

‘Worship and Christian Identity in Uganda:

A Study of the Contextualization of Worship in the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Independent churches in the West Nile and Kampala areas of Uganda’

By

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**Submitted in accordance with the requirement for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

This research develops a conceptual framework for a critical analysis of an area of theological practice that since the coming of Christianity to Uganda has been taking place at the 'folk level' in the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Independent Churches, in the West Nile and Kampala areas of Uganda. It is a theology of culture that is informed by insights from cultural and anthropological studies. The primary purpose of this thesis is meaning-making. It uses Clifford Geertz's idea of interpreting religious phenomena and Celia Lury's idea of cultural production in conjunction with Robertsons' global/local encounter in order to do a cultural hermeneutic of Lugbara/Madi traditions and the received Christian traditions as practised in the Lugbara language. It is interpretative and therefore theological, because theology is meaning-making. It further uses a 'community and critical consciousness' approach of Gerald West, to help communities to describe and analyse their cultural practices.

The research investigates the ways in which worship, as a cultural product, is used as a medium of social change and exchange and how its variability reflects socio-cultural identity. The cycle of production, distribution and reception of cultural works in the forms of societal structures, leadership styles, religious rituals, prayers and music are described with the purpose of making meaning. The role of technology in making it possible for the Lugbara/Madi to separate cultural works from their context of production for distribution and reception is also assessed. The result is a new mobility for their cultural goods and a transformation of their mode of cultural reproduction from repetition to one of replication. The research settles the point that Lugbara/Madi are in varying degrees using the modern technologies to provide unlimited copying of their cultural works to others and to copy from other cultural groups. The rural/urban interface provides them with this opportunity and they give it a social shape through the network of Lugbara community churches and cultural organizations that exercise a form of copyright for these cultural goods for wider use and circulation.

The process began when the Lugbara/Madi began to associate socio-cultural reproduction with their socio-cultural progress. It consisted in the implicit and explicit reception of the translated scriptures, which contributed directly to the development and affirmation of local cultural forms that in turn contributed to the formation of local Christian identities. The interplay and partnership between Lugbara/Madi religious traditions, the received Christian traditions and the local experiences of the gospel, in conjunction with the global processes that are marketed through urbanization and information technology, have led to the construction of these new identities. In short, the rural/urban interface is generating autochthonous Christian practices that are beginning to render the old denominational identities – of Anglican and Roman Catholic – immaterial. The Lugbara/Madi concept of *ori'ba* – 'people of God' for kinship, *orijo* – 'house of God' for Church and *orindi* – 'God present' for the Spirit generates new theological, ecclesiological and missiological insights that are stimulating.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated, first and foremost, to the memory of the great Africanist, poet, theologian and bishop, John Vernon Taylor, who believed in me before seeing me. When we finally met after almost a year of correspondence our hearts and souls were knit in a strong bond. His commitment to support this project financially until death shows his belief in the Church of Uganda and its role in the world.

Secondly, this work is also dedicated to the elders and people of West Nile who saw in the Son of Man the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the greatest Elder and Teacher of all. I dedicate this work to them so they may live to serve Jesus the Christ more and more.

*Ma so odru bikibiki
Ama ondukoni
Ma Murua Mvapi 'i
Drajoo oti amani
Tia orini, Kamimvani
Kami Kami Kami!¹*

¹ This panegyric is hard to translate but would be understood by the elders. If they see it they will know me, my ancestry and where I come from. See more in Chapters V and VI.

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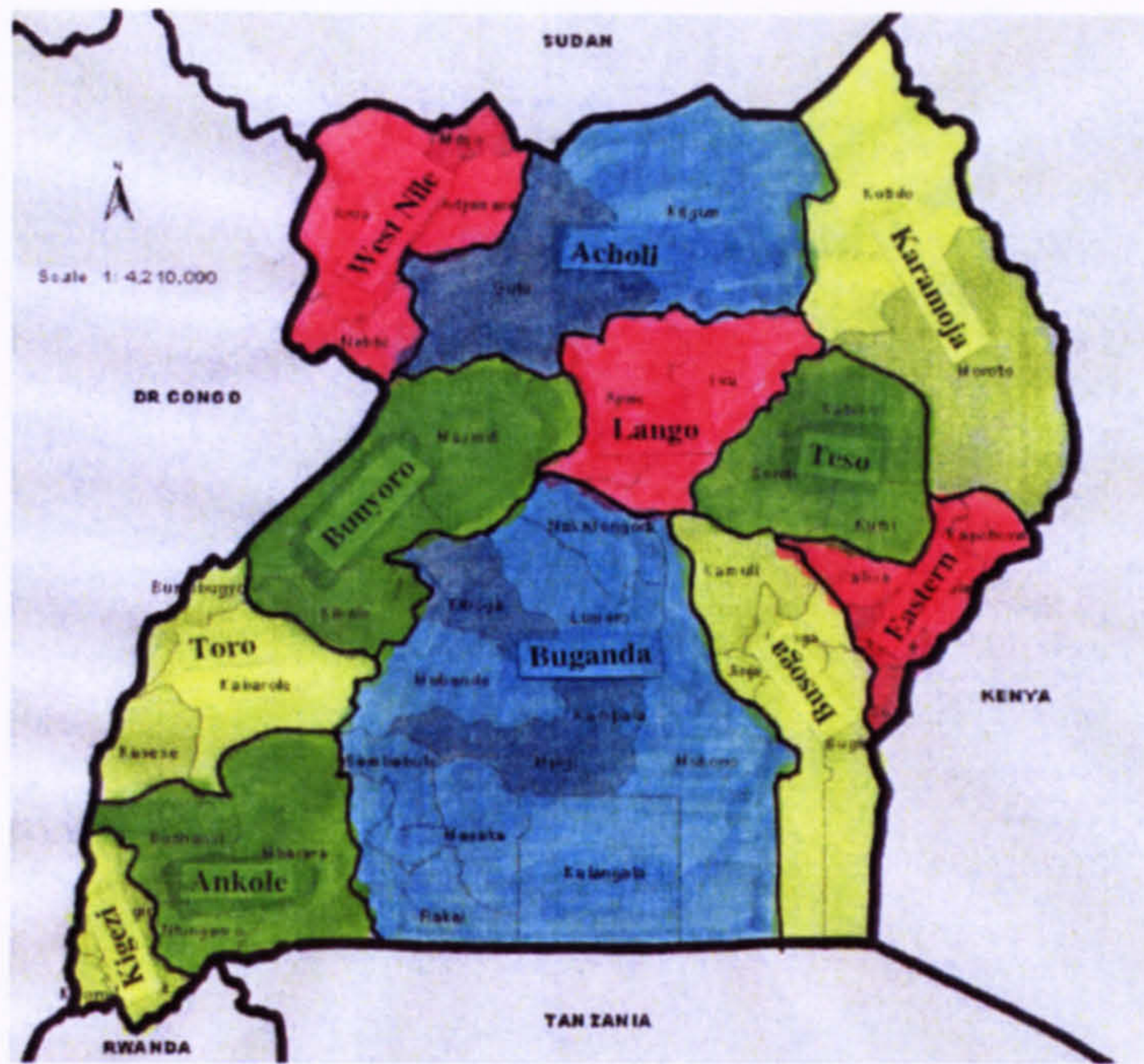
I thank Bishop Eliphaz Maari, who in his wisdom recommended me for a scholarship to research this subject area within the Church of Uganda. I thank the staff and students of Uganda Christian University School of Divinity and Theology, Mukono, who sharpened the edges of the ideas, expressed here, and tested some of the theories in their own field research, which I supervised.

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MAP OF UGANDA



Political map of Uganda





The region of West Nile in relation to other regions

ABBREVIATIONS

AACC	All Africa Conference of Churches
ACA	Arua Community Association
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AF	Anglican Flames
AYF	Anglican Youth Fellowship (Choir)
AWS	African Writers Series
BCLC	Bwaise Christian Life Church
BCMS	Bible Churchman's Mission Society
BCP	Book of Common Prayer
BD	Bachelor of Divinity
Bp	Bishop
BTTC	Bishop Tucker Theological College
CD	Contact Disc
CER	Chosen Evangelical Revival
Cf.	compare
CMS	Church Mission Society
COU	Church of Uganda (Anglican)
CUP	Cambridge University Press
DMiss	Doctor of Missions
Dip. Th	Diploma in Theology
EALB	East African Literature Bureau
EAEP	East Africa Evangel Press
et al	and others
FM	Frequency Modulation
GMEC	Gaba-Mukono Ecumenical Contact
HIV	Human Immune Deficiency Virus
IUP	Inter University Press
KPC	Kampala Pentecostal Church
LCA	Lugbara Cultural Association
LCC	Lugbara Community Churches
LCCF	Lugbara Christian Community Fellowship
LIFE	Lay Involvement for Evangelism
LUCCA	Lugbara Catholic Community Association
LULA	Lugbara Literature Association
MOA	Madi Okollo Association
Mt.	Mountain
Mt	Matthew
MUK	Makerere University Kampala
NC	Nebbi Community
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
OUP	Oxford University Press
RM	Roman Missal
SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics
SPCK	Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge
TV	Television
UCU	Uganda Christian University

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.I INTRODUCTION

This research is about worship and Christian identity in Uganda. It is about how the contexts in the West Nile and Kampala areas have affected the identity of Christianity among the Lugbara/Madi of Uganda. Christianity came to Uganda with a dual identity: Anglican and Roman Catholic in 1877 and 1879, respectively. This added to the Islamic identity that some Ugandans had acquired from Arab traders from the 1840s. Ugandans were divided by the way they worshipped, and families that once sat at the same ancestral shrine no longer shared ritually together. Later, when the Independent Churches emerged at the turn of the 20th century, in protest at the practices of the received denominations, they added to the complexity of the identity crisis.

This research develops a conceptual framework that critically analyses an area of theology that has been practised at the 'folk level' in the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Independent Churches in the West Nile and Kampala areas of Uganda. It is theological research in the area of the sociology of culture, informed by insights from cultural and anthropological studies. It does an institutional analysis of worship as a 'cultural work'.⁴ The research is in response to the cry that Christianity has destroyed Lugbara/Madi culture and to the need to recover such cultural values. It aims to reap the benefit of a culture that was once ignored, for Christian formation and celebration. The research brings the good news that Lugbara/Madi culture, instead of disappearing, is actually being celebrated and preserved through Christianity, which itself has become an 'African religion'.⁵

The quest for the recovery of African cultural values suggests that such values represent intrinsically derivative properties distributed by Africans. Although Africans have a lot in common across the continent, each people group always has something unique to themselves, as will be shown. This thesis shows that value, rather than being representational, is a regulative medium of preference. It answers the key question: if Lugbara/Madi people were left to choose for themselves, what would they choose to do, guided by their network of strategic evaluations and their collective system of values and practices? It is clear that they would not have chosen

⁴ Lury, *Cultural Rights*, 1993, p. 5

⁵ This term is used by Kwame Bediako in his book *Jesus in Africa: The Christian Gospel in African History and Experience*, Paternoster Publishing, 2000.

to be divided by the way they worship for they have interacted deeply with other cultural groups and learned from them as much as they have influenced them.

‘Cultural value’ is used in this research to refer to meaning or symbolic content where the value implied is a regulative medium of preference as well as a circulatory process of the collective system of values and practices.⁶ But rather than develop a theory of ‘values’ as might be the aim of sociology, the focus here is to investigate the ways in which worship, as a ‘cultural product’, is used as a medium of social change and how its variability – or consistency – reflects socio-cultural and religious identity. ‘Cultural production’ refers to the complex cycle of production, distribution and reception of cultural works such as music, dance and art, which reflect the level of cultural industry. The thesis gives a ‘thick description’⁷ of the way worship as a cultural product has developed in the history of Christianity among the Lugbara/Madi of Uganda amidst the prevalent variable contexts of social, cultural, political and economic changes in Uganda. A ‘thick description’ is a description of something with a view to making it intelligible. Worship as a cultural product entails the production, distribution and reception of religious objects, structures, liturgies, music, performances, services, etc., with the primary purpose of making meaning.

The research shows that technology helped to initiate changes in Lugbara/Madi cultural practices through what is called mechanical or technical reproduction. For, technology is also a cultural apparatus that makes possible the separation of cultural works from their context of production for distribution or reception into different contexts altogether. Technology gives a new mobility to cultural goods as it transforms the mode of cultural reproduction from repetition to one of replication.⁸ The possibility of replication in the 19th and 20th century missionary era was offered by the printing press. It created the similarities and differences between cultural and social reproductions associated with the modernisation process.

The present technologies of communication such as printing, typewriting, word-processing, the computer, the Internet, the photocopier, the telephone, etc.,

⁶ Celia Lury, *Cultural Rights: Technology, Legality and Personality* Routledge: London, 1993, p. 1.

⁷ Clifford Geertz uses the term ‘thick description’ from Gilbert Ryle’s *Collected Papers in The Interpretation of Cultures*, Fontana Press: London, 1973, p. 6.

⁸ Lury, 1993, Chapter 2, p. 13-36.

provide unlimited potential for copying and sharing of cultural works. This potential has been regulated or given a social shape by certain regimes of copyright, the outcome of which has been the economic, political and cultural differences between Africa in particular, and the developing world in general, and the West. The Book of Common Prayer (BCP) and the Roman Missal (RM), for example, are cultural works and therefore intellectual property of the Western churches. As such the missionaries largely determined the terms under which they were performed, copied, and distributed for reception. This meant the missionaries also regulated how the liturgy was to be celebrated and any innovations could only be with the approval of the resident missionary. Liturgy as a literary cultural work came to be mediated by the technical medium in which it was fixed and transmitted as a mainly one-way flow of ideas from the producer in the West to the recipient in the mission lands because what was done in the mission field did not often influence what was done in the 'mother church'. The Church in Uganda was therefore at a disadvantage at both the economic and technological levels and was relegated to being a perpetual consumer of these ready-made cultural products. The remedy came through the process of internalisation as Ugandans tried to integrate cultural and social reproduction for their socio-cultural progress. The process of internalisation consisted in the implicit and explicit reception through translation and celebration that contributed directly to the development of local forms of the received Western Christian traditions, which in turn contributed directly and indirectly to the formation of local Christian identities.

The 19th and 20th century missionary enterprise was therefore mainly a cultural enterprise that marketed cultural goods from the West to the rest of the world. It was spurred by the technology of the printing press that made it possible for the missionaries to separate their cultural works from the cultural contexts of production, thus giving them a new mobility. The Western cultural goods of liturgy, prayers, music, architecture, art and ways of life were given mobility through technology to the rest of the world. In this way, as Celia Lury points out:

Cultural works came to be, literally, mediated by the technical media in which they were fixed and transmitted in a largely one-way flow of messages from the producer to the recipient.⁹

⁹ Lury, 1993, p. 5.

The reception of these cultural goods by Africans through internalisation afforded the Africans the opportunity to enter into the Western worldview. Literacy, that is, the ability to read and write, gave Africans the opportunity to receive these cultural goods, mainly in the form of books, which the technology of printing had made possible. But at this stage Africans could only copy and parrot what the *muzungu* (white man) did. It was not until Africans became literate – in the sense of being ‘well read’ – that they began to internalise these cultural works and to innovate by celebrating them in cultural ways that marked them as African.

While printing made the distribution of cultural works easier, it did so in forms that already existed. The institutions of training for the ministry emphasised the means of copying and reproducing these works in the forms in which they existed in the missionaries’ home church. Ugandan church leaders became experts in doing things exactly as the founding missionaries did. However, this monotony was broken, as Ugandans became ‘mature’ – that is, literate – through schooling and particularly through the process of urbanization. Internalisation, the chief mechanism through which cultural reproduction is linked to social reproduction, contributed directly to the development of particular cultural forms, leading to the formation, identity and influence of particular social groups defined through the implied activity of cultural reception. Here culture became an aspect of organization of social life. The three tools of Christian maturation, which are also tools for the integration and convergence of Christian experience in Uganda, are: the vernacular Bible, the integrated leaders (church and civic) whom the people trusted and understood, and a living experience of God in Jesus Christ. This coming of age was hastened by the context of suffering¹⁰ in the 1970s and 80s, which were years of extreme need in West Nile and in Uganda in general. These were the most innovative years in worship because people experimented with many cultural liturgical ideas in the absence of the received liturgical books.

¹⁰ Dick Anderson describes suffering as the key to Christian maturity in *We felt like Grasshoppers: The Story of AIM*, Crossway Books: 1994, p. 106. Zac Niringiye makes the same point, in his 1997 thesis, ‘The church in the World: A Historical-Ecclesiological Study of the Church of Uganda with particular reference to Post-Independent Uganda, 1962-1992’, Edinburgh University.

.I.1. Research Organisation

The research has nine chapters. Chapter I introduces the research. Chapter II-VII cover the context in West Nile for the traditional and Christian understanding of worship among the Lugbara/Madi and Chapter VIII covers the context of Kampala City for how these understandings are being used in the urban context. Chapter IX is a critical analysis of the concepts under study in the two contexts, rural and urban, to uncover the relationships between the two contexts. The chapters II-VII that describe and interpret different aspects of worship amongst the Lugbara/Madi people each has two sections (A and B). Section A in each chapter gives the traditional Lugbara/Madi understanding and Section B gives the Christian understanding of the same concept.

In Chapter II, we deal with the community of worship. The chapter describes community among the Lugbara/Madi, and how this concept helped in the reception of the gospel and how it transformed the received Christian traditions. Chapter III focuses on leadership in worship. It spells out how the Lugbara/Madi raise their leaders, how these leaders affect the community and how this in turn has affected the leadership of the Church among the Lubgbara/Madi. It raises the key question of whether Jesus fits the model of a leader that they would follow. Until Christ is accepted as their leader, the Lugbara/Madi may not follow him. Chapter IV deals with sacrifices, offerings, and time, which is basically the Lugbara/Madi concept of religion. It is through this concept that the Lugbara/Madi engaged with Christianity as a religion.

Chapter V explores the ubiquitous components of worship: prayer and blessings. It investigates the attitudes that the Lugbara/Madi bring to God and what influences and motivations they have in relating to God. This brings us to Chapter VI, on the teaching/learning methods of the Lugbara/Madi. The centrality of *E'yo* – word in Lugbara teaching/learning – and how its use determines one's status and ministry in the community and its effect on the preaching and teaching ministry in the church is also assessed. The use of *e'yo* in story, myth, riddles and proverbs in teaching/learning is also assessed. Chapter VII focuses on music and dance. It explores the traditional understanding of music and dance and its role in society. Detailed attention is given to the various musical traditions and their roles with a view to explaining what their function is in society and in Church.

Chapter VIII deals with worship in Kampala and it assesses the concept of community in the Kampala and the role of Lugbara/Madi communities and churches in the socio-cultural development of Lugbara/Madi people. It explores the origins of Lugbara/Madi communities in Kampala and its suburbs. It further explains how the Lugbara Community Churches and Fellowships emerged from these communities. The theories of 'human becoming' and 'life rubbing' are tested in the practices and worship of Lugbara/Madi migrant communities. It is shown that the concepts of *ori'ba*, *orijo* and *orindi* determine their relations in Kampala. It is also shown that Christianity offers the Lugbara/Madi the opportunity to celebrate their culture and to use it as part of the progress and transformation they desire to make as a society and particularly their homeland West Nile. Urbanization and its attendant technologies and their role in cultural progress are used by the migrants to market the Lugbara culture and to transform it. Lastly, Chapter IX highlights the theological arguments that emerge in the thesis and explains them in the light of global processes in the world today. It ends with a conclusion that summarises the arguments and their theological and missiological implications.

.I.2. Research Methodology

This research uses the interpretation of religious phenomena¹¹ using 'community consciousness' and 'critical consciousness'¹² questions to help communities explain the underlying basis for their traditional and Christian praxis. We posed community consciousness questions of the 'what', 'who' how and 'when' type to Lugbara/Madi communities so that they could give descriptions of their communities and practises. The critical consciousness questions of the type 'why' were used for a more critical analysis of the issues, their inner meanings and underlying reasons. The method helps the communities and churches begin to appreciate in new ways their social progress or lack of progress over the years. It entailed an objective articulation of their cultural knowledge, resulting in a new, conscious ownership and appreciation of

¹¹ Clifford Geertz was the first to turn the explanation of religious phenomena into interpretation in his work: *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Fontana Press: London, 1973.

¹² These questions were used by Gerald West of Ujamaa Centre for Biblical and Theological Community Development and Research in South Africa to help poor and marginalized communities find solutions to their real life problems. See Gerald West, 1995, *Biblical Hermeneutics of Liberation: Reading the Bible in the South African Context*, Maryknoll, NY and Pietermaritzburg: Orbis books and Cluster publications, and *The Academy of the Poor: towards a dialogical reading of the Bible*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2003.

their culture and identity. At the critical consciousness level, the concern about local traditions that have greatly suffered under the received Christian traditions inculcated by the formal and religious education systems began to be challenged with a view to making a difference.

.I.2.1. The Research Process

The research fieldwork was conducted in the West Nile and Kampala areas of Uganda from 1999 to 2002. A preliminary survey was done in West Nile in September–December 1999. This was followed by more comprehensive data collection in 2000. There was a supplementary data collection done in Kampala between February and June 2002 in addition to regular trips to West Nile to meet with key informants. Writing up the research on the spot proved very helpful for the reason that I could get back to the informants to corroborate and clarify issues. The research exposes the interplay between African religious traditions, received Christian traditions, global processes marketed through urbanization and information technology, and the lived experience of God in Uganda. The thesis describes, translates and interprets the worship practices that are bringing about changes in Christian identity in Uganda.

It first of all describes Lugbara/Madi religious experiences, expressions and practices to expose what is typical of religion in general and Lugbara/Madi religion in particular. Secondly, it analyses the received Western Christian traditions of Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism from the Lugbara/Madi perspective. It further exposes how the received traditions have been internalised and asks whether or not these were found by the Lugbara/Madi to fulfil their spiritual needs. If not, what did they do about this? It is shown that they found the received traditions wanting and selectively used aspects of them in conjunction with their own experiences of the gospel to generate ‘indigenous’ ‘Anglican’, ‘Roman Catholic’ and Independent practices that are making Christianity a truly ‘African religion’. Theology is central to this thesis because of this interpretative aspect. According to Clifford Geertz, who is the first to turn the explanation of religious phenomena into interpretation, theology is the interpretation of religious experience.¹³ The focus here, however, is on description, translation and interpretation of religious practices, with a view to

¹³ See Clifford Geertz, 1973, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Fontana Press: London.

pointing out its consonance with other cultural and historical processes, while preserving the integrity of the religious experience-cum-expression as 'Christian'. For Christianity is not a theologically fixed entity that is introduced into different cultures, but a dynamic belief system that generates new concepts and practices in every culture and context with an enriching effect on other previous experiences, which are in turn made 'Christian'.

In the research process, firstly, the contexts of West Nile and Kampala reveal the cultural and socio-political factors that affect Christian worship. Along with the findings of other scholars this research shows that the rural-urban interface affects progress and development both ways.¹⁴ Secondly, the process of how context shapes reflection is used to understand and analyse and explain how communities organise themselves for worship in the light of the cultural, socio-political and technological processes within the rural-urban context. Furthermore, I examine how theological formation takes place in the use of the vernacular scriptures, the oral sermons, prayers, songs, gifts and offerings on the one hand, and the received traditions on the other. These primary building blocks are used to kick-start the construction of local theologies that affect Christian identity. In the process African culture is a partner rather than a victim as internalisation takes place. In it the best of African culture is 'recycled'¹⁵ and given a new form in expressing the new faith. In a way, this was how the Western Christian tradition of Anglicanism and other Protestant traditions emerged during the Reformation in Europe. But it is distinct, nevertheless, from the 'university model'¹⁶ in Western academic theology, which uses academic treatises or essays as the primary source for theology.

Thirdly, history is central to the thesis because it shapes and reveals how people and their perceptions of themselves and others are formed.¹⁷ The process of

¹⁴ See Aylward Shorter, 1991, *The Church in the African City*, Geoffrey Chapman, London. See also Poul ove Pederson and Jonathan Baker, 1992, *Rural-Urban Interface in Africa*, Uppsala, and Josef Gugler, 1996, 'Urbanization in Africa South of the Sahara: New Identities in Conflict', pp. 211-251, in Josef Gugler, ed., 1996, *The Urban Transformation of the Developing World*, OUP: Oxford. In these works the impact of cities on rural areas is clearly elaborated.

¹⁵ Mugambi suggests four ways in which integration takes place in the internalisation process between the received traditions and African culture. See Mugambi, 1995, *From Liberation to Reconstruction*, Evangel Publishing, Nairobi

¹⁶ See Schreiter's categorisation in Chapter 4, p. 75-94.

¹⁷ Zac Niringiye uses the political history of Uganda to explain the ecclesiastical developments in the Church of Uganda, in 'The Church in the World: A Historical-Ecclesiological Study of the

internalisation is rooted in history and is accomplished within history. It is above all because worship is an enactment of the 'remembered' relationship between humans and God that history becomes an essential element if remembrance is to occur.

.I.2.2. Research Methodology

As for methodology, instead of the 'translation model' of contextualization of Lamin Sanneh¹⁸ and the comparative model of John Mbiti,¹⁹ a combination of description, translation and interpretation²⁰ models of contextualization is used.²¹ Translation here is both from English into the vernacular (vernacularisation) and from the vernacular into English (Anglicization). That is why it is called 'meaning-making'. Interpretation, although similar to translation, is a step further in explaining African contextual understanding and practices, which does not always mean the same as Western understanding and practices. So a combination of description, translation and interpretation models of contextualization is used. Answering 'community consciousness questions' enables communities to describe their practices of worship before being asked 'critical consciousness questions', which help them analyse emerging Christian identities. This is done by use of the triad of context, history and theology.²²

Church of Uganda with particular reference to Post-Independence Uganda, 1962-1992', Edinburgh University, 1997.

¹⁸ Lamin Sanneh, in *Translating the Message: the Missionary impact on Culture*, Orbis: New York, 1993, spells out his translation model of contextualization that has greatly impacted on African Christianity, and its impact on other cultures.

¹⁹ John Mbiti has always highlighted Christian concepts of God, morality and sense of community in African religion with a view to building parallels between African religion and Christianity. In his works *African Religions and Philosophy*, Heinemann: Oxford, 1969; *New Testament Eschatology in an African Background*, OUP: London, 1971; 'The Biblical basis in present trends of African Theology' *Bulletin of African Theology*, 1, January-June 1979:12, 1979; *Bible and Theology in African Christianity*, OUP: Oxford, 1986 and 'The Bible in African Culture', in Rosino Gibellini, ed. *Paths of African Theology*, SCM: London, 1994, p. 27-39 he sees parallels between African religion and Christianity.

²⁰ The dictionary meaning of translation and interpretation are similar. In a way to translate is to interpret and to interpret is to translate. But here translation is to state in English what is being said in vernacular and interpretation is to explain the meaning of what is being said.

²¹ For the models of contextualization, see Stephen Bevan, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 1992 and David Hesselgrave and Roman Edward, 1989, *Contextualization: Meaning, Method and Modes*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Books.

²² The triad of context, procedure and history was used by Robert Schreiter in *Constructing Local Theologies*, 1993, p.4, to describe how local theologies are formed. I think theology is the key process for understanding the internalisation process.

Secondly, in the course of this research, it was repeatedly mentioned that when an African elder dies, a whole library is buried with him.²³ It began to dawn on me that I was on the right track by focusing on Christian elders who have lived the Christian faith amidst the controversies about African culture and traditions. This great library of the struggle between the received Christian traditions and African traditions dramatised in African lives has not been properly made use of, for research purposes. Researchers have tended to go to non-Christian elders to do research on African traditions. I deliberately targeted Christian elders because it is they who have struggled to be Christian and African at the same time. This approach illuminates the spirit animating the Lugbara/Madi people to show how they are meeting new challenges and exploring possible areas of development and involvement in the progress of their communities in the face of rapid cultural, social and political changes in Uganda. In this research I used discussions with the *'ba 'wara* (elders), *'ba ru kuza* (people of fame) and *onduou* (people of wisdom) – the sage philosophers²⁴ to arrive at an understanding of the oral traditions that are the chief source of religious practice and experience in Africa. African Christian elders have been valued for who they are and what they represent, but have not been used to the fullest extent as a research resource because many think their knowledge of African traditions is compromised. We use Lugbara/Madi 'sage philosophy' as the primary source of information because of the belief that within African communities there are certain members who are well grounded and versed in the fundamental principles that underlie their societies.

According to Ochieng'-Odhiambo of Nairobi University, there are two types of African sages: the folk sage and the philosophic sage.²⁵ A folk sage is one who is well versed in the wisdom and traditions of the community and has the capacity to narrate these faithfully, right down to the finest details. Folk sages are the mirrors of the community's wisdom and traditions. A philosophic sage, on the other hand, is

²³ This expression was alluded to in all the funerals and memorial services for prominent elders such as Caleb Ariaka the 4th bishop of West Nile who died on 22nd April 1994 in a car accident, Yekonia Alia one of the earliest Christians of Madi, died in 1999 and Silvanus Wani the first Bishop of West Nile who died in September 2000.

²⁴ Ochieng'-Odhiambo coined the term sage philosophy to denote the wisdom of Africa, see 'Sage Philosophy – The Root of African Philosophy and Religion', in Michael Kirwen, *African Cultures and Religion*, Maryknoll Institute of African Studies, Nairobi, Kenya, August, 1999, Volume 1, Number 3, pp. 3-11.

²⁵ Ochieng'-Odhiambo, *Sage Philosophy*, 1999, p. 3.

one who goes beyond folk sagacity. He/she, as well as narrating the beliefs and wisdom of the culture, is rationally critical and opts for, or recommends, only those aspects that satisfy his or her rational scrutiny.²⁶ In this way African communities not only pass their oral stories and traditions along the generation line but also challenge their members to adapt to changes for continual progress towards a better life. If the traditional explanation no longer satisfactorily affirms the community's experience, sage philosophers give a new credible explanation that helps the community cope with the reality.²⁷ In this way cultural progress is made at the same time as the community's identity is asserted, redeemed and defended.

The use of Lugbara/Madi Christian folk and philosophic sages as primary sources means using people who have struggled for long to define and analyse their community's life, keenly noticing the positive and negative changes in their common lives. These Christian elders have the longest individual memory or possess the longest collective memory in their communities. The use of Christian elders means tapping into the memory of the longest contact with Christianity. If culture is the sum total of the people's activities, memories, hopes, plans and dreams for the future, and therefore a sort of stalk-taking²⁸, then sage and folk philosophy is a valid source of information. The primary material for this thesis is therefore oral literature: that is, the cultural information and values that are transmitted mainly through the spoken word received by ear and responded to by the whole human organism in societies. Oral literature includes genealogies, folktales, legends, myths, beliefs, songs, poems, proverbs, tongue twisters, puns, panegyrics, travellers' tales, hero tales, council discussions and negotiations, traditions and rituals for birth, marriage and funerals. The methods of imparting group knowledge to the young and all members of society are also looked at.

Orality is an important source of literature because structural linguistics establishes the primacy of spoken language over the written, and treats the latter as merely parasitic on the former. Ruth Mukama, a structural linguist, reveals that even though there are many written materials in Ugandan languages at a lower level of

²⁶ Ochieng-Odhiambo, p. 3

²⁷ Yosam Ruda says only in death does one continue without change; interviewed on 13th November 1999.

²⁸ Taban lo Liyong, *Popular Culture in East Africa*, p. ix

reading, there is hardly anything for further or deeper reading in most of the languages of Uganda.²⁹ This is certainly the case for the Lugbara/Madi. It means a learner cannot go beyond the scope of the literacy primers to sustain a literacy culture in many Ugandan languages apart from Luganda, Luo and Runyankole/Rukiga. This does not mean in-depth research cannot be done in the Lugbara/Madi language because of lack of written materials. It justifies the use of sage philosophy as a valid primary source in this research.

I met with the ‘professors of the village’ to think through with them their community's dynamic history of contact with Christianity. This contact, although it initially caused confusion and loss of identity, even suffering to communities and individuals, has created new identities that make the received Christian identities of Roman Catholic and Anglican at the most irrelevant. The new identities are African and Christian at the same time because culture is a way of life. It is a way of life as lived by a particular group of people, at a particular moment in time, context, and history. And because history is made up of social, political and economic challenges, culture becomes the way of life as lived by a people in a particular moment in history in response to certain social, political and economic challenges. These challenges, in the case of West Nile and Uganda, have involved some suffering, which required theological and cultural responses from the people.

I.2.3. Criteria for selection of the Sages

Among the Lugbara/Madi the sages are drawn from the ‘*ba ‘wara* (elders), ‘*ba ru kuza* (people of fame or status) and *onduou* (wise people – the philosophic and folk sages), especially ‘*ba ‘wara* and *onduou*, because ‘*ba rukuza* may not necessarily be wise but can influence society by their fame. Lugbara/Madi people believe experience is the greatest teacher. They say *anzi nya zini* – meaning ‘because of immaturity a child eats faeces’. Maturity is seen in terms of grey hair, long life, fecundity, oratory skills and general wisdom. As earlier stated, I chose people who profess Christ, because it is Christians, not unbelievers, who struggle to celebrate

²⁹ See Ruth Mukama, ‘The Linguistic Dimension of Ethnic Conflict’, pp. 178-206, in Kumar Rupesinghe, ed., *Conflict Resolution in Uganda*, 1989, Kampala, p. 184. For excellent works on African oral literature and methods for researching them, see Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Literature in Africa*, 1970, and *Oral Traditions and Verbal Arts: A Guide to Research Practices*, Routledge: London, 1992. On orality see Alan Rumsey, ‘Orality’, pp. 165-67, in Alessandro Duranti, ed., *Key Terms in Language and Culture*, Blackwell, 2001.

Christ in their culture. It is therefore Christians who should critically examine their consciences to see if they are fulfilled or not in their Christian beliefs and practices. It was Paul, a Pharisee, who was able to bring the demands of the gospel deep into the Jewish tradition and to challenge the Jews to consider the concept of Jesus as the Messiah. Likewise it was the Greeks who boldly asserted Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, as the Greek *Logos*. Likewise, only Lugbara/Madi Christians can bring Christ meaningfully home into their cultural understanding and experience.

Another significant thing to note is the fact that most researchers tend to focus on African Independent Churches when researching African Christianity as if the Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions have nothing African about them. This research corrects that view and establishes the validity of studying African Christianity through the mission-initiated churches. This study does not only have an ecumenical bias, it also ploughs a new furrow, which exposes Africanity in both the Mission and Independent Churches. Africans in all churches have celebrated the received Christian traditions, adapting them and making them truly their own. The contextual experiences of the churches link them not only to their African roots but also to the modern challenges of today.

The Church in Uganda and in West Nile in particular is very youthful and is full of women. It was not therefore hard to spot the grey hairs in the congregations. I first interviewed as many elders as I could find in church, to gauge their level of understanding of the issues I wanted to explore, about their society, the Church and local traditions. Those I found helpful I asked to participate in further discussions. After meeting them individually I arranged group meetings in people's homes. There were two groups in Arua for the Lugbara speakers and one in Okollo for the Madi speakers. We always met over some food and tea, which the elders appreciated very much. Those who could not make it to the groups I continued to meet individually to corroborate what we discussed in the groups.

I met others individually in their homes, after worship services, at funeral rites, fundraising events, marriage negotiations, conflict resolution meetings, and in synod, chapter and church council meetings. Some of the meetings were prearranged, others impromptu. The individual discussions were brought to the groups to debate the findings. The challenge was to help the elders overcome prejudices with which they were made to receive Christianity as unrelated to African traditions and religion.

The Catholic leaders were the most informed in traditional matters, and discussions with them were free and deep. Because of the method employed the research is almost like a question and answer presentation. But this is the strength rather than a weakness of this method and reveals the interactive engagement involved.

.I.2.4. Defining the Research Process

I want to elaborate further the research process because it is very crucial. By using the triad of Context, History and Theology we set out to map the traditional and contemporary paths that worship has taken in the West Nile and Kampala areas of Uganda amongst the Lugbara/Madi.

.I.2.4.1. *Step 1: Context*

We began by seeking an understanding of the context, that is, the reality of the local communities and churches, by asking 'community consciousness questions'³⁰ of the 'what' 'who' 'how', 'when' and 'where' type. This was to help the participants to describe their communities and practices. We identified religious practices for them to define and describe. These descriptions specified the context into which the text of the gospel is woven because the word 'context' comes from the Latin *contextere*: to weave one thing into another. An understanding of the local context is therefore most important for the gospel to be woven into it. We discussed themes such as the structures of community, leadership and how the word is used in ritual and sacrificial systems. We also looked at prayers, sacrifices, offerings and time, music and dance, arousing their community consciousness on these issues.

The context of suffering in the community's contact with foreigner and in Uganda's political upheavals of the 1970s and '80s, when 60 per cent of the population of West Nile went into exile in the Sudan and Congo had a tremendous impact on the communities and churches of the area. We asked the elders about their experience of Christ in these hard situations and how it affected their communities and churches. It was clear that during such times people from different communities and churches believed their own experiences more than the received doctrines and built more bridges of innovation with other communities and churches in the over 80

³⁰ 'Community consciousness' and 'critical consciousness' questions are terms used by Gerald West of Ujamaa Centre for Biblical and Theological Community Development with poor and marginalised communities in South Africa for doing contextual Bible studies.

years of Christianity in West Nile. It is the innovations they stumbled upon in these hard times that are shared in all churches because they are the indigenous resources they could rely upon.

.I.2.4.2. Step 2: History

We traced the history of the themes, words, traditions and concepts, using community consciousness questions of the ‘when’, ‘where’ and ‘who’ type. We obtained stories and dug down to the origins of the myths and legends to expose their meanings. We did etymological analyses of words and stories to trace their historical development and how they had been shaped over time. Then we identified the major events – political, social, economic and cultural – that impinged on their way of life and on these themes and issues. We saw history as the river between³¹ the two ridges of African traditions on the one hand and the received Christian traditions on the other. The river nourishes both ridges, but it also erodes both to nurture the lower lands, that is, the new generation of Lugbara/Madi Christian communities with a new identity. We discussed how leaders on both sides helped to build cultural footpaths and bridges, using the vernacular Bible as the highway between the two ridges, and how shared Christian experiences reinforced the new identity and helped to build further bridges between the different denominations.

.I.2.4.3. Step 3: Theology

The last step is the step of analysis, where ‘critical consciousness’ questions of the ‘why’ types were used to bring out inner meanings and underlying reasons. This is theological because it focused on interpretation of why and how context and history affect practice and how they reflect local concerns and/or departed from the ways of the missionaries. This cultural hermeneutic exposed the ‘embodied theologies’³² that have all along struggled beneath the received Christian identities. The elders at first needed a lot of assistance in doing a critical social analysis of their context and history, because at the coming of Christianity it was not prudent to take interest in

³¹ I borrow this idea from Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s novel *The River Between*, that signified the bipolar exercise of cultural adventure between African culture and Christianity.

³² Gerald West uses this term to describe the theologies exhibited by poor marginalised communities in South Africa that were being introduced to basic hermeneutical and pedagogical principles of contextual Bible study. See Gerald West, *Contextual Bible Study*, 1993.

African traditions for fear of being branded a pagan. But at this stage their community consciousness had been aroused and was willing to ask 'why' and 'how' questions about their context and history. They could now point out how and why these changes came about and how they relate to the wider context and history of the society.

.I.2.4.4. External and internal Factors

At this stage the elders began to engage with the themes under discussion and to expose the 'embodied theologies'³³ of their communities and churches. The surprise was how they began to raise questions that challenge their church's official theology and practices. The elders began to articulate their own and their community's theological positions and to identify the internal and external factors that impinged upon them to bring them to where they perceived they were. No longer were they parroting what they had been taught as the 'official theology' of the Church. Their awareness of indigenous 'embodied theologies' was of great importance because it meant that the received theologies and practices of the Church could no longer be accepted without question. For the first time the elders began to understand themselves as a people and as Christians of a specific time and place. One of the things they wanted to do immediately was to bring their findings to the public realm for action. They wanted the discoveries and explanations to be brought to the attention of the church authorities and of society. It was also encouraging to see that they were identifying the external and internal factors that had impinged on them and influenced where they were. They were clearly glad that the past is continuous with the present although transformed and that one cannot talk about Lugbara/Madi traditions in the past tense. That past is present, even in the church today.

The thesis integrates the Lugbara/Madi 'past' with received Christian traditions and 'present' concerns as seen through the eyes of the sages and concludes that the essence of 'Lugbara/Madi' is present in the Church. In other words a Lugbara/Madi Church is emerging to play a significant theological and missiological role in the world. The greatest advantage of the method adopted is in the fact that it uses sources that Lugbara/Madi people have used and consider crucial for their

³³ Gerald West, *Contextual Bible Study*, 1993, p.23, and *Doing Contextual Bible Study: A Resource Manual*, 2005, p. 53.

cultural and social wellbeing. Another advantage is in the fact that it helps to restore hope in African traditions and wisdom (as many Africans have lost faith in their traditions) and in the African elders and their wisdom and ministry. It also restores hope that *'ba 'wara*, *'ba ru kuza* and *onduou* – the sage philosophers – are still a vital source of information for African studies.

.II THE COMMUNITY OF WORSHIP

This chapter has two sections, A and B, which deal respectively with the traditional and the Christian understanding of community in the West Nile context of Uganda. The chapter defines the community of worship in traditional Lugbara/Madi society and in the Christian era in West Nile.

Section A

.II.1. Community in traditional Lugbara/Madi culture

Richard Niebuhr states: "...no community can exist without institutions that give it form, boundaries, discipline and the possibilities of expression and common action."³⁴ In the light of this statement by Niebuhr we began by asking the elders "Who are the Lugbara/Madi?" and "What structures and institutions have they created to worship God?" This helped us obtain a description of the structures and institutions the Lugbara/Madi have created for worship and how these have helped in the reception of Christianity on the one hand, and how they are transforming and being transformed by the received Christian traditions on the other.

To do this we engaged the elders with 'community consciousness' questions of the 'who' and 'what' type about themselves, God, spirits, life and community. We further asked how life is communicated, how community is formed and about the relationship between the shrine and the community. Secondly, we used 'critical consciousness' questions of the 'why' type about their relationship with God, ancestors, shrines, and the clans and tribes in which they are located. My personal observations and participation in clan meetings and functions were used to engage with the elders.

.II.2. The origins of the Lugbara/Madi

West Nile is the part of Uganda – its northwest corner – that is cut off from the rest of the country by the Nile. Ownership of the region from 1993 transferred from Congo to Uganda, to the Sudan, and finally back to Uganda in 1914. The region has four main languages: Lugbara, Alur, Kakwa and Madi. There are also smaller tribes

³⁴ See Richard Niebuhr, 1956, *The Purpose of the church and its ministry*, Harper & Brothers: New York, p. 22.

such as the Okebu and Lendu in the area. Apart from the Alur who are Nilotic (related to the Luo-speaking Acholi and Jopadhola) and the Kakwa who are Nilo-Hamitic relatives of the Langi, Iteso and Karimajong, the rest are sudanic tribes. When I asked the elders who the Lugbara are, the response was “We are Madi.” In 1925, C. H. Stigand wrote that the Madi and Lugbara have the same historical and cultural background, and that is why their languages are mutually intelligible.³⁵ The Lugbara and Madi share the same myth of origin as the children of Dribidu and Ofunyaruru.

This research further supports the ‘same root’ theory of the Madi and Lugbara by the fact that Madi Okollo terms help give a better understanding of some of the concepts that are not so clear in Lugbara.³⁶ Both Lugbara and Madi elders agreed they belong to the Madi-Moru language group, but there is need for further research to establish this fact. The first Bible translation committee members agreed that Madi Okollo helped them in several controversial matters.³⁷ But there is no disputing the fact that time and distance is establishing the two languages as distinct entities and particularly the Madi Moyo. Because Lugbara, the more widely spoken language, was chosen for Christian worship and education, this has greatly boosted its acceptability and literary authority over the lesser-used dialects of Madi Okollo and Aringa. The lithography of Aringa is at present being prepared by the Summer Institute for Linguistics (SIL) and the first primers have been published. One can adduce some evidence of the relatedness of the languages by the progressive level of understanding between Madi Moyo, Madi Okollo, Madi Ogoko/Rigbo, Aringa and Lugbara.

.II.3. God in Lugbara/Madi understanding

God for the Lugbara is *Adrou*, or *Adro*, but for the Madi Okollo he is *Ori*. The two words for God exist in both languages but with reversed meanings between the two

³⁵ C. H. Stigand, *Equatoria, The Lado Enclave*, London, Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., (first printed 1923), 1968, p. 228. See also Mark Leopold, *Inside West Nile*, where the elders tell him the name Lugbara was given by colonialists to separate them from their roots of being part of the Madi people, 2005, p. 155.

³⁶ See the syntactic analysis of words like *ori’ba*, *orindi* and *orijo* in the sections and chapters that follow.

³⁷ Matia Anguandia and Daniel Agba, members of the first translation committee, agreed that they relied heavily on Madi Okollo on certain issue.

tribes. To the Lugbara *ori* refers to ancestral spirits; it may even refer to the whole ancestral religion. To the Madi Okollo *adro* refers to the spirits, particularly the capricious spirits that inhabit the mountains, valleys and thickets that when encountered may harm humans. The Lugbara refer to them in the diminutive form *adroa*. Simple offerings and gifts can appease such spirits. The elders attributed this swap in roles between the Lugbara and Madi Okollo terms to the teasing relationship between the two communities: the *uruleba*, or people of the uplands (the Lugbara) and the *andralebba* – people of the lowlands (the Madi Okollo). Such teasing often involved ridiculing the gods of the other community and still exists between communities and distant relatives today. This explanation seems to answer Dalfovo and Middleton's dilemma about the names for God and for the ancestral spirits.³⁸ The use of *Adrou* by the Catholics for God is gaining acceptance in most communities. But even if the Lugbara and Madi are not related, they have been ritually involved together for a long time and the Madi Christians have used the Lugbara Bible and liturgy for worship enough to be able to enter into the Lugbara worldview and exert ritual influence. It will be shown that the Madi and Lugbara have shared music, stories, legends and myths of origin so much that they have *rubbed life* into each other and can therefore be considered relatives.³⁹

The earliest contact of the Lugbara/Madi with outsiders was with the *Tutuu* – Arabs – in mid or late 19th century.⁴⁰ It was not a pleasant encounter because the Arabs raided them for slaves. The Muslims introduced *Allah* as God – unrelated to *Adrou* or *Ori* of the Lugbara/Madi. The missionaries who came in 1918 ignored these terms for God and used the Swahili *Mungu*. In Madi Moyo they introduced *Rubanga* from the Acholi *Lubanga*, the rendition of the Bantu *Ruhanga* (Lunyoro). This was because the first Protestant missionary, Paget Wilkes, came through Acholiland. The term *Mungu* remained in use in both the Catholic and Anglican Churches until about 1950 when the trend began to favour a return to the local terms. Although the missionaries thought this innovation was prudent it was, however, a

³⁸ See Dalfovo, 'The Divinity among the Lugbara', *Journal of Religion in Africa* Vol. 28-4, p. 468-490 and John Middleton, *Lugbara Religion*, OUP: London, 1960, and *The Lugbara of Uganda*, London, 1965.

³⁹ This point will be proved in the analysis of the Lugbara/Madi concept of kinship and community in the sections ahead.

⁴⁰ The Arabs were called *Tutuu* because of the sound of their guns used in the raids.

cowardly move to try to avoid the controversies about the name of God in Lugbara/Madi, as Dalfovo explains.

Those early evangelisers by-passed that difficulty related to the terms and meanings by adopting a new name for the divinity to which they could attach the precise meaning demanded by their teaching.⁴¹

The missionaries thought the term *Mungu* conveyed an unambiguous idea of the divinity that avoided references to pluralism and anthropomorphism in the local terms. It also became a means of differentiating the traditionalists from the Christians. One would frequently hear *mi mini Adrouni inzi, ma Munguni inzi* – you worship Adrou; as for me, I worship *Mungu* – as if the two were different. The use of the traditional terminology began in Catholic educational textbooks in 1956,⁴² then in Catholic songs in the early 1960s and later in the official Catholic Prayer book. By the end of the 1960s the term *Adro/Adrou* was well established in Catholic liturgical use. It sneaked into Anglican and other Protestant Church use through the joint translation in 1978 of the New Testament; up to this point *Yehova Mungu* was extensively used. So God is *Ori*, the seed or originator of all creation, for the Madi Okollo, and *Adrou 'ba o'bapiri*, the creator of human beings, amongst the Lugbara.

.II.4. The concept of life in Lugbara/Madi culture

Adrou/Ori gives *idri* – life. How God gives *idri* is not clear, according to the elders. The assumption is only clarified through the analysis of Lugbara/Madi concepts of kinship relations and the human spirit or soul. The word *idri* is associated with warmth. All living things are warm, just as dead things are cold. This means that *idri* – life – is a sharing or communication of warmth. It takes place sexually and through interpersonal relations within the space or medium of the community. According to Matia Anguandia, life is primarily communicated sexually (biologically) through the sexual union of an adult man and woman. But because life is more than just biological generation, the Lugbara/Madi people consider social relations in society important in shaping individuals into good and responsible

⁴¹ Dalfovo, 'Divinity among the Lugbara', *Journal of Religion in Africa Vol. 28-4*, p. 479.

⁴² This was in *Katekismu Madri Class Alo*, the first of four textbooks of Religious Education in Catholic Primary schools.

members.⁴³ There is therefore a social transmission of life that is as equally important as the sexual transmission.

Elders and peers, through their *indikindi* – presence – socially communicate life to the community. Social contact is a *life-rubbing* experience⁴⁴ in that it always produces love/hate – warm/cold relations. The term ‘life rubbing’ is derived from the way the Lugbara/Madi nurse their children by rubbing them with *iraka/araa* (red ochre) and *komura/awa* (shea butter oil). It is the process of socialisation, derived from the way they rub their children with red ochre from infancy to about the age of six, when they begin to take part in outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing and collecting wild honey, firewood and water. The rubbing generates warmth – love, care and affection, gestures that enhance life.

The elders maintained that people will only become ‘fully human’ when they live together in harmony and according to the known way of life. They recognised the community’s ‘way of life’ as the prime element in the identity formation of the individuals and of the community. *Ofuzu ‘baru* – human becoming – is, according to Yosam Ruda, about responding to and rubbing with one another within a particular context.⁴⁵ For any person to be good, he/she has to live within a particular socio-cultural, political, and economic context that determines the human relations best suited for living fully in those conditions.

Indikindi – presence – is central to Lugbara/Madi social relations. It is the key to socialisation, where warmth through social rubbing is the basis of all relations. The Lugbara/Madi response to a call is *ma indi* – I am present. People who are *indi* – present – can rub and influence each other. This social contact affects human conduct and behaviour and is the means of passing on the community’s norms, mores and concepts of what it means to be human. This is why truancy from rituals is an offence in Lugbara/Madi culture. In fact a child who is always available and does things well is said to *ofuu ‘baru* – to become human. John Macquarrie uses the

⁴³ Matia Anguandia, interviewed on 17th Feb 1999. Benezet Bujo affirms this point in *African Theology: in its social context*, 1992, p. 21.

⁴⁴ The term ‘life rubbing’ in English brings the connotation of erasing or rubbing out life. There is no better word in English to translate this concept and so we retain it to give the original meaning of mentoring, influencing and training someone into the ways of life of the community.

⁴⁵ Yosam Ruda, interviewed on 13th November 1999

concept of 'human becoming' in systematic theology,⁴⁶ but here, it describes the socially mediated process by which society educates, trains and teaches what is believed to be good for the welfare of all.

.II.5. The concept of community

The Lugbara concept of community derives from the need to engage with others for *human becoming*. A common Lugbara/Madi creation fable depicts this human need for companionship. In the fable a beautiful girl called *Aliko* failed to obey her brother *Aza's* simple rule not to open the door to anybody while he was away. *Aliko* was instructed to stay in doors lest she let out the Great Spirit while her brother was out hunting. Besides, the evil *Ebio* – ogre – was always lurking in the shadows, waiting to devour any stray beings. *Ebio's* attempts to get *Aliko* to let him in were rewarded when he obeyed the oracle pronounced by the clever *okuku* (tortoise) that he should put water in his mouth and not eat anything until he spoke to *Aliko*. When after several attempts he successfully restrained his vast appetite to reach up to where *Aliko* was locked up, he perfectly imitated her playmate to cause her to open the door. The result was that death entered into the world as the Great Spirit fled to the sky. *Aza*, a messianic figure, managed to rescue the sister but the spirit who protected them was gone. *Aza* continued to seek the Great Spirit and is regularly rewarded with the Spirit coming to his aid in times of crisis.⁴⁷

Aliko failed to obey because she needed companionship. From this point on, the duty of every family, clan or tribal leader is to seek God through the ancestral spirits. Hence, religion as a Lugbara/Madi way of life⁴⁸ is about how individuals and

⁴⁶ See Macquarrie, 1982, *In Search of Humanity*, SCM: London, p. 2.

⁴⁷ It may be possible that such a fable was created after the biblical story of creation was introduced in West Nile. The story's validity, however, lies in the fact that it uses culturally authentic characters that have been used in Lugbara/Madi tradition to teach and educate the society. See Chapter 5 on preaching, where the symbolic nature of these characters in Lugbara/Madi mythology is explained. I am indebted here to Aunt Neria Nyinga, who was an expert storyteller.

⁴⁸ There is no word for religion in any of the West Nile or Ugandan languages. All the tribes and religious denominations use the Swahili term *dini*, which is an Arabic import. The Alur talk of *kura bedo mwa*, meaning 'our way of life' or *kura mi the kwaru*, 'our ancestral ways'. The Lugbara/Madi talk of *idri amani a'bia* (our ancestral way). They all considered their 'way of life' as their religion where 'way of life' is that complex spiritual outlook of values that under-gird their individual and corporate existence. This does not mean the concept of religion is non-existent in these languages. It rather exposes the communication problem in the missionary era. The hypothesis is that the Western concept of life as secular and sacred, or public and private, the effect of the enlightenment, confused the African to the extent that the word 'religion', referring to a sacred, private and personal aspect of life, rang no bells in African minds. The impression was that religion

communities seek the beneficence of God by the help of the elders and religious experts. If the family or community is united, and its members are at peace with each other it is easier for the elders to find God than when they are in a row.⁴⁹ Another Lugbara/Madi image for community and society⁵⁰ is that of a forest with both big and small trees supporting each other. Martin Nkemnkia states that:

For Africans, the whole brings about the unification of the parts. The whole is not a reality, which ignores the parts: it would be contradictory and equally impossible to think of a whole without having an idea of the whole to which they belong.⁵¹

People who live alone and whose ways of life are different, who do things differently from the way of the Lugbara/Madi are considered *julu* – inverted. This is an indication either of their *asi onzi* – bad heart – or of lack of socialisation into the Lugbara/Madi ways. They believe a bad heart can be turned into a good one and socialising the person can overcome ignorance of their way of life. The socialisation for identity formation and for *ofuzu 'baru* – ‘human becoming’ – of every member is through rituals, eating and working together.⁵² Members of the community are never more truly human, never more truly persons, than when they find their true being in communion with others. This leads us to the Lugbara/Madi concept of kinship, the sum total of all the relations in the community. The following syntactic analysis of *ori'ba*, *orindi* and *orijo* reinforces the common genesis of the Madi/Lugbara peoples.

was an activity indulged in at certain mystical times while the rest of life could be lived ‘normally’, which was something new to the African. On how the enlightenment reordered and affected Western thought see Leslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture*, 1986, and *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 1990. Paul Hiebert’s *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*, 1994, p. 56-7, is also useful.

⁴⁹ Eriam Mbaa Nguma, in interview 22 on 10th May 2000, expressed this view when I asked him about the implications of this story in Madi culture.

⁵⁰ Aylward Shorter, 1973, p. 197, thinks ‘community’ implies a greater degree of sharing in common than is suggested by the word ‘society’. Robinson’s analogy of society, where there is ‘no communion without community just as there is no body without the body parts’, shows how communities form society; see *On Being the Church in the World*, SCM: London, 1960, p. 70.

⁵¹ Martin Nkemnkia, *African Vitology*, 1999, p. 165. This resonates well with John Pobee’s understanding that community is neither created by numbers nor by proximity, but by the sense that one needs the other person to define oneself and the meaning of ones’ existence – see Jesse Mugambi, ed., 1997, p. 151.

⁵² The more distant the lineage or the settlement from the Lugbara, the more ‘inverted’ the Lugbara consider such people, and stories of how they do things and use magic and sorcery are used to emphasise the difference. But once such people become ‘known’ they are taken as *ori'ba* immediately.

.II.5.1. The community as *ori'ba* – kinship

Lugbara/Madi kinship relations are vastly extensive. Ruda describes the system as *nzu* – the gourd plant that spreads far and wide, producing gourds as it goes along. The kinship relation is called *ori'ba*. *Ori'ba* is a word made of two words: *ori* and *'ba*. *Ori* has three meanings: (1) God or ancestral spirit, (2) seed (with a slight tonal alteration), and (3) the compound verb for sitting or settling on land. *'Ba* is the word for human being. The word *ori'ba* therefore has three meanings that explain the entire Lugbara/Madi concept of community and society.

- The first meaning is from *Ori* as God or ancestral spirit, where kinsmen are *Ori ma 'ba* – people of God or people of the same ancestral spirit.
- The second meaning is from *ori* as seed, where kinsmen are *(a)ma ori ma 'ba* – the people of our/my seed.
- The third meaning is from the way people settle on the land, where *ori'ba* are *'ba ori'ba tualu* – people who have settled together.

To settle on the same land or place means being ritually connected or sharing life together in a common shrine. People who rub together influence each other in many ways. All the three meanings together form the basis of Lugbara/Madi community and morality. It is also the basis for the sanctity of all human life. Human life cannot be owned; it is always a gift from God to be nurtured by the community. Bujo brings this out most clearly when he writes:

Though the human person stands in the centre of African morals, the position of God is distinctly emphasised, since as creator he has to intervene in the moral order if the human person does not follow the laws set by him.⁵³

By definition therefore *ori'ba* – kinsmen – are 'people of God', or the descendants of the same ancestor or of the same human seed, and/or people who have settled on the same piece of land. This summarises what we have discussed above that life is from God and is passed on through human seed in procreation and nurtured through human relationships. The Lugbara/Madi concept of *ori'ba* explains, firstly, the capacity of Lugbara/Madi communities to accept individuals from other lineages as tenants. People from other lineage or tribes, once they settle in a given community, gradually change from *juru* or *ani'ba* (strangers or unknowns) into *ori'ba*. All people who are ritually connected to any community are recognised as kinsmen of the host

⁵³ Benezet Bujo, 1998, p. 25.

community. This means the Lugbara/Madi people are not only related by blood and by their way of life or religion, which is also the key to their identity, but also by association.

Secondly, *ori'ba* explains the fact that socialisation is not only humanisation, but also the process of building a godly society – *societus Dei*. Here, society is the sharing of *idri* – life – which Shorter defines as: ‘the direct and total confrontation of human identities in which something common to all and basic to humanity – life – is shared.’⁵⁴ And thirdly, the word *ori'ba* shows that socialisation is a conscious and willed relationship rather than an effortless process of blood relations where members relate to one another without reference to the whole and to God – the source of all life. From this point we went on to discuss *orindi* – for the human spirit/soul and for the Spirit of God.

.II.5.2. *Orindi* – the human spirit/soul

The elders agreed that God gives life but, as stated earlier, none could tell how he actually gives it. This fact became apparent when we analysed the word *orindi*, meaning human spirit/soul. The word further throws light on the Lugbara/Madi concept of kinship and community. *Orindi*, like *ori'ba* has two root words: *Ori* (God) and *indi* (present). The other meanings of *ori* as *seed* and *settlement*, as seen earlier, also apply beautifully. It shows that in every human being, not only is God-present, but also there is a human seed and a need to settle and share with others. If community or society is *ori'ba* – people of God, *societus Dei* – it follows that *orindi* – God is present in every individual who forms the community. So for the Lugbara/Madi, *idri* – life – is nothing without God. Human dignity and vitality are spiritual elements communicated by God.⁵⁵ Further, every human being is a human seed that should be protected and nurtured and even the most restless of souls can settle and share with others. This concept entails the potential of every human being.

