INDIGENOUS ORAL COMMUNITIES' ENGAGEMENT WITH THE CREATION NARRATIVE OF GENESIS, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE NARO SAN OF BOTSWANA

by

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DECLARATION

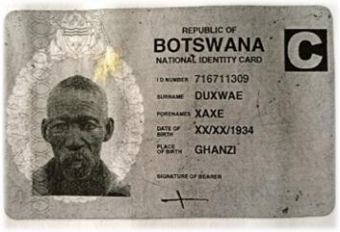
I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously been submitted in its entirety or in part to any institution for a degree.

Signed: *Gerhard Marx* Date: 27 June 2018

‘Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from our children but tell the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.’ Psalm 78:1-4

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many characters involved in a drama; some play major parts and others less important roles. There are actors who will be involved in every act and in almost every scene, yet, there are those whose appearance on stage can be compared to the solitary, elusive, nocturnal *aardvark***,** a master in the art of disappearing in a handy burrow in the Kalahari Desert. It is a territorial mammal, and the only living species classified in this genus, with a history difficult to track, and limited in modern knowledge. They make such an impression on those fortunate enough to catch sight of it, that many tales have been shared in an effort to unravel their secrets and untold life-stories. Around campfires in the Kgalagadi district of Botswana and the Kalahari Desert spanning several countries, one can still hear stories being re-told about man's encounter with this animal.



Some characters have long departed; their stories were never formally written, yet they have made a significant contribution to those involved in the play of life. One such a person is Xaxe Duxwae, a Naro San, born somewhere around Ghanzi, Botswana some time during the Great Depression. We will never know who first told him the biblical creation story, where it all began. For all we know he may have heard it around the campfire from his father and elders, who may have heard it from the likes of Doctors Livingstone and Moffatt.

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x) Finally, I am eternally grateful to God for reaching out to me first, touching me with His Great Love Story. This study is indeed a testimony of His ongoing work in my life.

Soli Deo Gloria,

Gerhard Marx

Pretoria, Republic of South Africa

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ABSTRACT

The principal goal of this research is to understand indigenous oral communities' engagement with Scripture, especially with the creation narrative of Genesis. It is a study in orality, wherein four sample case studies will be presented. Special attention is given to the Naro San people of Botswana (Chapters 2 and 3), after which three other people groups are studied, namely the Dao of Indonesia, the Baka of Equatorial Africa and the Gonja of Northern Ghana (Chapter 4). The case studies of the four oral people groups aim to show the diversity of affordances and performance of orality present within these communities as it pertains to Scripture engagement. The secondary purposes are to interpret their engagement and to determine its value for Bible translation, oral Scripture engagements and contemporary missiology.

This study involves a combination of descriptive, contextual and consolidative approaches while giving attention to the local cultural context and oral communication affordances and performances. The research process entails a review of documented data, personal interviews, group discussions and training interventions for data collection. It also makes use of the structure of the creation narrative in Genesis.

The fulfilment of the missiological task to the literate and oral people is contingent on the contextualised way Christians communicate and deliver to audiences and engage them with the gospel message. This study of oral Scripture departs from the premise that orality and literacy both play an essential role in Scripture translation and engagement. The reason for emphasising orality is that this traditionally neglected reality is opening up many exciting possibilities in the translation and communication of Scripture. This will be valuable for all practitioners, whether on the translation or the engagement side, helping them to understand the predominant contextual communication preference of any people group identified to receive and engage with Scripture.

Firstly, the study provides a documented context of the Naro San community of D'Kar as a higher orality reliant community and provides the reasons why the creation account of Genesis was specifically chosen as the Scripture portion for engagement with this community.

Secondly, the study explores the methods of oral communication of one Naro San family, focussing on their engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis.

Thirdly, the study compares the Naro San with three other indigenous oral people groups. It explores the aspects of the creation narrative of Genesis which resonate with an oral community. It deals with a structure of the creation narrative of Genesis, acknowledges the existence of creation stories in traditional folk lore, puts it into the context of missiology and documents the oral Scripture engagement using the creation narrative of Genesis.

Finally, the study recommends guidelines for Scripture translation and engagement that can be implemented by Scripture practitioners. The advice is based on the findings of the Scripture engagement in the case studies. The recommendations are designed around the different communication methodologies of these indigenous oral people to effectively engage them with God’s story.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of the problem

1.1.1. General background to the problem

The primary purpose of this research is to understand how indigenous oral communities, in their context, engage with the creation narrative of Genesis. The secondary purposes are to:

i) interpret their engagement in order to determine its value for Bible translation and other oral Scripture engagements,
ii) explore its implications for missiology.

This thesis describes, in the form of four case studies, oral Scripture engagement as practised by indigenous oral communities. It presents the way in which four higher orality reliant people groups engage with the Bible to make its contents applicable to their way of observation, interpretation and discipleship. At the heart of this is the firm conviction that the written Bible does not need to be physically 'opened' to communicate its contents effectively. There are other ways and means. For the vast majority of our world's population, its message only needs to be heard. One modern-day visionary eloquently captured his thoughts: '…a new world will arise out of the religious mists when we approach our Bible with the idea that it is not only a book which once spoke but a book which is now speaking…' (Tozer 2006:55). This oral communication of the Bible has always been a best practice in contemporary Christianity.

The Bible, known today mostly in the form of a written Book, is often called the Word of God and not the Book of God. This resonates with numerous and unmistaken references to orality in the Bible. As an example, this relationship between 'the Word of God' and 'orality' is found in the earliest narratives of the Bible. 'And God said, …' (Gen 1:3 ESV) and continues through the narrative of Israel as a nation. Moses taught the people of Israel with the words of a song (Deut 31:30 – 32:3, 47):

> Then Moses spoke the words of this song until they were finished, in the ears of all the assembly of Israel: Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distils as the dew, like gentle rain upon the tender grass, and like showers upon the herb. For I will proclaim the name of the Lord; ascribe greatness to our God!
> … For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.

The prophets were the bearers of a message they heard from God to different audiences. Asaph, the writer of twelve Psalms, implored his audience to tell the coming generation (Ps 78:1-4):

> Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children but tell it to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.

Jesus, the person about whom so much has been written throughout the centuries, relied solely on oral communication in his entire ministry; 'And He was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching, He said to them: Listen! ...' (Mark 4:2-3).

This communication path within the Bible, traced across every biblical period and genre, has always been an ideal method to bring the gospel to people groups who have not yet received it, most of whom are oral communities.

There are good reasons for the adoption of oral methodologies in Christian ministry and missiology. It is a general fact that people read, or hear, the message of the Bible differently. Biblical reader response criticism helps us to appreciate and explore these differences. It is a known fact that this school of literary theory focusses on the readers (or listeners) and their varied responses to a literary work rather than on the assumed intention of the author. Reader response criticism argues that literature should be viewed as a performing art, in which each listener creates his own, unique interpretation (Beville 2016:103). Another school of literary theory, speech act theory, distinguishes the locutionary act, the illocutionary act and the perlocutionary act. The locutionary act refers to a speaker producing an utterance. The illocutionary act's focus is on meaning, rather than the words and the construction. The perlocutionary act is the act of the speaker producing intended effects on the listener such as fright, conviction and courage (Ong 1982; 2002; 2012:166 and Pratt 1977: xix, 236). The

speech-act theory involves the listener referring to various kinds of calculations in order to make sense of what he hears. What is written and what is heard can have quite different bearings. These acts may not bear the same meaning as an example in an oral culture than what they mean in a literate culture, and they may differ also from one setting, or context, to another. Biblical reader response theory and speech-act theory are very helpful as technologies in the study of orality (cf. 1.1.2.2) as it relates to a people group's Scripture engagement and oral performance (cf.1.1.2.3. and Chapter 3).

Reviewing the contemporary works on biblical examples of participants' response to the message brought to them, the persuasive arguments of biblical researcher Werner Kelber (1983) present the Gospel of Mark as a watershed in the shift from orality to literacy in the Christian tradition. He argues that the Gospel of Mark produced a written narrative of the story of Jesus of Nazareth, derived from a rich oral tradition. It may not have been to preserve the oral tradition, but to bring the spoken word under written control and presenting his own version of the story. That we have four Gospels in the Bible is evidence that there can be a multiplicity of potential meaning, or polyvalence. These different accounts by Matthew, Luke, Mark and John, allude to different responses to the message observed and heard. Combining the four accounts in the four Gospels of the Bible, the listener is still left with gaps. These gaps can be filled with imaginary, non-narrated details by any person who engages with these accounts.

It is evident from the four case studies, presented in this study, that Fearon's list of four factors influencing the polyvalent interpretations is present: social location, reading/listening strategy, choice of empathy and conceptions of meaning (2012b). In contemporary Christian ministry among oral cultures, the response to biblical narratives, is a particularly noteworthy example of engagement with the Bible.

1.1.2. Literature reviewed as background

1.1.2.1. Oral communication

There are different schools of thought or understanding when it comes to oral communication. On the one side of the spectrum, Slack and Terry (2001:42) make a strong argument for either one of the two dominant learning preferences: literate

communication or oral communication. At the centre of their argument is the understanding that each person favours one of the two dominant learning or communication preferences in the world. It is either oral culture communication or literate, textual culture communication.

They, however, admit that a dominant preference does not always imply that a person is exclusively on one side or the other, but that humans are located at some point on the continuum between the two learning preference extremes (1999:42). Their admittance frames an alternative position. At birth, each person develops proficiency as an oral learner and communicator until being taught to become literate. Over time the oral learning and communication preference may progressively change to a literate preference. A person residing in a culture that is increasingly literate retains fewer oral communication skills compared to a person who resides in a higher orality reliant culture.

In the field of psychology, and more specific cognitive psychology, oral performances are studied for what it can reveal about the patterns of organisation of human memory (Stein and Trabasso 1982: 213-267). The complex issues of cognition and intelligence are also related to orality and literacy as argued by Scribner and Cole (1981). The cognitive structure of a human being and the formal patterns of human social relations are closely linked to the forms of communication that are predominant in the area where the person resides. In higher orality reliant cultures humans seem to be biased toward a particular pattern of sensory and expository capacity that encourages ways of seeing, hearing and knowing, which are remarkably different when other forms of communication are more dominant. As time progresses, those tendencies seem in turn to favour and encourage major changes in social organisation, influencing, to various degrees, possibilities regarding political, legal, religious and economic structures. Human experiences seem to depend greatly upon the form of communication used and valued by societies (Goody 1993, Botha 1999:272).

Ong refers to the skills of a literate person as being chirographic and typographic. To explain this, he uses the names of animals in the Bible as an example. Literate communicators tend to use names with an abstract understanding as labels or tags, whereas oral communicators use it with a functional understanding carrying a message of power over other beings or things (Ong 1982; 2002; 2012:45:17-18).

Throughout the written Bible we find examples of oral communication. In fact, all biblical revelation began orally, except when there is a handwriting on the wall (Dan. 15). God created by the spoken word (Gen 1:3 KJV). The Son of God, Jesus Christ, is presented as the Word of God (John 1:1-4, 14) and told his followers to teach the nations to observe all He has commanded (Matt 28:20).

The apostle Paul's exhortation alludes to an oral form of communication within Paul's written letters to the faith community (Rom 10:14-17 NASB):

> …and how will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? … for Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our report? So, faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

Verghese argues that in the same way that the spoken Word of God transformed creation, we, as his disciples created in the nature and image of God, are entrusted with the responsibility of translating, presenting, and communicating Scripture in a language understandable for effective transformation (2013:49-50).

Approximately 80 per cent of the world's population cannot or will not hear the Good News if we only communicate it to them in literate ways and means (Marmon 2013:312-327; Lovejoy 2012:11-39). There is now a renewed appreciation for the oral means of reaching this segment of the population with the Good News (Greer 2011:70; Willis 2003:4-7). Chiang also testifies from personal experiences that literate ways and means may be ineffective in certain contexts and that the adoption of oral communication strategies alongside literal communication strategies may have major implications for the spreading and growth of the Kingdom (2014:4).

Klem observes that, in Protestant Western missions in Africa, literacy and education were set as conditions for effective evangelism and growth. Another assumption was that vital Christian beliefs could only be learned through reading, consequently denying higher orality reliant learners' participation in the responsibilities of believers (Klem 1982:27-33). Literacy became the requirement for a meaningful relationship and Christian life – resulting in humiliation and the loss of Christianity (Klem 1982:39).

The pendulum is swinging back and currently missiologists are pondering the role that relationships play in effective oral communication. Relationship is appreciated as a key for communicating the Good News in oral communities (Motty 2014:19) as well as

the fact that oral methodologies significantly improve the impact of evangelism (Madinger 2013:20; Dubei 2013:189). A further argument is that oral learners' retention of information can be several times higher than that of literate learners. They will enjoy and remember the message if it is presented in an oral form, through a story, song, a riddle, a poem and art, which are easier to remember than hard abstract facts. They depend on memory therefore Scripture should be phrased in ways that make it easy to listen, repeat, memorise and recite (Brown 2004:123).

Oral communication methodologies may be more effective for spiritual growth specifically in the context of oral communities. Practitioners in the Orality Movement support this thought (Chiang and Lovejoy 2015:155). The Orality Movement has helped us to understand that literacy is not a prerequisite for spiritual growth, that hearts are affected by stories more than by theological deduction, and that understanding or respecting communities' contexts of social learning is imperative for effective transformation (ibid. 4).

This new appreciation of oral communication presents an opportunity to learn the best practices from existing oral communities. Madinger emphasises the need for a solid theoretical grounding to describe the 'why' and 'how' of oral communication (2015:127). Orality is a framework for what makes Bible storytelling, as a method, effective for Kingdom growth (Madinger 2014:6). To be the best oral communicators we need to reflect, to research and to respond (Madinger 2013:26).

On the other hand, to imply that any given higher orality reliant people should remain in their higher orality reliant communication context can be understood by that higher orality reliant people as racial bias (Gravelle 2017b). There are Western proponents of orality who argue that higher orality reliant societies should remain in their higher orality reliant communication status. There may be some scholars, residing in what was previously seen as a higher orality reliant people group, who may interpret this argument as an effort to keep that people group in a state of textual illiteracy, simply because it is their natural and preferred state (ibid). A better understanding would be that higher orality reliant communities would prefer higher orality reliant communication for their first Scripture engagement, but that it may move from oral communication to literate or textual communication over time. Gravelle (2017b)

therefore argues that we need to understand oral communication for effective oral Scripture distribution and engagement as and when the local context demands it.

1.1.2.2. Digital technologies and secondary orality

The move of the global society into the digital age enhances and contributes towards a greater appreciation for orality. This may contribute to a partial return to practices and ways of communication and thinking that were pivotal before the advent of the printing press (Pettitte 2016). According to Sauerberg, who created the concept 'Gutenberg Parenthesis', the invention of the printing press changed the conditions for the communication of and access to information and knowledge. This change not only affected the physical appearance of information or the spreading of knowledge, but also the process, the very nature of cognition. Presently, in a corresponding but inverted way, the mass-produced printed book is being absorbed into the digital environment. This enables the reproduction and distribution that surpasses even the longest print runs (Sauerberg 2016). It is argued that the oral culture was in a way abruptly interrupted by the advance of the printing press with its approximately 500 years of dominance but that it is now being resumed by the digital culture and the orality it embraces (Pettitte 2016). Development in media in the 20th century started with the advent of sound recording, film, radio, television and finally the global internet. The internet has significantly changed the media distribution networks and platforms. Pettitte argues that we are on the brink of a secondary orality movement based on the return of variability in communication (ibid).

Paul Konstanski (2017:17) supports this line of thought with his argument that more than seven billion people today live in a rapidly expanding digital environment, where personal information produces a digital footprint. This is an oral world. He states: 'Orality goes beyond the spoken word into a whole new way of relational thinking.'

1.1.2.3. Scripture engagement and orality

The process of the codification of Scripture may well have been to preserve the oral story. Early writings in the Ancient Near East often had a figurative and sculptural equivalent, where the word and picture were corresponding. Figure 1, below, depicts the Narmer Palette from Egypt, developed between 3100 BC to second century AD, which represents the beginning of both writing and epic art. As a single item, these

early graphic forms, pictorial or arbitrary, implicitly or explicitly communicate and as such are assumed to be the forerunners of writing (Goody 1993:11-12, 28).

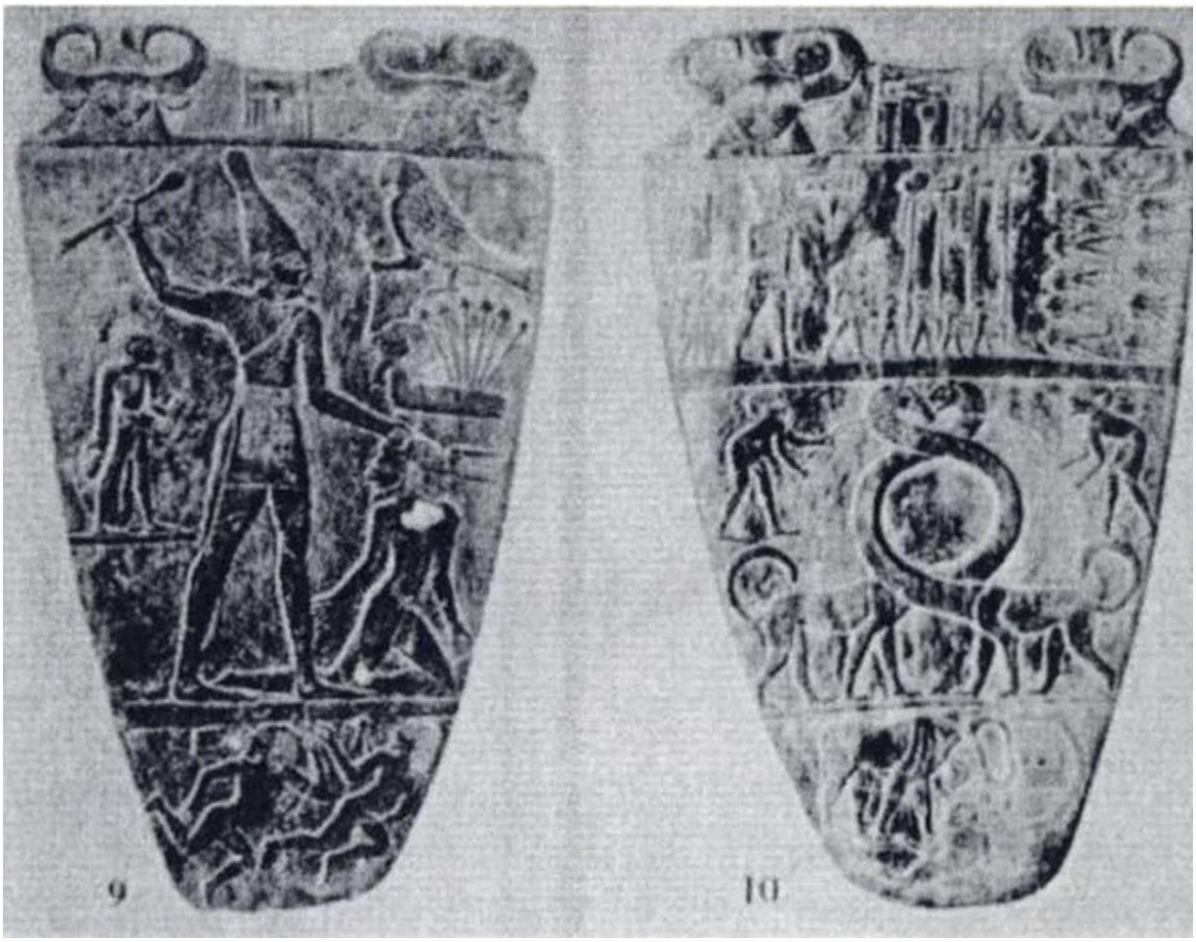


Figure 1 – The Narmer Palette

An important step was taken when the pictures or signa were strung together in a sequential form, which is most notably in the great scrolls of the Ojibway Midéwewin culture (Kelly 2015:78). Their picture-writing can be portrayed as mnemonic, implying that it requires an understanding of the accompanying chants and learning the specific linguistic acts which the signs signify (Figure 2).

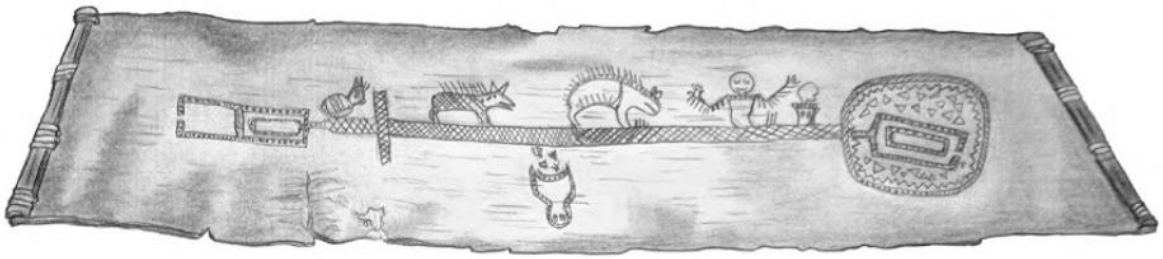


Figure 2 – The Ojibway Birchbark Scroll

Havelock (1986:134-150) states that the non-literate Greeks originally developed the alphabet around 700 BC as an instrument for the preservation of oral speech through memorisation**.** Gradually, the memorisation of a particular content was strengthened by capturing it in visual artefacts, so that the content could survive as long as a copy of the artefact survived. This creation of an abstracted version replaced that which previously had been experienced as a series of events and actions. Prior to the written form, God's progressive revelation in Scripture was passed on from one generation to the next solely through oral processes (Koehler 2010:28). There are biblical passages that similarly command oral, generational transmission (e.g. Deut 6:6-7, Jas 1: 3, 1 Cor 15:3vv and 2 Tim 2:2).

Gravelle points out that the occurrence of the Protestant Reformation in Europe around the 1500's brought with its far-reaching ideas, one of which was that people should be able to read and interpret the Bible (2017a). This subsequently required literacy in order to read the Bible. Much has been written on the impact of the development of the printing press on innovations in literacy. Combined with the democratisation of education, literacy in the Western developing nations showed an upward trajectory at the time. Literacy and the availability of the printed book fed the growing hunger for more printed Bibles in more languages. Gravelle's opinion is that Western missions spread the gospel message assuming that reading the written text of the Bible would be the primary way for new believers to engage Scripture (2017a).

The written Scriptures share a variety of genres. The proclamation of Scripture always has a dialogic and dramatic character, that through the divine communication process of God's speaking, the listener is taken into the great redemptive drama (Weber

1957:64). Oral performance is encased in the communal reaction or communal 'soul', and bound together in the drama are the narrator, audience and characters (Ong 1982; 2002; 2012:45). Oral Scripture engagement, therefore, presents an effective approach for communicating with oral communities (John 2014:15).

The oral aspect of the four canonical Gospels has been re-discovered. The text was either orally read or performed in a mostly illiterate local community (Chiang and Lovejoy 2013:30). Rhoads addressed this neglected performance dimension, demonstrated in early Christianity and proposed that we rediscover the oral/aural medium through which early Christians experienced the writings and traditions we now have in the Bible. He urges that we take seriously the ancient ethos of orality and that we look at the people, places, context and circumstances in concrete performance events. In doing so, performance criticism can help to re-build the oral performance dynamics of early Christians (Rhoads 2018:36).

It is estimated that only five per cent of the New Testament Christians were literate (Sogaard 1995:72). Oral learners do not value a written document as much as a living speech (Koehler 2010:31)**.** Koehler argues that Jesus modelled a traditional oral method of teaching. This model of oral Scripture engagement enabled a wider impact through his disciples (2010:32), to the amazement of the literate Jewish leaders (Acts 4:13).

Maxey argues that for centuries Bible translators have presupposed literacy, rather than orality, as the predominant means of communicating the Bible's creation, transmission, and reception**.** This status is now also being challenged through the historical and anthropological evidence that the Bible was rather created, conveyed and received in a higher orality reliant context (2009:1). Maxey asks whether the oral ethos of the early church has been sacrificed in the pursuit of literacy (2009:2). He also argues against a dichotomous discussion of literacy versus orality. He is of the opinion that literacy offers significant benefits, but that it could not be at the expense of oral appreciation. The rise of the modern Orality Movement, which is said to have started in the 1970's, and with it a growing interest in the oral strategies and oral Scripture production indicate a possible return to former times where the oral and written text co-existed in harmony. Together with the rise of oral strategies, the notion

that the printed text is the primary means of communicating the gospel is in decline (Gravelle 2017a).

Maxey indicates that in reflecting on his involvement in the translation of the New Testament into the Vuté language of Cameroon, he never purposefully led the team of indigenous translators into a discussion on how oral communication and engagement of Scripture may affect the textual translation process and his work (2009:9). Bill Bullock writes that the translation of words from one language into another is not an exact process and that every language comes not only with its own words, but also with its own mind-set and culture. He argues that translated communication can hardly ever be as good, as clear, or as rich as communication between speakers of a common mother tongue. As a person's cultural narrative resides in his heart, the more excellent way to change his heart story is through communicating in his language through his preferred communication methods (2015:3).

Genres exist in all forms of communication. Much of the development of the canon of Scripture was structured for oral remembrance and transmission in the genres of proverbs, poetry, songs, genealogies (and stories) to internalise, accumulate and recall a vast body of information. Scripture was originally given to be heard rather than to be read (Koehler 2010:28). Claerhout expressed the biblical creation narrative through paintings, accompanied by a contemporary re-telling of the story by Haarhoff (Claerhout and Haarhoff 1991). They clearly connect the written word with visual art, a practice which is very common in oral cultures. A lack of understanding of these different forms of oral communication of Scripture, limits Christian workers to storytelling only (Dubei 2013:89).

The oral communication of Scripture furthermore has preference among oral communities for whom storytelling is a way of life and is working where other approaches have failed (Chiang and Evans 2010:8-14). Oral people will typically avoid the printed Bible but will eagerly engage with the storytellers to discuss what was heard in the Bible stories told (John B 2014:16). Jesus was a master storyteller, using parables that spoke to the heart and engaged people interactively through questions. Biblical stories when provided in the heart language of oral people, create a hunger to hear more (Marx and Swarr 2015:32-34).

Gravelle (2017b) lists two major reasons why many mission agencies still assume that the printed Scripture should precede oral Scripture:

i) Literate learners cannot apprehend how an oral medium can effectively and accurately transmit the Scriptural text. This is based on a lack of understanding of the amounts of information an oral person can accurately recall after hearing it. Oral learners make mental pictures of what they hear. Literate readers are visually orientated to the printed words, sounding them out in their mind as they read (Ong 1982; 2002; 2012:117).
ii) Literate learners engage with the printed text differently. Bible or Word studies are done with cross-referencing the printed text. Oral learners apply inductive learning in other ways.

1.1.2.4. The creation narrative of Genesis

As human beings, with nature to reflect upon, we have always been intrigued by our origins. It interests even young children through their questions on provenance (Mark 1992:316). That God is the Creator of everything, is the first issue addressed in the biblical creation narrative. His creative work shows that He made the earth habitable for humans (ibid. 322). There are many other biblical references to God as the Creator of everything, such as Isaiah 45:18. Thus the creation narrative in Genesis is not just about how our world came into being; it is also about Who made it. It is a picture of the Creator.

Brueggemann's exposition is that the creation accounts are neither history nor a myth, but rather a proclamation of God's decisive dealings with his creation, and in particular the proclamation of covenanting. He argues that the creation stories of Genesis 1 to 2, but also the material of Genesis 1 to 11, are in the form of a narrative about God's insistence that creation should be nothing other than HIS creation. He notes that these materials have important links to parallel literature in the ancient Near East. It consists of poetic material, most likely to be used by the priests in a liturgy calling the Hebrew people to remember who they are, a chosen people transplanted into the centre of the ancient Near East to be a treasured possession and a kingdom of priests (1982:11-16).

Pawson (1999:13-15) claims that we can learn the following about the nature of God from the picture of the Creator presented in Genesis 1:

i) God is personal – He is a person with feelings, thoughts and emotions just like us.
ii) God is almighty – He gives 10 commands throughout the creation narrative in Genesis and each one is fulfilled.
iii) God is uncreated – He was always there, the Creator and not the creature.
iv) God is artistic – He creates in uniqueness and variety.
v) God is well-ordered – creation is in symmetry.
vi) God is singular – 'God created.' Gen 1:1
vii) God is plural – 'Let us make man' Gen 1:26
viii) God is good – All His work is good (Gen 1:4, 9,12,18,21,25) and his masterpiece, human beings, are very good (Gen 1:31).
ix) God is living – He is active in time and space.
x) God is a communicator – He speaks and relates creation and to humans.
xi) God is like humans – 'So God created man in his own image' (Genesis 1:27).
xii) God is unlike humans – He creates out of nothing, whereas we can only manufacture.
xiii) God is independent – There is a clear distinction between Creator and creation. He took a day off and was apart from creation (Gen 2:2).

The biblical book of Genesis also portrays a human being in all his relationships with God his Creator, with other humans and with creation (Westermann 1990:73). Such an understanding of humanity forms the basis of a theology of man, defined in terms of the relationship between God and man. Humanity's inquiry into the relationship between God and man and into the value of human community and human existence are so entwined in the creation account in Genesis that they cannot be separated from each other. Theological anthropology's ultimate goal is not to merely understand humanity's existence in relationship to God. There is no human that lives purely in his relationship with God. Theological anthropology can only be effective if humans, as holistic beings, are also viewed in their relationship with creation as a whole.

The Judeo-Christian creation narrative is also important, since humans, from their origins, are 'concerned with providing the means of life, the commission to work, community and speech' (Westermann 1990:79-80). Allison Howell argues that in terms of the care of creation (2013:176), the Bible is the story of God's relationship with all of humanity and all of creation; and that it is a story that all humans can identify with. He expands the relationships to a list of five from the account of creation in Genesis, which are:

i) The relationship between human and matter;
ii) The specific relationship between God and humans made in God's image;
iii) Humans exquisitely placed in relationship with one another;
iv) The relationship with oneself, reflected in the absence of shame for being nude; and
v) The relationship between humans and the rest of creation, including other living creatures and the earth itself.

He argues that the relationships described in the creation narrative are non-exploitative in that humans are instructed to not just act like God by sustaining other living creatures and the land, but also to continue in the act of creating. His conclusion is that no part of creation can be altered without having an impact somewhere else.

Cetina, from the Translation Department of the United Bible Societies, argues in her case study for the development of a theology for children wherein the creation account of Genesis presents God not just as the Creator, but also as the One who redeems or saves. She continues that God's act to rule or govern in the creation narrative in Genesis speaks of a God who brings forth the earth from a condition of disorder and emptiness to one of order and life. She argues that the account of God's activity in Genesis 2 can be interpreted as both creative and salvific. It is that God creates, for example, by changing dryness into fertility or loneliness into togetherness. Through this process of creation and salvation God forms a space for life in which there are not ethnic, racial or political divides, but in a sense, ontological equality. This exists as equality between humans, harmony between humans and created beings, as well as peace and justice (2013:208-209).

Wright opines that a culture houses its central convictions in its fundamental narrative, which answers four fundamental worldview questions (1992:38-40):

i) Who am I?
ii) Where am I?
iii) What has gone wrong?
iv) What can be done about it?

Zacharias argues that, despite differences in the worldviews, people generally ask the above four questions which relate to (2012):

i) origin
ii) meaning
iii) morality
iv) destiny.

He further indicates that the Judeo-Christian worldview is the only worldview that answers the four questions with correspondence and cohesion. According to Pawson, historians record what people have experienced in the past. Scientists observe what is observable now and suggest how it began. But neither group can tell us why it began and whether it has meaning (1999:4).

Willis argues that in order to influence the worldview of people we need to tell them biblical stories that offer alternative answers to the fundamental worldview questions (2005:35-36). Haarhoff opines that each generation has its own creation story, communicated in the present context, and that this story cannot be effectively communicated to a modern audience through the written word alone, but also through stories, songs, drama, poetry and art (Claerhout and Haarhoff 1991:43).

Darrow Miller (1998:37) states that man's fundamental questions, defining his worldview, are the same and find expression in:

i) Metaphysical questions are concerned with the fundamental reality of being, such as 'What is ultimate reality?', 'Is there a God?' and 'What is the essence of nature and time?' The disciplines of metaphysics include ontology, cosmology and teleology.

ii) Moral questions, on the other hand, cover values, ethics and morals in general and the problem of evil in particular, such as ‘Is there right and wrong?’ ‘What is good?’ ‘What is beautiful?’ and ‘Where did evil come from?’ The study of this field is known as axiology.

He further states that there is a worldview continuum and that all worldviews can be found along this continuum (1998:38).

Worldview Continuum

Animism	Theism	Secularism
Ultimate reality is Spiritual	Ultimate reality is Personal	Ultimate reality is Physical

Darrow Miller (1998:38).

Keller opines that making sense of the world around us forms the foundation of our worldview. Based on what storyline any person opts to believe will determine the response in any given situation. Furthermore, he states that a story consists of the following basic elements:

i) Something or someone has knocked life off its balance
ii) There is an ongoing struggle to restore the balance between good and evil
iii) The story ends with either restoration or failure.

Keller further argues that for a story to be a story, there should be a problem which challenges real life. It must have an account of how life should be, an explanation of who got thrown off balance, and finally a proposed solution as to what will put life right again. A worldview is a person’s master narrative. He defines a worldview as the comprehensive perspective from which we interpret all reality (Keller 2014:155-156).

Theism is entrenched in the Ancient Near East which was not monotheistic. Theism sees ultimate reality as personal and relational. God exits. God, the Creator, created a universe with physical and spiritual dimensions (Miller 1998:39). Truth is objective and can be known by man. God’s character inaugurates absolute morals. Monotheism holds to one personal-infinite God, the great ‘I am’ of Scripture.

Müller surmises the existence of three ‘common-ancestor’ worldviews, each originating from Eden (Gen 3:7-10): guilt-based (guilt-innocence), shame-based (honour-shame) and fear-based (fear-power). He affirms that human cultures are a blend of all three worldviews (2013). He points out that the gospel message does and should speak in terms of all three, basic worldviews (2013:133).

John Walton alerts readers to the importance of the ancient Near Eastern context to properly understand Genesis 1. He argues that the biblical text is not concerned with an account of the physical or material origins, but rather with allotting functions to the various elements of creation, as it relates to humans, specifically functioning for people (2009:64,163). Their functional ontology is the most important aspect of origins. He identifies a number of key features of the account of functional origins which include:

i) The word used for ‘create’ (Hebrew: bara) is concerned with assigning functions;
ii) The first three days assign three major life functions: time, weather and food; and
iii) Days four to six focus on the assignment of roles and spheres to functionaries of the cosmos.