Philosophically therefore, human beings have *orindi* – God present – in them and are socialised to become *ori'ba* – kinsmen – people of God. If God is present in

⁵⁴ Aylward Shorter, *African Culture and the Christian Church*, Chapman: London, 1973, p. 202, addition mine.

⁵⁵ J. Pobe, ‘Imago Dei’ in Mugambi, *The Church and the Future in Africa*, AACC: Nairobi, 1997, p. 152.

every human being, where 'is' is the philosophical 'is' of identity,⁵⁶ it is understood that every human being becomes a *presentification* or 'a making-present' of God. Death cannot destroy that which *is* in the human being. This means creation becomes the manifestation of divinity in the form of 'isness' – in the form of presence.⁵⁷ In other words creation makes God present. The ancestors are therefore not dead and lost; they are *orindi* – God-present and therefore ever-present channels to God.

The above discussion can be summed as follows. *Idri* – life – is from God and it is passed on through human seed (sexually) and through social contact. Because warmth is the physical evidence of life, rubbing and contact generates warmth where *life rubbing* is a key aspect of socialisation. In every human being the seed of life – God – is present and even the most restless and insignificant of people is capable of settling down to share with others. They only need to be ritually and socially rubbed. This analysis led us to discuss the concept of *orijo* – shrine or place of worship, or house of God.

.II.5.3. *Orijo* – House of God/shrine

The word *orijo*, like the words *ori'ba* and *orindi*, is two words joined: *ori* – *jo* (God – house). It literally means 'house of God' or shrine. Tonya, Mbaa and Ruda explain that *orijo* is the ritual space in which a constant ritual energy sustains and sanctifies human life.⁵⁸ When the elders are involved in a cultic activity at the shrine they are said to *ri orijo tia* – sit by the house of God. The elders sit at the entrance, not inside the shrine, because the divine fills it entirely. God cannot share the same space with mortals. Elders who are considered to be closer to God and to the ancestors have to die in order to share the same space, and to a certain extent the same status as *Ori* – God. But God, on the other hand, is so ever-present that he does not need a house. That is why Lugbara shrines are very plain and rudimentary. The shrine is only a

⁵⁶ When the form of 'is' used is for predication, as in 'Uganda is in Africa', reversing the sentence would be nonsensical. But to say 'Uganda is the Pearl of Africa' has the same meaning as 'The Pearl of Africa is Uganda' because the 'is' used is the 'is' of identity.

⁵⁷ Matthew Fox, *Creation Spirituality*, Harper Collins: New York, 1991, shows in his arguments about the sanctity of life and of creation that life is sacred because of aspects of God in human life.

⁵⁸ This was at the last funeral rite of Yekonia Alia in Vuu village on 23rd October 2001. The fact that God cannot share the same space with mortal beings can be seen in Solomon's dedication of the temple when the glory of God filled the temple so that the priests could not enter the temple 2Chro. 7: 1-3.

place of meeting and is often a bush some distance from the homestead or by the riverside, rather than a constructed space. The only thing resembling a construction is the placement of three flat stones on which the sacrificial blood is sprinkled, libations are poured and/or food is placed.

.II.6. The structure of Lugbara/Madi society

The basic *life-rubbing* structure of Lugbara/Madi society is *aku* – the family homestead. The home is not just for the nuclear family of parents and children, but for the extended family of relatives related by blood and association. Several families constitute *enyati* – the comensal ritual unit that eats meat and shares dowry and dances together. *Enyati* means ‘food set’ – the group of people that can sit around a single mound of food. All *enyati* in the lineage form the clan – *suru* – and the clans form the tribe – which has the same name, *suru*. Members of the same *aku*, *enyati* and *suru* are called *ori’ba*, either by virtue of their blood relations and/or by settlement and ritual engagement at the same *orijo* – shrine. These relations are like the gourd plant or the forest and form the vast extended relations the Lugbara/Madi are known for.

The term *ori’ba* for kinship therefore transcends blood relations and truly means ‘people of God’ because every one has *orindi* – God present – in them. *Orijo* – shrine is the ritual space in which all *ori’ba* meet to rub each other and to renew their ritual energy or ‘life force’. The community is incomplete without *orijo* – the shrine, or house of God. Lugbara/Madi families, clans and tribes are held together by their activities in both the *awiburu* (internal) and *awiamve* (external) *orijo*. Each home has an internal *orijo* that is visible under the house or granary, and clans and tribes have an external *orijo* on the outskirts.

.II.6.1. The concept of *ofu* – becoming

Lugbara/Madi religion or way of life does not evangelise. The elders spent some time arguing as to whether the socialisation of *life rubbing* is proselytism. Some elders felt it was; others disagreed, saying that it was to do with the interest of the person coming into the community rather than a matter of the community reaching out to the person. People were enculturated into the ways of Lugbara/Madi. This meant a foreigner or person from another lineage makes the effort to be socialised

into a member of the Lugbara/Madi society and thereby into a relative/kinsman. This change is expressed as *ofu/opu* – becoming. It literally means to suddenly become or to metamorphose into something one was not. This is how the Lugbara/Madi people manage the relationship between the living, the dead, the wild and God, which is crucial for their wellbeing.⁵⁹

They believe people can suddenly become what they are not, positively or negatively. A stranger or foreigner who settles among them, who agrees to share his life ritually with them *ofu ori'baru* – becomes a relative – who enjoys the full protection and benefit of the tribe as any insider related by blood.⁶⁰ Their origin tales, the lapse of witches into wickedness and the growth of children are all treated as *ofu* – metamorphosis or becoming. The concept informs the Lugbara/Madi expectations of the possible. It is therefore possible for a stranger to become *ori'ba* – a relative or kinsman. Such a person can positively or negatively affect the adopted community with cultural values from his origin. Good people may also suddenly *ofu 'ba onziru* – become bad people. Fardon illustrates the same concept from amongst the Chamba of West Africa.

People are constantly liable to slip out of the human frame by lapsing into animality, and eventually they must slip out of this frame the same way as they entered it: by joining the dead.⁶¹

The concept of change and transformation, for good or bad is therefore present in Lugbara/Madi communities and religion. It shows that human beings can change positively or negatively. But with the right ritual conditions the life force of the community can change the individuals therein for good.

.II.6.2. The effect of ritual celebrations on community

A good person, for the Lugbara/Madi, is one who is in communion with others, who continually enjoys the life and warmth of others and that of God and the ancestors. Every ritual ceremony is a sharing and celebration of the community's common life

⁵⁹ Richard Fardon, 1990, *Between God, the Dead and the Wild*, p. 42 deals with a similar concept amongst the Chamba of West Africa.

⁶⁰ The elders mentioned plenty of examples of such people to me. One in my own tribe of Okollo is the sub-clan of Okollo Ndu. The ancestor was called Azuru from Ndu, a Kebu clan. He was abandoned by Arab slavers and took refuge amongst the Okollo people who gave him land and arranged a marriage for him. He had three sons who produced children and are now a major *enyati* amongst the Okollo tribe.

⁶¹ Fardon, 1990, *Between God, the Dead and the Wild*, p. 42.

and a visible graphic display of the community's identity. A bad person does not share ritually with others. And society dissociates itself from such a person. If he is considered a threat to the community, some members of the community are silently mandated to eliminate such a person or to send him away. For in ritual celebrations, the beliefs, practices and values of the society are inculcated into the young and into the society in general.⁶² Such a person would influence the community in the wrong direction. David Kyeyune rightly points out that the African understanding of ritual is that it is 'the divine-human experience of life, which is lived daily for developing personal and collective relationship and friendship (harmony) with nature'.⁶³ Life is therefore accompanied by ritual, from conception to the life beyond the grave, to ensure it is rightly related to the whole community, God and the departed.

Juru (strangers) are not necessarily *ari'bo* (blood-men) or enemies. They are just people who do things *julu ru* – differently, or in inverted ways.⁶⁴ Because the Lugbara believe that in every human being God is present and that there is a human seed and the possibility of settling down to share, strangers are not disturbed without a cause. If a stranger expresses a desire to be ritually connected with a given community he is accepted and socialised in the ways of that community. In this way communities absorb people from other lineages. Blood is important, but community is more than just blood relations. This is the framework into which Christianity was introduced in West Nile in 1918.

⁶² This involves the progressive preparation of the young, through a series of stages in hunting, digging, dance, constructions of huts and other domestic chores. When a person does these successfully, it shows that the person can look after himself and others. In hunting, one has to kill three animals before he can eat wild meat. This is to teach self-control and perseverance. Preparation of seeds, planting and storage are vital in a home and a personal house shows maturity.

⁶³ See David Kyeyune's address to the Third Synod of Arua Catholic Diocese, *Third Synod Declaration*, 1999, p. 45.

⁶⁴ There were heated debates as to whether *juru* was a Lugbara corruption of the Bantu *julu*. The issue was not resolved even though many felt it might be a corruption by Lugbara who came back from Buganda.

Section B

.II.7. Community in the Christian era in West Nile

In this section community and critical consciousness questions were asked of the elders about the Church and its relationship to the community. How does the Church, in the light of the traditional set-up described above, fit into the Lugbara/Madi communities and how is it contributing to their human becoming? We also analysed how much of the past is meaningfully being reflected in the new community – the Church?

.II.8. The coming of Christianity to West Nile

It was in 1918 that Gardener and his wife were on their way to Adi in Belgium Congo to be missionaries there. This was in fulfilment of the African Inland Mission (AIM) goal to have a chain of mission stations from Mombasa on the East African coast to Lake Chad in Central Africa. One of them fell sick and they had to rest in Ovisoni in Vurra, eight miles to the southwest of Arua Town and a mile from the Congo border. As they waited the District Commissioner, Mr Alfred Weatherhead asked them to distribute relief food to the people of West Nile. There was a raging *liki* (famine) in the area. God opened their eyes to see the need for evangelising West Nile. They moved to Arua and were allocated Mvara two miles to the east of Arua town where Awudole the elder of the area had given land for them. Around this time the Comboni Fathers came down along the Nile from Khartoum to Moyo and later moved into Arua and were allocated Ediofe, two miles to the west of the town.

.II.8.1. The instruments of integration between Church and community

The Protestant elders cite three factors as crucial for the planting of the Church in West Nile: firstly, the demonstration of the power of Jesus to heal, protect and guide Christians, in the same way or better than the ancestral spirits; secondly, the vernacular Bibles, that came in 1967 (Lugbara), 1970 (Alur), 1980 (Kakwa), and 1995 (Kebu); and thirdly, the good leaders – philosophic sages – who saw something good in Christianity and helped the Lugbara/Madi to embrace it.⁶⁵ The vernacular

⁶⁵ Each community I interacted with knew who the first amongst them to embrace Christianity was and how such people influenced the spread of the faith in their community.

Bible, in particular, replaced the missionary as the ultimate authority and was treated as a sign of maturity for the church and the people. For as soon as the Bible in Lugbara arrived in West Nile the quest for a new diocese was made and two years later, 1969, the diocese was granted with Silvanus Wani as the first bishop.⁶⁶

For the Catholics, it was Vatican Council II and Pope Paul the Sixth's 1969 declaration in Nakivubo (Uganda) that Africans should be missionaries to themselves. They also cite prominent Catholic leaders who did a great deal to make the gospel appealing to African minds. Father Rosino Tonino, the Pastoral co-ordinator, Ms Sherry Meyers, the liturgical consultant, Mgr Frederick Drandua, the current bishop of Arua and Mgr Casto Adeti, the Vicar General, are mentioned time and again as persons who are helping to indigenise worship in the Lugbara/Madi Church. The following are some of the ways in which syncretism⁶⁷ of the Judeo/Greco/Roman type in the first century is taking place between the Lugbara/Madi concepts of community and the Anglo/Catholic Church traditions and the gospel. The church has become the place for people who live according to the story of Jesus of Nazareth.

.II.8.2. The Church as *Orijo*

Lugbara/Madi *aku* (homes/families), *enyati* (sub-clans) and *suru* (clans and tribes) are held together by the activities in both the internal and external *orijo* – shrines. No family, tribe or clan existed without *orijo* because the life and health of the community revolved around the ceremonies performed in both the internal and external shrines. It was not until Christ answered the existential questions of the Lugbara/Madi that they began to see the Church as *orijo* and life as nothing without the Church in its midst. Drati shows that when the missionaries tried to buy land for

⁶⁶ Jesse Mugambi draws parallels between the transition from missionary-led churches to African-led churches and that at the time of Moses and the time of Jesus. He thinks that when Moses gave the Law as the new standard for living, prophets began to use it to challenge the kings, priests and the people of Israel and Judah. In Jesus' time, the same was repeated because Jesus' followers saw that he taught with authority, not as the Pharisees and scribes. Jesus introduced a new standard that put the old Laws in a new light, thus eroding the credibility of the scribes. Even as, at the Protestant reformation, the authority of the scriptures replaced the authority of the Roman church, so also in the African reformation the scriptures came to replace missionary authority and affirm African human and cultural identity. See Mugambi, 1989, *The Biblical Basis for Evangelisation*, OUP: Nairobi, p. 83.

⁶⁷ Syncretism has been a dirty word in theology when it is made the mixing of basic Christian doctrines with 'pagan' ideas. But I challenge anyone to point to me when and where it has not been part and parcel of Christian evangelism and formation from one community to another.

building churches in the 1930s, they got none.⁶⁸ It was only when some Lugbara became Christians and the leaders proved Jesus as being more powerful than the capricious spirits that land was offered free for the construction of churches. The converts wanted their families, clans and tribes to have *orijo* for Christ in their communities, where the *adi* (story) of Jesus is told.⁶⁹

The terms *orijo* or *adrojo* (house of God) were, however, ignored for 'church' and were only used by Catholics to denote the Old Testament (OT) Jewish



Temple, with the Protestants using *hekalu* from Hebrew *Hekal* for the OT Temple. (The picture is of a church service in the open. It is possible that because the shrines were simple that many churches meet in the open). The Protestants adopted the Kiswahili *kanisa* for

'church', with the Catholics preferring the Latin *ekklesia*. These differences created a distorted view of Christianity in Uganda, where the division of the denominations was stressed above all that united them in the local languages. At this point the elders expressed anger at how Christianity was made too strange for reasons known to the missionaries only.

These denominational differences were perpetuated through catechesis and given form through pastoral practices. But these, according to Waliggo, were no longer the divisions of Europe but of the peoples of Uganda.⁷⁰ The remedy came with the joint translation of the scriptures, which led to a unification of terms and therefore a unified base for theological formation in Uganda. The implication has been a closer identification of the Church with the people and with the structures of the communities in which it is situated.

⁶⁸ See Drati, 1987, p. 110.

⁶⁹ Matia Anguandia, interviewed on 17th Feb 1999, and Teofilo Debo, interviewed on 22 March 2000, testified that until they destroyed some sacred shrines of their families and communities and proved Jesus was more powerful than the ancestral spirits that churches began to grow in their respective areas of Maracha and Ayivu.

⁷⁰ John Waliggo, in Shorter et al, *Towards African Christian Maturity*, Pauline: Kampala, 1987, p. 38.

The use of *orijo* or *adrojo*, in place of *kanisa* or *ekklesia* for church in liturgy is rapidly increasing in all denominations, beginning with the Catholics, Anglicans and Independent churches, in that order. Although the Independent churches are hesitant to call their churches *orijo* because of the negative connotations associated with ancestral spirits, it is clear that they treat the Church in the same way that *orijo* were treated in the past. While the traditional sacred groves were feared and not entered into without good reason, many community activities such as literacy classes, clubs and meetings of various kinds are held in churches or on church compounds. It may be because the church is often the only big enough place in the village where the community can meet, but even if there is such a place, people often prefer the church, indicating that it is because of its sacredness they prefer to meet in it.

At church services announcements about community activities are made, indicating the centrality of the Church in the community's life. If a church consists of more clans, the zones and areas will reflect the different identities, sometimes with slight disguises by assigning biblical or neutral names to the zones.⁷¹ In the Independent churches members come with bottles to fetch water from the altar, to drink for their health, healing and miracles. Even the sick can come into the church to wait for their miracle. The church is a place of refuge as *orijo* was for the community in the past.

.II.8.3. The Church as Ori'ba

From the above discussion the elders concluded that if the church building is *orijo* (house of God) then *ori'ba* (people of God) is the community of Christians who meet regularly to worship in it. Because there is more to *ori'ba* than just blood relations, the Church began to include people from different tribes and clans. Jesus is the 'hero' who perfectly represents how one can be a 'man of God' in order to form others into *ori'ba* – the people of God.⁷² This makes Jesus' story the story of the salvation of humanity because no ancestor perfectly represents humanity as Jesus of Nazareth did. He perfectly constructs the community into a *kin-dom* rather than a *kingdom* of God.

⁷¹ See appendix 1, 1.1 and 1.2 for the arrangements in Okollo and Mvara Cathedral.

⁷² See next chapter for a Lugbara assessment of Christ as leader, elder and cultic head of Lugbara cult.

It was in the revival meetings that a reconstruction of the Church as the community of God in Uganda began, with a realistic engagement between the African culture, the biblical traditions and the missionary culture. The *Balokole* (saved Revivalist movement) advocated for a real *ab'olunganda* (brotherhood or *kindom* of believers). Amos Kasibante points out how the vernacular began to be translated back into English with this inclusive Luganda word *ab'oluganda* for 'brothers and sisters', which became 'brethren'.⁷³ Joe Church the revivalist offered the concept of brethren as the solution to the problems of racism and tribalism in Africa.⁷⁴

In sum, even though the churches and the clans and tribes that worship in them have become synonymous, it does not mean, however, that all tribes have become Christian. But the terms *ori'ba*, *orijo* and *orindi* show God was already working amongst the Lugbara/Madi prior to the coming of the missionaries. The gospel found fertile ground in the Lugbara/Madi community structures and theology to make the church a symbol of Lugbara/Madi identity of being in Christ. The Church is using the traditional structures, which were used for communication, hospitality and service, for the same purposes. The Church has become a channel through which each Christian community offers the wider community to God, through *izita* (prayers), *feta* (offerings), *ongo* (music), *ongo tuza* (dance), *poi* (panegyrics), *cere* (praise) and whatever traditional practices by which they are identified. The communities are always proud to be who they are, to join with others as *ori'ba* – the people of God – the Church. The joy of meeting together in Christ is more pronounced because Jesus is seen to rehabilitate and reconstruct their cultural heritage, religious consciousness and identities into what they aspired to become as communities: truly *ori'ba*: humane, caring and godly.⁷⁵

⁷³ Amos Kasibante, 'Beyond Revival: A Proposal for Mission in the Church of Uganda into the Third Millennium', p. 363-368, in Wingate, Ward, Pemberton and Sitshebo, Eds. *Anglicanism*, Mowbray: London, 1998, p. 364.

⁷⁴ Joe Church, 1981, *The Quest for the Highest*, Paternoster: Exeter, p. 157.

⁷⁵ The *Balokole* have a song popularly sung at conventions and fellowship meetings: *Dridrio leta yoo. Andrusi Yesu eji amani ama lezuni* (For a long time there was no love among us. Today Jesus has united us.)

.II.8.4. The Church as the symbol of tribal progress

The argument for supporting the tribal proliferation of churches, where local communities become local churches, using their own language, cultural equipment and leaders, has been advanced by Paul Gifford. He observes that ‘in a country like Uganda where any sense of national identity is so underdeveloped, no such identity will develop until each constituent people feel equal’.⁷⁶ The Arua Catholic Diocesan Synod of 1999 recommended that the diocese, parishes, clans and village chapels should rediscover their real identities and true images in God through Christ.⁷⁷

While it may not be necessary or even possible to come to a time when every tribe in Uganda feels equal, there is however, a case for each tribe to be acknowledged as different and important to what is Ugandan. This association of the churches with the clans and tribes provides a new global framework for doing what traditionally was parochial. The Church has therefore become a globalizing agent for local experiences of God and for the construction of a new ‘glocalised’⁷⁸ community whose identity incorporates both the local and contemporary identities. Multiculturalism and pluralism – both features of globalization – are beginning to infect communities with a sensitivity that allows them to recognise a diversity of experiences and opinions. One of the fruits is the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) that unites the Anglican, Catholic and Orthodox denominations.⁷⁹ There are therefore two levels to what it is to be the Church in Uganda: first, the traditional understanding as *orijo* – house of God, the place of encounter with God for the *ori’ba* (people of God); second, the Church as a representation of progress and a sign of the advancement of the local into the global. The terms Anglican, Roman and Pentecostal are used as links to the more affluent parent churches in Europe and America.

⁷⁶ Paul Gifford, *African Christianity*, 1998, p. 138.

⁷⁷ See *Declaration, The Third Synod Summary Report*, 1999, p. 22: Arua Catholic Diocese.

⁷⁸ The term ‘glocalization’ was coined by R. Robertson. Subsequently it was used by Philip Wickeri et al., in *Plurality, Power and Mission: Inter-contextual Theological Explorations on the role of Religion in the New Millennium*, Council for World Mission: London, p. 17.

⁷⁹ The UJCC, which was formed in 1963 between the Anglican, Roman Catholic and The Orthodox Churches in Uganda, has struggled for a long time but the struggle is markedly bearing fruit in joint translations, joint Christian education syllabuses and joint celebrations of the Uganda Martyrs’ Day and days of prayer for AIDS and so forth. In the last decade a number of other Independent Churches have been drawn closer to joining, according to Grace Kaiso, the Secretary to the Council.

.II.9. The Church in Catholic understanding

Catholic Church buildings are more a reflection of Vatican power and wealth than the power of the local people. They are the most permanent structures in every village, well furnished and decorated by foreign artists, which is just beginning to change. No wonder that for many elders these are exotic *orijo* that are unrelated to the traditional *orijo* known to the people. Mark Boyer explains the Catholic theology of buildings that 'church buildings must reflect heavenly things'.⁸⁰ But for many this meant 'European things'. It also meant heaven must be as portrayed by Italian artists and architects. But the fact that these exotic *orijo* were filled with Lugbara people, who until the late 1960s were not allowed to do anything culturally relevant in it, made the Church an imposed shrine from elsewhere. It was, however, impressed upon Catholics that the Church was the symbol of progress. The issue in the 1970s, according to Casto Adeti, was therefore how the Church could represent in totality the hopes and aspirations of the people and develop their ideas as a legitimate part of all the ideas floating around in the world. This is what the Catholic Church is doing: making these exotic *orijo* relevant to local needs.⁸¹

.II.10. The Church in Anglican understanding

In the Anglican Church, the African Inland Mission (AIM) policy of keeping the Church very closely related to local structures was seen by local people as being intended to keep them underdeveloped. They felt that AIM had the resources of the Roman Catholics but was deliberately underdeveloping West Nile.⁸² Because the Church was conceived as *orijo*, on the one hand, and as a symbol of progress on the other, very poor communities, clans, tribes and groups have embarked on very

⁸⁰ Mark Boyer, *The Liturgical Environment*, Liturgical Press: Collegeville, Minnesota, 1990, p. 28.

⁸¹ Casto Adeti in personal Interview of 22 November 2001. For the Catholic theology on this see Anscar Chupungco, the post Vatican Liturgical brain in interpreting Catholic liturgy, 1992, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacraments, Religiosity and Catechesis*, Liturgical Press: Collegeville and 1997, *Handbook for Liturgical Studies 1: Introduction to Liturgy*, Pueblo: Collegeville.

⁸² In 1960, grass thatched buildings were torched in Arua Teachers College because the people saw the Catholics as being more committed to development than the AIM missionaries. Grindey and Wani reveal that Albert Vollor trained a number of builders under the supervision of Semi Zangu, the brother of Silvanus Wani, the first bishop of West Nile. All catechists were trained with a few simple rules about building and especially how to make simple trusses. AIM did not get into church construction. It only provided *fundi* (builders) for those preparing to construct a church. See Wani and Grindey, 1993, *The Beginning of the Gospel of Christ in West Nile, Uganda: A Brief outline 1918-1950*, Madi & West Nile, p. 10.

expensive church building projects, which have been beyond their economic means. Currently, Madi/West Nile diocese, for instance, is constructing a cathedral costing more than two billion shillings, the burden of which is on ordinary people who live on less than 1,000 shillings a day and a clergy who earn 35,000 shillings a month for half the year and nothing for the other half until Christmas when money becomes available!⁸³

.II.11. The Church in Independent Church understanding

For the Independent Churches the Church is a movement of people filled with the Spirit, engaged in spiritual warfare with Satan and the systems of this world. Its goal is to establish the kingdom of God through the preaching of the Word, with demonstrations of the power of the Spirit in prayer, resulting in healing and prosperity.⁸⁴ Adrian Hastings gives a plausible explanation of the seeming hostility between the Independent Churches and African traditions:

The intolerance of 'Spiritual Churches' is not an indication that they are themselves in some mysterious way foreign, but rather that the very depth of their Africanisation allows them no room to tolerate what they have replaced far more absolutely than the mission churches. In this case the absolute lordship of Christ replaces the role of ancestors. In a way they can be seen as an eruption of traditional religion that is integrally transmogrified by faith in Christ. The Independent churches in their spirituality and praxis take both the concerns and techniques of tradition. This includes the idea of community, the need for health here and now, the fear and awareness of sorcery, witchcraft and the proximity of spirits. All the materials of religious culture like melody, dance, appeal to visions, interpretation of dreams, prophecy, etc., are used but in a way as to make Christ Lord of them all. In other words the human situation in the Independent Churches is the same, but the solution is different.⁸⁵

There is therefore continuity in the religious tools but discontinuity in the message. For instance, the spirits and ancestors, although their existence is not denied, are rejected in favour of the legions of angels of God, the lordship of Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. In a deeper way therefore the Independent churches

⁸³ The Uganda shilling exchanges at 3,200 to the pound sterling, which means the building, costs nearly a million pounds sterling and an average pastor earns about 10 pounds only.

⁸⁴ A definition by Pastor Henry Candia and Pastor Isaac Asua of the Deliverance and Elim Churches, Arua, respectively.

⁸⁵ Adrian Hastings, 1976, *African Christianity*, Geoffrey Chapman: London, p. 54.

have managed ‘to integrate the Christian message into the indigenous culture’.⁸⁶ In other words, they have syncretised Christianity at a deeper level than the other denominations, to meet the needs of their embodied theology. This also explains their members’ mobility – that is, their tendency to move from church to church to seek fulfilment of their theological needs. If in one church something is lacking they seek it from another, be it healing, praise and worship, preaching, gifts of tongues, or power.

This search for fulfilment of embodied theology is found in all churches, as will be shown in subsequent chapters.

.II.12. A critique of community churches

A number of criticisms have been raised on the subject of community becoming church in Uganda. These include tribalism, nominalism and various structural problems that make the Church in Uganda and in Africa generally, weak as a participant in global affairs.

.II.12.1. Tribalism

The Roman Catholic Synod Fathers, meeting in Rome in 1994, pointed out that the attachment of the African Church to the tribe encourages people to look back to their tribal affiliations rather than to the broader relationship in Christ.⁸⁷ This tribalisation of the Church makes it difficult for Church leaders to serve in areas they do not come from.⁸⁸ And so the leadership struggles in church in Uganda are dirtier than in the secular world because of this. As a result the Catholics have tended to keep church structures straddling tribal lines and to use town names rather than the tribal names used by the Anglican Church to name their parishes and Sees.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Speech by Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda, at the Prayer Breakfast of 8th October 2000 in Sheraton Hotel Kampala on ‘Leadership for Constitutional Governance, Peace and Development’, as reported in *New Vision* of Tuesday 10th October 2000 by Elisabeth Kameo. President Museveni hailed the Prayer Breakfast for being interdenominational and non-sectarian.

⁸⁷ See *The Church in Africa*, 1995, No. 49, p. 37.

⁸⁸ The case of Halem Imana the Catholic Bishop of Kabale who was rejected by the Bakiga because he is of Rwandese origin from Mufumbira in southwestern Uganda in a grossly Mukiga diocese is one amongst many to note.

⁸⁹ Compare Arua Diocese and Madi West Nile Diocese and Nebbi Diocese where the names coincide with that of the Anglican diocese which only includes the Alur people while the Catholic diocese includes the Madi Okollo people also.

.II.12.2. Nominalism

A close association between church and tribe, according to Zac Niringiye, breeds nominalism.⁹⁰ The Lausanne Committee on World Evangelisation defines nominalism as ‘being a Christian by name only – one who carries the label Christian without distinctive characteristics to substantiate the description’.⁹¹ One sign of nominalism, according to Pastor Isaac Asua of Elim Church in Arua, is the ‘Sunday Christian’ who does not relate Christ to his or her total daily life.⁹² Nominalism, for Mafico, is a state in which tradition, habit and status become the reasons for church attendance rather than the lordship of Christ in one’s life and community.⁹³ Be this as it may, it is possible that there is no Christianity other than nominal Christianity, because nominality is always a comparison with another person’s experience of Christ. The fact that churches are celebrating local experiences and adopting known social structures is a positive thing.

.II.12.3. Structural problems

Thirdly, the result of considering the Church as *orijo* has led to the creation of huge Anglican Church structures and fragmentation of Independent Churches to cater for the different identities.⁹⁴ For the Catholics it has led to difficulties in accepting bishops and other leaders in areas they do not come from. For the Independent churches, it has led to a proliferation of splinter churches that are hard to run and develop as entities in themselves. But these problems reflect in more profound ways the structures, the economic and socio-cultural conditions of the communities. These criticisms notwithstanding, there is a positive effect of the Church on communities as a symbol and instrument of transformation, cultural change and identity affirmation

⁹⁰ See Zac Niringiye’s 1997 PhD thesis, ‘The church in the World: A Historical-Ecclesiological Study of the Church of Uganda with particular reference to Post-Independence Uganda, 1962-1992’, Edinburgh University.

⁹¹ Eddie Gibbs, in Heather Wraight, ed., 1999, *They call themselves Christians: International Lausanne consultation on Nominalism*, Dec. 1998, p. 10.

⁹² Isaac Asua Interviewed on 8th Nov 1998.

⁹³ Temba Mafico, ‘The OT and effective evangelism in Africa, pp. 400-409, *International Review of Mission*, vol. 75, no. 300, 1986, p. 400. Zac Niringiye thinks nominality is the direct result of equating Christianity with traditional religion where no true conversion experience is sought from traditional religion to belief in Christ.

⁹⁴ The existence of 32 Anglican dioceses in Uganda (soon rising to 34), compared to 12 for the Catholics, and of 108 parishes in Madi West Nile diocese compared to only 24 for Arua Catholic diocese, shows the Anglican predicament.

in God. It shows that a process of integration and helpful syncretism is taking place at every level. The need is for thorough syncretism of African traditions, contemporary traditions and biblical traditions.⁹⁵

.II.13. Summary

The thesis in this chapter is that Lugbara/Madi communities are becoming 'church' and that the process of inter-penetration⁹⁶ and syncretism between Lugbara/Madi traditional structures, received Christian structures and biblical values is well underway. In the process, Lugbara/Madi culture is a partner rather than a victim in the formation of the new Christian identities. The pre-Christian memory is being used to challenge received Christian identities and to reconstruct a Ugandan Christian identity.⁹⁷ The gospel values espoused are challenging, and transforming African traditions and institutions to become Christian in the wider community. The Lugbara/Madi traditional structures of *aku* (home), *enyati* (sub-clan) and *suru* (clan/tribe) are ritual units for building people into *ori'ba* – people of God. *Ori'ba* is not just people related by blood, but people who share *angu* (land) and *orijo* (shrine, or house of God).

Communities are formed through ritual socialisation and humanisation into *ori'ba* – people of God. Jesus represents superlatively what it means to be human. It is for this reason that the Lugbara/Madi accepted to build *orijo* – shrines – for him in their clans and tribes. Just as no community existed without *orijo*, each community saw itself as worthless without a church. They define their identity by the Christian community that has come to represent them, by the church building in their midst, where *Ori/Adrou* (God) is worshipped through Jesus Christ. This identification of the Church with the local community cuts across all denominations.

⁹⁵ Ronald Kassimir, in Spear & Kimambo, *East African Expressions of Christianity*, Currey: Oxford, 1999, p. 257, wants the degree of syncretism and assimilation in Ugandan Catholicism to be as thorough as in Latin America. For him, the received Catholic traditions and the local notions and practices of spirituality have not (yet) become interwoven to the point where a vigorous folk Catholicism can express, rather than contradict, the Catholic world-view.

⁹⁶ This word is used by Ren'e Padilla, in 'The contextualization of the Gospel', in *Mission Between the Times*, Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Michigan, p. 84, and features significantly in Arua Catholic Diocesan Synod documents of 1995 and 1999.

⁹⁷ Kwame Bediako, in his work *Jesus in Africa: The Christian Gospel in African History and Experience*, Regnum Africa: Yaounde, 2000, p. 57, asserts this point.

.III THE LEADERSHIP OF WORSHIP

This chapter explores the concept of community leadership in traditional Lugbara/Madi society and how it affects Church leadership. We asked the elders to evaluate their own roles in society.

Section A

.III.1. Leadership in Lugbara/Madi community

We began with community consciousness questions: ‘Who are the leaders of the Lugbara/Madi community and how are they made?’ and ‘What is the role of a leader in the Lugbara community?’ We also looked at whether Jesus qualifies to lead in Lugbara community and rituals, before analysing how this affects church leadership. The elders defined a leader by the capacity to decide through experience what ritual would suffice for particular occasions of the community and the ability to guide the community to derive maximum benefit from ritual activities. A leader is guided in such circumstances by the example of the ancestors. To lead, according to Tonya, is to influence others to fulfil certain goals and aspirations, through guidance, persuasion, example and reason; the capacity to lead is learned over time and is related to the status that society accords to the leader. That is why leaders are called ‘*ba ru kuza* (people of status), ‘*ba ‘wara* (elders) and *onduou* (the wise).⁹⁸

.III.2. Who is an elder?

Because experience is central to the attainment of status, it was felt an analysis of the Lugbara/Madi concept of maturation and growth was important for understanding the process of leadership development. The Lugbara and Madi terms for growth are *zo* and *co*, respectively, and the term for maturation is *mba* in both languages. *Zo/co* means to increase in length, size or height; but *mba* for maturation is about strength, toughness, hardness, firmness and/or dependability. An elderly person is *mbazoo* in Lugbara, a term that combines both concepts of growth in size and growth in strength. It literally means a ‘tough-grown-person’. *Mbazoo* or *mbazau* is the shortened form of *mbazaru*: grown, toughened or hardened.

⁹⁸ Tonya, interviewed on 10th September 2003

The equivalent Madi term, *oromva*, on the other hand, literally means an *adult-young*, indicating an elder who is still young enough to accomplish tasks. It implies that when aging renders a person stupid (senile) they are not suitable for leadership. *Ondoa* (wisdom), *ru kuza* (fame), *nita* (knowledge), *ondua* (wisdom), *e'yo vaza* (understanding) and *adriza onyiru/muke* (firmness of good character) are thus the main characteristics of an elder. Grey hair is the sign of continuity with the past. Malidoma succinctly expresses this connection between age and wisdom in Africa by saying: 'to know is to be old'.⁹⁹

A Lugbara/Madi elder is therefore a complete and accomplished person in *okpo* (strength), *zota/mbata* (growth) and *adriza* (character). According to Tonya the concept of maturation carries the connotation of perfection, as in the scripture "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect".¹⁰⁰ Here perfection is the attainment of ripeness, and fullness that consists in being patient, compassionate and all-embracing through interdependence.¹⁰¹ This contrasts sharply with Western individualism, which often results in impatience with the less fortunate in society. Although age and experience are considered basic for the attainment of status this does not, however, stop one from attaining status if one is competent in ritual matters at an early age. The Madi saying *Mva te gi oji ra eco afa nya 'ba 'wara be ra* (If a child washes his hands, he can eat with elders) shows that it is possible for anyone to attain the status of elder.

The Lugbara/Madi people think they are like a forest of big and small trees that support one another. Elders are the big trees while the young are the small trees. An elder is one who has at least a married biological son or daughter with children of his or her own. Having married offspring and grandchildren, however, is not an automatic guarantee of eldership because one has to be competent in lineage matters. Maturity and experience in life make one become an effective *life rubber*, that is, one who can lay down rules in form of laws and taboos that guide the society. This activity continues beyond the grave. For this reason elders are considered to be the

⁹⁹ Malidoma Patrice Som'e, 1996, *Ritual power, healing and community*, Gateway: Bath, p. 55.

¹⁰⁰ Matthew 5: 48.

¹⁰¹ Tonya, speaking in a personal interview on 19th September 2004. Matthew Fox, *Creation Spirituality*, 1991, p. 22, thinks compassion is about the actions that flow from humans as a result of their interdependence.

re-present-ation or the *present-ification* of the community's past. Living according to the patterns of the ancestors strengthens the tribe, clan, community and home, thus ensuring the wellbeing of its members.

Elders ritually *rub life* into the community and generate *idri* (warmth) that perpetuates their life force through worship at the *awiburu* (internal) and *awiamve* (external) *orijo* – shrines or houses of god. It is only when the ancestral links remain intact regardless, that worship becomes a truly *life rubbing* experience. Matia Anguandia thinks OT worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is similar to African worship of God through ancestors.¹⁰² The elders connect the community to God through the ancestors. Benezet Bujo thinks the leadership of elders is central in traditional worship when he says:

The sacredness of life in Africa is an understanding of life as participation in God and is a continuous worship mediated by one standing above the recipient in the hierarchy of being.¹⁰³

.III.3. The role of leaders in community formation

The elders affirmed that communities are formed by blood and by association as they exert mutual influence on each other. The social structures of *aku* (home), *enyati* (sub-clan), *suru* (clan and tribe)¹⁰⁴ are the ritual units led by elders. Apart from the home, which is led by a single elder, the rest of the institutions are led by groups of elders. The selected leaders of *aku*, *enyati* and *suru* collectively form the body of elders who *re-present*, or make present, the past to their communities. Each elder represents a specific area of competence in the community rituals. They not only make the past present; they also anticipate the future.

¹⁰² Anguandia, interviewed on 17th Feb 1999. Cf. Temba Mafico's idea that African religion and OT traditions are related in their worship, in 'The Old Testament and Effective Evangelism in Africa', *International Review of Mission*, vol. 75, no. 300, 1986, p. 403.

¹⁰³ Benezet Bujo, 1992, *African Theology in its Social Context*, Paulines: Nairobi, p. 19.

¹⁰⁴ The Lugbara/Madi use the same term *suru* for the clan and tribe.

.III.3.1. The conceptual framework for leadership

Society, according to Hoover, is not only about relationships between individuals and groups but also about power, authority and control.¹⁰⁵ The elders determine what constitutes deviance from the broad context of being integral to their culture. They use their power and authority to determine what can or cannot be done in the community. The individual has autonomy, freedom, and dignity; but he or she is also a member of society, and needs society and all it offers so as to realise his/her potential and identity in society. The elders all agreed that *presence* is used to influence and to effect change in society. This is because *presence* enhances the social process of *life rubbing* which is the chief goal of all rituals.

The sexual communication of life starts with physical maturity, which begins anywhere between 15 and 30+ years. The formal education system has considerably delayed the age of marriage for both men and women. Teeth removal,¹⁰⁶ tattooing and the construction of one's own house used to mark physical maturity. These days it is the getting of a job that determines the time of marriage. Although the social communication of life may occur between peers, friends and associates, it is believed that elders are especially endowed to *rub life* into the community by their *presence*. Elders are able to communicate life through their *ori* (seed), *e'yo* (word) and *adriza/obi* (habit/character). The word *adriza* has the connotation of *warming up* and of *being*, while *obi* is that which can be imitated. Bujo affirms that:

The function of leaders at every level of society is to transmit life, which embraces the whole of human existence, where life is the totality of the dimensions, which constitute the human as a person.¹⁰⁷

'*Ba 'wara* (elders), '*ba ru kuz*a (people of status) and *onduou* (the wise) have the privilege to decide which of the society's practices, institutions and values should continue or cease. The relationship between the individual and society is developed through the social structures of *aku*, *enyati* and *suru*. These not only reveal the Lugbara/Madi concepts of being human, but also provide the framework for

¹⁰⁵ For a detailed discussion on the interrelationship between power and identity in the development of human societies, see Kenneth Hoover, 1997, *The Power of Identity*, Chatham House Publishers.

¹⁰⁶ The Madi remove the four incisors on the lower jaw while the Lugbara remove all the incisors plus the two canines (six teeth in all) on the lower jaw.

¹⁰⁷ Bujo, 1992, p. 21.

becoming human. They help individuals realise their goals, hopes and potential according to those of the community.

The elders' decisions are, however, subject to ancestral approval made known through oracles. Lugbara/Madi leadership is basically exercised through both kin and association, and extends from the 'living dead' to the yet unborn. As such, the society is stratified in a way that family heads form the council of elders for the *enyati* (sub-clan), who's heads make the clan leadership, and in turn the tribal council of elders. These elders decide which aspects of life are worth *rubbing* into the society through rituals. The elders, musicians, poets, storytellers, wise men, sages, seers, prophets and everybody else – down to the least – help the society to internalise traditional values and norms. This means any new message that includes a call for change in the accepted order can only be taught and implemented with the acquiescence of the elders. Apart from the elders there is no human authority in Lugbara/Madi society to sanction or uphold the message or messengers of change.¹⁰⁸ As the Asian scholar Amartya Sen rightly points out: 'An adult and competent person has the ability to question what has been taught.'¹⁰⁹

Lugbara/Madi religion identifies various ways to support people and alleviate the problems of life. The caucus of elders comprises religious experts such as shrine attendants, musicians, diviners, priests, exorcists, herbalists, community spokespersons, go-betweens and rainmakers. They are called upon to discover the causes of suffering, sickness, drought, bad luck or disharmony, and to teach, train, treat, and protect the community. The elders work hard to restore the health, fruitfulness and harmony of the society so as to maintain its 'full life force'. Nkemnkia points out that:

For the African 'being' is an attribute of the 'vital force', of life itself, thus it is created. We consider being as the first entity in the order of creation. Generation, as a principle of individuation and determination, is derived from

¹⁰⁸ West Nile, unlike the kingdom areas of Uganda, is settled in families, clans and tribes, where the elders make the final decisions. But in the kingdoms such as Buganda, Busoga and Toro, although kings have councils to advise them, the final decision is always left to the king.

¹⁰⁹ Amartya Sen, 1998, *Reason before Identity*, Oxford University Press, p. 24. Compare this with Ochieng'-Odhiambo's definition of a philosophic sage as 'one who goes beyond folk sagacity and is rationally critical to recommend only those aspects that satisfy his rational scrutiny', 2003, p. 3.

the activity of 'Being'. Being is the expression of life. While life remains identical in everything, being evolves and is composed.¹¹⁰

These religious experts, according to Matia Anguandia and Yosam Ruda, not only discover the causes of disharmony and trouble, but also prescribe remedies for them.¹¹¹ It is the efficacy of the remedies they prescribe that constitutes their competence in those matters, and society sees this as the approval of God and the spirits on their leadership. Because of this, elders are rightly referred to as the "moral theologians of African religion".¹¹²

It is the role of leaders to restore the power of life through prayers, sacrifices and offerings. Other means include protective and curative medicines, shame and guilt,¹¹³ ordeals and punishments, therapeutic dances and reconciliatory rituals.¹¹⁴ Most elders can perform sacrifices and offerings, but others, such as protective and curative medicines and herbs require special expertise, which shows that cultic leadership is both gifting of God and an acquired or learned skill.

.III.4. The status of elders – *Atamva*

Atamva literally means 'a son of someone'. He is a person who has the capacity to generate ideas that perpetuate the good values of society and challenge those that are not so good. The status of a leader is also related to the *aku* (family and lineage) from which he hails and the *orijo* (shrine) that he attends to. Middleton points out:

¹¹⁰ The term 'life force' appears consistently throughout African and Africanist writings beginning with Placide Tempel's 'vital force'. It is the ontological force behind all *being* in African thought. A more thorough treatment of it is in Martin Nkemnkia's *African Vitology*, Nairobi, 1999, p. 118-119

¹¹¹ Anguandia, interviewed on 17th Feb 1999.

¹¹² Laurent Magesa, 1998, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life*, Pauline Publications: Nairobi, p. 175.

¹¹³ Shame has a religious and therapeutic use amongst the Lugbara/Madi and in Africa in general, which is different from its use in the West, particularly in Depth Psychology. It denotes the feeling of personal unworthiness experienced by a person in the wrong after being discovered and the wrong made public cf. Magesa, 1998, p. 49-50, 190. See also next chapter as we deal with shame as spirituality. Based on their work in East and Southern Africa, John Taylor and Bengt Syndkler have put forward arguments that Africans have no concept of guilt but do have a concept of shame; see *Primal Vision*, 1960.

¹¹⁴ Matia Anguandia thinks the elders have mystical powers from God and the ancestors that help them to guide the society in worship and in life. Interviewed on 17th Feb 1999.

Statuses are associated partly with the position of the owners' segment in the lineage, partly with the ownership of shrines, and partly by the ability to invoke the dead, which is demonstrated by oracles.¹¹⁵

Elders from large lineage segments of Lugbara society and those who preside at reputed shrines have statuses befitting those roles. Although anybody can aspire to invoke the spirits, it takes the approval of ancestral spirits, however, to exercise leadership in ritual matters at shrines. In other words, a clear sense of call is essential, and once the community recognises the spirits' approval through his competence, he becomes an elder with a befitting status in that specific area of the cult. Leadership roles include chairing clan meetings, marriage negotiations, funeral rites, settling border disputes, arbitration, sacrifices, medicine, etc.

Status may also be assigned by virtue of lineage. Persons from big and prosperous lineage are respected, even though all elders are respected on account of being the collective memory of the society. They, by their wisdom and by the rituals they perform, maintain the *life force* of the community. If a ritual does not work for the people, then the form must change and the elders are responsible for such changes. The elders and the ancestors are also referred to simply as *ini/yi* (them) or *'ba 'diyi* (the people) or *oroo/dede* (the elderly) – *wazeyi* in Swahili. In their council the elders refer to each other as *anzi* (little children or boys) often with a gentle, mocking smile. Yosam Ruda explains why:

Elders are children in comparison to the eternal God. They can as well play children amongst themselves because their age is nothing compared to God's. Because God and the ancestors live forever, they love children. They are drawn to the child in us – that part of us which trusts fully, cries easily, forgets and forgives easily and depends entirely on others. The child in the elders should never grow up so they can keep in vital contact with God, the ancestors and with all in their communities. At the shrine everybody is a child; that is why.¹¹⁶

This helps them to combat 'adultism' – the tendency to hoard, particularly for the benefit of the elders or for those in powers and with access to the decision-making apparatus of society. When adults preserve their space, Ruda thinks, the young do not prosper. The young only prosper when adults play with them, making communication between the generations a matter of mutuality and not of paternalism

¹¹⁵ Middleton, *Lugbara Religion*, 1960, p. 74.

¹¹⁶ Yosam Ruda, interviewed on: 23rd November 1999

and dependency. In this way the young appreciate the adults rather than resent them and get *rubbed* in the right way.¹¹⁷

Status also carries with it the aspect of *obi/adriza* – the reputation by which a person is known in life. This reputation is what is ‘remembered’ once one passes into ancestor-hood. Reputation forms part of the *adi* (story), which are recounted about individuals during ritual ceremonies. When a rumpus or controversy arises on an issue, the elders recall what ancestors of repute did in similar situations in the past, to arrive at a compromise. Because taboos, customs, norms and genealogies that reflect the community’s experience of the divine and of the world require time to imbibe, a long and regular time of participation is required to form and affirm the participants as elders and leaders of the community.

.III.5. The role of elders in cultural identity and authenticity

From the term *orindi* (god-present) the community’s experience of each other can become their experience of God. This experience forms the traditions and histories of the Lugbara/Madi people: that is, their embodied theology. God’s presence with the heroes of old and with the elders of today justifies their leadership. This means all leaders *re-present* God, much as when the whole community is together God is present.

The Lugbara/Madi response to a call is *ma indi* – I am present. It means nothing happens without presence. While participation requires presence, which is essential for the formation and affirmation of cultural identity, cultural authenticity is based on the remembered aspects of life, i.e., experience.¹¹⁸ A leader guides the community in ritual activities by being *present* at those rituals. Worship, the community’s response to the creator, cannot happen without the presence of God, the leader, and the participants. The practice of presence continues into the after-life.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Martin Nkemnkia talks of the *gnosiological* characteristics of African thinking, a coinage from the Greek term *gnosis*, see *African Vitology*, footnote 1, p. 175 where he explains it as ‘the means of asking questions regarding the specific nature of knowledge in comparison to experiences or activities of thought in all times, places and cultures’. If he uses *gnosiology* to prove that Africans are similar to the Greeks in their search for knowledge, he is mistaken but if the term is used to show African perception of knowledge and to give an African understanding of Greek perceptions, there is a case for an African *gnosiology*.

Although every human being has *orindi* (god-present) only persons who have had long and useful lives on earth are honoured for their good and upright lives as elders, and consequently as ancestors. An ancestor is one who has reached the highest state of existence, comparable to that of God. In that state they are given shrines so as to be the community's sacramental channels to God. For this reason ancestors, according to Anthony Ephirim-Donkor, are those who have 'achieved eternal existence after first achieving perfection as human elders and leaders'.¹¹⁹

The elders' position at *orijo tia* – at the entrance of the house of God – is very significant for two reasons. First, they are closer to the spirit world and to God, and secondly, they are the *link* between the living, the dead, and God. If the presence of elders is crucial for the worship of the community, in death they become *orindi* – spirit – and therefore ever-present to both the living and the dead. The Lugbara/Madi people believe ancestral spirits roam the land of the living. This mobility within the land is significant because they are believed to watch over the land – the grasslands and the streams – to satisfy the needs of the living. Their movement also reflects the mobility of the people whose lives and wellbeing is linked to the ecology of the land.¹²⁰

.III.6. Explaining the theory of *life rubbing*

Clifford Geertz explains the role of presence¹²¹ in discussing the 'speculative social phenomenology' of Schultz. He thinks human society can be aggregated into predecessors, contemporaries, consociates and successors. These patterns influence the individual identities, temporal order and behavioural styles of society. They are, for our purpose, the means and ways of *life rubbing*. According to Geertz, consociates are individuals who actually meet and encounter one another in the course of life and share, however intermittently, a community of time and of space. Consociates therefore are involved in each other's biographies. Contemporaries, on the other hand, are persons who share a community of time but not necessarily of space. They live in more or less the same period of history and may share attenuated social relationships with one another through their reputations, but may not meet.

¹¹⁹ Anthony Ephirim-Donkor, 1997, *African Spirituality*, AWP: Asmara, p. 140.

¹²⁰ This information is from a discussion with Yosam Ruda and Ibrahimu Tonya in 2003.

¹²¹ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Fontana Press: London, 1973, p. 365, cf. Schutz, 1962, *The Problem of Social Reality*, collected papers, 1, edited by Natanson: The Hague.

Contemporaries are linked, not necessarily by direct social interaction, but by generalised cultural assumptions about each other's typical modes of behaviour.

Lastly, predecessors and successors do not share a community of time or space, and so, by definition, cannot interact; as such, they form something of a single class over and against both consociates and contemporaries, who can and do share a community of time and space. Predecessors, having already lived, can however be known or, known about, and their accomplished acts can influence the lives of their successors. Some successors cannot be known, nor even known about – especially the unborn occupants of the future. It is because these categories are not pigeonholes into which individuals distribute themselves for classification, but imply a not so distinct relationship between people in a society, that *life rubbing* is possible. For example, as elders grow old, and fade towards ancestor-hood, the young gradually take over from them, thus impacting on the elders' lives. Predecessors can be said to be consociates of the very young, who are the predecessors of the as-yet-unborn successors. *Life rubbing* is possible because of the overlap and interpenetration between consociates, contemporaries, predecessors and successors.

Orijo – house of God – is the space where a constant ritual energy from God and from the ancestors flows. The elders' position and presence *orijo tia* – at the entrance of the house of God – makes them *sacramental contacts* for the community. This link continues beyond physical death; in fact, after death the elders are even more *present* because they become *orindi* (god-present). They are more *indi* (present) not in the sense of learning from the living, but of being ritually involved with the living. This means a good leader's *indikindi* (presence) is experienced, appreciated, and remembered beyond death, as he/she continues to be ritually involved with the successors. The goal of *life rubbing* is to communicate life and to socialise individuals so they become *ori'ba* – kinsmen – god-people – *societas Dei*. *Ori'ba*, as already shown in Chapter II, is the complex network of kinship that includes people who share a common ancestry, land and shrines.¹²²

¹²² The concept of *Oriba* as kin and persons sharing land is not limited to the Lugbara/Madi. Jomo Kenyatta, a Kikuyu from Kenya, states that 'first and foremost a person is several people's relative and several people's contemporary' See *Facing Mount Kenya*, New York: Vintage Books, 1965, p. 297.

.III.7. Leadership and identity formation

Benezet Bujo explains that:

In African conception, human beings do not become human by *cognito*: thinking, but by *relatio*: relationship and *cognatio*: kinship. Without communal relationships one can neither find his or her identity nor learn how to think. Self-awareness presupposes somebody opposite to you in human form.¹²³

Kenneth Hoover also states that: “all systems of power involve an accommodation with human identity needs”.¹²⁴ Amongst the Lugbara/Madi identity is formed through relationships that entail adherence to the customs, norms and moral traditions of the society, which are basically religious. Religion therefore is at the root of identity formation because it fixes a person’s identity and in it are the rights and powers used to attain status in the society. I showed above that the elders determine what should or should not be part of the values of society. The way of life determines what a person can become and in it are the means to build *obi/adriza* – the reputation, through which society assigns status. Only persons of status can be leaders and leaders are instruments used to recognise other leaders for the society. The sense of belonging, for that matter, is not only a marker of identity but also a legal entitlement to the rights and obligations of legitimate power and authority. In effect, one cannot be a leader of a community to which one does not belong.¹²⁵ Kenneth Hoover’s ideas on identity formation are useful in explaining the Lugbara/Madi concept of leadership formation. Leadership, according to Hoover, consists in a striving based on three elements: (1) *competence* in productive, social, and personal relations in the community, (2) the sense of *integrity* or *integral-ity* within their world of meaning, and (3) *mutuality* in the community.¹²⁶

¹²³ Benezet Bujo, 1998, *The ethical dimension of Community*, Pauline Publications Africa: Nairobi, p. 54. Nkemnkia, 1999, p. 177 develops the concept of perception, which includes the idea of seeing and experience where seeing is knowing and a person who has seen much is a person of experience. When the Lugbara say *mi nga ndrera* (you have seen much), they mean you have known and experienced a lot and therefore know a lot through your experiences.

¹²⁴ Kenneth Hoover, 1997, *The Power of Identity*, Chatham House Publishers: Chatham, p. 4.

¹²⁵ I discuss below how reluctant Ugandans are to have leaders from other tribes. The problem of language is crucial, but even when language is not a problem the reluctance persists.

¹²⁶ Kenneth Hoover, 1997, *The Power of Identity*, Chatham House Publishers: Chatham p. 19 & 26.

.III.7.1. The role of competence and integrity in identity formation

Among the Lugbara/Madi both *ecoma* (competence) and *ovuzu piri* (integrity) involve transactions between the self and the society. The term *ovuzu piri* means not only to be integrated but also to be a standard, rule, and therefore, canon for society. Both are achieved by personal effort and result from *obi/adriza* – reputation, which is used to assign *ru kuza* (status or fame). Fame, here, is a socially recognised and socially validated good name, because there is such a thing as *ru onzi* ('bad name'). Reputation can be both stature and skill.¹²⁷ The word *adriza* for character and reputation connotes ontology – *being*, presence, staying power, and/or stability, which is the ability to communicate being and/or to generate life and warmth. Status, therefore for the Lugbara/Madi, is reflected in the size of family, lineage, wealth and wisdom, which in turn are an indication of the inherent 'vital force' in the person and the community. These qualities inspire *inzita* and *ruta* – respect and awe in the community.

The Madi community confers and validates status through rituals where the symbols of leadership, such as the ironwood walking stick, stool, flywhisk, headgear, anklets, garments, title,¹²⁸ etc., are given. For example, Yosam Ruda points out that, the conferring of the Madi ceremonial garment of *okondo* (ostrich feather headgear), *oduu edi* (leopard skin), *amgba* (skin kilt), *dara* (cow tail flywhisk), *ulesu* (armbands) and *mgbiri* (jingles) (as in the picture opposite) is not a random act, but a profound ritual statement. It is a display of the tribe's identity and presence by its *ba ru kuza* (people of status) and '*ba wara* (elders).¹²⁹ These traditional artefacts are worn only by integrated and competent persons who are carefully vetted by their communities as the true



¹²⁷ For example, the description of Saul in 1 Samuel 9: 1ff, as 'handsome, standing head and shoulder above the people' and his exploits as an able man are his *adriza* that qualify him to lead Israel.

¹²⁸ The Madi/Lugbara do not have titles as such, but leaders become '*ba 'wara* (elders) or '*ba ru kuza* (famous persons), who are called 'son of', 'father of', 'mother of', 'daughter of', etc.

¹²⁹ Yosam Ruda of Okollo Adribu, Parabu village, Madi Okollo, Interviewed on 13th November 1999

representatives of the people.¹³⁰ For this reason, ceremonies are not only displays of identity but also instruments of identity formation.

The ceremony to confer a status consists of sharing food and drink, especially meat from the person's kraal and sorghum/maize beer, and of dancing, with music specifically composed for the occasion. The food provided by the candidate further integrates him into the community as a provider, communicator and generator of life and warmth. In this way community is kept warm and conserved as they share through rituals and ceremonies that include eating, dancing, sacrifices and offerings. The life and warmth in a community, according to Ruda, draws others to it in marriage, and provides refuge; it also draws prosperity, productivity, and health to the community, as it drives away sickness, poverty and calamity.¹³¹

.III.7.2. The role of mutuality in identity formation

Ovuzu tualu (mutuality), the third ingredient in identity formation, "is the attachments that make possible a sense of personal continuity independent of one's competence or ability to integrate one's experience within the larger pattern of meaning".¹³² Every ritual begins by an elder affirming the oneness of the community:

<i>Ama ba aluni</i>	We are one people
<i>Ama ndundu yo</i>	We are not divided
<i>Ama ma ngu ama ku</i>	We should not hate/discriminate against one another
<i>Ama ovu alu</i>	We should be one

This ritual statement has found its way into a Christian chorus, which is popular in all churches, called *Ama tualu Yesu ma alia* – We are one in Jesus, found in the Uganda Youth Praise hymnbook. For one to know one belongs and is accepted no matter what one's circumstances are is a critical factor in identity formation. This also underscores the dignity of human life irrespective of the status and achievements of the individual. *Mutuality* therefore helps to protect the members of the community irrespective of their individual status or capabilities.

¹³⁰ These artefacts are worn for dances, rituals and ceremonies, which involve the different lineages and or tribes. Because the wearers represent their lineage or tribe, only the best dancers or ritual experts are chosen to represent the various communities.

¹³¹ Yosam Ruda says a united family and clan makes other clans and tribes to want to marry there or from there, which leads to prosperity and good health. Interviewed on 25th Feb 2000.

¹³² Kenneth Hoover, 1997, p. 26

Leta/Ale (love), the power in mutuality, binds communities within the ritual units of *aku* (families), *enyati* (sub-clans) and *suru* (clans and tribes) that support the component members. “The value of a ritual community is in the fact that it creates power that protects and helps all within the community.”¹³³ Even outsiders who hibe into these ritual units are also protected. The most competent and integrated members in ritual units are given statuses to enable them to rub life into the units. Such leaders ensure the protection of all members, and a functioning community is one that is its own protection. Those not so gifted are accepted and protected, nevertheless, and encouraged in their *becoming* as per the traditions and norms of the society. In this way the individual is formed as he/she forms the society. Hoover summarises this point in this way:

Identity formation is a process located in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture, a process which establishes, in fact, the identity of those two identities. Identity grows and is nurtured or frustrated in the complex bonding of self and society.¹³⁴

“Whoever cannot practically show love to other persons,” states Malidoma, “*de facto* denies them the dignity and by the same token cannot be truly human.”¹³⁵ The sanctions and incentives in Lugbara/Madi social customs are aids to help individuals to live as human beings. This discussion reveals that being human and/or the concept of *becoming human* is a fulfilment of the drive for identity that reflects the morals of Lugbara/Madi societies.

To sum up this section, leadership is a socially mediated phenomenon that forms the identity of the leader and of the community. A person is biologically born into the society and is humanised by association with others as he/she imbibes the norms for the realisation of a life that the society considers worthwhile. As the person participates in the common ritual life of the community, his/her *ecoma* (competence) and *piri* (integral-ity/integrity) in their world of meaning are noted and rewarded with a status. The status of each individual in turn empowers the person to lead in the area of his/her competence. This establishes the person’s identity as much as it empowers the person to shape the identity of the society. Each leader’s *obi*

¹³³ Malidoma Patrice Som’e, 1996, p. 84.

¹³⁴ Hoover, 1997, p. 21.

¹³⁵ Patrice Som’e Malidoma, 1996, p. 69. See also John Pobe, in Jesse Mugambi, *The Church and the future in Africa*, AACCC: Nairobi, 1997, p. 150.

(reputation) is carried into ancestor-hood and helps the living community to remember him during rituals. Through mutuality society protects itself, especially through its leaders who communicate life and warmth into it and transform its ritual units to become *ori'ba* – people of God – *societas Deus*.

Section B

.III.8. Leadership in church in West Nile

In this section we shall look at how the above discussed Lugbara/Madi concepts of leadership have been affected by the coming of Christianity and how in turn they have affected the received leadership traditions in the churches in West Nile. We began by asking the elders to consider if Christ would be accepted as leader by the Lugbara/Madi community.

.III.9. Christ as Leader in Lugbara/Madi Religion

The concept of leadership in Lugbara/Madi society into which the gospel was preached led me to ask the following critical consciousness questions: Does Christ qualify to be leader and elder in Lugbara/Madi religion? Does he deserve to be 'remembered' for his deeds and statements and can he direct rituals by his *presence* in Lugbara/Madi communities today? These are crucial questions that determine whether the Lugbara/Madi can be Christians or not. The elders' reaction to these questions was very illuminating. Answering these questions helped the elders to analyse the response of Lugbara/Madi communities to the idea of Jesus Christ. From the Lugbara/Madi concepts of elders as ritual leaders and of *presence* as the mark of leadership for *life rubbing*, there are areas in which Christ merits worship in Lugbara/Madi religion.¹³⁶

.III.9.1. The deity of Jesus

The thing that preoccupied the minds of the ecumenical councils of the 4th–8th centuries was the deity of Jesus. The question I asked the elders was "if Jesus were not God, would it affect their belief in him?" To which the answer was an emphatic

¹³⁶ I discussed this with the four Madi elders Eriam Mbaa, Samson Drajoa, Yosam Ruda and Daniel Agba on 10th May 2000 and these are the views, which they thought are essentially crucial for the worship of Christ amongst the Madi.

no. The christological challenge for them is not an inquiry into Jesus' divinity, but into his humanity. That is why Catholics especially use Mary to implore him as his human mother. For them Jesus' divinity, though important, is not the most important thing for his worship amongst the Lugbara/Madi. God cannot be worshipped in abstraction. He can only be meaningfully worshipped through the heroes – people of status – the elders and ancestors who walked with God. The ancestors make the worship of God easy and meaningful because they *presentify* God and thereby make him 'worshipable'. The key quest for them is whether Christ fits the hero image of the Lugbara/Madi elder. For them, Jesus re-presented God so well by his life, teaching and power that he qualifies to have a shrine in every community for the worship of God through him.

.III.9.2. The competence of Jesus

I have shown above how the Lugbara/Madi accepted only people they judged to be competent and integral members of their community to lead them. It was not until Jesus related to the Lugbara/Madi as one of their own that they came to believe in Him. It was not missionary preaching about Jesus' divinity that turned the tide.¹³⁷ The elders believed God uses people, and chooses to use certain people more profoundly than others. In Jesus they saw God to be *present* and active in fulfilling His will. Jesus acted for the sake of humanity to draw humanity into doing the will of God. Jesus Christ qualifies to be a hero and a person of great status amongst the Lugbara/Madi. The popular chorus below shows this.

<i>Yesu namba alu</i>	Jesus number one
<i>Namba alu Yesu namba alu</i>	Number one Jesus number one
<i>Yesu namba alu</i>	Jesus number one
<i>Namba alu Yesu namba alu</i>	Number one Jesus number one

The elders appreciated Jesus' teaching and lifestyle. They saw in Christ the epitome of human becoming – what it means to be human. They recognised in Christ what society should make each individual be. Remembering and telling the story of Jesus means helping hearers to become Christlike and therefore 'truly human'. A community becomes Christian to the extent that it interprets human life situations according to the ideals of humanity lived by Christ, and the pastoral ministry exists

¹³⁷ Harvey Sindima in his book, *Drums of Redemption: An Introduction to African Christianity*, Praeger: London, 1994, p. 129, thinks that although the divinity of Christ is as important as his humanity, it is more his humanity which reveals God than his divinity.

to assist this process and make the divine dimension of human life more obvious. The elders saw in Jesus the best of themselves, fully grown, mature and well informed and competent in community affairs.

Christ's *tali* (miracles), his *a'diko* (parables), *imbata* (teaching) and *aziza* (promises and last words of how he should be remembered, including the last words to his mother) are acts or words the elders expected from a person of status. Jesus left his followers with clear 'points of remembrance' on how to proceed after his departure. The *orijo* (churches) for his worship amongst the Lugbara/Madi came about only when the people proved him to be *present* and effective in solving their existential problems. The proliferation of churches indicates the people's acceptance of him as leader of their lives and of their communities.¹³⁸

Jesus Christ's *obi/adriza* (reputation) as *imbapi* (teacher), *ojoo/rambile* (healer), *tali 'yepi* (wonder-worker) and *ba e'yo lipi onyiru* (fair judge) as documented in the gospels appeals to, and challenges, the Lugbara/Madi religious imagination for articulating faith in God through him. The gospels are the record of his *azi* (works) and *e'yo* (words) that also instruct how to live for him. His *adi* (story) does not fade. It is fresh for all times, unlike local ancestors whose memories fade with time. Shorter points out:

Probably the aspect of Christ's public ministry, which strikes the African religious imagination more than any other, is his role as an integral healer. He was the itinerant healer-exorcist that Africans instinctively recognise, healing the physical, emotional and mental ills...and the moral transgressions of his followers.¹³⁹

Drati raises the same point about the Lugbara of Maracha who expected Jesus to do miracles and heal as in the Bible. They were very disappointed with the missionaries who only talked of Jesus as someone who used to heal and do miracles but did not do a single miracle in their community through the missionaries.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ We showed in Chapter Three how every tribe in West Nile considered the church an essential part of its well-being and offered land free for church construction in its midst which arose from the traditional practice of every family, clan and tribe having a shrine. The church is identified with the clans, tribes and communities in the same way as the shrines were.

¹³⁹ Aylward Shorter, 1996, *Christianity and the African imagination*, Paulines: Nairobi, p. 127. Cf., Shorter, 1985, *Jesus and the Witchdoctor*, Chapman: London, p. 10-19.

¹⁴⁰ Drati, 1987, p. 128.

.III.9.3. The integrity of Jesus

In the words of elder Daniel Agba:

Yesu ni ama 'i, eri ama mvani, eri ama ori'ba Orini pele vi 'i. Eri 'ba ama imba caju ori'ba dru vi 'i. E'yo erio vi ece e'yo Orini ecole oole 'baru eri ti eri vi rua vi dria.

Literally translated:

Jesus is one of *us*, a true 'son of man', and a kinsman who is human-seed chosen by God and therefore the 'Son of God'. He is a relative who teaches all humans to become people of God. In him all human stories inhere as an example of what God can do in one so committed to doing God's will.¹⁴¹

Because of this they sing *ama tualu Yesu ma alia* (we are one in Jesus), which means Jesus is not only one of them, he also unites them. Jesus' ascension puts him, the relative, beside God to advocate, as a good relative should, for his kin here below. By his *adriza* (reputation) he draws all humans into fellowship and worship of God, which he demonstrated so well in life. Jesus' earthly worship continues in a heavenly ministry of intercession for all his kin below. As a good leader he does not only intercede but causes the community to participate in all that happens between him and God. Indeed the Son of God became *ori'ba* (relative) so that he might lift them up into a life of obedience and communion with God and with all who love God.

The elders agreed that the spirit of Jesus guides and leads humans to bear the burdens of this world in mission as he did in life. This is as the ancestors do. His presence with the Father is helpful in ritual terms. As a departed relative he is an ever-present channel, who is worthy to be implored in prayer. And as a good cultic leader, he put a prayer into the mouths of his relatives so they can pray 'Our Father who art in heaven'. Testimonies are his impact in human experiences. Mgr Casto Adeti sees Christ as the 'fully human' person who integrates into every human community and society. *Eri ecora e'yo drias* – He is fully competent in all aspects of human life.¹⁴² The critical consciousness question asked was: if Jesus is worthy to be worshipped amongst the Lugbara/Madi how does this affect the type of people who lead his worship?

¹⁴¹ Daniel Agba, interviewed on 10th May 2000

¹⁴² Casto Adeti, in a personal interview on 22nd November 2001.

.III.10. Leadership in Church

The Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches introduced Bishops, Priests, and Deacons as leaders of the Church. Although priesthood was familiar to the Lugbara/Madi people, the concepts of Bishop and Deacon were not. As Sila Adroa, the fourth ordained priest in West Nile pointed out; these titles were considered as the new statuses brought by the new religion into Lugbara society. This was because the missionaries determined who should become a clerk, teacher or priest by assessing the academic performance of the 'readers'.¹⁴³ In the light of the way the Lugbara/Madi raised their leaders, this missionary method presented a problematic, which partly explains why some mainline Church leaders have problems with their flocks. It arises from the relationship between the status, integrity and identity of the leader amongst the people. The problems arise in the selection and deployment of these leaders.

.III.10.1. Leadership in the Anglican Church

The first native Church leaders were very much respected because they not only distinguished themselves as competent leaders as per the missionaries; they were also people of status in the traditional sense. In Buganda chiefs and sons of chiefs were made catechists and later priests.¹⁴⁴ In West Nile 'Ba ru kuza (prominent and famous people) and/or their children were initially made church leaders, which made them leaders of status in their communities. That is why priest is *atalao* (the big father), which is what the priest is supposed to be. But as the criteria for leadership began to be distanced from African values and to become more of a Western academic qualification, the status of local leaders as per the local traditions began to drop.

The second process of making leaders for ministry from the 1930s and 40s was through the academic sieve. The brightest students went into secondary and higher education while the bright went into teacher training and other vocational institutions and those who could not make it academically but were of good character were made to come into the ministry. This meant teachers, doctors, clerks, and other professionals saw in the clergy, people who are unable to move further in their

¹⁴³ Sila Adroa interviewed on 15th September 1999.

¹⁴⁴ See John Taylor, 1958, *The Growth of the Church in Buganda*, SCM: London.

formal education. In this way the clergy not only lacked status in the traditional sense; they also lacked competence in the modern academic sense.¹⁴⁵

For practical reasons of language and how communities made their leaders the Anglican Church of Uganda has tended to send clergy to their own peoples¹⁴⁶ to help them be accepted to lead; i.e. to gain status, competence, and integral-ity as leaders. Because the Lugbara/Madi spiritual leader is also the provider of the needs of the community, in West Nile ordinands have to provide the meat for their ordination ceremony. This follows the tradition of conferring status on an elder where the candidate provides the food to feed the community. By this the community sees the ordinand as a provider for the community he/she is called to lead. But because young educated ordinands are often unable to provide such meals, it is difficult for the Christian folk to accept them as leaders. As a result people in West Nile prefer elderly retiring persons with some means as pastors, even without theological training. The 'tentmaker'¹⁴⁷ priest project arose in the 1970s out of this background. Even as recently as May 2005, the Bishop of Madi West Nile ordained 24 such people for leadership in the 21st Century Uganda!

.III.10.2. The role of the Catechist

The leader who has helped to reread and appreciate the gospel in local terms in both the Catholic and Anglican Churches is the Catechist or Church Teacher. The Anglicans developed a three-year training programme for them called Letters 1, 2 & 3 where the first Letter produced *Olu'ba* (preachers/storytellers). The Catholics preferred initially to call them Katekista (Catechists). Letter 2 and 3 courses produced *Ambo* ('big person'). While an *Olupi* looked after a single church or chapel, the *Ambo* looked after an area of more than two churches. The title Catechist

¹⁴⁵ Dr Mushambi, a lecturer in Makerere University and in the government Cadre school at Kyankwanzi, in a public lecture at former Bishop Tucker Theological College (BTTC) in 1992, now Uganda Christian University (UCU), said when he sees the clergy, he sees a bunch of fools.

¹⁴⁶ Multiplication of church structures (dioceses, parishes and churches) is more rapid than Mukono intake could satisfy. The entry into the diocesan colleges was under the control of the dioceses and the entry point was below (Ordinary level certificate) and courses were often in vernacular.

¹⁴⁷ The idea of 'Tent Making' is from Paul who earned his living with tent making as he preached. The teachers ordained got salaries from the Ministry of Education and served the Church at weekends. Many of them later trained to become full-time ministers on retirement from teaching. For details of this ministry see James Francis and Leslie Francis, eds., 1998, *Tent Making: Perspectives on Self-supporting Ministry*, Fowler Write Books.

in the West was for a person who taught the Christian faith with no administrative or pastoral roles. But the Church Teachers of Uganda have both pastoral and administrative roles in church all year round. Anglican and Catholic priests are simply itinerary sacramental visitors to the churches led by the Catechists.

The role of the Catechist comes next to the leaders of the Revival movement who brought the gospel to the indigenous roots of Africa and influenced lay participation in worship. The Africanisation of leadership in the Church of Uganda began in the 1950s when missionaries moved out of parishes into theological training, vocational ministry and administration. This opened ways for Africans to fill their positions and to begin to experiment with what was being done by lay people in fellowships, youth and women's meetings where educated lay men led with better effect. The catechist forms the most integrated leadership of the Church in Uganda. He is the face and identity of the local grassroots Church. He is perhaps the chief source for the rereading, appropriation, and appreciation of the gospel in African terms.

.III.10.3. Leadership in the Catholic Church

The Catholics were slightly different because they selected the best Catholic students for training at an early age. But they separated these students from the community, only to introduce them back as priests sixteen or more years later. This made Catholic priests strange because the traditional concept of status, which is reflected in the size of family, wisdom, and competence in ritual matters, was ignored. This made the young, articulate, and celibate Catholic priests who spoke vernacular with a foreign accent *julu* ('inverted persons'). But the mystery of their training and their socio-economic standing supported by the Vatican, celibacy notwithstanding, continues to attract more young people to train for the priesthood from West Nile than in any part of Uganda.¹⁴⁸ Uzukwu suggests a re-education of Roman Catholic priests to rid them and the African church of the dependence on the West. He wants seminarians who are fully in touch with the social, political and economic realities of the African context. He says "hesitant efforts are being made to restructure seminary

¹⁴⁸ Mgr Casto Adeti, personal interview of 24th Feb 1999, see Appendix 6 for the content of the interview. The researcher confirmed this during the GMEC visit in November 2004. West Nile had the greatest number of seminarians in Gaba major seminary, Kampala.

formation or to emphasize greater integration with the milieu and expose candidates to greater appreciation of self-reliance”.¹⁴⁹

.III.10.4. The Independent Church Leadership

Instead of the three-order leadership of Bishop, Priest and Deacon found in the Pastoral letters of Paul to Timothy and Titus, the Independent Churches preferred the five-tier model in the Epistles of Paul: Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 and especially Ephesians 4: 11-12. Typical of Independent Church philosophy and theology, the gifts of the Holy Spirit for ministry take precedence. “The Spirit gave gifts to some as Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers and Evangelists” is taken as the key reference for ordering the Church.¹⁵⁰ Some of the Independent Churches have begun to use the title Bishop, possibly because of the status the title carries in the wider Ugandan, African and global society. Their leaders are very much connected to the churches because in most cases the congregations were built around the leader and around the leader’s particular gift and ministry. The Independent Churches are generally a town phenomenon and struggle to build numbers in the rural areas.

.III.10.5. Mutuality in Lugbara/Madi churches

In mutuality – *Koinonia* the church stands in solidarity with those in whom it finds its vocation, and alongside those in other places who share its calling. Mutuality is “the sharing, experiencing and co-operating through which a common bond is attained with Christ and with other believers, the common condition of Christians which all are called to share”.¹⁵¹ The Catholics use the word *conviviality* for it. The practice of mutuality/conviviality in church is a sign of the church’s faithfulness to Christ’s leadership and a proof of the church leadership’s submission to the lordship of Christ. A crucial way in which mutuality is expressed is through worship and the sacraments; services where humans are gifted and empowered to perform concrete,

¹⁴⁹ Elochukwu Uzukwu, 1996, *A listening Church*, p. 98-9.

¹⁵⁰ Henry Candia of Deliverance Church, Arua, interviewed on 10th November 2003.

¹⁵¹ Andrew Davey, 2001, p. 104

historicized acts that proclaim God's new order in Christ.¹⁵² Uzukwu underlines African mutuality in church as follows:

The modern Western experience of individualism, which sometimes sees the society as a threat to the interests of the individual and which may define the society as a collection of individuals, is alien to early (African) traditions. Instead of the community swallowing up the individual, the gifts of individuals are brought together to create humane community living that satisfies the aspirations of each and all.¹⁵³

The signs of mutuality are seen in the All Africa Council of Churches (AACC), the Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC), the joint syllabus for teaching of Christian Religious Education and joint translations of the Bible. The Synod of Bishops for Africa recommended a new metaphor for the interpretation of the mystery and ministry of the Christian Church on earth. The new metaphor is the "Church as a Family" They said: "we are the family of God: this is the Good News! The same blood flows in our veins and it is the blood of Jesus Christ".¹⁵⁴ This shows that a new African ecclesiology of the church as a family is emerging based on the African communal living that each community and each person can enjoy an integral, wholesome and holy life through the recognition of the indwelling Spirit in both the individual and the community. Where, instead of the community or the leader swallowing up the individual, the gifts of the individuals are brought together to create a humane community that lives to satisfy the aspirations and identity of each and all.

.III.11. Summary

In summary, leadership is very central to the formation and identity of the community both biologically and socially. The Lugbara/Madi concepts of leadership and community are emerging in the leadership of the church. Jesus qualifies to be an elder in the Lugbara/ Madi community that is why they are willing to create shrines (churches) for him in every community, clan and tribe. What held or divided the communities is also holding and dividing the Churches today. This shows that the old is meaningfully being integrated into the new order of the church.

¹⁵² Ibid. p. 105

¹⁵³ Elochukwu Uzukwu, 1996, *Alistening Church*, p. 106

¹⁵⁴ Cited in Uzukwu, 1996, p. 47 but originally in *Synodus Episcoporum, Coetus Specialis pro Africa, Nuntus*, Vatican City, 1994, no. 25.

.IV SACRIFICES, OFFERINGS AND TIME IN LUGBARA/MADI WORSHIP

This chapter looks at sacrifices, offerings and gifts and the organisation of time and space in Lugbara/Madi religion with a view to see how these are affected and have affected the sacramental and ritual activities and the management of time and space of the church.

Section A

This was the most controversial part of the research because it was the part of African religion that was attacked and discouraged by the received Christian traditions. Sacrifices in particular were attacked and ridiculed and anyone found participating in any traditional sacrificial activity was immediately ostracised from the Christian community. It was therefore difficult to get the elders to discuss it with much confidence. To help get into the task we had to make a detour of studying the sacrificial system of Israel. We looked at the sacrificial rules and laws in the book of Leviticus, focusing on the types, forms, conditions and occasions for sacrificial activity in Israel. This helped the elders to build bridges between the biblical traditions and their own. When we asked the community consciousness questions of what sacrifices are and how and when they were offered and by whom in Lugbara/Madi community they were ready to engage with the issues. This then led us to ask the critical consciousness question of why the sacrifices of Israel are considered 'holier' than those offered by Lugbara ancestors.

.IV.1. The nature of Lugbara/Madi religion

In Lugbara/Madi religion, *ori owiza* (sacrifices/dedications to God/spirits), *andri ndriza* (oracles), *ori ti ziza* (divination or inquiry from God/spirits) and *izita* (prayers) form the major activities that constitute worship. Of these *andri ndriza* (oracles) and *ori ti ziza* (divinations) are consultative and diagnostic, in that they are used for discovering the cause of sickness or of problems in life and the identity of the responsible agent. But *ori owiza* (sacrifice) is always eucharistic. It is made, or promised, after the problem has been righted or as part of the remedy to a problem. All ritual activities and ceremonies of the community always conclude with the elders' *e'yo nzeza* (discussions). The expression *e'yo nzeza* means 'to pull out word

or to bring forth word' to bear on issues at hand. *E'yo* (word), as will be shown, is central to Lugbara/Madi understanding of being in the world.¹⁵⁵

The sequence of *andri ndriza* (oracles), *ori ti ziza* (divination), *ori owiza* (oblation or sacrifice) and *e'yo nzeza* (discussion) seems consistently to solve most Lugbara/Madi existential problems. The process not only provides answers to their problems of life it also provides sanctions against anti-social behaviour. The elders' *e'yo nzeza* (discussions) during and after rituals include *adi nzeza* (genealogies), *o'duko* (myths and heroic stories of the community), *ayi nyaza* (ritual statements and formulae) and *imbata* (didactic texts of proverbs, riddles and wise sayings). These constitute the major Lugbara/Madi teaching/learning methods. See Chapter V.

Magesa distinguishes between sacrifice and offering, where sacrifices are usually made of items of value and the ritual is bloody, whereas offerings are symbolic, and the ritual is usually bloodless. But in both cases the item is removed from human possession or use and transferred to the power to which it is offered or sacrificed.¹⁵⁶ Sacrifices and offerings are always a form of bartering or exchange: "God we give you this ox, ram, cock, money and/or food; give us life, health, prosperity, rain, crops, animals and blessings in your store."¹⁵⁷ Sacrifices and offerings gain value with what the items represent; the person(s) as the sacrificial victim(s) or as the symbol of self-offering and their efficacy lies in their ability to restore wholeness, unity and balance in human relations and community. That is why *ori owiza* has to be performed publicly, which also reveals the social dimension of worship for support, care and counselling.¹⁵⁸

.IV.1.1. *Ori owiza* – sacrifices

It is by *ori owiza* (sacrifices) that the full significance of the relationship between God, the living and the living dead, focused in the shrine, can be maintained amongst the Lugbara/Madi. Each sacrificial activity is unique in itself and a good elder

¹⁵⁵ See Chapter VI on Lugbara/Madi teaching-learning methods.

¹⁵⁶ Magesa, p. 182, and also Anthony Barret, 1998, *Sacrifice and Prophecy in Turkana cosmology*, Paulines Publications: Nairobi.

¹⁵⁷ Amongst the Turkana, Barret thinks their exchange of animals in bride wealth and blood wealth is so essential to their social life that it is taken into their relationship with God, *Akuj*, where sacrifice is considered a similar exchange. Barret, 1998, p. 25.

¹⁵⁸ See Tibeessigwa, 'Worship in the Anglican Church of Uganda: A critical study', D. Miss. Asian Centre for Theol. Studies & Mission, Seoul, Korea, 1996, p. 187.

determines how the relations between the clan and the ancestor to whom the shrine is dedicated can influence the way the community is ritually involved in worship at the shrine. For the Lugbara/Madi ritual is only meaningful when it is 'performed' according to the directives received from God or the spirits through *ori ti ziza* (divination). The role of the elder is to discern what agent is involved and what the incident requires. The discernment involves the use of dreams and visions in conjunction with oracular means.

Sacrifice involves the shedding of blood, or a killing or destruction by fire or by abandonment, where the emphasis is on separation by some form of destruction. Sacrifice as a holocaust or burnt offering however does not exist amongst the Lugbara/Madi people according to the elders, even though much of the sacrificial meat is consumed roasted. The blood forms the most important part of the sacrificial victim, some of which blood is sprinkled on the shrine of three stones and some of which is sprinkled on the person who is sacrificing. The meat is eaten as prayers are said for the person, issue or community. An engagement of the elders on the significance of the three stones generated the following ideas:

1. the three cooking stones from which the home is nourished
2. the three pillars of God, ancestors and the community that support each other
3. an alludement to the Trinity yet to be received and known¹⁵⁹

.IV.1.2. The role of *andrife* – oracles – in sacrifices

Two Madi elders offered to explain and demonstrate how *andrife* (oracles) are performed provided I did not disclose their identities.¹⁶⁰ *Acife* (the rubbing stick oracle), *onda* (the boiling medicine oracle), *buro* (the chicken oracle), *gbagba* (the rat oracle) and *e'ya* (the cracking or poison pod oracle) are the chief means used to determine the source of trouble and the remedial action required. *Ondrukundru o'baza* (the insect oracle) is a lesser oracle that even children perform to determine

¹⁵⁹ It was Canon Tonya who suggested the last

¹⁶⁰ I am indebted to two elders from Anyiribu, in Madi Okollo County, for this information. They did not want to be identified for fear of being ostracised by the Church.

when or whether their mother or father would return from a journey.¹⁶¹ Every elder or lineage head is expected to perform the *acife* (rubbing stick oracle) or else he is unable to direct the cultic and ritual activities at the shrine he attends to.

If the case is beyond what a local elder can handle, the community employs the help of other religious experts such as diviners, medicine men and spirit mediums from other communities to help establish the source of trouble and the remedy required. The remedy always involved an aspect of the community; how much depended on the magnitude of the case. Serious cases always involved the whole community. It is because wholeness, which results from such rituals, has personal and communal, vertical and horizontal implications. In this way the individual, the family and the community, both living and departed, are ritually held together.

.IV.1.3. *Aku ale edeza* – cleansing the Homestead¹⁶²

The commonest sacrificial activity amongst the Lugbara/Madi is for cleansing the homestead. The home is such an important place in the *human becoming* process that life in it has to be carefully guarded. People who have gone through difficult times of sickness, bereavement, adversity and suffering ask for special prayers to be organised in their homes. The leader of the home arranges with the elders who invite the community to assemble in the home to eat and pray. The client supplies the food. The prayers for *aku ale edezu* are addressed to the ancestors as benefactors of the home and people very close to God. They are asked to chase away death, calamity and evil. *Omoo* (white grass or *veronia smithiana*) is spread on the floor as a symbol of cleansing and purity, for the members to sit on as they eat the sacrificial meat and drink together.

.IV.1.4. Personalised rituals

Some people, such as hunters and fishermen, establish some routine of sacrificial activities, which become quite 'personalised' and which they perform alone. Such people are said to have served some spirits so well that a mutual relationship is

¹⁶¹ This information tallies well with the five oracular methods listed in Middleton, 1960, p. 80. The later involves putting insects to task; say if the insect crosses this line Dad will bring home game meat.

¹⁶² See Solomon Adebo, 1988, 'Spirit beliefs among the Lugbara with particular reference to the Diocese of Madi/West Nile', research for Dip Theo. Makerere University, p. x.

established between them. I visited a number of 'personalised' shrines for such 'personalised' spirits. Two shrines were made of a grove of special lilies (*ojo*); one had plain green leaves, the other, had spotted leaves. The spotted leaf lily is called *a'bau ojo* (pigeon lily). Three other shrines were groves of bushes, and one had wild sisal and *aloe vera* growing underneath. It should be made clear that *ojo* (lilies), as well as roots and herbs, are central to the Lugbara/Madi concept of medicine, healing and witchcraft. A medicine man is called *ojoo* (the person who knows many types of *ojo*- lilies) for that reason.

Each of the owners has his own ritual way of approaching the powers that give him success in hunting or fishing. One man lays his bow in the grove very early in the morning before anyone is up. Care is taken to avoid meeting women on the way to and from the grove. Another lays his bow there overnight and picks it up as he heads for the bush. After picking up the bow and arrows, he does not come home or look towards home. The fisherman eats a leaf from the *ojo* (lily) on his way to the river. After a successful errand all of them return to offer libations at the grove. One thing is that each of these people is already quite successful. The ritual at the shrine is to guarantee continued good fortune and success. Similar personalised contacts with spiritual powers are seen amongst the Igbo of Nigeria in the form of 'spirits of destiny', called *chi*.¹⁶³

.IV.2. Sacrifices as social events

Each *aku* (home) and *enyati* (sub-clan) may have a single internal shrine at which they sacrifice, which activity is called *owiburu* (sacrifice of the home). *Owiburu* always involved prayers and libations through the ancestors. The second type of sacrifice is where the whole tribe is involved in the external shrine in a ritual called *owiamve* (external sacrifice), which may not involve ghosts. *Owiamve* is basically a ritual of purification for occurrences such as suicide and the cleansing of sickness due to *onota* (grumbling). Sicknesses brought about by *onota* (grumbling) are referred to as '*ba ti* (sickness brought by the 'mouth of man'). If one does something wrong, for example, causes war or the death of another, the community grumbles.

¹⁶³ Chinua Achebe mentions the *Chi* in his novel *Things Fall Apart*, and Magesa also discusses it in *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life*, Pauline Publications: Nairobi, 1997, pp. 187-8.

Such grumbling causes the culprit to become restless and waste away until the victim sacrifices, for the community to *wi* (forgive) him.

The ceremony of *ali ti lizu* – the rite of ‘killing the bull of fornication’ – is a ceremony done when a girl gets pregnant outside marriage. If this is not done there is no success in hunting or production of crops. Other sacrificial activities done in the external shrine include *angu mile edezu* – the rite of striking the boundary between feuding neighbours. All *owiamve* are termed *angu edeza* – cleansing the territory. They are more political and judicial than religious. They are to do with feuds, marriage relations and segmentation of the tribes. In fact, before the ceremonies proceed, and before any *lita* (cutting) of the animal is done, compensations and restitution are made. All *edeta* (cleansing) involves blood.

Sacrifices are performed on certain days considered sacred or on appointed days. At such times gifts and pledges are also made and fulfilled as an expression of love to God and to the community. This further cements their relations with one another and with God. As a social event worship is always ‘uttered’ or voiced rather than ‘meditative’ or in silence. A spokesperson is chosen to comment in the hearing of all on all the activities and decisions taken. All actions are expressed in words, songs and bodily movements, for all involved to know and see exactly what is being done and how it is done. This helps all participants, particularly the young, to learn and thus plants these activities in their memory.

.IV.3. The basis for sacrifices and offerings

Owita (sacrifices) and *feta* (offerings) are *awa'difo feza* (thanksgiving or Eucharistic rituals for blessings or favours) bestowed on the people or community. Such occurrences as good harvest, recovery from illness, thanksgiving for a successful major community activity like a funeral rite or a successful hunting expedition, demand sacrifices and offerings. In the later case, certain parts of the wild animals brought home are offered to God and to the ancestral spirits as bows and arrows are laid in the internal shrine. In such ceremonies there is a strong sense of *awania - eucharistia* (thankfulness) amongst the people. It is sparked off by the sense of *rua*

ole – eucrasia (the state of wellbeing)¹⁶⁴ and *ayiko – eudaemonia* (the sense of ‘good spirit’, happiness or joy).

Good health is the effect of a good spirit and happiness in a person. This constitutes wellbeing for the Lugbara/Madi. John Pobee says “a person feels human to the extent that s/he has a sense of well being, contentment both within oneself and in harmony with the world outside oneself”.¹⁶⁵ Every good thing in life is worth celebrating because celebration makes visible the internal, often hidden condition of a person or community (i.e., healing, fulfilment, deliverance, blessedness, etc.), through a ceremony.¹⁶⁶ The ‘utteredness’ and ‘actedness’ of worship comes out clearly in celebration, which brings to the open the inner condition for which the sacrificial activity is performed. In sacrificial activity the health and unity of the community is restored and their ‘memory pool’ is replenished through worship.

Offerings and gifts on the other hand are not, as a rule, directly destroyed. The items may simply be dedicated to God or the recipient spirit and may remain in the household or village, depending on the nature of the offering. In case an offering is to remove an epidemic such as smallpox or measles, a casting away is preferred. Here the emphasis is on separation by dedicating to God or an ancestral spirit.¹⁶⁷ Certain parts of Lugbara/Madi communal lands have such animals abandoned for the spirits or for God. That is why there are *adrou au* (god/spirit chickens) and *adrou ndri* (god/spirit goats) in the bushes of West Nile.

¹⁶⁴ All ill-health is a spiritually induced condition, usually as a consequence of an invocation made because of an offence. Oracles and diviners are consulted to discover the nature of the case and the identity of the responsible agent; oblation is promised and made, usually after recovery of the patient, see Middleton, 1960, p. 129.

¹⁶⁵ John Pobee in Jesse Mugambi, ed., 1997, *The Church and the Future in Africa*, AACC: Nairobi, p. 146. See also Hannah Kinoti, ‘Well-being in African Society and the Bible’ for a detailed treatment of the topic in Kinoti and Waliggo, 1997, *The Bible and African Christianity*, Acton Publishers, Nairobi, pp. 112-122.

¹⁶⁶ John Harper, 1991, p. 14.

¹⁶⁷ Magesa, 1998, p. 182. For more on ‘gift theory’ and other theories on sacrifices, see Anthony Joseph Barret, *Sacrifice and Prophecy in Turkana cosmology*, Pauline Pub: Nairobi, 1998, p. 25-41.

.IV.4. *Feza ceni* – Promissory gifts and pledges¹⁶⁸

Promissory gifts and pledges play important roles in Lugbara/Madi traditional rituals. Through them God or the spirits are called upon to witness a declaration or promise in symbolic action that is related to the supreme values of Lugbara/Madi society. This is done in the presence and hearing of the community. *Oyo soza* (promissory oaths) may accompany such pledges as a commitment to do something for God and for the community.

Some declarative oaths are taken in judicial cases where there is an impasse in a judicial case and the evidence points to a particular person. The person then takes an oath, saying; ‘If I took this thing let the new moon not find me alive’ or ‘A spear will kill me before the grass burns’. Or one may say, while touching the ground, ‘By the time of the next harvest I want to provide a bull for the village school or church.’ Some oaths are taken at initiation rites, in covenants between families, tribes and individuals, in blood pacts and in the settlement of disputes in the community. The efficacy of these oaths and offerings, according to Shorter, is derived from three elements: (1) an immediate mystical sanction, be it religious or magical, (2) eventual community sanction and (3) the use of an explicit and powerful symbolism, which appeals to the people’s experience.¹⁶⁹ The offertory is the most elaborate part of Lugbara/Madi worship, where people come singing, dancing, clapping and laughing to offer money, food, crafts, animals, etc. Even those with nothing come to ‘show their faces’ before God and before the community. Most offerings are on *abala* (a competitive basis) between tribes, clans, families and individuals.

.IV.5. Time and calendar in Lugbara religion

The organization of time and space is a very important aspect in worship. I asked the elders about the Lugbara/Madi organization of time and what effect this has on their worship. This is how they said Lugbara traditional time is organised.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ Shorter, *African culture and the Christian Church*, Geoffrey Chapman: London, 1973, p. 103-5.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 105.

¹⁷⁰ See also the Lugbara Literature Association (LULA) materials from 1990 in Leopold’s *Inside West Nile*, 2005, pp. 158-9

January	February	March	April	May	June
<i>Elindri</i>	<i>Riorio</i>	<i>Ocokopahio</i>	<i>Ribulu</i>	<i>Ayika</i>	<i>Kaaka</i>

July	August	September	October	November	December
<i>Movo</i>	<i>Bubuofoo</i>	<i>Ayize</i>	<i>Ewadri</i>	<i>Anyufu</i>	<i>Ase'woko</i>

Table 3 Lugbara calendar

In 1990 the Lugbara Cultural Association (LCA) the organization under which the Lugbara Literature Association (LULA) operates, produced the Lugbara traditional calendar, which has become a popular calendar on the walls of Lugbara/Madi homes. In it *eli* (year) is divided into two *wangi* (seasons): the wet and dry seasons. Each season has *mba* (several months; literally moons) and each month is divided into *yomula* (weeks). The root of *yomula* is obscure. Tonya gives the most plausible explanation: that it might have come from the Alur *yomulanga* (to rest on the compound or homestead).¹⁷¹ It means there was a day for resting in the compound, in contrast to going to the fields. Fields in West Nile are often some distance from home so as to stop domestic animals from spoiling the crops or just to get some fresh land. Matia Anguandia and Samson Drajoa¹⁷² confirmed that there were days off work but these were not regulated for the whole community. Days of community rituals and sacrifices were automatically days off work. The regular Sunday day of rest came with Christianity, which built on the traditional idea of resting on the compound. *O'du* for day also means sleep, which means a day for the Lugbara/Madi is the time span in which the cycle of work and sleep is completed, where daytime is *itu* 'sun-time' and night is *ini* 'dark time'.

The calendar above mainly spells out the activities, weather conditions, or state of being in those conditions. *Elindri* (January) means it is the heart of the dry season. It literally announces the year is over, toppled or blown away! It is a happy time of rest and storytelling after the hectic harvest time. It is when thatching and cleaning of the homestead is done. Music and dance fills the air. This is the time

¹⁷¹ Tonya, personal interview on 10th Sept 2003.

¹⁷² Personal interviews on 17th February 1999 and 10th May 2000 respectively.

when the community performs *owiamve* (external sacrifices). *Riorio* (February) is the windiest and hottest month. *Riorio* is also the name for whirlwind, which is most common in February. Men spend this time fishing and hunting. *Ocokopawhiyo* (March) is the month of *ocoko* (suffering). The full meaning is that ‘suffering put my feet on the hot path’ in search of food and seeds. It is the month for breaking the ground for the coming rains. A visit by the elders to the rainmaker is common. *Ribulu* (April) describes the violent return of the rains with thunder and hail that sparks off heavy runoff and flash floods. It brings the white ants as a welcome change of diet to save the seeds from being consumed.

Ayika (May) is the heart of the first wet season. It is the weeding month. *Kaaka* (June) is the other month of scarcity. The term is one of advice: ‘*ba ma kaaka* – let’s be thrifty with the food we have. At this time all the seed is sown and there is nothing until the first harvest in July. *Movo* (July) is another month that comes with words of advice: ‘*ba ma vovo* – slash it. At this time the grass is tall and cannot be dug without cutting. ‘Slash before you dig’ is the advice for preparing the land for the final planting season. *Bubuofoo* (August) suggests it is the wettest month of the year and the beginning of the second wet season.

Ayize (September) is when the grass called *ayize* flowers and clings to clothing and causes watery droppings in animals. *Ayi-ze* also means ‘wet season droppings’. *Ewadri* (October) is the ‘lighter month’ from which the end of the year is visible. At this time boys take their horns to begin to practise the new songs for the dry season celebrations as the girls practise the new songs at the grinding stones and at wells. The songs describe the follies, achievements and lessons of the year. *Anyufu* (November) is the month of the flowering of *anyu* (simsim, or sesame), a major staple sauce in West Nile. *Ase’woko* (December) is the month of dry grass. Women cut grass for thatching in January.

.IV.5.1. The ritual meaning of the calendar

What does this calendar mean in worship terms? The Lugbara understanding of time and being is ritually related to their cosmology. Here ritual is a standardised form of conduct mediated by the social and natural environment in which it is enacted. It is not necessarily the result of belief, but is essentially the result of tradition, i.e., how things have always been done. This contrasts markedly with the Western

understanding of cosmology as systemic belief.¹⁷³ Middleton's observation that the Lugbara religious concepts have no system at all at the level of belief reveals his ignorance of how nature affects Lugbara culture, history and thought. Here, it is clear the Lugbara/Madi cannot live meaningfully in a detached world. The competence and consequence of their religion – what it is able to do for them, rather than an exposition of their beliefs – should be used to assess their worldview.

This understanding is closer to the Hebrew view of time and being. The Israelites have three agricultural pilgrimage festivals that mark their liturgical calendar: the feast of Unleavened Bread, the feast of Weeks or Harvest and of In-gathering. The Exodus-Settlement motif of liberation has nearly replaced the family festival nature of the feast of Unleavened Bread because they fell in the same month of Nisan. The spirit of the feast is as *Kaaka* (June) when families constrict to almost their nucleus state to share the little food that is available. The feast of Harvest is like *Ewadri* (October) with music in the air and plentiful food. The spirit of the feast of In-gathering is like that of *Elindri* (January) when the year is overturned and people are anticipating the prospects of the next year. This explains why church life amongst the Lugbara is often very seasonal in terms of attendance, giving and enthusiasm. This is how Isaac Anguyo wondered about church life in Aringa in West Nile:

There are many seasonal Christians in Aringa. If it is time to think about Muslim evangelism, all will go for it. Time for growing food all will be in the field, time to preach and everyone is at it. If it is time to get saved all will get saved. This is a seasonal Christianity. Can such a church grow?¹⁷⁴

This seasonal nature of traditional life has implications for Christian worship and practice, which we shall explore in the next part of this chapter. But suffice to say that Christianity reoriented this old worldview so that the old moral framework was reconfigured without totally being overthrown, as the missionaries wanted it to be.

¹⁷³ See John Taylor's introduction to *The Passion in Africa*, 1957.

¹⁷⁴ Isaac Anguyo, the Managing Director of Here Is Life and the radio station, Voice of Life, said this in the June 2001 issue of the newsletter *Here is life*.

Section B

.IV.6. The concepts of Sacrifices and Offerings in the Church

Much as sacrifices have ceased amongst the Christians in Uganda, there are several practices in the Church that follow in the path of sacrifices and offerings as in the traditional sense. The final aspect of sacrificial activity, eating, is very central in all churches. Church meetings, conventions, councils, prayers, services, etc., almost always begin and or end with some eating, for the whole congregation or at least the leaders. One Lay Reader boasted that once I step into a church, blood must flow talking about the slaughter of chicken and at times goats that happen at such visits.

.IV.6.1. Offertory

The offertory, as in the traditional sense, is still the most elaborate part of the service. It is always done according to *enyati*, tribes, zones, etc. Each group will sing their own song that identifies them. They may use their totemic symbols as they march to offer. Even those with nothing to offer come to be in the group. Some help carry what is being offered, just not to be left out. As a result the offertory is always the longest part of the service, in weddings, ordinations, baptism, confirmation, conventions and other large services. A time for making and fulfilling pledges is often given after the general offertory. Many people pledge yearly, or as and when the need arises to make a gift to God, and these pledges are often fulfilled during the Christmas season. Pledges are in the form of animals, money, furniture, vestments, equipment, etc., to the church. These pledges are made publicly so that the person can be held accountable for what is pledged to the church.

.IV.6.2. The Eucharist as Sacrifice and offering

The Catholics especially consider the liturgy as the corporate offering of the whole people of God, and the corporate nature of the Church is the key to corporate humankind. The sharing of bread and (wine)¹⁷⁵ in the Eucharist represents the whole substance of human life offered to God.¹⁷⁶ This understanding gave rise to the

¹⁷⁵ Only the Priest takes the wine until recently when they started to deep the bread into the wine for the people to eat.

¹⁷⁶ Fenwick & Spinks, *Worship in Tansition*, T& T Clark: Edinburgh, 1995, p. 45, Cf., A. G. Herbert, 1935, *Liturgy and Society*, p. 44.

emergence of the offertory procession.¹⁷⁷ This is the solemn presentation of the bread and wine, usually by members of the congregation, which itself expresses the common priesthood of the Church. Here, the offertory is collected and brought by appropriately dressed dancing young people called Kizito children escorted by an elder with a flywhisk.¹⁷⁸ This is unlike in Anglican and Independent Churches where the whole congregation brings their gifts to the altar in groups or individually, as the church organization demands. But the Catholic offering is liturgically managed.

Based on the concept of remembrance we discussed earlier, in Lugbara worship there is no problem for Lugbara Christians to take the words of consecration of bread and wine, “The night he was betrayed, he took bread... Do this in memory of me”, as sacred words. These are the last words of a dying person and therefore very important. Christ clearly demonstrated and acted out the ritual of the Eucharist and in Uganda the direct blessing, breaking, and giving to the people are more popular than breaking the bread after the Lord’s Prayer in the Eucharistic service.

The notion of sacrifice and offering in the Eucharist has troubled relations in the Church for a long time. In Uganda, apart from the different theological positions on the matter, there are differences between churches with regard to the use of light, bells, genuflection and incense at the Eucharist. The sacraments generally are not a very regular part of Ugandan Christian worship in the Protestant churches in West Nile. Many church congregations because lay preachers run them, do not see a priest for long periods of the year. As a result the preaching of the word forms the most central aspect of worship. Many Christians come late provided they get the preaching. According to many, what gets done before the sermon is not important as long as one gets the preached word. So the preaching calendar appears before the Pastor’s schedule for Holy Communion or baptism. But with parishes getting smaller and smaller, sacramental worship in the rural Anglican Churches in West Nile may improve with time.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁷ Fenwick, & Spinks, 1995, p. 46.

¹⁷⁸ Kizito was the youngest Ugandan Martyr and was killed in 1888 by King Mwanga. He was baptised by Charles Lwanga, see picture on p. 95.

¹⁷⁹ See Evaluation of the questionnaire to the pastors of Madi/West Nile Diocese, Appendix 2.

For the Catholics, the use of *owita* (sacrifice) for the Eucharist shows it is considered a sacrifice.¹⁸⁰ In fact Bujo, as a Catholic, considers the Eucharist and the African community as the two sources of life in the Church.¹⁸¹ The sharing of bread and wine in the Eucharist represent the sharing of the whole substance of human life, the joys, sorrows and plans for the future and the hopes and fears. The offertory procession, as we stated earlier, is a depiction of the people bringing what they have, including bread and wine to offer to God. God receives them and turns the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus, which is the Church's spiritual food.

The theology of the Eucharist is not well developed amongst the Independent churches in Uganda. Communion services are held but not as regularly as in the Catholic and Anglican churches. Most of them consider the preached Word, with the attendant results of healing, miracles and spiritual experiences, as more central to their worship than Communion. The same indifference can be observed amongst some splinter sections of the Revival movement in West Nile and in Uganda in general. The Chosen Evangelical Revival (CER), the 'trumpeters', question the efficacy of the sacraments in the salvation process. Fellowship in the Word is considered more important than the breaking of bread.

.IV.6.3. Innovations in Eucharistic liturgy of Uganda

The elders raised questions, for example, on the use of wine and bread, products that do not feature in most Africans' daily lives. They noted that in Uganda these questions do not seem to bother most worshippers. But there have been notable innovations in the Eucharistic service. First, the method of dipping the bread into wine as opposed to drinking from the same cup, although not new in the history of the Church, was allowed because of the AIDS/HIV pandemic in Uganda. In spite of the opposition from conservative members, the Church of Uganda went ahead to authorise it in 1990. Because some AIDS sufferers have open sores and wounds in their mouths, it was thought that with a shared cup it was possible for them to infect others who might have unrelated sores or scratches in their mouths. But even now some pastors still give the cup to those who want to drink after others have made

¹⁸⁰ Lugbara Catholic Hymn 39 is a plea to *Adro* to receive the little offering of bread, wine, money, food, prayers and heart. Hymn 42 goes on to list food stuffs grown in West Nile which can be offered to God, including bread and wine, as thanks offerings.

¹⁸¹ Bujo, *African Christian morality in the age of inculturation*, Pauline: Nairobi, 1990, p. 73.

their communion.¹⁸² In St Francis Chapel, Makerere, the practice is to have each communicant dip his/her own bread in the cup, like eating from the same bowl, which many Christians appreciate.

In the 1970s and 80s, when wine was difficult to obtain, churches in West Nile brewed tea to serve at communion. Some pastors prepared a certain herb, called *kulubu/gonzere*,¹⁸³ which was found to be a medicinal herb for the treatment of hypertension only when hypertensive Christians who regularly took communion were healed! Such uses of local material have not however been further developed practically and theologically. Because this particular time in Uganda was considered a time of scarcity, people are willing to wait without communion until enough money is collected to buy a bottle of wine, rather than brew tea or *gonzere* for regular communion. Alcoholic local drinks such as *nguli*, *kpete*, *ajon* and *mwenge*¹⁸⁴ are not acceptable to most people, probably because many had problems with these drinks before becoming Christians but above all because of the crude nature of these brews. This negative attitude can also be attributed to the brutal way in which African products were branded as channels of Satan to the African heart and backwardness.¹⁸⁵

.IV.6.4. The effect of the traditional calendar on worship

The traditional calendar implies that Lugbara/Madi worship tends to consist of Occasional Offices, with general feasts like Christmas, Easter and the Feast of the Uganda Martyrs forming the important climaxes. It also means that the new identity of Ugandan Christianity has ceased to adhere rigidly to the Western calendar by

¹⁸² Bugolobi COU, St Francis Makerere and others serve the Cup after the rest have partaken.

¹⁸³ In Luo the plant is called *malakuang*, although only the white one is used as sauce and the red one used here is for medicinal purposes only. Yuda Bileo, the pastor of Ajara parish, revealed in a personal interview on 22nd Jan 1998 that it was his innovation which became the common practice for the Anglican Church in West Nile in the face of the scarcity of wine in the difficult period of Idi Amin's regime between 1970 and 1980. The researcher, as a son of a Lay reader, regularly helped to prepare this *kulubu* wine a day before its use in communion in the 1970s.

¹⁸⁴ Apart from the *nguli* brewed from cassava, the rest are mild and nutritious brews used by whole communities, including children, and have a social significance. The wife or wives of a senior Madi man brewed *kpete* for a gathering of his peers and juniors to celebrate wellbeing, the fact that "life is going well". *Nguli* is a more recent brew, mostly used by men, and is more addictive and therefore targeted as the cause of male indolence and the root of problems in the community, and the women who brew it were also targeted for ostracism in the church.

¹⁸⁵ Paul Stuart Landau, *The Realm of the Word: Language, Gender and Christianity in a Southern African Kingdom*, David Philip: Cape Town, 1995, p. 81-110. Non-drinking is considered one of the marks of being Christian. Any lapse into drinking meant suspension from communion.

drawing from its African roots to celebrate and offer itself to the wider body of Christ. The ecumenical celebration of the Feast of the Uganda Martyrs on June 3rd, of Janani Luwum¹⁸⁶ on February 17th, Independence Day on October 9th, Uganda AIDS Day on December 1st, etc., are the uniting feasts that the whole nation celebrates. These general feasts are the collective memory of Uganda's history in its encounter with Christianity and with the political context of Uganda. The Church calendar in its finer details therefore varies from diocese to diocese and from church to church and denomination to denomination. It reflects the struggles for survival, the pains, distresses and joys that are seen as the 'finger of God' in the communities. It also reflects the life stories in relation to the environment and socio-political and cultural influences in which their relationship to Christ is a significant factor. Doctrine and exegesis are important but they should not be stressed in abstract ways without the dimension of personal experience and network of human interactions.¹⁸⁷ In this way each tribe, clan and people, and each church and diocese, have begun to create space for worship of God through Christ with the use of their own music, musical instruments, dance, prayers and leaders as much as through engaging with other people.

.IV.7. Summary

The concepts of sacrifices, offerings and gifts and of time and space have been affected by the coming of Christianity among the Lugbara/Madi people. These concepts in turn have also affected the rituals of the church. The Eucharist in particular is considered as a sacred meal in step with their traditional sacrificial meals of old. The church has become the ritual space in which a constant ritual energy flows to keep the life force of the community as it was in the traditional shrines. The sacraments and church functions that include eating are the most valued.

¹⁸⁶ Janani Luwum is the Archbishop whom Idi Amin murdered. He has been declared a 20th century martyr by the Anglican Communion.

¹⁸⁷ Sanneh in response to the charge that African Christianity is too celebratory and insufficiently cerebral, in *Whose religion is Christianity?* 2003, p. 35.

.V PRAYER, BLESSINGS AND CURSES

This chapter explores the most common practices of religion: prayers, blessings and curses amongst the Lugbara/Madi. The two sections deal with traditional and Christian practices of prayer, blessings and curses, to show how they affect or influence worship. I asked the elders community consciousness questions of what is prayer, blessing and curse, who does it where and when? What are the occasions for prayer, blessings and curses? We had the liveliest discussions about the types of prayer and the occasions for blessing and curses.

Section A

.V.1. Components of Lugbara/Madi Worship

Laurent Magesa mentions prayers, sacrifices and offerings as the major features of African worship. According to him, “it is impossible to appreciate the role of religious experts in restoring the power of life without considering such procedures as prayers, sacrifices and offerings”.¹⁸⁸ What comes to a Lugbara/Madi mind in every situation is the question *why*, because everything has a cause. When the *why* is answered then *what* should be done is established and once that is fulfilled an oblation is offered, which involves the whole community. *Izita*, the word for prayer, carries the connotations of inquiry, questioning and pleading, which is what is done in prayer. While prayer can be offered anywhere and by anybody at any time, and is often private, sacrifices and offerings, which usually involve prayers in addition to the setting apart of an item for divine use, is always a public or semi-public occasion. In this section we asked the elders to explain what prayer is in Lugbara/Madi tradition, what its social and cultural significance is and what its components are.

.V.1.1. Prayer in African Tradition

Adrian Hastings thinks it is in prayer and what can best be described as the spirituality of life that African traditional religion is best encountered in its rich and expansive diversity.¹⁸⁹ Tokunboh Adeyemo describes prayer as the “commonest act

¹⁸⁸ Laurenti Magesa, *African Religion*, 1998, p. 176-181. George Tibeessigwa concurs with this view that: “Prayers, offerings, sacrifices and gifts to God constitute the commonest acts of worship in Africa” See ‘Worship in the Anglican Church of Uganda: A Critical Study’, a thesis for D Miss., Seoul Korea, 1996.

¹⁸⁹ Adrian Hastings, 1976, *African Christianity*, Geoffrey Chapman, London, p. 51.

of worship”¹⁹⁰ In Lugbara/Madi prayers the divinity is addressed in kinship terms such as *Ata* (Father), *Ata agapi driari* (Great Father), *Ata o'bapi* (Creator Father), *Ata buari* (Father above), *Ata amani* (Our Father), etc. The ancestors on the other hand are referred to as *yi* (they), or *'ba wara* (the elders) and/or simply as *a'bipi* (ancestors). The supplicants refer to themselves more often as children than as friends or servants. It appears the attitude that the Lugbara/Madi people show towards those whose goodness they know by experience is the same as the attitude that they assume in communicating with God, where the same affection and trust shown toward parents and *ori'ba* (relatives) is shown in prayer to God. Other characteristically functional names are also used for God, such as *Rambile* (healer), *O'bapi* (Creator), *Okpo e'i* (the powerful), *Ori buari* (the god of heaven), etc.

Lugbara/Madi prayers vary on account of the concepts of God, but these concepts are often shared with other ethnic groups and languages. Over and above the differences in the concept of God, Lugbara/Madi prayers employ symbolism that is inspired by their geographical and historical experiences. For instance, saying a prayer while facing Mt. Wati or the east, or in the direction of the wind, are some of the symbolic stances employed.¹⁹¹ They believe it is better to pray along the wind than against the wind, when your words are blown into you rather than to God. To address the dead one has to face east to the rising sun or west to the new moon, which are symbols of new life, and the full moon is the symbol of good health and time for making scarifices and ritual dances. Facing Mt. Kenya is the usual Kikuyu direction of prayer.¹⁹² Uzukwu makes clear that in Africa: “the land, with its valleys and mountains, rivers and lakes, forests and plains filled with animals, are aids to and join in the rhythmic praise of the Creator.”¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Tokunboh Adeyemo, 1979, *Salvation in African Tradition*, Evangel Publishing House: Nairobi, p. 35.

¹⁹¹ Yosam Ruda interviewed on 23rd Feb 2000. Here the human being becomes mythically and symbolically at one with the environment and the natural world. Mt. Wati is where the hero ancestors were first put by God and buried, while the east is where life comes from. Each rising sun is a fresh opportunity to live – a kind of resurrection; and the wind is a messenger of the divine.

¹⁹² See Jomo Kinyatta, 1965, *Facing Mount Kenya*, Vintage book: New York.

¹⁹³ Elochukwu Uzukwu, ‘Inculturation and Liturgy’, in Rosino Gibellini, *Paths of African Theology*, 1994, p. 111.

John Tutu thinks it was these symbolic gestures in Lugbara/Madi prayers that the missionaries mistook to mean that they worshipped nature.¹⁹⁴ This is far from the truth because the common features of the providence, omniscience and omnipotence of God are expressed in the texts of prayers but not in the postures or agencies used for prayer. Prayer is usually said standing but prostration, sitting or squatting is also common. Some more serious prayers involve a journey to the sacred grove (external shrine) and or involve a sacred dance. The time of the day – morning, noon, dusk and moonlight – may also determine the posture and type or content of prayer. For example, at full moon one may pray, “Let our lives be full like the moon”, or “Let your health arise like the moon or sun”.

Prayer comes in most handy in times of trouble, misfortune or calamity to the individual or community. Magesa states that in Africa “wherever life is threatened or weakened, prayer is most abundant, so that balance and wholeness can be restored”.¹⁹⁵ But prayer is also said on festive occasions such as weddings, initiations (teeth extraction, or after a boy has killed three wild animals for the Madi) and various feasts, and in thanksgiving for a new house, harvest, childbirth or visitors.¹⁹⁶ It is said for family, friends, children, crops, rain, peace, victory, health, prosperity and good luck. In fact no event is too small for a prayer. The favour sought is the response on the part of God and the spirits to the act of praise and hope by the worshipper.

.V.1.2. Forms of Prayer

Prayer takes two basic forms: presentation and invitation.¹⁹⁷ The people may present themselves with the words, “We have come in your presence not for nothing”, “Here we are”, or “I stand before you”, or they may invite the divine to come: “Let the Great one come to us in our distress, or “Let the spirits gather to our aid”. The invited ancestors or spirits may be named, as elder Yosam Ruda did on one occasion:

¹⁹⁴ John Tutu, Personal Interview of 9th Feb. 1999

¹⁹⁵ Laurenti Magesa, 1998, p. 177.

¹⁹⁶ Prayer often marks departures and arrivals immediately after the greetings.

¹⁹⁷ Shorter, *African culture and the Christian Church*, 1973, p. 107

We invite Kamia, Tia and Drajoa to witness our inadequate offerings and look down in pity on our suffering, for we are but children who know not the ways of the Fathers and of the Great One.¹⁹⁸

This is all done with confidence and a sense of total dependence on the powers invited, but also in complete humility, which is often expressed in a certain diffidence and pretence of ignorance. For example elder Ruda continued to pray: “You are the one who knows all. As the ignorant ones we are not even sure we’re doing the right thing. Anyhow, you will not turn away from worms like us. Only we long for your protection and peace. When a child shits itself the mother does not throw it away with the leaves.” The elders noted John’s statement that he is unfit even to untie the laces of his (Jesus’) shoe as a typical attitude in prayer and of a spokesperson. While such self-abasement and pretence of ignorance in the presentation of one’s case is often practised in prayer, every ritual activity ends with thanksgiving and a benediction.¹⁹⁹ This shows the confidence in God and that even the most tentative approach to God is assured of God’s blessing.

.V.1.3. Types of Prayers

Aylward Shorter advises the study of traditional African prayers for the construction of a truly African Christian liturgy.²⁰⁰ His classification of African forms of prayer into three – the litanic, the panegyric or praise poem, and the stylised ejaculation or short invocation²⁰¹ – is generally correct, although it might be very limiting. One should not rule out other forms yet to emerge out of the jungle of Africa’s oral traditions through scholarship. We will expand on Shorter’s work by adding a fourth on mediation or vicarious prayer which the elders suggested.

.V.1.3.1. Litanic or antiphonal prayers

The litanic form of prayer is the commonest type of prayer that uses call and response and features in both speech and song. Here, as in song, the leader is vital. His/her tone, temperament and body language helps the people to respond

¹⁹⁸ This prayer was said after two consecutive deaths had occurred in a community and the elders were praying at the last funeral rite just before the relatives went to their various homes.

¹⁹⁹ See Shorter, 1973, p. 110.

²⁰⁰ Shorter, 1973, p. 106.

²⁰¹ Shorter, p. 107. See also Nkafu Nkemnkia, *African Vitology: A step forward in African thinking*, 1999, p. 154-5.

appropriately with a refrain that becomes the burden of their plea as in this prayer for rain.²⁰²

Ori buari	God of heaven
<i>Mi eri ama fo</i>	<i>Please hear us</i>
Ori onyiruri	Good God
<i>Mi eri ama fo</i>	<i>Please hear us</i>
At amaniri	Our Father
<i>Mi eri ama fo</i>	<i>Please hear us</i>

.V.1.3.2. Panegyric praise poem – poi

The panegyric praise poems or hymns are found in all tribes among the Lugbara/Madi and are usually of some length and may be for the exploits of God, the spirits or men.²⁰³ They are pieces of free verse which describe with some exaggeration people's origins and identity as a group or individually. This panegyric prayer by Ruda, in bidding farewell to his clan, the Adribu, after the funeral of a child, can illustrate what we are saying here.