On the other hand, the young-earth view of the creation narrative of Genesis assumes that the Hebrew text of the creation story is not written as a myth, a parable or poetry, but rather as an orderly, historical narrative (Kaiser 2001:80-83). Pawson argues that the whole Old Testament is built on the book of Genesis. He adds that Jesus frequently settled questions by referring to Genesis and that Paul’s theological deduction is based on the premise that the book of Genesis is historically correct (1999:7). Furthermore, the creation narrative is stunningly structured in such a way that the six days are divided into two groups of three days, and with an amazing correspondence between the first three and last three days (1999:19). He explains that God gives form to the earth in the first three days and sets out to fill it in the next three days. He brings order to chaos and fills it with life. Yet Pawson notes that although it has remarkable simplicity (1999:20), His purpose was not to provide scientific accuracy, but rather to provide an orderly explanation for everyone to follow and accept. Lioy agrees that the information is communicated in a language that is clear and straightforward (2016:52).

Wenham, on the other hand, holds that the creation narrative of Genesis can be compared with a hymn, like Psalm 8, in that it praises the work of creation or reflects on the mystery of God's creativity (1987:10). Robert Alter points out that the difference in form, between the two texts, is crucial and instructive. The creation account of Genesis is a narrative report of a sequence of events and Psalm 8 is more poetic, combining wisdom with praise, which continues after the completion of the creation story (1990:117).

Henschel argues that there may be a connection between the oral transfer of the creation narrative in Genesis and similar the African creation account which exists in the African oral tradition (2002:10-12). The connection between the two may well have been through early travel and trade (cf. the account of the travels and trade of the queen of Sheba in the biblical accounts of 1 Kgs 10 and 2 Chr 9), through exile (cf. Abimelech the Ethiopian in Jer 38), through the early church's growth (Ethiopian eunuch from the Candace queen of Ethiopia) or through early missionary work (cf. Livingston and Moffatt).

Sarna's comments on Genesis, from a Hebrew perspective, and specifically on the story of creation that it differs from all other such oral accounts that were current among the peoples of the ancient world (Sarna 2001:10). He adds that the account lacks characteristics that are generally found in this genre of literature of the time, such as a keen interest in the realm of heaven and its limited explanation depicting primeval chaos. He argues that the early Israelite myths, with all their elements of detail and drama, must have been attractive to most, but it was only the account of Genesis that became the authorised version. The Genesis account does not seek to clarify that which is beyond human comprehension (ibid. 10). He states that the biblical creation narrative, albeit it contains references to mythical beings, is first and foremost a document of faith about the history of beginnings. It is a quest for meaning for the Israelites and a statement of the religious position in the ancient Near East with its variety of people, beliefs and literary genres. The essence that it wants to convey is that creation is the product of divine intelligence by one self-sufficient, self-existing God, who is transcendent outside of creation and who is sovereign over all created things. The narrative, as a literary framework, underwrites the central idea that God created. The literary structure presents the creative process with bilateral symmetry.

The account is divided in two parallel groups, each with four creative acts performed in three days, and the third day in each group contains two creations. The arrangement is such that each creation in the first group supplies the resource needed for the corresponding creature in the next group (ibid. 11). The account was written down to be orally read, received and passed on to the next generation.

Through four African creation myths Henschel shows the close connection between the biblical creation account and their creation myths, since they all include the topic of God and humankind and provide the answers to the what, when and why questions. He expresses the viewpoint that these similarities, as well as its ability to answer important questions, play a primary role in the oral proclamation of the gospel. (2002:10-12)

Dan Lioy concludes that the creation narrative of Genesis reflects a prescientific view of the world and portrays the creation activities of God as humans would perceive it (2016:51). The account is presented in a highly stylised, parable-like manner without repudiating the underlying historical and doctrinal or theological truths conveyed. He argues that the creation narrative of Genesis reflects an Ancient Near East cultural context, but that the biblical writers did not apply the contemporary concepts and terms in the narrative. They used the prevalent pagan viewpoint instead in a shrewd way for expounding a position using suggestive and critical reasoning. He adds that the information presented is historical, but it is not portrayed as paralleling the typical human course of events (2016:52). The intent of the creation narrative is not to chronicle significant events which happened in protohistoric, but to present the theological understanding of that history. He summarises three important doctrinal truths from the biblical creation story:

i) God reigns ultimately over creation;
ii) God is actively present and involved in creation; and
iii) God cares for his creation, creatures and humans.

The creation account of Genesis, as a parable-like account, offers unique answers to oral communities. The commentator, Kenneth Matthews, rules out the understanding of the creation account of Genesis as a theological parable or story as it would result in a theology of creation rooted neither in history nor the cosmos (Matthews 1996:110).

He also does not believe that it is history written on the same level as Genesis 12-50 and concludes that it does not clearly fit into a traditional literary category, although it comes close to narrative, and is, therefore, a unique piece of literature.

There are similarities between the African creation myths and the creation narrative of Genesis, such as those from the Samburu people from northern Kenya with their strong oral tradition and their very similar creation stories (Straight 1964:50) Yet, in comparing it, one clearly notes that there are also substantive and meaningful distinctions. These similarities, especially as it relates to style and cultural correspondence, can be useful in the presentation of the biblical creation narrative. The differences give the opportunity to engage the people group with the important doctrinal truths in the biblical account.

To this day the uniqueness of the creation narrative of Genesis, almost in the style of an ancient Near Eastern or African creation account, with its ability to address fundamental theological issues for humans, has attracted many people groups, including the higher orality reliant people groups, such as the Naro San of Botswana, the Dao of Indonesia, the Baka of Equatorial Africa or the Gonja of northern Ghana.

1.1.3. Summary of the research problem

The main research problem can be stated as follows:

> In what ways do indigenous oral communities engage with the creation narrative of Genesis?

The following key questions can be derived from the main research problem:

i) *Who are the Naro San people?* (Chapter 2)
ii) *How do they engage with the creation narrative of Genesis?* (Chapter 3)
iii) *How does this compare with the Scripture engagement of other indigenous oral communities, especially with the creation narrative of Genesis?* (Chapter 4)
iv) *How does an exploration of the Scripture engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis by indigenous oral communities enrich the general understanding of oral Scripture engagement and what are the implications of*

these findings for Bible translation, Scripture engagement and missiology? (Chapter 5)

1.2. Objectives of the study

The main objective of the thesis can be stated as follows:

> To explore and interpret indigenous oral communities' engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis.

Other key objectives that can be derived from the main objective are:

i) *To form a better understanding of the Naro San's engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis (Chapter 3).*
ii) *To observe and interpret three other indigenous communities' engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis (Chapter 4).*
iii) *To derive guidelines that can be used in oral Scripture translation and engagement (Chapter 5).*

1.3. Hypothesis

The four indigenous oral communities' engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis is typical of oral Scripture engagement.

1.4. Key concepts

1.4.1. Orality

The Oxford English Dictionary explains the adjective 'oral' as 'relating to the transmission of information or literature by word of mouth, or (of a society) not having reached the stage of literacy' and the word 'aural' as 'relating to the ear or the sense of hearing' (Oxforddictionaries.com). The Collins English Dictionary explains the adjective 'oral' as 'uttered by the mouth, or spoken, of using, or transmitted by speech or of relating to, or involving the mouth', such as an oral testimony. On the other hand, it explains the adjective 'aural' as 'of or relating to the sense of organs of hearing'

(Dictionary.com 2017), derived from the Latin word ‘auris’ which is translated as ‘ear’. Freud’s psychosexual theory of development, on the other hand, recognises the oral phase in the development of humans. A time where orality characterises the preferred mode of discovery when everything goes in or out of the mouth (Freud 1953). One can, therefore, conclude that to be aurally attuned is to receive or perceive by means of one’s ears. Both terms are open and meaning gets assigned within a particular context.

Today, in Christian ministry the word ‘oral’ is used much more widely than ‘aural’. The adjective ‘oral’ receives seven possible definitions by the same dictionary, most of which relate to the mouth or speaking. It provides ‘orality’ as the noun for ‘oral’. To express oneself orally, therefore, means to speak. In comparing the action undertaken in both an aural and an oral activity, one may also argue that the aural activity can be more passive than the oral activity. Orality, as an abstract noun, is explained by the same dictionary as ‘the quality of being oral, a tendency to favour the spoken rather than the written form of a language’ (Dictionary.com 2017).

For the sake of this study, the meaning of orality will be explained in the context of communication, as a concept that is sometimes contrasted with written or textual communication.

Lovejoy defines orality as ‘a reliance on spoken, rather than written, language for communication’ and points out that the vast majority of people today use spoken languages extensively. He argues that orality is not simply illiteracy. Focussing on the positive elements of orality, he highlights that people, who live by orality, are capable of using beautiful, sophisticated and moving speech (2012:12-3).

Wycliffe states that orality is concerned with the study of the spoken communication and of people who learn mainly through oral communication. Subsequently such people are known as oral communicators (Wycliffe 2017).

Wesling offers the following explanation for orality: ‘It is the manifestation of a gestural mode, of a corporeality and a subjectivity within language. With the means of the spoken within the spoken. It is not about what is spoken, but what allows one to speak. With the means of the written within the written.’ (1995:159)

One cannot dispute the centrality of orality as a means of human communication and must acknowledge Ong's assertion that orality holds a place close to any human's daily living world (Ong 1982; 2002; 2012:42).

Harbinson (C 2005:6) proposes that the arts allow for multiplicity, as it witnesses in verbal and non-verbal ways and that inspirational art is an incarnational way to the truth of the human condition and God's redemptive purposes. The arts enable cross-cultural and cross-generational communication and contextualisation. The arts comprises the literary arts, visual arts, drama, dance, music and the creative engagement with the media arts.

Madinger (2013:13-40) describes orality as the ways and means of oral communication, with either a preference over textuality, or to its exclusion; in missiology it can be described as the complex manner in which high orality reliant cultures can best receive, process, remember and pass on the latest news, important information and truths.

1.4.2. Oral communication

Orality is as old as humanity and started before writing systems were developed. Madinger proposes that God by nature is an oral communicator (Madinger 2017:54) and that He created people in his image to communicate and connect with him by our shared oral capacities. He adds that our 'inner speech', as defined by the child development psychologist, Vygotsky, shows that everything is oral from our earliest development stages. The image our brain sees, must be expressed orally, and we do that through multiple literacies, such as speaking, reading, arts, mathematics, written musical compositions. He concludes that everything in communication begins and ends with oral, it starts in our heads as oral, it then is expressed in multiple literacies that people around us decode and comes back into our brains as an oral message.

Communities transferred information in oral forms form one generation to another. These oral forms were stories, proverbs, poems, songs, drawings (or sketches), drama, riddles and games (Greer 2011:9). To impart, to share, to transfer thoughts, opinions or information by speech, writing or signs is defined as 'communication' (Dictionary.com 2017). Warren points out that the word 'communication' is derived

from ‘communis’ in Latin, meaning ‘common’ (2017). He argues that you have to find something in common with your audience before you can communicate with them. It, therefore, can be presumed that oral communication is the act of sharing information through the spoken language, visual artefacts, ritual actions, feelings, smells and games. Klem said that ‘it is far wiser and more fruitful to attempt to empathise with the positive reasons people may have for preferring indigenous oral communications’ (1982:98-99).

Olanipekum, from the Institute of Christian Leadership Development, explains that some Africans do not connect to text or letters, but to the spoken word and face-to-face conversations. They may be sitting around a fire, discussing issues and come to agreements that are binding, even when no written document was signed (2012).

Moving from the African continent to Australia, Peter Freebody states in his research on literacy education that such an inquiry about what it means to be literate in a developed, late-industrial, comprehensively institutionalised society, such as Australia, is to ask questions about the actual and immanent symbolic communicational demands of that society, and about the implications of those demands for the social and moral organisation of the society (2007:9). Freebody explains that there has been a complete lack of acknowledgement of the indigenous Australian heritage of about 240 languages at the time of the European settlement (2007:12). Studies of the Aborigines’ oral communication are limited.

Robert Barton's painting – My Mother's Country (Freebody 2007:3)

To give literate communicators exposure to the Aborigines' oral communication Barton uses an Aborigine artwork to show the narrative captured in the visual artefact. 'The artwork [above] tells the story of an Aborigine mother's country and specifically the story of the Emu and Kangaroo. The narrative recounts the dreaming story of the Kalkandungu people, whose ancestral lands are found in the far North-western Queensland and who are revered as one of the country's fiercest warring tribes. The story is of the Emu and Kangaroo and how the Kangaroo got its red coat.' (Barton 2001).

Freebody argues in favour of the proper interpretation of the artistic work, that coming to understand the artefact as a text is coming to acknowledge its significance as a language, text and culture and subsequently recognise the need for connecting personal and communal language activities, histories and identities. He concludes that in general terms, the people shape the text, just as the text shapes the people (2007:3).

1.4.3. Oral communicator, oral learner and a high orality reliant culture

An oral communicator or oral learner is an individual who relies more on the spoken, rather than the written, communication in varying degrees to learn, to communicate with others, to express himself and to enjoy a story (Lovejoy 2012:15; Brown 2004:122).

Brown lists two categories of oral communicators (2004:122):

i) Higher orality reliant communicators are people in cultures with little or no literacy; and
ii) Secondary oral communicators are people who depend on electronic, audio-visual communications.

Lovejoy, however, warns us not to define oral communicators or learners in a negative perspective, that they are illiterate, or to make them enemies of literacy and education, but to look at the collection of characteristics that make them oral (Lovejoy 2012:13-14)

Greer divides the activities of an oral communicator into speaking and listening (2011:10,12).

Madinger (2017:55) proposes that purely higher orality reliant cultures and oral communicators still exist. He adds that some cultures and people function with a high orality reliance (HOR), and therefore depend upon oral ways and means of communication, while others have a lower reliance (LOR) and tend to rely less upon oral ways and means and more on textual orientation and expressions.

1.4.4. Oral methodologies

Methodologies are a set or system of methods, principles, and rules for regulating a given discipline, in this instance orality or oralities (Dictionary.com 2017). Oralities differ from context to context. This compels contextual strategies and methodologies (Bush 2017).

Oral communicators deal in events. They generally do not hold to teachings, concepts, principles, steps in a process or techniques in their minds, waiting to be used when

appropriate. In order to use information, everything an oral communicator is expected to hear, understand, believe or internalise must come as a verbal event in people's lives, for example as a story, an artefact or an action. Herein is many a time comfortably buried a teaching, a truth, a principle. For oral communicators, the teaching is the story event, and the story or event is the teaching. The process of hearing, remembering and recalling is not a matter of methods, but rather of communication (Lovejoy et al. 2001:163-164).

One can, therefore, argue that oral methodology is the art of teaching a subject through oral communication and forms, whether on its own or in a combination of stories, proverbs, poems, songs, drawings (or sketches), drama, riddles and games.

Emphasis should be placed on Greer's argument that reproducing the written material audibly does not necessarily make it acceptable for oral teaching. He further points out that content, such as the Jesus Film and new Scripture translations, need to be adapted to a more aural style for oral communities and that the presence of more 'literate' features could result in confusion for the oral learners (2011:11). It remains important to state that oral learners have a higher reliance on oral ways and means of communication.

1.4.5. International Orality Movement

Serving oral communicators happened through the likes of many organisations such as HCJB (The Voice of the Andes), Gospel Recordings Network, Trans World Radio, Far East Broadcasting Association and the Far East Broadcasting Company in the 1930s and onwards. The Jesus Film Project (JFP) of Campus Crusade for Christ International (CCCI), made significant strides in the 1970 introducing video as a tool.

Missionaries, such as Mark and Gloria Zook of the New Tribes Mission (NTM), pioneered orality work among the Mouk of Papua New Guinea in the 1970s. Developing relevant oral strategies for communication in storying, drama, song and other media came through the efforts of organisations like Vernacular Media Services in the early 1990s. These early oral initiatives were then implemented by teams from Pioneer Bible Translators, the Translators Association of the Philippines (TAP),

Lutheran Bible Translators (LBT), the Reformed Church in America (RCA), the International Mission Board, TWR, CCCI and JFP.

A growing awareness culminated in the 1990s among mission agencies such as CCCI, IMB, the Summer Institute for Linguistics (SIL) and the United Bible Societies of the magnitude of higher orality reliant cultures. At “Table 71” at the Billy Graham Association’s conference in the year 2000 in Amsterdam the seed was planted for the movement that was to become the International Orality Network later. Marcus Vegh, of Progressing Vision approached Table 71, where mission leaders explored ways to reach the then unreached peoples, asked Avery Willis the Senior Vice President of Overseas Operations for the IMB: “How do we make disciples of oral learners?” This question motivated subsequent meetings by these leaders to explore oral strategies for discipleship.

Avery Willis convened an orality consultation in 2001 in San Clemente, California, USA that resulted in the formation of the Oral Bible Network (OBN) tasked to serve the oral communicators in the context of where they were. The 2004 Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism ran a Making Disciples of Oral Learners Workgroup. This Workgroup merged with the OBN in 2005, becoming the International Orality Network (ION). The majority of the original ION work, over the first five years, was an outflow from the task forces which formed the heart of the ION movement.

In 2016 the ION moved from its previous model to allow for global regions, with the launch of the first two regions, Philippines and North America. The original vision for global regions started with other networks, such as the Global Initiatives in India in 2006 and the Movement of Africa National Initiatives (MANI) in 2008. The Orality Movement was a strategic priority for the Lausanne Three – Cape Town 2010 Congress in South Africa. The Congress expressed its total commitment to Orality. The role of Orality in Theological Education can be traced back to the beginning of 2012, which resulted in several focussed consultations.

Through decades God has used the unselfish service of many Christians to build a movement that seeks to influence the body of Christ to encourage all oral communicators to follow Jesus Christ (International Orality Network 2018).

1.4.6. Scripture engagement

The object of engagement is Scripture, both the Old and New Testament, commonly known as the Bible. To engage an object is to occupy your attention or efforts intensely with the object (Dictionary.com 2017).

The object, the Bible, is the standard, whether codified in writing or audio. This is a fundamental principle in oral Scripture engagement. The audio version of the Bible preserves God's Word in the same way the text does. Paul wrote to Timothy: 'All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness' (1 Tim 3:16). The Greek word used in this verse is 'theopneustos' which implies that God actually breathed out Scripture, rather than breathing into. This term recalls the concept in Psalm 33:6 that God's word has creative power: 'By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their hosts.' Hence Scripture is inspired by God. But, also, 2 Peter 1:21 clearly states: 'men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.' They spoke what God wanted them to say. Thus, both are true: the authors of Scripture were inspired by God and the subsequent writings were inspired by God.

According to SIL, Scripture engagement 'involves accessing, understanding and interacting meaningfully with the life-changing message of the Scriptures' (2017). The Forum of Bible Agencies International states that Scripture engagement is to 'facilitate encounters with God through interaction with His Word' (2017). Bible engagement is the process of taking in and living out God's Word for the purpose of knowing him better and experiencing him more (Bible Gateway 2017). Dye from the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics (GIAL) at Dallas International University and Scripture use consultant from Wycliffe/SIL list the eight conditions necessary for effective Scripture engagement based on the work done by the Welser couple in their work as Scripture engagement consultants in the Americas (2009:90-97) as:

i) Appropriate Language, Dialect and Orthography
ii) Appropriate Translation
iii) Accessible Forms of Scripture
iv) Background knowledge of the Hearer
v) Availability of Scripture

vi) Spiritual Hunger of the Community Members
vii) Freedom to Commit to the Christian Faith
viii) Partnership between Translators and other Stakeholders

If all of the above conditions are strong in a language area and community, then it sets the ideal circumstances for people to use the local language Scriptures and be effectively transformed by it.

The Taylor University's Centre for Scripture Engagement states that the definition of Scripture engagement rests on three theological assumptions (2017):

i) It is the Holy Spirit alone who enables the written or spoken Word of God to speak for itself.
ii) When the Holy Spirit speaks, it is the voice of the Father that is heard.
iii) Jesus Christ through the Word makes a unique claim upon the reader or hearer.

The Bible itself teaches us about the process to engage with the Word of God. It uses as an example some of the following words to illustrate it:

i) Meditate (Ps 1:2 and Josh 1:8)
ii) Reflect (2 Tim 2:7)
iii) Look intently (Jas 1:25)
iv) Dwell (Col 3:16)
v) Ponder (Jer 2:31)
vi) Eat (Jer 15:16 and Rev 10:9-11)

Scripture is vital to spiritual growth as it is God-breathed and active (Heb 4:12-13) and is useful for teaching and training (2 Timothy 3:16), it makes the truth known (Ps 19:7-11) and equips for service (2 Tim 3:16-17). Ward said that 'to encounter the words of Scripture is to encounter God in action' (2009:48). According to the Taylor University's Centre for Scripture Engagement, Scripture engagement leads people to discover (2017):

i) God
ii) Their mission with God

iii) Jesus Christ

iv) The collective mission of the Church

v) Values for life in general

Gerald West, in an attempt to find a better explanation of Scripture to indigenous Africans, states that the three key elements of African interpretation are the biblical text, the African context, and the act of appropriation by a human through which they are linked (2008b:1). The biblical text and the African context do not on their own participate in a conversation. For dialogue to take place an intervention of a human is required. West refers to this process of tri-party engagement as the 'enculturation engagement of biblical interpretation' (Chiang and Lovejoy 2013:102).

Tom Steffen (2016) points out that three basic styles of literature dominate the landscape of Scripture, which are story (75%), poetry (15%) and thought-organised format (10%). Lovejoy (2009:9) states that more people encounter Scripture by hearing it, than ever reading it themselves. Richard Swanson (2009:129) says that in all faithfulness 'we need to think long about the implications of translating Scripture with a view to the oral performance of it, and the aural encounter with it.' Rhoads argues for efforts to recover the original medium of the biblical tradition, which should include all the facets of performance. This can provide many new dimensions to the Bible and its interpretation. He says: 'Interpretation lies at the site of performance' 2010:192).

Toboso, from Kenya, defines oral literature as the performed art whose principle execution is through the spoken word. He adds that oral literature is a performance and therefore features of an oral performance are valid in understanding the meaning or oral literature. He classifies oral literature in two major forms, namely long and short forms. Under long forms he lists narratives, songs and poetry and for short forms he lists tongue twisters, riddles, proverbs, puns and jokes (Toboso 2016).

Olanipekum refers to the oral method of making an agreement and oral communication when it comes to oral Scripture engagement. The oral method or way is that 'your word is your contract'. Oral communication involves simply to say that you will do it. It then follows that oral Scripture engagement asks for a commitment when the listener hears the Word of God, his contract with His people. In his mind, this

aspect of the oral culture makes audio and oral Scripture engagement a blessing to Africans. Africans listen to the spoken Word repeated by heart; the written word is secondary. He concludes that many ministries failed to encourage Africans to engage with the Word of God because they connect these ministries solely with the written Scripture (2012).

1.4.7. Indigenous people

The United Nations Human Rights Declaration (2013:3) recognises indigenous peoples as being among the world's most vulnerable peoples, numbering more than 370 million people in about 90 countries. They constitute approximately five percent of the world's population and each has a unique and distinctive culture, language, legal system and history. They have a resilient relationship with the environment, their traditional lands and territories.

Indigenous people have been branded by definitions inflicted on them by others, therefore no formal definition has been adopted in international law. A functional definition has been in use by the United Nations Human Rights Declaration (2013:6):

> Indigenous communities, people and nations are those which, having as historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system.

The researchers of the Letloa Trust (2012:5) define indigenous people as 'the first inhabitants of a geographical region and whose identities and cultures are inextricably linked to the land on which they live and the natural resources on which they depend.'

1.4.8 Myth

The Oxford English Dictionary explains the noun 'myth' as 'a traditional story, especially one concerning the early history of people or explaining a natural or social phenomenon, and typically involving supernatural beings or events' or 'a widely held but false belief or idea' (Oxforddictionaries.com). Myths, together with legend, songs

and popular history can fall under the broad heading of folklore. In the African context one can define myth ‘as those stories about the very earliest past that explain the origin of societies, and the relationship with one another, in the absence of a written evidence’ (Shokpeka 2005:485).

Ras holds that a myth is both a story and an important structural device used by the storyteller. As a story, it divulges change at the very beginning of time, with gods and humans. As a storytelling tool for the development of a metaphor, it is both material and method. African literature borrows strongly from African myths. Africans have their own myths about the creation of the world and of humans (Ras 2018).

The use of oralities, such as storytelling, proverbs and myths, are mainly deployed by Africans as effective tools in the construction of the memory. Myths are largely stored in oral medium (Ngoveni 2006:65,93).

An African creation myth from Mozambique (Ngoveni 2006:93):

> So, I told him about the origins of time beyond time. In the beginning, the world contained men. There were not trees, no animals, no stones. Men alone existed. But so many humans were born that the gods realised there were too many and they were all the same. So, they decided to turn some men into plants, others into animals. And some, even, into stories. The result? We’re all brothers, trees and animals, animals and men, men and stones. We’re all related, created out of the same matter.

1.5. Design and methodology

1.5.1. Introduction

The primary purpose of this research is to understand oral Scripture engagement. The secondary purposes are to interpret their engagement in order to determine its value for Bible translation and other oral Scripture engagements, and to explore its implications for missiology. This research investigates, through case studies, the nature of four indigenous oral communities’ particular form of oral Scripture engagement. The researcher has therefore spent time to discover, observe, listen, read, examine, understand, evaluate, investigate and write a descriptive report on the qualitative process and findings of the research.

The mode of analysis followed by the researcher is a descriptive approach. The result is to give practical applications, in the form of guidelines, that can be tested in the field of oral Scripture translation and engagement. It can also be used to train prospective students for similar real-life situations in pursuing careers in the field of oral Scripture engagement.

The methodologies used in any research differ depending on the context of the research, the field of research, as well as the choice made by the researcher. Each methodology comes with its own advantages and disadvantages. This is a study in orality, which uses descriptive, contextual methodologies to conduct research in the field of the affordances and performances of oral communities in specific case studies, as they engage the creation narrative of Genesis. Descriptive research, in general, requires specific information needed for evaluation (Elliston 2011:68) and, in the context of this study, to examine the phenomenon of a higher orality reliant people's engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis in order to understand it. Descriptive research is a design approach with a frequentative process between (2011:xxi):

i) The main research problem.
ii) The review of other examples in the specific research.
iii) The research methodologies.
iv) The findings of the research.
v) The recommendations of the research.

It is Elliston's view (2011:68) that descriptive research yields numerous appreciably distinctive forms which are supported by a much wider range of research methodologies. This research on a higher orality reliant people's engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis, uses four case studies, which include:

i) The purpose of the exploration
ii) The research question
iii) Description of the case study
iv) Research design
v) Key findings, conclusions, recommendations for further research

Browning (1993:3) describes Descriptive Theology as the theory-laden practices that give rise to the practical questions which generate theological understanding. It analyses the local culture and religious meanings that surround religious practices. It employs a hermeneutical methodology. It is ultimately a dialogue between the researcher and the people, where the researcher brings his pre-understanding into the dialogue, with their actions, meanings and pre-understandings. Where Browning argues for a thick description of praxis as a starting point for doing theology, the researcher concluded that a thinner description presented in four case studies is sufficient.

This study makes use of descriptive methods, including a literature-reviewed description and context, documented data within the field of orality, interviews conducted, participant involvement and observations in Scripture engagement as presented in four sample case studies. This collection and analysis of data from numerous resources, include existing research and documentation, focussed interviews with specific individuals and participant observations at Scripture engagement and training interventions. These are strengthened by the structure of the creation narrative of Genesis, an appreciation of creation stories in folklore, as well as the context of the creation story in missiology.

The study focuses on appreciating what already exists among the indigenous higher orality reliant communities, rather than to add to their history of stigmatisation, with some practical guidelines. Special attention is given to the Naro San of Ghanzi in Botswana, as well as to three other indigenous oral communities, namely the Dao of Indonesia, the Baka of Equatorial Africa and the Gonja in Northern Ghana. These four communities were selected in terms of the following criteria, namely, that they are:

i) Higher orality reliant;
ii) Recent recipients of Scripture;
iii) Adequate documented data and resources exist on their history, culture and later engagement with Scripture;
iv) Distanced from one another in order to study their unique qualities.

The purpose of the research is to provide guidelines for the practices of Bible translation and communication of the gospel message that can be applied to all oral

communities. It has the potential of augmenting contemporary oral Scripture engagement. In addition, the research aims to confirm the need for the application of oral methodologies in reaching oral learners in practical missions.

The model best suited to achieve the objectives of this research is a case study. There are different forms of case studies. The spheres of business and education give us well documented principles of documenting a case study. Case studies are the preferred method of research when the focus of the research is to answer the 'how' or 'why' questions; when the investigator cannot manipulate, or control the behaviour of people or events involved; where the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context; and where the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin 2009:2, 23). The case studies, which describe indigenous people within their social context, incorporate aspects of social anthropological research, which can be very useful for missiological research as well. It is, however, an exercise in theology, because it does a theological evaluation of Scripture engagement by oral communities and is therefore limited to that field.

Describing the case studies requires the following **five components**:

i) Introduction
ii) Description and context (case)
iii) Observations and lessons learned
iv) Comparison, correlation and guidelines
v) Conclusion

1.5.2. The description and context

A case study is an 'Interpretation in context' (Cronbach 1975:123). The purpose of a case study is '…to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the groups under study…and… to develop a theoretical statement about regularities in social structure and process.' (Becker 1968:233). The description and documented context focus on the specific process of Scripture engagement within the confines of the creation narrative of Genesis, with special reference to a specific family unit, led by Tshabu, in the context of the Naro San community in D'Kar, the Dao of Indonesia, the Baka of Equatorial Africa and the Gonja of northern Ghana.

Due to the nature of oral communication, the Naro San ventured across the textual confines of the first chapter of Genesis into the broader context of the creation narrative captured in the second chapter of Genesis. The researcher includes their feedback in this study even where they have crossed these chapter 'fences' as they engage with the creation narrative. The collection of qualitative information was through interventions, interviews, discussions, observation and referencing over time as the community, in general, engages with Scripture.

The following entities make contributions in addressing the research question: The Naro Language Project of the Reformed Church, the Kuru Art Project and Davar Partners International.

1.5.3. Observations and lessons learned

The first case study documents the Naro San's main methodologies of oral communication observed andt the ways in which these are used in their engagement with the creation narrative in Genesis. The form of descriptive research, therefore, consists of a description of an extensive process of Scripture engagement through which the biblical narrative is being incorporated into the family story as part of the bigger community and within the broader context of Scripture. Data is collected from three main sources:

i) Documented data within the field of orality;
ii) Interviews; and
iii) Participant observation.

1.5.4. Comparison and correlation

The next phase compares and correlates these four indigenous oral communities' engagement with Scripture, especially with the creation narrative of Genesis. It explores the foundations of God's message in this narrative, which resonate with an indigenous oral community. It considers the aspects of the structure of the creation narrative of Genesis which resonates with oral communities. It appreciates the existence of creation stories in folk lore which may help to bridge to the creation narrative of Genesis. It appreciates and gives an understanding of the role that the

creation narrative can play in contemporary missiology and oral Scripture engagement.

1.5.5. Summary of findings and analysis

In chapter 5, the study recommends guidelines that can be implemented by Scripture practitioners in oral communities for Scripture translation and engagement. The advice provided is based on the research findings and correlation of the four case studies as these indigenous oral communities engage with Scripture. The recommendations are designed around the different communication methodologies of indigenous oral communities in order to present an oral approach to effectively engage the oral people of our world with God's master story.

CHAPTER 2

DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT OF THE NARO SAN

2.1. Introduction

The importance of orality can be elucidated by reflecting on the idea of ‘voice’. Voice is part of speech, the spoken word, in every language used in human interaction (Botha 1992:271). Ong contrasts sight or vision with hearing the spoken word: ‘Sight isolates, sound incorporates. Whereas sight situates the observer outside what he views, at a distance, sound pours into the hearer, simultaneously from every direction in a room or place all at once’ (1982; 2002; 2012:70). Sound also pours out of the speaker’s body but represents all that is not-body (Botha 1992:271). This ability positions the listener at the centre of an auditory world. This auditory world envelopes the listener and establishes him at the core of auditory sensation and existence. He concludes that a listener can immerse himself in hearing, in sound. By contrast, it is almost impossible to immerse oneself similarly as an observer in human sight (Ong 1982; 2002; 2012:70).

Ong notes that Merleau-Ponty (1961) observed that human vision dissects (Ong 1982; 2002; 2012:70). Human vision comes from one direction at a time. Therefore in order to observe an entire room or a landscape, one’s eyes need to be moved around from one direction and another. Ong opines (ibid.) that vision is a dissecting sense, whereas sound is a unifying sense. The ideal scenario for visual observation is the clarity and distinctiveness of the images. One’s vision focusses on an object and, in so doing, takes it apart. In contrast, the auditory ideal of the listener is harmony, the positioning of all the sounds in a grand symphony. This interiority and harmony characterise human consciousness. Every human person’s consciousness is totally internalised. It is only known to the person from the inside and completely inaccessible to any other person.

He states (ibid.) that everyone who says 'I' implies something different by it from what every other person means. That which is 'I' to the first person is only a 'you' to the second person. In a higher orality reliant culture, the word exists only in sound, not in

any text. The phenomenon of sound enters deeply into human beings' feeling for existence, as it is processed by the spoken word. For this reason, the way in which the spoken word is experienced by human beings is always meaningful in cognitive life. Profound paradoxes are connected to the spoken word, on the one hand, it can unify, yet on the other hand, the spoken word can be tied up with all human conflict. The spoken word is 'not merely linked to social structures, but chiefly to the deeply personal, to subjectivity and intersubjectivity, where the physical and the psychic merge' (Botha 1992:271). The spoken word is as ancient as humans themselves, yet it is always contemporary, blending spontaneously and creatively with advanced technologies.

Havelock opines that 'narrativization of experience was not an idiom or idiosyncrasy of ancient tongues', but that it is a primary ingredient of all speech preserved orally in all tongues (1986:149). The Greek alphabet, with its focus on the written word, took over this role and reshaped it to give us a new universe language and of the mind; a universe of principles and relationships, of laws and sciences, of values, ideas and ideals. This new visual language now supersedes our sensory experiences and expressions and had been superimposed upon our acoustic flow of sound and feeling expressed by the spoken word (ibid 149).