<i>Ama Adribuni</i>	We are Adribu
<i>Ama 'ba aluni</i>	We are the same people
<i>Ama Palafu orini</i>	We are the seed of Palafu
<i>Ama ga gi ku</i>	We may not fill one palm
<i>Te ama elokuni</i>	But we are untouchable
<i>Ami mvi onyibe</i>	Go well to your homes
<i>Ori eri co tusu ami dria</i>	May God spit upon you
<i>Letia kumu eri ovu yu</i>	May you not hurt your feet on the way
<i>Ami ndre aku indi.</i>	See your homes for me. ²⁰⁴

.V.1.3.3. The stylised ejaculation – cere

The stylised ejaculation usually accompanies religious ritual. It is made when the person thinks the ritual activity, be it dance, sacrifice or music, is at its zenith point. When a lot of *cere* is heard at a dance, they will say, *ongoni susu*: literally, "the dance is now very painful". *Cere* is also made in times of danger or as a sign of victory. Each person or tribe may have its typical ejaculation, which is only known to

²⁰² See the example Christian example of this in the Emanuel Cathedral Harvest Litany, Appendix 1. The litanic form of prayer is used extensively in the Kenyan Book of Prayer. The Arua Catholic prayers are generally litanic. See *Ezita*, 'A collection of prayers Catholics of Arua Diocese know by heart', 1997, *Eucharistic Prayer*, 1998, and *The Rite for the Assembly of the Faithful led by a Lay Presider*, 1998.

²⁰³ Shorter, p. 107.

²⁰⁴ This was on February 14th 2000.

him. Personal ejaculations express personal experience; for example: *dra kuma ni*: (death tried but left me) or a philosophy of life: *'ba nyaa diyi 'ba amvele*: (those underground are as numerous as those on land).²⁰⁵ This next one is for a clan: *Ama 'ba aluni, Ama ngu ama ku. Ori le vini*, (We're one people, let's not hate one another. God desires so).²⁰⁶

.V.1.3.4. Mediatlional or vicarious praying

Mediation is a common feature in Lugbara/Madi and African traditional relations and is reflected in the relationship with God. Prayer being a social phenomenon, the practical necessity of human mediation or vicarious praying is an accepted norm in most cultures. The chief or an elder or an in-law cannot be addressed directly. A mediator, spokesperson or go-between – *ojio* or *konde* is essential.

Mediators feature in marriage negotiations, peace pacts and all relational matters. The go-between is often one who is related to both the speaker and the person being addressed. If a relative to both cannot be found, then a friend of both will do. In case none of the above can be found, then an aversion of the face or a covering of the mouth by the speaker serves the purpose. Here, the head of the family or clan or the keeper of the shrine may say prayers on behalf of the community, but friends and relatives may also pray for their loved ones.

The dead, whose world of relationships is conceived as a mirror of the living world, pray and share with the living in worship.²⁰⁷ These ancestors and spirits that are considered close both to God and to the living are invoked to act on behalf of the living. They are mediators because of their proximity to God and to the living.²⁰⁸ Although these prayer forms tend to be stereotyped, there is considerable freedom for adaptation and application to the immediate situation and needs of those offering the

²⁰⁵ The first is a sort of brag to anyone who wants to harm such a person, but it is a prayer of thanks to the one above death, God. In other words if God helped me, who are you to harm me? The second is the philosophy that whether alive or dead I will not be alone. Death is no loss for the dead.

²⁰⁶ The Adribu clan of Madi Okollo would say this to one another over and over again during whatever ritual activity they are involved in. To be a community, observing the will of God to love one another, is central.

²⁰⁷ Shorter, 1973, p. 108.

²⁰⁸ The works of John Taylor on the work of the Holy Spirit as a go-between in mission is taken from this African concept and understanding, see *The Go-Between God*, SCM: London, 1972.

prayer, as is the case with music.²⁰⁹ Above all, one form of prayer can be turned into another form with great ease.

.V.2. Prayer as a tool of socialisation (human becoming)

An ancient definition of prayer by Clement of Alexandria, is “keeping company with God”,²¹⁰ which idea is echoed by Kathleen Harmon when she calls prayer “paying attention to the presence of God”²¹¹ and by Paul Iles as time spent in the “remembered presence” of God.²¹² *Izita* (prayer) denotes a two-way inquiry, questioning and/or conversation, which makes prayer less an act to perform or skill to master than a relationship and a conversation with God.

It is humans reaching towards God that results in more depth in the relationship with God and entails a conscious cultivation of the presence of ‘being with’, ‘being for’ and ‘being in’ God, best explained as the act of knowing and loving God. This chimes with Shorter’s view that “prayer is a rising of the heart and mind to God and is no less or more than loving God/ancestors”.²¹³ This makes prayer an essential aspect of humanisation because it helps people encounter God even in their weakness. That is why Friedrich Heiler thinks prayer is not just a religious but a human enterprise.

In this sense prayer can be said to be the great bond of union of all humanity because prayer is a natural human response to crisis situations which religion has hijacked to exert proprietary rights over. It is the most tangible proof of the fact that the whole of humankind is seeking after God – or better – that God seeks it. A human at prayer is proof of the universal revelation of God.²¹⁴

This means prayer is a natural human response precisely because it is already going on within all humans. In Lugbara/Madi tradition the concept of *Ori’ba – societas Dei*, as we saw in Chapter II, sets the community in a special relationship with God and other human beings, which only becomes meaningful with prayer.

²⁰⁹ See Chapter VI, on music and dance.

²¹⁰ See Simon Tugwell, 1974, *Prayer: Keeping company with God*, p. vii, from Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* Vii. 7, 39, 6.

²¹¹ Kathleen Harmon, ‘Liturgical Music as Prayer’, pp. 265-280, in Robin Leaver and Joyce Zimmerman, eds., 1998, p. 266.

²¹² Paul Iles, 1990, *The Pleasure of God’s Company*, Kevin Mayhew Ltd: Suffolk, p. 14.

²¹³ Harmon, 1998, p. 267. See also Shorter, 1973, pp. 19-20.

²¹⁴ Friedrich Heiler, 1932, *Prayer*, Oneworld Publications: Oxford, p. iv.

.V.3. Relationship between prayer and worship

Prayer is not only a personal relationship with God, but also a social communication between humans, in that, in prayer, real communion and intercourse between humans and a present God takes place:

As a social phenomenon prayer is a reflex of human relations and the forms of prayer are as manifold as are the forms of human speech. These include appeal and address, greeting and benediction, complaint and petition, praise and thanks, invitation, allurements, persuasion, threatening, insult, accusation, and apology – as modes of speech, appear in prayer. The social relation in which the praying person stands to God is one of subordination and dependence. This relation of dependence is always a faithful reflection of an earthly social relation, which is mostly one of kinship and or of subjection.²¹⁵

As a social phenomenon prayer ‘hardens’ very easily from a personal outpouring into a communal activity used in rituals. Heiler continues:

Prayer at first is a spontaneous emotional discharge, a free outpouring of heart, which springs directly out of the soul’s deepest need or highest bliss. This intimate intercourse with God gradually becomes hardened into an impersonal ceremonial, a rite consecrated by ancestral custom, where it becomes a fixed formula, which people recite without feeling or mood of devotion, untouched both in heart and mind. By this time its use is limited to definite, regularly recurring occasions that are inseparable parts of complicated rituals of purification, sacrifices, processions, dances, and consecrations.²¹⁶

It is because remembrance is central to any religious activity including prayer that acts of worship harden swiftly into sacred rites where the elastic outline of a personal outpouring for concrete needs of the moment become fixed formulas for transmission as traditional possessions. The first is a personal utterance of an individual or the spokesman of a group; the latter is the impersonal, professional business of the priests and other religious experts. Formal prayers are used for the most part on regular occasions such as great festivals as well as in extraordinary circumstances, and in times of particular needs and concerns. Prayer that is ritualised can be called worship – the doxological attitude of the believer towards God. And it stems from what God causes us to remember of him and his activities, to which we might be witnesses.

²¹⁵ Ibid, p. 58.

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 59.

Although this reversibility between prayer and worship is legitimate, the word ‘worship’ is mostly used to refer to the liturgical complex of ritual actions, verbal formulas, readings and instructions, that give expression to religious adoration, at the heart of which is prayer, which also validates it. Shorter distinguishes between prayer and prayers, where prayer (singular) is the communion of the believer with God and prayers (plural) are techniques of communication, mental, oral and written, which the believer employs to express this communion.²¹⁷

.V.4. Blessings and Curses

We asked the elders to define blessings and curses and the occasions on which they are used. They thought blessing and curses are part of the process of humanisation of the community by the Lugbara/Madi elders.

.V.4.1. Blessings

Blessing is a major aspect of Lugbara/Madi spirituality and religion, and is focused on character-building and the *human becoming* of members of their society. To bless – *asi ndriza fezu or ndri fezu* (literally to give good heart, or to give goodness), and *tusu cozu* (to spit upon)²¹⁸ – is a formal way of praying which belongs commonly, but not exclusively, to the elders of the Lugbara/Madi people. A senior mostly gives it to a minor. There are three types of blessings.

.V.4.1.1. *Simple blessings*

Most simple blessings are directed to the person or object being blessed and many are not necessarily addressed to God. The following examples from the Madi people will help to illustrate this. They are simple statements from an elder to a child like the following:

Mi co izu – Grow tall

Mi drile eri adri ole – May your front (future) be clear

Mi ka eri adri awu – May your feet not grow weary or may your feet be light

Mi o mi iji ama beni – Do well so you can look after us.²¹⁹

For anyone embarking on a long journey they will say,

²¹⁷ Aylward Shorter, *Evangelisation and Culture*, Geoffrey Chapman: London, 1994, p. 19.

²¹⁸ The Protestants use *Asi anzuru* while the Catholics, in addition to *tusu cozu* (to spit upon), use *ndri* (peace) in blessing.

²¹⁹ Note here that the prayer of the blessing is addressed directly to the blessed without reference to God or divinity.

Mi aci onyibe – Go well
Mi ka dri onyibe be – Return well
Eri aci mi be – May he go with you

Here, an unnamed partner is addressed, which may also be said in the plural even if one person is travelling, e.g. *Ami aci onyibe* – May you (plural) go well.

Eri ce dri mi drilea – May he be ahead of you²²⁰
Mi drile eri susu – May all that is ahead of you be well
Kumu eri si mi onzi ku – May no obstacles knock your feet.

.V.4.1.2. Complex blessings

The blessing can be elaborate, addressed as a panegyric or put to music, danced and dramatised as in this *osego* dance song composed by Erinayo, an elder of Madi Okollo, to bless his tribe.

<i>Okollo ayakaka</i>	Everybody from Okollo
<i>Ami rua dra eri ovu yu yo</i>	May you all be healthy
<i>Ada rua dra eri atira yo</i>	May you, my children, all be healed
<i>Ami rua eri suku yo</i>	May you suffer no pains ²²¹

.V.4.1.3. Sacramental blessings

We will call blessings that are attended by some ritual action or gesture sacramental blessings. They are unlike the simple or complex blessings cited above. They include blessing with a spray of spittle (*tusu coza*) and blessings that are administered with a strike from a plant called *ajinguru* (rosemary) or the grass called *omoo* – *bracaria ruziziansis*, or with *ediko bi*, the leaves of a tree whose black fruits jackals love so much. Hillman, in a study from amongst the Masaai, writes this about sacramental blessing with spittle:

Blessings supported by spitting are efficacious; they are fully expected to have divine concurrence, and thus accomplish what they proclaim. Spittle gives life to words and expectations. Combined with the breathing out of words, spittle becomes a very efficacious symbol of life communicated from one person to another. Such symbols, arising from the inner depths of

²²⁰ This emanates from the indirect way of addressing the ancestors without naming them explicitly. Christians address even God in this way.

²²¹ Erinayo's explanation of the circumstances under which he composed the song is that he saw many young people die in the liberation war to remove Idi Amin in 1978-1981 and felt moved to pray for the Okollo people in the face of these killings in the land. He believes God heard his prayer.

respected persons, who themselves are obviously blessed by God with long life and fecundity clearly participate in what they signify.²²²

The blessing here is communicated through sound and water. The spittle is expelled with a breathy *pwa* sound that is almost spoken. The wetness of nature and of living beings is thought to be manifestly productive, fruitful, fecund and life-giving.²²³ When the elders bless children they may make invocations such as *ori eri zi miyi leti* (may God open ways before you), and when friends meet after a long time they may spit on their hands before greeting each other after a bit of a mock wrestling.

The use of wetness to bless may be taken a step further by mixing water with certain herbs or medicines. At times ash is put in water, which the elders put in their mouth to spit on the objects or persons to be blessed. They may use *ajinguru* (rosemary) or *ediko bi* and spray the mixture over the people and objects. The liquid may be sprayed by means of a calabash, which is covered with *omoo* (*bracaria*) grass so that it comes out in fine droplets on the people. This has its equivalent in the Roman practice of using *aspergillum* in the rite of sprinkling holy water to bless the people, caskets and objects. Holy water is also extensively used by the Independent Churches, even though the use is not as sacramental as in the Catholic Church.

Saliva has power to change the bad into good. "Spittle gives life to words and expectations."²²⁴ The person blessed responds by giving thanks. This is the most sacramental blessing given to an individual, and the Catholics extensively use the words *tusu coza*. The Anglicans and other Protestants use *asi anzuru* or *asi ndriza fezu*, which is the translation of the Western blessings of peace and grace. In Lugbara it literally means 'giving the cool heart or the good heart of God'. This sacramental blessing of 'spitting upon' is what needs to be practically and sacramentally developed in all Ugandan Christian worship.

.V.4.2. Curses

When one talks of blessing, one cannot but talk about curses, because the two go together. A curse is the direct opposite of a blessing, having the same source and

²²² Eugene Hillman, 1993, *Toward an African Christianity*, Paulist Press, New York, p. 55.

²²³ Matia Anguandia expressed the same about Lugbara blessing with spittle in the interview of 17th Feb. 1999

²²⁴ Eugene Hillman, 1993, p. 55.

purpose: the promotion of 'right order for the good of all.'²²⁵ The curse like the blessing is part of the humanization process among the Lugbara/Madi. The symbolic or sacramental actions for a curse amongst the Lugbara/Madi are touching the ground, raising the hands towards heaven, or slapping the thighs and/or the breast.²²⁶ Removal of curses may involve the shedding of blood but a confession and restitution may also suffice. The wrongdoer will provide an animal or a fowl and the ceremony is always a public event. Everything done in the reversal of a curse is the opposite of what is done to bring it about. The ceremony ends with a blessing for all.

Section B

.V.5. Models of Prayers in Ugandan churches

We have seen how very rich a tradition of prayer there is amongst the Lugbara/Madi people. But how much of this tradition is being used in the Church today is the question we asked in this section. Addressing the Third Synod, Mgr Frederick Drandua, the Bishop of Arua Catholic diocese, said:

As a local church of Arua, we are increasingly aware of the fact that we must be situated within a given context. This is our biggest challenge, our greatest task is to respond to the signs of our times and to touch the lives of the people we are called to serve, to be relevant, credible and authentic. Our task is value radiation. We are called to radiate true values – Gospel values – being human and divine values before the entire people of God, in the hope that they will come to imitate us.²²⁷

As a relationship with God through Christ, Christian prayer must therefore originate in the very first direct relationship we have with God in Christ – our baptism. This makes prayer and worship the fundamental condition and mode of evangelism.²²⁸ Many features of prayer in Christian worship in West Nile today derive from local traditional practices and from both the contemporary and the received church traditions. As a social phenomenon prayer helps church services to be occasions of

²²⁵ Ibid, p. 57.

²²⁶ Slapping the thigh or breast is the typical curse of a parent to a child. It shows the child has slapped the thigh that carried it or the breast that nursed it. It can be lethal to the child.

²²⁷ Bishop Drandua's address to the Third Synod, 23rd November 1999, *Third Synod Report*, p. 9-10.

²²⁸ Shorter, 1994, *Evangelisation and Culture*, p. 19. Shorter takes this argument into the whole of worship, which for him is a means of evangelisation because it is the scene for human encounter with God, see p. 20. Note how Catholics use 'Evangelisation' for 'Mission' in Protestant circles.

the meeting of values and products of culture, leading to bridge-building, understanding and accommodation of such ideas and practices.

The common factor in the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Independent Churches in West Nile is the vernacular that makes the average worshipper comfortable with services. The Lugbara language allows the different churches to build bridges of understanding, learn to respect each other and enjoy the differences and the variety that is in these churches. Drandua is right to highlight lives and practices that are “relevant, credible and authentic” and that radiate values that are “true, human and divine before the entire people of God”.²²⁹ The radiation of these values is beginning to bear fruit in breaking down the walls of hostility between churches and fellowships. Some people are already calling it an African reformation or reconstruction.²³⁰

The sharing of experiences in Uganda has been to varying degrees, and began with the formation of the Uganda Joint Christian Council in 1963 when the Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Churches agreed to be in ecumenical fellowship. The Independent Church Movement was a bit slow in rising to the challenge but their banning by Idi Amin in 1972 drew them into the Anglican Church from which they had earlier departed. The Charismatic and Liturgical Renewal Movements in all the churches in the 1990s helped further the churches’ sharing of the experience of the same spirit in prayer. This experience, termed by Catholic Bishop Paul Bacenga as ‘the new Pentecost’,²³¹ is characterised by joy, celebration and active participation²³² by the ‘whole Church’ cross-denominationally and by the clergy, laity, children, women, the poor and the rich. Its components can be listed as follows:

²²⁹ Frederick Drandua, address, *Third Synod Report*, pp. 9-10.

²³⁰ Jesse Mugambi, 1997, ‘Social Reconstruction of Africa: The role of the Churches’, pp. 1-26. Mugambi says, ‘...the theme of reconstruction, though derived from the engineering profession, covers a wider scope than rebuilding civil works’. He posits the period of reconstruction to have begun for Africa in 1994 when Mandela was made the President of post-apartheid South Africa. For him, Africa’s cultural and religious heritage is the foundation upon which its social reconstruction should be undertaken. See Mugambi, ed., *The Church and the Reconstruction of Africa*, AACC: Nairobi, 1997.

²³¹ Bishop Paul Bacenga of Mbarara Catholic diocese, Uganda, speaking on Radio Vatican, 7th October 1997

²³² Mgr Casto Adeti describes the liturgical life of the Catholic Church in Uganda today as *participatory*, in a personal Interview on 24th Feb. 1999.

.V.5.1. Extempore and spontaneous prayer

One of the best forms of prayer Africa has offered the world, according to Shorter, is the extempore prayer.²³³ Although there was already considerable scope in Christian worship for extemporisation through the Revival movement, the new form of sharing specifically seems to thrive on it. Extemporisation, according to Madrwa, shows that the gospel has been received and internalised and the relationship cultivated to a level where conversation with God does not have to be guided by another person's prayer.²³⁴ It shows a coming of age of Lugbara/Madi Christians. John Taylor points out that 'the decisions of a mature man or woman may be spontaneous and *ad hoc*, yet they reflect the person that he or she is or has become, as well as the demands of the particular situation'.²³⁵ Spontaneity reflects what the African Christian has become in responding to God's revelation in Christ: consistently free, relaxed and yet intimate – a stance which, according to John Tutu, is the result of both experience and knowledge of God rather than just rules or rubrics.²³⁶ Spontaneity in prayer reveals an authentic African person-hood that is consistent, because it is under God, free because of God's adoption and forgiveness. It shows the Lugbara/Madi come to pray because they want to come and because they find fulfilment in that meeting with God.

Intercessions in most churches are done on this spontaneous basis. The leader may mention some prayer items and either ask a particular member or any member to pray 'as the Spirit leads' or the whole congregation to pray for deliverance, healing or exorcism of a case. A study of such prayers reveals much about people's understanding of themselves, and of God and his works: each person does what he/she is gifted to do in form of 'binding', 'loosing', 'freeing', 'breaking bonds', 'casting out', healing, interceding, 'standing in the gap', etc. While extempore prayer is widely practised in all churches, the Anglicans and Catholics prefer to use both the written and extempore prayers and the Catholics are more at home with liturgically framed prayers.²³⁷ The intercessions in Catholic worship are therefore more

²³³ Shorter, 1973, p. 102.

²³⁴ Mgr Pierino Madrwa, personal interview of 19th Feb. 1999.

²³⁵ John Taylor, *The Go-between God*, SCM: London, 1972, p. 164.

²³⁶ John SagradoTutu in Interview on 9th Feb. 1999

²³⁷ See *Ezita: A collection of prayers Catholics of Arua Diocese know by heart*, 1997. Mgr Pierino Madrwa, the Vicar General of Moyo, Arua Diocese, criticises the Catholic Church and its

structured and follow a given pattern, which is litanic, where three or four people come to the *ambo* (lectern), announce the request and pray, and the people respond.²³⁸

.V.5.2. Conversational prayer

The conversational prayer is where a number of people talk to God as if in conversation with one another and is common in small group prayer meetings. As one person prays, the rest agree with what is prayed, “Yes, Lord”, “I agree, Lord”, “This is the right thing to do, Lord”, “We are sorry, Lord”, “We object to the way this matter has taken so long to be settled”, etc. This keeps everybody alert and the prayer meeting lively, as most prayer meetings tend to be drab and tedious.

.V.5.3. Litanic or antiphonal prayers

This is the most common form of the written prayers in use in most churches in Uganda. The Harvest litany of Emanuel Cathedral, Arua, is a typical litanic form of prayer.²³⁹ Catholic parents say the ‘Litany of Praise’, which uses the same structure, on the day of their children’s baptism.²⁴⁰ See also the liturgy for blessing the SIL office in Appendix 11.

.V.5.4. Mediated prayers through the saints

The concept of mediation in traditional prayer is used very much by the Catholic Church where the saints, particularly the Uganda Martyrs, the Blessed Virgin Mary and patron saints of churches and communities are implored to assist Christians in trouble. In Buganda, since the majority of the martyrs were Baganda, the cult of the martyrs is very well developed: each martyr’s picture or sculpture has the totem of the tribe from which he comes. For example: John Marie Muzeyi is from the *Mbogo* (Buffalo) clan, Jacob Buzabaliawo is from the *Nkima* (Monkey) clan and Kizito, the

liturgists and pastoral agents for translating other peoples’ prayers instead of composing new liturgies for the worship of the church in Arua; he was interviewed on 19th Feb. 1999.

²³⁸ The intercessor will choose a response for the congregation, either from the many church responses or design one for that day, which is taught before the service begins.

²³⁹ See Appendix 2. Joel Obetia wrote this service for the celebration of harvest in September 1998. It has been used ever since for this purpose in the Cathedral.

²⁴⁰ See Appendix 3. This litany was adapted for use in Arua Catholic Diocese by Ms Sherry Meyer, 1999; see last page of the booklet: *Come to the Water Books 1-3*, in Lugbara and English.

youngest martyr, is from the *Mamba* (Lungfish) clan.²⁴¹ Members of tribes pray to their brother saint in times of need and the saints are automatically considered patrons of their clans. Many Catholic schools, including St Charles Lwanga College Koboko in Arua, St Aloysious Gonzaga College Nyapea in Nebbi and St Kizito Primary School in Kampala, have adopted the Uganda Martyrs as their patrons.

.V.5.5. Overnight prayers

Ratra – overnight prayers or *kesha* in Swahili – began in the early part of the Revival movement in the 1940s²⁴² and became popular during the Idi Amin era in the 1970s when most Independent churches were banned in Uganda. *Ratra* has since become a feature of Ugandan church practice both in churches and homes. In Arua there are monthly overnight prayers in the Catholic, Anglican and Independent Churches that are cross-denominationally attended.

.V.5.6. The Morning Glory movement

The other new activity is the Morning Glory movement where Christians come to a church or any agreed place early in the morning, between 4.00 and 5.00 a.m., for prayer and praise. In Nebbi, the Morning Glory activities involve a march with trumpet music²⁴³ or jogging around the village/town with music, dance and prayer. This is similar to what the army or the government political cadre schools – popularly called *chakamchaka* – do in Uganda. They are considered victory marches or runs for Jesus to take control of places for God.

.V.5.7. Prayer as warfare

This model and form of prayer and worship is born out of the reality of other spiritual forces besides God in the African context. In addition to those forces named in the Bible, such as devil spirits, satanic forces, demons, principalities and powers, there are spirits associated with divinities, and with natural phenomena and objects, as well as spirits of the departed, magic, sorcery, witchcraft, the evil word, evil eye

²⁴¹ If you look at the drawings of the Martyrs used in this thesis you will see the clan symbols under each Martyr's feet. See next page.

²⁴² See Joe Church, 1981, *Quest For the Highest*, Paternoster: Exeter.

²⁴³ In West Nile the African Inland Missionaries (AIM) did not import organs and pianos for church worship; they brought in brass instruments and the training was done in Adi in Congo.

and the curse. This is the baggage that the African brings to the Church and that drives the prayer tradition in African Christianity.

Prayer then is a weapon for warding off these spiritual forces and mystical powers from self, property, the community and church. The central aim of prayer as warfare is healing and protection. It is prayer that affirms that Jesus is Lord over these forces. Christian life is therefore a spiritual warfare and those who distinguish themselves in this engagement are called 'prayer warriors' or 'spiritual warriors'.

.V.5.8. Prayer in the name of Jesus

The name of Jesus is important in prayers. All prayers end with 'in the name of Jesus Christ'. At times the congregation to participate in and reinforce the prayer being led by a member, in a similar way to conversational prayer uses the phrase in the name of Jesus as a refrain. But here it is more animated. It is more common in pentecostal and charismatic services in all the mainstream churches. Praying in the name of Jesus sets Christians out as a peculiar community, a visible expression of the body of Christ. In Uganda it can be said that the mark of a Christian is prayer *in the name of Jesus*.²⁴⁴

.V.5.9. Prayer to the God of 'faithful ancestors'

The concept of faithful ancestors there were also 'unfaithful ancestors' as Bujo affirms in his book.²⁴⁵ It means that not everybody becomes an ancestor.



means

Only those who distinguish themselves by their exemplary lives of faith, wisdom and fairness become ancestors. The criteria for becoming a Christian saint is similar that is why. The picture is of Charles Lwanga, a Ugandan martyr baptizing the young Kizito who are now the faithful ancestors of Uganda.

Forms of address in prayer are numerous. But addressing prayer to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is popular in Uganda. The Kenyan prayer for Communion

²⁴⁴ These are the words preached by a Pastor in Bwaise Christian Centre on 14th March 1999.

²⁴⁵ Bujo, 1992, *African Theology in its Social Context*, Pauline: Nairobi, p. 19.

at the Sanctus, joins “with Angels and Archangels and with Faithful Ancestors” in everlasting praise, which connects with many African hearts. At certain critical moments the God of famous believers from an area is called upon. For instance in West Nile, the God of Wani, Obetia, Dronyi and Vollar, the early leaders of the Church are called upon.²⁴⁶ The three Bishops of West Nile, whose graves are well kept as a sign of respect at the old Cathedral in Mvara, are also reverently acknowledged and referred to in meetings to emphasise certain points they stood for. It shows they are still considered part of the Church in West Nile. The wisdom of such departed elders, and especially the experience of the Uganda martyrs (see picture above) Bujo categorically states, is a veritable sacrament, which helps the living to discover the meaning of their history, to the effect that the past, as seen through their lives, is their salvation already revealed and assured.²⁴⁷

Fr David Kyeyune’s opening address to the Third Synod of Arua Catholic diocese brings this to the living members of the Church. He links the present leaders to the Fathers of faith in Israel, Mary, the Apostles, the Uganda martyrs and the missionaries.

My Lord Bishop, the Elder of Arua Diocese
 My fellow priests and deacons, my dear brothers and sisters in consecrated life, My brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ the Lord,
 I greet you as venerable members of the Third Synodal Assembly.
 I recognise you as the grandsons and daughters of Abraham and Sarah.
 You are the grandsons and daughters of the Apostles, Prophets and Uganda Martyrs – the foundation of the Catholic Church in Uganda.
 You are the grandsons and daughters of the pioneer missionaries who founded the Catholic Church in West Nile.²⁴⁸ You are the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ and therefore you are sons and daughters of Mary the Mother of Jesus Christ – our Mother in the faith.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁶ Silvanus Wani and John Dronyi were the first people to be ordained in West Nile in 1943. Wani went on to become the first Bishop of Madi/West Nile, and the Archbishop of Uganda. Albert Vollar was the missionary who arrived in Arua in 1923 till 1965 and did much of the pioneering work in West Nile. Benon Obetia was Rural Dean in Madi and Vurra and was a popular preacher. The Madi have a special place for Edward Sururu, who became a Christian in Bunyoro, before the missionaries set foot in West Nile. Their God is the God now worshipped by the Lugbara/Madi Christians.

²⁴⁷ Bujo, *African Christian Morality in the age of Inculturation*, Pauline Publications: Nairobi, 1990, p. 81.

²⁴⁸ The pioneer missionaries include Fr Atonieli, Fr Lino, Fr Augustino and Mgr Angelo Tarantino, the first bishop of Arua.

²⁴⁹ David Kyeyune, address to Third Synod, 26th November 1999 on ‘The Biblical Experience and understanding of the Jubilee year 2000 and beyond a Christian challenge to the entire family of God in Arua Diocese’, *Third Synod Declaration*, p. 33.

.V.5.10. National Days of fasting and prayer

National Days such as Uganda AIDS day on 1st December, the Martyrs' Day on 3rd June and other declared days are commonly observed as days of prayer and fasting. Such days are organised by groups such as the Intercessors for Uganda, the Association of Uganda Prayer warriors and the Uganda Joint Christian Council. My interaction with several prayer groups shows that they are often born of frustration with the fact that the Church is not praying enough.

.V.5.11. Borrowed models and practices from the East (Korea)

Some ways of praying have been acquired through the mass media, especially television in the town context. The Korean form of prayer where the whole Church prays together for a request is very common in most churches, but especially in towns and in Pentecostal Churches. It features in the intercessions, where instead of one person, the whole church intercedes, and in praise and worship.

.V.5.12. The Prayer Mountain movement

Another new phenomenon of Korean origin is the Prayer Mountain movement. This came into Uganda through Ugandan church leaders who went to Korea for huge Christian conventions by Campus Crusade for Christ International in the 1980s. There are about three prayer mountains in Uganda today. The first is at Biko in Nebbi Anglican diocese in West Nile constructed by Pastor Song.²⁵⁰ Another is at Nakasero in Kampala and Life Ministry, a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ International, in Kako, Masaka, constructed the third. The Biko Prayer Mountain is the most developed and is about 5 kilometres outside Goli, the Nebbi diocesan headquarters. It has a chapel, a retreat centre, a youth centre and a convention site that is being constructed between three hills with prayer caves and cells all around

²⁵⁰ In the mid-1980s Campus Crusade for Christ held a huge prayer conference for student leaders and pastors in which several Ugandans were involved, and many organizations have sent people to Korea to study what they are doing in prayer. Above all there are a number of Korean missionaries working in Uganda as nursing community health workers and in theological education. The only Reformed theological college in Uganda is run by Koreans and is training clergy for the Anglican and Pentecostal churches. Madi West Nile has been one of the earliest beneficiaries of this training, with six graduates in key pastoral positions.

the mountain.²⁵¹ It was built at the request of Henry Orombi, a Renewal leader and now Archbishop of Uganda.

.V.5.13. African attitudes of prayer in church

Some typically African attitudes of prayer can be observed in various churches. These are observations I made in the course of attending services in different churches within and outside West Nile.²⁵² Some are mentioned by Shorter, but we offer some cultural and theological explanations for the practices so that they can be developed rather than being a source of shame.

.V.5.13.1. Scolding or the prayer of complaint

In a complaint prayer one may say “God, I refuse to believe that you are going to do nothing about this case”, “Lord, I am not going to step out of here until I am assured of your will in this matter”. As I observed people in prayer in the different churches, they sounded stubborn, almost defiant as if God should treat them differently from others. This is not unique to Lugbara/Madi or Africa but it is a human attitude, which the African tradition exhibits. It is as Jacob did when he wrestled with ‘some man’ before he was re-named Israel.²⁵³ Such prayer may appear puerile but are we not the children of all those gone before us and did not Jesus say something about receiving the kingdom as children? One Lugbara pastor thinks the complaint prayer is a means of provoking God into action on behalf of one who has nowhere else to turn but to God. He thinks that when injustice seems to triumph only such a stance can resolve the issue.²⁵⁴ Complaint prayer, therefore, can be seen on the one hand as a technique for twisting God’s arm to do what one wants, a form of idolatry, an abandonment of humble submission and dependence on God. But it can, on the other hand, be considered a human response to the inscrutability of God’s action set against the implicit, and even explicit, acceptance of God’s will as the outcome of all prayers.

²⁵¹ When Rev Song came to Nebbi, he could hardly speak English. He was, however, prepared to point to the beauty of God’s creation to the Alur people through things that they took for granted. This attachment to nature and land, as we have seen, is part of our traditional religious heritage, which has been allowed to waste away as church buildings were emphasised as the aboard of God and of his worship. Rev Song has been able to turn Biko hill into a natural cathedral for prayer, praise and worship for Ugandans of all walks of life.

²⁵² See Appendix 12 for the churches and services attended.

²⁵³ Genesis 32: 23-33.

²⁵⁴ Canon Manua Ofuta of St Philips Church, Arua, interviewed on 10th Mar. 1999.

This latter is an honourable response that shows one's acceptance of God's will in all things and is a venture worthwhile for all to use.

.V.5.13.2. The infallible prayer

This attitude is related to the first, in that it arises from the feeling that if a ritual is correctly carried out in all its minute details, then God is bound to grant what is asked. If he does not, then there is a mistake, usually attributed to the worshipper, or the issue or person prayed for, and often also to God. This attitude is very common amongst the Independent Churches where people are coached to follow certain procedures in order to experience 'breakthroughs' in their prayer and spiritual lives. It becomes clear after something positive has come out of a negative experience. After a long dry spell when the rains finally came, one lady prayed: "God I thought you had forgotten us, thank you for the rain; it is true you never forget your people. I now believe it is only humans who forget."²⁵⁵ A hunter, who does everything possible to succeed in the hunt but spends almost the whole day without killing an animal, may say when he finally succeeds: "Thank you God, I thought you were going to make the mistake of making me go home without meat."

The attitude is revealed after success, especially in thanksgiving. It is a utilitarian use of prayer and of God, which arises out of the conditions of want in Uganda. It means when rain does not come, when no animal is killed, or no recovery from sickness is granted, other means will be sought to assist God (in his seeming failure), without necessarily denying God's power or existence. This utilitarian approach to prayer is a step above the complaint prayer and is one in which 'self will' becomes equated with 'God's will'.²⁵⁶ It means after the solution to a problem is found, whatever the source of that solution, that source becomes equated with the will of God. It reflects the struggle the African person has with the concept of salvation as 'life lived to the full' in a world afflicted with suffering and need. Good pastoral care and counselling can help this attitude from deteriorating into pantheistic forms.

²⁵⁵ A prayer by Neria Nyinga of Dawaa village, Okollo Parish, after the drought of 1985, courtesy of Samson Drajoa, personal interview of 9th May 2000.

²⁵⁶ Refer to the discussion on personal and private rituals in Chapter III above.

.V.5.13.3. *The divinatory prayer*²⁵⁷

Here the worshipper requires a sign from God. This sign is often expected in the course of the prayer or soon thereafter, to prove that God was listening or the person was praying in the right way. Examples from the Old Testament of Elijah on Mt. Carmel and Gideon with the fleeces are typical of divinatory prayers.²⁵⁸ Divination in Lugbara/Madi prayer is a feature shared with many other tribes and peoples in Uganda and Africa in general. Divination fulfils a deep need for people to understand what is happening to them, a search for meaning in the events of life. The diviner unlocks this meaning both by manipulating chance through ritual and through a heightened awareness or consciousness beyond that of other people. The practice originates from the traditional Lugbara/Madi practice of *i'ya ofiza* and *idro a'baza*, literally 'popping seeds' and 'trapping rats'. In the case of seeds the diviner throws seeds in the fire, saying, "If this journey will be very fruitful let the seed give two distinct popping sounds." If it does, the diviner will say, "You lie. Now I am going to throw in this seed. Let it give one popping sound." If it does, the diviner may make a final demand and if it comes to pass the project proceeds.

In the case of rats the worshipper may demand that a male rat be trapped. If this is fulfilled, he may demand a young female rat. If some of the demands are not met the project is either put on hold or abandoned. In a sacrifice the worshipper may demand that the sacrificial animal urinate to show that God has accepted it. In a prayer for rain, one lay reader prayed, "God, this time next week we shall be eating white ants."²⁵⁹ This in-built divination inhibits growth through the virtue of perseverance. That is why, in my view, in times of crisis many Christians turn to 'quick fix' solutions, which may not be biblically inspired.

.V.5.13.4. *The problem of noise*

Christians in Uganda, if not in Africa in general, are in danger of thinking that the noisier the service the better. Spirituality is equated with loudness where the louder the worship, the more spiritual it is thought to be. Stephen O'dama calls it

²⁵⁷ For a detailed discussion on divination, see Cherry Gilchrist, 1987, *Divination: The search for meaning*, Dryad Press: London.

²⁵⁸ See 1Kings 18: 20-46 and Judges 6: 33-40.

²⁵⁹ This was in a service at Okollo St. Philips church on March 7th 1999. The ants come only when it rains.

'Noisianity' instead of Christianity.²⁶⁰ *Asisile droza* – the quiet contemplative stance for building a 'memory pool' – is lacking in many churches and lives. That churches in Uganda are poor managers of silence is evident. Every space is filled with singing, prayer and activity. Even serious moments, such as after the communion, are filled with music. Helen De Borchgrave, from a different context but nevertheless from a contemporary experience, says:

The richness of life is in danger of death in our contemporary culture of facts and figures, where time is money; speed drives us, and noise blocks out the inner voice... [There is a need] to stir the imagination, encourage contemplation and stimulate wonder and praise, to ponder anew what the Almighty can do.²⁶¹

One explanation is the huge congregations with children all over the place, which makes silence very difficult to observe. The alternative is to keep doing things so as to focus attention on the performance. This, however, takes attention away from the act of communion with God. Careful planning can help refocus attention on the communion if music is used as an aid to meditation rather than as entertainment and a means of filling the gap, which is often a distraction from worship instead of an aid to it. The way forward is not dogmatic constraint, which some Ugandan church leaders impulsively reach for, but freedom in the spirit as exercised in extempore prayer. God can, however, bear noise, and to use dogma and other draconian constraints is to defeat the purposes of God as the God of all peoples, tongues and tastes.

.V.6. Summary

To conclude this section, the traditional practices of prayer are a central aspect of Lugbara worship and characterises the nature of Lugbara/Madi Christian worship. There is no doubt the Church in Uganda is a praying Church and in this they pray in the way they know best, that is in the traditional way. The traditional attitudes and forms are used to address God. And this identity of a praying church has been acquired over the years as the nation and people of Uganda have been subjected to the hardships of violent changes of government and civil wars. The political upheavals of Uganda have given birth to a praying Church that has prayer warriors,

²⁶⁰ Stephen O'dama, interviewed on 19th Feb. 1999.

²⁶¹ Helen De Bochgrave, 1999, *A Journey into Christian Art*, Lion Publication, p. 8.

prayer mobilisers and intercessors whose ministry is known worldwide. The prayer activities are interdenominational and are held in cathedrals, stadiums and other places from the state house to the papyrus churches in the slums across the land. The prayer is stubborn, divinatory and spontaneous. Even though it is not perfect, its all-embracing nature shows that God is in it.

.VI LUGBARA/MADI TEACHING/LEARNING METHODS

This chapter analyses the Lugbara/Madi teaching-learning methods. The material is drawn from discussions with Lugbara/Madi elders and is used in conjunction with other materials on African thought to establish how they bear on the wider Ugandan and African Christian thought. We asked community consciousness questions of how the Lugbara/Madi taught their communities. The elders took a lot of pride in explaining their oral teaching traditions and particularly the story telling traditions.

Section A

.VI.1. African thought forms

A number of attempts have been made to analyse African thought forms in order to understand African teaching-learning methods.²⁶² These studies have purportedly been done not only to help others gain an understanding of Africa but also to help communication between Africans and the rest of the world. The problem is that these studies assume Africans are monochrome, and if you speak to one you speak to all! This is very far from the truth. However, these works show – as we shall show here – that even though there are numerous written materials on African traditions, orality constitutes a major source of African thought. Orality embodies the African understanding of humanity, society, the cosmic world and the Supreme Being – God.²⁶³ In the case of many African peoples, including the Lugbara/Madi little has been written on their traditions, which makes their oral traditions a major source of information.²⁶⁴

²⁶² Useful works in this area are John Middleton, *The Lugbara of Uganda*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston: London, 1965; Ivan Karp and Charles Bird, eds. 1980, *Explorations in African Systems of Thought*, Indiana University Press: Bloomington; Richard Fardon, 1990, *Between God, The Dead and the Wild: Chamba Interpretations of Ritual and Religion*, International African Library: Edinburgh; Paul Stuart Landau, 1995, *The Realm of the Word: Language, Gender and Christianity in a Southern African Kingdom*, Heinemann: Portsmouth; Aylward Shorter, 1973, *African Culture and the Christian Church*, Geoffrey Chapman: London; Eugene Hillman, 1993, *Towards an African Christianity*, Paulist Press: New Jersey. Martin Nkafu Nkemnkia, 1995, *African Vitalogy: A Step Forward in African Thinking*, Pauline Publications: Nairobi, is one of the best works from an African amidst these works by Africanists.

²⁶³ Martin Nkemnkia singles out African thought as a means to promote and share African cultural values with other peoples in the world, in *African Vitalogy*, Paulines: Nairobi, 1999. See also Aylward Shorter, 1996, *Christianity and the African Imagination*, Paulines: Nairobi.

²⁶⁴ Here the works of John Middleton, *Lugbara Religion*, 1960, *The Lugbara of Uganda*, 1965 and Dalfovo's *Lugbara Proverbs* have proved very useful works on the Lugbara.

.VI.2. *E'yo* – Word in Lugbara/Madi Religion

The Lugbara/Madi people attach great importance to *e'yo* – word – and its use in ordering human life and affairs. For them the power of the word is related to the way it is spoken, the person speaking, the context of the speech, and to whom it is spoken. This is because *e'yo* (word) is related to *ava* (breath), which is the sign of *idri* (life). There is no *e'yo* (word) without *ava* (breath) and no *ava* (breath) without *idri* (life). *Idri* (life), as noted in Chapter III, is related to *driza* (warmth), which has connotations of love, brooding, nursing, and affection. This means *e'yo* (word) is not only a sign of life, breath and warmth, but it also communicates life. Life is destroyed by removing breath and warmth, such that when a person dies the Lugbara/Madi will say *e'yoni de 'i 'bo/e'yoa deni 'ba* – his/her words are finished.

.VI.2.1. The power of *e'yo* – word

The Lugbara/Madi people believe *e'yo* (word) has power, especially when it comes from a socially mature person and is accompanied by saliva. In the ritual of blessing, the saliva is expelled with a loud breathy '*pwa*', which has a sort of 'spokenness' about it. This is distinct from the saliva expelled in contexts of a curse or witchcraft. The spittle carried on the word and breath of a munificent or beneficent elder with *asi ala* (a good heart), blesses. And that from an elder with *asi onzi* (a bad heart), and expelled as a sign of rejection, causes harm.²⁶⁵ The word and spittle of a child, a socially immature being, does not contain mystical power. Only in exceptional cases do the words of minors have power, particularly when their basic rights are violated; in which case their word becomes *lemi/nyoka* (a curse) that can affect the entire lineage or community.²⁶⁶ This means words are carriers of feelings, beliefs, motives and intentions and become more 'weighted' when they come from persons of experience and status and from the weak and vulnerable. Words are principally addressed to God, who puts the intention of the words into effect. They can be used to bless, or to curse or destroy life. Ritually, elders can use *e'yo* (word) for or against

²⁶⁵ The spittle that is expelled to harm others is expelled as in expelling an object from the mouth, by expelling it between the tongue and the upper front teeth. Wizards and sorcerers do this on to persons and objects. Lugbara elders, unlike the Madi, used to have up to six dental extractions (the Madi removed only four teeth) which made it even easier to speak with a lot of saliva spray; in fact one has to spit every word that is spoken.

²⁶⁶ Middleton, 1960, pp. 22-24, records stories of how *nyoka* affects the whole lineage and tribe, the symptom of which is 'growing thin' (*oyi*), which does not lead to death but 'shows' the offender *e'yo ci* (there is word) against him/her.

people, things or animals. Teofilo Debo, the Revival leader of West Nile testifies to how his father once cursed an eagle which took sacrificial meat by just pointing at it and saying: *mi 'ba* – you! The bird circled the place with the meat for several minutes and fell dead with the meat in its claws.²⁶⁷

The importance of *e'yo* can be further illustrated by the following syntactic analysis. Instead of saying 'how are you?' the Lugbara greet: *E'yo ngonja?* (What is the word, any word?) to receive the reply *E'yo yo* (No word). This means the Lugbara believe life is full of problems and difficulties that must be regularly addressed by bringing 'word' to bear on them. The following uses of *e'yo* further illustrate its importance in Lugbara/Madi culture.

E'yo nzeza – Discussion is 'to bring forth word' to bear on a matter or issue
E'yo onzi / e'yo ezaza – Sin is 'bad word' or 'destroyed or spoilt word'
E'yo ada – Truthfulness or righteousness is 'true word' or 'good word'
E'yo truzu – Forgiveness is to 'release or free word'
E'yo muzu/tozu – Not to forgive is to 'store up or keep word'
E'yo onzi kuzu – Repentance is to 'leave bad word'
E'yo erizu – Obedience is to 'hear the word'
E'yo vaza – Understanding is 'digging or cultivating word'²⁶⁸
E'yo niza – Knowledge is to 'know word'

This shows they believe that word must be heard, received, released, dug/cultivated and known by people. Every ritual activity therefore is about correctly and constructively using *e'yo* (word) to bring about wellbeing, health, prosperity, productivity, etc., in the community in a given context. Good rains, good crop yields, good health, peaceful relations and success, are signs or effects of 'good word'. A good rainfall and a good crop yield, for example, is an indication that the strut of the community is right and proper and *e'yo yo* ('there is no word') against the people. On the other hand, drought, crop failure and calamity indicate *e'yo indi* 'there is word'; something is the matter, which needs to be addressed.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ Teofilo Debo in a personal testimony at the revival convention of January 2001

²⁶⁸ Note that Culture comes from the agricultural word to till or cultivate the land, which is also clear here in Lugbara thought and is related to the way people understand the world.

²⁶⁹ Paul Landau discusses the various uses of 'word' and how events reflect deeper meanings in Swana use in South Africa which is similar to these Madi/Lugbara categories. See *The Realm of the Word*, 1995, p. 18.

.VI.2.2. Asisile drozu – reflection on word

For the Lugbara/Madi, reflection on life is *asisile drozu*. This literally means to ‘running into the heart’ or ‘running after the heart’. In the broadest sense the expression *asisile droza*, according to elder Samson Drajoa, is the whole vision of reality in the mind at all times. It is the way one interrogates the myths of origins, and formulates questions on the meaning of life from daily experiences.²⁷⁰ To this Yosam Ruda adds: “When I am distressed my memory keeps me alive.”²⁷¹ Since it is not possible to think without existence and to conceive of being without life, the starting point for *asisile droza* (reflection) is therefore experience. People ‘run into the heart’ to draw strength from past experiences. Martin Nkafu Nkemnkia coined the term African ‘vitalogy’²⁷² from Placide Tempels’ ‘vital force’²⁷³, to explain this African concept of reality, where there is no dichotomy between matter and spirit, religious commitment and daily life, soul and body, the world of the living and the world of the dead. He thinks that ‘African thought, is essentially based on the experience of daily life, where vitalogy is the science of reflection on life’.²⁷⁴

Experience is life in its daily form and expression. It is assumed that the longer the life and experience, the better one is able to reflect on them and to have influence on other lives. Elders are wise because they have had a longer time to reflect on life. This, according to Manoa Ofuta, makes persons with long lives a resource for the values of Lugbara/Madi culture and traditions.²⁷⁵ A frequent *asisile droza* – ‘running into the heart’ – makes one a wiser and better communicator. That is why the art of speech is called *e’yo nzeza* – ‘to pull out word or to bring forth word’. People reflect in order to ‘bring forth word’ to bear on issues and on circumstances.

²⁷⁰ Personal interview of 22 November 2001

²⁷¹ Yosam Ruda interview of 25th February 2000.

²⁷² Martin Nkemnkia, 1999, *African Vitalogy: A step forward in African Thinking*, Paulines: Nairobi.

²⁷³ Placide Tempels, 1959, *Bantu Philosophy*, Paris, p. 63.

²⁷⁴ Nkemnkia, 1999, pp. 9-11.

²⁷⁵ Manoa Ofuta, interviewed on 10th March 1999.

.VI.3. Traditional Lugbara/Madi teaching-learning methods

Aylward Shorter defines culture as the configuration of meanings expressed in images or symbols through which a people communicate and develop an understanding of life in the world.²⁷⁶ An understanding of such symbols has a direct link with understanding the cultures in which they occur. Lugbara/Madi teaching-learning methods are geared towards the arrangement and ‘spicing’ of words to create *ava* (‘a mode of reception’) and *ava liza* (‘a mode of relaxation’) in the listener.²⁷⁷ The modes of reception and relaxation help the listener to eagerly assimilate information and to be able to retell what is heard. Yosam Ruda explains that the ‘mode of reception and of relaxation’ is a state of willingness to listen and to internalise the word for retelling.²⁷⁸ There are eight African literary forms,²⁷⁹ which the elders considered to be the teaching-learning methods. They divided these into three categories: (1) *a’diko/o’duko* (the story method), (2) *ayi nyaza* (the ritual formulae method), and (3) *imbata* (the didactic method). The difference between them is that story methods have aesthetic and ethical intent while ritual formulae are used to impart skills for performing rituals and didactic methods are skills of communication that use logic to instruct and to teach about life.

.VI.3.1. A’diko – Story methods

A story is an account or narrative of an incident or series of incidents in their sequence. Events or incidents are storied so that they can be passed on or impressed on the minds of listeners; and stories are cultural tools or ‘tokens of culture’²⁸⁰ offered for interpretation by the storyteller to an audience. In this way *a’diko oluza* (storytelling) is the celebration of historical or mythical events. Benjamin defines

²⁷⁶ Shorter, *African Culture and the Christian Church*, Geoffrey Chapman: London, 1973, p. 84. See also Geertz, 1982, *Inculturation and the Challenge of Modernity*, Rome.

²⁷⁷ The *ava* in mode of reception and *ava* in relaxation have different tonal expressions. The former has to do with interest; the latter is to do with breath, and *ava liza* means to breath in a relaxed way; thus to relax.

²⁷⁸ The concept of the ‘mode of reception’ is also present amongst the Batswana of Botswana with reference to storytelling and can be said to be an African learning method, see Landau, 1995, p. 15-17.

²⁷⁹ Shorter, 1973, p. 84.

²⁸⁰ Harriet Manelis Klein, ‘Narrative’, Alessandro Duranti, ed., 2001, *Key Terms in Language and Culture*, Blackwells: Oxford, p. 162.

storytelling as the 'art of repeating stories'.²⁸¹ The storyteller takes stories from his/her own or other people's experience and makes them the experience of the listeners.

Eriam Mbaa thinks storytelling is the chief way for parents and grandparents to inculcate into children social and moral values in the home.²⁸² The Lugbara/Madi people take pride in the art of storytelling and listening. Each teller has a way to cause listeners to attend to the story, which we have noted as the 'mode of reception and relaxation'. This allows listeners to take the story in with a view to retelling it. The more people there are telling a particular story, the richer the narrative becomes, because each teller stamps the story with his/her character. Each teller constructively adds layers to the constitution of the story through the variety of tellings and retellings. As such several versions of a given narrative may exist, distinctively and characteristically signed by the different narrators, their style of narration and their strategy for the telling.

After some time the most compelling teller is given the copyright of a particular story. It is because each teller stamps the story with his or her own style, identity and aura²⁸³ that, with time, the story as a work of art is established in the people's memory as the story told by the best teller.²⁸⁴ This person may even be given the name of the hero in the story as a nickname. In this way the notion of aura is implicated in the understanding of history, not as a chain of cause and effect, but as a kind of tradition as presented and understood by the best teller of the story. This explains why, as we shall see later, certain preachers are invited to preach in various churches because Christians find their particular way of preaching and their stories good and appealing.

²⁸¹ Benjamin, W., 1970, *Illuminations*, Fontana: London, p. 91.

²⁸² Interviewed on 10th May 2000.

²⁸³ Celia Lury states that 'the unique aura of a work of art derives from its repetition within a rooted, spatially and temporally particularised context and is realised within a personal and particular mediating practice between producer and audience'. See *Cultural Rights*, 1993, p. 16.

²⁸⁴ Although stories just 'happen', with time some people excel in telling particular stories that they become identified with them. He or she can at times delegate someone younger to tell the story in his/her presence and help, when problems arise, to pass the story and its telling on to others in the best form as possible.

Unfortunately, although Africans are often better orators, conversationalists and listeners than writers and readers,²⁸⁵ the art of storytelling at the family hearth is fast dying out amongst the Lugbara/Madi of Uganda, but especially amongst those living in towns. Young people prefer to read and watch electronically prepared stories than hear a story being told. This is partly because they have not come across compelling storytellers but more so because lifestyles have changed drastically in the last thirty years in Uganda. To show how modernity has affected these teaching-learning methods, we conducted a survey amongst 100 pupils in rural West Nile, Arua town and in Kampala City.²⁸⁶ The survey shows that in the rural area storytelling is the preferred means of communication and films the least common means.²⁸⁷ In Arua storytelling ranked the same as films, with books as the leading method. In Kampala films were appreciated most, followed by books and storytelling methods.²⁸⁸ (See Table 1 below).

Place	Storytelling	Books	Film
Okollo	60	30	10
Arua	32	36	32
Kampala	20	23	57

Table 1

Not only is storytelling, according to Samson Drajoa,²⁸⁹ an important way in which the traditions of the Madi are orally transmitted, but good storytelling also reveals the persons of wisdom in a society. He gives two reasons for the demise of storytelling

²⁸⁵ Shorter, 1973, p. 83.

²⁸⁶ I am indebted for the information here to the Headmaster, staff and pupils of Jojoyi Primary School in Madi Okollo, the Headmaster, staff and pupils of Arua Demonstration School and the Headmaster, staff and pupils of Buganda Road Primary School, Kampala who selected for me a group of 100 pupils in their school to take part in this short survey.

²⁸⁷ Very few of the pupils had actually seen a film as a result a number of them gave film a high rating indicating they would love to see a film. Those who saw did so either while visiting relatives in town or when a video or film for religious/agricultural/health was shown in their neighbourhood. In my work as a Diocesan Mission Co-ordinator, I used to show the Jesus film around. In a place where a film had never been shown, there was a particularly loud weeping when faces rather than whole pictures were showing. It became clear that they did not know how to read pictures, asking what did they do to Jesus' legs, or where is his stomach?

²⁸⁸ Although the children in Kampala came from well to do families, not many families owned TV sets and the Cinema halls are geared to adult shows and rarely for families.

²⁸⁹ Interviewed on 11th May 2000.

as a teaching-learning method amongst the Madi. Firstly, the school system takes children away from the home and village as a sign of ‘progress’. As a result children and parents do not see this mode of cultural production as essential to the social products they want to become. The second factor is the changed (and ever-changing) lifestyle in Uganda, where the homestead of parents, children and grandparents no longer exists, due to work patterns. Where they exist, the methods, aims, and goals of education have changed from that of repetition to that of replication,²⁹⁰ such that good storytellers – and good stories with them – are disappearing, and being replaced by books, the internet and television.

In general, therefore, there are social limitations to storytelling being given meaning through ritual and tradition in the present contexts of Uganda. Where this is attempted certain people are effectively excluded, particularly the young and the educated elite who see little benefit in participating in this form of cultural production and social formation. The process of cultural production for the children and the educated, according to Lury,²⁹¹ has moved on from the repetition of stories, dances and songs, to replication. This is the copying or replication of originals for distribution through photography, film, video and sound recording tools, as a means of cultural production. There is, nevertheless, some access to the techniques involved in story methods, including a good capacity of reception as indicated in the primary school survey above.²⁹² The story teaching-learning method can be categorised according to the type of stories, which include *a'diko* (folk-tales), *adi* (myths), *e'yo efi* (etiological stories) and *e'yo eti* (historical narratives).²⁹³

.VI.3.1.1. *A'diko/o'duko – folktales*

The Lugbara/Madi term *o'duko* means story, but with a slight tonal alteration it becomes ‘voice’. This is not an accidental connection but a derivative link to the idea

²⁹⁰ Celia Lury, 1993, *Cultural Rights*, p. 17.

²⁹¹ Lury, p. 18, discusses how means of cultural production are affected by technology from repetition to replication whereby cultural goods are constituted as intellectual property managed through organizations for elite consumption giving rise to the culture industry.

²⁹² The children still love to hear stories told and are able to repeat the stories they are told indicating their reception level is high that is why national and community celebrations include cultural performances of storytelling, music, dance and drama watched by people dressed in three piece suits in 35 degree Celsius temperatures.

²⁹³ These appear in Shorter, 1973, pp. 83-121 as ‘African literary forms’, but we separating the story methods from the ritual formulae to create the two categories of teaching-learning methods.

that the story is always projected by voice. In the final analysis the voice that tells the story becomes the story. Folk stories, according to Shorter, are ‘stories told for their own sake to be enjoyed as story or because of the cleverness of the plot and the characterisation’.²⁹⁴ Lugbara/Madi folk-tales surrogate animal life for human activity. They depict the *etoo* (hare) as the trickster, *okuku* (tortoise) as the wise seer, diviner, and/or *ojoo* (medicine man or herbalist). *Ambuleti/apuate* (the cricket larva) is always the wife to the hare, who often undermines the hare’s tricks; the *ebio* (ogre) is the gluttonous flesh-eating dunce who sorts out those who cannot keep to accepted norms of life.²⁹⁵

Other animals are presented for what they are, for example *kami* (the lion) for its power, *o’du* (the leopard) for stealth, *obau* (the hyena) for its stupidity and gluttony. The human character *Aza* is depicted as the moral saviour-figure that deals fairly with these animals and overcomes their tricks. *Aza* has a naive belle for a sister, called *Aliko* (the green tree frog).²⁹⁶ There are also abstract characters such as *inzo* (lies), *awu* (lust), *ada* (truth), *abiri* (hunger), *dra* (death), *de* (old age), *a’bu* (fatness), *idri* (life) and *avimu* (disappearance) that are used in stories. Shorter points out that:

All folk stories have a moral, the value of which is often secondary to the technique and plot of the story. Folk stories are told as entertainment. The moral behind it is a bonus, which is imbibed through the enjoyment of the story.²⁹⁷

.VI.3.1.2. *Adi – myths*

“Myth refers to symbolism in general but to a symbolic story in particular.”²⁹⁸ Although the word ‘myth’ has gained pejorative meaning in both Christian and non-Christian circles, human society cannot do without myths. For Pluss, myths are “narratives which help man to situate himself temporally in view of the sacred and in

²⁹⁴ Shorter, 1973, p. 86

²⁹⁵ Finnegan, 1970, pp. 342-3, points out similarities in the plots and characterisation of African folk stories with a warning not to be misled to deduce cultural uniformity on the basis of the similarities because the moral from them is often very unrelated and different.

²⁹⁶ The long legs of the frog, the smooth dark skin, the prominent eyes and shrill call as opposed to the rough croaking of the toad are the beautiful feminine features preferred by the Lugbara/Madi.

²⁹⁷ Shorter, 1973, p. 86.

²⁹⁸ For Shorter, because all African literary forms employ symbols, they qualify to be called myths on this account; see p. 86.

society – they relate to fundamental questions of existence”.²⁹⁹ Attempts to compare myth and history have appeared in academic circles over the years, and have shown that myth and history are not opposed to each other and that the difference between them is not as between truth and falsehood.³⁰⁰ Shorter elaborates:

If the aim of history is to establish facts by an appeal to evidence, a myth is used to teach truth – even the historical truth of tribes, by means of symbols. Myths may teach untruth just as a historical narrative may in fact be untrue and the evidence on which it rests false.³⁰¹

Christopher Wrigley points out: “...there is always a large territory in which myth and history interpenetrate. But it is easier to identify their respective contributions when they are recognised as being conceptually distinct.”³⁰² Even though human society cannot exist without symbolism, humans can refuse to know symbols except as translated into ideas. Whereas history tries to say what actually happened, myths explain “why things have become what they are, and why they cannot be otherwise; describing, in other words, not what happened, but what must have happened”.³⁰³

The Lugbara/Madi myth of origin that means so much to them is that of *Gbogboro and Meme*. It gives the origins of the tribe and how they came to live where they are and to be the people they are today. The theme of the myth is basically cosmological and sociological. It is similar to but also different from the *Kintu and Nambi* myth of the Baganda that is widely taught in Ugandan schools. The Kiganda myth has a more religious (theological) than cosmological theme.³⁰⁴ It shows how death came into the world and the roots of cultural stereotypes amongst the Baganda.

²⁹⁹ Jean-Daniel Pluss, *Therapeutic and Prophetic Narratives in Worship*, Verlag Peter Lang: Frankfurt, 1988, p. 19.

³⁰⁰ For a detailed treatment on myths including, the common qualifications of myths, the comparison between myth and falsehood, the role of myths in cultures, contemporary examples of myths and the theology of myths, see Pluss, 1988, pp. 15-24. Jan Vansina's *Oral Tradition as History*, James Currey: Oxford, 1985, is a very good place too particularly in relation to African history.

³⁰¹ Shorter, 1973, p. 92.

³⁰² Christopher Wrigley, *Kingship and State: The Buganda Dynasty*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1996, p. 46. The written history of Buganda kingdom dates from 1862, but Wrigley argues that the oral myths of the events beyond that date are valid and valuable records that throw light on the kingdom of Buganda.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ Wrigley basically discusses this Kiganda myth and its significance on the Kingdom of Buganda. Another discussion is by Benjamin Ray, 'The Story of Kintu: Myth, Death, and Ontology in Buganda', Ivan Karp & Charles Bird, eds., *Explorations in African systems of Thought*, 1980.

What I discovered here is that myths are constantly created as folk stories are. The Lugbara have created myths about the activities of the first white man in Lugbara-land, which has to do with their perception of the white man as an ‘inverted’ personality with mystical and magical powers. The first Administrative Officer in Arua from 1914-1922 was Alfred Weatherhead. They nicknamed him *Nzerekede* because he is depicted as being capable of covering tens of miles in a short time to emerge amidst feuding clans to arrest them. He is said to emerge from anthills in time to find wrongdoers in their act.³⁰⁵ This, according to the elders, is because the Lugbara have a way of exaggerating the unknown to differentiate it from their ‘normal’ ways. This is their way of saying the Lugbara knew nothing of the white man’s ways and methods. For them Alfred Weatherhead was *julu* (inverted) because he did not do things as the Lugbara did.

.VI.3.1.3. *E’yo efi – etiological stories*

These are myths by the fact that they are popular explanations of how things came to be as they are now. They are ‘just so’ and ‘why so’ stories.³⁰⁶ They are used mainly for teaching a moral or etiquette. The story of why *Barifa*, a place under Arua hill, came to be so-called is a typical etiological story. The name came about because a certain tribe, the Bari, from Sudan, settled under Arua hill and started to construct a tall tower of bamboo. The tower collapsed, killing the constructors in droves. Their bones littered the place, such that the place became known as *Bari-fa* – Bari-bones.

Each tribe, clan and community has its own ‘just so’ stories, not only passed on from of old but also created by the people of wisdom in their society. These include stories of why chicken constantly scratch in the dust, why the kite eats chicks, why the fox loves chicken, why the tortoise has a patched back, why dogs bark and have wide mouths, and why people die. One such story among the Baganda is about plantains. It shows why they are called *ebitoke* in Luganda.

Once a *muzungu* (white man) came to visit an African friend and was given some food to eat. He was first served millet with some sauce. He complained that it tasted like mud. He was then served steamed plantains. He said it was ‘a bit okay’, so steamed plantains became known as *ebit-oke*.

³⁰⁵ The word *nzerekede* in present Lugbara means something plastic or jelly-can but in the 1920s it was used to describe Weatherheads movements in the course of his duties. See Leopold, *Inside West Nile*, 2005, pp. 82-107.

³⁰⁶ Shorter, 1973, p. 86.

The point of this story is not an actual origin of the word *ebitoke*, but to illustrate the fact that such stories are created for the enjoyment of the people. It also shows how translation is not only from English to the vernacular but also from vernacular into English, and this brings new meanings to ordinary local words.

.VI.3.1.4. *E'yo eti – historical and heroic narratives*

Unlike the foregone story methods, *e'yo eti* are factual stories and accounts of events well known by the community for at least three to four generations. They are what people remember of their heroes and include genealogies and stories of heroic acts in battles, hunting, wise sayings and last words of heroes. Historical narratives are a depiction of the big stories of families, clans and/or tribes through small stories of individual heroes. Such stories normally have a moral about how things should be done, as exemplified by the practices, acts and sayings of such heroes. However, the interpretation of the stories is often biased towards the local heroes and the tribes.³⁰⁷ It is because these story-forms employ symbols that they are rightly called myths, according to Shorter.³⁰⁸ We will now analyse *ayi nyaza* (ritual statements) as a Lugbara/Madi teaching-learning method.

.VI.3.2. *Ayi nyaza – Ritual statements*

The second category of Lugbara/Madi teaching-learning method consists of statements used in ritual situations and comes in the form of ritual formulae. Ritual experts in performing religious acts skilfully use them. Ritual formulae are *invocative* texts because they are used to invoke God or the spirits. They include specific *izita* (prayers), *ayi nyaza* (invocations), *oyo soza* (oaths), *tusu coza* (blessings or 'application of saliva'), *atri/otrita* (curses) and *andrita/ondrita* (magical or oracular spells).

The formulae are of a more or less fixed pattern but each person applies them in his/her own way by the use of personal ritual gestures. Such gestures or actions include slapping the thigh, touching the ground, raising the hands to heaven, rubbing

³⁰⁷ This idea of historical stories was used by Michael Wright, in titling his work on the Baganda, *Buganda in the Heroic Age*, Oxford University Press: London, 1971.

³⁰⁸ Shorter, 1973, p. 86.

the mouth, spitting, use of the fly whisk or walking stick, or breaking an object.³⁰⁹ All these actions have ritual meanings and when accompanied by ritual words can be effective conveyors of meanings, values, information and power to heal and to harm. See in Chapter III the section on Blessings and Curses above.

.VI.3.3. Imbata – didactic texts and songs

The third category is *inculcative* texts (as opposed to invocative texts, described above) because they are meant to teach and instruct. They include *e'yo o'beza* (proverbs),³¹⁰ *koikoi* (riddles), *imbata* (instructional formulae or wise sayings), *o'duko/a'diko* (parables)³¹¹ and *ongo nyiri* (children's songs and rhymes).³¹² Didactic texts are used to construct cosmic pictures and are "the result and product of the experience of the people in their historical marriage to the land...used for the cultural education of the young and society".³¹³ Didactic texts are shared across contiguous cultures and people groups, as all religious ideas are. For example, in West Nile many proverbs are shared between the Lugbara, Madi Moyo, Kebu, Alur and Kakwa. The use of didactic texts reveals the persons of wisdom in society, as this Kiganda wise saying illustrates: *Siwa muto lugero nga talumanyi* (He who refuses to explain a proverb to a young person simply shows his ignorance of it).³¹⁴

Lugbara/Madi riddles and proverbs incorporate images from vegetable, animal and human worlds for effect. The meanings, however, are derived from the ritual context or the social occasion in which they are used. The images from the

³⁰⁹ The breaking of a pot, calabash, walking stick, drinking straw, rope, a seed, etc., all have symbolic ritual significance to show a severance of relations.

³¹⁰ The Lugbara meaning of proverbs is 'words thrown around' such that the hearer has to assemble the meaning from the context and from experience. This fits well with Nketia's idea of proverbs as an 'artistic use of words presented in a compressed or forceful language which gives freshness to speech', J. H. Nketia, 'Folklore of Ghana', *The Ghanaian* 1, 1958, p. 21, cf., Ruth Finnegan, 1970, *Oral Literature in Africa*, p. 389-90.

³¹¹ Note here that the Lugbara/Madi people use the same term (a'diko/o'duko) for both folk stories and parables and technically they are in the same genre.

³¹² A lot of children's songs and rhymes are nonsensical, mixing Arabic, Lugbara and Alur together. I am not sure why this is; possibly it is a misrepresentation of songs in Alur or Arabic. Finnegan, citing Tracey, 1929, p. 99, talks of 'many nonsense words' in Southern Rhodesian (Zimbabwean) mystical songs, 1970, p. 167. For a detailed treatment of African proverbs, riddles and rhymes see Ruth Finnegan, 1970, *Oral Literature in Africa*, Oxford University Press, Nairobi. Children's songs and rhymes are often accompanied by dance and group performance.

³¹³ Shorter, 1973, p. 84, 86.

³¹⁴ This is the nearest translation and is taken from unpublished collections by John Taylor in the possession of the researcher.

world of nature are borrowed for application to particular human experiences as a challenge to people or community to understand. The Swahili *kitendawili* for riddle literally means a 'two-way action', indicating that a riddle is a meeting of contexts and therefore a window for the interpenetration of contexts.

As Shorter rightly argues:

All symbols, in a way, are riddles because they present a pair of opposites from which the referent must be guessed, aided by a more or less helpful context... As symbols, riddles are therefore participatory experiences in other peoples' contexts or meanings and also an opening for others to participate in one's culture through adaptive learning.³¹⁵

He treats riddles as verbal challenges, which, though often statements, have implied questions to which the hearer must supply the application. Finnegan thinks the difference between African and Western riddles is that the former are basically statements while the later are mostly in question form; ending with 'what am I?' The point in African riddles is often in the form of images, visual, acoustic, or situational, rather than in puns or plays on words.³¹⁶ The following examples of Lugbara riddles will help illustrate the point.

Yi aluza sopa piri (Sweet water standing up). -*Eka* (Sugar cane).³¹⁷
Soni pa ku (it never stops) -*Itu* (time, or literally the sun).

Some riddles adopt story lines. For example: *Ma si jo batisi te ma la drinia* (I built an iron roof house, but I chose to sleep on it rather than in it. what am I?). The answer is *Anikani* (the house spider). *Ma saani ci te ma enya ova nyaku dria* (I have plenty of plates, but I place my food on the ground. What am I?). The answer is *Ago* (pumpkins).³¹⁸

The following examples of Lugbara instructional formulae show how they are used. *Odru vileri ma ndua ari wara* (the last buffalo often has a bloody bottom) teaches people to make haste, not to lag behind and to move with the others, as the last or slowest person often gets hurt.³¹⁹ And because many Lugbara rituals revolve

³¹⁵ Shorter, 1996, p. 87, 89

³¹⁶ See Shorter, 1973, p. 87, cf. Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Literature in Africa*, Oxford University Press, Nairobi, 1970, p. 427.

³¹⁷ Note how the English translation looks awkward without 'what am I?' at the end.

³¹⁸ The pumpkin has leaves that are like plates but the pumpkin fruit grows on the ground than on the leaves.

³¹⁹ This explains a principle of Lugbara socialisation and reveals the relationship to their world of nature.

round the eating and sharing of meat, as depicted by their societal structure (*enyati* – sub-clan) to show the way they are organised to eat ritual meals, many proverbs and sayings emphasise how to behave at table and to claim one’s rightful share in such rituals.

Drinza nya onde: The shy person eats tendons
Okuku dra drinzasi: The tortoise dies of shyness

These two sayings teach people to speak out when treated unfairly or not given their rightful share as members of a comensal unit. At ritual meals, patience is an important virtue that is abundantly rewarded. The patient person enjoys good meat whereas *yakpakpa nze fa* (the impatient person hurries away with a bone). A Kiganda proverb on patience goes: *Kiriba edda, mmesa ya mu mutala* (the nearest English proverb being “Everything comes to him who waits”).

Patience in other areas of life, such as getting the right marriage partner, is also important. The Lugbara have a saying for young girls waiting for the right person to marry: *Zamva onzivururi deni akua ku* (Even the ugliest girl cannot grow old in her mother’s house). This saying encourages girls not to worry that they may not be married. The deeper meaning is that moral character is more important than physical beauty. The proverb does not imply that physical beauty is to be despised, but that physical beauty without moral beauty is worthless.³²⁰ Yosam Ruda thinks Madi proverbs, riddles and wise sayings, in their structure, symbolise the unchanging traditions of the Madi people and that the various meanings given to a proverb are indicative of the socio-cultural changes and developments among the people. In a way, life is a proverb and is consistent in content but the meaning depends on the context in which it is used.³²¹

.VI.3.4. O’du peza – heroic recitations and praise poems

Praise poems are pieces of free verse, which “describe with some bit of exaggeration people’s origins and identity as individuals and/or as a group”.³²² They include *cere*

³²⁰ For a very detailed treatment and record of Lugbara proverbs, see Dalfovo, *Lugbara Proverbs*.

³²¹ Interviewed on 13th November 1999.

³²² Shorter, 1973, p. 90.

(praise poems)³²³ and *poi* (panegyrics). They are widely used by the Lugbara/Madi as well as by most other tribes. *O'du* is used when people are feeling good about themselves and at intense ritual moments. *Cere* in particular is used at times of bereavement, joy and victory, to show the level at which the matter has affected the person. It is literally an ejaculation or emotional outburst in the form of a stylised crowing.

The boasting of warriors and hunters, and addresses to rulers and elders and the praise of favourite animals and ancestral spirits all fall into the same category. Skilled orators to show esteem for named individuals, to cheer the people and to enliven the atmosphere also use *cere* and *poi* at public religious and political meetings. The same forms are also used to tease the in-laws and to elevate one's own tribe above the others at weddings and other cultural gatherings. Special songs or poems may be composed for such occasions. They include dirges, hunting songs, songs for work tasks such as harvesting, and songs/poems of farewell or welfare and lullabies, as well as oratory in courts, councils and in church.³²⁴ To conclude this section it will suffice to mention that the difference between folk and sage philosophers is seen in the use of these teaching/learning methods. The folk sages excel in the story and ritual methods of teaching/learning while the sage philosophers excel in didactic and heroic poem methods. The philosophic sages teach at the same time question the stories, myths and rituals of the community. They keep the community forward looking than backward looking. And so to church we now turn.

Section B

.VI.4. Christian Teaching/Learning methods in West Nile

In this section, first the role of the word and of the Bible in Lugbara/Madi Christianity is explored and the practice of preaching in the churches is examined in the light of the traditional teaching-learning practices we have shown in the section above. We asked the elders to show how the traditional use of *e'yo* (word) has influenced their understanding of the word of God and its preaching and how the

³²³ The praise poems are 'crowed' rather than said, but the community would know what each person's poem says.

³²⁴ Finnegan, 1970, p. 445 discusses the unique oratory practices in Africa with which many an elder will delight audiences and which in turn earns them a status in the society.

Lugbara/Madi teaching/learning methods are being used to propagate the word of God.

.VI.4.1. The Bible as *E'yo Siza* – the written word in Lugbara

The importance the Lugbara/Madi people attach to *e'yo* (word) and the fascination they had towards the written word drew many Lugbara/Madi to become Christians in the early years. When the vernacular bible in Lugbara arrived in West Nile in 1967 it was like a coming of age of the Lugbara people. There was a dramatic increase in church attendance and it was not surprising that two years later, in 1969, a diocesan status was granted to Madi/West Nile. The general role of the Bible as the Word of God in religious and social life of the Lugbara/Madi cannot therefore be underestimated. African scholars have pointed to the role of the Bible in the literary development of African languages.³²⁵

Two major factors, according to Casto Adeti, fixed the Bible into Lugbara/Madi and other Ugandan cultures; first, the Protestant translation of the scriptures into vernacular and, secondly, the Second Vatican Council's recommendation that ordinary Catholics should study the Bible for themselves.³²⁶ I have mentioned how missionaries used literacy as the chief method for the propagation of the gospel such that the first generations of converts in Uganda were called *basomi* (readers). The Bible and the literary development of the Lugbara language and other languages in Uganda are intertwined. The earliest Lugbara primers were scripture texts, and the whole Bible in Lugbara, which came in 1967, is the only literature in Lugbara in most homes. The vernacular Bible had a dramatic effect on the Lugbara language, enriching it with new words and concepts. Joy Grindey says it boosted church attendance and worship, as well as having a significant effect on literacy in general.³²⁷

³²⁵ See John Mbiti, 1979, 'The Biblical basis in present trends of African Theology' *Bulletin of African Theology*, issue 1, January-June 1979, p. 12; 1986, *Bible and Theology in African Christianity*, OUP: Oxford; and 'The Bible in African Culture', edited by Rosino Gibellini, 1994, *Paths of African Theology*, SCM: London p. 27-39.

³²⁶ See Appendix 6 for content of the Interview of 24th Feb. 1999.

³²⁷ Joy Grindey in a personal interview on 27th August 2001 revealed how church services became fuller and more exciting with the arrival of the bible in Lugbara in 1967 and Kakwa in 1980 in West Nile.

In the literary development of the language, new words for church, priest, bishop, grace, angels, Satan, etc., although not appropriately researched, were added to the Lugbara language, or existing words were given new meanings. The vernacular Bible therefore was the most hope-filled sign for their desire for cultural progress and for Christianity that satisfies the deep and genuine spirituality felt across the communities and across the religious spectrum in Uganda.³²⁸ The vernacular Bible therefore had a liberating effect on local initiatives in Christian practice to the point that European culture began to be peeled away from the gospel that more fully embraced the totality of local experience. Beginning with the Independent Churches and the Revival movements in the mission-instituted churches, the vitality of worship with respect to music, prayers, preaching and offertory began to be seen in Uganda as a result of the vernacular Bible. This was because the Bible was found to reflect African concepts of family, community and society, and to provide new parallels with indigenous concepts of God, spirits, the human soul, life and death. Christianity also brought the new leadership roles of bishops, deacons, and priests, as well as posts in the colonial administration, with economic powers and benefits that went with such positions.³²⁹ The vernacular Bible was therefore a coming of age – a *kairos* moment – for the Church in West Nile and for its people, who saw their languages in print for the first time, with which came opportunities for biblical hermeneutics and exegesis in local languages and cultures.³³⁰

.VI.4.2. The vernacular Bible as a source of theological distortion

These opportunities, however, were not easy to come by, because of different denominational positions on the Bible, which set Protestant and Catholic Christians against each other. The Bible translations were markedly different in the use of

³²⁸ Anthony Bellagamba, 'New attitudes towards Spirituality', p. 95-109, in Shorter et al., 1987, *Towards African Christian Maturity*, Pauline: Kampala, p. 95, Bellagamba highlights the hope that the vernacular Bible injected into African Christianity.

³²⁹ Even though the Bible had a tremendous effect on African culture and languages, its message was corrupted by the mission agenda espoused by the mission agencies. Apart from these so-called benefits, European interpretations and biases were imposed on African believers that were reflected in the various translations and therefore distorted the theology that evolved from these translations.

³³⁰ Waruta & Thamburi have illumined the role of the vernacular Bible in African Christianity in general in Kinoti and Waliggo, eds. 1997, *The Bible in African Christianity*, Acton Publishers: Nairobi, p. 42.

terminology in the same language. Denominational beliefs and practices divided same people groups and often families, too, emphasising what divided the churches rather than what united them. The following terms in Lugbara illustrate how Protestants borrowed from Kiswahili and Lugbara, and Catholics from Latin and Lugbara, to express certain same words.³³¹

<u>Word</u>	<u>Protestant</u>	<u>Roman Catholic</u>
Church	Kanisa (Kiswahili)	Eklesia (Latin)
God	Mungu (Kiswahili)	Adrou (Lugbara)
Mary	Mariamumu	Maria
Christ Jesus	Kristo Yesu	Kristu Yezu
Catechist	Olupi (Lugbara)	Katekista
Communion	Mesa	Meza or Communio
Baptism	Baptizi	Batisimo ³³²

Table 2

The differences in terminology pose problems for the development of local theologies in Lugbara. Where the same term is used the spellings are twisted to create a difference. These show why the Bible is not timeless from the human perspective, since perishable materials are used by fallible and sinful human beings whose ways and goals are often contrary to those of God. Such people can influence the translation of the scriptures into local languages. Thus in the Independent Churches the interpretation of the Bible is often a source of schism, with different Bible study groups breaking away to become new churches, showing that such groups can lead to multiplication of errors and to exploitation rather than being centres of nurture.

This, however, does not nullify the tremendous effect of the Bible study groups on the growth of the Independent Churches in Uganda, their divisive tendencies notwithstanding. The joint translation and revision of all vernacular

³³¹ Klesia and Katechista have Latin roots.

³³² Note how even when the two churches use the same term the spellings are twisted to create a difference.

Bibles, and the joint syllabus for Christian religious education in Uganda from 1980, have addressed the terminological problems and laid a firm base for the common development of local theologies in Uganda. Despite these denominational differences, which are often biblically defended, the Bible remains the unifying factor for Christians in Uganda.

Tinyiko Maluleke points out another problem that attachment to the Bible brings to the Christianity it has helped to create. This is the problem of a “Christianity that values hermeneutics less and emphasises the authority of the vernacularised Bible more”.³³³ The use of the Bible as a magico-religious book, which, whenever and wherever it is opened, ‘speaks’ to people and guides them in particular situations, is common in Independent church groups and revivalist groups, where instead of going to a diviner, the Christian reaches for the Bible and derives simple directives from what is read.³³⁴ Fidelity to the Bible has led to its ‘absolutisation’, whereby it is treated as an oracle to which to turn for a ‘quick fix’.³³⁵ It is true that attachment to the Bible is so simplistic in Uganda that if a critical interpretation is undertaken, or a view is critically challenged and questioned through hermeneutics, many Christians are left with nothing to hold on to, and can therefore falter badly. Some then resort to consigning to hell those whose interpretations they reject. However, some sophistication in the use of the Bible is emerging with contextual theological training that emphasises cultural appropriateness in worship.³³⁶

.VI.4.2.1. Breaking the biblical Canon through local values

The elders discovered that there is no danger in using the vernacular Bible to celebrate local values. It is because African users improperly stick Christianity to ready-made uses of the Bible in the West that makes new initiatives and interpretations difficult. The vernacular Bibles are ‘original language’ copies that offer new challenges in the local and other contexts. The Canon, after all, is not

³³³ Tinyiko Sam Maluleke, in Mugambi, *The Church and the Future in Africa*, AACC: Nairobi 1997, p. 98.

³³⁴ In a Seminar on 16th January 1999, a team of worship leaders from Emanuel Cathedral revealed that some people sleep with bibles under the pillow to ward off bad dreams and nightmares.

³³⁵ Maluleke, 1997, p. 98.

³³⁶ For emerging African exegetical practices see Kinoti and Waliggo, eds. 1997, *The Bible in African Christianity*, Acton Publishers: Nairobi.

closed because of the new concepts and interpretations that emerge with every translation into vernacular languages.

Zac Niringiye blames the vernacular Bible for nominalism in Uganda. He thinks people read too much into the vernacular scriptures, thus equating Christianity with traditional religion, and thereby affecting Christian growth and the bearing of visible fruits of repentance.³³⁷ I rather think it is the lack of engagement with African traditions, and the condemnation of everything the African lived for, that is to blame for the duality of Christian life in Uganda. Nominalism is in my opinion an attempt to be authentic in a hostile Christian mission environment that offers no solutions to African existential problems. Nominalism is more a judgement on an uncaring Christian mission than on Africanity or Africanness. Landau speaks of “half-hidden continuities flowing under abrupt ruptures over rainmaking, healing and fears of witchcraft in the Botswana churches”,³³⁸ which are also a feature of Christianity among the Lugbara/Madi of Uganda. Nominalism in any context is therefore a sign either of the poor ‘earthing’ of the gospel or that ‘Christianity’ can never be more than ‘nominal’ in any given context.

Christ’s ministry was very inclusive and community-centred. He honoured even the most tentative approaches to him, so that if anyone felt excluded it could be that he rejected Christ’s message or that his followers excluded the person. Jesus did not cast aside any genuine seeker. Today Lugbara/Madi Christians still gather at the trials of rainmakers and witches in local council courts because they still believe rainmakers influence rain patterns and because no Christian church has taught about rainmaking rather than just condemn it. For instance, Ibrahim Tonya wondered whether Elijah was a rainmaker or not when he declared, “As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, during these three years there shall be no dew or rain except at my word”.³³⁹

³³⁷ Zac Niringiye, 1997, p. 54.

³³⁸ Paul Stuart Landau, 1995, p. 25.

³³⁹ There was a very heated debate among the elders on this issue. The royal clans of Alur are called *Juparwoth*. They are also rainmakers, (see the works of Southhal on the Alur chiefdom) and have agents in various contiguous tribes including the Madi Okollo. My personal experience of human influence on rain was during the funeral of my father in-law on 18th March 1987. He was a royal converted to Christianity in 1926 and so had little to do with these traditions for a long time. But on the day of his funeral, rain was threatening to wash the mammoth crowd of mourners. One elder went out with *ambaya* (flywhisk) and commanded the rain to follow the rivers Aniza and Ora into the Congo, which it did, as the mourners watched thus allowing the funeral to go on.

The charge of nominalism may only be that the legacy of the presentation of the gospel in Uganda and in Africa, whereby a Christianity cultured in the West was deployed, is not yet entirely gone, such that African Christians condemn any Christian who is integrated in African tradition and culture.³⁴⁰ Until it is understood that the product of the gospel anywhere does not have to conform exactly to any 'Christianity' from another part of the world, words like nominalism and syncretism will not cease to stigmatise and demmean those genuinely trying to live for Christ in their own contexts. Although a family relatedness is useful, uniformity can be the death of Christianity.

.VI.4.3. Preaching and reading of the Word

In our discussions the elders were sure that preaching as a religious activity does not exist in Lugbara/Madi religion. George Tibeessigwa makes the same observation of the Banyankole of Western Uganda.³⁴¹ However, the elders agree that traditional teaching-learning methods form the basis of Christian preaching in Uganda. Because of the slowness with which reading developed in Uganda, preaching was the first public face of Christianity.³⁴²

In West Nile the central role of the storyteller in Lugbara/Madi religion and culture resulted in Christian preachers being called *olu'ba* (storytellers) (singular: *olupi*).³⁴³ This shows that preachers were expected to continue in the traditional teaching-learning methods as they carried out their Christian duties. Today, *olupi* is how the preacher identifies himself in all the languages of West Nile and of Uganda. The *olupi* (storyteller/preacher) tells (*olu*) the word (*e'yo*). Preaching (*e'yo oluza*),

³⁴⁰ Jesse Mugambi, 1989, *African heritage and Contemporary Christianity*, Longman: Nairobi, p. 92 points out the three aspects that played significant roles in the establishment of Christianity in Africa. Firstly, the gospel message whose core is the teaching of Jesus as recorded in the gospels and passed on in the tradition of the churches and mission agencies; secondly, the Western culture, in which the gospel was expressed before the rise of the modern missionary movement that came to Africa; and thirdly, the African heritage into which converts received the gospel.

³⁴¹ See George Tibeessigwa, 1996, 'Worship in the Anglican Church of Uganda: A critical study', D. Miss. Asian Centre for Theological Studies & Mission, Seoul, Korea.

³⁴² See Louise Pirouet's *Black Evangelist: 1891-1914*, Collins: London, 1978.

³⁴³ Other tribes in West Nile use the equivalent, e.g. the Alur use the word *jayer*; they use *japonji* (teacher), possibly because in the early days church teachers were also schoolteachers. Apart from the earlier denominational confusion when Catholics called their church teacher Katekista in order to be different, all the denominations now use *olupi*.

forms 'the people of the word'.³⁴⁴ *E'yo siza* (the written word, or the scriptures) and *e'yo bari* (the good word, or the gospel) forms the basis of *pata* (salvation). Because the word is found in a book, the Bible, *e'yo laza* ('the read word', or literacy) becomes the chief identity of Christians – who are called *basomi* (readers) in Luganda.³⁴⁵

So the public face of Christianity is basically reading and preaching in the Protestant Anglican and Independent tradition in Uganda³⁴⁶ while more symbolic forms to invoke God – including the liturgy, the Eucharist, wearing a cross, making the sign of the cross at every ritual moment, and using the rosary – identify the Roman Catholics in Uganda. Although Protestant Christianity appears to use the story methods more than the ritual methods and the Catholics appear to use the ritual methods more than the story methods, it is not as simple and straightforward as that. The innovations made after the Vatican II, and after 1969 when Pope Paul VI declared, "By now, you Africans are missionaries to yourselves",³⁴⁷ have created bridges between the two traditions. A survey of church services reveals an extensive use of African literary forms in all churches.³⁴⁸

.VI.4.3.1. *Use of stories in preaching*

Lugbara teaching-learning methods are used extensively in preaching and influence the spirituality of the churches, thus drawing them closer in practice and in worship. Preachers are known by the power of their preaching and invited from one church to another and from one fellowship to another. Although the sermon is considered a proclamation of the scripture readings just heard most preachers begin with a story,

³⁴⁴ Waliggo, in Aylward Shorter, et al, *Towards African Christian Maturity*, 1987, p. 34.

³⁴⁵ To become a Christian at some point became synonymous with reading, thus someone who had 'gone to read' had become a Christian. Note that Christians were called *basomi* (readers) in Luganda.

³⁴⁶ Today about 52% of the men and only 42% of the women can read, and about 70% of the church is women and children. Because the church has more illiterate people than literate ones, the 'preached word' has overtaken the 'read word' in the propagation of the gospel. It is a religious duty to hear the preached word regularly in the Protestant churches whilst the Catholics would value the Eucharist and confession as most important. Those who can read are always ready to preach, and good stories from the Bible are told and retold by preacher after preacher.

³⁴⁷ This declaration was made on July 31st 1969, and there and then the Symposium of Episcopal Conference of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) was formed. See John Paul II, 1995, *The Church in Africa*, para. 35, p. 29 (cf. *Ad Gentes*, 6).

³⁴⁸ See Appendix 12 for the churches, services, etc., sampled.

either true or created for the occasion. Protestant preaching,³⁴⁹ apart from being full of stories, is also full of scriptural references, often because the scriptures used are also good stories in themselves. Every point in a created or true story is pegged to a scriptural reference, which clarifies the story. The more verses used, the better the preaching is as the ‘word of God’.³⁵⁰ This reflects Pluss’ view that “story-telling or narrative as a religious tool is a pre-reflective impression of experiences of God’s presence and or absence in human lives resulting in a response to God”.³⁵¹

Folk tales are also used in preaching in all churches and preachers often start and end with such stories. In the stories, *ibio* (the ogre), *kami* (the lion) and *etoo* (the rabbit) represent the devil, and the human figure *Aza* or some strong but humble animals like the elephant, or the humble lamb, represent the ‘Christ’ or saviour figure. The snake depicted in Genesis as the devil finds a cultural niche easily because even though the devil does not exist in traditional religion it is not difficult to accommodate him because of the wiles of the snake. The snake’s double tongue is culturally associated with lying and deception.

As in the traditional sphere, good preachers often create stories to convey biblical truth, as Joseph Healey notes: “Many stories just ‘happen.’” The stories are created out of necessity to communicate to the huge and varied audiences assembled in churches and at celebrations. For such mixed groups, argues Healey, “a didactic homily or sermon may not communicate well, but a story always will”.³⁵² A considerable amount of retelling of biblical stories from African perspectives happens all the time. These include Christmas stories, modern Magi and their gifts,

³⁴⁹ David Zac Niringiye, 1997, argues that Protestant Christianity grew most rapidly in Uganda because indigenous receptors were almost immediately transformed into transmitters of the gospel, which point is also made by Louise Pirouet, 1978, on the growth of all Christian denominations in general in Uganda. Such a transformation would not have been possible if the tradition of storytelling wasn’t so engraved in the soul of the people of Uganda.

³⁵⁰ Some preachers try to disengage themselves from their preaching, as one preacher told me, in order to let the hearers engage with the scriptures used. Each passage quoted is in turn illustrated by a story of how either the preacher or another person engaged with it so that, as Pluss puts it, “the effective word and the effective sacrament” can be merged into one, 1988, p. 12.

³⁵¹ Jean-Daniel Pluss, 1988, *Therapeutic and Prophetic Narratives in Worship*, Lang: Frankfurt.

³⁵² Rev Joseph Healey, African Stories on the web site afriprov.org/resources/stories.htm, another site can be found in parish-without-borders.net/afristories.htm. In these sites one can find African Christmas and Mission stories.

modern prodigals and good Samaritans, issues of hospitality, greed, etc.³⁵³ This is “preaching as a local theology”,³⁵⁴ which exposes the embodied theologies and is good because it reinforces local world-views and values, at the same time also challenging and stretching them.

The aim in the stories is to create a human or moral crisis from which the hearer should find a way out. Here, theology is the interaction between human culture (history) and the physical environment (geography) or context. In a context such as that in Uganda – of insecurity, poverty, health problems and suffering – it is easy to blame others who are different for ones problems. In Christ the world of nature becomes the “theological dictionary” or the “elementary cathedral”³⁵⁵ in which human affairs and relations are constructed or reconstructed under God. The symbolic or revelatory character of created nature is arrived at through the juxtaposition of different frames of reference, thus expressing a relationship of unity-in-difference, giving an understanding of the world as the “news of God”.³⁵⁶

.VI.4.3.2. *The literary form of the Bible in preaching*

The vernacular Bible and literacy opened up the literary form of the Bible to the Lugbara/Madi, who found that biblical stories often resembled stories in their own traditions. These biblical stories motivated the evangelists to want to learn them and retell them everywhere they went.³⁵⁷ For example, the story told to the Hebrew children in Deuteronomy 6: 21-25, which begins “We were once slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out of Egypt with His strong hand...” is one much-loved historical narration. It is because of its nostalgic effect that it is loved, as are the origin narratives of the Lugbara/Madi people. The story is used in the Kenyan

³⁵³ See web site: afriprov.org/resources/stories.htm and for adaptations of Biblical stories into African legendary forms see Don Sybertz and Joseph Healey, 2000, *Towards an African Narrative Theology*, Pauline Publications: Nairobi.

³⁵⁴ See Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, 1997, *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art*, Fortress Press Minneapolis, pp. 91-121.

³⁵⁵ These terms are used by Zahan, D., 1979, *The Religion, Spirituality and Thought of Traditional Africa*, Chicago, p. 16ff. Cf., Shorter, 1996, p. 88.

³⁵⁶ William Wordsworth, 1978, *The Prelude*, London.

³⁵⁷ In *The Black Evangelists*, Louise Pirouette, 1978, makes this point explicitly. The human origins in Adam and Eve, the stories of biblical ancestors like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and heroes like Joseph, Moses, and Samson from the barren marriage of Manoa and wife, Samuel from a similar but polygamous marriage, the stories of kings Saul, David and Solomon with their many wives and the fecundity that went with polygyny, all have something African about them.

Prayer Book for this very purpose.³⁵⁸ The link with biblical stories is through the salvation wrought by Jesus for the sake of the whole world. The stories of the prophets Elijah, Elisha and Nathan, the ritual instructions of Leviticus and the elaborate genealogies of ‘who begot whom’ are also very popular. Particularly loved is the genealogy of Jesus, with its mention of women, including foreign women, which shows that God is inclusive in the way He works, and that this is “in spite of us” rather than “because of us”. I asked Yosam Ruda about the genealogies in the Bible and he simply said *ece ‘ba enga pati ruua yu* – they show that no one comes from a tree.³⁵⁹ A comment in *The African Bible* on the genealogy of Jesus states: “This could imply that the ancestry of Jesus is not by blood, but by adherence to the covenant”.³⁶⁰ This interpretation is ‘good news’ in Africa because it not only stretches Lugbara/Madi kinship relations, which can sometimes be corrupted to exclude outsiders, but – more important still – affirms their communities, as we have shown.³⁶¹ Ruth’s declaration to Naomi, “Your people will be my people and your God my God” (Ruth 1: 16), was highlighted by Ruda as the most profound commitment to belonging, which no community should take lightly.³⁶²

A number of ‘just so’ stories are cited in the Bible by the elders; these include why and how Isaac was named Isaac (Gen. 18, 21: 1-7), how he got married, how Jacob became Israel at Peniel (Gen. 32: 23-32), and why the Jews and Samaritans hated each other. In the New Testament, Jesus’ parables on feasts, muggings, travellers, sowing, planting, harvest, children, lost sheep, coins, guests at table, as well as the narratives of the journeys and heroic deeds of Jesus and the Apostles, and the miracles, fascinate preachers and ordinary readers and listeners of the Bible alike. Jesus is seen as the greatest storyteller. So the literary form of the Bible endears it to African hearts and minds as worth learning and retelling.

³⁵⁸ Archbishop Gitari, in a personal discussion at Oxford Centre for Missions, April 2001.

³⁵⁹ Personal interview of 13th November 1999.

³⁶⁰ Notable are the insertion of Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba and Mary in the lineage of Jesus the Christ in Matthew 1:1-17, Victor Zinkuratire and Angelo Colacrai, General eds., 1999, *The African Bible*, Pauline Publications, Nairobi. See Comments and Notes by Fr Pelin D’Souza and Bp John Njue.

³⁶¹ In my discussion with Samson Drajoa, the story of Yusufu Cilia, son of Azu from Ndu, a Kebu, was related to me. He took refuge amongst the Okollo people because of famine and was naturalised as Madi; his children are now a sub-clan (*enyati*) called *Okollo Ndu*. They are part of the Okollo people from the Okollo Ndu *enyati*.

³⁶² Yosam Ruda, in a personal interview of 13th November 1999.

.VI.4.3.3. *Didactic texts in preaching*

Proverbs and wise sayings are used extensively by preachers (the books of Proverbs, Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes are also much read for enjoyment). The use of didactic methods varies from preacher to preacher, but Lugbara/Madi preachers extensively use the responsorial method whereby the preacher starts the proverb or wise saying and the congregation completes it. For example:

Preacher:	<i>Odru vileri</i> The last buffalo	Congregation:	<i>ma ndua ari wara.</i> has a bloody bottom.
	<i>Orio dria</i> At the coward's		<i>acika 'diri</i> smoke is seen
	<i>Ombau dria</i> But the fearless brute		<i>otu nguru</i> becomes a mound of earth

The first proverb of the buffalo is a warning to those who take their time in all things including responding to the gospel; it encourages people to make good use of the opportunities available to them, and to join with others in responding to the gospel. The second, which is in two parts, shows how the fearless brute dies, while those who appear to be cowardly but with a good sense of judgement live long. The smoke is a sign of life.

Some further examples

Preacher	<i>Ova godri vile</i> The dikdik that went back	Congregation:	<i>go dri dradri.</i> went to die.
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This proverb is used to discourage people from backsliding.

Preacher	<i>Ndondoni</i> Every postponement	Congregation:	<i>andrali</i> is like dew.
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As with the first saying (about the buffalo), this complex saying is applied to those who are reluctant to respond to the Word of God and keep procrastinating such a response. The message here is that dew comes in its season, and there comes a time when dew cannot be found; it is used to encourage people to do the right things at the right times and seasons.

Preacher:	<i>Aparaka ma tibi</i> Playful jokes	Congregation:	<i>agobi</i> are like pumpkin leaves.
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The meaning of this proverb is obscure, particularly in relation to the pumpkin leaves. The most plausible explanation is that pumpkin leaf sauce has a way of

remaining on the teeth of which the consumer is unaware. It is however not a sanction against jokes but against bad jokes. In fact jokes are very important in Lugbara social relations. They are very common amongst peer groups, for example, or between first cousins, and are used to show the community's sense of *eudaemonia* (good spirit or happiness) during celebrations, where good health and happiness constitute wellbeing.³⁶³ There are, however, people who take nothing seriously. This proverb shows there is a limit to everything. The moral of the proverb is that taking jokes too far is dangerous.

.VI.4.3.4. *Scripture as the source of spiritual songs*

The proliferation of spiritual songs can be linked to the desire to transmit scripture and Bible stories in culturally appropriate ways. Daniel Agba, who was a Bible translator, says, "If you want a story to travel far, put it into song".³⁶⁴ He believes it is because scriptures were put into song that the gospel travelled faster than the missionary, the evangelist and the Bible itself in West Nile and other parts of Uganda. The repeated refrains in spiritual songs,³⁶⁵ formed out of key scripture verses, are their teaching points. Participation in the refrain causes the message of scripture to come to each person and the moral of the song to be internalised, for retelling. The time of year that spiritual songs are used is also significant. This is mainly in the months of *Ewadri-Anyufu-Ase'woko* (October, November and December), the time for reflection on the experiences of the year.³⁶⁶

During this period, too, the story songs and liturgical songs (service songs) dealt with in Chapter VII are produced. Preaching or liturgy is interwoven with these songs to reinforce the points in the experience of the hearers. Preaching as a one-way communication from preacher to congregation, without response, addition,

³⁶³ Shorter argues that although jokes introduce an element of disorder and disorganization, they tend to connect more widely differing fields of experience than the ordinary symbol. For him jokes stretch symbols and strain their functions in the same way that metaphysical reasoning strains conceptual language. See Shorter, 1996, p. 91. But in the context of the gospel it is used to warn those who reject the gospel seriously.

³⁶⁴ Daniel Agba, interviewed on 10th May 2000. On how the gospel spread in the early part of the Christian church in Uganda see Louise Pirouette, 1978, *The Black Evangelists: The spread of Christianity in Uganda 1891- 1914*, Collins: London; David Z Niringiye, 1997.

³⁶⁵ See Chapter VI.

³⁶⁶ See the section on the Calendar and its significance in Lugbara rituals.

elaboration or spontaneous eruption of song and appreciation from the audience, is rare in most churches in Uganda. As West points out:

The bible is immersed and saturated with spontaneous prayer and singing; nothing happens among African Christians without spontaneous singing and prayer! Not only is every bible study begun with prayer and singing, but no body takes a position in the front of the group without being ‘escorted’ to the front with singing.³⁶⁷

We can take, for example, the programme of one of the overnight prayer meetings organised by St Philip’s Church, Arua, on 11th December 1998. The theme was Christ the King, under the topic “God’s indescribable Gift in Jesus”. It illustrates how the traditional teaching-learning methods are used in such informal meetings.

<i>Theme: Christ the King</i>	
<i>Topic: God’s Greatest Gift –Indescribable: 2nd Corinthians 9:15</i>	
8.00-9.00	Arrival
9.00-9.15	Praise and opening Prayer (Anne)
9.15-9.30	Introduction of the theme (Joel)
9.30-10.00	Prophecy Isaiah 9: 2-7 (Joseph)
10.00-10.30	Angel Gabriel, the annunciation, Mt. 1:18-25 (Tonya)
10.30-10.45	Praise and prayer (Edith)
10.45-11.15	The Wisemen visit, Mt. 2:1-12 (Philista)
11.15-11.45	Shepherds watch their flocks, Luke 2: 8-20 (Aleni)
11.45-12.15	Thanksgiving prayer (Gertrude)
12.15-1.15	Summary – what the birth of Jesus means to me (Stephen)
1.15-1.45	Memory verses (Nancy)
1.45-2.30	Tea Break
2.30-3.00	Bible Quiz (Gertrude)
3.00-3.30	Testimonies/reflections (Joyce)
3.30-4.00	Prayers-Intercessions (Jocylene)
4.00-4.30	Prayer cells
4.30-5.30	“On and off” (Gina)
5.30-6.30	“One for the road”, announcements, closing prayer
6.30-	Departure
Facilitator: John Akutoko.	

Figure 1

The meeting was basically a retelling of the Christmas story from Old Testament to New Testament. Each speaker was given 15 minutes to introduce the topic and another 15 minutes for elaboration, additions and questions by members. At the end of this, someone summarised in a personal testimony all that had been said and done. A memory quiz and riddles where profound statements, sayings, verses, events,

³⁶⁷

Gerald West, 2005, *Doing Contextual Bible Study: A Resource Manual*, p. 7

activities and personalities in the Bible are used to help members' reflections followed this, after which decisions for Christ are invited.

The whole programme is interspersed with praise and singing that reinforce the lessons and points raised in the discussions. Prayers are said for people's needs and concerns, and with eating – breakfast appropriately being called *pa bazu geria* (one for the road).³⁶⁸ The programme illustrates how culturally appropriate teaching-learning methods are used to proclaim and celebrate the gospel. Note how the 'mode of reception and relaxation' is created through story, discussion, memory tests, music, prayers and eating, with an emphasis on personal application to show that hearing of and obedience to the word is taking place. The testimonies and reflections are opportunities for every member to fit their stories into 'the story of Jesus'.

.VI.4.3.5. *Use of testimony in preaching*

Another aspect of the identity of Ugandan Christianity is the testimony, which came through the Revival movement. The Revival Movement stressed, if not overstressed, experience as the mark of conversion. Hence, each person who claims conversion is encouraged to share the experience with others, which does not need a lot of encouragement because of the traditional practice of 'storying' events. Sharing a testimony is treated as a sign of Christian maturity, or maturing. Tonkin argues that to speak to an audience is a claim that one should be listened to and a testimony is presenting oneself as a challenge for audience examination.³⁶⁹ Preachers use testimonies to connect with the audience and to offer their own experiences as examples of Christ's redeeming work. Helpful scriptures and songs are given as testimonies. As Niringiye points out:

Faith in Uganda is expressed in testimony. Testimony is both the life and narrative of faith; of the relation with Christ at the individual and corporate levels, spanning the whole life in its temporal dimensions of past, present and future.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁸ This Lugbara expression, *pa 'bazu geria* (putting someone's feet on the road), refers to traditional hospitality where, if possible, a traveller is not allowed to depart from a home on an empty stomach. It helps the traveller to focus on the mission of the journey and be less of a burden on the people he is going to; above all it enables the traveller to receive and appreciate hospitality without having to ask for it because of hunger.

³⁶⁹ Elizabeth Tonkin, 1992, *Narrating our Pasts: The social construction of Oral History*, CUP: Cambridge, p. 39.

³⁷⁰ Niringiye, 1997, p. 326.

Apart from the oral forms of testimony that emanate from preachers, evangelists, catechists, pastors and ordinary Christians, lives themselves are also important testimonies, in terms of morals, prayer life, fasting, and sharing of the gospel with others. In short, “testimony is both portrait and description”.³⁷¹ This is how the Church and Christians in Uganda show they are in the world but not of the world, because of what Christ has done in their lives.

.VI.4.3.6. *Liturgical reading of the Scriptures*

While the Catholics emphasise the liturgical reading of the scriptures through the three-year lectionary, augmented by personal devotional aids such as the rosary, the Anglicans and Independent Churches emphasise personal devotional reading of the Bible with scriptural aids.³⁷² Whatever the approach to the Bible, it is clear that “the Christian faith in (Uganda) is faith in the bible”.³⁷³ The genuine and sincere efforts made to read and live the Bible are thwarted only by lack of instruction, illiteracy and social, cultural and economic problems.³⁷⁴

The problem of illiteracy and economic hardship has turned out to be a blessing in disguise, especially in the mission-instituted churches because the leaders are forced to think about what to do for each service and thereby stumble upon ingenious ways of doing things for God from the scriptures. Adherence to the Word of God is seen in how it is used in daily life in spiritual songs, preaching, witnessing, ordinary conversation, and ministry.³⁷⁵ Preaching as the main means of presenting the gospel has overshadowed scriptural reading as an evangelistic method, which has moved to the nurture and discipleship of believers. Although testimonies along the

³⁷¹ Ibid. Niringiye points out the two directions that the witness simultaneously faces: towards Christ in acknowledgement of the Christ-event as the ground of faith; and towards the world, to live the faith to summon the world to turn to Christ and be saved.

³⁷² The Scripture Union leaflets and guides such as *Daily Power* for families and students, and *Daily Guide* for mature readers, are useful tools in Uganda and East Africa but hardly culturally appropriate.

³⁷³ Jesse Mugambi, in Shorter, et al., *Towards African Christian Maturity*, Pauline: Kampala, 1987, p. 69.

³⁷⁴ Bibles and prayer books have always been given free or at subsidised prices to new converts. In the last decade the prices of these books have quadrupled and are beyond the means of many Christians. I have been to churches that have only a few hymnbooks.

³⁷⁵ Apart from what we have shown here on the use of Scriptures in worship and in Spiritual Songs in chapter VI, Wynnand Amewowo discusses various traditions of reading the scriptures in Africa. He thinks African scriptural reading is gradually increasing at the scientific and scholarly level as the number of theologians and bible experts of African origin increases.

lines of “I read Book X, verse Y, and was converted” are common, the public face of Protestant Christianity in Uganda remains preaching that is full of stories, singing, repetitions and scriptural references.

Although the initial yearning in West Nile was for reading, the secondary benefit of conversion has been the fulfilment of deeper spiritual needs. Despite the importance of the Bible in Lugbara/Madi Christianity, no emphasis is put on the importance of bible readings in worship or to show the link between liturgy and God’s record of salvation in a cultic way. The time for readings is usually the lowest point in Anglican and Independent church services, and the time for preaching the highest point. Readings are often casual, non-dramatic and drab. Often, a lot of time is wasted in helping people find the passage in their own bibles, so that the rhythm of worship is affected. Some people in the congregation read aloud to themselves, ignoring what is read at the *ambo* (lectern). Perhaps if readings to the congregation were better delivered it would be easier for people to close their own bibles and listen. However, it is mainly the importance people attach to the bible as the Word of God, as well as the urge to preach, that makes people want to read from their own bibles and, if possible, mark passages where God is speaking to them in order to use these in their own preaching. In other words, while a reading or preaching is going on in church each person is busy preparing his/her own sermon, which is often launched immediately after the church service.³⁷⁶

If Anglicans and Independent Churches have a literal attachment to the Bible, the Catholics have a mystical attachment to the Bible as the word of God. It is ‘escorted’ to the lectern, wrapped in banana leaves, or put in a calabash, as the Baganda and Acholi would respectively treat food. It is not to be touched or read anyhow by unconsecrated persons. On the question, “Who can interpret the Bible authoritatively?” Catholics would answer, “The written or spoken word of God can be interpreted authoritatively by the living teaching authority of the Church – the *Magesterium* – that is, the Pope and the Bishops acting together with him.”³⁷⁷ It took a Papal exhortation for the ordinary Catholic Christian to pick up and read the

³⁷⁶ In the 1960s and ’70s when the Revival movement was striving to fit in the church, this was very common and caused a lot of stress to the church leaders and missionaries. The police were often called to round off such preachers on church compounds.

³⁷⁷ David Konstant, 2001, *The Faith of the Catholic Church*, Veritas Publications: Dublin, p. 16-7.

Bible.³⁷⁸ But, all in all, the power of the Word to give life and offer instruction is not diminished. Just as the stories of the Lugbara/Madi ancestors are useful in the ‘human becoming’ of the community, so the Word of God is useful in the Christ-like becoming of the Christian.

.VI.5. Summary

In this chapter I have shown how the Lugbara/Madi concept of ‘word’ and their teaching-learning methods are used in the ‘human becoming’ of their communities and how contact with the Bible has evolved over nearly a century of Christianity in West Nile.³⁷⁹ It is clear that their reading of the bible follows a certain hermeneutic principle, which is traditional or culture-based. It includes reading, listening and reflection, resulting in conversion, renewal and singing. Every contact with the Bible as the word of God demands a response of some sort in terms of conversion, renewal or some form of spiritual nourishment and activity. The word is spiritual nourishment, a light or lamp both to individuals and the community. That is why, after church services, there is a fellowship meeting and testimony where everyone can speak out about the challenges that the Word has brought to him or her personally. The bible is full of stories that are similar to the Lugbara/Madi hero stories and therefore very good to tell and to learn for their morals. They are used to form the people into Christ-like people just as the hero stories were used to make people like the ancestors.

³⁷⁸ John Paul II launched the new evangelisation for the third millennium in 1994, inviting Christians to “turn with renewed interest to the Bible” (*Tertio Millenio Adveniente*, no. 40), and in the Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 1995, p. 44, he wrote: “In order that the Word of God may be known, loved, pondered and preserved in the hearts of the faithful (Lk 2: 19, 51), greater efforts must be made to provide access to the Sacred Scriptures, especially through full or partial translations of the Bible, prepared as far as possible in co-operation with other Churches and Ecclesial communities and accompanied by study-guides for use in prayer and for study in the family and community....In brief, efforts must be made to try to put the Sacred Scriptures into the hands of all the faithful right from their earliest years” no. 58.

³⁷⁹ The following works of John Mbiti are very useful, 1979: ‘The Biblical basis in present trends of African Theology’, *Bulletin of African Theology*, 1, 1 January-June 1979:12; 1986, *Bible and Theology in African Christianity*, OUP: Oxford; ‘The Bible in African Culture’, in Rosino Gibellini, ed. 1994, *Paths of African Theology*, SCM: London, p. 27-39.

.VII MUSIC AND DANCE IN WORSHIP

This chapter explores the role of music and dance in traditional and Christian worship in West Nile. We asked the elders community consciousness questions of what is music and dance and how Lugbara/Madi music and dance influence and are being influenced by the received Christian traditions and how they relate to identity and identity formation. This was by far one of the most exciting and dramatic of our discussions with the elders where many sang and demonstrated how music and dance related to identity formation and traditional life in general.

Section A

.VII.1. Music and Dance in Lugbara/Madi culture

We began by asking what music and dance is in Lugbara/Madi traditional understanding. As we discussed, I realised that in Lugbara/Madi tradition *ongo* (music), *ongo tuza* (dance) and *avita* (drama) cannot be separated. Music and dance according Ruda are performed or dramatic arts. This means that music and dance feature as drama in traditional life. They are received in the same way as story-telling in a mode of reception for the socialisation and humanization of the members of the community. However, drama as a socialisation tool in its own right is fast being articulated and realised among the Lugbara/Madi.³⁸⁰

.VII.1.1. Music and dance as cosmic sound and rhythm.

The definition of music and dance by Yosam Ruda is *ongoni nyawu oyini* – music/dance is the sound/rhythm of the world.³⁸¹ In fact in the Lugbara/Madi language, to say *ma mu ongoa* (I am going to music) means I am going to dance. Ruda adds that because our experience of the world is both pleasure and pain, music/dance as a cosmic sound/rhythm, is basically the experience and expression of this pleasure and pain. The other term for dance is *ongo kaza/tuza* (to step upon music). To ‘step upon’ is simply to step as the music demands or in beat with the music. Indeed dance is to move in time and in rhythm to music. By Ruda’s definition, dance is to ‘step upon’ the pleasures and pains of this world and folk

³⁸⁰ See Drati, 1987, ‘Using Traditional Media to Communicate the Gospel to the Lugbara of Uganda’, Fuller Theological Seminary, pp. 192-212.

³⁸¹ Interviewed on 13th November 1999.

music can be said to be the pains and pleasures of a people in their world of meaning. Music and dance are therefore deeply experiential activities that accompany every human activity.³⁸²

What then does this make the musician? For Tonya, who is a musician himself, musicians are experts who express the cosmic sound in forms, tunes and lyrics that help society to move in beat with the cosmic sounds and rhythm. As an expert the musician is mature, experienced and wise in cosmic matters in order to express them in musical terms. He reads or understands the cosmic sound/rhythm to express it for society to hear and experience by joining in the beat and rhythm. He said music 'comes' to him as a composer through the created order such as the whirling wind, a falling tree, the grinding stone, grazing animals, the rushing river, the still of night, the rising and setting of the sun, the fullness and waning of the moon, the distant thunder, rain, etc. He thinks musicians have ears that community and society cannot do without. They have to rely on such ears if they are to enjoy life to the full.

Another elder, Samson Drajoa agrees to this and said his uncle Ciriako Orema, a prolific musician in Adribu clan who composed songs for many different social occasions, had such ears that he was able to come out with a song at every important moment in the clan's life.³⁸³ Out of tragic and joyful experiences, songs emerge to bless and encourage people in their diverse conditions. In other words music brings every occurrence into the feelings of the people, making the experience common to the community. This means every newsworthy occurrence is put to music, including people's folly, prowess and mishaps in order to bring it to every member's experience. Music is therefore found in every social, religious and cultural activity and is a primal means of communication, instruction and discipleship. Doctrines, morals, skills, pain and fun are all found in traditional songs.³⁸⁴

Traditional music and dance can be 'heavy' or 'light' according to Drajoa.³⁸⁵ He cites *nyambi*³⁸⁶ as an example of 'light music' where men and women and

³⁸² James Batte 1983, p. 10, explains how music is a feeling for the Baganda of Uganda.

³⁸³ Samson Drajoa, interviewed on 9th May 2000.

³⁸⁴ Batte, 1983, p. 10.

³⁸⁵ Drajoa, Personal Interview of 9th May 2000

³⁸⁶ *Nyambi* is a form of light music and dance performed in the dry season after the harvests.

cousins tease each other to teach certain norms and principles and enforce some stereotypes of life. For instance, a *nyambi* song goes thus:

Men: <i>Enya eni drio azini ya</i>	Can you call cooking real work?
<i>Izi la mi ita sua dru ku yo</i>	Woman, do not talk anyhow
<i>E'yo zo ndra mi drio</i>	I know you aren't the cooking type
Women: <i>Nga ini drio azini ya</i>	Can you call digging real work?
<i>Onyi la mi ita mba dru kuyo</i>	Husband, don't talk anyhow
<i>E'yo zo ndra mi drio</i>	I know you are not a hard worker.

Hard work is taught through such teasing and fun, and some stereotypical roles that society thinks are important to be inculcated into its membership are emphasised. 'Heavy music', according to the Lugbara/Madi elders, is found in the *mbgiri* and *Baiko* dances where whole tribes and clans are involved. The festive nature of *mbgiri* and *baiko* dances is revealed by the fact that it always ends with families of the tribe to which the dance is taken inviting families of the dancing tribe into their homes to eat and drink. Animals are slaughtered to cement relations. The people received do the same to those who received them at a later time. 'Heavy music' and dance is reciprocated. Friendships and alliances made in this way are some of the most enduring amongst the Lugbara/Madi and are at times sealed by blood covenants, etc.

.VII.1.2. Categories of Traditional Music and Dance

Enoch Drati, in a study of Lugbara ethnomusicology, gives an organised frame of reference for Lugbara music. He classifies Lugbara music and dance into four categories:

- funeral music and dances
- weddings and occasional music and dances
- borrowed music and dances
- special sounds and gestures³⁸⁷

One thing, as shown earlier, is very clear from Drati's categorisation that all Lugbara music is meant to be danced. The close association between music and dance in their understanding is clear in the expression *ama mu ongoa* instead of *ama mu ongo tu*, which is 'we are going to music' but understood as 'we are going to dance', as in the latter expression.

³⁸⁷

Enock Drati, 1987, p 192-212.

.VII.1.2.1. *Funeral music and dance*

Funeral music and dance forms a great part of Lugbara music and dance that falls in the 'heavy' category. This reflects the reality of Lugbara/Madi experience, where poverty, uncertainty, destruction and death are more ubiquitous rather than prosperity, assurance, and security.³⁸⁸ Drati mentions several types of funeral music and dance, performed by various relatives at different times, from the time of death, the burial, the four to seven days of mourning, until the first or second memorial. Music and dance here are used as therapy for the mourners.³⁸⁹

Kejio music and dance help the relatives to cope with the shocking news of death. *Baiko* prepares them for the burial and *mutre* is for the burial proper. *Odu* music and dance are for mourning, which may last from four to seven days depending on the status of the dead, and *abi* and *igbua* are used for the subsequent memorials. At the end of it all the dead person is said to rest in peace and the community comforted. In the event of any of the dances being omitted, the soul of the dead person is restless and may affect the relatives who did not perform the dance by making clear its unhappiness through visions and dreams and sometimes through oracular revelations.

.VII.1.2.2. *Occasional music and dance*

Occasional music and dance reveal how music and dance permeates Lugbara/Madi and African society in general, whereby every ceremony and event comes with its own music and dance.³⁹⁰ Most of the light music falls in this category, including *nyambi* which we saw earlier. The social, theological and cultural meaning of every event and ceremony is expressed in such occasional music and dance. John Mbiti sees this sort of music as a major source of oral theology in Africa.³⁹¹ In this research we call it the 'embodied theology' where even unexpected events like a successful

³⁸⁸ Batte, 1983, and Moleneux, 1987, referring to the Baganda and Bacongo respectively allude to this fact as the reality of African experience.