For the purpose of this research a case study of the San, in Botswana, as a high reliant oral people was conducted. Botswana is one of the larger countries in southern Africa occupying an area of over half a million square kilometers. The country is sparsely inhabited with just over 2.2 million people (Joshua Project 2017). SIL's Ethnologue cites the number of living languages spoken in the country of Botswana as thirty-one (2017) of which twenty-six are indigenous. The government of Botswana recognises four as institutional. Three of the languages are endangered and one is a dying language.

Significant to Botswana is the fact that the Kalahari Desert covers approximately seventy percent of the country's land area. One of the people groups of the country is the San, alternatively or previously referred to as bushmen. The San number close to 100 000 people in southern Africa (Hitchcock et al 2006:1) and are regarded as the original human inhabitants of Southern Africa (Barnard 2007:4). One of the languages spoken by the San is Naro.

As indigenous oral people, the San use all forms of oral communication. Much of the history of the San is transferred from one generation to the next through the re-telling of events, major incidents and association. It comes together through the immersion in time, space and sound. Piecing together their history remains a challenge. As Ong has pointed out, in a previous paragraph, the word in a higher orality reliant culture only exists in sound (2012:70). The San has an 'alphabet based on sound clicks' (Higgs 2013). Orthographers took on the mammoth task and worked tirelessly to record the Khoe and San sounds in written form (Namaseb et al: 2008). To illustrate the complexity of an alphabet in sound, Visser reported twenty-eight clicks in the Naro language, which can be pronounced in different tones, such as a long tone, a nasalised tone, a pressed tone or various combinations of these (1998).

According to Smith, many people have showed renewed appreciation for the San culture in its various forms. It remains difficult for an outsider to truly capture the essence and context of communication, learning and applying the spoken word by a higher orality reliant people (2000:99). Modern-day poets and writers employ the fables and oral histories which were preserved by the Bleeks (1928) and others such as Le Roux (2004) or heard from the present-day San.

Hitchcock (2006:3) points out that the San people lived in southern Africa since ancient times and that the oldest unmistakable human remains were excavated at Klasies river mouth, east of the modern city of Cape Town. For many generations, the San populations were the sole inhabitants of southern Africa. At a time, their territory stretched southwards from the Congo-Zambezi watershed in central Africa to the Cape. Today they reside in six countries, namely Angola, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. San oral testimonies divulge that the San lived in well-defined areas, which belonged to different clans (Le Roux and White 2004:16). The clan controlling an area guarded and protected the natural resources in that area. In these traditional areas or territories, the San were familiar with the landmarks of the area and respected those of the neighbouring clans. Entering another clan's area was only through consultation and permission (2004:168).

The San language, culture and struggle for survival are captured by numerous authors and scholars, including Barnard (2007), Baracchini (2013), Bolaane (2014), Boonzaaier (1996), Güldeman (2014), Hasselbring (2000), Hitchcock (2006),

Hoggarth (2006), Le Roux (2004, 2006), Visser (1998). This research does not aim to capture the full version of their story – only they who can truly give voice to this and much still remains to be told.

The San present a wide mixture of social, economic and political groups. Some of the San still continue to hunt and gather part-time. Others work for low wages on farms. There are also some self-sufficient San communities involved in a combination of agriculture, livestock-production, rural small-scale industries (Hitchcock et al. 2006:1). The San display remarkable cultural flexibility and creativity, identifying themselves as members of the world's indigenous populations (Hitchcock et al. 2006:3; Lee et al. 2002). Today, most of the San live in Namibia and Botswana. Distances between human settlements and the isolation of the Kalahari Desert and surrounding areas have contributed to their survival as a people.

Four criteria are used to identify and distinguish San people from other African tribes (Lee et al. 2002):

i) A history of subsistence through hunting and gathering.
ii) The possession and use of click-languages.
iii) Self-identification as San.
iv) A distinct physical appearance.

(The last criterion is less reliable than the first three).

In the present century, San are typically found in four types of settings:

i) In independent villages where they live in a mixed economy.
ii) Attached to a village of Setswana people and cattle posts.
iii) As workers on commercial farms and ranches.
iv) As part of government resettlement schemes.

The D'Kar Museum and Cultural Centre (2008) and Le Roux (2006) trace knowledge about the higher orality-reliant history of the Naro dating back to the 1700's. A recent study of speakers of the five languages, used in the Ghanzi-province of Botswana, placed Naro at the bottom of the social, ethnic literacy hierarchy. This proves that, as a higher orality-reliant people, they traditionally have been socially and linguistically stigmatised (Dirven, Roslyn and Pütz 2003:102). The Botswana government

addressed this historical challenge through the promotion and appreciation of the diversity of languages. The theme for the first language day was: 'Tiris kg'uis ka dqomise' (My language, my pride) (Mswela 2014:14).

The Naro clan of the San is important for our understanding of higher orality-reliant people, as is evident from the work of the Naro Language Project (Bolaane 2014: 44). The project has been instrumental in the translation, printing, recording and engagement with the New Testament. The Naro's contemporary art also gives them a medium to communicate that which they cannot convey due to literacy barriers (Kuru Art Project 2016; Bolaane 2014:53).

Their oral communication is further developed during the annual Kuru Traditional Dance Festival. A highlight of this festival is dancing for the Creator (Nqari Ba). Coex'ae, himself a member of the Naro clan, explains this as follows (D'Kar Museum and Cultural Centre 2008):

> To help us survive, Nqari Ba gave us understanding of the world beyond what we can see, and we prayed to Him through our dances and songs around the fire. This is where we were told stories … These stories were our way of teaching our children and communicating with each other to bring understanding. Our narratives were carried into our dances and songs and helped us to restore the harmony in our communities…. Even today we like to solve our problems in a group and sometimes still dance to look for the harmony we have lost.

Oral Scripture engagement training has been conducted amongst the Naro during 2013, 2014 and 2015 (Davar Partners International 2015). The trainers have observed their process of engagement and in particular the importance of the creation narrative in Genesis. Coby Visser, the Scripture engagement coordinator for SIL in southern Africa, testifies that their engagement with Scripture creates space for the San to contextualise the biblical message (2014).

The documented description and context of the San, as it pertains to their oral Scripture engagement, started before the commitment was made to conduct this research. It was a natural process of reaching out to them through the established missionary efforts of others. The detailed process is explained in Chapter 3 of this research.

2.2. Oral history of the Naro San

2.2.1. The San and Tswana Tribes

By the 1700's three major San tribes resided in Ghanzi, Botswana and the surrounding areas, namely, Naro, Ju|'hoansi (‡Au||eisi) and Dcui (G/wi). The trek between 1700 and 1795 of the BaKgalagadi, the BaNgologa and the BaBolaongwe groups took them past Ghanzi in search of water for their herds. This so-called Gobabis-Kgwebe Trek Route ran between Lake Ngami and Walvisbaai in Namibia. During 1830 the OvaHerero and the OvaMbanderu tribes crossed Ghanzi with their large herds of cattle. It was only between 1830 and 1890 that the son of the Batswana Chief Moremi, Letsholathebe, consolidated all groups under his rule. Sekgoma Letsholathebe and his son, Moremi II, spread the BaTswana's influence southwards to the Okwa, eastwards to the MaKgadikgadi, westwards into present day Namibia, and northwards to Andara in the Western Caprivi (Le Roux 2006).

2.2.2. The influence of Europeans and Afrikaners

According to written sources, Fernão Veloso was the first European to encounter indigenous people in Southern Africa. He was the captain-major of the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama and the encounter took place on Wednesday 8 November 1497 at what is now St Helena Bay at the mouth of the Berg River. Fernão described the inhabitants as small in stature, tawny-coloured and dressed in skins (Barnard 2007:11). Da Gama's translator speculated that the encounter was with 'Hottentots' (Khoi), but Barnard agrees with Boonzaaier et al. (1996:54-55) that they were most likely San as the distinction between Khoi and San was only applied late in the eighteenth century (Barnard 2007:21).

Under the Dutch expansion into southern Africa, the Dutch explorers encountered both Khoekhoe and San. The earliest documented encounter with the San people in the interior of Southern Africa was by Jan Wintervogel in 1655, which took place approximately 370 kilometers north of present-day Cape Town (Boonzaaier 1996).

Later British control of the Cape Colony and the expansion agenda of the Tswana chief Moremi II led to the dispersion of the San to remote, geographically challenged areas (D'Kar Museum and Cultural Centre 2008).

Today, the majority of the Naro language speakers can be found in Ghanzi (Kuru Family of Organisations: 2016); their language forms part of the Central San languages (Barnard 2007:6). In D'Kar they number approximately one thousand inhabitants (Visser: 2012; Centre for African Language Diversity 2015; Dintwa 2014:10). The University of Botswana confirms Naro as part of the Central Khoesan languages, mainly spoken in the western part of Botswana (Bolaane 2014:43).

Le Roux (2006) summarises the major events in the history of the San as follows:

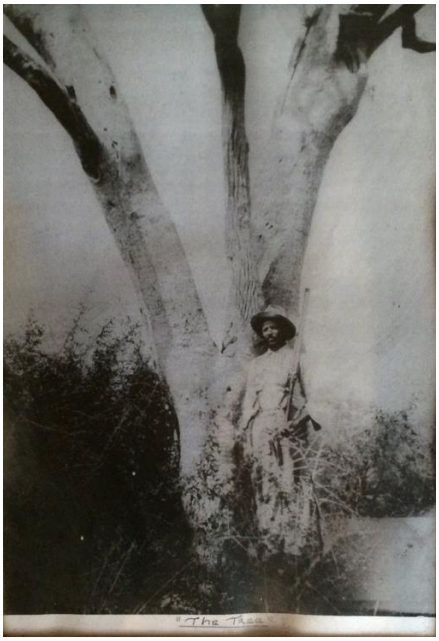
Approximate Date	*General Description*
1850	The first European traders, hunters and missionaries moved along the Gobabis-Kgwebe route on various trips.
1870	Hendrik Van Zyl, the first white Afrikaner to settle in Ghanzi, set up a small hunting and trading post in the area and built a double storey house at the 'old-Ghanzi'–pan, later specifically identified as the D'Kar farm. This pan played a significant role in the lives of the local San. Stories were told from one generation to the next of how he hunted elephants and other species of big game in the vicinity of the pan. Through the re-telling of the history, the San identified the current quarry, named Van Zyl's cutting, as the place where his homestead was located. He received concessions for Ghanzi from Moremi II but was killed by his own Nama servants in 1880.
1880	The Naro resisted the Setswana rule. The resistance was led by Tsabu, from Tsau, whose people used their bows and arrows to defeat the Setswana with their guns. Eventually, Tsabu was killed and his followers were subsequently captured as slaves. The powerful Naro and ǂAu‖eisi San chiefs used to clash

	frequently. Reports were that the ‡Au||ei chief ‡Dukuri submitted to the Naro. In 1921, a ‡Au||ei informant, |Kukurib, told Dorothy Bleek of his father's victory over the Naro. Dorothy worked among the Naro San in the 1920's.
1890	The Barolong moved into the Okwa valley. During this time, the Okwa trade route was referred to as the Damara Road, used for gun-running by various groups.
1894	Isak Bosman negotiated with the local Nama captains and the Setswana chief, Moremi II, at Poloneng for the rights to settle white farmers in Ghanzi.

2.2.3. The impact of colonial rule

Le Roux (2006) describes the impact of colonial rule as follows:

Approximate Date	*General Description*
1897-1898	Cecil John Rhodes, in the name of the British South Africa Company (BSAC), secured concession rights to settle farmers in Ghanzi, from Mosekome, the son of Moremi II. The British Empire, however, dismissed the claim of BSAC over Ghanzi. Ghanzi subsequently became 'Crown land' under the throne of the British monarch.
1898 – 1902	The Administration of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, under British rule, allocated forty-one farms to trekkers from the Marico district, to deter German expansion from the then South-West-Africa, which was later renamed Namibia. The first farmers, Drotsky and Van der Linde, arrived in February 1899. Each farmer rented about 5 000 morgens, approximately 6,5 square kilometres of farmland on the Ghanzi Ridge for five British Pounds per year.

1905	By this time, most of the early settlers had moved on. A widower, Taljaard, and his children remained at ‘old D’Kar’ where the ruins of his old homestead can still be seen today. D’Kar derived its name from four letters found carved in a tree trunk on the local farm.
	
The tree on which the letters D, K, A and R were carved. This led to the farm being called D’Kar. This tree was unfortunately destroyed by a field fire. *Photo: D’Kar Museum and Cultural Centre 2008*	
1912	The second wave of migrating South African farmers arrived in the region, including Hardbattle and Burton.
1922	The establishment of the first magistracy in Ghanzi. The present Ghanzi town used to be the local police camp. Monthly postal services between Gobabis and Ghanzi started. Mailbags were carried by local San messengers and young white males. The journey between the two towns took them approximately two weeks.
1928	The first truck that arrived in Ghanzi, was bought by Mr Sharp, a shop owner from Kalkfontein. By 1928 a regular transport service

	had been established between Maun in the north and Gobabis to the east.
1933 - 1934	A severe drought caused local wells to run dry. This was followed by foot-and-mouth disease which broke out in the east. Local farmers and San competed for 'food-for-work'- schemes on local road construction projects.
1947 – 1951	Increasing numbers of white South African farmers, as well as Namibians, migrated to Ghanzi.
1951	The Ghanzi Farmers Association was formed to serve the local farming community.
1954	The abattoir in Lobatse became fully functional with 59 trucks serving the Ghanzi to Lobatse transport route, providing additional income for the local economy.
1957	The colonial government, under British Administration, surveyed and fenced the farms. They also started to regulate water usage and drilling as the Kalahari-basin is a semi-desert area and water is a scarce resource. The fencing of land, which inhibited free movement, had a devastating impact on the local San. Access to their old hunting grounds was lost. Many of the pans, which contained water and were pivotal in the daily lives of the San, were now inside the boundaries of farms. The San population became landless.
1963	M.A. Kruger, a pastor in the Reformed Church in Aranos, Namibia, bought the 3000-morgen farm land, called D'Kar, from Thys Taljaard in an effort to reach out to and assist the now impoverished local San communities scattered on government land. E. Rampa served as the first missionary and D.J. Jerling as the farm manager.

1965	At that time, fifty people lived on the D'Kar farm (More than seven hundred at present).

2.2.4. The Naro and Botswana's independence

Le Roux (2006) describes the influence of the independence of Botswana from the United Kingdom on the Naro as follows:

Approximate Date	*General Description*
1966	Botswana gained independence from Britain, resulting in the emigration of white farmers. Ghanzi became the administrative capital of the district. The national and local government was controlled by the majority local tribe, the Setswana. The Bushman Development Officers informed the local Naro San to move away as they were illegally squatting on land which was not in private ownership. More Naro San arrived on the D'Kar farm, which served as a safe haven to them.
1967	A local school was started by the Aranos Reformed Church, introducing literacy through the Bible to the Naro San. The school was handed over to the local government in 1972-1973.
1980	The local church, consisting of 80 members, was instituted as an independent congregation. A.H le Roux was sent to serve as pastor of the D'Kar congregation.
1986	Some income generating activities, which started earlier on the farm, were expanded with the influx of more San and were then called Kuru Projects. These activities included sewing, a nursery school, vegetable gardening, leatherworks and a tannery. The Kuru Development Trust was established in 1986 when the D'Kar farm was legally transferred to the Reformed Church of D'Kar.

1990	Mission work of the Reformed Church of Aranos in D'Kar was terminated.

2.3. Building the institutions to preserve their language and culture

Le Roux (2006) appreciates the following major events in preserving and growing Naro San language and culture:

Approximate Date	General Description
1991	The D'Kar congregation, with approximately 200 members, signed a partnership agreement with the Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, which then sent Hessel and Coby Visser to translate the Bible in Naro and to establish literacy work amongst the San. The Vissers arrived in Ghanzi on 6 March 1991.
1993	The Reformed Churches in Botswana was formed by uniting the two missions, the Reformed Churches of New Xanagas and Ghanzi and the Reformed Church of D'Kar.
1999	The Ghanzi district was divided into three congregations: Charleshill, New Xanagas and Xanagas. The farms Kuke, D'Kar, Qabo, Groot Laagte and Tshobokwane came under the responsibility of the Church Council of D'Kar.
2001	The Kuru Development Trust changed its name to the Kuru family of Organisations and the local reformed Church of D'Kar established the Kuru D'Kar Trust. Projects included the Kuru Cultural Centre and the Art project. The Naro Language Project helps the local Naro San to preserve their language and the annual Kuru Traditional Dance Festival their culture.

The Kuru Cultural and Art Centre in D'Kar.

Photo: Researcher 2015.

2003	The Reformed Church of D'Kar welcomed its first local pastor, Gaobolelwe Ngakayaja.

2.4. The Naro San in recent times

The summarised timeline is as follows:

Approximate Date	General Description
2003	As a higher orality reliant people, speaking a complex click-language, the Naro has traditionally been socially and linguistically stigmatized (Dirven, Roslyn and Pütz 2003:102). A recent update on the San clearly exposes the reality of the marginalisation of the San in southern Africa (Hitchcock et al 2006:1,6,7,19,20,21,41). History shows that various rulers have tried to force them to conform to the dominant culture of the time. During the past decades, joint efforts of the Kalahari communities and scholars have helped San languages to gain prominence in educational and cultural development, a major

	move away from being mere exotic, marginalised 'clicking' curiosities (Hitchcock et al. 2006:19).
2004	Approximately 9, 000 speakers of the Naro mother tongue reside in Botswana and Namibia (Visser 2002). Rough numbers of people for the towns and villages of Botswana are listed below with the remainder residing on various farms in the area. Ghanzi: 4 000 D'Kar: 600 East- Hanahai: 300 West-Hanahai: 300 Kuke: 300 Tshobokwane: 250 Groot Laagte: 200 New Xanagas: 400 Qabo: 300 Kg' õesakene: 100 Kalkfontein: 50 Karakubis: 50 Visser (2002) estimates that about 20 percent of the Naro speakers are also literate, but that literacy in their mother tongue is as low as 500 people or 5 percent of the population. This makes the Naro a higher orality reliant people.
2006	There are close to 100, 000 San in southern Africa, which includes the countries of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe (Hitchcock et al. 2006:1). Their social, economic and political conditions vary widely from area to area. Exceptional cases of community-based development activities exist.
2008	Oral communication, through story-telling, songs, dance and art, helps them to teach the next generation, to bring understanding and to solve problems among them (D'Kar Museum and Cultural Centre 2008).

2012	Approximately 100 Naro San live on the old D'Kar farm today. A milestone was the publication of the New Testament in text and audio (Visser 2012; Centre for African Language Diversity 2015; Dintwa 2014:10).

The New Testament in Naro: text.

Photo: Zeke du Plessis 2012.

	
The New Testament in Naro: audio. *Photo: Roy and Rose Tibbit 2012.*	
2014	There is a total of 10 Khoesan languages spoken in Botswana by an estimated 100, 000 people (Visser 1998). The Central Khoesan languages are mainly spoken in the western part of Botswana (Bolaane 2014:43).
2014 - 2015	After the successful presentation of Scripture engagement training, Visser concluded that it provided the Naro San with new experiences of the Bible and led to conversions and confessions of faith (Visser 2014).

Interactive Bible Discovery, Ghanzi 2014.

Photo: Researcher 2014.

2016	The majority of Naro-speakers resides in and around the Ghanzi district. Hessel Visser was succeeded by his fellow team member, Isaac Khanx'a Saul. Isaac studied linguistics in Stellenbosch, South Africa and in Gaborone, Botswana (Kuru Family of Organisations 2016; Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken 2017).

2.5. San, bushman, Basarwa and Khwe

The San, also known by their Setswana name 'Basarwa', were hunter-gatherers (Thomas 2016:13) but also nomadic. The terms 'Bushman', 'San' and 'Basarwa' are according to Barnard (2007:138) not indigenous terms. Since 1970 several debates in anthropology have focused on the issue of an appropriate terminology for this people. A further term has also been in use, namely 'Khwe', for peoples of hunting and gathering origins in southern Africa (Hitchcock et al. 2006:4). The term 'San' has a derogatory connotation in the Nama language, from which it was originally derived. Officially the countries of Namibia and South Africa used the term 'San' from 1996 to refer to this people. Before that, they used the term 'Bushman'. Angola uses the

Portuguese term ‘Bosquimanos’ for Bushman. Neither Zambia nor Zimbabwe has official terms for indigenous peoples (2006:5).

Barnard further explains that the word ‘Bushman’, from Dutch ‘Bosjesman’, dates back to 1682. This, however, became the most commonly used term by 1770. The Dutch referred to the San not just as ‘Bosjesman’ (English: Bushmen) but sometimes also as Saoqua or Sanqua, which is the masculine plural form of ‘San’ (Barnard 2007:12) and means ‘people different from ourselves’ (Smith 2000:2). The word ‘Bosjesman’ has been dated back to 1682. Khoekhoe or KhoiKhoi or Kwena are the general names which the herding people of the Cape used for themselves. Hitchcock argues that these terms can be used as a general designation for people groups in southern Africa that are small in stature and yellow-skinned (Hitchcock et al. 2006:4-5).

Jan Van Riebeeck used the Cape Khoekhoe masculine plural form of ‘Soaqua’ in his journal of 1653. The term ‘Khoisan’, originally spelled as ‘Koïsan’, was conceived in 1928 by the zoologist and anthropologist Schultze. This can, however, refer to both the Khoekhoe and Nama peoples (Hitchcock et al. 2006:5).

In the 1970’s the word ‘Basarwa’, the plural of ‘Masarwa’, meaning bushman in Setswana, came into use in Botswana (Barnard 2007:138). Hitchcock et al. say that this term was derived from a word signifying ‘people of the south’. The San groups in Botswana, in general, refer to themselves by their own group names, for example, |Gui for the people of the central Kalahari (2006:5-6).

According to Güldemann (2014:2), the Khoisan languages were classified under the bipartite term ‘Bushman and Hottentot’, where Bushman referred to the hunters and Hottentot to gatherers or herders. Both terms carried derogatory connotations and are preferably replaced with ‘San’ and ‘Khoekhoe’ today. McIntyre (2010:4) affirmes the view that the San are indeed hunter-gatherers. He prefers to use ‘Khoisan’ for a language grouping rather than a specific race or tribe (2010:22) and when referring to a specific people group or villagers, he also prefers to use their local names, example Ju-/wasi, !Kung, Hai-//omn or any of the dozen other groups (2010:23).

Since 2001 the Khoisan Consultative Conference agreed that the term Khoisan will be scrapped, favouring two separate names, Khoe and San. Visser indicates that the Khoesan were formed by two parts, Khoe and San, where both parts are two Central Khoesan words. Visser states that Khoe means ‘person’ and that San, is pronounced with a long ‘a’ as ‘Saan’ (1998). In academic circles, particularly in anthropology, they are referred to as ‘San’ (Barnard 2007:4).

The Khoisan Consultative Conference embarked on their own process to define the specific people groups. They combined ‘Saa’, which they determined to mean ‘to gather’, with the ‘n’ as a marker for a person, number and gender, and indicative of the third person plural, with the word ‘Khoe’. The Conference henceforth agreed that currently, Khoesan functions as the collective pronoun referring to these specific groups of people (Hitchcock et al. 2006:6-7). The San, therefore, refer to themselves by their own group or clan name, such as Ju/’hoansi or Ha//om (Smith 2000:2).

2.6. The Naro language and culture of the Kalahari Basin

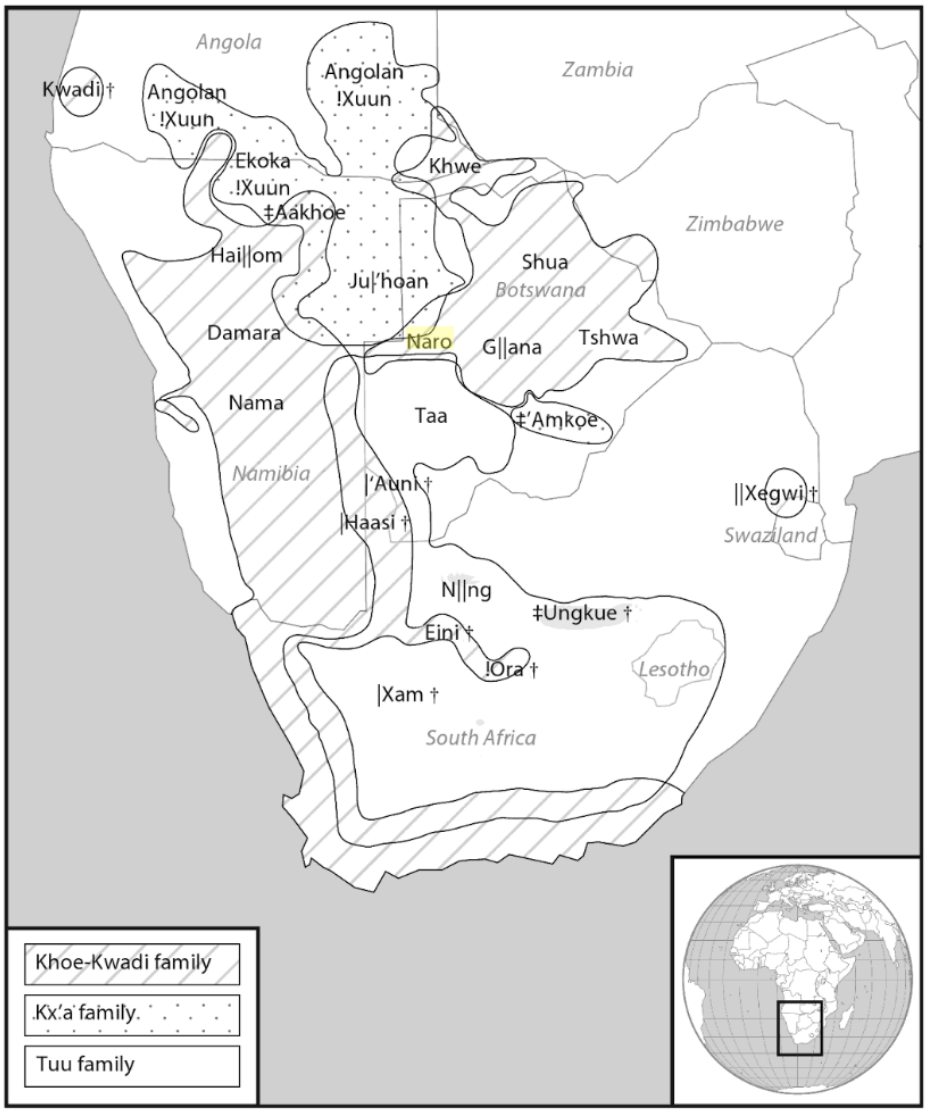


Figure 1: Major Khoisan lineage and languages (Güldemann 2014:12*)*

Five lineages are currently recognised by researchers. There are two isolated language families in eastern Africa: Hadza and Sandawe, and three language families in southern Africa, namely the Khoe-Kwadi, Kx'a and Tuu (cf. Figure 1). This places the Naro language in the Khoe-Kwadi family of languages. Visser divides the southern African Khoesan language family in three, namely the Northern, Central and Southern Khoesan (1998). He identifies the Central Khoesan languages as the most prominent of the three groups with the statistically strongest members of the Khoesan language family residing in the West of Botswana. Naro is spoken in the western part of Botswana and the eastern part of Namibia (Visser 2002).

Ethnologue (2017) cites the data on Naro as follows:

ISO 639-3:	Nhr
Classification:	Khoe-Kwadi, Khoe, Kalahari Khoe, Southwest.
Language development:	Literacy rate in L2: 15-29 years: 70% in Tswana [tsn], 15% in English [eng]; 30-54 years: 10% in Tswana, 2% in English; 55 years and older: 2% in Tswana, 0% in English.

From Ethnologue's literacy statistics as well as the earlier definition of high orality reliant communicators one can conclude that the older generations of Naro San (30 years and older) lie closer to higher orality reliant people on the orality-literacy continuum, while the younger generations (15-29 years of age) tend to embrace literacy in secondary languages, also called languages of wider communication.

Naro is a tonal language with click sounds. This means that consonants with ingressive mouth air are used. In this language the tone is very important as the meaning of words is sometimes distinguished by tone only. Naro has five vowel qualities, which may occur long, nasalised, pressed or a combination of these. A vowel may be pronounced using three tone levels. Levels differ from speaker to speaker and women may typically have higher levels than men. (Visser 2001:2-4)

As an example of the orthography, two click sounds have been selected for the purpose of this study, namely 'tc' and 'q' present in the words 'tcúú' (Naro for 'head') and 'qõò' (Naro for 'go'). The sound 'tc' is pronounced by placing the tip, or front section, of the tongue towards the alveolar ridge, behind the teeth, at the place where the 't' is made. The air is then sucked in by quickly releasing, lowering the tip of the tongue. The 'q' is generated in the same manner, but the tip of the tongue is placed further back in the mouth, against the hard palate, i.e. the top of the mouth. The sound produced resembles the sound of opening the cork of a bottle (Visser 2001:2-3).

> 'Our world is changing too fast, and sometimes it seems our culture is dying, so we need to use our language to keep our culture alive,' says Tcega Fritz in an interview with Barnaby Phillips of the BBC (2005).

Bolaane's case study demonstrates that the Naro's contemporary art, at the Kuru Art Project in Ghanzi, has value to educate us on the issues of the San (2014:12). The San still use art today as a form of communication or expression. The Kuru Art Project was formed to preserve the cultural history of the San (Kuru Art Project 2016). None of the original artists had any formal art education, but with the help of the Project, they were able to express their indigenous knowledge in contemporary art.

When scrutinising their contemporary art, one would notice that the artists still draw deeply from their ancient history (cf. Figure 2 as an illustration). This figure shows an example of Scripture engagement as presented by Schrag (2016:56), which he framed as 'Arts with God.'

Figure 2: Adam, Eve and Snake 2016. Artist: Cg'oma Boma 400 x 350. Used with permission.

The Naro depict animals and plants they have encountered during their lives (Bolaane 2014:53). If the artwork, sketch or painting, was created by a woman, she would use imagery of women gathering veld food, birds and small creatures such as beetles. She might also tend to make clothing or jewellery in addition to sketches and paintings. Men, on the other hand, would focus on illustrating animals, mythical creatures, hunting activities or defining masculine roles. Both men and women would include their local landscapes, context and hunting-gathering lifestyles.

Van Waart recalls that the San originally believed in two gods - one a stronger or bigger god and the other one a lesser and weaker god (2000:23). She mentions that researchers who studied the San concluded that the stronger god was more heavenly in nature and the lesser one more evil in its nature.

The San not only use language and art to transfer culture, but also dancing and music. The Kuru Dance Festival at the Dqae Qare game farm in Ghanzi provides evidence of a people who build self-respect through what they value (2014:56). San dances typically depict their culture. The dance with music includes men and women dancing separately, young and old wearing traditionally designed clothing made of animal skins, painstakingly decorated with ostrich egg shell beads. Their dancing repertoire includes lullabies, love songs, lamentations, entertainment, folklore and the spiritual.

2.7. The values of the Naro San

One would not do justice to the Naro San, if one omitted a discussion of their values. Great strides have been made by the Values Development Team and the Custodian Unit of the Kuru Family of Organisations in the first publication on the Naro San Values (Letloa 2012), a publication which is the result of thirty years of development work amongst the San in Botswana. This publication showcases the kind of values the San treasure and keep in spite of the onslaught of modernisation. Appreciating their values, one can perhaps learn and receive wisdom through their ways.

The indigenous people have strong relationships with their territories of origin and live with a system of belief wherein the land and ecosystem have a symbolic and spiritual value and wherein people play an integral part. A fundamental value among the various San tribes is one of sharing on an equal basis (Letloa 2012:5). To integrate

the San culture in a modern world, the San have opted to use drawings, narratives and symbols to clarify modern values, which are abstract. The drawings, narratives and symbols used to depict values gave both the San and observers the ability to connect with the meaning of their symbols and the values.

The Letloa Trust is very much a project of the San people, but the research and documentation of the Naro San values includes the input of Willemien le Roux, wife of the late Braam le Roux, as well as the original custodians of the Kuru Custodian Unit, James Morris and Aron Johannes. Eben le Roux supported the documentation of the San Values for leadership development.

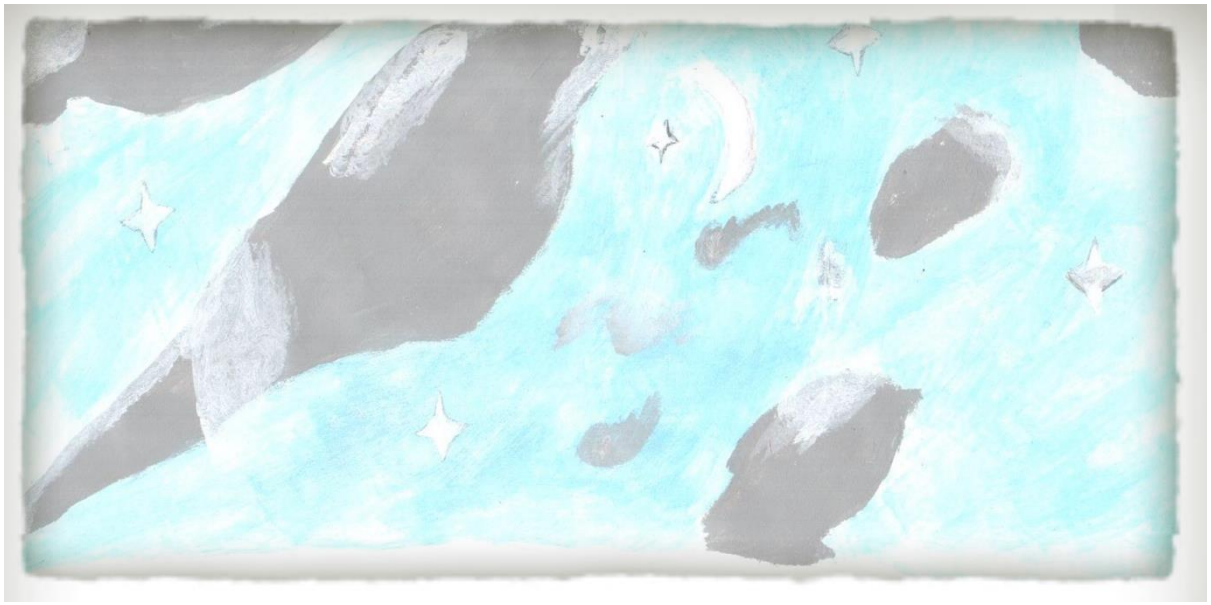
Three San language groups were involved in this study conducted by the researchers of the Letloa Trust. These are in the sequence of input given, the Naro, Kwe and ||Anikhwe, with limited input from a fourth group the Ju|'hoansi (Letloa 2012:7). As an example, two of the ten values, as understood in the context of leadership and management, are presented for the purpose of placing this study in the context of their values.

2.7.1. The San value of knowing the face of God

The corresponding modern values for this value and image of the San are forward-looking and fair-minded (Letloa Trust 2012:8). This involves having an understanding and experience of seeing beyond the immediate, requires wisdom. Wisdom gives one the ability to be forward-looking. The San value for this kind of wisdom is to know the face of God. This can also be associated with being just or fair-minded.

The San know that there is a bigger Power at work in the world. The knowledge that they live in the presence of God, has been transferred from generation to generation. The immense expanse of the Kalahari firmament gives them the symbol to associate with knowing the face of God (2012:21). The Naro San use the term 'Nqarim Kg'ai Koe' for the face of God, as the Kalahari firmament shows them the unfathomable size of his presence and might. In his presence, under his protection and eye, they can never be alone. He is always bigger than any challenge they may face here and now.

There is always a spiritual dimension to anything they do and during difficult times the San go out alone into the veld to seek his Face.

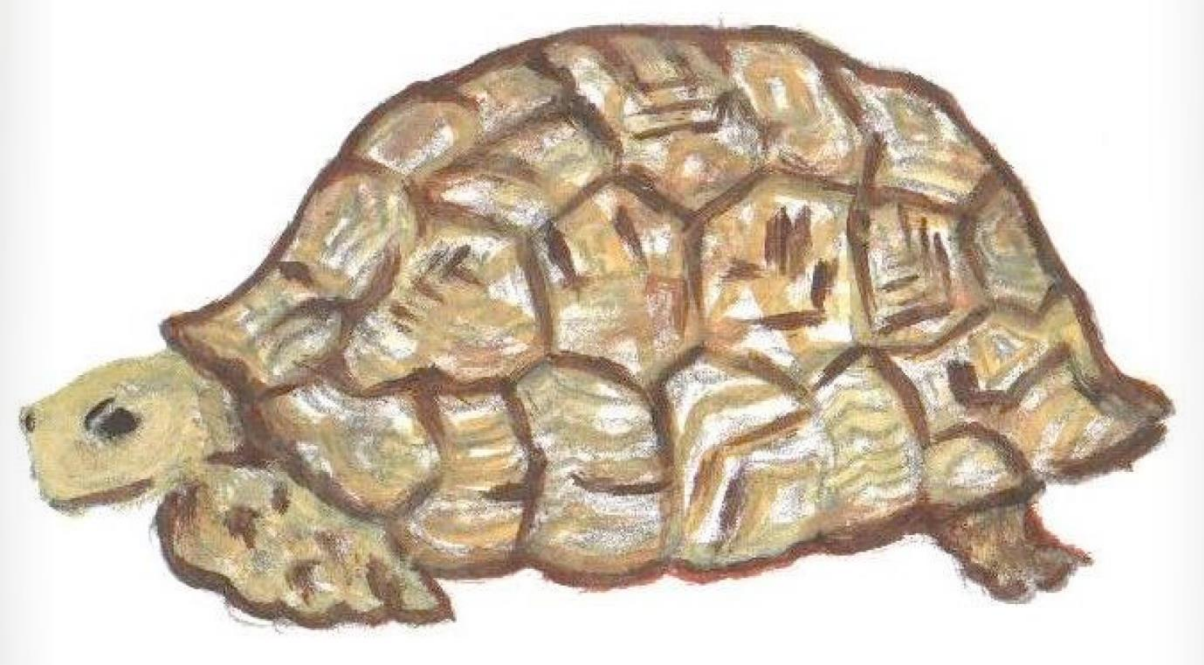


The symbol to know the face of God: Sky (Letloa 2012:21)

2.7.2. The San value of custodianship of the earth

The corresponding modern values for this value and image of the San are being dependable and supportive (2012:8). With Botswana's independence came the local land boards and a ministry of environmental affairs (2012:15), which led to development projects without honouring the relationship with the earth. The San live in close relationship with creation which they deeply respect.

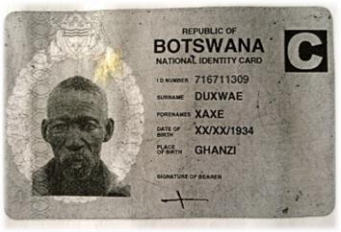
To disturb or harm the earth is seen on the same level as harming a relative or tribal member. The Naro San believe that creation and people are inter-dependent and that a spiritual connection exists between these two, which enables them to communicate in various ways (2012:14).



The symbol to hold the custodianship of the earth: Tortoise (Letloa 2012:14)

The shell of the tortoise is scarred and when one scale is damaged, the soft body is at risk. Damaging one part of creation leaves a scar on the earth. A tortoise can dig a hole in the ground to protect itself from severe drought or cold. But the tortoise is a very slow creature which has no ability to fend off predators. Similarly, the earth cannot defend itself if one part is mismanaged or exploited but is at the mercy of the people and animals living on it, and the impact in one area will affect the whole (Letloa 2012:14).

2.8. Meet Tshabu T̲ãase from D'Kar



Tshabu T̲ãase is a San, more specifically, from the Naro clan. He resides, with his family, on the D'Kar farm, in the Ghanzi district of Botswana. He remembers his father, Xaxe Duxwae, who first told him the Big Story – where it all began. Was it important for him to ask his father or mother where and when he was born? No, it was more important to know his family. He had a copy of his father's identification card, something that came with the new Tswana-led government. His father was born around the time of the Great Depression. Tshabu learned from his father that growing up is not easy. Where did his father first hear about the biblical story of creation? We will never know; that detail has not been told to anyone and is lost forever.

In the re-telling of Tshabu's life-story (Visser 2014; T̲ãase 2014), it is clear that his life was not easy. In his first interview with the researcher, he went back in history, showing the physical graves of his children and his first wife – all San. All were buried in the back of his garden, close to his 'new house'. He still refers to his residence, the old brick-and-mortar house, as 'new', as it represents the new way of living under the new Botswana government. Clearly, he yearns for the days when the area was open around the Ghanzi-pan, when fences did not determine one's movement and everyday life, or the lack of movement. Today there are many 'fences', inhibiting the San-way of living. His first wife's father was one of the first famous artists at the local art project. Tshabu is proud of this father-in-law. His second father-in-law, also a San, is a traditional healer – something Tshabu does not approve of.

Tshabu became a Christian on the old D'Kar farm and was one of the original twenty San who resided there. He probably converted through the ministry work of the reverend A.H. le Roux or Mr Jerling, the then farm manager. Tshabu preferred to use the title 'mister' as a sign of respect. He especially remembers the Bible stories told by Mr Jerling. Gaobolelwe Ngakayaja also worked for one of the local farmers. He became a Christian and was later installed as the pastor of the local Reformed Church

of D'Kar. Tshabu was a disciple of Gaobolelwe, who served as an elder in the local Reformed Church of D'Kar.

Tshabu still struggles with adjusting to the changes of life. When facing challenges, he visits the Visser family and looks for answers from the Word of God. This supports Hofstede's cultural dimensions' theory framework, as Tshabu with his collective cultural perspective, processes information with others, such as the Visser family and his own family; his 'power distance index' is high showing that a hierarchy is clearly established in his society, he seeks out a well-respected leader, and he prefers to have the input of the collective society (1984). He looks for spiritual answers in almost everything that happens to him, which is evident from his re-telling of the lightning bolt which struck the big tree in front of his house. He still feels that sitting around the fire helps him and his family to be comforted by the recalling and retelling of life's stories.

Tshabu always worked on farms, which was a way of survival for many San after the arrival of the Batswana and Europeans. Tshabu later worked at the local tannery on the D'Kar farm. His first wife worked at the local nursery school. All three of these projects later became part of the Kuru Development Trust.

As the projects and people increased on the D'Kar farm, the need for a Bible in the Naro language developed. Hessel and Coby Visser came to translate the Bible under the auspices of the Reformed Church. Tshabu speaks both Naro, Afrikaans and Setswana.

He is proud that he can work and put his hands to good use. In his spare time, he has produced some artwork from wood. His artwork reflects the old traditions and also some modern reflections. He is a man who now has to do manual work as a handy-man due to being 'fenced-in' by modern laws barring him from following the hunting lifestyle of the traditional San.

Tshabu on the left, busy repairing a log house.

Photo: H Visser 29 April 2015

Tshabu attended literacy classes on the farm. One of the first things he wrote was on the threshold of his house: ‘This is my house’ in Naro. He and his family are now part of approximately 1300 people living on the D’Kar farm, which belongs to the Reformed Church of D’Kar. The San love their limited ‘freedom’ here, as the government does not bother them on the farm.

Tshabu allowed the researcher and the readers of this study, to be part of his story, a story which may well be comparable to that of many biblical characters, struggling with life’s issues and with whom we can associate.

2.9. Tshabu T̲ãase’s descendant indented chart

It has already been established that the Naro language is in the Khoe-Kwadi family of languages (cf. paragraph 2.6). The Collins English Dictionary defines the noun ‘family tree’ as ‘a genealogical chart showing the ancestry, descent and relationship of members of a family or genealogical group’ (Dictionary.com 2017). In the case of Tshabu T̲ãase, a family tree was structured mainly through information retrieved

during discussion and inquiry. Textual evidence, such as birth and/or death certificates, lacked in many instances. Hessel Visser assisted Tshabu to capture his descendant's information in the form of an indented chart (Visser 2017).

The only way to learn more about Tshabu's father, Xaxe Duxwae, was through conversations with him. As mentioned before, Tshabu has a copy of his father's Identification Card, issued by the government of Botswana. From the approximate date on the Card and from Tshabu's recollection of stories told by his father he could place the birth of his father around the time of the Great Depression of the 1930's (T̲ãase 2014).

Tshabu was first married to a very young lady named Sam Xg'oa in the 1970's. She died before 2000, by which time she was in her late thirties. Tshabu and Sam had eight children during her short life. Only three of these children are still alive today, namely Ncence, Xgara and Taanse.

Shortly after the death of Sam, Tshabu married Tsetcg'ai Gamnqoa, who was younger than Sam. They have now been married for approximately 20 years and Tshabu sired another nine children by Tsetcg'ai, but they have lost two children, namely Qgam and Tshae at a young age.

Life and family are precious to Tshabu. To make something with his hands, thereby showing off his identity, gives him dignity (T̲ãase 2014). Bolaane confirms that the production of trade and crafts is an extension of the San cultural heritage; this enables them to generate an income and develops their skills while preserving their age-old traditions and culture (2014:55).

The summarised family chart of Tshabu T̲ãase and his wife Sam Xg’oa is as follows:

Tshabu T̲ãase b.~1959

\+ **Sam Xg'oa** b.~1960. DOM. ~1975. d.~2000.

├── **Ncõx'ae Tshabu** b.~1978. d.15 Apr 2005

├── **Ncence Tshabu** b.~1981

├── **Nqose Tshabu** b.~1985. d.21 Jun 2005

├── **Ntcisa Tshabu** b.~1988. d.~2013

├── **Xgara Tshabu** b.~1990

├── **Taanse Tshabu** b.~1993

├── **Qgam Tshabu** b.~1995. d.~1999

└── **C'ix'ae Tshabu** b.~1996. d.~2005

\+ **Tsetcg'ai Gamnqoa** b.~1965. DOM. ~1996

├── **Tcuixgao Sisi Tshabu** b.~1997

├── **Qgam Tshabu** b.~1999. d.~2001

├── **Qgam Tshabu** b.~2001

├── **Boroman Tshabu** b.~2004

├── **Nqose Tshabu** b.~2007

├── **Nxau Tshabu** b.~2009

├── **Cgara Tshabu** b.~2011

├── **Ntcisa Tshabu** b.~Jul 2013

└── **Tshae Tshabu** b.~Feb 2015. d. 23 Oct 2015.

From left to right: Tshabu, Tcuixgoa, Taanse Cukuri, Tsheko Cukuri.

Taanse and Tsheko are sons of Tshabu's brother, Cukuri.

Photo: H Visser 29 April 2015

Tshabu and the grave of his first wife, Sam Xg'oa.

Photo: Researcher 27 March 2015.

2.10. Summary and analysis

2.10.1. Oral people

The description and context of the San and the Naro San clan provided proof that the Naro is an indigenous oral people group that convey much of their culture, history and lessons from one generation to the next through oral methods. Historically, the Naro San lived in harmony with neighbouring San clans, but clashed with the Batswana, OvaHerero and Ovambanderu tribes who trekked across the landscape in search of better pastures and water for their cattle herds.

In the latter part of the 19th century, the expansion agenda of the European traders, hunters, missionaries and settlers significantly impacted the San. As hunter-gathers, the Naro San in the Ghanzi area were confined to smaller, fenced-in areas. Under British colonial rule, most of the San were either forced to work on farms or moved to settlements with only a few smaller groups still following their hunting-gathering lifestyle in game reserves. The San population became marginalised, stigmatised, landless and impoverished, struggling to maintain their culture and livelihood.

The Reformed Church in D'Kar assisted landless Naro San in preserving their language, culture and traditions. This led to the establishment of the Kuru Family of Organisations which through a holistic approach preserves, develops and supports the hunter-gathering San to enter and live within contemporary Botswana society.

The recent efforts of the Reformed Church in D'Kar, the Kuru Family of Organisations, the D'Kar Museum and Cultural Centre, the Kuru Art Project and the Naro Language Project helped the local Naro San in D'Kar to gain prominence in educational and cultural development. A milestone was reached with the publication of the New Testament in audio and text in 2012.

2.10.2. Oral methodologies

The world of the Naro San is changing rapidly and efforts have been made by the San themselves, the Botswana government, as well as other interested parties to keep their language and culture alive. Using contemporary art forms has assisted them to

express their indigenous knowledge system. Dance and music have been promoted to build self-respect through what the San value.

The description and context of the Naro San has shown a high orality reliant people expressing themselves through oral methodologies, yet who are presently adjusting in contemporary society to the demands of textual literacies, where the latter may indeed help to preserve the original oral communication. Their expression in new ways and means of their unique oral communication, in a changing environment, may help other oral societies in their struggle to adopt literacy alongside orality and may help literate societies to appreciate and re-discover the beauty of orality. Their context and description emphasise the need for appreciation, awareness and further scholarship in the field of orality in changing environments.

CHAPTER 3

OBSERVATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE NARO SAN

3.1. Introduction

The researcher conducted a case study on the Naro San and their engagement with Scripture, particular with the creation narrative of Genesis. The key findings of the conducted case study will be compared in Chapter 4 with a selection of three other case studies amongst indigenous oral people. Therefore, the principal goal of this chapter is to list the key findings and lessons learned during the case study which observed the Naro San and their engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis. This chapter places the findings within the purpose of this study. It deals with the questions to be answered and the methods for finding those answers.

This chapter's outline is as follows:

i) The purpose of the exploration
ii) The question for the case study
iii) Description of the case study
iv) Design of the case study
v) Key findings, conclusions, recommendations for further research

The key findings are presented in the following categories:

i) Oral translation
ii) Oral performance
iii) Oral engagement
iv) Oral preference and literacy

This case study on the Naro San engagement with Scripture is limited as their journey continues, and as it presents only a descriptive analysis. More research is needed to document this engagement more broadly among other Naro San and more deeply to include different forms of research.

3.2. The purpose of the exploration

Herbert Klem, a missionary who taught for many years in seminaries in Kenya and Nigeria, wrote that after almost 150 years of literacy-based mission activities and initiatives we will still miss half the world's population if we continue to believe that people must first be able to read before receiving the Word of God (1995:64). He also said that it is far wiser and will be more fruitful to empathise with the reasons people may have for oral communication preference than to try to cure their resistance to literacy.

Greer argues for the biblical pattern of communication that resonates with oral communicators: hearing, observing, imitating, listening, repeating, memorising, saying, storying, singing and expressing; and also, that we should allow the Holy Spirit to produce the 'living Word' as He transforms lives in ways which will leave us amazed (2011:4, 23, 71). He compared oral communicators to literate communicators who tend to learn by seeing, reading, examining, classifying, comparing an analysing and argues that the contrast of these two forms of communication goes deeper (2011:23). Oral communicators often think and talk about events, not words, and their usage of information is embedded in time and usually within a story, song, art, poem or riddle. Oral communicators store information in their memories.

Sailhamer points out that medieval Protestants held that the biblical patriarchs not only relied on unwritten Scripture, that is, biblical revelation in spoken form, but were also first-hand receivers of divine revelation (2009:137). They did not have the Scriptures in written form – but lived it, communicated it, and transferred it. Sailhamer also identifies this fundamental belief with the orthodox concept of primeval revelation (2009:144) and observes that Scriptural texts such as Exodus 15:25 and 18:16 denote that laws were well known and followed (2009:365). He asks whether the Pentateuch set out to establish a religion firmly grounded in a written religion – i.e. sola scriptura – or whether it endorsed some form of unwritten religion (2009:564).

Barrick asks an even more contemporary question: Do we have within our written Bible all the revelation God ever disclosed to humankind? (2011:2). Or does the written word confine the reader, hiding from him the divine revelation present in the narrative that is heard by an oral person? He concludes that the God Who is, is the God Who speaks.

In times leading up to the patriarchal era continuing forward into the patriarchal era, God's people depended upon his unwritten revelation for knowing his will (Barrick 2011:10). Barrick states that God has not supplied the contents of that unwritten revelation, because as literates we do not need it today to know Him, to know his will, or to be obedient to Him. He continues that as literates we have to admit that God spoke to many individuals at many times and that we should not limit his revelatory speech to only that which is recorded in text.

The purpose of the conducted case study on the Naro San in this research is to illustrate that they rely on the unwritten Word to follow Jesus Christ, to communicate God's Word, to build community and express their faith in everyday life. The aim of this research is not to argue against literacy, but to appreciate orality as a trusted and effective mode of communication on the same level as literacy.

This exploration of their ways and means will also seek to meet the following objectives:

i) To interpret and understand the Naro San's engagement with the creation narrative in Genesis.
ii) To compare their engagement with that of three other oral communities.
iii) To derive guidelines that can be used in oral Scripture translation and engagement.

3.3. The question for the case study

The principal focus of this research is to answer the 'How' question. In answering the main research question the focus of this chapter will be on answering the question:

How do the Naro San and specifically Tshabu's family engage with the creation narrative of Genesis?

In a case study, the investigator (researcher) cannot influence, regulate or predetermine the behaviour of the San involved in Scripture engagement events. The emphasis is on a present-day occurrence in a real-life setting with the creation narrative. The San recognise that other humans have more physical and literal fences

which influence even a story-line. They, however, find it more appropriate to move freely, unhindered by the fences put up by other people.

The description and documented context in this chapter focus on the specific process of the Nar San's Scripture engagement with the creation account of Genesis. In the following chapter, their engagement will be compared with that of the Dao of Indonesia, the Baka of Equatorial Africa and the Gonja of northern Ghana.

3.4. Description of the case study

Stake argues that the data collection for a case study begins before the commitment to conduct a study. It begins with the background, acquaintance and first impressions (1995:49). A considerable proportion of the data is early impressions, which will be refined and tested during the study. Stake argues that the 'first obligation' in a case study research is to fully develop and understand the case at hand (1995:49-50). Case studies are sometimes selected if the researcher requires the close examination of people, topics, issues or programs (Hays 2004:218).

Stake states that a qualitative case study capitalises on ordinary ways and means of becoming acquainted with things (1995:49). Researchers have a great privilege and obligation. They have the privilege of paying attention to what they consider worthy of attention and the obligation of making meaningful conclusions are principle qualifications for qualitative research. In other words, the researcher has to be directly involved in all aspects of the research.

The case study research excels at bringing us an understanding of the issue at hand and can extend the experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research. The case study of the Naro San will, therefore, be compared with three other case studies in the next chapter.

Each of these items could constitute a case or what is termed a bounded system. A bounded system determines the focal point of the study (Stake 1995:49). The bounded unit for this study is the Naro San community's engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis founded on oral communication methodologies.

Stake (1995) and Yin (2009) use different terms to describe a variety of case studies. Yin categorises case studies as exploratory, explanatory or descriptive. Exploratory case studies are frequently used to define the structure for future studies (Yin 2009:6). Explanatory case studies define how and why an experience took place, suggesting possible cause-and-effect relationships. (2009:7). A descriptive case study is used to develop a document that fully elucidates the details of an experience (Stake 1995).

A descriptive case study was selected for this study for two main reasons:

i) First, one of the goals of all case studies is to develop an understanding of the bounded system. For this study the specific purpose is to develop an understanding of the Naro San community's engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis.

ii) Secondly, descriptive case studies answer questions based on theory. The description of oral communication methodologies observed during the research process helped to the define the theoretical constructs under which the Naro San engage with Scripture.

The result of this study can be used by Scripture practitioners in oral communities to adjust their approach towards a more effective oral Scripture engagement and translation.

3.5. Design of the case study

Yin points out that a case study inquiry is only fruitful when built on the collection and analysis of data from numerous sources (2009). Rađenović maintains that there is no one correct conclusion to any case study and that there are multiple ways to interpret a case study, resulting in multiple potential solutions (2014:5). This study therefore also provides an opportunity to compare and discuss different analyses and alternative solutions.

What follows is an outline of this case study used for the Naro San, identifying the sources of the data, the methods used in obtaining the data, analysing the data, and how the data will reveal effective oral communication methodologies for Scripture engagement.

3.5.1. Sources of data

The collection of data started before the commitment to conduct the case study. The background started with the researcher being exposed to the Naro San community during the process of recording the Naro New Testament in 2012 and led to further acquaintances and impressions over the years from 2012 to 2016 during personal visits, the presentation of Interactive Bible Discovery training sessions and personal interviews. To collect data the researcher employed the following:

i) Documented data in the field of orality, dealing specifically with the San and Naro-speaking San. This includes contributions in the form of articles, communications and artwork from the Naro Language Project of the Reformed Church, the Kuru Art Project and Davar Partners International.
ii) Interviews conducted with the Naro, and specific people of the D'Kar Naro, as well as other people who were working with the Naro San on a daily basis.
iii) Participation, involvement and observation in facilitating Scripture engagement through Bible story-telling techniques. The engagement interventions included full three-day training events, with Bible storytelling, discussions and feedback. This was supplemented with individual visits and follow-up visitations and conversations which were recorded.
iv) Interviews with artists and the viewing of art at the Kuru Art Project, presented as feedback and visuals in this research.

After collecting, the researcher compiled the table below to analyse the data. Sub-questions are listed in the left-hand column of the table, followed by the sources of the data, the method of collection and the preferred method of learning.

Questions	*Sources*	*Method*	*Learning preference*
How do they receive the creation story?	Researchers, Naro San, Participants, Contributors	Review of existing data, Interviews, Participation, Contributions	Dialogue & Group Discussions

How do they pass on the creation story?	Researchers, Naro San, Participants, Contributors	Review of existing data, Interviews, Participation, Contributions	Dialogue & Group Discussions
Who is involved in learning the creation story?	Researchers, Naro San, Participants, Contributors	Review of existing data, Interviews, Participation, Contributions	Participation
What is the role of the performing art forms in learning the creation story?	Researchers, Naro San, Participants, Contributors	Review of existing data, Interviews, Participation, Contributions	Performing Arts
What message does the creation story carry today?	Researchers, Naro San, Participants, Contributors	Review of existing data, Interviews, Participation, Contributions	Experience
How is the creation story viewed today?	Researchers, Naro San, Participants, Contributors	Review of existing data, Interviews, Participation, Contributions	Variegated
What is used to help in memorising the creation story?	Researchers, Naro San, Participants, Contributors	Review of existing data, Interviews, Participation, Contributions	Mnemonics

In what ways do you learn best?	Researchers, Naro San, Participants, Contributors	Review of existing data, Interviews, Participation, Contributions	Participation in multiple oralities

Research Design Plan

3.5.2. Documentation

Yin argues that the use of documentation is vital in case studies and should be employed to support and enhance data from other sources (2009:36). In this case, it was used to understand the ways in which the Naro San engage with Scripture. The information furnished by documentation collected in this field should not be used as indications of certain findings, but rather as a source of support or revealing the need for further research and understanding. LeCompte and Schensul, therefore, argue that documentation may be necessary to develop a complete understanding of the physical and social environment being studied (1999a). Stake states that just as with the gathering of observational or interview data, the collection of documents must be based on the organisation of the study (1995).

While much of what happens during oral Scripture engagement for the Naro San can be accessed through the use of observation and interviews, understanding the ways in which the Naro San engage with Scripture may need further research. To accomplish this the researcher visited, requested articles, conducted interviews and received feedbacks on artwork from the Naro Language Project of the Reformed Church, the Kuru Art Project and Davar Partners International.

These resources supported the observations and interviews regarding the ways in which the Naro San engage with Scripture and added to the understanding of effective Scripture engagement and translation in other higher orality reliant communities.

3.5.3. Focussed Interviews

Stake states that qualitative researchers take pride in discovering and portraying the multiple views of the case (1995:64). Although participant observations allow for the collection of rich data, there is also room for the researcher's interpretation of the environment. Stake, therefore, argues that the interview is the main road to multiple realities. LeCompte and Schensul point out that interviews follow the format of the formative theoretical framework and explore the main domains in the study, initial hypotheses and contextual factors (1999a:122-123). Therefore, finding a balance between data gathering and storytelling in the interview process is of paramount importance. LeCompte and Schensul add that a good interviewer must:

i) Keep in mind how the topic relates to and interprets the larger question asked by the study.
ii) Determine whether the person being interviewed is keeping to the topic, and if not, how to reintroduce the topic.
iii) Understand what rational connections the interviewee is making in the discussion when those connections are likely to be quite different from those of the interviewer.
iv) Establish the meaning of the terms used.
v) Recognise when the interviewee's ideas are clearly expressed, or when they need to be elaborated on to make sure that they will be understood by everyone who reads or listens to the notes.

In order to have a better understanding of the Naro San community's engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis, the researcher conducted focussed interviews with Tshabu T̲ãase, the Naro San involved in the Interactive Bible Discovery Training and Coby Visser, Scripture Engagement Coordinator for S.I.L Southern Africa.

Tshabu Tãase on his property during an interview.

Photo: Researcher 27 March 2015

3.5.4. Participant observation

Hays points out that observation is an important aspect of case study research and that data may be collected in both formal and informal processes (2004:230). Formal processes mostly require accounts of different types of observed behaviour. Informal observations allow the researcher to openly observe the situation, recording the complexities within it. Questions and answers in this case study were addressed through a combination of formal and informal observations. It is the researcher's belief that this approach contributed to developing the description of the situation better than either process would have done on its own. LeCompte and Schensul support this assumption by arguing that, used in combination with informal observations, formal observations orient the researchers to the field and enable them to sort out major social and cultural dimensions in the field setting (1999a:97).

This study involved a formal protocol in which the researcher observed and recorded oral Scripture engagement activities in two three-day Interactive Bible Discovery training events conducted in Ghanzi, Botswana. A minimum of eight hours for each training event was spent per day. The observations were made during each one of the eleven building blocks of the Interactive Bible Discovery Training. The protocol of the story-teller/group was used (Marx and Swarr 2015:26-34).

Naro San Participant Group.

Interactive Bible Discovery Training, Ghanzi 28 October 2014.

Photo: Researcher

3.6. Key findings, conclusions and recommendations for further research

Never before 2012 did the Naro San have the Bible or New Testament translated into their language (Visser 2012). One could therefore legitimately ask: how did they get to know the creation narrative of Genesis?

As discussed in Chapter 1, Henschel argues that human beings want the answers to three foundational questions: What? When? And Why? He is convinced that the first people answered these questions by using their beautiful narrations, in the folklores of prehistorical time. He finds it remarkable that as modern people we still understand such myths (cf. Section 1.4.8. above). In Africa, there are thousands of such myths, which may not be accurate or complete, but there may be parts that are related to the creation stories of Genesis. Hummel argues that the biblical creation accounts have

some similarities with the pagan neighbours of the Israelites, as it was given to them in the wilderness after the exodus from Egypt, but before the conquest of Canaan, referred to as the historical-cultural model (1986:175),

Henschel's plea is for us to appreciate and understand the immense beauty of the stories of the past (2002:4). The general question of when everything, including the San, was created is a universal question irrespective of the way we prefer to learn or communicate. There are other questions that come to an observer's mind: what do they hear in listening to the creation story of the Bible? Is it different to or the same as a creation myth they have previously heard?

Coby Visser reports that the San express themselves through storytelling, discussion, songs, art, drama and dances (2013). Although they use drama and painting in Bible engagement, their most preferred form of oral Bible engagement is storytelling. She mentions that only one percent of the local Naro in Ghanzi are Christians. From the Bible storytelling workshop conducted she reports that participants enjoyed it and took the process and content seriously.

3.6.1. Oral translation

3.6.1.1. Created in an oral God's image

Charles Madinger reminds us that we are all created in the image of an oral God (2016:3). God by nature is an oral communicator. He created humans in his image to communicate and connect with him.

Madinger adds that our created orality begins with the process of inner speech. We learn how to perform and express that inner speech. We verbalise it. We physically act it out through bodily motions. We write it out with descriptive impressions. The psychologist Vygotsky argues that our inner speech forms as we integrate thought and language and private speech, as children talk to themselves as they carry out a difficult cognitive task. Private speech is the earliest manifestation of inner speech. Furthermore, the use of speech codes in the reading process is part of the same phenomenon of inner speech (1962). Piaget offers opposing views on the development course of private speech and the environmental circumstances in which it occurs most often (1959).

Visser indicates that the translation of the Bible into the Naro language shows the Naro people that they are important to God – that He is their Creator, that He speaks their language (1998).

A typical structure of the creation narrative as found in the first chapter of Genesis, as chosen by Lioy, which is very low in orality reliance, can be summarised as follow (2016:17-26):

i) The primordial earth (Gen 1:1-2): The universe brought into existence. It was a completely new beginning. God formed and filled a suitable ecosystem for habitation. The Spirit brooded, directly involved to ensure life would emerge.
ii) The first Creation Day (Gen 1:3-5): God purposefully brought the universe into existence. God commanded light to be, previously not present, in sharp contrast with darkness, thereby laying the foundations for a cycle of good order and time.
iii) The Second Creation Day (Gen 1:6-8): God created a permeated vault, separating waters and naming it by his authority.
iv) The Third Creation Day (Gen 1:9-13): God separated land and seas. He commanded the land to produce vegetation, on its turn to produce and enhance life.
v) The Fourth Creation Day (Gen 1:14-19): God decreed that there should be brilliant lights in the sky to separate day and night. It was to serve as signs to mark of seasons, days and years. There were also signs of the Creator, who controlled these lights.
vi) The Fifth Creation Day (Gen 1:20-23): God commanded that the sea brings forth fish and marine life, while the sky should be filled with flying creatures, all of it subject to his unchangeable will. He blessed these with productivity and fruitfulness, ensuring their success.
vii) The Sixth Creation Day (Gen 1:24-2:1): God populated the land, seas and vegetation with animals and humans. In turn, they governed the realms they populated. Humans were made in his image, bearing the material and immaterial aspects of their existence. God endowed them with the ability to flourish and be successful.

Would such a structure be important to Tshabu and the Naro San? From the training interventions (Interactive Bible Discovery) conducted by the researcher as well as the

interviews with Tshabu, it was clear that the structure did not impress them that much. They may typically correlate these structures in general, such as the divisions into chapters, verses or specific days, to the fences put up in the Kalahari Desert which limit their free movement.

The feedback gathered from the Naro San group during training sessions focussed more on the character of the Creator God in the creation narrative of Genesis, who created everything for humankind to inhabit the earth. Secondly, they were excited about the logical order. Not once did they doubt the existence of the Creator God or look for evidence in creation narrative of Genesis about his existence. Tshabu said that we (the Naro San) know that Nqari Ba exists (T̲ãase 2014). This resonates with Lioy's assessment that the creation story, like the rest of the Bible, does not try to prove the Creator's existence. (2016:16-17). In general, the creation narrative of Genesis tells the Naro San that the one true Creator God lives, created all of creation, and cares for all creation including humankind.

The stand-up displays depicting the San Oral History, in the D'Kar Museum and Cultural Centre (2008), communicate the importance of Nqari Ba (Creator God) for the Naro San. 'To help us survive, Nqari Ba gave us an understanding of the world beyond what we can see.' This understanding of being created by the Creator is expressed, or translated, through their medium of performance. The San treasure what they hear, and observe through imitating, repeating, internalising, saying, storying, singing – a complete performance. Visser adds mimicking to the process of translation (1998). They mimic animals of the field in order to make an analogy of human behaviour.

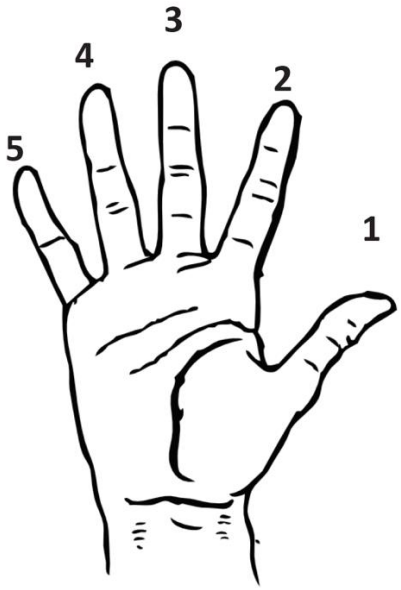
Xgaiga Qhomatcã eloquently captures the essence of artistic depiction in a word picture, saying: 'Art starts with creation and will always be part of being human. As long as we live, our art will be there. It is like when you come upon a dried-up plant that you know contains an edible tuber…you have to dig really deep to see where it started its life. That is where you will find the food to eat. Art is like that. You have to dig deep to find its life (meaning).' (Kuru Art Project 2007:4). From this quote, it is clear that for the Naro, everything started with creation. There is no other conceivable way. The Creator God is the beginning of life. He created. In the same way that God created, He has given us the ability to be like Him. Oral God. Oral creatures. Oral communicators. Oral translators. Oral performers.

In the researcher's interviews with Tshabu, his story started in the past as far as his memory could serve him to recall events of yesteryear. He used a story-line to communicate the main events of his past. We did not sit in a room to conduct the interview. It had to be out in nature. He wanted to show the researcher physical evidence of what he described. He translated knowledge to the researcher, through storytelling, his origins performed in the context of the world here and now. Woven into the very fabric of his story, was the presence of the Creator God, who was active and involved in all aspects of his life. He spoke with great reverence about Creator God, who created all of creation to be good. He is righteous. This Creator God still 'speaks' to Tshabu through creation around him, his interaction with people in the community, and through his Story, that is, the Bible conveyed to him.