³⁸⁹ Drati, 1987, p. 193.

³⁹⁰ Okot p'Bitek, portrays this when he entitled his plays as songs: *Song of Lawino*, Nairobi, 1966, *Song of Ocol*, and *Song of Malaya*. For him, the best way to say something to the Acholi, as to other tribes, for them to hear and to heed, is to say it through song.

³⁹¹ Mbiti, 1979, 'The biblical basis in present trends of African theology', *Bulletin of African Theology*, 1, 1 January-June 1979: 12. See also 1986, *Bible and Theology in African Christianity*, OUP: Oxford.

hunting or fishing expedition will have songs composed on the spur of the moment for the impromptu celebration.³⁹² Because occasional songs are event-specific, their life is often short. To lengthen the life span of such songs they are given a more generalised meaning and message that could be adapted for other situations and uses.³⁹³ Wedding and welcome songs are usually adapted by inserting the names of the couples or visitors involved, to make the songs suitable for that day and occasion. For example, this welcome song can be adapted by inserting the name or title of the visitor, e.g., Bishop, Archdeacon, Pastor, Guest of Honour, etc., in place of *omu* (visitor).

<i>(Omu) amani ama a'i mi ra</i>	Our visitor we welcome you
<i>Awa'difo emutasi</i>	Thank you for coming
<i>Mini ngaria mviria</i>	When the time comes to go back
<i>Mi aci geria opi be</i>	Go on you way with the Lord

.VII.1.2.3. Borrowed music and dance

Amongst borrowed music and dance are *duluka* and *koro*, both of Nubian origin.³⁹⁴ The Madi also use *osego* from the Kebu people. The Kebu and the Madi, according to Drajoa, whose mother comes from Ndu, a Kebu clan, have traded for a long time.³⁹⁵ The Kebu as blacksmiths brought hoes, knives and sickles in exchange for food crops and white ants from the Madi. Some Kebu settled in Offaka and other areas and were the ones who taught the Madi to play and dance the *osego*. Some Congolese music and dance is also finding its way into West Nile, but this is a modern rather than a traditional phenomenon.³⁹⁶

³⁹² In 1954 when Eriam Mbaa shot a leopard in a goatshed, the next four days were dedicated to celebrate this courageous act. Songs were composed for the impromptu celebration (source Simon Mbaa Oyee, 13th Feb 2000). A biblical similarity can be seen when the Israelites, were returning from the war with the Philistines and the women went out to meet the army with the song "Saul has slain thousands, and David his tens of thousands", 1Sam. 18: 7.

³⁹³ Many folk songs are very flexible. They get adapted over the years to suit contemporary situations. This adaptation can be both in the message and in the tune. The message and the beauty of the songs depend on the singer, and especially, the soloist leader.

³⁹⁴ There has been a great deal of intercourse between Nubians and the people of West Nile from the times of Emin Pasha. The 1st and 2nd Anyanya uprisings in the 1950s and '60s, and the Ugandan exiles after the Idi Amin years 1979-1985, brought about further cultural exchanges.

³⁹⁵ Interviewed on 13th Feb. 2000

³⁹⁶ Although Congolese dance and music is typical to them, the fact that they have incorporated modern instruments (guitars and keyboards) learned formally or informally makes people think of them as a modern phenomenon; one third of the Lugbara are in the Congo and share the same traditions with those in West Nile, Uganda.

.VII.1.2.4. *Special sounds and gestures*

What Drati calls special sounds is the praise poem or ejaculation we have seen in the teaching/learning methods of Chapter V. Included in special sounds is *poi* (panegyrics), where in a flowery language God, the spirits, ancestors, elders, the self, tribe or clan is praised. The following is the *poi* of the Adribu clan:

<i>Ama Adribuni</i>	We are Adribu
<i>Ama 'ba muru ni</i>	We are a small clan
<i>Ama elokuni, 'ba avi amayi ku</i>	But untouchable, play not with us;
<i>Ama ondukoni</i>	we are sorghum eaters!

Each person will flavour this basic *poi* in the way he/she feels best, at times depending on the type of dance and where the dance is taking place. In a hostile environment, the panegyric becomes more militant, and in a local friendly situation where the participants are known, a more friendly tone is adopted. Other related sounds used are *jiliri* (ululation), *cere* (crowing or stylized ejaculation) and *dri saza* (clapping of various types). The Lugbara in particular use clapping to accompany music and dance. Other gestures include ritual runs *aju soza*, and mock spear battles that are accompanied by profuse *poi* (panegyrics) and *cere* (crowing). The mock battles and ritual runs are to establish social relations. In order to get to know a person, you take the person on a ritual run or a mock battle, where, in flowery language, each of you reveal your tribe, maternal/paternal ancestry, totem and identity.³⁹⁷ Such ritual runs and mock battles often end up in a place where the initiator has stored some *kpete* (sorghum/maize beer) or *nguli* (the strong brew from cassava and malt), which is then shared.³⁹⁸

.VII.1.2.5. *Lugbara/Madi traditional musical instruments*

The Lugbara musical instruments include percussives that are non-melodic but rhythmic, wind instruments and string instruments. The ever-present musical instrument of all is the *ari* (drum). The drum's origin, according to Galabuzi Mukasa,

³⁹⁷ In West Nile a few tribes, clans and individuals do have totems, but the phenomenon is not as extensive as in Buganda and other Bantu tribes. See the totems of the martyrs under their picture. Note also my panegyric in the acknowledgement on p. ii.

³⁹⁸ In a dance a person may take several people on such runs as a means of knowing and establishing relations with them. These may end up as vital contacts for arranged marriages between their tribes, or emissaries for other such arrangements such as bringing about peace and reconciliation between hostile neighbours. Such runs may end up with invitations to homes where animals are slaughtered, the hind legs of which are taken home to be shared with other relatives.

is unknown.³⁹⁹ In West Nile it has a huge cultural, political, social and religious importance.⁴⁰⁰ It is first of all the broadcasting station that announces the commencement of all events and occasions including births, community meetings (for prayer, worship or sacrifice), emergencies, work, festivities, arrivals, departures and death. Colonial chiefs used the drum to show their political power.⁴⁰¹ The drum as a political tool, however, is best seen among the Alur and in the south and west of Uganda –the kingdom areas, where it signifies the power and glory of the kings.⁴⁰²

In West Nile drums are categorised by their uses: *dra ari* (funeral drums), *ongo ari* (dance drums),⁴⁰³ *odra ari* (spirit drums), *rata ari* (night drums), *kanisa ari* (church drums) and *azi ari* (work drums). (The picture opposite is of drumming for the church service.) Although the Madi/Lugbara had work drums performed in specific ways, the Baganda *saagala agala mi dde* (I don't want anyone idling around) rhythm is widely used in West Nile and other places for calling people to work. This shows how much sharing of cultural values and practices takes place between the tribes.



Some tribes have *a'di ari* (war drums) and *suru ari* (clan drums).⁴⁰⁴ The clan drums may be categorised by the rhythmic sound patterns played to symbolise the clan. This may also symbolise totem in tribes that used totems. But the drum, apart from calling the community together, is above all an instrument of worship in both the traditional shrine and the church. They come in sets or families of *ari ayo* and *ari*

³⁹⁹ David Galabuzi Mukasa, 1977, *A brief anthology on Uganda musical instruments*, Comb Books: Nairobi.

⁴⁰⁰ The same is true in Buganda, see James Batte, 1983, p. 38. The King of Buganda, the chiefs, elders and religious experts use the drum to send particular messages to their communities. For instance Chief Ajai of Madi, according to Eriam Mbaa, had a drum called *Rwoth tundu* which is an imitation of the sound it makes *di didi* which means 'the king has arrived' in Alur. See personal interview of 10th May 2000.

⁴⁰¹ Chief Ajai of Madi, (1940-mid 50) had a drum called *Rwoth Tundu*, the Alur for 'the chief has arrived' which is in imitation of the sound it makes: *di didi*.

⁴⁰² See Galabuzi Mukasa, 1977, p. 9, for a detailed discussion of the use of the drum in the kingdom areas, and James Batte, 1983, p. 38, for other uses, i.e. in the Church.

⁴⁰³ In dance drums one may specify *osego ari*, *mgbiri ari*, *duluka ari*, *nyambi ari*, *agwara ari*, to show which dance is being performed.

⁴⁰⁴ See Mukasa's categories in Mukasa, 1977, pp. 9-20.

anzi (mother drum and the kids) made from wood and skins of various animals, both domestic and wild, and tuned in the pentatonic scale. Because the skin slackens after every use, fire or the sun is used for tuning it for continual use.

Other instruments include *olangi* (bells and metal bars), *koyo* (rattles, gourd and reed shakers) and *mbgiri/ayioro* (ankle jingles). The instruments which are getting less used are the *lukembe*, *sansa* or *akadongo* (thumb piano) and *o'di* (lyre), because very few people now know how to make and tune them, let alone play them. The chief wind instrument of the Lugbara is the *mari* (gourd trumpet)⁴⁰⁵ while for the Madi it is the *osego*, and both tribes use various animal horns (*guka/iga*). *Rikiriki* (the single string violin) and *adungu* (the 6-10-stringed harp) from the Alur and Luo tribes are widely used.⁴⁰⁶ The *endaara* or xylophone of the Bakonzo is also widely used in West Nile, especially by the Alur. As Mukasa shows, the *ndaara* also features amongst the Baganda, Basoga, Bagwere, Banyole, Japadhola and Batoro.⁴⁰⁷ The *kengere* or *ngalabi* of the Baganda is the drum made from monitor lizard skin, with a long wooden stem and broad top. It is used by diviners and spirit mediums and has been used very widely in *odra* worship and in *osego* dance among the Madi.

.VII.2. Music and Singing

Before going any further, a distinction needs be made between music and singing. Gelineau suggests these should be distinguished from each other rather than separated.⁴⁰⁸ Music and singing are both human activities that follow closely after words and gestures, and are very important signs and symbols employed in worship. Music is organised sound or rhythmic sound that is vocal or instrumental or both to produce beauty of form and harmony. Instrumental music is organised sound without words that employs rhythm and melody. Singing on the other hand is music that employs rhythm, melody and words. In this case music and singing are in every way rites, as are preaching, readings, prayers, processions and ritual meals, because they awake and induce meaning as much as they reveal certain fundamental theological

⁴⁰⁵ The *mari* is a gourd fitted with a short wide pipe into which air is blown from the side of the gourd. It makes a deep rumbling rhythmic sound at the back of the drums.

⁴⁰⁶ See Edward Galabuzi Mukasa, 1977, p. 43-4.

⁴⁰⁷ Mukasa, 1977, p. 21.

⁴⁰⁸ Gelineau, 'Music and singing in the Liturgy', in Cheslyn Jones, et al, *The Study of Liturgy*, 1978, p. 440.

facts about human relations with God and with each other. Patrick Byrne treats music and singing as one of the primary symbols in worship.⁴⁰⁹

In West Nile the elders think the main route taken to the realisation of cultural identity is via music. Music was used as protest against the rejection of African culture and to assert African cultural identity at the arrival of Christianity. One example of this is the proliferation of spiritual songs that has rendered the received hymnbooks almost redundant. This has been the route taken by most churches, be they started by foreign missions or indigenous people. But whatever route the theological reflection on music has taken, the exercise has benefited music more than liturgy, as we shall show in the later part of this chapter.

.VII.2.1. Composition of Traditional and Christian music

I interviewed several composers in West Nile, both Christian and traditional, and they said songs basically come to them in three related ways:⁴¹⁰

- In dreams or visions
- By conscious inspiration, where a distinct rhythm comes to the person to cause him/her to take note. This can happen anywhere – in bed, in the field or at work
- Words can simply ‘well up’ and the person ends by getting a tune for the words. This often happens while meditating on issues and the scriptures

Gordon Molyneux records very similar ways in which hymns came to Kimbanguist composers in the Congo.⁴¹¹ Joel Kerchan’s experience whereby hymns come to him in all four parts (soprano, alto, tenor and base) is an experience recorded amongst the

⁴⁰⁹ Patrick Byrne, 1998, ‘Symbolic Actions in Christian Worship’, p.70-101, in Robin, A. Leaver and Joyce A. Zimmerman, eds. *Liturgy and Music*, The Liturgical Press: Collegeville, Minnesota, p. 86.

⁴¹⁰ Teofilo Debo is the Revival leader for West Nile. Robert Candia was a revival team member but is now backslidden. He is the composer of a number of praise songs. Joel Kerchan specialises in hymns and composes in tonic solfa. Leonora Avako is a hymn composer. It is her hymn that features in the Lugbara Hymnbook. None of these had formal education above primary four. Nason Nitho is the leader of the diocesan trumpeters, trained to transcribe music from staff notation to tonic solfa. Rev Misaeli Waru is a specially ordained priest and trumpeter, originally from Congo. He has no other formal training. John Tutu, a former Seminarian and teacher, produces tunes for psalms in Catholic worship. Olympia Asia and Erineo Azo have composed several traditional tunes for both *osego* and *mgberi* dance.

⁴¹¹ Molyneux, Gordon, *African Christian Theology: The quest for selfhood*, 1985, devotes Chapter Three of his book to describing into detail how hymns came to members of the Kimbanguist church and how the directors of music went about to verify new songs for church use.

Kimbanguist hymn composers. Kerchan finds the act of musical composition very exhausting, and considers it a 'bringing into being', a form of creation or giving birth. The other composers like Tonya, find it so too, and they attach the notion of inspiration to recalling, recording and teaching the music to others.⁴¹²

The 'welling up' of music is the most frequent way in which music comes to most of the composers, and is most common amongst the Revival brethren. In it very new words can be given to old tunes or a new tune is given to old words. For example, Lugbara hymn 65, which is formerly to the tune of Hymns of Faith no. 9, has been given a new tune that is typically Lugbara.⁴¹³ In both traditional and Christian compositions participation with departed musicians or friends is common. Some Christian composers talk of angelic choirs singing, with people they knew in life, now dead, often in white or shining array. One can see here that the traditional methods of composition are carried into Christianity with only an altered source of inspiration: the scriptures, angels and departed Christians instead of ancestors and spirits.

Section B

.VII.3. Music and Dance in church in West Nile

From the understanding of music as a cosmic sound, John Taylor wondered how difficult it was for a person from the temperate regions of the world where the seasons are more sharply and clearly marked to understand the rhythm in Africa where the seasons are more diffused than sharply differentiated. He advised the foreigner not to be deceived but to look beyond the seeming confusion to the inexhaustible surge of life force and the tedium of interminable patience that lies beneath this confusion, where "there is vitality without form, energy without climax and fruitfulness without completion".⁴¹⁴ Taylor attributes the many-layered nature of African religion to this seeming confusion, particularly on the Equator, where there is no total death, and planting takes place throughout the year and harvest is when the

⁴¹² Molyneux, 1985, p. 162 and Teofilo Debo, interview 23(A), 15th March 2000.

⁴¹³ The source of the new tune is unknown but is certainly different from the original. The later tune is more loved than the original.

⁴¹⁴ John Taylor introducing the photographic presentation of *The African Passion*, by Hans Leuenberger, 1957: Chr. Kaiser Verlag Munchen, p. 11.

crops are ready! The diffused seasons for him are priceless gifts of drama, mythology and liturgy.⁴¹⁵ Adrian Hastings, another Africanist, states that:

Africa is a continent of song, dance and musical instruments, of language and languages. Here lies the heart of (Africa's) communal artistic inheritance, which wealth should have been allowed to pass into the worship of the young churches in the first instance.⁴¹⁶

With the diffused seasons in Uganda, worship leaders have to use more imagination than in any part of the world to stage-design for worship. The numerous 'occasional offices' by individuals, families and tribes are the result of this. This demands an output of music to march the occasions.

The African Inland Mission (AIM), which evangelised West Nile, was a



typical Protestant inter-denominational faith mission that did not see the need to engage the local culture in designing the worship of the emerging Church. Despite the rich musical heritage of the people of West Nile, as shown above, the missionaries

ignored all these riches and introduced European hymns and brass instruments for church worship. The picture above is an open-air service led by the West Nile trumpeters. The Verona Fathers did not do any better either; they introduced the harmonium instead of making use of local instruments. Traditional Lugbara/Madi music, musical instruments and dance did not, therefore, feature in organised Christian worship in the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches up to until the mid-1960s. Writing on music in the Anglican diocese of Namirembe, which could be said of any part of Uganda, James Batte states:

Music in Namirembe was intended to fit the standard in any English church or cathedral with organ and choir. The singing of a good Western church music was another mark of being an educated and devout Christian.⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁵ John Taylor, *ibid.* p. 11.

⁴¹⁶ Adrian Hastings, *African Christianity*, Geoffrey Chapman: London, 1976, p. 48.

⁴¹⁷ James Batte, 1983, p. 7-8.

The Luganda hymnbook, apart from being used widely in the south and eastern Uganda, formed the text for translation into other languages including Lugbara.⁴¹⁸ James Batte offers an explanation, even though unconvincingly; of the enthusiasm for adopting foreign music from the African point of view. He thinks that since traditional songs had to be learnt before use in worship, new converts considered the adoption of new songs as part of their training for the new faith.⁴¹⁹ But Batte does not explain the missionary attitude of selective rejection and acceptance of local cultural goods. Why, for instance, did the missionaries take language learning seriously but reject music and dance, and why did some of them record African sayings and proverbs but reject African art, prayers, music, and musical instruments?

There is however, an increasing number of Christian churches today that are discovering a refreshing upsurge of creativity in their worship through traditional music and dance, especially those churches that espouse a form of written liturgy and were considered rigid and spiritually dead by the 'spiritual' churches. The funeral and death rituals and music caused the greatest frictions between Christianity and Lugbara/Madi peoples. But today a compromise has been reached such that both traditions have begun to mutually benefit each other. This phenomenon, often referred to as liturgical renewal, has not only helped the Catholics and Anglicans, but also non-liturgical Protestant and Independent churches to begin to appreciate liturgical worship that is appropriately and aesthetically tuned to the cultures of the worshipping communities.⁴²⁰

The Catholics have led the way with culturally appropriate music in church even though the Revival groups have used culturally appropriate music for a longer time in their fellowships and meetings. At first, church drums were made different from the traditional drums, which were broad at the top and narrow at the bottom, and made of wood. The church drums were made out of metal drums instead of wood. But today the same drums are used. The sound of drums from the various churches used to be distinct but now they sound similar. These traditional

⁴¹⁸ One translator revealed to me that when it was difficult to use the English version, the Luganda version was used. All the Lugbara hymns show the English and Luganda references.

⁴¹⁹ Batte, 1983, p. 9

⁴²⁰ Hugh Wybrew, 'Ceremonial' in Cheslyn, Jones, G. Wainwright, and E. Yarnold, eds. 1978, *The Study of Liturgy*, SPCK: London, p. 439.

instruments are appearing alongside the modern amplified instruments such as the guitar and the keyboard even in some remote villages.

.VII.3.1. The Lubgara Anglican Hymnbook

Hymns are not only a vital element of oral credal expression, but have been of special importance to Christian worship throughout church history.⁴²¹ They constitute a sub-category of oral utterance and have their own additional characteristics, which they share with verse and poetry.⁴²² The translated Lugbara hymns from English unlike their origins have a language that is more direct than allusive and affirmational rather than rationalistic. They communicate more from heart to heart and appeal to feeling more than to reason, without being unreasonably meaningless. This shows the time for a revision of the hymns and scriptures is at hand.

Of the 272 hymns and 75 choruses in the Anglican Lugbara Hymnbook, a woman from Terego composed only one hymn (hymn 124) locally.⁴²³ The rest are liberal translations from the Hymns of Faith, Inspiring Hymns, Golden Bells, Sacred Songs and Solos, Negro Spirituals and others.⁴²⁴ Of the entire assortment of hymns and before the phenomenon of 'spiritual songs' the Negro Spirituals were the favourite of the congregations. When I asked why people liked the Spirituals they said the tunes, rhythm, message and brevity of the songs endeared them to the aesthetic tastes of the people of West Nile.⁴²⁵ As a result many lyrics were created for the different Spirituals. The most popular Spirituals were given lyrics for different seasons and occasions.⁴²⁶ We will now turn to a discussion of the theology

⁴²¹ This statement does not ignore the periods when hymns were banned in church. But after the reformation and especially from the Wesleyan era onwards, hymns have been inseparable parts of both Protestant and Catholic Christian worship.

⁴²² Molyneux, 1985, p. 159.

⁴²³ Leonora Avako is a prolific folk musician and has sung hundreds of hymns, which she sings everywhere she moves. More of these hymns need to be studied and recorded for church use.

⁴²⁴ There are 147 hymns from Hymns of Faith, 48 hymns from the Golden Bells, 22 from Inspiring Hymns, 25 hymns from Negro Spirituals, 18 hymns from Sacred Songs and Solos and 12 others from assorted books.

⁴²⁵ Discussion with Anglican pastors on 29th Nov. 1999 in the diocesan Chapter meeting at Mvara.

⁴²⁶ For example, the spiritual *He rose from the dead* is translated for both Easter and Christmas, cf. hymn 30 and 58. *John Brown's Body* was translated for Evangelism and Infant Baptism cf. 171 & 240, and *It's me, O Lord*, has lyrics for the Worship of God and for standing in trial, cf. hymn 8 and 225.

of hymn 124 because it captures in a special way the Lugbara understanding of the mission of Christ and the gospel in the world from an ordinary Lugbara woman's perspective.

.VII.3.1.1. The theology of Hymn 124

Lugbara Hymn 124 embodies the theology that best explains the meaning of Christ's sacrifice and the gospel for the Lugbara/Madi. It relates the *adi* (story) of the gospel, as the Lugbara understand it. The *adi* (story) in the song is given in the inculcative form. I write the hymn and its literal translation in full for analysis.

*Mungu co adi amaniri de 'bo,
Eri co Opi Yesu ma arisi;
Eri le 'ba dria ma emu i vu,
Ari nde a'izu onzi yinisi.*

God's revealed how he dealt with our sins,
He did it by the blood of Lord Jesus;
He wants everybody to come to Him,
To receive the blood for their sins.

*Mi ma 'yo mi 'ba alaru 'dini ku,
Mungu ni afa alaruri dria,
Eri nira ama 'ba onzi ada,
Mi nga ovu alaru ari ndesi*

Do not say you are holy,
For God knows all who are holy;
He knows we are truly sinners,
You can become holy through the blood.

*Asi mini ma ama onzi mini,
Onzi ci asi mini ma alia;
Mi ma ku onzi nde 'diyi Yesu dri,
Eri nga mi oji ari inisi*

Let your conscience help you,
There is sin in your life;
Leave your sins to Jesus,
He will then wash you with his blood.

*Mi ma ku e'yo onzi mini andru,
Mungu leni e'yo onzi mini ku;
Eri nga mi a'i asi ndrizasi,
Mi ka Opi Yesuni a'i andru.*

Would you leave your sins today?
God does not want your sins;
He will receive you by his grace,
If you receive Christ today

*Mungu le 'ba dria ma fi 'bua ra,
Eri leni 'ba onzi ndre 'dale ku;
Opi Yesu mi oji ma alaru
Ma le di mani mu fi 'bua indi.*

God wants everybody to go to heaven,
He doesn't want to see sinners there;
Lord Jesus washes me clean,
For I too would like to go to heaven.

*'Ba ngapi acepi nyakua 'diyi,
Yi nga ovu candi amboru alia;
Yi nga le apa Mungu ma milia,
Yini Opi Yesuni galerisi.*

Those who will remain on earth,
They will be in great trouble;
They will want to escape from God,
Because they rejected the Lord Jesus.

The first stanza states the Lugbara understanding of sacrifice in relation to the death of Christ. In Christ, God was 'telling the story' of dealing with our sins. *Adi cozu* is to reveal the meaning and purpose of a sacrificial activity. It may also mean to atone for a wrong or sin. The person who pays for the atonement has to 'tell the story' of the wrong committed for the sacrifice to be effective. The Lugbara atone for their sins by slaughtering animals, the blood of which cleanses the individual and/or the

community of the sin or mishap that befalls them. Stanzas 2, 3 and 4 are the evangelistic message that spells out the steps to be taken in order to appreciate and receive the benefits of Christ's work. The fifth stanza is the decision, and the sixth and last stanza describes the consequence of rejecting the story that God has told, about what He has done for us in Christ.⁴²⁷

VII.3.1.2. *Other translated hymns*

The other translated hymns carry the basic outline and theology of the original compositions in English. But it must be noted firstly, that the translations were liberal rather than conservative, affecting both the theology and the occasions in which these hymns are to be used. Secondly, because Lugbara/Madi music and English music scales are different,⁴²⁸ the translated hymns have slightly different tunes to the trained ear from their original English tunes. Thirdly, apart from the accidental changes in tunes, a hundred years of using these hymns, tunes, music and liturgical forms have made it possible for the Lugbara/Madi to adapt and express them in culturally relevant ways. New lyrics have continued to be added to old tunes and vice versa,⁴²⁹ and new stanzas added to the songs. For instance, hymn 9 in Hymns of Faith, which is 65 in Lugbara, has a new tune by an unknown person, which is much loved in West Nile. And the 18th century Revival hymn by William Cowper, 'There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's vein' has been given a new stanza recently that is in line with Lugbara/Madi salvation theology, which goes thus:

<i>'Ba la! Emi a'i Yesu</i>	My people! Believe in Jesus ⁴³⁰
<i>Emi idri be 'diyi</i>	You who are still alive
<i>Yesuni 'ba drole kusi</i>	Because Jesus casts not aside
<i>Eri drilea yo</i>	Anyone who comes to him

At present the Lugbara Hymnbook is being used less and less, perhaps because it is expensive, or maybe it is just being ignored. It was last printed in 1996, in 10,000

⁴²⁷ Notice that no mention of baptism or any sacrament is made, which is due to the influence of the revival movement, at its peak when this song was composed in about 1965.

⁴²⁸ While the English scale is (doh reh me fah soh lah tee doh'), the Lugbara scale does not have (fah & tee) scales. The Lugbara will sing (doh reh me me soh lah doh' doh').

⁴²⁹ Hymn 65, which is in the tune of Hymns of Faith no. 9, has a traditional tune to it.

⁴³⁰ The person who added this last stanza, it was intimated to me, was moved to do so by Paul's concern for his people: 'the Israelites who were zealous for God but that zeal was not out of knowledge', Romans 10: 1-4. 'Ba la!' is a plea in Lugbara meaning 'My people!' It can also be an appeal to humanity.

copies, which took almost three years to sell. It is therefore not uncommon to find 600 people in a church sharing fewer than 20 hymnbooks mainly for the liturgy. For this reason people are resorting to using *ongo Orindini* (songs of the Spirit) in their worship services, to which we now turn.

.VII.3.2. The 'Spiritual songs' of West Nile

The concept of 'spiritual songs', according to Teofilo Debo, is found in two places in the scriptures; Eph.5: 18-20 and Colossians 3:16, where spiritual songs are the result of being filled with the Spirit and with the Word of God, respectively.⁴³¹ To be filled with the Spirit results in speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and *spiritual songs*, singing and making music in the heart for the Lord, giving thanks to God in everything in the name of Jesus Christ. And being filled with the Word of Christ enables Christians to teach and admonish each other with all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns and *spiritual songs* with gratitude in their hearts to God.⁴³²

From these two scriptures we can see that spiritual songs are songs put in the hearts of Christians by the Spirit through the Word of God, the equipment for praising and worshipping God. Robert Candia, a prolific composer of spiritual songs, says his songs bring a great deal of depth to his worship and praise life. As stated above, fewer and fewer hymns from books are being used in all churches, and 'spiritual songs' are increasingly being used in preference.⁴³³ This upsurge is attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit and is termed 'revival' and/or 'renewal', although one cannot rule out the lack of hymnbooks in both vernacular and English in recent times.⁴³⁴ But the fact that worship has become more vibrant shows that congregations have found these songs to be in tune with their aesthetic tastes. Teofilo Debo, a Revival leader in West Nile, has this to say about it:

God's spirit is leading brethren in such a way that they want to use every part of their body and being to praise God and to communicate the gospel

⁴³¹ Personal interview, 15th March 2000.

⁴³² All emphasis and italics mine.

⁴³³ This trend was evident in the eight conferences of various kinds, two music festivals, two conventions, three seminars on worship, wedding services, and various services in Catholic, Anglican and Pentecostal churches attended in the course of this research. But the lack of Hymnbooks may also be a factor.

⁴³⁴ The last print of the Lugbara hymnbook was in 1996 but the price was beyond the reach of most people. As a result today it is not common to find a church of 200 sharing fewer than 10 hymnbooks.

effectively in truth and in power. They do not seem to find that power in some hymns any longer.⁴³⁵

Although Isaac Watts and the Wesleys considered their hymns to be spiritual songs, which was an assault on the unreasoning immobility of the Church in worship,⁴³⁶ their songs do not seem to be so spiritual any longer for some Lugbara/Madi Christians.⁴³⁷ The Revival brethren saw these hymns as instruments of a dying religion, which was oppressive and lifeless. So when songs 'came' to the new converts, they called them *Ongo Orindini* (spiritual songs) as opposed to *Ongo Kanisani* (church hymns). Although all are *ongo* (songs), the Church at this point in time was considered not spirit-led but a missionary-controlled institution.⁴³⁸

Sostenes Dronyi Ajugu, one of the first converts,⁴³⁹ was a prolific preacher and composer of spiritual songs. Rasto A'ia states that "Sostenes Ajugu, Daniel Erah and Simon Moi's conversion experience made them overflow with joy [so] that they began to praise and sing and dance for the Lord".⁴⁴⁰ When Ajugu was given an ultimatum to stop his radical preaching and praising, or lose his job as a bookshop attendant and teacher, he tore up his teaching certificate and resigned from the bookshop, something he said would not take him to heaven. Certain rules were made by the brethren, which included spurning European clothes, especially ties, shoes, watches and ornaments.⁴⁴¹

The number of spiritual songs increased with the criticism of the Church's music. Apart from the Revival theme song *Tukutendereza Yesu* (Glory, glory Hallelujah), numerous spiritual songs were composed and taught in fellowship

⁴³⁵ Teofilo Debo, interviewed on 15th March 2000.

⁴³⁶ Elsie Houghton, 1982, *Christian Hymn Writers*, Evangelical Press of Wales, p. 56.

⁴³⁷ Isaac Watts used the term 'spiritual songs' in 1719 when he published 'The psalms of David in New Testament language, with Hymns and Spiritual songs'.

⁴³⁸ Teofilo Debo, interviewed on 15th March 2000.

⁴³⁹ Sostene Ajugu was a schoolteacher in Moyo, but a Kakwa by tribe. He was converted through the preaching of Dr Elias Lubulwa, a man from Buganda. Ajugu criss-crossed the whole of West Nile; singing and preaching about the 'dryness' of the established church. In one song (*I ku mani geri wala*), he asked the church to 'give way' to the spiritually revived people, because the church leaders were leading people *acia* (hell).

⁴⁴⁰ Rasto A'ia, 1979, 'Spirit Beliefs among the Lugbara with particular reference to the Diocese of Madi West Nile', a dissertation for Dip. Theo. Makerere University, p. 21.

⁴⁴¹ Teofilo Debo Interviewed on 15th March 2000.

meetings that took place immediately after church services.⁴⁴² The Church responded by denying them the sacraments, as the brethren declared the sacraments to be instruments of religion that cannot save. They began to use traditional musical instruments such as *koyo* (gourd and metal shakers) and *ari* (drums). Before this the drum was only used for summoning people to worship. Many Revival experiences were ecstatic, with parallels in *odra* worship where people spoke in tongues, shivered uncontrollably or just lay silent. These experiences, according to Uzukwu, can be seen as “ecstatic gestures of the pious soul tending toward the cosmic rhythm”.⁴⁴³ Because of such parallels the church leaders were resolute about stamping them out. So the resistance to traditional tunes and musical instruments in the Church continued while they were given central place in fellowship meetings. By the mid-1960s to early 1970s, as more pastors were ‘saved’, the spiritual songs were beginning to find their way into church, depending on the leadership. It was not unusual for a very dull church service to be followed by a very moving fellowship meeting led by the same person. Many Christians seemed dualistic in their lives, thinking that what was done in a formal church service had no link with what was done in the fellowship meeting.

Dance that relates closely to the traditional Lugbara dance appeared in the Revival meetings, where two people hold hands or shoulders and jumped, ending with an elaborate handshake and embrace. The singing and dancing are interposed with testimony and preaching and can go on for a long time. Each testimony or significant point is responded to with a song that either emphasises or establishes the point and/or Christ’s victory over the issue or situation. By the end of each presentation, a whole sermon has been sung and preached.

At the millennium convention of January 12th-16th 2000 in Arua, I asked a particularly vigorous dancer why she danced so much. Her answer was simple but profound: “I dance because I cannot fly.”⁴⁴⁴ Dance for her is what she was made for, just as birds are made to fly. Yet dance is the least developed human activity in

⁴⁴² The source of information here is Teofilo Debo, the West Nile Revival leader, interviewed on 15th March 2000.

⁴⁴³ Elochukwu Uzukwu, ‘Inculturation and Liturgy’, in Rosino Gibellini, ed., 1994, *Paths of African Theology*, SCM: London, p. 102.

⁴⁴⁴ Onyivuru Selina is a member of the revival movement; I talked with her on 14th January 2000.

Anglican Church worship in West Nile. It always comes as an accident, a spillover from a planned worship activity, which whenever it happens is thoroughly enjoyed. However, these days the spillover happens most frequently in the processions, at the offertory and in special group presentations. This reveals that a natural tendency of the people⁴⁴⁵ is being suppressed by the assumed superiority of one form of religious expression over another, a fact that the Church in West Nile has to address. Only the school chaplains report regular dances in formal worship services.⁴⁴⁶ The youth conferences and Revival conventions use dance extensively.

.VII.3.2.1. *Categories of Spiritual song*⁴⁴⁷

In order to give the spiritual songs some 'shape' and to assess their role I sat with some composers to try to understand their compositions. By looking at the message and structure of the songs one can discern five categories of spiritual song that reveal the embodied theology and spirituality of the Lugbara/Madi people.

.VII.3.2.1.1. Songs addressed to God

These are in the forms of praise, worship, adoration, confession, petition and response. A combination of these forms can be found in the same song. The following is an example of a song addressed to Jesus in the form of a petition or prayer.

<i>Yesu la mi ku ma kuyo</i>	Jesus do not abandon me
<i>Mi ovu ma be</i>	You be with me
<i>Mini 'ba omveria</i>	When you call others
<i>Opi la mi a'i ma indi yo</i>	Lord please do remember me too.

.VII.3.2.1.2. Mutual songs

These are songs addressed by members to one another. They can be in the form of exhortation, instruction and/or affirmation. The following two examples illustrate

⁴⁴⁵ Drati's categorisation of traditional Lugbara music shows that all Lugbara music is supposed to be danced, Drati, 1987, p. 192-212.

⁴⁴⁶ See Appendix 21 on questionnaire to Anglican clergy of Madi/West Nile in their chapter on 26th-27th Nov. 1998.

⁴⁴⁷ Gordon Molyneux's work on Kimbanguist music is very helpful in this area. His ideas helped me to focus on the messages the songs carry and thereby the category in which to place them.

this. The first is a reminder to watch out because times are bad and the second is an exhortation to persevere.

<i>Ewu 'dori ngo 'i ya</i>	which era do you think is this
<i>Mini aparaka 'bazuri</i>	In which you seem to be callous?
<i>Anzila 'ba mu nga</i>	Friends let's move on
<i>Aita be drile</i>	Believing and trusting;
<i>E'yo Nyakua 'diyi</i>	The things of this world
<i>Yi dria took</i>	Are but worthless

.VII.3.2.1.3. Evangelistic songs

These are songs addressed to the world and are evangelistic entreaties and/or warnings. They began to feature most prominently in the mid-1970s as the Revival movement reached its peak in West Nile. They are used for altar calls and between testimonies and for preaching, as we saw earlier. For songs used in altar calls, see below.

<i>Mi emu karile la</i>	Come young man
<i>Yesu ni omve</i>	Jesus is calling you
<i>Mi emu mi emu</i>	Come, come to him
<i>Yesuni mi omve</i>	Jesus is calling you

.VII.3.2.1.4. Occasional songs

These are songs for the various liturgical ceremonies, particularly for occasional ceremonies such as weddings, funerals, welcomes and greetings. They are always simple and brief and easily translatable into various languages. The following are examples of welcome songs. The first three are in a mixture of Swahili and Lugbara/Madi

<i>Karibu sana adripi/amvipi amani</i>	Most welcome, our brother/sister,
<i>Ama ai mi Opi Yesu marusi</i>	We receive you in Lord Jesus' name
<i>Karibu omu amaovi</i>	Welcome, our visitor,
<i>Ma ai mi ra</i>	We receive you.
<i>Kama mina wona wandugu</i>	If I see brethren like this
<i>Nina furayi sana</i>	I get so excited;
<i>Jina la Yesu asifiwe sana</i>	The name of the Jesus be praised
<i>Damu yake ana yunga sisi</i>	His blood unites us.
<i>Omu ka eca mavuni</i>	If a visitor comes to me,
<i>Ma ovu ayikosi</i>	Makes me very happy,
<i>E'yo bari ma nga azi ni</i>	The gospel is at work.
<i>Alleluia Yesu</i>	Alleluia to Jesus!

.VII.3.2.1.5. Story songs

There are two types of story song. The first is where the choir or music group sings an entire story, say on marital problems and/or social relations, as in the famous Abindi song: *Ojo dri adre mi asia ci* (If there is something in your heart).⁴⁴⁸ The second type is found mainly amongst the Revival brethren where a good point in the preaching is emphasised or driven home with a song. The song *Tukutendereza* (Glory, glory Hallelujah) is extensively used in this way in the south and west of Uganda, while in West Nile it is used in addition to various spiritual songs as a refrain to the preached word. Although these songs are best enjoyed in communal praise and worship, many are intensely personal. This is the result of a personal salvation preached by the Revival movement to draw people out of their communities into the community of the saved, the *balokole*. But there are some songs with communal meanings, such as *Anzila ba mu nga*, which I quoted above, and the following:

<i>Ayiko amani</i>	This joy we have
<i>Ayiko Yesu alia</i>	It is the joy in the Lord ⁴⁴⁹
<i>E'yo onzi Nyakuniri</i>	The sins of this world
<i>Eri nga asira</i>	Will one day cease

.VII.3.2.2. *The literary structure and theology of spiritual songs*

Firstly, spiritual songs and much of Lugbara/Madi music is antiphonal, where the soloist's line and a repeated chorus response alternate with each other in an overlapping way to form a harmonious effect. The response is repetitive because it contains the main message of the song, while the soloist's line changes with nearly every line where a repetition is always a coincidence. The soloist's ability to weave in new lines creatively endears him or her to the choir and makes them fit to lead the particular song. A great deal of this music is in triple time.

Secondly, spiritual songs are adaptable for use in different occasions. Songs are adapted to create different theological and didactic meanings. Adaptations

⁴⁴⁸ The song is a discussion between a childless husband and wife. When their relations become too tense, the woman pleads with him to say what is in his mind. The man says he doesn't need a ring, but children. The way the story unfolds makes it very nice to follow. As the song is enjoyed the message that marriage is valid with or without children is conveyed. The song depicts very well the problems that childless couples face in West Nile, as in Uganda and Africa in general.

⁴⁴⁹ One can see that the song was inspired by Paul's exhortation to the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord always, Phil. 4: 4.

depend on the audience and occasion. This shows the situational nature of orality, where orality entails speak/hear/do as opposed to the literary category of read/write/speculate.⁴⁵⁰ In oral cultures adaptations do not offend the original composer. In fact a tune used for different occasions is a compliment to the composer who was given 'a loaded song' for the community. I asked Robert Candia about this and his feeling was that songs that come to him are often tentative; their fullest riches emerge with time as the community uses the songs.⁴⁵¹ The community is expected to contribute to the riches of the songs while participating. And what each person learns from the song is reflected in the turns and twists they give to the song, which also reflects their collective identity: "We participate, therefore we are."⁴⁵² Although the songs can be sung by individuals they are at their best when sung communally; they come alive and show their full riches when their meanings and effects are seen in the eyes, the body language and movements of the members of the community. This shows that singing and dancing are rituals, and as rituals they "find part of their meaning in communal participation".⁴⁵³

Thirdly, the theological and aesthetic content of spiritual songs and Lugbara hymns in general, when judged from a Western point of view and according to the standards and ideas of Western catechism, may make them appear ordinary and simple. But they are legitimate expressions of spiritual and aesthetic tastes, where "repetition of the 'just said' keeps both the speaker and hearer on track", and ought to be assessed from that point of view.⁴⁵⁴ These songs reflect Lugbara/Madi thought patterns, which are mainly cyclical, characterised by repetitions, additions and complements, as compared to the linear and analytical Western thought pattern. Molyneux thinks this is the nature of orality, which relies on repetition and tends to establish a conservative or traditional mindset and to inhibit intellectual experimentation. It is situational rather than abstract.⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵⁰ This is a term used by W. J. Ong, 1982, *Orality and Literacy: Technologising the Word*, Mathuen: London. p. 7.

⁴⁵¹ Candia, interviewed on 15th January 2000.

⁴⁵² Gordon Molyneux, 1987, p. 172.

⁴⁵³ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁴ Molyneux, 1987, p. 171.

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid.

.VII.3.2.3. *Spiritual songs in liturgical use*

Massey Shepherd links liturgical innovation to the musical life of the worshipping community when he writes: “No spirit of liturgical innovation has developed among Christians without an adequate vehicle of liturgical song.”⁴⁵⁶ The phenomenon of spiritual songs may therefore be a sign that such a time has come for the Church in Uganda. The creation of liturgy, according to Shepherd, requires choral participation on the part of all people of God. Christian worship being pre-eminently eucharistic must of necessity be realised at its best by a singing Church; and a singing Church in Uganda, according to Rwagyezi, is a dancing Church because happiness and enjoyment cannot be compartmentalised.⁴⁵⁷ The phenomenon of spiritual songs has affected worship positively in the Anglican and other churches in Uganda although the liturgical texts have remained generally unaffected. They have had a positive effect on the mood and atmosphere of worship through the Praise and Worship movement.

VII.3.2.3.1. The praise and worship movement

The praise and worship services started in towns and in the schools. They begin with 10-15 minutes of free praise and worship, led by a worship leader. This is before the clergy and the other liturgical leaders process into church. The processional hymn is always from the hymnbook. Spiritual songs are also used to fill in the liturgical gaps. One of the gaps to fill is when communion is being served. Here some quieter songs and hymns are sung. Some spiritual songs have found niches in the liturgy itself. For example the following song is used for the readings or for inviting the preacher to the pulpit.

<i>E'yo Munguni eri onyiru</i>	The Word of God is good
<i>Eji drileba 'ba ma eselea</i>	It brings blessings to people ⁴⁵⁸

At the time of notices and introduction of visitors the welcome songs, which we looked at earlier, are sung as the visitors are invited to greet the people. Some visitors may also ask for a favourite song to be sung. The song below is used for spiritual

⁴⁵⁶ Massey Shepherd, ed., 1960, *History of Liturgical Renewal*, Oxford University Press, p. 25.

⁴⁵⁷ Stephen Rwagyezi in *New Vision Newspaper of Uganda* 27th March 2000, p. 34.

⁴⁵⁸ Community, tribe, clan, church, family, etc, can be substituted for 'people'. It faintly echoes the message of Psalms 119: 103-5.

warfare, especially when a testimony of victory over Satan, temptation and/or adversity is given, and also for the intercessions. The song is a Lugbara reading of 1 Peter 5: 8-9.

<i>Setanini aci gunaguna</i> ⁴⁵⁹	Satan prowls around
<i>A'ita 'bani ezazu</i>	Seeking to wreck people's faith
<i>Mungu mi fe okpo</i>	God give us power
<i>Ari'ba ni ndezu</i>	To overcome him

This next song is used in the same way but especially for the intercessions.

<i>Yesu ma okpo</i>	Jesus' power
<i>Okpo ma e'ini</i>	He is the mighty one
<i>Aleluya, eri 'ba papiri</i>	Hallelujah, He is the saviour

The next two songs are for Christian solidarity.

<i>Ama woro anzi Munguni</i>	We are all children of God
<i>Setani idami 'dale</i>	Satan go away
<i>Setani ile ma ji ngoaya</i>	Satan where do you want to take me
<i>Ayee</i>	Ayee

<i>Ama tualo</i>	We are one
<i>Ama tualo</i>	We are one
<i>Yesu ma alia</i>	In Jesus

As a response to the gospel and a prayer for mercy they may sing as follows:

<i>Yesu la mi ku ma kuyo</i>	Jesus do not leave me
<i>Mi ovu ma be</i>	You should be with me
<i>Mini 'ba omveria</i>	When you call others
<i>Ata la mi a'i ma indi.</i>	Father accept me also.

For invitation to Christ and Altar calls:⁴⁶⁰

<i>Geri muzu 'buari</i>	The way to heaven
<i>Eri ewaru 'donia</i>	Is so hard to travel
<i>Mi ka asi oja ku</i>	If you have not repented
<i>Mi nga dri ja ada</i>	You will indeed perish

Chorus:

Solo	<i>Mi emu Karile la</i>	You are welcome, you young men ⁴⁶¹
All	<i>Yesuni mi omve</i>	Jesus is calling you
Solo	<i>Mi emu mi emu</i>	You're welcome, you're welcome
All	<i>Yesuni mi omve</i>	Jesus is calling you

⁴⁵⁹ *Gunaguna* is to follow stealthily. Satan shadows the Christians in order to catch them off guard for once and make them fall; this is the Lugbara rendering of 1 Pet 5:8 where Satan prowls.

⁴⁶⁰ Altar calls are a common feature in Anglican and Pentecostal services in Uganda.

⁴⁶¹ The soloist can call for all other groups there present: children, girls, women, men, elders, the sick, the weak, the dying, the married, the rich, the poor, the educated, etc.

I have shown earlier that songs are sometimes composed while a person meditates on the scriptures. This is shown by the snippets of scriptures in the next song for protection and refuge, which uses Boaz's words to Ruth who took refuge "under the God of Israel's wings", and which combines ideas from the letters of John and of Peter ⁴⁶²

	<i>Ama zi ama, Opilenia</i>	Let us take refuge; under his wings
	<i>Pari 'bani 'ba zizuri</i>	Our place of refuge
	<i>Eri Yesu vuyo!</i>	Is in Jesus Christ
	<i>Ama zi ama</i>	Let us take refuge
	<i>Pari 'bani ava lizuri-a</i>	In the place where we can have rest
Chorus:	<i>Ama anzi Munguni</i>	We are God's children
	<i>Ari 'ba Setani kirikiri idami</i>	Enemy Satan please go away

Songs for the offertory may not have fixed verses. Preferred are the songs sung in different languages, with every new line in another language, which enhances the use of time in the form of the 'eternal now'.⁴⁶³ The single phrase, *Kongei Yehova*, in Sabiny (Thank you Jehovah), for instance, is spontaneously translated into many languages thus: *Awa'difo Yesu, Asante Yesu, Eyalama Edeke, Webale Yesu, Afoyo/Apoyo Yesu, Iyete Yesu*, and so forth.⁴⁶⁴ In this way the song is used to create an 'eternal now' (*andruni andru*) for the people to give their offerings to God. It continues as long as the line of dancing people continues towards the offertory basket.

.VII.4. Music and dance in the Catholic Church

The Catholic Church moved very quickly and boldly to make use of culturally relevant music in its liturgy after the Vatican Council II. By this time they had the leaders to guide the congregations into the new liturgical journey the church was embarking upon.

.VII.4.1. Ongo Izitaniri – Lugbara Catholic Hymnbook

The present *Ongo Izitaniri* hymnbook, 1995,⁴⁶⁵ is divided into two parts: the hymns and 'service music.' The book has 299 hymns and seven service music songs which

⁴⁶² Ruth 2: 12, John 1:12 and 1Peter 5:8-9.

⁴⁶³ Matthew Fox, *Creation Spirituality*, Harper Collins: New York, 1991, p. 8.

⁴⁶⁴ The languages here are Sabiny, Lugbara, Swahili, Itesot, Luganda, Alur/Luo and Kakwa.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ongo Izitaniri*, 1995, published by Ediofe Vicariate Liturgy commission, Arua Diocese.

are typically Lugbara/Madi, with a few translated hymns such as 'What a friend we have in Jesus' (34), 'Rock of ages' (151) and 'Nearer my God to thee' (154) perched between them. The hymns are mostly antiphonal and are composed on the main Christian themes while service music is part of the liturgy put to music.

.VII.4.1.1. *Lugbara hymns*

New songs that are culturally appropriate have only appeared in Arua Catholic diocese after the the Vatican II Council and more so from the 1980s years.⁴⁶⁶ The Hymnbook, according to Sherry Meyer, needs to be balanced if it is to cover the important Christian themes fairly.⁴⁶⁷ The rites of the church form a big part of the hymnbook 37%, with Eucharist and reconciliation forming the bigger part of this section (47%). The seasons and feasts form 28% of the hymns. Of the rituals, marriage is poorly served, even though marriage is regarded very highly in Lugbara/Madi society. A possible explanation is the fewer weddings in a year in the Catholic Church compared to the Anglican and Pentecostal churches, which may be due to the hard view the Catholic Church has about marriage and divorce whereby Catholics prefer the traditional option.

Songs to Mary and to the saints form 11% of the book with Mary songs forming 69% of these. Compare 6% for prayer and 1% for healing. The hymnbook reflects Catholic theology, of relying very heavily on ritual and intercessions through the saints and Mary.⁴⁶⁸ Some terms for Mary may rightly be used for God, e.g., 'look down from your heavenly throne' (hymn 121), 'we worship Mary the holy mother' (hymn 120), 'pure light and sinless' (hymn116). Other terms such as *bandre*, a terminology for the favourite wife of a wealthy elder of status, are also used for Mary, which is the highest honour a Lugbara woman can have in society. The term cannot be used for a woman who does not give and serve the community liberally. One thing about the hymns is that they are event specific and looking at them one can tell from which parts of West Nile they come from because of the terminology

⁴⁶⁶ Mgr Casto Adeti, interviewed on 24th Feb. 1999. The second synod of 1994 authorised diocesan and Vicariate liturgical commissions to approve such culturally appropriate songs for liturgical use, in Resolution 22.

⁴⁶⁷ Sherry Meyer, interviewed on 19th Feb 1999.

⁴⁶⁸ *Ongo Izitaniri* 1995 has 19 songs on prayer or that are prayers, 30 songs for the preparation of the Altar and the gifts.

used. This is the fruit of Second Synod Resolution 22 of 1994, which authorised each of the four Vicariates, i.e., Moyo, Lodonga, Maracha and Ediofe, to produce their own hymns and to use only songs in familiar languages in worship.⁴⁶⁹

.VII.4.1.2. *Service music*

In liturgy, 'musical action' involves three things: a significant human act, a symbolic and ritual context, and a given musical form.⁴⁷⁰ Service music in the Catholic liturgy aims to bring about musical action, as the diocesan Liturgical Commission underlines:

Although mass can be conducted without music, it is often music, more than anything, which helps people to feel the beauty of the presence of God and keeps them close to God.⁴⁷¹

Service music makes music an integral part of the liturgy and is performed in a particular symbolic and ritual context where people in that context appreciate it. Here, the liturgy is the same Catholic liturgy the world over, but the music is what earths it to a local context. Rosino Tonino cites seven places for service music in Catholic liturgy.⁴⁷²

- Penitential songs; there are three tunes for *Opi iko ama aza* or *Kyrie eleison* (Lord have mercy).
- *Rukuza* (Gloria), in three tunes.
- The responsorial psalms where the response 'must always be sung',⁴⁷³ and each season (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and ordinary time), has a particular response. The Easter response must always include an Alleluia and at least two tunes are given to each response.
- The Creed. The instruction for the Creed is: "It is best spoken rather than sung, but when it is sung the words must be the same as the official version. It must not, therefore, be sung every Sunday."⁴⁷⁴ There are three tunes in use at present.

⁴⁶⁹ See Second Synod resolution no. 22. This is important because only Ediofe and Maracha Vicariates use Lugbara, Moyo and a part of Lodonga use Madi Moyo and Kakwa respectively.

⁴⁷⁰ Joseph Gelineau, in Cheslyn Jones, et al, eds. 1978, p. 450.

⁴⁷¹ *Training of Song Leaders Manual*, p. 8.

⁴⁷² See pages 139-150 for the Service music in *Ongo Izitaniri*.

⁴⁷³ As directed by the Pastoral Co-ordinator in Tape 2, *Ongo Izitaniri*.

⁴⁷⁴ Instruction in Tape 2, *Ongo Izitaniri*, by Pastoral Co-ordinator.

- In the liturgy led by a Catechist, a creation of the diocese of Arua used nationally,⁴⁷⁵ the prayer of thanksgiving is always responded to in music.
- The Lord's Prayer – as 'the only prayer left by Jesus' – must, when sung, be in the official words.⁴⁷⁶ It is sung in two tunes. The first line is used as a refrain (*Ama ata ovupi 'buari ama mi ru icu*).
- There are seven forms of Eucharistic prayers (A-D and C1-C3) and three acclamations to be sung by the assembly: (a) the Sanctus, (*Mi Alari*, or Holy, Holy, Holy); (b) the memorial acclamation, or the mystery of faith (Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again) sung in three tunes, and (c) the great Amen. The Eucharistic prayers C2 and C3 have more than three acclamations and A-D have another acclamation after the peace and the breaking of bread – *Kabilomva* or *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world) – all of which are to be sung.

As I stated earlier this is Roman Catholic ritual as found anywhere in the world, in Santiago, Rome or the Philippines. The important point here is what earths the Roman celebration to the particular soil of Arua and Uganda: the music. It is the music that makes the ritual an Arua or a Lugbara/Madi celebration. The hymns, songs and musical instruments cause the Roman missal to be earthed in West Nile.

.VII.4.1.3. *Liturgical translation rather than creation*

On liturgical innovation, the Assistant Pastoral co-ordinator Sherry Meyers, who is a liturgist from America, says: "I refuse to use anything for liturgy that does not come from or is not known to Uganda."⁴⁷⁷ But she is yet to actually begin to write liturgy that is locally made rather than just give Lugbara words to liturgy already made in other places, including South Africa. Mgr Pierino Madrwa, the Episcopal Vicar of Moyo, challenges the Catholic Church in Arua to begin to compose liturgy of its own instead of translating from other sources.⁴⁷⁸ Such a criticism notwithstanding, it is important to realise that translation is not saying the same thing in equivalent words. Liturgy is not just information or teaching, whose only importance is the content; it is also symbolic action by means of significant forms, such that if any form changes, the rite also changes, and if one element changes the total meaning changes! The

⁴⁷⁵ *Rite for the Assembly of the Faithful led by a Lay Presider*, 1998.

⁴⁷⁶ Instruction on Tape 2, *Ongo Izitaniri*, by Pastoral Coordinator Tonino Rosino.

⁴⁷⁷ Sherry Meyers, interviewed on 19th Feb. 1999.

⁴⁷⁸ Pierino Madrwa, interviewed on 16th Feb. 1999.

translations have therefore unearthed forms and ritual meanings that are unique to West Nile.

Liturgical committees are being trained in all parishes and churches to train congregations to participate in worship as they collect music, and occasionally prayers, from the churches for the central committee to study and distribute. In this way the Catholic Church in Arua is well equipped for the process of liturgical innovation and creation. Its technological capacity is benefiting the Anglicans and Independent churches as these bring their songs and prayers to be printed and or put on overhead projector transparencies, etc. The catechism for child baptism produced by the Catholic Church is benefiting the Anglican pastors.

.VII.4.2. Dance in Catholic worship

Aylward Shorter underlined the centrality of dance in African culture and the role of dance in African Catholic liturgy when he wrote:

In African cultures, dance is the height of cultural expression, and it is typically a community event, inviting maximum participation. As such it possesses the ability to affect people very powerfully. In fact it is rapidly becoming a liturgical and catechetical commonplace.⁴⁷⁹

Dance, as in Anglican worship, features in processions and at the presentation of the gifts. The *Kizito kids*,⁴⁸⁰ dressed like the Uganda martyrs (see picture below), lead the processions and bring the gifts to the altar. They are escorted by an elder – dressed in traditional garb including feathered headgear, and carrying traditional artefacts of a flywhisk and a ‘talking’ stick – who is their mentor and guide. The dance adds colour and beauty to the liturgy as the earthly gifts of money, food, wine and bread are brought to the altar for God to transform for human spiritual nourishment.

⁴⁷⁹ Shorter, Aylward, *Evangelisation and Culture*, 1994, p. 15.

⁴⁸⁰ Kizito was the youngest martyr who was baptised by Charles Lwanga before martyrdom. Instead of bark cloth the Kizito kids tie *kitenge* across one shoulder.



Drawing of Charles Lwanga baptising Kizito; note their totems at their feet

Before the gospel is read the kids lead the deacon with a symbolically wrapped Bible, as food is wrapped in African societies. In Rubaga Cathedral it was wrapped in banana leaves called *luwombo*, the best steamed food for the Baganda. In a charismatic High Mass at Namugongo led by the Church in Acholi, it was put in a calabash, as the Acholi would serve their food. In Arua, food is served in a reed basket called *ivu*, which is used to carry the gospel to the *ambo* (lectern). This dramatically connects with the local world of meaning concerning food, as the reader carefully unwraps or removes the Bible before inviting the congregation to partake of the word of life.

.VII.5. Music and Dance in Independent/Pentecostal Churches

Like the Revival brethren, the Independent/Pentecostal Churches at first despised hymns and liturgy, which they considered unspiritual. They started to use simple Swahili choruses such as *Mungu yo mwema* (Oh God is good);

Oh God is good (x3)
He's so good to me.

Because they used this song and the word 'Hallelujah' so much, other Christians began to call them *Mungu Mwema*, or *Hallelujah* churches. While the Anglican Revival brethren mainly used spiritual songs in the vernacular, the Independent/Pentecostal churches mainly used spiritual songs in English or Swahili.

Vernacular spiritual songs, however, are now being used in Independent/Pentecostal churches. Apart from the Pastor and the elders, the next person in authority is the worship leader, one who is spiritually gifted to lead worship.⁴⁸¹ Praise and worship are given almost equal time as the preaching of the word, at times more.

All Independent churches have Worship Teams (as in the picture below at Uringi conference in 1999) led by a worship leader, the size of the group varying from day to day and from church to church. Impromptu groups formed to give special presentations or ministries are also common. In Kampala churches well-trained musicians lead these worship teams. The services begin with vigorous praise, accompanied by clapping and dancing. This can go on for about 15-30 minutes; then the songs begin to slow down as hands are raised, eyes closed, and drumming slows to match the pace. It



ends with everyone praising and worshipping God individually in loud voices in both English and the vernacular with phrases such as ‘You are worthy, Lord’, ‘We bless you, Lord’, ‘We praise you, Lord’, ‘We glorify your name, Lord’ and ‘We magnify your name, oh Lord’. *Glossolalia* (speaking in tongues) is also common at this final point. Such utterances may come in several waves before the people switch to other activities. Some similarity with traditional *odra* worship can be drawn here. In *odra* worship, when spirits are invited, their arrival is usually marked by a frenzy of activities: people, screaming, crying or falling to the ground and lying motionless.

Activities may also be initiated by the leader with commands such as “Let us raise up holy hands”, “Let’s wave to the Lord”, “Give a mighty clap for the Lord”, “People of God, say Amen”, and “Let’s bless the Lord, Alleluia”, and the people do as instructed. Other commands may include greeting one another, smiling to one another, and saying something to a neighbour, such as “The Lord loves you”, “You’re special”, “Fear not!” or “God bless you!”

⁴⁸¹ Most Pastors begin as worship leaders, or, conversely, most Pastors are also worship leaders.

Good use is made of acclamations, which Gelineau defines as “human cry, developed and stylised”.⁴⁸² Crying out and shouting are vital human responses to intense ritual situations. And such situations abound in scripture and in church tradition, where the cry and shout of an oppressed people for help is *maranatha* and *Hosanna*. If the penitential cry is *Kyrie eleison*, the cry or response for heartfelt ratification of a covenant and revelation is *Amen* and the joyful shout of the saved is “Alleluia! Praise the Lord!”