Tshabu used words, physical evidence such as a tree struck by lightning or an animal, even the history of his family in the community, as evidence of a Creator God who still speaks and is still involved in creation (T̲ãase 2014). This understanding is confirmed by Westermann that the biblical account of creation describes man in all of his relations: 'The basic question about the relationship of God to man, of the very meaning of community and human existence are so intertwined in the biblical reflection on creation that they cannot be separated from each other' (1990:73).

During the storytelling sessions, in Ghanzi, the researcher observed different small groups, learning and re-telling the creation narrative. The groups were composed according to language preference: Afrikaans, English, Naro, Sesotho and Setswana.

The process of learning the biblical creation story involves bodily expression, lots of discussions, the asking of questions and feedback. The five steps of learning a Bible story from the Interactive Bible Discovery Manual were used during the training (Marx and Swarr 2015:27-28). The strong hand is used for remembering the process to learn the Bible story as listed below.



i) Pray: The participants at the training events listened to the creation story once. They then prayed together for the ability to remember and understand the story and to retell it accurately and with enthusiam.

ii) Listen: The participants listened to the story another time. They were taught that as they rehearse the the story they may want to change some of the wording to make it easier for them to understand. As an example: they may replace difficult words with a word with similar meaning. They selected words for their story that their listeners would use to express themselves.

iii) Tell: They then each had the opportunity to tell the Bible story out loud from memory. They first had to try to recall as much of the story poissible, and if they forgot parts, not stop but to finish the telling. If the forgotten information came back to the storyteller's mind, he could add the missed information. They had to remember that it is not memorisation but story-telling.

iv) Retell: They had to listen to the story once more. While listening, they noted any information they had left out or added. They were asked to remember the story by following the picures formed by the story in their minds. Once they had listened to it again and remembered the picture, each one had to tell the story once more. The story-teller was allowed to make corrections as needed.

v) Step through: The participants then had to step or work through the story on a systematic basis. They had to select their opening and closing statements for the bible story. After this, they had to establish the path of their story. They had

to prepare how it would start and end. As they moved through the path of the story, they had to make mental notes of difficult parts of the story, to assist their memories in recalling the information during the retelling exercise.

The Naro speaking group quickly internalised the Bible story, and learned it as a group, and not individually. It was particularly interesting to note their use of gesture in performance. Everyone participated in the re-telling and identification of key elements in the story. As a group, they encouraged the storyteller whenever he got stuck with the details and greatly praised him when finishing the Bible story.

They already had an animated discussion going whereas the other groups were still trying to recall the Bible story. Their mental pictures and close relationship with creation enabled them to recall the biblical creation story with ease. They were excited about the story.

Their discussion focussed on what they had heard from the Bible story and how it related to similar stories they have learned before. With the right encouragement, they were able to move the application of the Bible story to their personal lives.

Compared to the other people groups present at the training events, namely, the Afrikaners, English people, Basotho and Batswana, the Naro San struggled to tell the Bible story before the whole group. They were also not keen on leading discussions within the whole group or to encourage storytellers from other people groups in the same way that they would encourage their fellow Naro San.

In discussion with the local missionary, Coby Visser, the researcher learned that this hesitance on the part of the San to engage on the same level with other people groups may still be the legacy of their previous marginalisation by those same people groups.

3.6.1.2. Creation under the face of God

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Letloa states that the San know that human life is in the presence of God (2012:10). This intimate, basic knowledge has been transferred from generation to generation. The magnitude of the sky tells them and the generations

after them about the Creator God's incomprehensible power, presence and might. He protects them. Under his presence and eye, they experience peace. He is always bigger than any ordeal they may face.

The painting of the biblical story of Noah's Ark by Sara, a Naro women, clearly shows the sky – representing God's presence with the humans and animals in the Ark. Her comprehension, translated into her artwork, communicates that nothing is hidden from the Creator God's sight. He is all-knowing.

Noah's Ark 2016. Artist: Sara 350 x 400. Used with permission

During the researcher's interviews with Tshabu, it became clear that he experienced life, living under the Kalahari sky, under the face of God, as a continuation of an old story. His life encompasses more than one time or event. He recalls it not in a linear way, but retells events based on the criterion of priority. He walks into one setting, exits and moves on to another story and setting. Many a time these stories are not

linearly connected in time but spread out in the expanse of time much like the stars scattered in heaven. On the question where life began, he stated that it began with creation. For him, his entire world under the Kalahari sky is the dwelling place of God. It is a divine sanctuary to him (Tãase 2014).

He placed the first telling of the creation story by his father, in the context of a hunting expedition, a first for him with his father. The connection between his first hunting experience and his first introduction to the first story in the Bible was noted and important. This emphasizes the importance of this particular Bible story, told after his first expedition. It marks a significant milestone in the life of a young San boy metaphorically being introduced to the God of creation. Moreover, the event took place in the veld, under the Kalahari sky, in His Presence. (Tãase 2014)

The interview sessions continued over a couple of days. Each day a part of the story was told with emphasis on that which Tshabu regarded as important. At the end of each session, he said that he would prefer to think and reflect, before telling the researcher the next part of the story. The emphasis on certain parts of the creation story showed the importance of that part for both him and the listener. It marked either a spiritual treasure in plain view or hidden in the fabric of the story. The process of thinking and reflection is also important both to the presenter and listener. Time is allowed to reflect on the lessons, meaning and implications of the story.

During the telling of his version of the creation story, he introduced other characters into his account. Father, wife, children, friends and the extended family. Although his first wife and some of his children had passed away and he showed the researcher their graves, he still talks about them lovingly, recalling their history, and looking forward to being united with them again. Life under the face (presence) of the Creator God, is the ultimate experience for him. (Tãase 2014)

Nothing can fence in this life in the presence of God, although the government had placed fences around the D'Kar village. He indicates: 'According to the Botswana government, the land on the other side of the fence now belongs to someone – we believe that the land still belongs to Creator God' (Tãase 2014).

Tshabu also did not try to prove to the researcher that the Creator God existed – for him, this belief is not something new. He, and his ancestors before him, lived life under

the face of Creator God. God is and will be the source of all food, water, children, health, forgiveness and grace. It is difficult for him to adjust to a life controlled by the modern government and other people. To do work for payment of money remains problematic to him. He yearns to live freely in the veld – God's property. He wants to live in harmony with God. Like so many other San, harmony with God is important in order to live in harmony with one another in the community (Tãase 2014).

During the question session of the Interactive Bible Discovery training in Ghanzi, the participants had to answer five sets of questions to analyse the biblical contents of the creation story. These are:

i) What can we learn from the setting/situation/scenery of the creation story?
ii) What can we learn from what God said/did in the story?
iii) What choices did God make in the story, and did He have any other choices?
iv) What impact/results do we see from God's choices? Who or what was impacted and in what ways?
v) What can we learn about God? What characteristics do we see? What does this mean for my life? In what ways do we respond to Him?

The feedback gathered from the Naro San group during the training sessions was that God intentionally, thoughtfully, methodically and in an orderly way brought everything into existence for the benefit of his ultimate creation, humankind. They were excited to hear the order of creation, for example, that plants could not sprout, grow and yield fruit before there were the resources of soil, water and a sun to make it sprout and grow.

Some of the Naro San also noted that during the first three days Creator God shaped creation and in the second three days He populated creation.
Day 1: God created light and separated it from darkness.
Day 2: He created the sky and water and the waters separated.
Day 3: Land, seas and vegetation created, and the water gathered together.
Day 4: He created the sun, moon and stars to govern the day and night and to mark the days, seasons and years,
Day 5: fishes and birds to fill the waters and the sky,

Day 6: and land animals. Humans were finally created to rule over the earth and to commune with God.
Day 7: God rested and declared his creation good.

It is interesting to note that they never focussed on the time (how long) of the six-day creation period, but rather on the rhythm, sequence and result of creation. For them the main focus of the story was that Creator God created everything for humankind. Facts which they learned about Creator God, as He was portrayed in the story, are listed below, and the researcher noted similarities to Pawson's list as well (1999:13-15):

i) Nqari Ba is personal.
ii) Nqari Ba is powerful.
iii) Nqari Ba is uncreated.
iv) Nqari Ba is creative.
v) Nqari Ba is orderly.
vi) Nqari Ba is singular.
vii) Nqari Ba is plural.
viii) Nqari Ba is good.
ix) Nqari Ba is living.
x) Nqari Ba is a communicator.
xi) Nqari Ba is like humankind.
xii) Nqari Ba is not like humankind.
xiii) Nqari Ba is independent.

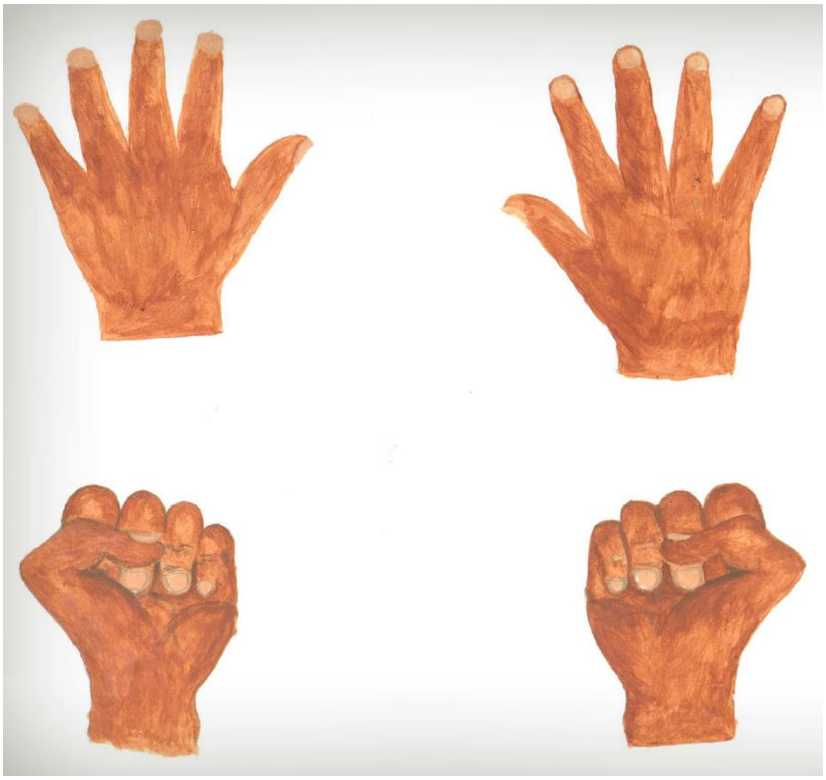
During one of the training events, the researcher was interested in in how the Naro San experienced the relationship between man, as his creature, and Creator God. The researcher attempted to assist them by mentioning the metaphor of a man dancing with a woman, the man leading the couple in the dance. The Naro San expressed extreme shock and explained that it was unthinkable that a man and a woman would ever dance with one another. The San only dance before Nqari Ba (Creator God), never with one another. They typically dance around the fire at a communal gathering. For the San, such a dance is to bring back the harmony with Him and within the community.

They explained that man has the role of a hunter and woman the role of a gatherer. A man has the privilege of taking the life of another creature, and in this role, he imitates Nqari Ba as the Great Provider and Protector. Life was not to be taken thoughtlessly or at random. The woman has to gather tubers, roots, seedpods and edible fruit. Herein she also reflects Nqari Ba's softer side. She never has to do the high-risk work of taking a life, or defending the family against danger, but shows compassion for her family instead.

3.6.1.3. Created to care

A highly rated value in the San community is the responsibility to care (Letloa 2012:9). An important aspect of this is the responsibility to care for creation: 'When we see people exploiting and damaging the earth and the environment, we have to stand up and be responsible and make our voice heard to protect the earth for our children.'

The San use the symbol of the hands to illustrate the responsibility to care. Their hands remind them that they hold in their hands everything that is precious to them. In the San rock art, a person can see the paintings left by their ancestors as proof of their presence, but also that they were responsible for the earth, God's creation.



Hands: the value to be responsible to care (Letloa 2012:9)

Tshabu impressed the researcher with his soft and tender demeanour. The San see themselves as soft people (Letloa 2012:11), taking care of creation, but also treating every part of creation, including human beings, with great love and respect (Letloa 2012:22). The biblical account of the creation narrative explains it in the same way: everything which God created, is good. Tshabu similarly sees every aspect of his daily life as good, including the hardships and challenges (T̲ãase 2014).

Reflecting on the biblical creation narrative, Tshabu confirmed that it is the responsibility of a human being to care for all of creation. He elaborated on the impact of the carelessness of other human beings on creation and his family. He firmly believes that, as a San, created in the image of God, he has to care for himself, for fellow San, for other human beings, and for the rest of creation. For him, taking care of creation is not an exploitive relationship, but a godly, fatherly act to provide sustenance in an ecological relationship. He struggles to understand why other people groups cannot do the same (T̲ãase 2014).

Daneel confirms his understanding of man's God-ordained responsibility to care for creation, as he notes in Ghana, quoting Raviro Mutonga: 'This is the work Mwari (God) commands us to do.' Mangombe adds (Daneel 2001: 190-191):

> We as women are the first to return to this task of tending Mwari's garden. We women are chosen by Mwari for this important task and will be honored for it. When planting Mwari's trees as a woman, ordained by Mwari to do so, I have to dress in my church uniform. These are not in the first place my trees, or ours. It is God who waters or kills. He causes the trees to wither and die, he provides life through rain.

3.6.1.4. Created to communicate

Through their stories, art, song, rituals and games the San come to terms with their daily pressures and expectations. As a 'soft' people, who embrace their fellow humans with great love and have a caring spirit to bring healing, they dislike conflict (Letloa 2012:11). Boolane reports that Botswana is a country that still resists community radio stations and, as a result of this, the Naro San have to preserve their music, songs, dance, art and handicraft through alternative expressions (2014:50).

Although Mrs Visser reported that they prefer storytelling in Scripture engagement, art has become their most expressive form of communication with the outside world, followed closely by dance and music (2013). Few strangers are invited into the fire-circle, because they will not understand the language or appreciate the way to bring back harmony within the family. They have developed their own voice in a language of wider communication, which is art. The preferred art form of the Naro San is painting (Kuru Art Project 2016). Their art confirms that as San, they can adapt, be accepted and live in an ever-changing world, without losing their values and identity. Bolaane notes that in studying their art one can still notice that the San draw deeply from their ancient history (2014:52).

Thama K̲ase says: 'Art is like politics in your mind. You may dream of so many things or hear so many stories. Art is to put these things together, to give meaning to them and to make them visual.' (Kuru Art Project 2007:6) Art is a form of translating stories, including biblical stories.

Perhaps it has been best summarised by an anonymous Naro artist: 'People say we do not have a voice. But the problem is not that we do not have a voice, the problem is that people do not know how to listen to us' (Barachinni 2013).

In the interviews with Tshabu, the researcher noted the extensive use of hand signs (T̲ãase 2014). It was clear that he employs what is natural to him – storytelling is his strongest communication tool. To tell his story to an outsider is to bring that person into his family. His world is not an idyllic paradise, but it does not blemish the beauty he sees. His reflection on his life, intertwined with the ongoing creation story is rather seen as aesthetic and functional, than ethical.

3.6.1.5. Created to co-create

Bolaane (2014:54) reports that in recent years, San artists have received substantial acclaim locally and abroad, such as Dada Coexa'ae, Qgam, Cg'ose Ntcox'o, Nxabe Taase, Thamae Kaashe, Xhaqho X'are. San handicrafts include a wide range of items, such as ostrich egg-shell products, glass beadwork, wooden crafts, hunting sets, skin products and paintings (2014:55).

The San art, music and dance performances still play a vibrant and symbolic role in their lives across borders. Bolaane argues that, in addition to playing a role in economic and social change, San handicraft, art, music and dance can well form the basis of knowledge and representation of the voice of the San itself. He concludes that as the general public's interest in San traditional knowledge grows, the younger generation of San realises that their culture can instil pride, build self-esteem, have economic value to the San and help them and other cultures to transcend physical and mental borders (2014:58-59). ACT International, founded by Byron Spradlin, also believes that today's culture listens better to artists and therefore uses art and music to communicate the gospel message (ACT International 2018).

Tshabu is very proud of his handicraft, which consists of traditional and modern images made out of wood, depicting animals and human figurines and even soccer players, reflecting his recent encounter with the world of sport. This gives him identity, dignity and affords him the opportunity to trade in a changing world. This generation of an income develops his artisan's skills, on the one hand, while on the other hand, it preserves his age-old traditions and culture (Tãase 2014).

According to Dyrness, the Israelites understood art and beauty as reflections of the Creator God's perfect order. In his study, he further found that the early Christians used art to teach and inspire. He points out that during the Reformation, Protestants abandoned the visual art in favour of the written word. He acknowledges the recent appreciation of visual art and concludes that it, when reflecting the order and wholeness of the world God created, can play an important role in communication the gospel message (2001).

The artists of the Kuru Art project focus on communicating the gospel message in various artworks (cf. 3.6.1.2. above). Thus, presenting the viewer with a message that is perceived by the eyes.

Harbinson eloquently says (2005:31):

> ''Art can capture things for us where words alone fail. Art can both remind us of what we have forgotten and help us to see what we have never understood.'

3.6.2. Oral performance

3.6.2.1. A narrative discourse

God is an oral communicator who created us in His image to communicate with Him and to connect with Him by our shared capacities, and everyone shares this oral nature. One consequence is our oral communication with each other. Our communication methodologies may differ based on our culture of origin. Madinger states that the discussion is no longer about oral versus literate or even primary versus secondary orality. He states that some people and cultures have a high orality reliance and depend profoundly on oral communication, while others have a low orality reliance and depend on print/text orientation and expressions (2016:3).

Emmanuel Jatau agrees that the story of creation points to an oral God (2016:54). We first encounter Him in the creation narrative in Genesis, calling the whole of creation into existence. He points out from Revelation 1:3 that there will always be those who read it and those who hear it.

Around the fire, the San have been telling their stories for countless generations. The elders tell stories to the children to entertain them and to teach them. The stories have a symbolic meaning or a message of wisdom about life. A saying is: ‘If you are smaller and weaker than others, be clever and you will survive!’ (Kuru Development Trust and Naro Language Project, Volume 1). At special events, the San depict their stories through cultural dances. Through story-telling and dancing, they transfer their wisdom, traditions and culture to the next generation.

The San Oral History, as described in the displays in the D’Kar Museum and Cultural Centre (2008), conveys the oral performance of the San in their communication with God. They prayed to Him through their dances and songs around the communal fire. This is also where they told their stories – age-old accounts about survival, about the interactions between humans, humans and animals and about everyday things they experienced. Their narratives were translated into dances and songs. It helped them to restore the harmony in their families and communities. They were healed from problems, illnesses, even of conflict and hunger, by dancing under the evening sky (face of God).

To this day, they still solve their problems in groups and sometimes still dance to bring back lost harmony. Their rhythms and melodies are different from any other musical tradition in Africa, perhaps the oldest music on earth.

3.6.2.2. A song

The Reformed Church in D'Kar started a Naro Choir in 1989. This event is of great importance to the Naro San. The leaders of this choir were Tomku Bob and Marea Camm, members of the local Naro San. Tshabu remembers and loves the songs that they sang at the church. The Naro San blended their own form of music with those of other neighbouring cultures. They used locally known Setswana music and adapted if to their own San style, rhythm, unique harmonies and click language. These productions were show-pieces, displaying the richness and fullness of Nqari Ba's multi-faceted creativity.

Their gradual increase in the pitch of a song can lead the listener to raise his level of living in the presence of Creator God (Naro Choir 2017). A theme found throughout all of the choir's music is that of peace, harmony and joy in the Holy Spirit. Their song, Tshoa-tshoasas Koem, incorporates the creation narrative and the fall of man from the book of Genesis.

3.6.3. Oral engagement

Noll says that over the last century, the Christian saturation of local cultures accelerated at an unprecedented pace (2005). He argues that the primary vehicle that enabled this penetration was the translation of the Bible into the local languages, combined with translations of liturgies, hymns, theological writings and devotions.

Marx and Swarr argue that although the gospel was readily and quickly received by local cultures, their worldview has not significantly changed (2015:21). The new message was merely added to their previous set of beliefs, resulting in a blending of beliefs. As an example, in the animistic worldview, where people believe and honour the spiritual essence of the animate and inanimate creation, Jesus Christ is added to the list of gods to be worshipped. In-depth Scripture engagement leads to consistent and prolonged worldview change. Marx and Swarr report that missionary workers

among African tribes found that the biblical creation story is often stated by new believers as the reason for coming to faith (2015:21).

During his involvement in the Interactive Bible Discovery training, presented in Ghanzi, the researcher concluded that there was a practical 'fullness of time' for a higher orality reliant people. In the same way that God sent his Son in the fullness of time (cf. Gal 4:4), preparation is needed for higher orality reliant people. Oral engagement in their own language is the first step in this journey. The fact that one person in the small group could read the biblical account of the creation story to the whole group, helped them to engage with the content. The information was not lost in translation but presented in a format that spoke to their hearts. This would not have been possible if someone, like the Visser couple, started the journey by codifying the Naro language and assisting oral people to read and write.

Fitzgerald argues that for Bible translators to record a traditional narrative text, naturally provides a foundational resource in building a vernacular lexicon and for discovering a language's distinct, linguistic features (2013:144).

Visser adds that language is an integral part of one's culture and identity (1998). Every person has the unalienable right to express himself in his own language. To use the language of the local people reinforces self-respect as it allows engagement with other people and the wider society. To suppress a person cannot win the heart of that person, because suppressing a heart language is considered an act of segregation, while a sense of belonging develops mutual trust. Language, and especially a local language, plays an important role in these processes.

Emmanuel Jatau further argues that oral performance is not just about the ways and means that people communicate or learn, but also about engaging real people with the gospel narrative (2016:51). It is also about real people in their context. Engaging real people with the gospel narrative affects every pastor, every missionary and every Christian leader. He argues that there is a need for effectively reaching out to the oral-illiterate, the oral-literate and the highly oral-literate people of our time with meaningful and effective strategies. These strategies should include better oral communication methods (2016:53). He concludes that the task to disciple or engage oral people is an

honourable task now in view of the extraordinary growth of the Church in the southern hemisphere (2016:54).

In communicating the gospel message, we need various strategies (Marx and Swarr 2015:21). There will always be people who primarily read the Bible, and people who listen to the Bible. The Word of God, the Bible, is the standard, whether codified in writing or audio. This is fundamental in Scripture engagement. An audio Bible preserves God's Word in the same way that the text does. This makes it possible for a listener, or an oral preference learner, to have his or her own trustworthy reference copy of the Bible, which makes him or her less dependent on other human interpreters.

Tshabu prefers to listen to the Bible in his mother tongue, although he understands and speaks Afrikaans as well. The Naro New Testament is available in an audio version and in print form. However, he prefers to listen to stories from the Old Testament. He can relate to the daily lives and challenges of the biblical characters. It makes more sense to him when he is allowed to reflect and think about a particular Bible story, and to be given the opportunity to discuss things in the story he either understands or does not understand (Tãase 2014). The Ethnodoxologist, Brian Schrag describes the powerful, heart-rendering effect of worship in his own language, music tradition and culture when he stepped back into his home congregation in Dallas after several years in other settings "there is something profound about being home. About the peculiarities and particularities of a culture that is somehow mine. My heart language, Heart worship. Heart music. And it is this depth and fullness of communion with God that I want all people in the world to be able to experience" (Krabill 2013:355).

The creation story points to the fact that God is not only a God of orality. He contacts real people – those who are able to read, and also those who can only hear what is read. Both readers and listeners will always be with us (Jatau 2016:51-54).

3.6.4. Oral preference and textuality

All people need the complete Word of God for them to become God's treasured possession, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation with a biblical worldview (1 Pet 2:9; Marx and Swarr 2015:20).

Madinger defines orality on one level as the use of the spoken word to formulate, send, receive, and understand messages and on a deeper level as a significant learned framework for interpreting the world around us (2015:129). He adds that orality is first embedded in social cognitive development which relates to how a person learns to think and builds a framework through which he can order the world with the assistance of those around him during the early stages of language learning.

Ong recognises that even though oral cultures produce beautiful oral performances, they need to be supported by textuality in order to develop (1982, 2002, 2012:14). He states that without writing human consciousness cannot achieve its fullest potential and will not be able to produce other just as beautiful and powerful creations. He firmly believes that orality needs to produce and is destined to produce writing. Textuality is needed for the further development of an illiterate people. Hatab compares the written and the oral language as follow (2007:322):

> Writing is far from simply the transfer of spoken words to graphic signs. If it were, we could not account for the far greater difficulty in learning to read and write, compared to natural language acquisition. There are many different ways to distinguish the nature and effects of writing from language confined to oral speech. Oral language is primarily the province of hearing sounds, while writing turns the seeing of words in a material medium. Accordingly, oral speech is exclusively temporal and memorial, the passing of sounds means that memory is the only source of preservation. Writing provides a material presence for words and a fixed structure of spatial relations, so that now language can 'stand' as a permanent reference for memory and inspection.

McLuhan argues that Plato lived in a world of convergence, that he straddled the written and oral tradition, and subsequently translated the tribal encyclopaedia of the preceding culture into the written, classified form (2003:125). Gibson continues (2011:2):

> The contrast between the circular formulaic patterns in Homer's epic poetry and the linear prose style in Plato's dialogues served as evidence of a basic division between oral and written, and represented the way that messages are conveyed through the form of the medium, - and not solely through the content – as well as how the content of a new medium is made up of a prior medium.

McLuhan's principle 'The medium is the message', stresses two important principles (1964:7):

i) Messages are transmitted through the medium itself in interaction with the content, and not just through the content
ii) The content of the medium is always prior to the media.

Marx and Swarr allude that textual cultures, on the other hand, often do not realise that ancient Israel was an oral community (2015:21). God was the first writer on tablets of stone. 'When the Lord finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave him the two tablets of the covenant of the law, the tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God' (Exod 31:18). Yet, He told Moses to write it down, and teach it to the Israelites in a song (Deut 31:22) (Yoreh:2017), thus Moses followed the example of the Creator God and became the first human scribe. 'And he (Moses) wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments' (Exod 34:28). It was only much later in history that the Levites could write the Torah Scrolls. It was estimated that in the time of Jesus only about 5% of the world population was literate (Marx and Swarr 2015:21). The Bible continues to show us that God had a very practical way of engaging oral people with his Word, eventually entrusting the work of making his Word available in written form to the next generation through the people of the Book, the Jewish people.

Marx and Swarr observe that the Creator God had a three-tier strategy to assist the oral people, the Hebrews, to live by his Word, which is (2015:22):

i. Daily and continued engagement by everyone through the utilisation of tangible visible symbols. Every segment of the community was included, namely young and old; rich and poor, men and women, citizens and aliens (Deut 11:18-21 and Deut 31:9-13).
ii. Scheduled corporate listening, discussion and application events. The nation was to gather before the Lord God three times per year for extended periods of celebration and oral learning (Neh 8:1-9:3).
iii. Strategically situated learning centres focussed on applying Scripture to real-life circumstances, staffed with Levites who could refer back to the written standard and could read what was written for the oral people who would listen (cf. Num 35 about Levitical Cities). The Levites served in the tabernacle and later in the Temple on a rotation basis. They studied in conjunction with the

priests and, upon return to their towns, this learning was passed on to the people of their region.

Rosenberg believes that oral traditions are not as accurate as written records. ‘Useless data are forgotten in an oral tradition, while remembered phenomena are updated – made consistent with current beliefs and attitudes.’ He notes that precision is a product of writing and that keeping to a general pattern is the most exact mode that oral communicators are capable of (1987:78-79, 87).

Visser argues that the preference to use heart language with the Naro San showed an increase in use, as well as a desire for the Naro to know how to read and write (1998). Hasselbring in studying the San, says: ‘many people want to learn to read and write a language which they speak’ (2000). Her study showed that when illiterate people were asked which language they desired to learn to read and write, the invariable reply was: ‘My own language.’

Oral cultures need to develop literacy. The spoken word of Creator God was first captured by Moses, as the first human scribe (cf. Exod 31:18). Visser proved that by developing an orthography, dictionary, written resources and eventually the written New Testament in the Naro language, the way for the Naro to learn the skills of reading and writing was opened, which contributed to their further development and inclusion in a wider community (1998).

To have a Naro dictionary made them feel part of the human race. The fact that the Bible was translated into and written down in the Naro language demonstrated to the Naro San that their language was important enough to be written down. It proved that the Creator God regarded them as more important than animals, and that they were dignified people of God.

Visser and his wife started to learn the language – very much in an oral way (1998). They learned Naro by memorising simple sentences, understanding the sentences and expanding them. By comparing individual words, they were able to analyse and capture the pitch and sounds of every word. The wordlist became a dictionary. The dictionary helped to develop alphabet cards with pictures, an alphabet book, calendars, Bible story booklets, books on Naro folk lore and monthly magazines, and finally, the Naro New Testament was translated into text and recorded into audio. They

concluded that using a language must be functional. Its use must serve a purpose. The language must be studied and used to empower the speakers. The use must serve a purpose. Language must be studied, and the speakers empowered by the use of it.

Lovejoy agrees, stating that an oral Bible does not provide the whole council of God or the entire Bible, but it helps to prepare the way for the written Bible and secures the process (2005:11-12).

The researcher noted that the Naro San participants in the Interactive Bible Discovery training events made use of both literate and oral preferences in learning, telling and retelling the creation narrative. The Old Testament of the Bible is not available in Naro text, only the New Testament. Therefore, a person, who was able to read, would read the creation narrative in Setswana. The person would then re-tell the story in Naro. Corrections to this first version, the standard, happened spontaneously. This process continued until the whole group was confident and satisfied that the Naro spoken version accurately reflected the Setswana written version. The group would then continue to discuss the standard one and reflect on the lessons learned in the story.

Tshabu Tãase followed much the same process, although on an individual level (2014). Part of the biblical creation story was told to the researcher on a daily basis. It was a worthwhile process, albeit time-consuming, to encounter this method of correction and verification to ensure that a reliable version was being conveyed. On questioning him why he did this, he said: ‘I want to tell the story as accurately as possible’ (Tãase 2014).

Wafler affirms that neither traditional Bible translation nor orality alone could succeed in providing Scriptures to Bible-less people. Bible translators and orality practitioners have to work together in accomplishing the goal of eliminating Bible poverty (2006:6). He argues that impacting the lives of people is more important than a final Bible product and that oral preference and communication methods are not the magic wand to complete the task of the Great Commission (2006:7). He states that typical translation problems such as key Bible terms, figurative language and unknown ideas existed in both literate and oral communication. To use translation principles and

processes in oral communication strategies is appropriate and necessary (2006:9). The task of oral preference in performance is, in essence, a translation.

3.7. Summary and analysis

The researcher conducted a case study of the Naro San Community's engagement with Scripture. The collection of data for this case study started before a commitment was made by the researcher to conduct a study in the field of Scripture engagement. The focal point, or bounded system, of the descriptive case study, is the Naro San community in D'Kar, Ghanzi, Botswana with a specific family unit led by Tshabu T̲ãase as they engage with Scripture, and specifically the creation narrative of Genesis.

The key findings, based on the collection of qualitative information through interventions, interviews, discussions, observations and referencing, moved beyond the literate confines of the first chapter of Genesis into the broader context of the Bible book.

Overall the descriptive case study found that the Naro San rely on the unwritten word to follow Jesus Christ, to communicate the content of the Bible, to build community and to express their new-found faith in daily life.

In their oral communication, the Naro San use storytelling, discussion, songs, art, drama and dances. Their most common form of oral Scripture engagement is Bible storytelling, which was confirmed by the researcher's interaction with groups of San but also by Tshabu. Discussing the story is a natural process which follows after a story was told. Mimicking animals of their natural environment to make an analogy of human behaviour forms part of their drama repertoire. Storytelling and discussion are followed closely by dance and music, then by art as the most used oral communication forms. Their biblical art tells the story of a Creator God involved in the lives of the San.

The Naro San know that the Creator God exists, they did not learn this from the creation story of Genesis. The San's story and art begin at creation with the Creator God. This Creator God is the beginning of all life, including the San, who were created as oral creatures by an Oral God. They learn more about this Creator God as the one, true, living God and his love for creation by the creation story of Genesis. In the

Kalahari, they live under the presence of Creator God. Like God, they are to care for creation.

3.7.1. Oral translation

The San's understanding of being created by the Creator is translated through their oral performance. Their intimate knowledge of life in the presence of God is passed on from one generation to the next generation through their oral translation. As a community, they are responsible to care for creation, as everything God has created is good. Through their stories, art, song, rituals and games the San communicate. Through their art, music and dance performance the San co-create to help them and other cultures to transcend physical and mental borders.

3.7.2. Oral performance

The San love stories. Through narrative discourse, they teach their children and communicate with each other to bring understanding. Their narratives are carried into dances and songs around the communal fire-circle. They have developed their own unique San style, rhythm and click language rhythms as they sing songs. Their biblical songs are used to affirm the biblical stories and make it easier for them to remember (cf. Naro Choir 2017, song 'Qari nem úúa Nqari ba).

Oral engagement in the heart language of the people is part of a people's culture and identity; it reinforces self-respect and develops mutual trust. To engage Scripture in the language of the local San people aids their acceptance and understanding.

Their preference to use the Naro San's heart language increases their use of and desire for literacy. Literacy has contributed to the further development and inclusion in the wider community, where the Naro San learned how to read and write. Making the Bible available in written form for the Naro showed them that they are important to the Creator.

To recognise, appreciate and use the Naro San's forms of oral interpretation, performance and engagement helps us to understand them as an oral people, helps to build trust and recognition and aids in the process of literacy, which in turn helps with the integration of the San into the wider community as a respected partner. The

Naro San helped the general Christian community to understand that orality and literacy can be part of the same people group's fabric and that people speaking the same language can move on the continuum of being highly oral, on the one side, to being highly literate, on the other side of the spectrum.

CHAPTER 4

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE DAO, BAKA AND GONJA

4.1. Introduction

Researching oral communication methodologies of higher orality reliant communities can greatly assist us to learn how to communicate the Good News to the majority of people alive today.