Acclamations therefore represent high points in the activities of the assembly when the people are moved to express solidarity in faith.⁴⁸³ The Pentecostal and Independent churches and the *Balokole* groups in all the churches use Amen, Alleluia, Praise the Lord, as greetings and to identify themselves. They will also respond with these words at certain high points in the worship service. Other shouts and interjections include *Yesu Oyee! Yesu juu zaidi, Setani chini zaidi* (Swahili for ‘Jesus higher indeed, Satan lower indeed’), *Polo, polo, polo* (Luo for ‘heaven’). A singer may be blessed with “God bless you, you angel voice!” or “You have blessed me man/woman of God!” The shouts and cries are used in the same way as the Lugbara use *poi* (panegyrics), and *cere* (crowing). In this way the congregation is kept involved and at times spontaneously so.

Hymn singing, however, is dying out in the Independent Churches because of lack of hymnbooks, and its place is being taken by choruses, praise and worship songs in English and Swahili, and spiritual songs that can be put on overhead projectors for the whole church to sing from. Hymns used are well known ones that can be sung by heart, such as ‘What a friend we have in Jesus’, or choruses like the Christmas carol:

Oh come let us adore Him (x2)
Oh come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

.VII.6. Music and dance and identity formation

From what we have discussed about the relationship between music and dance and its effect on the worshipping community, one can relate music and dance to the social and cultural identity of the worshipping community in two ways.

⁴⁸² Gelineau, in Cheslyn Jones et al, eds. *The Study of Liturgy*, 1978, p. 452.

⁴⁸³ Ibid. pp. 452-3.

VII.6.1. Music and dance are people- and event-specific



Kebu musicians play a tune - Paidha, Nebbi, May 18.

Music and dance, like language and speech, are culture and people-specific. When the Madi dress up for dance, according to Ruda, they make a ritual statement about themselves.⁴⁸⁴ The picture on the left shows Kebu Osegu musicians. Each people group can only speak, sing, and dance in a particular way, that is why the Lugbara/Madi will at regular intervals, in the course of a dance, make known their identity through *poi* (panegyrics and *cere* (crowing or praise ejaculation)). Although the Madi and the Lugbara both perform the *nyambi* dance, the tunes and dance styles are tribe-specific. The

Madi are also known for their *namina* or *mgbiri* and *osego* dances.⁴⁸⁵ Although the *osego* dance was originally a Kebu tribal dance, the way the Madi perform it is now quite distinct from that of the Kebu. The Lugbara on their part have a specific way of singing and dancing, with the men jumping and the women singing the words and clapping to the rhythm of the dance. The way each tribe and clan arranges itself in dance, the way they dress, and the way they sing and dance is specific to them. Each tribe, clan and family will arrange themselves and dance in a way that makes them distinct within the wider context of meaning.⁴⁸⁶ Music and dance therefore, are not only identity-affirming, but also identity-revealing.

Apart from being people-specific, music and dance are also event-specific. Funeral music and dance, wedding music and dance, folk music and dance, children's play songs and dances, youth songs and dances, lullabies, etc., are some of

⁴⁸⁴ Interviewed on 13th November 1999

⁴⁸⁵ *Mgbiri* is the original traditional Madi dance. It is performed with jingles worn on the ankles and a headgear of ostrich feathers. The women put on sisal skirts, *asu*. It is a vigorous dance. *Osego*, on the other hand, is a bamboo flute dance, initially of the Kebu people. As the women sing the lyrics, men blow the flutes to the tune.

⁴⁸⁶ It is worth restating Yosam Ruda's words of wisdom of 13th February 2000, when he said; 'a tribal ceremony is not a random act, but a ritual statement, a display of the tribe's intention to exist in the midst of a complex of relations'.

the types of songs and dances that are performed by the people of West Nile. Each music and dance comes with its own style, tempo and dance form. This specificity has been taken into the church, where each church thinks their kind of music and dance is specific to them. This was more pronounced in the past, when there were Catholic songs, Anglican or Protestant hymns and Pentecostal choruses. But it is now common to go into any church and find the same praise and worship songs and hymns being sung. Charismatic renewal members across the denominations use the same songs and in services that may be deemed ecumenical, such as funerals or fundraising, service planners are beginning to be considerate in choosing songs so as to have everyone present participate.⁴⁸⁷

The words of James Batte are appropriate: "To think you are praising God but do it badly because the type of music you are using is unnatural to you is to insult the great God who created you in order you can offer a perfect worship to him in the natural way he gave you to express yourself."⁴⁸⁸ As Begbie observes, social and cultural determinants affect the way music is practised, experienced and theorised.⁴⁸⁹ This, however, does not mean one cannot use music from other traditions, because there is something universal about music and dance. Apart from being the mark of cultural and denominational identity, music and dance can also be the mark of our human and Christian identity.

.VII.6.2. Music and dance as a universal language

Although the forms they take vary across cultures and people groups, music and dance are universal to all humans. First, the use to which music and dance is put is appreciated across cultures. Here, John Taylor's comparison of the Tamil *kirtan* and the *barjan* from South India with African dramatic-narrative song can help illustrate the point. The examples, according to him, show how universal the appeal of this form of musical presentation is. The *kirtan* and *barjan* are similar to the African 'solo and chorus legend storytelling'⁴⁹⁰ where music is used to tell a story in such a

⁴⁸⁷ The burial of Mrs Mary Adriko (20th April 2000) where the Catholics officiated was planned to include choruses and hymns that are known by all denominations present.

⁴⁸⁸ James Batte, 1983, 'Attitude to the Indigenisation of church music in the Anglican Diocese of Namirembe,' thesis for Dip. Theo. Makerere University.

⁴⁸⁹ Jeremy Begbie, 2000, p. 36.

⁴⁹⁰ Taylor, 'The development of African Drama for education and evangelism', *International Review of Mission*, vol 39, no. 1, 1950, p. 294.

way that it can be appreciated cross-culturally. This is why Indian films are popular on Ugandan television.

Secondly, as a cosmic rhythm, music and dance can be recorded and appreciated across human cultures and by all human beings.⁴⁹¹ This stems from the ritual nature of music, which evokes spiritual experiences that are registered by all human beings. Music not only reveals our common humanity, but is also a means of bridge-building and communication between peoples and people groups.⁴⁹² With a little exposure one people are able to appreciate another people's forms of music. That is why the Madi can adopt the *osego* of the Kebu and the Lugbara take to *duluka* of the Nubians.⁴⁹³ Above all, if specificity was the only thing associated with music and dance, Africans would not have benefited from the Western music and hymns, which came as the vehicle of Christianity to Uganda, when all local and indigenous music was rejected for English choral music.⁴⁹⁴ Africans may have adulterated Western music, but they did not miss the point and message that the music carried! The point here is more the functional and phenomenological aspects of music and dance than aesthetics and tastes.⁴⁹⁵ This does not lessen the specificity of music to people and events, which we have established. We will always have Indian, African, Western, Catholic, Orthodox, Spiritual and other kinds of music, which will functionally continue to mediate spirituality and faith to the world at various levels of understanding and appreciation.

Although the written word and the spoken word are effective up to a point in describing the world and human experience, there is a limit to what they can achieve. At some point words exhaust their usefulness. But music works its miracle on each

⁴⁹¹ On universality of music as a communication medium see Edward Heath, 1976, *Music: A Joy for Life*, Sidwick & Jackson: London. In Chapter Nine, titled 'Music for everyone', Heath says 'Music is all-pervasive, it permeates every aspect of our daily lives. The extent is not always fully recognised because of the attitude of being interested or not interested. But the fact is everyone is continually encountering and responding to music in everyday life.' See p. 191.

⁴⁹² Cf. Joyce Scott, 2000, *Tuning in to a different Song: Using a Music Bridge to Cross Cultural Differences*, Pretoria.

⁴⁹³ See Drati, 1987, on borrowed music and dance.

⁴⁹⁴ James Batte, 1983, p. 7.

⁴⁹⁵ Here the erudite son of Africa, Professor Ali Mazrui, notes that aesthetic values are often the most conservative of all values in their response to foreign influence. It is often far easier to be converted to the ethics of a conquering power, than to the aesthetics. As between societies which are otherwise very different, agreement between right and wrong, good and bad, is often easier to achieve than agreement on what is beautiful and what is ugly. See Pio Zirimu and Andrew Gurr, 1973, Eds. *Black Aesthetics*, Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, p. 33.

of us, if we give it the chance. For all who allow music to awaken their feelings and understanding, it remains a joy forever, whatever its origin and style. In other words, music can be an offering to God and to other peoples. Even though it is not that easy to tune into other peoples' music, using music from other cultures and churches, music builds bridges between them because identity is not a static epitomisation of self-hood but a dynamic self-redefinition that results from the influence of others on ones life. To be a Lugbara/Madi Christian is a manoeuvring of biblical, traditional and contemporary ideas received in terms of the ideas they already had, which resonate with the old values that moves them forward.⁴⁹⁶

.VII.7. Summary

We have seen how music and dance are related and how rich a music tradition the Lugbara/Madi people have. This tradition is used to story the community's life and to teach them through enterainment. The same musical tradition is already being used to celebrate and story the Christian experience. The Lugbara/Madi church is a singing dancing church. Each church and people sing and dance as themselves much as they use music and dance to build bridges to other churches or peoples.

⁴⁹⁶ Lamin Sanneh, 2003, *Whose religion is Christianity? The Gospel beyond the West*, Eerdmans: Cambridge, pp. 42-43.

.VIII WORSHIP AND IDENTITY IN KAMPALA

This chapter deals with worship and identity in the Kampala area of Uganda. It assesses the way in which Lugbara/Madi migrants in Kampala organise themselves socially and religiously and how their traditional institutions, structures and customs from West Nile inform and is transformed by their life in the city. The thesis here is that the move by the Lugbara/Madi into Kampala and its suburbs is in line with their idea of progress and has a direct impact not only on their personal lives but also on the rural communities and churches at home in West Nile. The Church has become a vital aspect of Lugbara/Madi life that they cannot do without it even in the anonymous city context. The persistence of their faith and faith communities in what is assumed to be a secularizing environment forces the questions about how they adapt to and resist the different elements of the urban experience. How they, in these circumstances have kept their sense of community and identity and exert real presence ecclesiastically in the Kampala setting?

.VIII.1. Research methodology used in Kampala

Armed with the information from West Nile, I attended Lugbara/Madi community meetings, church services, funerals, weddings and social gatherings in Kampala to find out about the socio-cultural and religious dynamics under which they operated. In these meetings I was able to locate the elders and opinion leaders with whom to engage. I interviewed the leaders, both lay and ordained, to see who would be most useful sages in the urban context to discover what I wanted to get. The main information sources became the pastors and leaders of Lugbara/Madi communities and community churches (LCC) and leaders of the Lugbara Christian Community Fellowship (LCCF).

There are about fifteen (15) churches or congregations in the Kampala and Entebbe area and these are Entebbe, Makerere, Ggaba, Okuvu, Abiribani, Namamve, Nanasuba, Kaganve, Kajjansi, Lusaze, Bukasa, and Nsambya. The others are yet home fellowships that will eventually grow into fully fledged churches. Of these Okuvu and Makerere are the largest. In Lugazi, the Masamba Parish [the Sugar Estate Parish] has 24 congregations led by Rev Isaac Adia and in Bugadu Parish in Bugerere there are about 10 congregations led by Rev Charles Alio from Congo. In Jinja, Mutai is a sub-parish in Kakira Parish with several Lugbara speaking

congregations led by Rev Johnson Candia. There is a big Lugbara congregation in St Andrews in Jinja town. The services I attended include Sunday services in St Francis Chapel in Makerere, Okuvu Church in Mbuya, on the outskirts of Kampala, Namamve church between Kampala and Mukono town, Masamba parish in Lugazi in Mukono Diocese and St John's in Entebbe in Namirembe Diocese. I also attended LCCF meetings and conventions in Okuvu, Makerere, Bugadu in Bugerere and Mutai in Lugazi. I attended several memorial services in Bwaise by Catholics and five joint funeral services for some people whose bodies could not be taken to West Nile for burial. As a member of the Madi Okollo Association, a cultural association, and of Arua Community Association (ACA) I engaged with the elders who organised the Lugbara/Madi communities to transport bodies to West Nile and led teams to celebrate weddings and memorial services in West Nile. This helped me to get the inside picture of how Lugbara/Madi communities work in Kampala and how these communities have transformed themselves into Christian communities. I asked community consciousness questions about their communities, church services, meetings and ceremonies in Kampala and its surroundings.

To get the histories of these communities and their activities I met with the 'elders' and people of status among the migrants. Two researches among the migrant communities by Samson Embaga and Samuel Erema⁴⁹⁷ were very useful because many of the earliest members of these communities have died and some of the present leaders are too young and with little knowledge of that history. It was therefore initially difficult to find the philosophic and folk sages in this context because I was looking more towards age than who does what. But once I overcame this huddle of understanding that in this context age did not quite matter to the same extent as in rural West Nile things began to flow. As will be shown, the length of gainful employment and material wellbeing was important in the attainment of status among the migrants. It is here that the young people and the women began to feature more in the decision making fora of the communities and of the church; the young people for being technologically and financially better equipped and placed and the women for their numbers. The elders agewise had their place because some have been here long enough to acquire land and material wealth to play significant roles as

⁴⁹⁷ Samson Ujiga Embaga, 1981, 'The mission of the Church to the Lugbara Community of Lugazi Sugar Industry', Dip Theo. MUK. Samuel Erema, 1996, 'The Role of the Lugbara Community Fellowship in the growth of the Church', 1914-1996, BD. Makerere University.

elders in the sense as in West Nile. Once I sorted out whose opinion mattered in a particular community it was easy to proceed to the last and final part of the theology (or theologies) by asking 'critical consciousness' questions of why they did what they did.

.VIII.2. The Origins of Lugbara/Madi Communities in Kampala

The Lugbara/Madi started to move progressively from the rural villages of West Nile to Kampala City – voluntarily, that is – in the 1930s. A small number of these in pursuit of education, but the majority as army men and factory workers in the textile, tobacco and mining industries and as casual labourers for the well-to-do African (mainly Baganda), Asian and European owners of tea, sugar and coffee estates. It was a colonial programme to use West Nile as the source of casual labour and in the armed forces.⁴⁹⁸ The cash crops of cotton and tobacco introduced in West Nile in the 1930s did not bring sufficient money in comparison to coffee. Interviews with the migrants show that the mere move from West Nile to Kampala is considered progress, no matter whether one is gainfully employed or not. No one, however, who is not gainfully employed, no matter how old, is given the status of elder in the migrant community. Gainful employment on the other hand automatically improved ones' status. Only in cases where ownership of land and property was involved was one considered as an elder.

By the 1950s and '60s some of the early migrants had acquired enough property (land and plantations) and good enough jobs that they became the people to whom new arrivals from the village would come. The people with good jobs and with some means provided 'home' for new arrivals in the city. The newcomers were hosted for as long as they were unable to fend for themselves or until they got jobs enabling them to live on their own. When they got jobs they did not move far away but stayed in the vicinity of the 'home', which continued to oversee their settlement into city life. As a result quarters of the same people from particular areas developed in the city, for example, the Madi quarter in Bwaise,⁴⁹⁹ the Lugbara quarters in

⁴⁹⁸ See Mark Leopold, 2005, *Inside West Nile: violence, history and representation in an African frontier*, James Currey: Oxford.

⁴⁹⁹ For example Madi quarter in Bwaise developed around Nelo Aluma and Teddy Onio, where the former provided the land and the latter the money for he worked with the Post Office.

Wabigalo, Mbuya, and Nsambya, the Kebu quarter in Namwongo and the Acholi quarters in Naguru and Bwaise, etc.

In this way new arrivals were received and helped to adjust to the conditions of the city by the established and well-to-do city dwellers. They would gather in such homes to drink and dance, thus creating a feeling of West Nile. They also met to discuss job opportunities, to resolve disputes, and to correct those who were not living well. From these settlements, associations that looked after the economic and cultural wellbeing of the migrants emerged such as Madi Okollo Association (MOA), Arua Community Association (ACA), Nebbi Community (NC) and Lugbara Cultural Association (LCA) under the Chairmanship of some prominent person.⁵⁰⁰ These associations organised funerals, weddings and social events that involved the Lugbara/Madi and the people of West Nile in general. They established scholarship funds for the poorest children⁵⁰¹ and also supported development activities in their home communities in West Nile who appealed to them for funds and other support.

.VIII.2.1. The history of Lugbara Community Churches (LCC)⁵⁰²

Around the 1970s many of those who came to Kampala who were also Christians and took their relationship with God seriously felt they needed to worship God in their mother tongue. I have already shown in the earlier chapters that the church has become an important feature of Lugbara/Madi communities in the West Nile region because of their traditional concept of *orijo* (house of God), *oriba* (people of God) and *orindi* (spirit of God). Remember also that most of these migrants knew neither English nor Luganda, the main languages for worship in Kampala. They relied on a smattering of Swahili learnt in the workplace. Their wives were in an even worst

⁵⁰⁰ Madi Okollo Association (MOA) is led by John Okello, a government statistician; ACA is led by Superintendent of Prisons, Mr. Joseph Etima, and Nebbi Community by retired civil servant Mr. Peter Ocanda.

⁵⁰¹ For a number of years in the 1980s and '90s MOA supported the three highest first graders in secondary schools in West Nile.

⁵⁰² I am indebted to Rev John Atiku of St Francis Chapel, Makerere, who gave me a personal interview on 3rd April 2000, see Appendix 1, 1.4 for content. The information from Atiku is corroborated by information from Samson Embaga's 'The Mission of the Church to the Lugbara community of Lugazi Sugar Industry', Dip. Theo. MUK., Kampala, 1981, and Samuel Erema, 'The role of the Lugbara Christian Community Fellowship in the growth of the Church, 1914-1996', 1996, BD. MUK.

situation. Such people began to meet for fellowship in the homes of prominent Christian members. These fellowships developed into what is now called the Lugbara Community Christian Fellowship (LCCF). It is the LCCF that formed the basis for the development of Lugbara Community Churches (LCC), an umbrella organization that looks after all Lugbara/Madi Christians who worship in the Lugbara language in Kampala, Entebbe, Lugazi and Kakira. These include Lugbara, Madi Moyo, Kebu, Kakwa, Madi Okollo, Kuku, Logo, etc. from Uganda, Sudan and Congo. In November 2007, in their general Convention, they dissolved the LCCF to form the all embracing West Nile Christian Community Fellowship (WNCCF) to continue to nurture the people from the West Nile region.⁵⁰³

The first Lugbara community church service, according to John Atiku⁵⁰⁴ began in 1957 but did not last long due to lack of leadership. But from that time the Lugbara continued to hold services in various places such as Kawala, Kabanyolo and Bulange, whenever leadership was found and wherever was convenient. The Makerere St Francis Chapel service began in Kawala, west of Makerere, in the 1980s and was strongest in 1983–87, after John Atiku became the Lay Reader. When Rev. Ephraim Adrale was the Refugee Secretary in the Province of the Church of Uganda he provided pastoral care for the service. The service grew to draw people from Mbuya, Bulange, Makerere, Mulago, Bwaise and Kololo areas. But in 1987, when the Baptist Elder from Congo who shared the leadership with Atiku wanted to turn the church over to the Baptist church that had began in Nakulabye, Atiku and the Anglicans moved out to St Francis where he was already a warden. Soon after, another Lugbara service began in Bulange Church of Uganda, a Luganda speaking church. They had an early morning service before the Luganda speakers came at 10 o'clock, led by Joshua Angundru, the present Church Teacher in Gaba Lugbara community church. Later this service was brought to an end, due to conflict with the Baganda.

⁵⁰³ This was when the Archbishop Henry Luke Orombi, a West Nilean from Nebbi met them in their annual convention at Ggaba, November 3rd 2007.

⁵⁰⁴ Personal Interview 22 March 2000

By this time Ephraim Adrale had become Bishop of Madi West Nile in 1987



and Rev. John Edega of St Peter's Nsambya continued to provide pastoral care to the Lugbara community churches.

(The picture opposite shows St Francis Chapel decorated for Lugbara service on Christmas of 2000.)

The official Lugbara service was launched on 22nd February 1990 when Bishop Ephraim came to confirm over 70 candidates in a grand service in St Francis Chapel in Makerere University. This date, according to Atiku, is the official opening of the 12 o'clock Lugbara service in Makerere. The service has now about 300-500 members, the numbers ebbing and flowing with the seasons and times of year.

About this time the women at Mbuya Kinawataka zone started what is now considered the mother of all Lugbara churches in Kampala called Okuvu.⁵⁰⁵ The women who did not know any other language started the church in order that they might worship in their mother tongue. They got support from their husbands, as Yohana A'yoma explains:

Those of us who know Luganda found it useless on Sundays to worship because our wives and children were not getting anything from these services, so we felt the best thing for us was to start our own churches in which we could use our own language, Lugbara.⁵⁰⁶

Because, traditionally, a community is nothing without a shrine (*orijo*), the Lugbara communities could not do without keeping in touch with God and with each other. There are now fifteen congregations in and around Kampala and parishes at Masamba in Lugazi, Mutai in Jinja and Bugaddu in Bugerere. The service at St Francis Chapel Makerere has a fulltime pastor who assists the Chaplain of the

⁵⁰⁵ The name Okuvu means 'started by women' or 'the place of women' or simply 'of women'.

⁵⁰⁶ Yohana A'yoma in Samson Embaga, 'The Mission of the Church to the Lugbara community of Lugazi Sugar Industry', Dip. Theo. MUK. Kampala, 1981, p. 25.

University. The services at St John's in Entebbe, and other smaller services are led by Church Teachers/Catechists.

The parish in the tea and sugar estates of Lugazi, called Masamba, has 24 churches. Their emergence is in line with the Lugbara idea that no community can exist without a place of worship. Just as the tribes and clans in West Nile wanted churches to be in their midst, the migrants saw the church as important for their wellbeing in Kampala. Because the migrants considered their coming to Kampala as a form of progress, their concern for what happened at home in West Nile made them work hard to succeed. Each migrant wanted to improve the situation at home in West Nile. Some came to collect money for marriage, or to pay debts. They first settled in homes of community leaders and then in the Lugbara communities/quarters, or if they were well-to-do they would live elsewhere and drive to join in the meetings of these communities. Such well-to-do members sponsored some of such meetings and beer parties. They would raise money to help a member in trouble or transport the body of a dead person for burial in the ancestral lands. In this way they helped to develop West Nile by making financial contributions to the relatives at home. Gradually the church services began to replace the social gatherings, or social gatherings began to take place in the church after the Lugbara services.⁵⁰⁷

The LCCF has a yearly convention which takes place in August or December where all Lugbara communities and churches come together. It is a time of teaching and of eating together. All communities prepare special songs, dances and drama to present and they collect money through *abala* (competitions) for the activities of the communities, churches and fellowships. Every year they also invite the Bishop of Madi West Nile to come for a pastoral visit. Apart from confirmations, he also shares with them the needs of the Church at home, and each church makes a special contribution in money and in kind. In this way the Lugbara communities in Kampala have contributed to the building of the Cathedral in Mvara and other church projects in West Nile.

⁵⁰⁷ To date most wedding, funeral and other meetings take place after services in Makerere, Okuvu, and other services mentioned in the Kampala area. These services have become a very important part of the social organization of the Lugbara/Madi in Kampala.

.VIII.2.2. The Catholic Christian Communities

The Catholic arrangement is slightly different, because they have Catechists from West Nile who take care of communities without actually asking for space in a Catholic Church. But the Catechist is always under the care of an existing Catholic parish. For instance the Catechist in Kyebando who is a Madi looks after Lugbara/Madi Christians from Bwaise, Kamwokya, Mulago, Kawempe and Kalerwe areas and works under the Parish Priest of Kyebando and in close association with the Catechist of Bwaise Catholic Church. He has imported a set of *adungu* (harps) and a lively choir of 20 members. The choir members work in various fields: as teachers, mechanics, housewives, housegirls or doing other casual jobs. The choir takes full charge of the service: reading, leading and intercessions. The Catholic communities all fall under the Lugbara Catholic Community Association (LUCCA) where elder and retired Commissioner of Prisons Joseph Etima doubles as community leader and elder.

In a similar pattern to the Anglicans, the Catholics invite the Bishop of Arua for a grand Mass every year, where the whole Lugbara Community is invited. The various communities present music, dance and plays. A lot of food is served and the whole Lugbara community is entertained and preached to. Here we find that the old received identities of Catholic and Anglican are still important, but, as Sanneh points out, the lines separating them are no longer barriers.⁵⁰⁸ The Lugbara ethos is used to link and unite them and the celebrations become various celebrations of Lugbara/Madi identity in God. Here denomination has become a variety of the same rather than a barrier.

.VIII.2.3. Community in Independent Churches

The Lugbara Community churches however are only in Anglican and Catholic forms. Those in Independent churches in West Nile who come to Kampala mainly attend Anglican services. Some attend Independent church services in Kampala but still come to join the Lugbara community services in Makerere or Entebbe which have afternoon services. In fact many members of the Lugbara community churches are also members of Independent churches like Kampala Pentecostal Church, Rubaga Miracle Centre and Bwaise Christian Life Church.

⁵⁰⁸ Lamin Sanneh, *Whose religion is Christianity?* 2003, p. 40.

Community in the Independent Churches is quite different, in that it is built within the church, with members belonging to different groups including discipleship groups, home cells and various clubs. There are also clubs such as Youth Alive, Women of Destiny, Men of Integrity, and New Life Groups, that provide community for the members of different churches. The membership of these clubs and groups is very flexible, with members drifting in and out according to the programmes. They offer a sharing of experiences for members who may belong to several groups in different churches.

The proximity of people and churches in the city context encourages the sharing of ideas, music, preachers, liturgy and experiences. Easy mobility in the city helps Lugbara/Madi Christians to go where their specific spiritual needs are met. Members tend to flow where their 'embodied theologies' are celebrated. This is further helped by some of the churches providing free bus rides for people who want to come to their services. Independent churches such as Miracle Cathedral of Robert Kayanja, Bwaise Christian Life Church (BCLC) of Pastor Jackson Senyonga, and the Abundant Church of Pastor Leslie provide free transport every Sunday to worshippers. The Miracle buses are the only double decker buses in Uganda, imported from London, while the BCLC buses are air-conditioned coaches!

.VIII.3. Community Leadership in Kampala

There are two types of leaders in Kampala: cultural leaders and religious leaders. The cultural leaders are men and women of means who provide leadership for Lugbara/Madi communities in the social, economic and political areas. They are the leaders of organizations such as the Arua Community Association (ACA) and the Madi Okollo Association (MOA). Most of these leaders, such as Godfrey Adukule and Helen Oyeru of St Francis Chapel, John Okello of St John's in Entebbe and Joseph Etima also double as Christian elders of the Lugbara Community Churches.⁵⁰⁹

There are four types of religious elders: the pastors, catechists, wardens and the elders. The pastors and catechists are called '*ba Kanisani* (church people), while the wardens are *kitia* (pillars or those who lay out the chairs) and the elders are

⁵⁰⁹ Godfrey Adukule is a Pharmaceutical dealer and Helen Oyeru was a minister of Culture and community development in the Amin era and is now a Council member for Gulu University.

simply *'ba wara* (big people/elders). The 'church people' are respected for what they are because they provide spiritual leadership for the communities. The wardens basically look after the church in its gathered form, when in worship. They look after the church building and the human beings gathered therein. They provide eats and drinks for the speakers and visitors.

Elders such as Godffrey Adukule and Helen Oyeru of Makerere, Sam Wuma of Okuvu and Joseph Etima of the Catholic community churches, are well-to-do members of the Lugbara/Madi churches and communities who look after the members in their scattered form, when members are in their homes, zones and workplaces. They have the means to sponsor community and church gatherings, meetings and social events. Godffrey Adukule, for example, chairs most of the wedding and funeral meetings for Okuvu and Makerere churches. They are known across the denominations as men and women of integrity. At first, Lugbara community churches began by importing catechists and pastors from West Nile to lead services, in addition to locally appointed leaders such as Joshua Angundru of Gaba, John Atiku of Makerere, and Charles Adaku of Entebbe. Lugbara priests working in Kampala in other parishes or offices also provided sacramental relief where there was no priest.

For example, Ephraim Adrale, who was Refugee Secretary in the Church of Uganda provincial office, and Edega John, who was the parish priest of Nsambya Parish, provided pastoral care when there was no priest to help in Makerere and Okuvu Lugbara congregations respectively. In Masamba parish they imported Canon Simeu Droti to look after the church for 10 years in the 1980s. It was later discovered that such leaders invited from Arua struggle because they do not know the culture in Kampala. By the 1990s the LCCs began to train their own members to lead them. That is how leaders like John Atiku, Charles Alio, Rose Obema and Isaac Adia have emerged to lead the churches as pastors in the migrant communities.

Living in proximity with the other tribes and churches in Kampala challenges the Lugbara/Madi people to constantly interpret their culture to make it meaningful to others. This is best done under progressive community leaders, who give a face to the Lugbara/Madi as a people. These leaders help the communities and churches to modernise and globalise Lugbara/Madi cultural goods. The migrants bring cultural goods such as music, musical instruments, language and art from West Nile to be

technologically improved for sending back or for distribution in better forms in Kampala and abroad. This is how they have managed to negotiate places for worship in churches that do not belong to them, including one in Makerere University!

.VIII.4. The elements for buying social space in Kampala churches

I engaged the Lugbara/Madi elders in discussing their understanding of how they see themselves fitting into the urban setting and the effect of their lives in Kampala on the life of their communities in West Nile. They cited religion, the Lugbara culture and especially Lugbara language and music as the key elements for buying social space in the city

.VIII.4.1. Religion

Robertson, the influential theorist of cultural globalization, thinks there is a process underway in every urban context where universal and particular (local) religious elements are in search of fundamentals in order to locate identity in a fast-changing world. This search for identity is pursued in terms of ideas about tradition, history, locality, community and nation, which are diffused by globalization.⁵¹⁰ This explains what the migrants from West Nile are doing. The changes in their circumstances and context when they move to Kampala demand a reorganization of their religious beliefs to confirm and assert Lugbara/Madi religious and cultural identity. The continual contact with other peoples within a reduced social space in Kampala makes the Lugbara/Madi much more aware of the diversity of human experiences that challenge their beliefs and worldviews. This demands an interpretation and re-interpretation of their beliefs and that of others. The reorganisations are attempts to reassert their particular histories and to protect their identity as Lugbara/Madi while continuously learning from others. The process demands a constant interpretation that renders the community accessible and dissolves other peoples' opacity for them to live as peoples.

This interpretation and re-interpretation requires the wisdom of the folk and philosophic sages who not only have the power but also the skill to courageously chart the way through the turbulent waters of change in the urban setting. Folk sages such as Joseph Etima, John Okello and Helen Oyeru take care of the historical and

⁵¹⁰ Robertson R., *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*, Sage: London, 1992, p. 68.

traditional aspects of their life. In a way they are like the archives of the migrant communities. These elders keep the Lugbara/Madi traditions and beliefs in the public arena. But the traditions must be interpreted critically, hence the need of philosophic sages in the community such as Godffrey Adukule, Stephen Amayo and Sam Wuma. Their technological knowledge and experience of the 'other' makes them question and challenge the Lugbara/Madi traditions so they can continue to be 'normal' in the city context to help the community share their social space with others. The fact that the Lugbara are given space to worship in Luganda- and English-speaking churches in Kampala shows they are accepted as 'normal' by the other tribes. In other words the Lugbara are saying, according to Geertz, that they are 'normal', without reducing their particularity.⁵¹¹ This is a survival mechanism to preserve their language, culture, traditions and identity but in a progressively hybrid form so that the community understands it as progress. Here the Church has become the place to work through the problems and challenges of life and society following from Jesus as the best integral elder. This hybridization blurs the boundary between the high and the popular, rural and urban, oral and mass cultures and makes the distinct identities translatable.⁵¹² This helps people to buy space in the churches of their hosts in order to market and preverve the Lugbara/Madi identity.

.VIII.4.2. Music

One of the first things that the Lugbara/Madi communities imported or came with to Kampala was their music and musical instruments. Music, according to David Hesmondalgh, and as we have already seen in Chapter VII, is a particularly promising cultural and communication medium for three reasons. First, it makes powerful statements about cultural identity due to the shared experience of rhythms and melodies that bind people together in intensely physical, emotional and sensuous ways. Music is not only people specific but also a universal human activity. Second, music is highly mobile, and musical styles travel as easily as the performers. In the modern world recorded music is highly transportable in cassettes, records and CDs and these are the very ways in which the Lugbara Community churches are

⁵¹¹ Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Fontana Press: London, 1973, p. 12.

⁵¹² Vivian Schelling, 'Ethnic Identity and popular culture' in Kiely and Marfleet, *Globalization and the Third World*, 1998, p. 144. Sanneh makes this point in all his works and particularly in *Whose religion is Christianity?* p. 33.

marketing their cultural good of music in Kampala. And third, music has the potential to cross language boundaries, because its core is not language but patterns of humanly organised sound.⁵¹³ Lugbara/Madi folk songs and spiritual songs are brought to Kampala and they are put to modern instrumentation or a combination of both traditional and the modern (guitar, keyboard and *adungu*). Or it is interbred with other music to create a hybrid, which nationalises or even globalizes it. When this hybrid music reaches back to Arua it causes a stir. The Makerere and Okuvu choirs in particular have gone into this business and are making money out of Lugbara music on cassette tapes and CDs. All the churches and services have a choir and musical instruments, both traditional and modern. The yearly conventions are a parade of Lugbara/Madi cultural goods in terms of music, musical instruments and performances.

.VIII.4.3. Culture

Although religion and music are aspects of culture, the way in which Lugbara communities use their culture to buy space to fit into the urban context demands elaboration. Here culture is used to adjust and adapt to the external and fast changing urban environment and to other people and enabling their history to interact with that of others in the city. This is seen particularly amongst the suburban and the plantation communities, where life is no different from that of rural West Nile. These communities are made up essentially of rural people living in peri-urban areas. For instance, these communities have only one meal a day; they are poorly housed, with bad sanitation, and have large families. Because of their poor conditions they never go home and people at home do not think about them when taking important decisions. They speak good Luganda and Swahili but nevertheless they are distinct. In other words they are really settled in Buganda. It is for such people that the Lugbara Cultural Association (LCA) was formed, to keep them in touch with their roots. The LCA produced the Lugbara calendar we talked about in Chapter III that spells out the traditional Lugbara management of time.

The traditional management of time had to come to the city to be technologically shaped and presented back for celebration by all. The calendar is

⁵¹³ David Hesmondalgh, 'Globalization and Cultural imperialism: A case study of the Music industry' in Kiely and Marfleet, *Marfleet Globalization and the Third World*, 1998, p. 165.

seen hanging in the homes of Baganda and other peoples with whom the migrants are in touch. The urban context stretches the rural understanding and organization of time, space and people on a kinship and natural community basis by putting various peoples together in the same place. This calls for negotiations so that active and conscious sharing and learning between different peoples with different identities and world-views could take place. A cultural 'stew' is a better analogy to use than the 'melting pot' to describe the process of integration because in a stew the various ingredients are still distinct but the taste is different on account of the mixture. This process seems to be common to most communities, as was evident when Pope John Paul II visited Uganda in 1999 and each region offered a different identity of the Catholic Church by the way they worshipped and celebrated.

To test whether the theory of the seasonal and cultural nature of worship amongst the Lugbara/Madi was common to other tribal groups, I asked the theology students of Uganda Christian University, Mukono, to help. I asked them to list out the most important cultural celebrations that are not taken care of by the Book of Common Prayer and to design liturgies for these important celebrations in their communities. The result was very interesting because it split the nation into culturally distinct regions. Most of the students from Western Uganda put the give-away ceremony⁵¹⁴ and the blessing of homes at the top of their list. Only the Bakonzo of Western Uganda put circumcision at the top of the list, and the Bagisu, Sabiny and Pokot of Eastern Uganda joined them. The students from Buganda and Busoga (central Uganda) wanted liturgy for the installation of an heir while the students from the North (Lango, Acholi and Teso) wanted liturgy for naming and for reconciliation of estranged people.

Interestingly the students from West Nile wanted a liturgy for the installation of elders. This revealed the cultural differences between the regions of Uganda. Western Uganda is the most politically and economically stable part of Uganda, where family and homes are important. It is where the most building construction is taking place. Most of the weddings in Kampala churches are for people from Western Uganda. They therefore wanted liturgy for giving away their daughters in marriage and for blessing their new homes. The Bakonzo, Bagisu, Pokot and Sabiny

⁵¹⁴ This is the ceremony that takes place in the bride's home a few weeks or days before the wedding day to give away the bride to the groom. It is a time to give gifts to the new family and to the parents of the lady.

are the only tribes that circumcise and some communities amongst them practise female genital mutilation (FGM). They argued that until the Church comes out to do circumcision in the right way it would continue to be done wrongly with bad consequences for the candidates. The north is the most disturbed area and their concern for the family, children and harmony in the community is understandable. The Church is at a loss as to what to do with recaptured and or returning abducted rebels who want to be reconciled with their communities.

.VIII.5. Denominational contributions in the urban context

Worship in the Independent Churches challenges the legitimacy of the ‘traditional’ claim that a written liturgy is the appropriate medium in which to experience God’s grace through the life and work of Jesus Christ. The phenomenal growth of these churches with unwritten liturgies shatters this proposition. But there is no denying the tremendous impact the English and Vernacular versions of the Roman Missal (RM) and the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) have on Ugandan Christianity in particular and Christianity in general, even though people are no longer limited to and by them.

There are things that Roman Catholicism offers to Ugandan Christianity, such as the rosary, making the sign of the cross at ritual moments, before and after eating or drinking and before and after entering a holy place. The devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to the saints flows with the Lugbara/Madi devotion to ancestors and sacred things and places. These sustain and support the Lugbara/Madi practice of community and of constant communication with the divine through ancestral intermediaries, libations and prayers. As Sanneh points out, “people sensed that Jesus did not mock their respect for the sacred or their clamour for an invincible saviour and so they beat their sacred drums for him until the stars skipped and danced in the skies”.⁵¹⁵ Above all the Catholics bring boldness to the theological process. They are scholarly and aggressive in pursuing the cultural agenda. They also have the technology to put their discoveries into cultural forms that can be copied, replicated and distributed beyond their community and church boundaries.

⁵¹⁵ Sanneh, 2003, p. 43.

The Anglican understanding of spirituality that pirouettes on the fact that “by grace natural actions may be turned into actions of religion”,⁵¹⁶ the life described in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) as “godly, righteous and sober”, inspires lifestyles that shun some local Lugbara/Madi traditions of carousing and extravagance. The possibilities and freedoms in the BCP have been cited as the reason why the clergy and people are reluctant to create a new liturgical book, which needs time to internalise and to celebrate with such freedom.⁵¹⁷ In other words they seem to have internalised the book so well that they can celebrate it in a way that is their own.

The rural/urban interface has helped Lugbara Community Churches in Kampala to supply money, hymnbooks, liturgical books, and order of services, etc., to the churches in West Nile. They use typing, and computer and photocopier facilities to supply their rural counterparts with worship materials. This is also true politically and economically, whereby the fortunes of the urban and rural areas are inextricably linked in terms of market and production.⁵¹⁸ Urban innovations in worship and liturgy are transported to the rural churches and rural (traditional)⁵¹⁹ ideas are modernised, or made culturally mobile and consumable by the wider clientele in the towns.⁵²⁰ The songs, prayers, liturgies and testimonies are technologically processed into cultural goods and given mobility to cross cultural

⁵¹⁶ Sydney Evans, ‘Anglican Spirituality’, p. 13-16, in *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, edited by Gordon Wakefield, SCM: London, p. 13.

⁵¹⁷ We have already criticised the rubricist approach by some less well trained catechists and pastors to the BCP in chapter 3. This was also done by George Tibeessigwa, 1996, ‘Worship in the Anglican Church of Uganda: A critical study’, D. Miss. Asian Centre for Theological Studies & Mission, Seoul, Korea. It is, however, Zac Niringiye, 1997, who thinks the BCP has become a Ugandan book through its celebration which differs markedly with the way it is celebrated in England.

⁵¹⁸ Jonathan Baker and Poul Ove Pedersen, point to the interdependence between the urban and the rural sectors in Africa in a book that was the result of research done in South, East and West Africa. They observe a ‘circular causation’, where the pivotal role of small towns as agents of rural improvement and how rural changes also influence urban prosperity in Africa. See Baker and Pedersen, eds. 1992, *Rural – Urban Interface in Africa: Expansion and Adaptation*, Scandinavian Institute of African Studies: Copenhagen.

⁵¹⁹ This does not mean rural ideas are necessarily traditional. There are very traditional ideas in towns.

⁵²⁰ Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda since 1986, is a proponent of such a belief in modernisation. His campaign slogan has been ‘Peace, Unity and Modernisation’. He thinks that the good traditions of Africa will die or be taken advantage of if they do not interact with the modern world in reciprocity, which leads to a catharsis of all traditions for the betterment of humanity. He argues that the African should be a critical celebrant of his own culture so as to be rightly critical of the wider world. Cf., Shorter, 1991, *The Church in the African City*, who thinks there is a continuum between rural and urban that benefits both in one way or another.

borders. The FM radio stations, the music groups, and church choirs play very vital roles in this process. By transforming and shifting the mode of cultural production from repetition to replication the urban Lugbara/Madi communities and churches are like doorways through which their rural counterparts and others can enter into Lugbara/Madi cultural, religious and social experiences.⁵²¹

.VIII.6. Summary

The movement of the Lugbara/Madi from West Nile to Kampala is in line with their understanding of progress. They come to the city as intensely religious people from communities where worship and religion mark them out as a people. The Lugbara/Madi traditional religion has also interacted at a very deep level with Christianity that has come to them in the form of Anglican, Catholic and Independent Christian identities. The migrants bring with them cultural goods that are challenged by those from other regions and also by the rapid change that takes place in the city. This makes the Lugbara/Madi to re-interpret their culture to make it intelligible to others and to themselves. In order to preserve their culture and identity they formed their own community churches so they can celebrate their lives and give to and receive from others. Their presence in the city serves as 'home' for the rural and a centre of progress to transform and develop the rural West Nile

⁵²¹ See the methods of cultural reproduction in Celia Lury, *Cultural Rights*, 1993, Chapter two, p. 13-38.

.IX WORSHIP AND CHRISTIAN IDENTITY IN UGANDA

This chapter summarises the findings of this research. It explains how context, history and theology and the rural/urban continuum have led to the internalisation, transformation, and ownership of the received Christian traditions of worship and made Christianity an African religion. It shows that Christianity has become the modernising and globalizing factor for local traditions and cultural goods. It further explains the theological and missiological implications for the Church in Uganda, Africa, and globally.

.IX.1. The rural-urban continuum

There is a continuous movement of ideas and people in search of progress from the rural villages of West Nile to Kampala City. From the 1930s onwards the people of West Nile have left their homes in search of jobs and better economic opportunities. The Lugbara/Madi traditional worldview of having *orijo* (house of God) in every community was taken to Kampala, along with their language, music and musical instruments. In this way the migrants started Lugbara communities and Lugbara Community Churches (LCCs) and services in their workplaces and settlements in Kampala and its suburbs and the towns of Lugazi, Entebbe and Jinja.

These communities and churches have become centres of progress for Lugbara cultural products and goods. They initially imported leaders from West Nile to lead them, and/or used Lugbara pastors who minister to the wider Christian community in Kampala. But they have since started to train their own leaders and to export leaders back to West Nile. Similarly music, musical instruments, and tunes from West Nile and crafts are brought to Kampala to be technologically transformed for use and for sale in Kampala and to be taken back to West Nile. The songs, tunes and instruments and other cultural goods are made technologically appealing to others in contact with the Lugbara/Madi. The Lugbara services in Kampala have a globalizing effect on Lugbara cultural goods and worship while at the same time affirming their particularity as a people. The urban context helps the Lugbara/Madi to learn synchronically from others and diachronically from their history. The result of this learning from and with others, focusing on culture and social change, is contextual theology that affirms and forms local identities as Christian and African.

.IX.2. The tools of Christian maturation

Internalisation, the chief mechanism through which cultural reproduction is linked to social reproduction, contributed directly to the development of particular cultural forms leading to the formation, identity and influence of particular social groups defined through the implied activity of cultural reception. Here culture became an aspect of organization of social life. The three tools of Christian maturation, which are also tools for the integration and convergence of Christian experience, are:

The vernacular Bibles,
The leaders (church and civic) whom the people trusted and understood,
And, a living experience of the Lord.

These tools of Christian maturation were set into operation by the context of suffering.⁵²² And as has been shown, the 1970s and '80s were years of extreme suffering in West Nile and in Uganda in general and these were the most innovative years in worship, when people experimented with local liturgical ideas as they could not keep on keeping the received traditions.

.IX.3. The agents of innovation

The different denominations that came into Uganda replicated the worship practices from their home countries as the identity markers of these denominations. The 'surprise factor' in the project is that Africans selectively used the Western ideas to celebrate their cultures. As much as missionaries tried to grade Africans by the way they imitated Western ways, the Africans saw these as obstructions to their reception of the gospel.⁵²³ Essential innovations in Anglican worship in West Nile began to emerge with the Revival movement in the 1950s, the introduction of the Lugbara Bible and translated hymns in 1967, and good local church leaders who looked into the vernacular Bible during hard times to innovate in culturally appropriate ways. The relationship between the pre-Christian traditions and the Bible stories opened the people's hearts to the message of the Bible, which was used to build bridges between

⁵²² Dick Anderson sees suffering as the key to Christian maturity in *We felt like Grasshoppers: The Story of AIM*, Crossway Books: 1994, p. 106. Zac Niringiye makes the same point in his 1997 theses 'The church in the World: A Historical-Ecclesiological Study of the Church of Uganda with particular reference to Post-Independence Uganda, 1962-1992', Edinburgh University.

⁵²³ Dick Anderson mentions how Albert Vollar and Seton Maclure who were well versed in the Lugbara language were still being imitated and made fun of by the Lugbara after 40 years in West Nile, in *We Felt like Grasshoppers: The story of African Inland Mission*, 1994, p. 101.

the Lugbara/Madi traditions and the biblical traditions through Jesus Christ. The story of Jesus, which has similarities with the hero stories of the Lugbara/Madi, and the stories of their encounter with Jesus and with his Spirit are told as a sign of belonging to the Church, or of being a follower of Christ. For the Catholics, it was the Vatican II Council that presented them with the tools of liberation, autonomy and cultural creativity.

The agents of indigenisation include local leaders such as Catechists, Revival leaders and pastors who incorporated the traditional forms into the new channels of reading and writing and through naming. Naming for the Lugbara/Madi is a sign of belonging and ownership. The practice of naming or renaming of churches and places with locally meaningful names or with the name of the tribe/clan and the creation of space in every clan, tribe and town to build churches were signs that the new faith was being owned and internalised.⁵²⁴ However, because familiar places and spaces can easily be offered or refused to others, sectarian tendencies have been ubiquitous in Ugandan church polity between Catholics and Anglicans and between Christians and Muslims right from the genesis of the Church in 1877. This is also true between the institutionalised churches and Independent churches and even amongst the Independent churches. But the traditional African ethical dimensions of community, which emphasise hospitality, mutuality, the gracious offering of space to guests, and rallying together in the face of adversity,⁵²⁵ have given the denominations and churches some national cohesion and solidarity.⁵²⁶

The emerging Church identities therefore incorporate the new and the old pre-Christian traditions in an interpenetrating way in the context of rapid socio-cultural change. The movement of people in and out of the Church as a result of the

⁵²⁴ K. M. George argues that the European naming of places, rivers and mountains (and churches) in Africa and Asia with European names was a sign of conquest. No wonder that when Africans took over control, they started to rename with the formerly displaced names or gave new names. See 'Beyond the Frontier Complex: Recovering Christian Mission in Asia' edited by Philip Wickeri, 2000, *The People of God among all Peoples of God: Frontiers in Christian Mission*, p. 209.

⁵²⁵ Zac Niringiye in his thesis 'Church in the World', argued effectively that the socio-political troubles in Uganda galvanised the tribally fragmented churches of Uganda with some form of a national identity that comprises the local identities, however tentative that identity.

⁵²⁶ The Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC), which comprises the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, has come up with a joint teaching syllabus for Christian religious education, joint election monitoring, and joint celebrations for the Uganda Martyrs' Day and Uganda AIDS day. The Anglican Church celebrates Janani Luwum Day and organises a memorial lecture for Festo Kivengere. These celebrations were born out the turbulent history of the church in Uganda in relation to the turbulence in Uganda as a nation.

practice of worship shows the Church as a cultural institution. In other words, people tend to flock to the church in which they feel at home to celebrate their lives, and away from churches that have forms of worship that are strange to them. Ugandan churches are therefore becoming in varying degrees a reflection of the cultural identities of the peoples of Uganda. Churches that are authentic, familiar and relevant to particular contexts in Uganda, and are constantly reordering themselves socially in time and space, are growing, and those that are slow to move with the times continue to decline in numbers.

.IX.4. The context of suffering

The context of suffering in the political, social and economic upheavals of Uganda and the rural-urban interface have helped Ugandans to transform the received Christian traditions of Anglican and Roman Catholicism into indigenous traditions that have rendered the received identities inconsequential. The new identities have arisen out of the sharing of resources during hard times. The social, political and economic turmoil in Uganda from the 1970s onwards helped communities and churches to rely upon local resources to keep in touch with God. The lack of Bibles, prayer books, wine, bread and vestments helped the churches to innovate and experiment with local alternatives to stimulate renewal, change and liturgical participation.⁵²⁷ These include experimenting with tea, fruit juice and red *gonzere/malakwang* for wine and *ove* (millet wafers) for bread, the use of *kitenge* for vestments, and local music and musical instruments. Through technology these innovations have been put into forms that are easily copied and distributed for celebration by other churches. Worship as a cultural product is being used to root Christianity into Ugandan communities. The use of local resources with good results means Christianity is no longer 'other' but their own.

.IX.5. The impact of the Vatican Council II

The situation in the Catholic Church in Uganda and Africa at large, is such that most innovations seem to hinge on the Vatican Council II. The Council reminded Catholics that the Sacraments are not private rituals but celebrations of the whole

⁵²⁷ Keith Pecklers thinks in hard times popular religion is used as a catalyst for renewal and change. See *Worship*, Continuum: London, 2003, p. 148.

community of faith, leading to a renewal of liturgical life focused on the sanctifying action of the mystery of Christ's passion, death and resurrection. It also moved the Catholics to read the scriptures in a more contemplative fashion as the continuing unfolding of God's promises. Vatican II therefore moved the Catholics to have the same awareness about the Sacraments and about the Scriptures as the Protestants had. People, whether Catholics, Anglicans or Independent church members, began to live their sacramental lives not just through its rituals and devotions, but in the ways that appropriately celebrated the memory of Jesus in a given and specific context.

.IX.6. Towards a Ugandan Christianity Identity

We have shown that there is a gradual merging of the identities of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Independent Churches in the West Nile and Kampala areas of Uganda. These identities are not exactly the same as the received identities of Anglican and Roman Catholic churches in the 19th and 20th centuries. What defines and shapes their new identities as 'church' is the complex of events and traditions from within and outside Uganda, coupled with the historical, religio-cultural and socio-political phenomena that Uganda has passed through from the time of the genesis of Christianity in Uganda and the biblical traditions. These identities have emerged, despite the prescriptive nature of the approach of the missionaries, in all denominations and churches. The new identities are markedly a product of the indigenous traditions plus aspects of the received and contemporary practices. As a result they are very difficult to pin down because of the diverse and dynamic nature of the contexts in Uganda; but nevertheless they are notably Ugandan rather than remade European identities.⁵²⁸

The main features of Ugandan Christianity as outlined in this thesis can be identified as follows. Firstly, it has narrative theology whereby space is given in every service, including the set liturgies in Anglican and Roman Catholic churches,

⁵²⁸ Different parts of Uganda had different missionary groups that evangelised them, e.g., West Nile was evangelised by African Inland Mission (AIM), Karamoja by BCMS, Central and Eastern Uganda by CMS, the Southwest by Rwanda Mission, etc. The story of the Catholic Church is no different; much of the south, east and west of Uganda was evangelised by the White Fathers, but the North and North West was evangelised by the Verona Fathers. Not only this, but also the different parts of Uganda have not only had different cultural experiences, but different political upheavals. For example the Buganda crisis in 1966-7 and Luwero Triangle crisis 1982-86, the Teso rebellion 1987, the Karamoja cattle rustling, the Holy Spirit rebel activity in the North from 1987, the Sudanese refugee crisis in West Nile and the Rwenzururu and Rwandese crisis in the West have had various effects.

for the use of testimonies and visionary narratives. In the Independent churches the testimonies and visionary narratives are used within an unwritten liturgical framework that celebrates and brings the power of God in the Holy Spirit to heal and empower the people for ministry. The testimonies are an engagement between the secular and the sacred – stories of personal engagement with the world and with what people think God is doing in and through their lives. Sanneh thinks testimonies are “cultural and personal forms of integrity grounded in solidarity with God and with the people of God”.⁵²⁹ This is similar to the first century developments of Christianity, which was a charismatic movement in which every member participated by virtue of their disclosure of faith in Christ, publicly demonstrated through baptism in water and experience of the fullness of the Spirit. As Pluss elaborates:

Testimony is not simply a religious statement to be understood as a formulation of a witness’ affiliation to a certain group of Christians; it is a claim of an experience of self-transcendence and is a theological statement.⁵³⁰

Secondly, the hermeneutical and theological consequence of the use of oral narratives in worship has led to the development of a theology of the laity. There is, especially in the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, the laity coming of age, particularly the women and the youth whereby the laity only consents to the clergy authority if it is biblically convincing to them.⁵³¹ That is why ugly clergy have often been thrown out of the church. But there is no doubt the clergy and especially the bishops wield a lot of power in the church. The Independent Churches encourage the participation of all members in leading, singing, prayers, and giving testimonies and prophecies, which seems unstructured and spontaneous at first but in fact follows a pattern and a rather fixed structure.

Thirdly, the strength of the Church in Uganda as elsewhere in Africa has led to the revaluation of theology in the light of an assertive African theology. There is now an academic discipline called African Theology because of what is done in

⁵²⁹ Sanneh, 2003, p. 45.

⁵³⁰ Pluss, p. 236.

⁵³¹ The Arua Catholic diocese has prepared a liturgy for a service to be led by a lay person adopted for use in the whole Catholic Church of Uganda. In the Anglican Church the role of the House of Laity has devised tough regulations for the conduct of Bishops and Priests and put limits on their powers and ministry in terms of retirement and term of office, shows that the time of ‘the clergy know best’ is over.

churches in Africa today.⁵³² It is the interpretation of African experience of the gospel.

Fourthly, it is a church in which there is a renewed appreciation of divine activity in and through individual leaders and the Christian community at large that can clearly be seen and studied. These have a direct effect on the leadership development of the churches, such that Anglican priests have to be distinguished and active lay members of the Church before they can be trained or ordained. Likewise prospective Catholic priests are selected from good Catholic families, as the policy for vocation promotion in Arua diocese spells out:

Catholics shall draw young people to lay ministry, religious life and priesthood by the example of their lives. Families shall make the greatest contribution where a spirit of faith, charity and piety enables young people to hear and follow the call of God.⁵³³

And fifthly, it is a relatively young, praying, singing, and dancing church – a happy and noisy church. This contrasts markedly with the ageing, rigid, and sombre Anglican and Roman Catholic churches in the West. These identities in terms of ministry, leadership, mission, sacramental presence and worship are shaped by the political and cultural contexts in Uganda. The Church in Uganda is the Church of Uganda because it has survived and been formed by the various contexts in Uganda.⁵³⁴ The different and distinct elements that have shaped and continue to shape the identity of the Church in Uganda include the amalgam of influences from African traditions, the received traditions, the story of Christ in the gospels, modern and global trends and African secular aspirations⁵³⁵

What defines these new identities as ‘church’ and Ugandan is the complex of events and traditions both from within and outside Uganda, coupled with the historical, religio-cultural and socio-political phenomena that Uganda has

⁵³² See Jesse Mugambi, *African Heritage and Contemporary Christianity*, Longman: Kenya, 1989, *African Christian Theology*, 1989, and *The church and the reconstruction of Africa*, 1997. See also Gibellini, R., ed., *Paths of African Theology*, 1994, and Benezet Bujo, 1992, *African Theology in its Social Context*. On the church’s engagement with the African culture, see Aylward Shorter *African Culture and the Christian Church*, Geoffrey Chapman, 1973.

⁵³³ *Arua Diocese Policy Book: A Guide for Christian Communities*, 1998, p. 16, paragraph 200.1.

⁵³⁴ Zac Niringiye, (1997) argues convincingly that the history of political turbulence in Uganda has affected the churches’ leadership, ministry, service, worship and identity.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*

experienced since the time of the genesis of Christianity in Uganda in 1877. They emerged in spite of the prescriptive nature of the approach of the missionaries, in all denominations and churches. The new identities are markedly hybrid and very difficult to pin down because of the diverse and dynamic nature of the contexts in Uganda but are nevertheless, distinctly Ugandan. In it Catholics, Anglicans and Independent Churches find themselves engaged in doing the same activity, manifesting a new and yet common way of worship that addresses their embodied theological needs and helps them cope with the rapid social, political, economical and spiritual changes in society. A new Africa is being reconstructed that will affect others in mission terms and ministry.⁵³⁶

.IX.7. New Theological insights and challenges

There are theological insights that can be sieved out of this thesis. We said earlier that theology is central to this thesis for the interaction between history and context produces theology that transforms humans identity.

.IX.7.1. Community as a present-ification of God

The inner life of God as a community of Father, Son and Spirit is made manifest in the human community as *ori'ba*. The concept of *ori'ba* shows that God communicates Himself in every context. Jesus reveals God most explicitly in human form, but specifically through *E'yo* (Word). The *Orindi* (Spirit) stories God in human lives and the life of the community of faith. Because *indikindi* (presence) is central to worship, the presence of God, the presence of the leaders, living and departed, and the presence of the *ori'ba* (people of God) – the faithful community, living and departed, are all important to the continual formation or 'becoming' of the society. The concept of *ori'ba* places God at the centre of this process of human and community formation.

Human life is therefore sacramental on this account, where at all levels of ritual and human relations the suffering and risen Lord is seen to be present, communicating, revealing, teaching, healing and serving the community. Joan Timmerman confirms this point by stating that "Human relations are sacramental

⁵³⁶ See how Ka Mana comes to the same conclusion in his work *Christians and Churches of Africa: Envisioning the Future*, Regnum Africa, 2002.

because persons mediate being to each other".⁵³⁷ The Lugbara/Madi concept of *ori'ba* and *orindi* show that all beings participate in the divine Being and are therefore within the bracket of the mystery of grace. This sacramentality extends to all creation, that is, to all that makes the people's life what it is. In Lugbara/Madi tradition the ancestral spirits roam over the land to keep it amenable and to sustain the livelihood of the community. The fact that God is present in all situations and communicates Himself continually implies that the sacramental potential extends to all nature and to all history, and the more so because of Christ's incarnation. Lugbara religion is fulfilled in Christ for this reason.

The centrality of relationships to *life rubbing* in the Lugbara/Madi concept of community translates very sensibly into the Church as a communion. It also makes individuals important as 'faces' of God seen when they are dynamically present. When people exude energy and vitality and express love, joy, peace, patience, and common suffering with others, they communicate and present-ify God. Testimony then becomes a sharing of personal experiences of the Christ in the hearing of others, to identify with the hearers and to reveal Christ's presence in a person. In every service testimonies to the knowledge of Christ are given in the hearing of the community in the hope that their story will rub Christ into the hearers and reveal the God they have experienced in Christ, in the Spirit and in Truth. Every ritual is therefore an offering of both thanksgiving and promises to God. The content of these rituals is aimed at relating with God and with His people. God is the origin of all things. Christ is the *kayo* (first-born) of all humans who are committed to obeying God. And the Spirit is the immanent confirmer and affirmer of the community and one in whom God in Christ is experienced, known and received. Much as words are used to inform, relationships are used to transform, making grace a relationally mediated virtue of God.