The International Sports Coalition, in their open resource for sports coaches, encourages their highly literate coaches to use a variety of communication methods in teaching oral learners. They acknowledge that many literate societies may still prefer oral learning. They list eight modes to repeat the teaching and to deepen the understanding when working with oral learners, which are (2017:9-20):

i) Storytelling and discussions: Oral learners learn best when the information comes in a continuous narrative. Discussion on the story helps the group to explore the meaning. Helpful questions are important for oral learners to assimilate and internalise ideas.
ii) Proverbs: The use of proverbs in oral communication helps to summarise the meaning or essence of a story.
iii) Body movement and dance: Most cultures have body movements and dance as part of their living traditions. It helps them to interpret the Bible story and brings it closer to the heart of oral people.
iv) Sport and fitness: Storytelling can be integrated into sport and fitness for an active group of oral learners. Physical activity engages thinking and reflection.
v) Drama and role play: An idea is brought to life for oral learners by acting it out or implementing it in a practical way.
vi) Video, audio and documentaries: audio-visual learning is easy for oral learners. Videos, film, television and audio tell stories in ways that oral learners learn best.
vii) Music and lyrics: Songs, chants, poetry and music act like an arrow that carries the message directly to the heart of an oral learner.
viii) Visual art and artefacts: Many cultures paint, carve, fashion or work stories into practical and decorative arts. Oral learners create artefacts to reflect on a story. Visual art serves as a reminder and helps to share a story.

The worlds of business, government and education are also struggling with oral communication, and many a time the approach has been to dichotomise it into the realms of literacy and illiteracy. Some of the more current research acknowledges that oral language skills can be included as components of literacy but excludes the impact of oral preferences in the way we communicate and learn (Freebody 2007:10). It is encouraging that governments are recognising that the literate form of communication does not suit all learners equally.

Oral learners simply cannot relate to the message if it comes to them in a conceptual linear orientation (Chiang and Lovejoy 2015:129-130), which most literate learners prefer. Madinger (2015:131) identifies five characteristics to measure oral preference, which are:

i) Communicational processing: How narrative, proverbs, folktales and other means of transmission become a channel for information and truths.
ii) Cognitive processing: How a person or people acquire knowledge, learn and use memory.
iii) Social processing: From individual to collective processing.
iv) Temporal processing: How people view time, space, music, dance and narrative.
v) Technological processing: What forms are preferred for technologising the word: concrete to abstract, archiving information and truths in narrative and songs or text.

Madinger concludes that measuring a people or person's oral preference would help the Christian workers to best design education, training and strategies that will work in these oral cultures (2015:132).

This chapter describes aspects of the case studies, conducted by other researchers, among three oral people groups: the Dao of Indonesia, the Baka of Equatorial Africa and the Gonja of northern Ghana. The researcher uses the research conducted by these researchers and presents it in the format that fits the goals of this study.

This chapter gives a brief introduction to each of the oral people groups and then summarises in each case the oral Scripture translation used, the oral methodologies employed, the oral Scripture engagement preferred and the oral production and distribution taking place. Though the three cases are from different contexts and also differ in much of the detail, the study will highlight striking similarities in the Scripture engagement.

4.2. The very remote Dao tribe of Indonesia

4.2.1. Introduction

Two young American missionaries, barely out of their teens, stumbled upon a primitive, semi-nomadic, violent and cruel people, the very remote Dao tribe, in the rainforests of Indonesia. This tribe had no alphabet for their language and obviously not even a single verse of Scripture before the couple arrived. No other religious group of any type had ever worked among the Dao and these two were the first Christians to bring them the Good News of God's Kingdom.

After living with the Dao for about three years, they were informed by the tribesmen that they were the fulfilment of the prophetic dreams of Apius' father, the local chief, more than thirty years before the Phillips family arrival. Subsequently, many tribe members had the same dream. The dreams were referred to as 'Prophecies of pale skins' wherein people with pale skins would bring them an extremely important message, which they called 'the big talk'. The tribe was waiting for these people. The two missionaries realised that they were indeed the fulfilment of those 'prophecies'. From the prophecies told by one generation to the next, the Dao knew what they would look like. The prophecies were even clear on where they would come from. The current generation's fathers and mothers hoped for and awaited their arrival, knowing that they would carry the greatest message of all time for them as a people.

Scott Phillips told the old chief: 'We are here to bring you a message'. He continued: 'We are from a land very far away, but we have hiked into your territory because we want to tell you a story about the Creator of all things.' As everyone was completely silent, he then said: 'We do not come to bring you material wealth or things of this earth. We come with a message about a trail to eternal life. We come with a message primarily for your spirit.' The translator continued: 'We want to tell you and your people of their Creator and his great message' (2013, Chapter 7).

The chief spoke so fast in his language that the translator had to keep up:

> We have been waiting for your message. Come! We will help you learn our language. We will help you so that we can hear the message.

Scottt Phillips, a Tennessee Temple University graduate, and his wife Jennie spent ten years living in the remote jungles, working to see the Bible translated into the local language of the Dao. They communicated the message of ‘the Creator’s leaf book’ and told them the stories of Yesusi (Dao for Jesus) and what He did for the Dao on ‘the crossed wood’. As a result, many put their faith in Jesus and were saved. Scott and Jenny escorted and trained the first teachers to reach out to their own people in other remote areas not exposed to the message of the Bible and the Christian faith.

The Phillips Family – 19 February 2016

Photo: Heritage Baptist Church Lakeland, Florida, Facebook page.

Scott Phillips shares the story in detail in his book, *Prophecies of pale skin (2013)*. He shares the remarkable true story of the ways in which this higher orality reliant people, the Dao engaged with Scripture to come to a saving knowledge and faith in Jesus Christ, to build community and to reach out to other clans and people who were still waiting on the Creator’s message.

4.2.2. Scripture translation for the Dao

The Phillips couple faced many challenges translating the Bible into the Dao language. They almost gave up after a particularly difficult period of living in the jungle. Jenny recalls the morning after one sleepless night: ‘I realized that morning (after Apius told her of the prophecy) that God was even more committed to his Word than I was because if even one of the tribes were missing on that final day when everyone was standing before God’s throne, that would make Him a liar. And God is not a liar, nor will he let Himself be made into one!’ (Phillips 2013, Chapter 8). This reflects a specific interpretation of certain New Testament passages about every tribe and nation hearing the gospel before the end will come (cf. Matt 24:14; Rev 7:9). This interpretation has been the driving force in much of recent mission practice and reflection, especially in eradicating Bible poverty by the “Every Tribe Every Nation” group of Bible agencies (Every Tribe Every Nation 2018).

The Dao language, before the translation work of the Phillips family, was without an alphabet and writing system. During the ten years of their work amongst the Dao they were faced with the same question over and over again: ‘How do you translate a word that doesn’t exist?’ (Phillips 2016). As an example, they had never seen or heard of a sheep, an animal given great prominence and used as an analogy for the people of God in the Bible. How does one translate Psalm 51:7 when people have never seen snow, but have been used to living in a humid rainforest? What about the word, ‘angel’, when their traditional belief only makes provision for evil spirits, and they do not have a word for a benevolent spirit, like an angel?

As an answer to prolonged prayer and dedication, the Holy Spirit led them to use words which were well known in the Dao language and even closer to the original languages of Scripture. One such an example is the word for ‘angel’, where they have opted to translate it with the Dao word for ‘messenger of the Lord’.

Otopina, one of the main Bible translation helpers – 26 July 2016

Photo: DS Phillips.

As the Phillips family continued to live with the Dao to learn their language and culture, they were challenged to compare their own Northern American culture to those of the Bible and to Jesus' teachings (Phillips 2013, Chapter 8). These comparisons became central to understanding not just the Dao culture, but also the biblical culture and assisted them significantly in translating the Word of God.

Dao tribe members frequently enquired when they would be told the story of the 'Creator's leaf book'. The Phillips couple remained committed to first become well acquainted with the language, to understand the culture and to live with the people in order for them to tell his Story, accurately and completely. They developed and recorded an alphabet for the Dao language to help them to preserve their language

(2013, Chapter 11). In Indonesia, many languages have disappeared when the national Bahasa Indonesian language replaced the tribal languages.

As an animistic people, the Dao believed in many spirits and had no concept of a Creator Spirit who was good in nature, more powerful than all others, and ultimately sovereign over all things created. Therefore, the Phillips couple decided to start with the story about the beginning of all things in the Old Testament rather that the story of the Son of God in the New Testament. The foundation had to be the creation account. The leaf book had to start with one good Creator God over all things to prevent the Dao from merely appeasing a new 'Jesus spirit' by following new rituals and habits (Phillips 2013, Chapter 11). Packer (1961:24) wrote: 'We must know what it means to call God Creator before we can grasp what it means to speak of Him as Redeemer.'

Scott and Jennie started to translate parts of the book of Genesis for this animistic people group. They would lay a proper foundation of a good Creator God and an understanding of his promise to one day redeem humankind.

4.2.3. Oral methodologies used with the Dao

Scott Phillips testified that on occasion they received a visitor, Yakiyaa, who came from another tribe where a man was claiming to have the message of the Creator God. This man taught that there was a place of fire where the enemies of the Creator One would end up if they continued to wear their decorative nose bones, their traditional clothing, bows and arrows and smoked their tobacco and not change to the culture and ways of the foreign pale skins (2013, Chapter 9). Yakiyaa wanted to know whether the Creator One had sent the Phillips family because He hated the Dao and their ways and to tell them that they would go to the place of fire. Scott saw the opportunity to demonstrate that this Creator One had sent them to bring a message of reconciliation and love. When he thought about his own life, how he tried to please God for many years, he realised that it never was about him, but about God. He reached out to the cigarette in Yakiyaa's hand, brought it to his lips and took a big pull. Scott had never smoked in his life before. He watched the reaction of Yakiyaa's eyes and face as the smoke ascended in the room. At last Scott responded (2013, Chapter 9):

> Well if this is what sends a person to the place of hellfire, I guess I am going there too since I also have now smoked some of your tobacco! ... But this is not the

> message that we bring ... instead the message from the Creator's leaf book actually saves someone from the place of fire ... you and your people will finally hear about the one and only true trail to eternal life.

From this testimony, it is clear that the true message of the gospel must be presented in a format that the local tribe could relate to. The Scripture had to be presented using both words and actions. Scott recalls several such instances where they had confirmed to the Dao that God was interested in their culture and cared about them as a people. The Phillips family researched every local practice in order to determine whether there was any conflict with Bible values. One such practice was for the men to pierce the septum of their noses and another was to give a new name to people you really trust and to reveal to them your name and not just a pseudonym used as a name.

Jennie Phillips began helping the Dao families to chart their family trees and kin systems, thus the process of moving from oralities to textualities began. Their family structures and kin systems helped them to gather information on aspects of their belief systems which would not have been possible through normal processes of inquiry (2013, Chapter 10):

> [Revenge killings] Our people believe that the first humans on earth were a mother and three sons. One day the middle son tried to commit incest with the mother and so the other brothers decided that they must kill him because of this evil act. They waited for just the right time when he least expected it. Then they shot him with their bows and arrows and killed him for his evil act… some of the blood dripped down into the ground next to that special tree… it seeped right into the mouth of the great evil spirit. For this reason, even to this day we Dao people die… The story sounded strangely familiar! A disagreement between two brothers? A special tree? A serpent that was responsible for the death of mankind?... Another important thing we realized in studying the kinship of the Dao people was that there was not a single person we had met in the entire Dao tribe approximately our age who had both their father and mother living….It seemed that the Dao people were killing each other faster than we could even learn their language well enough to tell them about their Creator and the trail He has provided them to eternal life!

4.2.4. Scripture engagement by the Dao

In order to understand how to present the stories of the Bible, the Phillips couple asked their closest Dao friends in what ways a story was told, where it was told, the setting

of the occasion and various other aspects (2013, Chapter 11). The insights gained from the answers enabled them to prepare the story of the Creator's leaf book. After key Bible stories were translated, Scott and Jennie painstakingly revised them to ensure that it reflected the biblical account accurately. They would translate one story from the Bible and then discuss it with their closest friends, making sure it was correct. Through several stories, selected from the Old Testament, they continued to translate to build a chronologic set. As they told the stories to their friends, they asked many questions to ensure that they understood it correctly.

> When a Dao person has something important to say how does he say it and in which setting does he say it? Does he tell it to everyone at once or does he tell the biggest and most respected me first? Does he tell the important news casually while smoking some tobacco and while everyone sits around the fire? Or does he stand up in the middle of the village and shout at his audience while occasionally tapping one of his hunting arrows on the ground in front of him every time he hits a main point? Does he do anything out of the ordinary in order to keep everybody's attention or does he just talk like he always normally talks? What shows it that a message is important in the culture and the speech of a Dao person? (2013, Chapter 11)

The second round of story-telling and questions was held with a smaller group of close friends. Once ready they told the first story of creation to their most trusted friends, Wikipai and Daapoi. The first line of the story was: 'Long, long ago, in the very beginning, the Creator One created the heavens and the earth…' and they told it to the end. The men were shocked and asked whether the Creator One really created 'all things'. They sat in awe – overwhelmed by the reality that one God created all things, including the Dao. This was more important to them than the structure of the creation narrative in Genesis. On hearing about the all-powerful Creator One, the two men were not even moved by a small earthquake that occurred at that very moment. They expressed their trust and were not fearful any longer. The basic human emotion of fear had been expelled by the story of an all-powerful Creator God (2013, Chapter 11).

The Dao tribe gathered once every two years to celebrate the 'yoo' (Ibid. Chapter 12). Each and every member of the tribe attended this gathering, which was timed to coincide with a certain phase of the moon. All major announcements and sharing of information took place at the celebration of this particular event. The Phillips couple announced that the message from the Creator's leaf book would be told during the

‘yoo’. This communicated to the Dao that it was a very important message on an equally important occasion. Once everyone was present, Scott shot an arrow into the sky which indicated to the Dao that an extremely important ‘talk’ would take place (2013, Chapter 12). No one would think of hunting or warfare, or of walking any trails during such a talk. When he began the biblical creation story, he removed the bowstring from his bow – a further indication that this was an important message. Everyone knew that it is important, so they kept quiet and listened.

Scott’s friends, Wikipai and Daapoi, were the witnesses as they already knew the story from the translation process (2013, Chapter 13). They now took it upon themselves to help tell the story. After each phase of the story, discussions took place around fires and in homes on what they had heard. It took three weeks to tell the biblical creation and the stories of the Fall.

Wikipai’s testimony was presented in Scott and Jennie’s newsletter of 23 January 2016, under the title: ‘When bragging is a privilege’. This is an extract from his testimony:

> Before I heard the Creator’s Big talk that is the way I thought. And then you came to us. You came to us and began teaching us of these things and also how to read and write. And you also taught us about and explained to us our Creator’s Big Message to us. After you had taught us through our Creator’s Big message to us, I finally thought to myself and also told you, Wow, thank you so much my friend for coming to us and teaching us about these things, this is a true talk!

The Dao were not interested to read or write until they heard the first stories from the Creator’s leaf book (2013, Chapter 14). They understood that if they put time into learning this skill they could engage with the stories when they had time even when they were alone. At this point, the literacy programme took off. This shows the Dao’s movement on the continuum of orality towards textuality to learn more about the Word of God.

The stories from the Creator’s leaf book were used by the Dao to sift through their old customs and ways. There newly acquired insights inspired them to expose those habits which were at odds with the Creator’s leaf book, keeping only those which were not (2013, Chapter 14). They challenged each one of their beliefs and identified those rituals which did not concur with the Creator’s leaf book.

4.2.5. Scripture production and distribution in Dao

After three months of telling and fervent discussion, the tribe members dispersed back to their individual villages, carrying the ‘big talk’ with them (2013, Chapter 14). They continued to gather once a week to hear the message again and to allow time for interaction. As there was no calendar in the Dao culture, Scott used vines with seven knots to introduce a seven-day week and to enable the Dao to convene on the same day.

When the Dao heard in what way the new believers praised God, they wanted to learn English songs. The Phillips couple led them to realise that they could praise God in their own language and assisted in composing songs suited for their own musical style. A young boy sang the first song (2013, Chapter 14):

> Yesusi, Yesusi
> He is the One that is the Creator’s Son
> He is the One that came down to earth from up above
> He is the Creator’s Son
> He is Yesusi.

Two other young men composed a song about the seven days of creation. It described the detail of each day. The songs were valuable vehicles to convey the message of the Creator One. Reinforcing the spoken message heard through song is Scripture engagement.

The message of the Creator One was recorded in what they called the Creator’s leaf book. Daapoi summarised the essence of the leaf book well (2013, Chapter 14):

> Just as our garden food provides nourishment for the stomach and makes us strong, the Creator’s leaf book and his words within it are like the sweet potato for our souls by which our souls can become strong and we can live well.

Wikipai and Daapoi emerged as pioneers to plan an outreach to carry the Creator’s leaf book to a neighbouring clan, a two-day hike away (2013, Chapter 15). Although there were physical and spiritual challenges on the journey, they were committed to taking the Creator’s ‘big talk’ to this clan. They reported back that the people were hungry for the words of the Creator. They moved to that village and started to teach people on a daily basis from the Creator’s leaf book.

4.3. The semi-nomadic hunter-gatherer Baka of Equatorial Africa

4.3.1. Introduction

The semi-nomadic Baka was one of at least four groups of Pygmies who lived in the rainforests of central Africa (Wycliffe Canada 2004). Dan Fitzgerald (2013:141-150) did a case study to highlight the best practices and examples of oral Scripture engagement for the Baka tribe in Cameroon, Africa, including the translation of the Bible. According to Ethnologue 2017, the Baka speakers numbered 24,500 in the south-eastern rainforest of Cameroon (approximately 50,000 in all countries). The Baka, ethnically referred to as 'pygmies', were traditionally hunter-gatherers in transition to becoming farmers.

The Naro San, also traditionally hunter-gatherers, are included under the San of southern Africa (Barnard 2007:6), and the Baka are genealogically on par with the San of southern Africa (CNN 2017). The Baka's traditional territories, like the San, have been shrinking due to the agendas of conservationists to move humans out of the reserves and industrialists who led to either fenced-in reserves or deforestation, creating an obstacle for their nomadic existence. In the past, the rainforest's canopy had been their roof, but these have been replaced by poorly constructed huts scattered on the forest's threshold. Many converted to Christianity at the turn of the century, while others were still following their animistic worship practices. The Baka employ polyphonic singing and water drumming as part of their oral communication.

The Baka are a peace-loving people (Joshua Project 2017). Men are the hunters using nets, spears or bows and arrows. The women are the collectors of wild fruits, roots, insects, lizards and shellfish. As nomadic people, they live in groups of 20 to 100 people. Their music instruments include drums, whistles and two-stringed bow-guitars. Solo singers are more common than groups in unison. One of their central creation beliefs is that after their creator god created man, he abandoned them to their own fate as he was no longer interested in this world and withdrew into the sky. Their creator god features in many of their stories and fables (Leónard 2011:3).Fitzgerald argued for the adoption of oral strategies in the framework of 'biblical performance criticism' in the time-honoured interdisciplinary research of 'oral traditions' (2013:142). In the context of performance criticism, he placed the oral performance in oral tradition,

such as story-song and poetry, as one of many performance modes. He paralleled the oral performance in the oral cultures of the early Christian Church with the contemporary performance of the biblical narratives in Christian mission among oral cultures, as an effective model for the appropriation of the Bible. His case study amongst the Baka people of Cameroon described how Christian mission adopted a seemingly innovative, yet quite ancient, model of Scripture engagement.

4.3.2. Scripture translation for the Baka

The Baka are a higher orality reliant culture and as such, they do not easily adopt literacy (Fitzgerald 2013:143). African rural economies do not really depend on textuality to operate. Very few Baka could read and write, either in French or Baka, and their primary mode of learning was oral (Leónard 2011:1). Baka parents do not encourage their children to attend school. Subsequently, a viable literacy program in Baka still needs to be developed (Fitzgerald 2013:143). Music, dancing and storytelling played a central role in the Baka's culture (Wycliffe Canada 2004:6). Their form of traditional tales, named 'likanos', is unique and considered to come from the creator god, 'Komba'. The traditional tales included the storyteller and listeners as participants, where the storyteller acts as a solo lead singer, and the rest of the group can participate by repeating only the chorus (Wycliffe Canada 2004:9).

Often faith-based or other agencies work on an initial assumption that mother-tongue literacy would fairly naturally give access to higher orality reliant people groups like the Baka to the benefits that their particular agency had to offer. In particular, Christian mission agencies held biblical literacy as a vital means to satisfactorily access the Good News they had come to proclaim to the Baka. Literacy was by default considered to be the missional means of discipleship (Fitzgerald 2013:143).

As a higher orality reliant people, there were countless obstacles blocking the Baka from moving further on the continuum adding reading and writing to their cultural and social systems. They had not found many practical social or economic incentives to justify the mountainous burdens that literacy would add to their already challenging daily survival. Literacy is also not a prerequisite for the Baka to function in a rural African subsistence economy. The result of this was that parents did not encourage their children to attend government and mission schools, which used the national

business language, French, as the medium for communication and teaching. The oral tradition of the Baka involved a rich mnemonic system which enabled them to accurately transmit huge amounts of information (Leónard 2011:11). As an oral people, most of what they viewed as socially significant was marked by oral art, by song in particular (Fitzgerald 2011:12). They yodelled the words when singing.

The challenges which existed for literacy were the same for Bible translation (Fitzgerald 2013:143). The first Bible translation project was started by a Roman Catholic Mission in the 1970's. Only portions of the Bible had been completed with no New or Old Testament reported (Joshua Project 2017). Another Catholic Mission used an oral style of translation that incorporated the natural linguistic structures of everyday Baka speech.

After Yves Léonard (Lockhart 2004) started his linguistic work with the Baka, he became convinced that storytelling would play a key role in translating the Scriptures or the Bible for them. It was clear that the Baka's indifference to literacy was the single major barrier to Bible translation. He studied their complex system of telling stories and listened to their traditional tales wherein he observed intricate social customs that were ingrained in these tales. Previous storytelling approaches practised in Christian mission did not pay adequate attention to the discovery of a people group's traditional narrative arts (Fitzgerald 2013:145). This led to the neglect of the power of the genuine oral narrative performance of the people, which should be included in a strategy for Scripture engagement.

Yves said (Lockhart 2004): 'They use a specific style of communication that's not part of normal conversation.' Yves discovered the use of a distinctive Baka verb form that typically encoded the main storyline of a Baka narrative discourse (Fitzgerald 2013:145). This verb resembled the present tense, even if the narrative at hand recounted an event in the past. The Baka understood that the action is in the past, but the use of the present tense verb lent authenticity to the story when told. He then began his translation work on 14 key Bible stories from the Old Testament (Lockhart 2004). He stayed faithful to the biblical content but made sure that the translated stories conformed to the genre of the traditional tales. Telling Bible stories incorporated great spontaneity, active participation by the listeners, as well as singing, sound effects and repetition.

SIL Bible translators used this method in the translation of the Gospel of Mark. A French version of the Gospel of Mark was used as the source text. The Baka translators would internalise a portion of the content and then do a free retelling in their language. The retelling was recorded and served as the basis of a discourse structure, which was then completed by translating the content verse by verse. The result was an oral style of Scripture which lent itself naturally to Scripture engagement by higher orality reliant people.

The recording, transcription and analysis of the natural Baka discourse served as the basis for the subsequent SIL's oral style translation (Fitzgerald 2013:144). The recording of the Baka people's traditional narrative texts provided the foundation for compiling a vernacular lexicon which served to discover the linguistic features of the language. This oral strategy for translating Scripture, rooted in the local context, became the preferred strategy for SIL's translators (Fitzgerald 2013:145).

To identify and understand the complex inner workings of the Baka's narrative, verbal art is a prerequisite in the process of translating and 'oralizing' Scripture (Fitzgerald 2013:146).

SIL's translators made a careful selection of narratives from both the Old and New Testament. In contrast to other translation methodologies which employed the language of wider communication, in this case, French, SIL utilised the Baka lexicon to tell the biblical story (Fitzgerald 2013:145).

An overview of the process of Bible translation for the Baka, as summarised, is as follows (Fitzgerald 2013:147):

i) Selection of narratives, in a chronological timeline, from the Old and New Testament to provide a summary of the history of salvation and to address the most prevalent socio-cultural needs.
ii) One biblical narrative at a time was selected for translation.
iii) The narrative was properly analysed.
iv) The narrative was drafted in a written, paraphrased translation in the character of the Baka traditional oral narrative.
v) The written draft was read out several times to Baka co-translators who could not read and write. During this phase, the setting, characters and plot were discussed, to clarify contents and individual parts.
vi) The Baka co-translators retold the entire narrative, part by part.

vii) The revised orally-drafted narrative was then captured as the new written version.
viii) The new version was then read by the translator and retold by the Baka co-translator and both were recorded in audio.
ix) The recorded version of only the Baka co-translator was reviewed and edited and the recorded version of the translator was discarded.
x) The audio version was edited to match the natural pace of a Baka narrative discourse.
xi) The audio narrative was played to several Baka listeners. Reviews and edits were captured in writing.
xii) The resultant Baka version was then translated back into French.
xiii) An experienced Bible translation consultant checked the written French translation for exegetical accuracy and clarity.
xiv) The translators then revised the written vernacular text.
xv) The final version was then 're-oralised' following steps viii) to x).

4.3.3. Oral methodologies used with the Baka

Léonard argued that literate methodologies used especially in Africa often suffered because of a lack of understanding of and appreciation for traditional orality (2011:1). The literate methodologies failed to build upon the cultural values of the recipient people and created the impression that a person had to abandon his cultural identity for the sake of literacy. Literacy is not simply the ability to recognise letters and words in the text; it is a conversion from one way of communication to another and in one sense from one worldview to another (Leonard 2011:1).

Storytelling as an oral methodology is one the preferred ways to bring the Scripture to the largely animist Baka people (ibid). This approach freed God's Story to circulate in conversation style in the forest of Cameroon and in the homes of the Baka in the same way that their traditional stories were passed on. Multiple artforms can augment this strategy for them to receive, to process, to remember and to pass the message on.

The Baka traditional narrative art was the vehicle of communication. Their narrative discourse was crafty, believable and highly participatory (Fitzgerald 2013:145). The genuine oral narrative performance proved to be more effective in communicating the gospel.

A distinctive feature employed in the Baka narrative discourse was their culture-specific use of repetition, actions, words, phrases and sounds, and the lengthening of

vowels can function in several ways. This was used, for example, to illustrate ongoing climactic action, which makes the narrative more memorable when orally recounted (Fitzgerald 2013:146; Leónard 2011:18).

Prosody was artfully used by Baka storytellers. The manipulation of the verbal intonation, rhythm and voice quality was employed for expressive impact, for the focus of the story's critical elements and also as background effects. The application of these skills was critical in the competent preparation of a biblical narrative discourse for a higher orality reliant people.

The singing of songs by groups was also an important oral communication methodology for the Baka. The song was a narrative performance conveying climax, distinctive characteristics and feelings of the characters, as well as significant themes. A narrative song produced a sense of both personal and social participation. For the Baka, the song occurred within the story (Leónard 2011:4). The storyteller led the singing and encouraged the audience to join.

Another oral method used by the Baka was rhetorical questions (Leónard 2011:19). The use of rhetorical questions served to either affirm or deny something.

4.3.4. Scripture engagement by the Baka

The Baka sang Scripture. Fitzgerald's research (2011: 46, 48) showed that the Baka's verbal performance is song, story and story's song. Signing passages of orally performed biblical narratives proved to be of great advantage to the socio-cultural acceptance of and belief in the Scripture by the Baka (Fitzgerald 2013:146). Songs were included in most of the translated biblical narratives (ibid.148).

Baka oral tradition comprised of a rich mnemonic system that helped them to accurately transmit large amounts of information (Leónard 2011:11). The ways in which these stories are passed on, as well as the social context in which they are told, ensure that the stories are kept sacred and transmitted faithfully.

Storytelling was a social force for the Baka to bring continuity, harmony and unity within the community and was also used for teaching and entertaining (Leónard 2011:5).

They have their own unique form of a sacred story, the likanos' (lìkàn`ɔ). These sacred stories are to the Baka what the Bible is to the Christians.

Oral Scripture engagement strategies were adopted by missionaries working amongst the Baka. They reported that the Baka children instinctively internalised and memorised the Bible stories, subsequently retelling it to each other (Fitzgerald 2013:149). Bible storytelling workshops were conducted where the Baka would listen to the biblical narratives in audio, internalise the story, retell it to each other and discuss the message.

Barry and Desma Abbott of World Team USA are involved in chronological oral storying to present the Word of God to the Baka of Cameroon. The setting for the storying is the communal campfire of the village. The recorded Bible story in Baka is played on a device. They always started with the creation story. The Abbott family shared the stories with the Baka, who in turn as families shared it with other families. Everyone joined in (Abbott B and D 2011).

World Team USA (2011) reported that they found that the Baka showed a keen interest in oral methodologies to communicate Scripture. Twelve men and women attended the first workshop, twenty-four the second workshop and the numbers of attendees have kept growing since then. The participants listened to the first four Bible stories on audio playback devices. The four stories were: creation, the Fall, Cain and Abel and Noah. While listening they used their own words and gestures. They then used the Bible stories to share it with their friends and neighbours.

4.3.5. Scripture production and distribution in Baka

The biblical narratives and songs were recorded and distributed on hand-held devices. Small listening groups were formed by the Baka, who would listen to the biblical narratives for many hours and sing the accompanying songs (Fitzgerald 2013:149; World Team USA 2011).

The oral Scripture engagement methodologies employed amongst the Baka sparked a growing interest in literacy. Subsequently, SIL transcribed the audio biblical narratives into text and distributed booklets with accompanying audio recordings. These booklets then served as the basis for their literacy programmes.

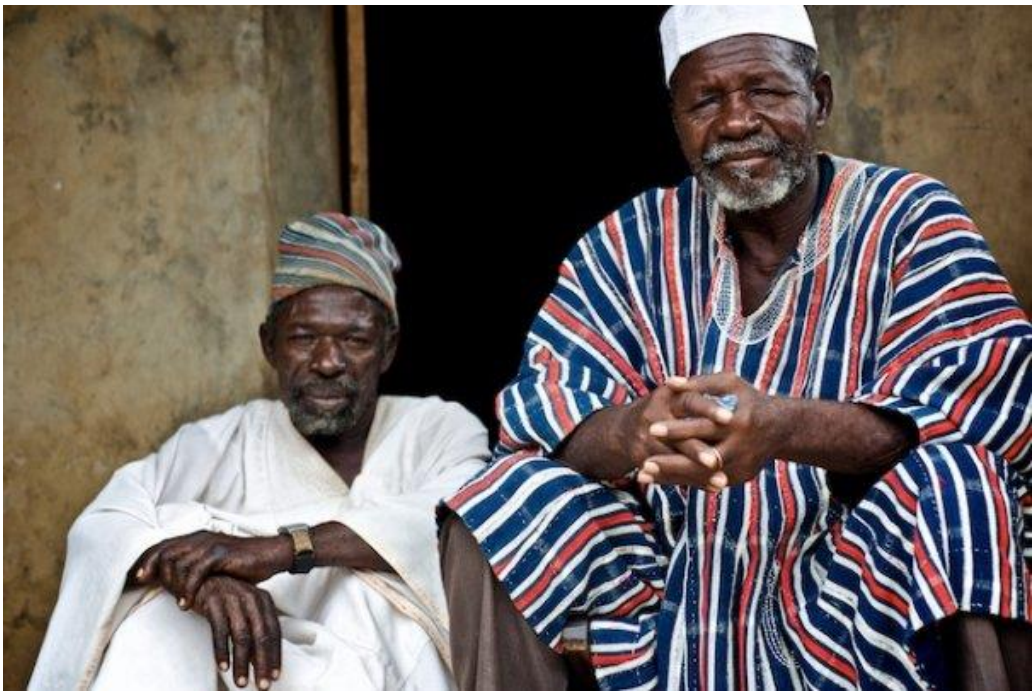
4.4. The agrarian Gonja of northern Ghana

4.4.1. Introduction

Telling stories is a preferred pastime for the various peoples of Ghana (World Map 2017). Most of the indigenous cultures preserved their oral cultures, and the practice of the elderly telling stories to the young persists to this day. Moral lessons are conveyed through stories. Anansi spider stories are popular in the folk tale tradition of Ghana. Folk theatre troops perform the folk stories, combined with music. Ghanaians use art to preserve their rich oral cultural history.

The Gonja people of Ghana, comprising approximately 351,000 speakers, reside mainly in the northern parts of the country. Most of the people in the north practised subsistence farming. Due to low income levels, most children would stay at home to assist in the fields instead of attending school. The literacy rate was reported to be lower than five percent of the population. Low literacy rates demanded an oral presentation of the Scripture and the gospel. Narrative discourse was the primary mode of communication (Joshua Project 2017).

Like most other people, the Gonja understand their mother-tongue better than English, the national business language (MiDi Bible 2016). The majority of the people are either Muslim or animists.



Gonja Literacy and Translation Project.

Photo: The Gonja Development Foundation.

Ruben Dubei served in the Scripture Engagement Department of the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, Literacy and Bible Translation (GILLBT). His ministry led him to Gonja-country where he observed Scripture engagement first-hand. He researched effective approaches to communicate Scripture when evangelising the Gonja people (Dubei 2013:7-8).

History, the knowledge of the past, was passed on by Gonja drummers (Dubei 2013:15). The Gonja were also fortunate that the Arab Muslim rulers had recorded their oral history in script. These Arabic manuscripts presented the Gonja as migrants from the country of Mande, part of the Mali Empire (Braimah 1997).

Dubei argued that, for an effective discipleship ministry in oral communities, one has to use oral means of communicating Scripture (2013:61).

4.4.2. Scripture translation for the Gonja

The Midi Bible Distribution in minority languages project (MiDi Bible 2016) reported in February 2016 that the Gonja Bible was translated and printed. Dubei's research found that the Gonja people were highly oral in their style of communication (2013:145).

Dubei advocated for the translation of an oral Bible and a story-set for the Gonja which would be specific to their worldview. He argued that an oral Bible assisted in the adoption of Scripture by the Gonja. He defined a typical oral Bible as a selection of Scripture from the beginning to the end of the Bible. The selection included God's plan of salvation through history, beginning with creation, adding a selection of stories about the patriarchs, Israel, the prophets, the story of Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension, the young church, parts of the epistles and finally the triumphant return of Jesus Christ. He developed the following procedure to translate an oral Bible or story-set (2013:148,150):

i) Adequate research on the story-style of the Gonja people and preparation of the stories. Story style can include forms of drama, proverbs, parables, chants and songs.
ii) Maintain the selected story style in each story.
iii) Present each story as a narrative.
iv) Keep to the original biblical account.
v) Maintain the chronology in the story selection.
vi) Record an audio version of each story.
vii) Use story-telling styles in presenting the stories.
viii) Avoid exposition during the telling and in discussing the story.
ix) Rehearse a particular story in groups.
x) Include retelling of the previous story in rehearsal time.
xi) Encourage chronological Bible stories to be retold to outsiders.
xii) For retention of stories, repeat as often as possible.
xiii) Discussion is critical for the application.
xiv) Trust the Holy Spirit to convey oral Bible stories as sacred.
xv) Telling of stories should be done in a style appropriate for all ages.

4.4.3. Oral methodologies used with the Gonja

The oral methods of communication were summarised by Dubei as spoken, audio and visual (2013:93). His empirical research showed that the Gonja were mainly oral (ibid.,146). Yet, his research also showed that the Christian church mainly used literate methodologies, such as evangelistic outreaches and expositional preaching. His

research also showed that the most successful oral methods used among the Gonja were the ones which were relational in nature.

He, therefore, argued for the following preferred communication methodologies in reaching oral communities (2013:146-147):

i) A model of communicating God's message as illustrated by the biblical creation account, which portrays that God is a God of relations as presented in his face-to-face model of communication with man and the rest of creation. God wished to restore this intimate relationship, scarred by sin. This relational model of communicating God's message was, therefore, the preferred method to use among oral cultures.
ii) A narrative approach, following what he described as Jesus' model of 'audience-sensitive' communication, using parables, stories and object lessons aimed at addressing the audience on the level of their ability to grasp the message.
iii) The retelling, or oral transmission, of the biblical stories as conducted by the early church as was evident in the rapid growth of the Church in the first generation after Jesus.
iv) Following the character of the Bible, with its majority of content being stories, poetry and proverbs. This could be loosely classified as narrative discourse. He argued for the return of a narrative discourse in our communication methodologies to oral communities.

Dubei also stated that the Bible often uses oral forms of communication which provide appropriate material to use in oral communities (2013:142) and can specifically be used with the Gonja.

4.4.4. Scripture engagement by the Gonja

Dubei presents a relational approach of communicating Scripture to oral people. He argued that the creation account was originally relayed verbally and that it was conveyed through oral methods before it was written down. Jesus Christ did not exclude some of his followers and disciples, who may have been illiterate, from the work of presenting the Good News to all people. His plea, therefore, was that oral people could be used in the task of spreading the Good News (Dubei 2013:141-143).

He supports narrative communication style, relevant to the local worldview of the Gonja in communicating Scripture in their heart-language (Dubei 2013:157).

Dubei regards the following as effective Scripture engagement for the Gonja (2013:178, 188):

i) Oral radio programmes to serve the Gonja listeners in remote areas.
ii) Mobile phone ministry to the Gonja as most of them own a phone. Phones can be loaded with audio and video Bible story-sets and passed on through the available technology on these phones.
iii) The use of the local Gonja visual arts as a medium to communicate Scripture.

Dubei also supports the Inductive Bible Study process as developed by Evans (2004:24) to disciple oral learners. This process involves three steps:

i) Observation of the story told: What was said?
ii) Interpretation of the story: What does it mean?
iii) Application of the story today: What does it mean to me personally?

Evan's ten-step guide for developing biblical stories (2004:26) for oral cultures was supported by Dubei for application among the Gonja (2013:152):

i) Identify the biblical principle which the storyteller would like to communicate.
ii) Evaluate what worldview challenges existed in the target people group. Dubei used Terry's assessment which (2009) provides ten typical ways to gather information to assess a worldview of a people group.
iii) Consider the bridges, barriers and gaps in their worldview compared to the biblical values.
iv) Select the Bible stories needed to convey the selected biblical principle.
v) Plan both the presentation and discussion of the Bible story.
vi) Tell the story in a culturally sensitive style, using narrative.
vii) Encourage discussion of the story by the group in order to develop applications.
viii) Implement steps for the individuals to obey the newly discovered biblical principle.
ix) Develop a system to establish accountability amongst the members of the group.
x) Encourage the listeners in the group to retell the Bible story, use the process and apply the principles.

4.4.5. Scripture production and distribution in Gonja

Dubei argues the case for oral media production and distribution for the Gonja people (2013:183). He specifically supports the development of an oral Bible which contains a set of passages showing God's plan throughout history, beginning with creation. It

includes selective stories of the fathers of the faith, the nation, prophets, Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, the early church and, finally, the Second Advent.

Such an oral Bible could be used by many oral people who, for various reasons, would never adapt to literate methodologies. It could also be used by literate people who want to internalise God's Word (Dubei 2013:149). The structure of an oral Bible could be researched for a specific people group, language, context and worldview. Selections of specific biblical stories could be adjusted, based on the specific worldview and culture of the people.

There would always be opportunities for repetition and retelling to spread the oral Bible amongst different families and villages. Such an oral Bible could not be stopped by physical barriers, such as borders (Dubei 2013:150).

4.5. Summary and analysis

This chapter described aspects of Scripture engagement as encountered by other researchers amongst three higher orality reliant people groups: the Dao of Indonesia, the Baka of Equatorial Africa and the Gonja of northern Ghana.

The data from these case studies could be summarised as follow:

i) Scripture translation: The translators among the Dao used the oral performances of the people group as a foundation in their translation efforts. The appreciation of their oral performances helped the translators in presenting Scripture which was then widely accepted. The translation of Scripture started with the creation narrative of Genesis. The translators amongst the Baka employed their important sacred story-song genre to translate biblical stories, also beginning with the creation account.
ii) Oral methodologies: The Dao preferred stories and song. The Baka employed story and story-song. The Gonja used story, song and art.
iii) Scripture engagement: The narrative discourse was important for the Dao. Scripture was presented with great ease through the sacred story-song genre of the Baka. The Gonja engaged Scripture through story, discussion and song.
iv) Scripture production and distribution: The biblical stories were told and later written down for the Dao. For each Bible story told by the Baka, a sacred story-

song was developed and sung. The Gonja retold the Bible they had heard. In all three cases, Scripture was produced and distributed by one or more of the following: the story-teller, the story-teller singer, the singer, audio playback devices and subsequently also in printed textual form.

CHAPTER 5

CORRELATION AND GUIDELINES

5.1. Introduction

> Moses came with Joshua son of Nun and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people. When Moses finished reciting all these words to all Israel, he said to them, 'Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you—they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess' (Deut 32:44-47, ESV).

During 2005 to 2006, the researcher was scheduled to teach, on a monthly basis, to both English and French pastors attending advanced theological training in Pretoria, South Africa. During the teaching, some of them, who spent a considerable number of hours in teaching sessions, fell asleep. To change the mode of presentation by varying the tone of voice helped immediately, but only for a short while before some fell asleep again. The researcher, who was scheduled to spend a whole afternoon with them on a specific topic, realised that he could not keep them focused for more than half an hour using a factual, abstract linear methodology of teaching. Not even the painstakingly prepared presentation came to his aid! There were barriers which needed to be overcome.

After this experience, he was determined to change his lecturing technique when working with high orality reliant people. Reading, as a method in which students of the Word of God have been taught to communicate, simply did not resonate with these functional oral learners, or high orality reliant people. There were barriers that needed to be examined, to be understood and finally bridged. This was the beginning of the researcher's journey to understand what is today defined as orality.

During several interventions and training sessions, the researcher discovered that oral learners were much more interested in the pictures used on Power Point slides than in the accompanying facts written in text. They seemed to capture the major points of a textual presentation on writing pads, but closer examination revealed that in many

cases it did not resemble anything close to the message displayed on the slides of the presentation.

Ong originally made the distinction between higher orality reliant, which is the case when a people group have had no contact with or appreciation for writing, and secondary orality, which refers to people who may often depend on the literate world but prefer oral communication, which is made easier for them by using electronic media, such as cell phones, radio, television, computers and digital devices (1982; 2002; 2012:2). Ong's universal view that orality and literacy produce certain universal consequences in cognition, and his conception that the relationship between orality and literacy is a continuum, is challenged by scholars such as Street, who holds the contextual view, which insists upon continual interaction rather than a blunt polarity between oral and literate functions in individuals and communities (Cole and Nicolopoulou 1992). Bush argues for a better approach going forward, to speak about orality in terms of affordances. Orality is escorted by specific affordances that provoke certain kinds of effects in certain kinds of contexts (2017:8).

This 'global resurgence of orality has arrived with vigour and has tectonic implications for our stewardship of the gospel for this century' (Chiang 2014:4). It is difficult and painful for us to adjust, but for the sake of the gospel we will follow Paul's example in 1 Corinthians 9:20 (NASB): 'To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews…' Perhaps it is time that we revert to what we did naturally before receiving any formal teaching. As oral teachers we would be more successful in reaching the screen-agers, the unreached higher orality reliant learners, the vast majority of people with little literacy training, the functional oral people and last but not least, the visually impaired.

In this study, special attention was given to four higher orality reliant communities, namely: the Naro of Botswana, the Dao of Indonesia, the Baka of Equatorial Africa and the Gonja of northern Ghana. In this chapter the findings of these four case studies are compared, focussing on the following aspects:

i) The use of oral communication methodologies in Scripture engagement
ii) Aspects of the biblical creation story that resonate with an oral community

iii) The structure of the creation narrative of Genesis which speaks to an oral community
iv) The appreciation of creation stories in folk lore
v) The context of the creation story in missiology.

On the basis of the findings of the comparative study, this chapter will then develop and present guidelines for:

i) oral Scripture translation
ii) the adoption of oral methodologies in Christian mission
iii) oral Scripture engagement
iv) oral Scripture production and distribution.

The ultimate goal of this chapter is, therefore, to present guidelines to assist the Christian mission towards more effectively engaging oral people with Scripture. The hope of the researcher is that these practical guidelines will assist a wide spectrum of practitioners, *from* the highly literate Bible translation consultants on the one side of the literacy-orality continuum all the way *through* Bible teachers, church planters, missionaries, evangelists, lay people, people experimenting with orality, *to* those on the other end of the orality-literacy continuum, the oral Christian who shares God's story with his neighbour. The guidelines or counsel provided below are limited to a descriptive analysis based on the data described in the four case studies.

5.2. Correlation

5.2.1. Oral communication methodologies

In comparing the oral communication methodologies used by the Naro San of Botswana, the Dao of Indonesia, the Baka of Cameroon and the Gonja of northern Ghana with Greer's list of oral communication methodologies (2011:9), one can conclude that each one of these people groups prefers one or more of the oral communication methodologies, even where some of the people are literate.

For the Naro, story-telling, dance, art and song are at the heart of the transfer of wisdom, traditions and culture to the next generation. Around the fire, they tell their stories with a symbolic meaning or with a lesson about life. At special events, they tell

these stories through dancing. The stories and dancing help them to restore harmony in the family and in communities. Their rhythm and melodies differ from other musical traditions on the African continent. The San style songs reflect a unique rhythm, interesting harmonies and their click language.

For the Dao, the narrative discourse, mainly stories, substantiated by actual deeds, confirms the validity of the message (Phillips 2013, Chapter 9). The message was first validated by the arrival of a 'pale-skin' couple who fulfilled the 'prophecies' received by the Dao. It was later validated by the Phillips family who learned their language, translated the 'big talk' and then transliterated it, thereby creating the 'Creator's leaf book'. The message of Creator God affirms that they are important as a people, as He created 'all things'.

The story and song, or story and music, including sound-effects, present in all four case studies, are closely connected in numerous settings in Africa. The story-and-song performance, greatly appreciated by the Baka, can be described as an African narrative performance. Three broad performance distinctions are evident: the story told, story and song performed in alternation, and the integration of story and song when a narrative is sung in its entirety (Fitzgerald 2011:137). At the heart of the Baka's performance is the storyteller-singer (2011:228). As Léonard commented (Lockhart 2004):

> When the Baka see written things, deep in their hearts it 'smells bad'. Written stuff is not local stuff. It never can be. The only way Scripture can become accepted is if it teaches things that are already accepted in the culture.

Because foundational Bible stories such as the creation account have been conveyed in the genre of the Baka traditional tale, they have become familiar with it and accept is as their own. It prepares them to receive God's Word in written form.

The pastime of conveying moral lessons through stories is a cultural treasure for the Gonja of northern Ghana (World Map 2017). The telling of stories is their primary mode of communication (Joshua Project 2017). The Gonja relate spontaneously to a relational approach to communication and a narrative discourse for conveying moral or spiritual lessons (Dubei 2013:146-147).

Comparing the preferred oral communication methodologies of the Naro San, Dao, Baka and Gonja, one can conclude that each one of these people groups has their own preference of using a specific combination of oral communication tools. The San prefer stories, art, songs and dance, the Dao prefer stories and song, as do the Gonja, whereas the Baka prefer the sacred story-song with accompanying sound-effects.

5.2.2. Aspects of the biblical creation story which resonate with an oral community

The Naro San story begins with God and creation. They live under the presence of the Creator God, Nqari Ba, as is confirmed by the biblical creation story. He created everything for humankind. This intimate knowledge has been passed on from one generation to the next. They dance before Him, around the fire, to bring back harmony and peace. Their art starts with creation. They tell the creation narrative of Genesis in the context of an important milestone in life. They love the rhythm, sequence and result of the biblical creation story. As part of creation, the San have a responsibility to care for creation. They treat every part of creation with respect and love because everything that God created is good.

The Dao refer to Scripture as the ‘Creator’s leaf book’. They previously had no concept of a creator god or spirit who is good in nature, more powerful than all other spirits, and ultimately sovereign over all created things (Phillips 2013, Chapter 11). The biblical account of the creation story was the first to be translated and presented to the Dao so that they could grasp that there is only One Creator Spirit present in the ‘big talk’ of the ‘Creator’s leaf book’. The creation account is foundational to a biblical worldview and to understand that there is only one Creator God. For them to understand the Redeemer, they first needed to form an understanding of the Creator who created ‘all things’, including the Dao. To them, God is Creator God, and they refer to Jesus as ‘Yesusi’.

The translators’ helpers, Wikipai and Daapoi, sat down in silence on the day they started to translate the biblical creation account. They were ready to meet the Creator for the first time, face-to-face, right there and then (Phillips 2013, Chapter 11). They knew something marvellous was about to happen and they harboured a reverent fear.

The creation account was so fundamentally important to the Dao that they produced a song to convey the seven-day story to other clans (Phillips 2013, Chapter 13).

Lockhart gave an eye witness account of Leonard telling the inhabitants of a Baka village how God (Komba) made the world (2004). Leonard used various voices for each character and mimicked the sounds of forest animals, familiar to the Baka people. He paused regularly in order to assess the reaction of the Baka. They were smiling.

Their laughter and enthusiasm confirmed that the Baka people love stories. The narrative discourse is key to reaching their hearts with the gospel. The feedback from one man explained the impact of the message: 'Do you know you are really speaking Komba's Word? When you speak this way, our people will have no doubt this comes from Komba and they will really understand.' (Lockhart 2004)

For the Dao, God is the Creation One, for the Baka He is God-Creator and for the Naro San, Nqari-Ba. These people are all too familiar with creation and a Creator, whom they call by different names. They quickly accept the biblical account of creation, provided it is presented to them in their particular literary genre and in a narrative discourse style.

All four of the oral people groups studied in this dissertation celebrate the creation stories available to them through Scripture.

5.2.3. The structure of the creation narrative of Genesis which resonates with an oral community

The purpose of the creation narrative of Genesis, like the rest of the Bible, is not to prove the existence of the Creator God. Genesis, like the rest of the Pentateuch, was given to a faith community who already believed in God. The pagan societies at that time had their own creation stories, involving many deities. The contents of the creation narrative of Genesis, on the other hand, tell the reader/listener about one, true, living Creator God who created all things (Lioy 2016:16-17). This aspect of the one, true, living God, who created everything, resonates with the Naro San, the Dao, Baka and Gonja.

The typical structure of the creation narrative of Genesis, as chosen by Lioy (2016:17), is noted by Naro San and the Dao, but the order, sequence and results speak more clearly to them. They focus on a universe that was brought into existence through the act of a Creator God, where He filled it to create a space habitable for humankind.

The results of the case studies of the Naro and Dao support Lioy's overall argument that the biblical creation narrative mirrors a prescientific view of the world and depicts the creation actions of God, as normal humans, in this case, higher orality reliant people, would recognise it (2016:51). Man's origin, which includes that of the Naro San, Dao, Baka and Gonja, together with the rest of creation, is resolutely entrenched in the biblical creation account. The oral people in the case studies ask the same basic questions, like the rest of humanity as presented by Henschel (2009). Their predominant worldview was influenced by the primary god they served and an introduction to the Creator God opened up that worldview, as argued by Miller (1997). Where the biblical creation account was offered to the Naro San as a narrative, song and art, to the Dao as a narrative, to the Baka as a sacred-story-song and to the Gonja as a narrative, in a style that they were used to, it affirmed the underlying spiritual truths which it conveyed.

The fact that most of the oral people in the presented case studies are familiar or have a creation myth as part of their repertoire of folklore, helps them to bridge to the biblical creative narrative. This supports Lioy's argument that the biblical creation narrative reflects an ancient Near East cultural milieu, although the biblical writers did not employ those contemporary notions and vocabularies in the narrative (2016:51). The employment of the predominant pagan perspective by the biblical writers in the creation account may indeed prove to be an effective way for Scripture engagement for oral people.

The case studies affirm that history and the beginning are important to oral people. The creation story builds on this value. The fact that oral people view the creation story as historic and may not even be interested in the exact timing of events, further supports Lioy's argument that the creation account is historical but does not portray the typical human sequence of events (2016:52). The oral people in the case studies are attracted to the Creator God and the act of creation rather than the exact chronological order or theological understanding.

The oral people in the case studies did not list the important doctrinal truths discovered during their engagement of Scripture. Their discoveries during the discussion sessions could be summarised as follow:

i) The Creator God continues to be involved and is present in creation.
ii) The Creator God reigns absolutely over all his creation.
iii) The Creator God loves and cares for all of creation, including creatures and humans.

The creation account of Genesis, as a parable-like account of the biblical creation story, assists the higher orality reliant people with unique answers. The Naro San engage with it as a narrative and translate it into art and song; the Dao learn it as a story of the beginning, the Baka adopt it as a sacred-story-song and the Gonja pass it on as a story.

This uniqueness of the account of creation in Genesis, which is almost in the style of a pagan creation myth, with its aptitude to speak to fundamental theological issues for all human-beings, appeals to all people throughout human history. The biblical creation story continues to speak to oral people such as the Naro San of Botswana, the Dao of Indonesia, the Baka of Cameroon and the Gonja of Ghana.

5.2.4. Appreciation of creation stories in folk lore

Richardson refers to redemptive analogy when you recognise that the fingerprints of God resides in culture, that beauty is under the surface, and our task is to present Kingdom values in a manner that is relevant to our listeners. He adds that every culture carries certain aspects of God's glory:

> God has been working sovereignly in a preparatory way by seeding cultures worldwide with the foreshadowing of the Saviour (Richardson 2014).

Richardson, working in Indonesia, found that the key to the Sawi tribe's salvation, embedded in their culture, was the value for peace as seen through the 'peace child'. He utilised this as means of sharing the Gospel message and saw tremendous breakthroughs (Richardson 2005).

As stated previously (cf. Section 1.1.2.4 above), Father Henschel (2002:9) argued that people tell myths to help them to answer the What, When and Why questions of life. Since the beginning of time, humankind has found answers to these questions in a unique style of stories, narrated as myths, almost parable-like stories. These myths explained that humankind, many generations ago, was able to see nature around them. They had the aptitude to grasp what was behind the immediate foreground, to understand profound realities. As an example, they recognised God.

In comparing the creation myths of the four oral people groups with the biblical creation story, the same similarities exist as presented by Henschel, namely: a commonality in origin and dating back to the beginning of humankind (2002:10). These old myths can help us to appreciate the biblical creation account (2002:11), which may well have been the case for the Naro San, Dao, Baka and Gonja. The book of Genesis contains in its first two chapters, two old narrations about the creation of the world, of the cosmos, of nature and of humankind, narrated in the style of myths or folk lore (2002:11). The younger of the two narratives was in Chapter 1 (2002:12), probably from the 6th century before Christ. In verse 26 it says: 'And God said: Let us make man in our image, in the likeness of ourselves.' According to this narrative and the one in Chapter 2, man has the life of God in him, which causes him to be in the image of God. That God donated life to humankind, and that humankind was created in the image of God, are important facts to oral people. These important facts help oral people, who often suffer from stigmatisation or rejection, to build self-respect. The receiving of life is an important aspect of African myths, as in the biblical account. Listening to African creation myths, or for that matter, people's creation myths, can help us and them to discover the Christian Message and gospel.

There is one major difference between most traditional creation myths and the biblical creation account. In traditional myths God abandoned humans, and in Genesis 3 God sent humans away. However, in the traditional myths, humankind forever is searching to find him, while in the biblical storyline God first reaches out to humans. In the biblical account, Creator God is always on his way to humankind. As soon as humans begin their journey to seek God, they find God who is on his way to humankind. The liberating news of the biblical creation account is that God Himself is on his way to humankind as is presented in Genesis 3:8 to 24.

The adoption and oral engagement of the biblical creation account by the Naro San, the Dao, the Baka and the Gonja support Lioy's elucidation that the biblical creation account reflects a narrative nature and a denunciation of the pagan myths widespread in ancient Egypt, Canaan and Mesopotamia (2016:51).

The Dao people told Scott Phillips their version of the creation account, which was a folk story describing where the first humans came from and the first unrighteous act of disobedience, which required redemption (2013, Chapter 10). Elements of their version have some correspondence with the biblical creation and the Fall account. These include the conflict between two brothers, a special tree in a special garden, and a serpent responsible for the death of humankind. Scott Phillips remembered that this was not the only story which had similarities with the Old Testament. The creation narrative of Genesis became the foundation of the whole message, the 'big talk'.

Belgian anthropologist, Hallet, related numerous detailed expressions of the folklore of the Pygmies (1973). The Baka people are also called Pygmies (Joshua Project 2017). One of the folk stories Hallet was told was that of their ancient creation account which features a monotheistic Father God who resided in heaven and made the first man, as well as a man who was placed in a special forest and forbidden to eat of a specific tree. Such a creation myth is attractive to people who love narrative discourse to bridge to the biblical creation account. As was the case with other creation myths, the Baka also believed that their creator god was no longer interested in the affairs of man and withdrew into the sky. They only called upon him in times of crisis, summoning him with a trumpet blast, which was supposed to imitate his voice (Joshua Project 2017).

For the Naro San, the Creator God is 'Nqari Ba' (D'Kar Museum and Cultural Centre 2008). 'To help us survive, Nqari Ba gave us an understanding of the world beyond what we can see.' The San realise that they had been created by the Creator God. They live under Creator God's presence, represented by the Kalahari Sky. And they respect creation, entrusted to them as part of their stewardship.

When we analyse the creation myth of a people group, it helps us to communicate the biblical creation account in a way that they would appreciate, and which could lead

them into a relationship with the creator God of the Bible (Marx and Swarr 2015: 21).

5.2.5. The context of the creation story in missiology

The Naro San have a special reverence for Nqari Ba and they continue to use the creation story to tell other people about Him. They use the story in their paintings and in their songs. This allows other people to learn about a Creator God who loves, cares and continues to be involved in creation.

Today Dao believers use the stories from the Creator One's 'leaf book' to bring the 'big talk' to other villages. Dao Bible teachers teach stories from the same book (Dropnick 2013). They always begin with the creation narrative of Genesis. In order to make sure that the listeners in the village understand the stories, the teachers take turns in teaching and repeating.

In 2008 a village leader, Ekapitaa, from an unreached area two to three days' hike away, sent a message to the Phillips missionary couple and the Dao Bible teachers (McMaster 2008):

> Please tell Scott that we want to hear this Creator's Talk. We want it so much that we are waiting for the time that you along with the Dao Bible teachers will bring it to us. When the time comes that you are ready to tell us of the Creator's message, just send us word and we will come. We will gather everybody from our area. We will all hike the trails all the way down to where you are, and we will live in the area for as long as two moons. We will all do this just so that we can hear the Creator's message.

The Baka of Cameroon use the biblical creation story in chronological storytelling. The storyteller either tells the story, or the groups listen to the recorded story on a playback device. New groups or families are always first introduced to the sacred-story-song of the biblical creation story.

Ampile telling the story of creation.

Photo: Barry and Desma Abbott Facebook Page.

5.3. Guidelines based on the findings

5.3.1. Orality – why it matters

Orality, as a field of study, is still very young. Christians have a thesis on it, but we should expect an antithesis and work towards a more accurate and modulated synthesis (Bush 2017:1). This study aims to contribute towards a more balanced synthesis. Orality matters to God in the creation story. It matters to people throughout Scripture. It still matters today.

Orality matters to followers of Jesus Christ, which may include Bible translation consultants, Bible teachers, missionaries, teachers, anthropologists, sociologists and more. It matters because communicating the gospel across cultural barriers is an important element of the Great Commission. It matters because the majority of the world's population are still oral learners.

Since orality matters in Christian mission endeavours, we have to assess the extensive effects of orality on what we do, in evangelism, discipleship, training and church planting, to be effective in engaging oral learners.

Bush argues for an adjustment in our concept of orality, acknowledging it is an essential human element that describes contextual affordances influenced by contextual factors (2017:9). The presence of an oral affordance (operational thought process) within a people group does not imply the absence of a corresponding textual affordance (abstract thought process). Lastly, oralities differ from situation to situation which demands contextual strategies and methodologies. Oralities matter for those with textual affordances as is evident from the rise of secondary orality. It matters because literacies and oralities are complementary human affordances.

The researcher agrees with Bush as he show-cases orality as a normal human quality of communication, which is greatly influenced by the context of the person or group of people. The oral people presented in the case studies showed varied abilities to receive an enormous amount of data, to internalise, to discuss, to reiterate, to draw conclusions that are helpful in life in general, to make decisions based on the data, and to represent it in a form they are most comfortable with. To an extent, they communicate through this ability that print or text literate people should rid themselves of the associated pride, arrogance and a sense of dominance.

Evans states that, largely through story, proverbs, poetry, drama and song, oral communicators encapsulate their knowledge, information, teaching, concepts, lists and ideas in narrative presentations which can be easily understood, remembered and reproduced (2004:3). Each of the people groups presented in the case studies showed various levels of appreciation for the various forms of oral communication. It may be deducted from the case studies that one of the forms ranked higher than the others. Depending on the context or importance, the common vehicle to process, remember and convey a teaching, concept or principle, might change. Oral cultures, therefore, employ the form most fitting in their situation or context to best transmit information, lessons or principles.

Bush also cautions that in describing orality it might be better to add ‘oralities’ to the vocabulary in use (2016:9). While orality described an abstract notion, ‘oralities’ is

more accurate since it applies the abstract notion in the context of local cultures. Every local culture encompasses unique contextual factors that strengthen and restrict oral affordances, and therefore each culture merits definite research that informs its contextual approach. The case studies showed that the various oral people groups were on their journey in the context of orality-literacy. It, therefore, provided the context of the people groups' oralities, which could help other oral people groups. It also supported the notion that in-context research should be conducted to inform the contextual approach appropriate for that oral people group.

Gibson (1999:127) originally referred to the noun, affordances, as the qualities or resources that the environment provides or offers an animal. The animal, in turn, had to be able to perceive and utilise it. It implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment. Bush, therefore, submits that orality is a qualitative and quantitative reality which is deeply affected by local context (2016:10-11). Hence, in any given context, one should look at the affordances of orality. The case studies showed the varied affordances of the oral people group, under study, in their local context. These affordances can help in the development of strategies and methods to match it. It also provides clues for researchers regarding what to look for when conducting a research in another oral people group and their context. More research is needed in studying the manifold oralities across the globe, hence the need for becoming students of the local context.

This study would like to accentuate the importance of the local context of the oral people and the qualitative reality of their orality when engaging with Scripture.

5.3.2. Oralities and literacies

More than 30 years ago Walter Ong published his work on orality and literacy at a time when people were wondering about the impact of new media and communication technologies on learning and knowledge.

According to Madinger, Scripture records the early orality-literacy-modalities of Israel (2016:1). The people of ancient Israel as the receptive audience sang songs about it, memorised it, and passed it on to the next generation (2016:1) orally or in text.

Oral, audio and visual Scripture production and distribution are on the rise, as is evident from, for example, YouVersion's Annual Review (2017):

i) 300 million digital copies of the Bible installed on mobile devices
ii) 3 billion audio chapters listened to.
iii) 120 million verse images created.
iv) 1 365 versions in 1 171 languages.

Gravelle, in his article in the International Orality Network, claims that oralities and literacies still matter as they influence people's perception about Bible translation and Scripture engagement (2016:18). He points out that in early Christianity the composition and distribution of Scripture involved multiple literacies: the oral composition, the scribe who would write down the oral composition, and the reader who would rather perform it out loud to other listeners. The original composers (translators) were the authors. Servants and tradesmen were the scribes. Readers were the trusted oral distributors of the text. The case studies showed oralities and literacies side by side in oral communities.

Gravelle argues that if literacy is a way of making sense, then orality is a form of literacy (2016:20). Foley states that cultures are not oral or literate but rather employ a menu or spectrum of communication strategies (1999:3). This is evident from the four oral people groups presented in the case studies. Likewise, an individual employs a repertoire of possible methods of communication which depends on the genre, communicative strategy, audience and other factors. Gravelle concludes that orality is a form of literacy if one understands literacy to be something that produces different social and mental effects on various contexts. Hence, literacy should assume certain oral or aural practices that could not be satisfactorily provided by reading and writing, and indeed also for learning, remembering and being functional (2016:21).

Hill observes that oral preference learners, including those with limited literacy skills, still want something in text or in literate form (Hill 2016:12-17). The case studies proved this point. Madinger argues that the idea still holds that the 'book' has to contain valuable information and that there is a social value of owning a 'book' which authenticates the message (2016:4).

The Good News of God's Word should indeed be Good News to those who are highly oral reliant. In the words and practices of Jesus Christ who values everyone made in his image, we should not fail them due to the ways and means by which we communicate to them (Madinger 2016:5). For the sake of the oral learners, we should communicate in the way they best receive his Words.

5.3.3. Guidelines for oral Scripture translation

Maxey (2009:46-47) suggested that literacy should not be the presupposed medium for Bible translation. His supporting reasons can be summarised as follows:

i) The anthropological model of contextualisation argues that one discovers what is already available in any given context. Orality continues to be the dominant communication form through much of the world, even if literacy is available.
ii) In the first century, during which much of the New Testament was composed, the world consisted of a predominantly oral setting.

It would serve Bible translators and consultants well to research the local context of their people group, and if the majority of the local people are oral learners, they should adjust their practices to involve multiple literacies. For example, it would greatly help, when the oral composers compose in more than one language, that the literate writer be tasked to write down the oral composition, for the reader to read it to other listeners, that the listeners verify the spoken presentation and that the consultant verifies the accuracy of the translated composition.

It would do Missiology good if more Bible translators embraced oralities and piloted new translation projects where literacies and oralities are used on an equal basis using an integrated approach.

Hereafter, this study will give attention to the translation of Bibles stories, Bible story-sets, scriptural ethno-songs and ethno-artwork in the context of the local oral people.

5.3.3.1. Translation of Bible stories

Gravelle lists three major challenges in Bible translation where there is an objective to introduce an oral society to the literate world (2017a). These can be summarised as follows:

i) Linguists and literacy workers discovered in the process of translation that oral and literary styles are two distinct concepts, leading to additional training in the form of writers' workshops.
ii) Workers have to ensure that there is enough reading material, and funding to put broader topics, with only local oral content into the text, in order to generate interest in reading.
iii) New readers default to the trade, business, or language of wider communication which already has more material in written form.

It would, therefore, be of paramount importance that Bible translators research the local context of the oral people and that additional preparation work will be required before the actual translation is started. Time should be allocated for the initial phases of translation as well as the phase where the oral people listen to the Bible stories. The first oral draft should be treated as a draft until it is properly checked, and a final version is prepared for publication.

In order to reach oral learners with the Word of God, Bible translators must give them enough stories (Evans 2004:35). One story should follow the next story. Research on the local context and worldview would determine where in the Bible to start in the translation of the stories. The case studies showcased people with a previous, predominantly animistic worldview. The stories of the Book of Genesis, beginning with creation, could be a good place to start for other oral people with similar worldviews. The selection and translation of the stories should:

i) Form an Old Testament foundation to understand the gospel story presented in the New Testament.
ii) Include the fathers of the faith as well as the heroes of the faith from the Old Testament. It should tell the oral people about their life struggles and victories in order for listeners to relate to it.
iii) Sing the songs of the songwriters and recite poems and proverbs from the Bible.
iv) Include selections of the biblical prophecies of the prophetic books of the Bible.
v) Present enough of the birth, life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ so that listeners can get to know and to follow Him.

vi) Tell about the acts of the first believers to expose them to fellowship in the body of Christ.
vii) Look forward to the return of our Lord and Saviour.

5.3.3.2. Translation of Bible story sets

McIlwain, a New Tribes missionary in the Philippines, experimented in the late 1970's and 1980's with a story presentation format, which he later named Chronological Bible Teaching. It presumes that the hearer has some literacy skills or is gradually moving on the orality-literacy continuum towards a more literate learning style. This could be seen in the video 'EE-TAOW! The Next Chapter' (Ethnos 360:2017). In this video about the work of Zook, another New Tribes Missionary in Papua New Guinea in the Mouk villages, the viewer is informed that those who used this method had to be somewhat literate.

Chronological Bible Storytelling was also developed in the Philippines. This follows a more narrative gospel presentation style, versus the Chronological Bible Teaching wherein the storyteller shifts to a literate, expositional format of teaching, after he told the Bible story. This method works well among higher orality reliant people. Chronological Bible Storytelling consists of fifty-four Bible stories translated and produced (Lovejoy et al. 2001:27-28).

New Tribes Mission and other agencies, such as the International Mission Board, The God Story-Project and StoryRunners, all use the translation of chronological Bible story-sets for Scripture engagement. Based on their example, the researcher conducted separate research and developed the Bible 365. Bible 365 is a chronological story-set, translated in the language of the oral people, which supplies building blocks necessary to sustain a self-replicating disciple-making community while the work of translation of the rest of Scripture takes place (Marx and Swarr 2015:22, 51-53). Bible 365 has been translated and recorded in several languages to date and is used globally by various agencies.

A language-centred emphasis in the production of a translated written Bible was considered an achievement by literates. According to Macalinao, this was not the case with oral learners. Oral learners recognised the written Bible as a deviation from their oral culture (2016:56). To communicate the gospel to oral learners, the translation of

the Bible has to include the full spectrum of oral communication genres, such as stories, songs, poems, and allow such an approach to advise and guide the translation work in real and deliberate ways.

Bible 365, a chronological 'Bible-story' set, also supplies oral preference learners and those working among oral learners, apart from what has already been mentioned, with the full genre of oral communication within a panoramic overview of Scripture and with the golden line pointing to Jesus Christ in Scripture (Marx and Swarr 2015:22, 51-53).