.IX.7.2. The community as *Kin-dom* rather than Kingdom

Worship as the chief mission of the Church is a cultural product that sustains the individual's and the community's passage through life. It is an intensely personal and at once an intensely public activity. The result of the new understanding of the

⁵³⁷ Joan Timmerman, 'The Sacramentality of Human Relations', in *The Way, Supplement 1999/94*, p. 9, edited by Michael Barnes.

church as *ori'ba* (people of god – *societas Deus*) based on the Lugbara/Madi concept of kinship is of great value in rooting the Church into Lugbara/Madi communities. The life of the *ori'ba* (people of God), centred in the *orijo* (house of God), is what the Church has become for them. With the emergence of the Revival Movement, despite its sectarian tendencies and anti-culture traits, *ori'ba* has emerged as the *societas fidelium* (believers within the wider concept of society) who fit into the sub-clans, clans and tribes as followers of Christ.

The Greek concept of Jesus as *Kurios* (Lord) quite does not mean much within the Lugbara/Madi understanding of community as *ori'ba*. Jesus is better thought of as the ancestor *par excellence*, the one who meets the community's need in their times of need. *Ori'ba* (people of God) are therefore less a kingdom than a *kin-dom* where blood relations, settlement and ritual connections play important roles in forming the community. Jesus fits the measure of what it takes for Lugbara/Madi to be an elder and benefactor of the community. His story and experiences of Him unites the believers as the children or people of God. His blood prepares a people by washing them of their sins. The church as *oriba – societas Deus – kin-dom* is evident in the rural areas where its structure follows the structure of the clans and tribes at the centre of which is Jesus, Son of Mary and of God. In Kampala it follows either the tribal community church model as in the Lugbara Community Churches, or the housing estate (settlement) and the club or interest group models where people go where they want to go according to the services they prefer.

.IX.7.3. The Role of the Revival Movement

First of all, the Revival movement put personal salvation, testimony and the preaching of the gospel at the heart of Ugandan church life. Just as the successful traditional hunter and fisherman develops a personal ritual for his trade to create a cultural tradition for the society to emulate the Revival members did the same for Christians. Their opposition to culture notwithstanding, the Revival leaders ended up developing personal rituals of prayer, personal and family devotions for believers to copy. The ethos underlying these personal rituals is traditional. Secondly, the movement has accumulated music, prayers and ritual materials that are beginning to

be used for the liturgical and charismatic renewal of the churches.⁵³⁸ This has given rise to new responses, particularly in towns, in forms of art, music (spiritual songs), and dance that are culturally relevant. Congregations are responding spontaneously in a less fettered way to 'Mother Church' traditions but in ways that are more in line with the local or 'mother tongue' and contemporary traditions and to the Spirit of God. Congregations are celebrating their lives rather than just doing the 'right' thing according to the rubrics.

.IX.7.4. Varied indigenous features

The degree of indigenisation varies from church to church and many aspects are also cross-denominationally similar. For example, the Anglican and Catholic order of Bishop-Priest-Deacon, at the level of ministry, is flattened or reduced to that of Pastor as amongst the Independent churches. This is done without negating the ministry of priesthood.⁵³⁹ However, the sacraments are not a regular part of Ugandan church life like preaching, counselling, praying for the sick and comforting the bereaved. On the other hand, many Independent churches have begun to use the titles Bishop and Archbishop but without the sacramental duties as in the Anglican and Catholic traditions in addition to titles of Prophets, Apostles, Teachers and Evangelists. The socio-political changes in Uganda have helped to reorganise ministry in the different churches with a view for continued authenticity and relevance to the contexts such that the local conditions and traditions have affected church leadership, ministry, and the received traditions.

.IX.7.5. Tentative identity

The dynamic nature of the Ugandan context and of the faith relation with the Christ event means that the Church's identity is only tentative. As Niringiye points out, "to the question 'What is Church?' the answer is always provisional, as each generation

⁵³⁸ In the Catholic Church, the liturgical renewal movement, according to Mgr Tonino, Interview, Appendix 5, is spearheaded by the Catechumenal Way and the Charismatic renewal is led by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement which have revivalist mentality. In the Anglican Church the Renewal movement is led by pastors such as 'Uncle' Ben Mugarura, the chaplain of Makerere University St Francis Chapel, Canon Mrs Lovey Kitembo, Archbishop Henry Orombi and laymen such as Nickolas Kisakye, John Awodi, now ordained, etc.

⁵³⁹ The sacraments are valued and the Bishop and Priests are at times considered as sacraments, whose visit is appreciated and celebrated with a lot of pomp. But although the priestly ministry is valued, to be a good preacher and one who ministers to human need is best.

of the Christian community lives and defines itself in action vis-à-vis the world”.

Niringiye goes further to say that a

..prescriptive ecclesiology, whether Anglican, (Roman Catholic) or the credal ‘One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church’, does not fully account for the ecclesiological identity of a church, because it is imperative that the contextual experience of the church is taken into account.⁵⁴⁰ (Addition mine)

The identification of the churches in Uganda with the clans, tribes, regions, towns and cities in which they are situated, though not unique to Uganda, is a mark of ownership. Things are done in these churches as the people in the area do them, be it music, preaching, praying, et cetera. But the catholicity of the Church emerges in times of collective experiences of hardship and tragedy, for example in the Amin era and the Lord’s Resistance war in the north today.⁵⁴¹

.IX.7.6. The challenge of Leadership

The competence of leaders, particularly Bishops, Priests and Catechists, is judged by their effective presence in the community. The absence of a leader amounts to abuse of the trust that people have in the leader to mediate ‘being’. An absent leader mediates non-being or a diminishment of being by not being present. But absence on the other hand powerfully reveals God, not in ‘being’ but as the absent presence. A competent leader mediates God’s presence by causing the community to remember situations in which God’s presence or absence or level of intimacy, or a forgotten detail of the past, can become an evocative power of presence whereas absence becomes an empty sign or no sacrament. Because the churches are large and in need of good leaders, the lack of leaders is having a negative effect on the continual growth of the church and on its mission to the world. So far the world has not felt the effect of the phenomenal growth of the church in Africa because of lack of good leaders.

⁵⁴⁰ Niringiye, 1997, p. 354.

⁵⁴¹ Niringiye thinks the Churches of Uganda were most united when Amin persecuted them. They surmounted the differences of tribe, culture, language and class. Once regional crises were treated as problems of those areas, but when Amin’s government machinery left no safe areas, the entire Christian community protested, pleaded and applauded as the case may be. It also led to learning from each other, which was not done before the death of Janani Luwum, the Anglican Archbishop. Then the rivalry between the Anglican and Roman Catholics became irrelevant in the light of the threat Amin posed to the Church as a whole, p. 215.

.IX.7.7. The challenge of globalization

The search for identity has led to an increasing fragmentation of the Church in Uganda. This is testing churches to struggle for cultural, ethnic or religious bridge-building as they face the rapid changes in their congregations. As globalization draws the world towards a uniformity of the culture of the powerful, the local identity needs try to seclude. For example as nation-states, cultures or ethnic groups are drawn into all embracing world systems by the forces of world markets and mass media communication, every people group, like the Lugbara/Madi of West Nile, is searching for its cultural and traditional roots and stressing its cultural uniqueness as a right for being developed as an entity. This self-awareness is freeing and building the Church in areas where the Church has not had much success and at the same time creating barriers to relations with others.

The negative effect of this is the violent separatist tendencies fuelled by differences in cultural and religious identities that have led to the growth of unsustainable Church structures. These structures – dioceses, parishes and churches – are based on ethnic, tribal and language differences and at times differences of understanding. The differences have led to economic, political and social services being used as cultural or religious goods. The religious conflicts in Uganda between the Protestants, Catholics and Muslims have inevitably acquired political and economic undertones, where religion is politicised and/or politics is sacralised. Anglicanism has often tended to consider itself as the state religion as in England, leaving the other denominations to scramble for political posts left over by the Anglicans. Religious considerations tend to play a considerable role in political appointments.

.IX.7.8. Globalization and Localization

The struggle between the global and the local identities is dramatised in the urban contexts of Uganda. Kampala and towns such as Arua in West Nile are the meeting places for the plurality of cultures, peoples, lifestyles and faiths. Globalization promises community for ‘all’ without room for the local identity of ‘each’, whereas localization promises identity for ‘each’ at the expense of community for ‘all’. The globalizing forces of technology and communication have created a shared neighbourhood with geographically distant places where the experience of people

thousands of miles away is instantly made the experience of the local here and now. These experiences of cultural plurality and global conformity in the urban areas trickle into the suburbs and the rural villages through radio and television, by word of mouth or by example when town people come 'home' or rural people visit the town. A lifestyle that combines both the local and the global is emerging, a process that has been described by the neologism, 'glocalization'.⁵⁴²

The Church as an organization is experiencing the same conflicts between its local and global forms that affect especially its worship. Yet the Church in Uganda, in a fresh way, is being challenged through a renewal of faith, worship and witness, to be a sign to its people as God intended human communities to be. The challenge is to affirm the particular and yet be united in the common sharing of cultural and spiritual resources throughout the world. In the best examples the churches maintain their Anglican, Roman Catholic and African Independent identities, not as exclusives, but as a common wealth for all with a vital experience of Jesus Christ at the centre of church life. The spiritual and salvific experiences unite people across the cultural, religious and denominational particularities. It is the contextuality and the catholicity of the gospel that unites Ugandan Christianity. This unity has been realised in most Protestant denominations through the sharing of Communion with all who know and trust in Jesus. But it is yet to be realised in the communion with the Catholics where the many Protestant identities will be united to the one Roman Catholic identity. Protestant fragmentation is being healed by the commonality of spiritual experience in culturally relevant worship, and this cultural relevance is drawing the Catholics to realise how the church has become the church of the people, not the 'special church' from Rome. The Lugbara/Madi concept of *ori'ba* (people of God, meeting in *orijo* (house of God, the body of Christ), empowered by *orindi* (God's presence, the Spirit) makes real the Trinitarian unity of being and relationship of persons. The ecumenical movement and the liturgical and charismatic renewal movements have contributed to the expression of diversity in truth, unity and love amongst the churches of Uganda. So, the altar-centred, sacramental, liturgical worship of the Catholics and the pulpit-centred, sacramental, liturgical worship of the

⁵⁴² R. Robertson was the first to use the term 'glocalization' and is quoted by Philip Wickeri in *Plurality, Power and Mission: Inter-contextual Theological Explorations on the role of Religion in the New Millennium*, Council for World Mission: London, p. 17.

Anglicans balance the body-centred, non-liturgical, spontaneous, spiritual worship in the African Independent Churches.

.IX.8. Conclusion

This thesis responds to the cry that Christianity has destroyed African culture and values and to the need to recover such values. It brings the good news that African culture, rather than being destroyed is being preserved and celebrated through Christianity, which according to Bediako has become an 'African religion'.⁵⁴³ The thesis reaps the benefits of Lugbara/Madi culture that had previously been ignored for Christian formation and celebration. It shows that the new mode of being in the world has not spared the Church in West Nile and in Uganda. This new mode of being arises from challenges posed by the rapid social, cultural and political changes whereby local destinies of nations, ethnicities, tribes and churches are being enmeshed and transformed in their contexts to transcend their boundaries. Worship as a cultural product has become a network of social relations characterised by a growing exchange of cultural goods, information, knowledge, images and people between different localities – nationally and transnationally.

The significant thing about this is the fact that the growing interconnectedness does not necessarily mean a diffusion and imposition of dominant cultures and institutions upon weaker ones. Nor is it about how local cultures appropriate elements of external cultures without losing their sense of being fixed in a particular place and in the context of a particular tradition. Rather, it is about how weaker cultures are using the powerful culture industries of the West, and to some extent the East, in the forms of television, advertising, cinema and music as well as electronic media, to preserve their cultures and identities. It shows that the local is 'competing' to create shared desires and tastes in order to survive socio-culturally, economically, politically and spiritually.

As a result Ugandan social relations that are anchored in specific locations such as West Nile now break across their borders into Kampala. Today more and more Ugandans live in circumstances whereby their institutions link local practices with other peoples' practices to transform aspects of their daily lives. This brings their embodied theologies to the experience of others, near and far. The embodied

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Kwame Bediako, *Christ in Africa*, 2001.

cultural forms, identities, institutions and social relations are recombined in different contexts and space/time frames to help their survival in the new mode of being in a fast changing world. This is how Lugbara/Madi cultural forms and identities are being transformed and preserved as a result of urbanization from their original context by reconstituting themselves in new contexts as diasporic forms.

Lugbara/Madi music and its attendant forms are being marketed through the technology of radio, television and various forms of recordings. The revolution is further sped by the communication gadget of the mobile phone that now instantly links the distant city with the remotest village. Even the cattle herder in rural West Nile is connected! These culture industries are transforming the local ethnic symbols of dislocated populations into marketable styles with a national if not global reach. The global reach in turn impacts back onto both the original and migrant cultures and churches transforming them, and in the process creating new local identities and theologies.

While Uganda relies heavily on South Africa, Nigeria and Ghana for African films and videos, the Church – along with various cultural groups⁵⁴⁴ – seems to be an important vehicle for marketing Ugandan cultural goods with church worship teams, choirs and music groups bringing the particular into the global. The Anglican Youth Fellowship Choir (AYF), the Anglican Flames, the Miracle Worship Team, the African Children's Choir and Christ the King Choir are some of the groups that travel to minister and to perform. The Light TV and Top TV companies, although owned by Americans, run local programmes presented by Robert Kayanja, Imelda Namutebi Kula, Isaac Kiwewesi⁵⁴⁵ and others, with a wide reach in Eastern Africa. Of the 104 radio stations in Uganda, about 80 are faith-based stations. There are also religious programmes on the national and private TV stations. Top TV sponsored the national football league for the whole 2003-4 season showing they are not just about preaching only.

⁵⁴⁴ Cultural groups such as Ndere Troupe, Obsessions and Namasagali School have been key performers in this area.

⁵⁴⁵ Isaac Kiwewesi and Imelda Kula do their preaching in Luganda and have translators. They are popular ministers in the Eastern Africa region.

These glocal formations have led to a form of hybridization⁵⁴⁶ of cultures that blurs the boundaries between the high and popular, rural and urban, oral and mass cultures. The process is transforming local Ugandan cultural differences and particularities into a national currency for profit-making and for mission. In it cultural products that are unexciting and 'usual' are reinvented and reinvigorated by introducing a difference to keep them marketable. Where a cultural product is offensive and therefore about to be rejected, its radical 'otherness' is tamed and domesticated by innovative additions through technology or through merger with other products. In this way the 'other' is made to become one more style or experience to taste or to collect by the 'networked' individual or community.⁵⁴⁷

The fear amongst 20th century missionaries, as spelled out by Shorter, that modernisation was going to lead to the secularisation of Africa – with the retreat of the sacred, the supernatural and the otherworldly, as in the West – was therefore unfounded.⁵⁴⁸ This research proves that religion is still an important aspect of modern Uganda. Even in a globalised world, where socio-cultural change seems to spiral out of control, religion is still a partner. In fact, Marfleet shows that globalization and religion are intimately connected and religious resurgence is an important expression of a global world.⁵⁴⁹ The churches in Uganda are enjoying an unprecedented opportunity offered by these global trends to celebrate their cultural identities in an atmosphere of a great religious revival.

The notion that the Christianisation of Africa by-passed African cultural knowledge is also challenged by the fact that at certain critical moments the African seems to solely rely on his culture to bail him out. This shows how humans are totally immersed in culture and are conditioned consciously and unconsciously to accept as 'natural' the cultural pattern that shapes their society. It is a historical fact that Christian missionaries to a great extent ignored African culture and imposed their own viewpoints on their converts. Many Lugbara/Madi Christians today think they have little or nothing to do with 'the past', until they discover that they cannot

⁵⁴⁶ Schelling, 'Globalization, Ethnic Identity and Popular culture' in *Globalization and the Third World*, edited by Ray Kiely and Phil Marfleet, 1998, p. 144.

⁵⁴⁷ Schelling, p. 144

⁵⁴⁸ See Shorter, *The Church in the African City*, 1991, *Evangelisation and Culture*, 1994, and Shorter & Onyancha, Eds. *Secularism in Africa*, Pauline: Nairobi, 1997.

⁵⁴⁹ Phil Marfleet, 'Globalization and Religious Activism', 1998, p. 186.

deny themselves, and begin to live their cultures beneath 'Christian' masks, often with some guilt. It is this guilt that the gospel is removing to replace with confidence and hope through culturally appropriate worship.

This interaction and participation with others has given rise to new forms of religious identities and popular cultures in Uganda where local popular cultures and religious identities are turned into commodified styles for consumption and also as cultures of resistance to assert and affirm marginalised groups. The shared experiences across denominations are used for reaching out within and beyond particular cultural groups. However, in Uganda, as everywhere in the world, the process is uneven, unequal and differentially experienced as localization helps communities to assert their identities within the wider society. The rural-urban interface keeps the process as a continuum that continually creates and breaks new boundaries.

The triad of Context, History and Theology used in this thesis has a Trinitarian theological explanation. God the Father communicates himself in every context. He initiates all relationships. He is *Ori* – the seed and origin of all humanity and living things, and *Adrou afa dria o'bapi* – the creator. God the Son's incarnation as Jesus of Nazareth reveals the personhood of God the Father. Jesus is the human being who shows what God can do in and through a person. The activities of God are 'processed' in Jesus' life to a degree that justifies him to be called the 'Son of God'. The Holy Spirit causes humans to remember their experiences of God in Christ. God uses human beings to do his will, and history is the story of humans and human communities in a world created by God. Human beings and human relations are the 'processes' of God's ministry in the world. This thesis puts forward the Father as the source of unity, the guarantor of communication, and the Son as the pattern or process of communication, and the Spirit as the mover and recorder of history in human lives and minds. This is all related to the need and search for identity in a changing world, which is pursued in terms of ideas about tradition, history, locality, family, community, clan, tribe, nation, etc., institutions that humans have created for service to God.

So the fear that Africa is becoming extinct culturally because of its contact with Christianity and modernity is unfounded. God was ahead of the missionaries and the proof is in the Lugbara/Madi concept of *ori'ba*, *orijo* and *orindi*. The outer

man of Africa may be wasting away, but the inner man is alive and well, which is what the world needs to see. This research has missiological and theological implications for the Church in Uganda and Africa at large. As the centre of gravity of Christianity comes to rest firmly in Africa the question to ask is why God would allow the Church to grow phenomenally in Africa without a reason. This has never happened in history and is not about to happen for the first time in Africa that a church grows without mission at its heart. This research shows that the gospel is firmly planted in Uganda and is being celebrated in culturally appropriate ways as a sign of the salvation of the people of Uganda. This celebration also shows that Ugandans are ready to take the gospel to rest of the world, even to the former missionary-sending churches and lands. This will not, however, be done in arrogance, opulence and power, as it came to them, but in weakness and humility. It will be in the biblical way, without bags or extra shoes or shirt, relying more on the hospitality of the receivers and the power of God as they share what they have – the living Christ.⁵⁵⁰ Until the Jews in Jerusalem and the gentiles in Antioch, the Romans in Rome and the English celebrated Christianity in this *local* way it could not be taken anywhere else. Africa stands poised for mission to the world for this reason.

Theologically, the histories of worship is that of change and of continual adaptation to evolving cultures with a view to responding to the signs of the times and to authentically express the needs and desires of particular communities.⁵⁵¹ Contextual worship and theology injects life into the church, which is evident in Uganda today. The fear of losing the old received identities of Anglican and Roman Catholic is getting less and less. This is being helped by the ‘scandals’ of the homosexual debate in Anglicanism⁵⁵² and liberalism in the West. Africans are beginning to realise they are the ones holding on to a biblical faith. This realisation has also made them aware of how much they have travelled along the road of faith with Christ. The thesis shows that when the gospel encounters culture, it is the culture that is transformed and changed, but not the gospel. Liturgical traditions like other cultural traditions are not created or invented at a whim, but they develop over

⁵⁵⁰ Matthew 10:1-15.

⁵⁵¹ Keith Pecklers, *Worship*, Continuum: London, 2003, p. 136.

⁵⁵² The Church of Uganda used the example of the Uganda martyrs who refused to be used by the King of Buganda for his homosexual pleasure and died for it to respond to the homosexual debate in Nottingham in June 2005.

time. This thesis shows that Ugandan liturgical traditions are being formed through these continuous contextual readjustments and the demand for an appropriate liturgy that reflects these changes is rising.

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.IX.9.1. Books

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⁵⁵³ These are materials produced and adapted by the Liturgical commission through the Pastoral Co-ordinator's office.

⁵⁵⁴ Adapted by the Pastoral Co-ordinator's Office Arua from Thomas Richstatter's book of the same title published in 1995 by St. Anthony Messenger Press.

⁵⁵⁵ Adapted from LUMKO No 4 of the series '*Training for local Ministries*' published by Lumko Missiological Institute, a Southern African Catholic Bishop's Conference Institute.

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.IX.12.3. The Sage Philosophers

.IX.12.3.1. *The Elders from Arua*

- Rev. Canon Matia Anguandia, 76, a former teacher ordained as a Tent-maker and Bible translator.
- Teofilo Debo, 78, Revival leader for West Nile,
- Ven Sila Adroa, died in 2000, ordained in 1945,
- Lay Canon Samuel Nyakuni, 80, the head of Laity in West Nile for 20 years.
- Rev. Canon Manoa Ofuta, 65, a former missionary to Karamoja.

.IX.12.3.2. *The Catholic elders*

- Mgr Casto Adeti, The Vicar General of Ediofe
- Mgr Pierino Madrwa, the Vicar-General of Moyo

- Fr Tonino Rosino, an Italian and Poastoral Coordinator
- Ms Sherry Meyer, a liturgist and Deputy Pastoral Coordinator

.IX.12.3.3. The Madi elders

- Yosam Ruda, 86
- The Rev Canon Ibrahimu Tonya, 89
- Daniel Agba, 90
- Eriam Mbaa, 90,
- Samson Murua Drajoa, 76
- Neria Obeleru, folklorists
- Neria Nyinga, folklorists
- Nesta Drakuru, folk-singer and preacher.

.IX.12.3.4. The Independent Church leaders in Arua

- Henry Candia, the pastor of Deliverance Church, Arua
- Pastor James Onaali the pastor of Full Gospel Church, Arua
- Asua Isaac, the pastor of Elim Pentecostal Church in Arua
- Pastor Ephraim Acidri

.IX.13. Appendix 1

.IX.13.1. The church of St Philip, Okollo

Madi Okollo County consists of two Archdeaconries, Rhino Camp and Oyibu, which correspond with Lower and Upper regions of the county, respectively. St Philip's church is the headquarters of Oyibu Archdeaconry and of Okollo Parish. The Okollo clan peoples the parish. St Philip's Church (34 miles from Arua) is the church for the sub-clans of Adribu and Vuu. The Adribu form one zone and are the descendants of first-cousins Drajoa and Omiyi, who were the sons of two brothers, Tia and Ogunya, the sons of Kamia. Most of the descendants of the two cousins became Protestants while the most of the other members of the same lineage who live across the river Ora became Catholics. The Adribu zone was given a biblical name, *Nazareti* (Nazareth), and is divided into four sub-zones, by *enyati*, according to the descendants of Drajoa, who had three wives (from Ndu, Ocebu and Ombaci), and those of Omiyi, who had only one wife. A few Protestant families from the Oga and Ndu⁵⁵⁶ lineage, the majority of whom are Catholics, join them.

The Vuu, as the bigger sub-clan, is divided into four zones. The Panicu, the descendants of Anderea, form Kanani zone (because they grow lots of fruits); the Oyaanzi, the descendants of Oza, who had three sons – Israeli, Samueli and Fenahasi – form the Yoppa zone (because they settled beside a stream).⁵⁵⁷ The Pagarasi form Betani zone; and the Pamberi form the Yeriko zone. Each zone in turn is divided into *enyati* according to the families in the sub-clan. The last zone consists of the church workers and the staff of the primary and secondary schools, and is called Yerusalem. Here, the old structures are baptised to reflect biblical structures.⁵⁵⁸

In terms of furnishings and decorations the church of St Philip in many ways reflects people's homes. Furniture there is, is brought and taken away by the members. For a long time the altar table was the priest's dining table, until

⁵⁵⁶ The sub-clan of Okollo Ndu is the descendant of Azuru from Ndu, a Kebu tribe who was left in exchange for food in a very severe famine in the late 19th century. He married and his descendants are now called Okollo Ndu. They are *ori'ba* of the Okollo with full shrine rights.

⁵⁵⁷ The Oyaanzi are not of the Vuu lineage. They are a hive-off from the Elibu tribe in Offaka who took refuge amongst the Vuu in the 1930s. They have now been naturalised as the Vuu people and participate fully in the clan's ritual activities. They are fully *ori'ba*.

⁵⁵⁸ You can see that the zones are given biblical names to show what they have become: transformed by the biblical message.

contributions to buy an altar were made. The only decorations in the church are the flowers on the altar, often picked on the way to church, and the multicoloured Sunday and 'big occasion' dresses that the people wear. The church of St Philip, like the traditional external shrine, *orijo*, is central to the lives of the people of Okollo, and reflects their economic and cultural identity. The people of zones and sub-zones regularly meet in designated homes (internal shrines) to eat and pray together and plan how to give to the church at festivals such as Christmas and how to celebrate their lives together. They also plan how to carry out their church duties and the work assigned to them. This maintains the identity of the different zones within the wider unit of the church. The church of St Philip is the 'house of God' (*orijo* in Okollo). In Mvara, the zones are given neutral names instead of biblical ones. (See below).

.IX.13.2. Mvara Cathedral Parish

This is a peri-urban parish, just two miles outside Arua town. It was the first Anglican Church to be built in West Nile and is the headquarters of Madi and West Nile dioceses. Settlement around the mission station started in the 1930s when Christian wardens were appointed from the various tribes of West Nile to provide guidance and safety for the catechumens and school children from those areas. Quarters were assigned to the various tribes: for example, Madi quarter to the South, Maracha to the West, Terego and Kakwa to the North, and Vurra and Kebu to the East. But in the 1960s and 1970s, people began to buy and sell land to whosoever wanted it. Although people tended to buy land and to settle where their kith and kin were, a mixing of the tribes could not be avoided. In the end it became incorrect to call these quarters by their original names, although the original tribes were still dominant in the zones.

By 1980 the names were changed to the neutral country and location names of Zambia, Congo, Sudan, Kenya, and Central zones, respectively, where Central zone is for the Cathedral staff, Diocesan staff and the teachers of the Teacher training and Demonstration schools. The Central zone is divided into some category of *enyati*, where the Bishop, the Principal of the teacher's college and his deputy, the Diocesan Secretary and the Mission partners form the 'Castle' *enyati*. All the teachers belong to the 'Senior Quarter', and the rest of the Diocesan and Cathedral staff to the 'Second Letter' *enyati*. The Congo zone, one of the largest in the parish,

as Congo is in Africa, is divided into sub-zones: *enyati* of Bunia, Isiro, Bazi and Kisangani – key towns in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The point, according one of the zone leaders,⁵⁵⁹ is to maintain continuity with some form of community life, the traditional structure for ‘life rubbing’ wherever people are. The zones and sub-zones guarantee each and every member room to participate in the community and church.

All church giving, competitions of any kind (youth, women, music, etc.), hospitality, church services, etc., are channelled through these zones and sub-zones. The zone leaders play the roles of catechists and are also the elders of the Cathedral. The zone ties are very strong, even comparable to blood ties in the tribes, because most of the people are many miles away from their original tribal homes. The zones are like artificial tribes, which take care of every individual in the zone. When death occurs, the zones take charge of the funeral arrangements and treat the true relatives as mourners. It is clear here that the new ties of Christian brotherhood in the zones and in the church are beginning to take the place of the tribe in providing care and comfort in times of crisis.

The Cathedral church has permanent brick pews and a few chairs and benches for the clergy and important persons up front. There is no cross behind the altar; the Ten Commandments, John 1: 29, 3: 16, and Romans 3: 23 are written on a wooden board behind the altar.⁵⁶⁰ There are no decorations apart from the white and red earth wash of the walls and pillars. Every Sunday, flowers are placed on the altar and on the graves of the three previous bishops of the diocese. The church has no shutters and the pastors use their homes and the vestry as office. It is lifeless and deserted throughout the week unless there is a service or meeting, which means that many of the activities of the church are done in the zones and participation in the zones is crucial in the Cathedral’s ministry to the people. Here, the church is only used when necessary, just as the external shrine (*orijo*) was used when need arose. The zones are like internal shrines. If the structures of the Anglican and Catholic churches run parallel to the civic and traditional structures, the Independent

⁵⁵⁹ Personal interview with Nathaniel Amaru, the leader of Central zone (1997-98).

⁵⁶⁰ This says something about the AIM who evangelised West Nile. They are more Baptist than Anglican. Were it not for the ecumenical adeptness of Bp Alfred Tucker, West Nile would have been the African Inland Church (AIC) of Uganda.

Pentecostal churches are identified with the towns and city suburbs in which they are situated.

.IX.13.3. Arua Elim Church, Onialeku

This church is just outside Arua town, to the northwest, in the heart of a poor slum area called Obalakofuko.⁵⁶¹ It was established in 1954. Its membership is mainly from this slum, mostly self-employed, with a few civil servants and a good number of students. Two pastors lead it. Members consider the church as a community within a community.⁵⁶² Even amongst other Christians, they are Christians with a difference. The services are times of sharing of testimonies of victories over Satan and the systems of the world. The testimonies are endless and prayer requests and actual prayers plenty. Home groups are like family units and every member is encouraged to join a home group or form one. The tribes and clans are referred to show where one comes from, and are not important for one's Christian development, as in the other two cases above. The true believers are those who particularly worship at Onialeku and are born again and baptised in the Holy Spirit. Others are good, but not good enough. The church is like a barracks, a base to report to for supplies and equipment. The problems are solved out there in the battlefield; only the wounded are brought in for more intensive nursing.

.IX.13.4. St Francis Chapel Makerere Lugbara Community Service

Makerere University employs Lugbara in a number of positions, especially as Guards and Custodians. The first Lugbara service in Makerere, according to Rev Atiku,⁵⁶³ was started in 1957, but did not last long due to leadership problems. When this first attempt at a service in the late 1950s failed, the Lugbara continued to hold services in various places, depending on where a leader was able to gather them. Kawalaa, Kabanyolo and Bulange are a number of such places. The current strength of the Lugbara service in Makerere is attributed to the leadership of John Atiku, under the express encouragement of Rev Canon Benon Mugarura, the Anglican Chaplain of Makerere University. John Atiku came to Kampala from West Nile as a motor

⁵⁶¹ The name implies the houses are so close together that if a jackal enters the area, it cannot come out alive.

⁵⁶² Interview with Pastor Asua 8th Nov 1998.

⁵⁶³ Personal interview with John Atiku, 3rd April 2000

vehicle mechanic apprentice in 1976. By 1983 he had become the lay reader for the church in Kawalaa, west of Makerere University. But in 1987, when the initiators of the Kawalaa church, who were Baptists from Congo, wanted to assert their identity as Baptists, because a big Baptist church had been built down the valley in Nakulabye with missionaries providing free relief clothes and food, the Anglicans had to move out. John Atiku, then the Custodian of Nkrumah Hall, began to assist as warden in St. Francis Chapel.

When an old man who was sick sought to be baptised and no one was able to help him due to language problems, John Atiku was challenged to instruct him in catechism and, before long, others joined in the catechism class. With the encouragement and advice of the Chaplain, the Lugbara pastor of Nsambya Parish, John Edega, was invited to baptise the candidates.⁵⁶⁴ The Chaplain, in collaboration with the Archbishop, who is also Bishop of Kampala diocese, invited the Bishop of Madi West Nile to confirm these people. The service was held on 22nd February 1990, which is considered the day the Lugbara community service began in Makerere.

This twelve o'clock service draws Lugbara and other West Nile peoples from around Kampala. The membership is about 400 people, drawn from the eight zones of Makerere, Mulago, Kololo, Bulange, Kawalaa, Kikonyi, Nsambya and Bwaise areas of Kampala. The zones are divided into smaller sub-zones, similar to *enyati* in West Nile. Every week each zone is assigned a job of either leading the services, providing hospitality, or cleaning and decoration of the church. The Zone Leaders have committees who assist in running the activities. There are two Wardens and two Elders. The Wardens mainly look after the welfare of the church in its gathered form. They organise the seating, the cleanliness, lighting, books, the elements, and translations, in case someone who does not know Lugbara is in the service. The elders on the other hand, are prominent men and women who look after the welfare of the community in its scattered form, that is, the moral, social, cultural, economic and political conditions of the community. They are men and women of status, with considerable material means. Of the two elders, Helen Oyeru was a Minister of Culture and Community Development in the Uganda government of the 1970s, and

⁵⁶⁴ John Edega is one of several Prison, Police and Army officers trained to serve as Chaplains in the forces. He has since gone to be Archdeacon of his home area, Maracha, in Arua.

is now a businesswoman, while Mr Asua is a lecturer at Mulago Dental and Laboratory Technology School. When someone dies anywhere in the zones, or when a wedding is planned, their contribution and advice is sought. The elders are often used as links between the church in Kampala and that in West Nile and also with high government officials.

.IX.14. Appendix 2**HARVEST LITANY.**

(Priest/Leader stands before the Holy Table facing the People. A basin of good Soil, a pot of clean Water and a Flower vase with preferably sunflower to represent the Sun)

Priest/Leader: These blessings shall come upon you and overtake you if you obey the voice of the Lord your God. You shall be blessed in the city, and in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of the ground, and the fruit of your beast, the increase of your cattle and the young of your flock. Your basket and your kneading trough shall all be blessed.

Response: We shall be blessed as we come in and blessed as we go out!

Priest /Leader: The Lord has done great things for us

Response: He has done so much for us we cannot tell it all.

Priest/Leader: May we now who sowed our seed with tears and weeping bring forth our harvest to the Lord our God with shouts of joy!

Response: Hallelujah! God is great! He is great indeed!

(People rise to bring forth their harvest with singing, dancing and ululation.)

Priest/Leader: For the good soil in our land. *(With appropriate gestures)*

Response: We thank you good Lord.

For the good rains

We thank you good Lord.

For the good Sunshine

We thank you good Lord.

For the strength to work

We thank you good Lord.

For the good harvest *(mention the varieties there present- millet, beans, sorghum, sesame, etc.)*

We thank you good Lord.

For the good animals and birds *(cows, goats, sheep, chicken, etc)*

We thank you good Lord.

For our children and families

We thank you good Lord.

All that we have

We give back to you

All that you have given to us

We share with our neighbours

(The congregation bursts into appropriate thanksgiving praise.)

(As the people kneel or sit.)

Priest/Leader: Let us pray.

Lord God our provider, our keeper and our sustainer, our hearts are filled with joy and our mouths with praise for who you are to us and for your marvellous gifts to us. We give ourselves to you for service and pledge to share these your gifts with the world around us. Accept us good Lord with all that we have through Jesus Christ our elder brother and Lord. **AMEN.**

.IX.15. Appendix 3**LITANY OF THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

Lord, you are the source of all life. We thank you for giving us these children.

We praise and thank you (*ama mi ecuu, ama mini awa'dinia 'yoo*).

Father, we praise you for the birth of our children. We give you thanks for being reborn in baptism.

We praise and thank you.

Father, your Spirit lives in us and in our children

We praise and thank you.

With joy we parents see that our children resemble us. They and we resemble you, Father.

We praise and thank you.

As we are the father and mother of our children, so you God are the Father of us all. You accept us as your children.

We praise and thank you.

Great God, with joy we stand before you today as we carry a child in our arms who is from our life.

We praise and thank you.

God, our creator, You alone knows how life began and still begins today.

We praise and thank you.

Holy are you, God, source of life and joy.

We praise and thank you.

.IX.16. Appendix 4**Interviews and other sources**

1. 8th Nov. 1998, Pastor Asua, Overseer of the Elim Pentecostal Church.
2. 30th Dec. 1998, Feb 23rd 1999, Bp Henry Orombi of Nebbi.
3. 8th Jan. 1999, Bp George Sinabulya Liturgical Commission.
4. 10th Jan. 1999, Pastors Tamara and Jimmy Onaali of Full Gospel Arua.
5. 14th Jan. 1999, Ephraim Acidri, Youth Pastor of Full Gospel Arua.
6. 9th & 16th Feb. 1999, Fr Rosino Tonino, Pastoral Co-ordinator.
7. 9th Feb. 1999, John Sagrado Tutu, former seminarian.
8. 16th Feb. 1999, Mgr Pierino Madrwa, Episcopal Vicar Moyo.
9. 17th Feb. 1999, Rev Canon Matia Anguandia
10. 18th Feb. 1999, Amos Bazaale, Co-ordinator 'Operation Joshua'.
11. 19th Feb. 1999, Ms. Sherry Meyer, Assistant Pastoral Co-ordinator
12. 19th Feb. 1999, Mr Odama Stephen, Society of the disabled Arua.
13. 24th Feb. 1999, Mgr Casto Adeti, the Vicar General of Arua Diocese
14. 10th Mar. 1999, Canon Manoa Ofutaa
15. 12th Mar. 1999, Peter Asiimwe Director Life Ministry Uganda.
16. 12th Mar 1999, Stanley and Norah Kyobe, Wardens of St. John's Entebbe
17. 16th Mar. 1999, Pastor Hamnon Bwoch of Kampala Chapel.
18. 10th May 1999, Bp. John Taylor, Oxford.
19. 10th May 2000, Eriam Mbaa.
20. 10th May 2000 Daniel Agba.
21. 11th May 2000 Samson Drajoa.
22. 27th August 2001 Joy Grindey

.IX.17. Appendix 5**Ms. Sherry Meyer, Assistant Pastoral Co-ordinator**

Ms Meyer is an American who was a teacher in a Roman Catholic Secondary school in the States. After doing her Masters, she was Headmistress and then moved to teach Scripture and liturgy in a theological school for 16 years. She got a call to come to Africa through the Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM), a mission organization started by a Catholic lay woman in Britain 25 years ago. She has now been in West Nile for eight years. Her role as the only native English speaker in the diocese, as most missionaries are of Italian descent, includes:

- Editing and publication of documents in English.
- Administration and preparation of programmes for various diocesan conferences and seminars.
- The adaptation and use of other materials e.g. LUMCO materials for West Nile.
- Assistant Pastoral Co-ordinator of Arua diocese.
- Teaching the Priests, Catechists and Lectors on the general Christian formation of the diocese.

Meyer says her role “is to help the church to plan rather than react to issues”. Her assessment of the liturgical life of the Catholic Church in Arua is that, although the time for liturgical renewal in the diocese is short, there has been tremendous progress. Liturgy in the past, according to her, was the domain of the priests and the religious (i.e. Brothers and Sisters), but today it involves much lay participation. The priests and religious have not taken this lying down, she says. “I have found resistance and resentment from priests. But I know how to deal with that because I know we cannot see things clearly until we see them from a distance.”

Liturgy for Meyer is the celebration of God saving us together and our freedom to express ourselves in the joy of that knowledge of God. The Catholic/Protestant division is a received division that can be overcome in the freedom of the shared knowledge and celebration of God. She gives the example of the Easter liturgy at Ekarakafe parish church, which attracts many Protestants. Education is extremely important for inculturation and for liturgical innovation. “If there is to be radical inculturation, education must be done.” Her role as the diocesan liturgist is to explain to the Christians of West Nile what these things mean in Western Christian thought so that they can see the equivalents in their cultural

contexts; for example, in marriage, how do we show covenant? "I refuse to use anything that does not come from Uganda for liturgical purposes."

Church music in Arua Catholic diocese is good but the theological content of the music is very poor. A few songs have scriptural texts but the whole musical range is unbalanced (see the analysis of the content of the music books). For example, there are more songs to Mary than for Christmas or Easter; only songs for the Eucharist exceed the number of songs to Mary. There is a good structure in place to improve on this and the Liturgical Committees study and approve new songs for liturgical use. An expert is putting everything in musical notation, and a group of Sisters is putting all the music on tape for choirs who may not know how to read music. Many of the songs come from Protestant traditions and/or are composed by Protestant Lugbara, Madi or Alur.

Meyer thinks groups are formed out of need. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) movement was formed out of the need to bring life and joy to liturgical celebration and to the Church. The only problem with this is the fact that they have to form a group to do that instead of doing it through the whole Church. The group creates a barrier which the rest of the Church has to overcome in order to belong and this makes it hard for none member to receive from the group. Their emphasis on healing, according to Meyer, is too extreme and preys on the local culture of superstition. For her, God works through the ordinary and when we look for the extraordinary we may miss God and the extraordinary cannot be maintained for a long time. Day by day we are just ordinary earthy people. She counsels that the group should not be persecuted but lovingly drawn into the community of the Church by the Church leadership doing their ministry properly.

Meyer thinks the Charismatic renewal movement can be employed for the benefit of the whole Church by practising a participatory liturgy that is lively and by priests meeting the needs of the people by taking the sacraments to the sick, holding healing services and involving the people as lay ministers in pastoral visits. The charismatic movement, according to her, can become so sectarian that ministry to the main body becomes secondary. The followers become super Christians in their own sight even if they are lacking in the church's sacramental disciplines. The movement is poorly related to the rural situations in Arua, always conducting its services in

English and centred exclusively in the town areas where there is access to electricity and public address systems.

The movement was formed to bring Catholic praxis back to catechisis as the primary means of evangelisation. The group suffers the same problems as the charismatic renewal members. Meyer thinks there is a lot to go for in ecumenical relations and she suggests several areas of co-operation such as:

- Good Friday joint prayers
- Week of prayer for Christian unity
- Prayer meetings for common concerns
- Interchurch committees working on Muslim relations
- Involvement of members of other churches in meetings and conferences. For instance, the 2nd Synod of Arua diocese, in 1994, was addressed by the Anglican Bishop of Nebbi and that Synod directed the Catholic Bishop of Arua to appoint a Diocesan Director of Ecumenical Affairs, which he has yet to do.

.IX.18. Appendix 6**Mgr Casto Adeti, The Vicar General of Arua Diocese**

I began by asking him to explain his role in the diocesan hierarchy. The Vicar General is basically an assistant to the Diocesan Bishop. He does everything the Bishop does except priestly ordination.

Bishop																						
Vicar General																						
Episcopal Vicar Moyo								Episcopal Vicar Ediofe														
Rural Dean Lodonga	Rural Dean Ombachi	Rural Dean Ediofe	Rural Dean Moyo	Rural Dean Maracha	Rural Dean Adjumani																	
						P	A	R	I	S	H	P	R	I	E	S	T	S				

Arua Catholic Diocesan Structure

The Parishes are divided into zones led by Zonal Catechists; the Zones consist of Chapels, which are led by Catechists. The Chapels consist of Christian communities (*enyati*). The diocese has three Catechist training centres at Angal and Maracha where they spend one year and at Lodonga where they spend two years. The Catholic Church in Uganda has a centre for people who come into ministry late, in Kitgum in Northern Uganda. The rest begin at the minor seminary at Pokea five miles outside Arua and end up in the Major Seminary at Gaba, Katigondo or Alokolum.

Adeti thinks the liturgical situation in the diocese has dramatically changed in the last few years but the whole phenomenon has not yet been fully digested. The role of the Pastoral Centre in this is very vital. It is seen in the form of training and preparation of materials, some of which have now been adopted by the whole Roman Catholic Church in Uganda. Lay participation and the increased involvement of women are the visible signs of this change. Before this, lay participation was limited to personal devotional life, such as the reciting of the rosary. But today the Eucharist is celebrated every Sunday in every Eucharistic centre and Lectors preach in every chapel. The Inculturation Committee is studying some cultural practices, such as traditional marriages, in order to give some theological guidance on their sacramental expression. The general liturgical celebration has become more colourful because of the liturgical dance by the 'Kizito Kids'. The diocese has talented musicians who are

busy notating and tape-recording music, working closely with the liturgical committee who are looking at the theology of the music. But the lives of the musicians are a cause for concern.

The religious communities are at once a blessing and a nuisance to the church. They are a blessing in the sense that they are involved in education, nursing, community health and other training, such as cookery, knitting and tailoring. But they are a nuisance, according to Mgr Adeti, because they want to be different rather than complimentary to the wider Church. The diocese has produced a number of religious societies.

- The Holy Trinity Sisters founded by the late Bp Angelo Tarantino
- The Marian Brothers of Lodonga, founded on 19th March 1954 by Bp. John Baptist Cesana and Fr. Ijino Albrigo. They specialise in education.
- The Sacred Heart sisters from Sudan now stationed in Moyo.
- Mary Mother of the Church Sisters formed by the late Bishop of Lira, Caesar Asili, who was born West Nile

Arua Diocese is the leading diocese in terms of vocations to the priesthood in Uganda, but vocations are being threatened by the fact that all dioceses are to be self-reliant. The economic hardship is affecting seminarians as they are expected to pay part of the fees. There are many local priests who are joining the old missionary vocations. The diocesan leadership is now basically African, with the exception of the parishes of Ombachi, Lodonga and Odravu, which are led by foreign missionaries.

Mgr Adeti says Africa now is the chief defender of celibacy and voices against it come from the West rather than from Africa. But this seems to be the official ecclesiastical line rather than the public opinion on the matter, because Christians interviewed on it think otherwise. There are African matters, which are now being dealt with liturgically, for example exorcism led by Fr. Cassela of CRM, and soon Fr. Sattori, one of the first sign workers of the diocese, will be beatified by the Pope. In sum, Adeti thinks the people of Arua diocese are now ready to cook liturgically and invite others to eat. The one way to describe the liturgical life of the diocese is participation.

.IX.19. Appendix 7**John Sagrado Tutu, Former Seminarian**

Tutu thinks there is nothing that is really new. It is only the result of putting the right emphasis on the right things that has changed the worship of the Catholic Church in Arua. These include the vernacular language. In the past Mass was understood by very few people and participation was by cramming the liturgy in Latin. Secondly, in the past people were obliged to come to worship. To be a good Catholic you have to prove it by coming to worship and the religious leaders made sure they noted who was present or absent. Those who gave no good reason for not attending were charged to work for the church or pay money to the church. Today people come because they want to. As a result church attendance has fallen considerably but the worship is richer and more involved. Worship is no longer to satisfy God but to satisfy people foremost. People come for their own sake.

In the old days worship was a sad affair, with a lot of people weeping because the Christian experience was a painful separation from family and friends. Many Christians were outcasts from their communities and such memories caused them to cry. Worship today is a jubilant celebration in word, music, dance and liturgy because Christians have worked through the pain and understand the faith better.

Thirdly, literacy. Today people know the whys and hows of worship. Many Christians are even more knowledgeable than the priest or Catechist. They participate intelligently in worship and even suggest what should be done in music, dance, gestures and prayers.

Fourthly, music for worship has greatly improved and expanded in the last ten years. Music can only become a living story when it includes my story. Music is good as long as it speaks to me and of me. At its best, music is a testimony. The problem is the proliferation of new songs, which is typical of folk music; as a result their life-span in Christian worship is short; many get lost within a few years, depending on their popularity.

Fifthly, the role of the liturgy committees in the diocese has greatly helped the evolution of worship in the diocese. They are responsible for the liturgy and music, its theology, purpose, meaning and source. They are also responsible for

teaching worship leaders, choirs and the worshipping community to engage meaningfully in worship.

On leadership, Tutu thinks the policy of celibacy for all Catholic priests and bishops is proving to be the greatest undoing of the church in Africa. He believes the church is living a lie because the clearest evidence is the sexual involvement of many priests. This is seen in the number of children fathered by priests and many priests dying or suffering from AIDS-related diseases. He challenges the Cardinal to call for a referendum to see if the Catholic Church in Uganda wishes to have only celibate priests. He thinks it is the cause of the high dropout rate of seminarians. Anyhow, the number of religious groups being formed in the diocese and the number of people joining them is increasing.

Tutu disapproves of the Sunday school programme, saying that it gives the kids a wrong impression of God. Children from nominal Christian families can only see their parents pray in church and parents attending church together should enhance this and ministers prepared to say something to the children in every service.

.IX.20. Appendix 8**Mgr. Pierino Madrwa, the Episcopal Vicar of Moyo**

This was done in a very short time as we waited for the Pastoral Co-ordinator. I began by asking him to comment on the liturgical progress of the diocese. Mgr Madrwa thinks that not enough is being done to inculturate the liturgy. "If the translation from Western texts has revolutionised worship to this extent, how much more will a liturgy that comes from our own hearts in the forms of prayers, psalms and collects do to our worship?" He wants traditional activities like sacrifices and reconciliation to be given liturgicalexpression in the Church. He described how an African explanation of traditional reconciliation has greatly assisted people in putting their lives in order so they can participate in Holy Communion. To be a Christian and not participate in Communion is like being reconciled to someone and not being able to eat at the same table with them. The use of traditional reconciliation has helped people to put their marriages in order, pay debts, or pay restitution for offences to others.

.IX.21. Appendix 9**Odama Stephen**

The traditional church of Uganda is in danger of dying and giving way to a new tradition of a happy clappy church, especially in the towns. The church is a place where we humble ourselves and not parade ourselves. The COU is opening itself to foreign influence and giving the church a false face. The happy clappy church is very hypocritical to say the least.

The confirmation of 7-10 year old children is not helping the Christian formation of the children. The children are too young to understand the faith, as they should. Even though children of this age are literate, they are still too young to understand the theological issues involved in communion and Christian life.

The creation of numerous church branches of the same denomination is making the church structure too big for meaningful development. It is a fragmentation rather than development. The Catholic Church is more cohesive and better equipped for keeping a broad spectrum of people in one unit. The COU needs a policy to avoid easy breakage of its structure.

The level of training for COU priests is too low. A poorly trained priesthood cannot challenge and minister to people beyond their level. The Catholic Church is better informed on developmental matters because it has better-trained personnel. Planning is a problem for the COU on account of inadequate training.

.IX.22. Appendix 10**Common Seminar Topics in Youth Conferences**

1. Relationship between boys and girls
2. Prayer
3. Leading a lively worship service
4. Building a strong Youth Group
5. Mentoring Leadership
6. Building a strong fellowship
7. Witnessing
8. The gifts of the Holy Spirit
9. Breaking curses and bondage
10. Curses and Deliverance
11. Cults
12. Christian giving
13. Growing up
14. AIDS awareness
15. Modern idolatry
16. Spiritual warfare.

Questions for group discussions

1. What are the things you love about worship in your Church?
17. What do you not like about the worship in your Church?
18. If you were given the chance, what changes would you like to make in the way the Church worships now?

.IX.23. Appendix 11**SIL OFFICE DEDICATION LITURGY**

Let us humble ourselves before God as we prepare to dedicate this place to Him and for His work.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

HE IS RISEN INDEED. ALLELUIA!

The Lord be with you

AND ALSO WITH YOU⁵⁶⁵

Peace be to this place⁵⁶⁶

AND TO ALL WHO WORK IN IT

Let us pray

Lord God, Holy, Blessed and Glorious, we ask you to bless, hallow and sanctify this office. That it may be filled with joy and gladness, peace and love, health and goodness and thanksgiving to you; and let your blessing rest upon this office and all those who work in it, now and for ever.

AMEN.

(Prayer of Dedication)

God of time and eternity, we dedicate this Office, the home of SIL, to you and for your work in Arua. We receive it as a gift with gratitude and hold it in honour, respect, and care. Use this office for your glory, so that every tribe and language and people and nation, which you have purchased with your blood from this region of Africa, may receive your life giving Word in their own tongue.⁵⁶⁷ So that your Kingdom may be established in the world in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

AMEN.

(Prayer for Workers)

Grant, Lord, to all who work and shall work in this Office that in serving others they may serve you and share in your perfect service and that in the busyness of their work they may possess you in tranquillity; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN.

(Prayer for Protection)

Father of all, blessed forever: expel and put away from this places all power and presence of darkness. Watch over and defend this office, and let no evil come near your servants, that they may be guided by your angels and enfolded in your eternal love, through Christ our Lord.

AMEN.

⁵⁶⁵ This is the standard opening from the ASB, 1980.

⁵⁶⁶ Jesus said, 'As you enter a house wish it peace' Matthew 19: 12 (The African Bible, Paulines: Nairobi).

⁵⁶⁷ Revelation 5: 9, the first stanza of the new hymn of the Elders in glory.

May Christ always be here with you. May he share in your work and comfort you when your work is hard. May he inspire and help you to make this office a dwelling place of love, offering the kindly hospitality and the gentle industry of God in this town and region, through Christ the humble worker.⁵⁶⁸
AMEN.

(Reading and short Word)

*(Intercessions for SIL)*⁵⁶⁹

May the leaders of SIL be clothed with wisdom, righteousness and power.
AMEN. LORD, BLESS THEM FOR EVER.

May they know what to do when the going gets tough.

AMEN. LORD, BLESS THEM FOR EVER.

May their work bless all the peoples whose languages shall be worked upon.

AMEN. LORD, BLESS YOUR PEOPLE.

May your Word go forth from here to bless, heal and save.

AMEN. LORD, BLESS YOUR PEOPLE.

May the path of the gospel lead from this place to all languages and peoples.

AMEN. LORD, BLESS YOUR PEOPLE.

May Northern Uganda, Southern Sudan and Eastern Congo receive your blessing of peace.

AMEN. LORD, BLESS YOUR PEOPLE.

(Final Prayer and Blessing)

Hear God's word of benediction:

The fruit of righteousness will be peace,

And the result of righteousness tranquillity and trust forever.

My people will abide and work in secure dwellings;

And in quiet resting-places.

And now the eternal Spirit,

Enfold this place with love;

Indwell this place with joy;

And build it with peace.

And the blessing of God almighty,

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Be with you now and always.

AMEN.

⁵⁶⁸ Here the double image of God as feminine and male comes out. The home is where hospitality is lavished on others and the woman is the chief controller of that atmosphere. Hard work for the welfare of the home to get the things needed for hospitality is the work of the man. Yet he has to be gentle so as not to tire out the rest of the family in the pursuit of the needs of the family. The picture is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Man.

⁵⁶⁹ These 'Call and Affirm' prayers belong to the traditional cult at the shrines. The Kenyan Book of Prayer uses them extensively. They also feature in African music.

.IX.24. Appendix 12**.IX.24.1. Conferences and Conventions referred to****.IX.24.1.1. *Conferences***

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. 26 th Aug.-1 st Sept. 1998 | Mvara Scripture Union Conference |
| 19. 12 th -16 th Dec.1998 | Goli conference |
| 20. 28 th Dec. - 3 rd Jan. 1999 | All Saint's Cathedral Youth Camp |
| 21. 4 th -10 th Jan. 1999 | Uganda Youth Conference |
| 22. 11 th -16 th Jan. 1999 | Uganda Christian Teacher's conference |
| 23. Nov. 13 th 1999 | Junior Scripture Union Conference |
| 24. 18 th -21 st Dec 1999 | Ombatini Youth Conference |
| 25. 7 th - 11 th May | Oyibu Youth Conference |

.IX.24.1.2. *Festivals*

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. 19 th April 2000 | St Francis Chapel Music Gala |
| 26. 19 th - 20 th 2000 | Diocesan Youth Music Festival |

.IX.24.1.3. *Conventions*

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. 12 th - 16 th January 2000 | West Nile Millennium Convention. |
| 27. 22 nd -28 th Nov. 1998 | Arua Great Gospel Crusade with Oyet. |

.IX.24.1.4. *Seminars*

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. 26 th -27 th Nov. 1998 | Clergy Chapter Madi West Nile Diocese |
| 28. 6 th Mar. 1999 | Cathedral Worship leaders' Seminar |
| 29. 5 th Feb. 1999 | Cathedral Stewardship Seminar |

.IX.24.1.5. *Assemblies*

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. 6 th -9 th Jan. 1999 | Provincial Assembly |
| 30. Nov 13 th -Dec 7 th 1999 | Arua Diocese Third Synod |

.IX.24.2. Services referred to

.IX.24.2.1. *Wedding services*

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. 23 rd Jan. 1999 | Wedding Ukemo, Ukuru Parish |
| 31. 13 th Feb. 1999 | Wedding of Mike and Gertrude, Mvara |
| 32. 6 th May 2000 | Wedding of Patricia and Joel, St Philips |

.IX.24.2.2. *Commissioning services*

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. 21 st Feb. 1999 | Mother's Union Commissioning Service, Mvara |
| 33. 28 th Feb. 1999 | Mother's Union Inauguration Service |
| 34. 26 th April 2000 | Dedication of SIL office Arua |

.IX.24.2.3. *Ordination and induction services*

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. 31 st Jan. 1999 | Ordination Service Adibu, Offaka Parish |
| 35. 28 th Nov. 1999 | Ordination Service Warr, Nebbi Diocese |
| 36. 17 th -21 st Nov. 1999 | Induction Service Archdeacon of Maracha |

.IX.24.2.4. *Funerals*

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. 1 st Oct. 1998
94 | Two funerals, for a child of two and a lady of |
| 37. 1 st -3 rd Feb. 1999 | Funeral of a relative in Anyiribu Parish |
| 38. 4 th Feb. 1999 | Memorial service for Archbishop Silvanus Wani |

.IX.24.2.5. *Fund raising services (Kusifa)*

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Nov 7 th 1999 | Cathedral Roofing fund raising |
| 39. 28 th Nov. 1998 | Arinzoro Church fund-raising Service |

.IX.24.2.6. *Catholic services*

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. 1 st Nov. 1998 | All Saint's Day Service, Catholic Centre, Arua |
| 40. 7 th Feb. 1999 | Ediofe Catholic Cathedral Mass |
| 41. 13 th Mar. 1999 | Christ the King Catholic Church |
| 42. 5 TH March 2000 | Funeral at Bwaise |
| 43. 16 th April 2000 | Palm Sunday, Arua Catholic Centre |

.IX.24.2.7. Independent services

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. 8 th Nov. 1998 | Elim Pentecostal Church Onialeku, Arua |
| 44. 20 th Nov. 1998 | Arua Full Gospel Church |
| 45. 10 th Jan. 1999 | Full Gospel Arua |
| 46. 17 th Jan. 1999 | Full Gospel Arua |
| 47. 13 th Mar. 1999 | Rubaga Miracle Cathedral |
| 48. 9 th April 2000 | Bwaise Christian Fellowship Church |
| 49. 26 th April 2000 | Kampala Pentecostal Church Service |

.IX.25. Appendix 13**Questionnaire to the Anglican Clergy**

This was the questionnaire given to the 150 active and retired pastors of Madi West Nile Diocese of which 128 were received during the Chapter meeting of 26th-27 November, 1998. This was an 88% response.

Survey on Liturgical Practice

1. (Optional) Name----- Parish/School-----
50. How many Communion services do you have in a month?-----
51. Baptism (state the average in a year)
 - a) Infant -----
 - b) Adult-----
 - c) How would you grade the teaching of catechism in your parish/school?
Very good----- Good----- Fair----- Poor-----
52. Do you have a Sunday school programme in your Parish?-----
 - How many qualified Sunday school teachers are there?-----
 - How many times do you visit and teach the Sunday school in a year?

53. How would you rate yourself as a pastor for:
 - α) Children (1 2 3 4 5 6)
 - β) Youth (1 2 3 4 5 6)
 - χ) Women (1 2 3 4 5 6)
 - δ) Men (1 2 3 4 5 6)
54. In what areas do you find the Lugbara/Kakwa/Alur Book of Common Prayer not helpful in your ministry? (List areas).
55. Liturgy is born out of pastoral need. What new liturgies do you think will be helpful to you in light of the pastoral needs in your parish/school?
56. How do you make use of the following in your pastoral and liturgical ministry?
 - α) Choir
 - β) Drama
 - χ) Dance
 - δ) What musical instruments are used in your church? (list them).
57. What new things are you doing in your parish/school which you want the rest of the Church of Uganda to know about?
58. As a pastor, how would you rate your liturgical and pastoral ministry? (you may tick several as appropriate to you) (Fulfilling; enjoyable; very easy; difficult; frustrating; too demanding).
59. How would you rate your pastoral equipment? (Adequate; satisfactory; just about right; inadequate; very poor).

Questions for personal interview

1. Tell me about yourself (date and place of birth, family, schooling, profession, call, etc.,)
60. What is your present role in the Church?
61. How do you assess the liturgical life of the church today? What is worship like in the church?
62. What new changes have you noticed and what do you anticipate for the future?
63. What about music, how is it doing in the church?
64. What new movements are emerging in the church that are focused on liturgical and worship renewal and how are they affecting the church?
65. In your opinion which way is the worship of the church going?
66. How would you, in a few words describe the present state of worship and liturgy in the church?
67. Any other things you would like to add on any aspect of worship??