As discussed previously (cf. Section 1.1.1 above), the Gospel of Mark contains evidence of a rich oral culture. Qualities such as the episodic development, rather than a chronological, linear progression, the repetition of key terms, key phrases and formulas, are likely to be traces of orality and storytelling. Some of these qualities may seem unnecessary at times but help the storyteller and listener to internalise and remember (Rhoads et al. 2012).

The translation of the oral qualities of Bible stories should fit the appropriate oral affordance of the recipient oral culture. The redemptive analogy seeded in a high reliant orality culture should be considered in the selection of Scripture for a Bible story set. The prevailing worldview of the culture should be assessed and be used as a guide in the selection of Bible stories for a set. Enough stories should be selected to form a set for daily, weekly, monthly and annual Scripture engagement, which can also be used as building blocks for topical Scripture engagement. Lastly, Bible story sets should include the various genres to allow not just for enough building blocks for that community, but also to allow space for the various orality affordances.

5.3.3.3. Translation of scriptural ethno-songs

> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord (Col 3:16).

Heart Sounds, a ministry of Operation Mobilisation, says that God created each people group with their own cultural and linguistic identities. They set as their goal that every people group would glorify God by celebrating and expressing their heart worship in music, media and related arts (2017). They serve as an example of a global ministry

that works with local communities to develop culturally relevant scriptural worship (Heart Sounds International 2017).

Evans states that songs offer both a reflection of belief and a teaching or reinforcement of belief (2004:29). It could form part of the tools used by missionaries for teaching the Good News or reinforcing a particular aspect of the message. As a reflection, it could measure the depth of theology within the particular Christian community. For new believers, Christian worship songs could contribute towards building their identity of faith. A song, translated in the style and genre of an oral people's culture and language, is easy to remember and adopt when they love the rhythm and melody. Songs speak to the heart of an oral people. Scriptural songs are effective tools for teaching a particular message.

Evans defines four types of songs needed by any oral people group (2004:29):

i) Bridging songs, bridging the oral people's worldview to that of the Bible
ii) Narrative songs, a storytelling song
iii) Songs about life, helping new believers on their journey of faith
iv) Praise songs, songs for worship.

In the development and writing of songs the cultural practices of music and singing, as well as local musical instruments used by the oral people, must be considered. A good practice is to start with scriptural songs.

The Naro Choir blended their own form of San music with those of the locally known Setswana lyrics and adapted it to their own San style, of rhythm, interesting harmonies and their well-known click language. The published album was a show-piece, displaying the richness and fullness of Nqari Ba's multi-faceted creation (Naro Choir 2017); the choir regularly performs the songs in the album at various events.

Once some of the Dao became literate, the Phillips couple encouraged them to write and sing songs in their own language and cultural idiom. The older men refused to sing the songs, as they felt that their language may not be good enough to worship the Creator One. A young boy, Yoni, and his friends took the first steps to compose a song which was the first song that the Dao sang to praise the Creator and Jesus Christ. After this break-through several new songs were composed (Phillips 2013, Chapter 14). The songs help the Dao to realise that God is worthy to be praised in their

language. He created them and their language. Dao is his language, just as much as it is theirs.

The Baka sacred story-songs are circulated on audio players in several villages. The Baka receive the stories with enthusiasm (Leonard 2011:12). The translators translated the songs in the same format and genre as the Bible stories. This facilitated the transmission to different villages, clans and families.

5.3.3.4. Translation of the message into ethno-artwork

> ‘A picture is worth a thousand words.’ English proverb (Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2017).

Smith (2006:7) states from experience that visuals help to communicate the intended message. It brings the attention of the person viewing the visual or artwork to the common focal point. Bible stories or Scripture portions do not depend on visuals, artwork or pictures, but they help guide the attention and focus of the audience. As a mnemonic device, it helps clarify the message, reinforces the memory and helps to give a concise summary of larger amounts of material. Effective visuals could range from impressive works of art to a picture drawn in the dirt by a person’s finger. Smith (2006:9) states that to observe the art, artefacts and cultural art of an oral people group reveals insights into their worldview and expression of values, needs and beliefs. These understandings could then be used to strategically select Bible stories, themes and new artwork to communicate the gospel.

The Kuru Development Trust started the Kuru Art Project. Since 1990 they have assisted local San artists to experiment with modern art material to express the artistic yearnings within themselves (Kuru Art Project 2007). Bolaane acknowledged the importance of San contemporary artwork, which assists with the integration of marginalised populations, such as the primarily oral San, into the modern world. As Gamnqoa, one of the local artists, remarked to Bolaane: ‘Art is something that we cannot help doing. We should hold it in our hands, and we should not lose it for the sake of our children’ (2014:52).

Evans (2004:42) reports that Bible story artwork has been used in Taiwan, during an exhibition, to give artists the opportunity to share their story with visitors. Facsimiles of

the works of art were later bound in a booklet and later used, for example, to tell the Bible story to fellow travellers on trains.

Macalinao regards that ethno-art as one of the two critical initiatives in orality (2016: 57), the other being the oral Bible story. Story, dance song and chant are all one entity.

Dubei advises that additional research and development should be conducted about the use of visual arts with the Gonja in northern Ghana. The use of the local cultural means of the Gonja can assist in the production of such visual art materials (2013:178).

5.3.4. Guidelines for oral methodologies

> 'When a Bushman (San) dies, a whole library is lost!' (proverb quoted by Evans 2004:10).

Oral learners can learn just as well as literate, text-based learners. An oral learner's memory is superior to that of the average literate person. The challenge, therefore, is not in the ability to learn, but in the method of presentation. Oral learners prefer oral methods (Evans 2004:10).

5.3.4.1. Performance

According to Swanson (2009:39), the concept of biblical performance has for too long been seen as negative, especially in instances where the silent print of the Bible is restored into sound. Presenting the Bible in spoken form, that is, sound, is best described as 'performance'. This is a multi-faceted undertaking that involves much more the re-creation of oral speech from a silent text. He clearly states that oral language involved much more than the pitch, rhythm, volume and emotional expression - it involves the whole person. The listeners connect and interact with the performer even if they are physically separated.

For Swanson, the change in the ways we engage Scripture has to begin with the preachers, who are the primary communicators of the Bible. They need to draw the listeners into an event, a struggle, an encounter with a biblical character and into a relationship with the speaker as well as the ultimate Speaker. This is a dynamic

process, especially if the bearer of Good News performs the message (Swanson 2009:40).

Oral performance draws from all the senses by experiencing communication while the performer, text, and listeners negotiate meaning (Maxey 2009:81). Performance expresses identity and shapes communication in any given context. Oral performance could be seen as a process that infuses both translation and engagement with new understandings, methodologies and expressions.

The context of performance might change the form of performance (Maxey 2009:81). Oral performance includes words and is communication. Bible performance conveys the sacred nature of the communication.

5.3.4.2. Narrative discourse

Oral communicators learn best through the relational world of narratives (Evans 2004:3). Life's lessons are processed by observation, participation and verbal communication, especially through narrative. Oral histories, sayings and proverbs, genealogies, dramas, songs and stories all express a worldview which is shared, helping to process and assimilate new information (2004:4). Communicating the gospel through these same oral methods definitely improves effectiveness.

5.3.4.3. Chronological narratives

> A number of Muslim movements to Christ were birthed through some form of discovery Bible study, a growing familiarity with the biblical salvation narrative. Through the Bible they discovered for themselves God's plan that began in creation and continued through the prophets, which they recognized, before culminating in the life, teachings, and work of Jesus Christ. By the time these 'discoverers' encountered Christ in the New Testament, they were convinced of his authenticity and had given their lives to him in humble submission (Garrison 2014:247).

With the above Garrison concludes that the narrative chronological presentations of Scripture play a significant role in many Muslims accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Effectiveness increased exponentially with the use of chronological narratives of the Word of God, especially where the selection of biblical narratives addresses the worldview and context of the oral people (Evans 2015:42).

The worldviews of oral communities may differ vastly from the biblical worldview. An oral presentation of Bible stories in an orderly manner, which involves similarities or bridges with the oral people's worldview, could greatly assist them to overcome obstacles in receiving the gospel, rather than the single brief, abstract or literate presentation of the gospel message (Evans 2004:4, 14). Their version of creation can act as such a bridge. From Lockhart's account, it is clear that the written word was a barrier for the Baka (2004).

5.3.4.4. Ethnomusicology

The Baka's sacred songs are part of their oral art tradition (Fitzgerald 2011:12). Frisbie states that vocal music plays a more important role with the Baka than with the San. It is, however, a rare occasion not to hear music in either the Baka or San camps. The Baka prefer group performance. The Baka Pygmies, like the San, recognise a singing group that consists of some or all people from the group who wish to participate. The Pygmies have songs that may only be sung by a group consisting of one gender (1971:276-283).

Frisbie identifies the following descriptive profiles that are common to the San and the Pygmy music (1971:265-275):

i) instruments, vocal music
ii) musical styles
iii) structures.

She argues that the Pygmies' songs reflect aspects of San religious beliefs and moralities of social interaction and education. Various kinds of songs mark rites of passage, such as lullabies, initiation songs and wedding songs. They also name songs and dances after stronger animals, insects, or things: such as the buffalo, eland, honey, rain and the spider. The Pygmies, like the San, enhance and illustrate various myths through songs. In both instances, songs about the animals' sound and their movement are used to teach the next generation. Both people groups employ songs associated with hunting, gathering, healing, dancing, rites of passage, folktales and entertainment (Frisbie 1971:265-275,283).

Narrative songs serve as a tool for teaching (Evans 2004:29). The oral people groups create new songs at music workshops as a method to assist them to internalise

Scripture. Evans gives the following guidelines for creating such songs and music (2004:30):

i) Call and response songs: the response is normally the same throughout the song, whereas with a call it could be different
ii) Songs focus on beauty, simplicity and truth
iii) They review the Scriptural content to ensure that it is in tune with the biblical content with simple, understandable words or phrases
iv) A song with a pleasant rhythm is easier to sing
v) Repetition of the main themes in the song makes it easier to remember.

Evans recalls a song sung by women at such a workshop (2004:30) about creation:

In the beginning, God created, and it was good!
It was good!
In the beginning, God created, and it was good!
It was good! It was good! It was good! It was good! It was good!
In the beginning, God created, and it was good!...
He made you, He made me!
It was good! It was good! It was good! It was good! It was good!
…
All that He made, yes, it was good!

5.3.5. Guidelines for oral Scripture engagement

The majority of African Christians engage and express their faith in oral forms (Maxey 2009: 69).

According to Ott, it is highly important to properly translate Scripture, but it is even more important for the translated message to be accepted as valid by the listeners (2016:60). When listeners are convinced that the translated message is legitimate, it is more likely that they will accept its content and allow it to alter their worldview.

5.3.5.1. Oral learning

Dubei identifies the following elements that enhance the effectiveness of oral learning (2013:23):

i) Where the process involves active listening, dialogue and performance by the participants
ii) When the events featured include real life, life imagined and real people
iii) When drama and personal interaction are allowed.

Macalinao gives three basic guidelines (2016:55-56) for oral learning:

i) Orality informs the appropriate communication process
ii) Orality drives the communication strategy.
iii) Orality validates the outcomes of the initiative.

5.3.5.2. Chronological storying changes worldview

Worldview is sheltered in stories because stories address the very core of who people are. One story from the Bible may not change the way a person would think, but it could set the person on a journey to develop a worldview which relates to the Bible. Worldviews are formed over time and through life's narrative, lending itself to a chronological, rather than a topical presentation of the Bible (Evans 2015:43).

If one wishes to alter what people believe about their life story, you should give them a better story. God's Word can change people's heart stories. A chronological Bible story-set, that is, stories selected and presented in an orderly manner, when accepted and kept by an oral people group, may well be the only Bible available to that people group. Care should be taken to include bridging Bible stories to the worldview of the people group and present it in the storytelling genre of the people. This oral Bible can enable them to meditate on God's Word. It can go where the written may not be able to go. It can become the permanent possession of the oral people, available at all times, for them to retain, recall, repeat and discuss (Evans 2004:4, 11).

5.3.6. Guidelines for oral Scripture production and distribution

> The only Bible many people will ever have is the one you tell them, or show them, what they hear and see, the one in their hearts and in their heads, because for many, the one in their hands will never have any meaning! (Evans 2004:35).

Oral, audio and visual Scripture production and distribution are becoming more and more popular. However, some still hold that the Word of God is only faithful when it is in a written format. They see the non-printed (oral, audio and visual) translation and distribution as a threat to firm biblical knowledge. Some at best, see non-printed Scripture as only a supplement for non-literate users. Various researchers have addressed this dichotomy. As an example, research from the Meyah of Indonesia shows a people, who prefer oral Scripture performance, who maintain a long-term oral history and who still use it for their contemporary needs. Recent attempts to write their

oral tradition have failed. Even though some of this people group can read, it failed because their oral style utilises word contractions in very complex ways (Gravelle 2016:18-19,21).

As stated previously, the context of the oral people, their preference of oral performance and heart language, are all important for communicating the Good News. It is also important when producing and distributing Scripture. The following guidelines will enhance oral Scripture production and distribution:

i) Formulate and implement strategies that are biblical, oral, systemic, holistic and worldview specific
ii) Foster a sense of value and ownership by involving oral people in the process of producing and distributing oral Bibles.

The ideal is to produce and distribute a chronological Bible story-set, a panoramic overview of the Bible, which could be presented in oral, audio, video or digital form, incorporating music, drama, dancing and art (Evans 2004:36).

According to Ott, an audio version of Scripture, preferably in a Bible story-set orderly selected, has two primary qualities which make it effective for the oral learner (2016:61):

i) It captures the style and vocabulary of the oral learner.
ii) Oral learners must be able to hear the Bible in their natural, accustomed mode of learning.

5.4. Summary and analysis

The main purpose of this chapter was to feature the commonalities between the Naro San, and the three groups discussed in the previous chapter as it pertains to oral communication methodologies used in Scripture engagement. It highlighted aspects of the biblical creation story that resonate with oral communities and the structure that speaks to an oral community within the appreciation and influence of folklore. It also valued the creation story within missiology. Finally, it presented guidelines for oral Scripture translation, the adoption of oral methodologies in Christian mission, oral Scripture engagement, and oral Scripture production and distribution.

In general, it was discovered that:

i) There are striking similarities in the Scripture engagement processes among the four higher orality reliant communities examined. Each one of the oral people groups displays a preference for one or more of the oral communication methodologies, even in instances where some of the people are literate. For the Naro, story-telling, dance, art and song are at the heart of the transfer of wisdom. The Dao prefer the narrative discourse, validated by songs. At the heart of the Baka's performance is the storyteller-singer presenting the sacred story-song. The Gonja relate to a relational approach and a narrative discourse.

ii) The narrative, parable-likeness of the creation account of Genesis resonates with oral people. The one, true, living God who created everything and still cares for everything speaks to the heart of the oral people. They love the order, sequence and results of the creation account. The fact that He created space and a place for them, communicates his love for them.

iii) The biblical creation narratives mirror a prescientific view of the world and present the creation deeds of God as normal human beings would see it. This provides an effective way for Scripture engagement among oral people. They appropriate the events of the biblical creation narrative as part of their own history.

iv) The creation account of Genesis contains aspects relating closely to their traditional creation myths. This enables them to bridge to Scripture.

v) The creation story answers a fundamental worldview question for all of them. The creation account is an important Bible story in their journey with God, including their commitment to his mission.

Most Christians engage and express their faith in oral forms. In order for oral people to engage with Scripture, it should be translated with them as end-users in mind. Oralities should inform the translation process, but more importantly, it should drive the communication process. A Bible story-set, selected in an orderly manner, that takes the context of the local people into consideration could well be the best first Bible for any higher orality reliant people. Such an oral Bible story-set could also be the only Bible they will hear and pass on.

These practical guidelines would assist a wide spectrum of Christian practitioners on the literacy-orality journey.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

> For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires (Heb 4:12, NLT).

6.1. Introduction

This verse has been claimed by Bible translation agencies and ministries in the field of orality to justify their objectives to make Scripture accessible, written or spoken, in the language of the local people (Biblica 2013; The Seed Company 2015; End Bible Poverty 2017). God's Word is indeed alive and powerful today, whether it is in the printed text, the proclaimed Word or the enacted Word.

This study made the introductory statement (cf. Section 1.1.1 above) that the written Bible, also called The Word of God, gives numerous and unmistaken references to orality. The last chapter of the Bible is introduced as follows:

> The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near. (Rev 1:1-3, ESV)

These verses mention orality and the oral expressed and preserved in text, the readers and the listeners, side by side. Similarly, the exploration in this study of Scripture engagement by four higher orality reliant communities acknowledged the value and special functions of orality and literacy. The purpose of this research is not to promote orality only or to force a choice between orality and literacy. Much rather it aims at promoting a better understanding of orality and its close relationship with literacy. It will remain helpful to understand the predominant communication preference and context of any people group identified to receive and engage with Scripture.

This research, presenting mere guidelines in the previous chapter, is opening the way for further research to form an even better understanding of the field. Many a time the

appreciation of facts in a case study or an argued point have limited practical application. In other instances, such research has uncovered fresh new ideas that can be further explored. This research has brought important issues to the fore, such as the clear definition of local contexts and the predominant communication preference of oral people, which should be considered in discussions of Scripture engagement, Bible translation, social anthropology, missiology and theology.

The clarion call of this research is therefore for Bible contextual translation and engagement, where the 'creators' of local Scripture engage with the 'end-users' of Scripture in the context of the Bible, in the context of the local language and customs and in the context of their Scripture engagement. Special attention must be afforded to the 'lost' or 'neglected' forms of communication, such as an expression of Scripture by art, artwork, craft, songs, hymns, poetry and stories.

The challenges of a such a translation of Scripture for serving the local end-users, in their diversity from higher orality reliant on the one side, to high literacy on the other side, are enormous and have not been addressed in this study. The four case studies revealed different preferences in the Scripture engagement of the four higher orality reliant people groups. This proves that there cannot be a one size fits all approach to oral Bible translation.

Ultimately, the value of translated Scripture will be measured by the communities who will engage with it and will be the future agents taking the message of God's Word to their neighbours.

6.2. The research problem and the research objectives

6.2.1. Research problem, questions and objectives

Chapter 1 provided the research problem, key research questions and research objectives of this study. These can be summarised as follows:

The research problem with its main objective are:
In what ways do indigenous oral communities engage with the creation narrative of Genesis?

To explore and interpret indigenous oral communities' engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis.

The key questions with objectives are:

i) *Who are the Naro San people? It presented as a special reference the description and context of the Naro San in Botswana, southern Africa, in a case study* (cf. Chapter 2).
ii) *How do they engage the creation narrative of Genesis? It formed a better understanding of the Naro San's engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis* (cf. Chapter 3).
iii) *How does this compare with the Scripture engagement of other indigenous oral communities, especially with the creation narrative of Genesis? It observed and interpreted the Dao, Baka and Gonja's engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis* (cf. Chapter 4).
iv) *How does an exploration of the engagement of the creation narrative of Genesis by indigenous oral communities enrich the general understanding of oral Scripture engagement and what are the implications of these findings for Bible translation, Scripture engagement and missiology? It correlated the research findings and derived guidelines that could be used in oral Scripture translation, Scripture engagement and contemporary missiology* (cf. Chapter 5).

6.3. Summary and analysis of the research findings

6.3.1. A review of the Naro San Community

Chapter 2 provided a written overview of the verbally transmitted history of the Naro San. This included a historical overview, a summary of the San in recent times, their language and culture and their involvement in the building of institutions to preserve their language and culture. It also gave a resume of the values appreciated by the San and in what ways they communicate a selection of these values. It presented the San as a higher orality reliant people who pass on much of their history, language, culture and values to the next generation through ordinary oral communication.

The chapter also introduced Tshabu T̲ase from D'Kar Ghanzi and gave his indented family chart in order to appreciate him and his contribution as precious in the eyes of Nqari-Ba, Creator God. More than building our appreciation of the individual, he was introduced as a case, an example of his people group, and of a significant group within humanity, namely the oral communities.

This overview described the Naro San as a higher orality reliant people group with their unique way of communicating through narrative discourse, song, dance and stories on their journey, which evolved amongst the challenges of modern-day Botswana. It presented the efforts made by organisations assisting the San in the further development of their culture, language and Christian faith journey.

As a people group, they are moving around in a space or continuum with different mixtures of orality and literacy, not necessarily in a linear fashion, where literacy may help them to preserve their orality. We could learn from them that literacy should not be adopted at the cost of orality. This context and description highlighted the need for further research that would lead to greater awareness of and appreciation for the field of orality and Scripture engagement in the context of changing environments.

6.3.2. A review of a Naro San family's engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis

Chapter 3 explored the manner in which the Naro San, and in particular one family, that of Tshabu T̲ase, engaged with the creation narrative of Genesis. A case study was carried out to examine the Scripture engagement of Tshabu T̲ase and his family, as part of the Naro San as a higher orality reliant community. A collection of qualitative information was conducted through interviews, observation and referencing within the confines of the creation narrative of Genesis for a specific family unit, led by Tshabu, who is a member of the Naro San Community in D'Kar, Botswana.

We learned from Father Henschel (2002:4) that human beings, irrespective of the ways we preferred to learn or communicate, in general, want to answer three important questions: What? When? and Why? He argues that the first people answered it by their beautiful narrations, many a time through their creation myths, which gave us a bridge to the biblical account of the creation story.

The research revealed that they engage with Scripture through typical oral performance:

i) As people, created in the image of an oral Nqari-Ba, who Himself was an oral communicator, they communicate and connect with Him through the narrative discourse of Scripture, which allows them to discover that the Bible story connects with their own story. Around the fire, they tell stories. At special events, they use their stories in the cultural dance. Through storytelling and dance, they transfer their wisdom, traditions and culture to the next generation. They speak to God in their language, Naro.
ii) As people, living under the presence of Nqari-Ba, they dance and pray. His story for them continues throughout creation. They learn that Nqari-Ba is personal, powerful, uncreated, creative, orderly, singular, plural, good, living, a communicator, like humans, not like humans, and independent. Living under the Kalahari Sky (Face of God), they pray to Him through dances and songs around the communal fire. They solve their problems and sometimes dance to bring back lost harmony between them.
iii) As people, they imitate God. They imitate Him in sharing the responsibility to care for creation. This caring for creation is not an exploitative relationship but acting like God to provide sustenance in a natural relationship.
iv) As social people, they communicate like Nqari-Ba, through songs, art, rituals and games. They sing as a group around the fire-circle in the camp. Their art is one of their most expressive forms of communication in a changing environment. Their rituals are entrenched in their way of life. Through games, they learn the next generation of San.
v) As people, representing Nqari-Ba on earth, they co-create, an action that gives them dignity.
vi) Receiving God's Word in their own language brings dignity and proves to them that they are important to God and other people.

6.3.3. A review of oral communities' engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis

Chapter 4 correlated the Naro San's engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis, with that of other oral communities, specifically with that of the very remote

Dao tribe of Indonesia, the Baka of Equatorial Africa and the Gonja of northern Ghana. It appreciated the foundations of God's message as captured in the biblical account of the creation story which resonates with an oral community. It dealt with the structure of the creation narrative of Genesis and further appreciated the existence of creation stories. Lastly, an appreciation for the oral Scripture engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis, was put in the context of missiology.

A person's worldview is based on the god he worships (Miller 1997:97-98). God's Word includes narrative truth in the form of histories, stories and parables. God created the universe (Gen 1:1) and he is therefore not merely a tribal god. He is the one God who reigns over all nations, tongues and peoples. God has revealed himself inside a particular culture, history, which came with a worldview, that of the ancient Near East and his people, the Hebrews (Mischke 2015:31-32). God's Word also includes propositional truth – it is the Book of Books – the written Word of God, rich in declarations, proverbs, principles, laws, prophecies and letters (ibid). The predominant worldview within any culture establishes that culture's principles. A change in worldview ushers in a change in the understanding of most other things within that world. To bring about the change to Christianity, a person needs to be introduced to a biblical worldview, which involves exposure to the Bible, beginning with the creation narrative of Genesis.

Also, as cautioned by Maxey, the presence of vernacular Scripture in any given community does not ensure an engagement with these Scriptures by the community (2009:56).

The findings of the survey of the four oral people groups' engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis can be summarised as follows:

i) The translation of the Bible, whether Old Testament, New Testament or chronological story-sets, comes with various challenges within each of the four oral people groups. These challenges include their animistic worldview, a lack of an alphabet and writing system, the selection of the appropriate genre of oral performance used in translation, bridging context and content of the Bible to the local context and content, and the selection of appropriate Bible stories. The

approaches followed by the translators were different in each case, taking local context and factors into consideration.

ii) The four oral people groups have different preferences regarding the ways of expressing their Scripture engagement. The Naro prefer story, dance, song and art. The Dao opt for the story in a narrative discourse and songs to emphasise a Bible story. Music, dance and storytelling play a central part in the Baka's oral culture. At the centre of the Baka's spiritual journey is the sacred story-song form. The use of stories in a narrative discourse is the preferred methodology for the Gonja people. They make a story with a moral lesson a cultural treasure.

iii) Oral Scripture engagement works best when it matches the local context of oral performance. The presentation of oral performance, the repetition of performance, the setting and timing of the performance, the people involved in the performance as well as interaction during such a performance, determine the acceptance of the message.

iv) The production and distribution of Scripture result in a greater impact when conducted through oral means in the local context. These include the performer telling, retelling, asking questions, discussing questions and further interaction which could include singing, dancing and artwork. The performer in the case of the Baka is the story-singer. It also involves group telling, retelling and singing. All of the case studies report an interest to receive the Scripture in their language in print when they are ready for the written word. The recorded oral Scripture is distributed on various hand-held devices and the written Scripture is distributed in various printed forms.

Additional aspects were discovered during their engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis:

i) Various people groups relate to God as Creator, as presented by the creation narrative of Genesis. The Naro San recognise the God of creation as Creator God, Nqari-Ba, who is as close to them as the expanse of the Kalahari Sky. The Dao relate to a Creator One who brought them his message, the 'big talk' as prophesied in previous generations. The Baka interact spontaneously with the story-song of the biblical account of creation, spoken in a way that they knew only the Creator, 'Komba', would speak.

ii) People who already believe in some creator god, readily accepted the creation narrative of Genesis that there is one, true, living Creator God who created all things. The creation narrative depicts the creation actions of God as any believer would recognise it as creation history from a theological perspective.

iii) For most of the oral peoples, the existence of creation stories in folklore or myths helps them to bridge to the biblical account of creation. The narrative style of the creation account of Genesis mirrors that of typical myths. God that breathed life into the first human in the creation narrative of Genesis is also an important aspect of African myths. However, the liberating news of the Bible, that the Creator God is always on his way to man, was the one aspect which sets the Bible apart from the traditional creation myths.

The chapter ended by placing the biblical account of creation in the context of missiology to be used in reaching out to other oral peoples who relate to the same preferred oral methodologies. This chapter concluded that what was discovered about the Naro San's engagement with Scripture, resonated with the Scripture engagement among other higher orality reliant people groups.

6.3.4. A review of guidelines for effective oral Scripture translation and engagement

There is a dynamic relationship between the Bible and the people who engage with the Bible. 'Peoples of varied cultures and languages have shaped the way Bibles have been translated and Bibles have shaped the way people live out their faith' (Maxey 2009:4). Scripture recorded the early orality-literacy-modalities of Israel as they were influenced by Scripture (cf. Section 5.3.2).

Chapter 5 presented guidelines for effective Scripture translation and the adoption of oral methodologies in Christian mission, guidelines for oral Scripture engagement, and guidelines for oral Scripture productions and distribution of Scripture among oral people. These guidelines are based on the findings of the case studies of the four oral people groups' engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis.

The descriptive analyses, based on the data presented in the four case studies and the subsequently derived guidelines, will hopefully assist a variety of people in

Christian mission. In particular, its aims to be of assistance to practitioners, facilitators and teachers, from the highly literate to the oral person who shares God's story with his neighbour.

This chapter showed that orality still matters. If it matters to God in Scripture, it matters to Christians. It matters to oral people who currently constitute 80% of the global population (cf. Section 1.1.2.1). It matters in our Christian endeavours as we communicate with oral people. It matters as our communication needs adjustment to the context of the local oral people and their affordances.

Oralities matter and so do literacies. The composition, distribution and engagement of Scripture involve multiple literacies. All people employ a spectrum of communication strategies as they freely move around in the space between orality and literacy.

This chapter recommended that Bible translators spend time to research the local context and to adjust their practices to involve multiple literacies. A first goal would be to give oral people enough translated Bible stories, from the beginning to the end of Scripture and from all its genres, to meet them where they are in their worldview and local context. It would greatly assist Christian endeavours in building and sustaining a self-replicating disciple-making community if a chronological Bible story-set were available to the local oral people. In addition, a scriptural chronological Bible story-set, and scriptural ethno-songs offer reflection, teaching and reinforcement of belief. Ethno-artwork powerfully communicates the message to oral people. Mnemonic devices can also clarify, reinforce or summarise the message. Ethno-musicology can speak of the sacred story-song performance of some oral people and can help others to memorise or reinforce the message.

Oral performance richly draws from all of our human senses. As such, oral performance can infuse Scripture translation and engagement with a fresh understanding, with new methods and expressions. The context of the local performance influences the form of Bible performance.

Oral, audio and audio-visual Scripture production and distribution are on the increase. It will serve the Christian mission well to accept that there could be other forms than the written form which can serve as the standard, or authorised version, and not just as a supplement.

6.4. Recommendations

There are four guidelines recommended by this study, which evaluated the engagement of four oral communities with the creation narrative of Genesis, with the purpose of serving other Scripture engagements and exploring the implications for world mission.

6.4.1. Guidelines for Scripture translation

It is important for Bible translators to understand that the context of oral preference in communication determines the medium of translation. The translation and presentation of Scripture should therefore include:

i) enough chronological biblical narratives based on the full spectrum of orality to advise and guide the continuing translation work in real and deliberate ways
ii) Scriptural ethno-songs in the style and genre of the oral people's culture to serve as bridges between the oral people's worldview and biblical values, to reinforce the biblical message and to assist as mnemonic devices
iii) Scriptural messages and stories woven into ethno-artwork as critical mnemonic devices to share the gospel story with others, to aid in clarifying the message, or to reinforce or summarise the message.

6.4.2. Guidelines for oral methodologies

Christian communicators, especially those from the North-Western hemisphere, or as highly literates, will do well to remember that oral learners have a local performance which affects their biblical performance. Oral performance involves most of our human senses. Oral performance can give new understanding, with new methods and expressions for Scripture translation and engagement. The context of the local performance influences the form of Bible performance.

The method of presentation has to appeal to oral people. Specific methods that should be considered are:

i) Biblical performance, which includes the presentation of the Bible in a spoken form where the performer, draws the listener into an encounter with the biblical character and event, as well as with the narrator and the Ultimate Narrator.
ii) Oral communicators learn best through the oral performance of the narratives from the Bible, where the message is observed, interpreted and applied.
iii) Narrative songs assist in internalising and memorising Scripture.

6.4.3. Guidelines for oral Scripture engagement

Practitioners, facilitators and trainers in the field of Scripture engagement would do well to include oral affordances and performances in their presentations. When listeners are convinced that the translated message is legitimate, it is more likely that they will accept its content and allow it to alter their worldview. A biblical story-set selected in an orderly manner, in the storytelling genre of the oral people, communicates with bridges into their worldview and addresses the core of that people. Assuming that the worldview of the listeners is not compatible with the biblical worldview, it can be replaced by the biblical worldview.

6.4.4. Guidelines for oral Scripture production and distribution

Christian ministries involved in producing and distributing Scripture can significantly improve their impact in distributing oral media forms of Scripture to the almost 5.7 billion oral people alive today. Media forms (oral, audio and visual) of Scripture production and distribution are increasingly popular. The ideal is a panoramic overview of the Bible presented in oral, audio, video and digital form, incorporating music, drama, dance and art.

6.5. The contribution of the findings to theology and missions

Theologians and academics should take note of the prevalence of orality as this will affect established theology and missiology.

The research topic of this thesis, namely the oral engagement of Scripture, provided some guidelines for practices such as Bible translation and communication of the gospel message. It, therefore, has the potential to enrich contemporary theology and

missions. The study purposefully made use of descriptive methods and analyses, to focus on the appreciation of what existed among higher orality reliant people rather than to add to their history of stigmatisation and provided some practical guidelines. The research involved the collection and analysis of data from numerous resources, including existing research and documentation, focussed interviews and participant observation at training interventions. These were strengthened by the structure of the creation narrative of Genesis which appealed to oral people, the appreciation of creation stories in folklore, as well as the context of the creation story in missiology.

The research explored four higher orality reliant communities' engagement with the creation narrative of Genesis. It then presented guidelines for the translation of and engagement with Scripture that could be applied to people of all oral cultures. In addition to this, the research confirmed the need for the application of oral methodologies in reaching oral learners as part of the *Missio Dei* performed worldwide by the Church.

Much further research is needed in the field of the prevalence of orality and textuality in higher orality reliant cultures. It is helpful for all practitioners, occupied with either translation or engagement, to understand the predominant communication preference, as well as the ways and means of that communication, of the higher orality reliant people they are working with.

The researcher hopes and prays for contextual Bible translation and engagement and for the 'creators' of local Scripture to engage with the 'end-users' of Scripture in the context of the Bible, in the context of the local people and in the form that they would like to be engaged.

It is the researcher's hope that a new appreciation will be given to orality as an undervalued form of communication and presentation of Scripture, as is evident in the early Near Eastern Church, through art, artwork, craft, songs, hymns, poetry and stories.

6.6. Conclusion

The researcher, as a student of literacies as an expression of oralities, is concerned about the way in which the whole counsel of God's Word is brought to all people,

especially the Bible-less people. They will remain Bible-less if the Word of God is presented in a form that they cannot engage with. The researcher's hope is that oralities would be seen as a part of every human being's DNA and that oral affordances and performances are normal to everyone. He is convinced that proponents of literacies should embrace oralities as part of their human nature.

Though there are many challenges in Scripture translation, the biggest one is perhaps that the world of Scripture translation got stuck in literacies. The challenges in translating oral Bibles remains gargantuan and require the same efforts previously employed in written translation work. These challenges have not been addressed at length in this study.

The researcher acknowledges that there is no single solution or process that can be applied in each and every situation. This was evident in the different ways in which the four oral communities explored in this study, engage Scripture. Advocates of Scripture engagement can enrich the existing literate engagement through the methodologies of oral Scripture engagement.

Ultimately, the value of translated and presented Scripture will be measured by its effect on communities, who will be taking the message of God's Word to their neighbours when fulfilling their *Missio Dei*.

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