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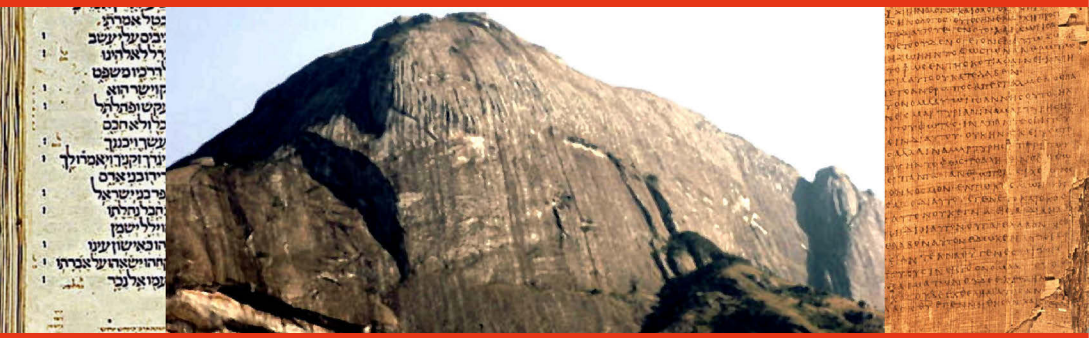
Justino Alfredo

THE BOOK OF RUTH FROM A LOMWE PERSPECTIVE

ḤESED AND IKHARARI



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ABBREVIATIONS

BDB ..... Brown, Driver, and Briggs Hebrew Lexicon
BHS ..... Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
CEBITA ..... Center for Bible Interpretation and Translation in Africa
CFR..... Cognitive Frames of Reference
DCH ..... Dictionary of Classical Hebrew
KB ..... Koehler and Baumgartner Hebrew Lexicon
IUB ..... Igreja Uniao Baptista
JNSL..... Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages
JSOT ..... Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JOTSSA ..... Journal of Old Testament Society of South Africa
LXX..... Septuagint
RSV..... Revised Standard Version
SASNES..... Southern African Society of Near Eastern Study
SBM..... Sociedade Biblica de Moçambique
SBL ..... Society of Biblical Literature
SBT ..... Studies in Biblical Theology
SCM..... Studies in the Christian Movement
SDBH ..... Semantic Domain of Biblical Hebrew
SIL ..... Summer Institute of Linguistics
TAPOT..... Theory and Practice of Translation
OTE..... Old Testament Essay
OTSSA..... Old Testament Society of Southern Africa
UEM ..... Universidade Eduardo Mondlane
UBS ..... United Bible Societies

ABSTRACT

It has been acknowledged in two recent studies that the translation of key biblical terms is an area that needs urgent attention. Many lexicons provide the meaning of a word by describing its etymology, hardly paying any attention to the socio-cultural contexts within which it is used. Thus, lexicons are often of limited value for Bible interpretation and translation. This dissertation argues that the meaning of a word can only be fully determined by taking into consideration the linguistic and socio-cultural contexts within which it functions. A basic assumption is that the biblical source text serves as a frame of reference for the semantic analysis of a particular word. The text provides an integrative semantic and pragmatic framework within which a biblical term must be investigated with reference to its wider socio-cultural setting.

In the light of this framework, this study investigates the meaning of חסד in the book of Ruth from a Lomwe perspective. Although the word occurs only three times (Ruth 1:8, 2:20 and 3:10) with reference to Ruth, Boaz and Yahweh as subjects, respectively, the book is a "חסד story", which represents the essence of the covenant between Yahweh and His people. The essence of this covenant is demonstrated by the main characters of the story, which unveil the theological depth that חסד brings to the understanding of this narrative. Since the aim of the study is to evaluate the suitability of the terms *osivela, osivela* combined with *woororomeleya* and *ikharari* in relation to others that are potentially available in Lomwe to convey the conceptual complexity denoted byחסד , a Cognitive Frames of Reference (CFR) approach was introduced for the translation. To bridge the cognitive gap between the socio-cultural worlds of the biblical audience and the target audience, the study used different dimensions of CFR namely the textual, socio-cultural, communicational and the organizational frames of reference. Using the book of Ruth as a starting point for the translation of the word חסד into Lomwe, it is argued that this approach offers a better understanding of the meaning of חסדin Ruth 1:8, 2:20 and 3:10. Since *osivela waya woororomeleya* does not do justice to the meaning of חסד in the three passages, the words *ikharari* (1:8 and 2:20) and *oreera murima* (3:10) have been proposed as exegetically and socio-culturally more appropriate alternatives.

OPSOMMING

In twee onlangse studies is aangedui dat daar dringend aandag geskenk behoort te word aan die vertaling van sleutel bybelse terme. Baie woordeboeke verskaf die betekenis van 'n woord deur die etimologie daarvan te beskryf, met 'n beperkte fokus op die sosio-kulturele kontekse waarin dit gebruik word. Gevoglik is die waarde van woordeboeke beperk met betrekking tot bybelinterpretasie en -vertaling. Hierdie proefskrif argumenteer dat die betekenis van 'n woord slegs volkome bepaal kan word deur die inagneming van die literêre en sosio-kulturele kontekste waarin dit funksioneer. 'n Basiese aanname is dat die bybelse bronteks as 'n verwysingsraamwerk dien vir die semantiese analise van 'n bepaalde woord. Die teks verskaf 'n geïntegreerde semantiese en pragmatiese raamwerk waarin 'n bybelse term ondersoek moet word met verwysing na sy breër sosio-kulturele milieu.

In die lig van hierdie raamwerk ondersoek hierdie studie dus die betekenis van חסד in die Boek van Rut vanuit 'n Lomwe perspektief. Alhoewel die woord slegs driekeer voorkom (Rut 1:8, 2:20 en 3:10) met betrekking tot onderskeidelik Rut, Boaz en Jahwe as onderwerpe, is die boek 'n "חסד storie" wat die essensie van die verbond tussen Jahwe en sy volk verbeeld. Die wese van dié verbond word gedemonstreer deur die storie se hoofkarakters wat die teologiese diepte van חסד tot 'n beter verstaan van die narratief blootlê. Aangesien die studie 'n evaluering van toepaslike terme *osivela, osivela,* gekombineer met *woororomeleya,* en *ikharari,* in verhouding tot andere wat moontlik in Lomwe beskikbaar is, om die konseptuele kompleksiteit weer te gee, ten doel het, is 'n Kognitiewe Verwysingsraamwerk (KWR) benadering vir vertaling voorgestel. Ten einde die kognitiewe gaping tussen die sosio-kulturele wêrelde van die bybelse gehoor en die teikengehoor te oorbrug, het hierdie studie verskillende dimensies van KWR, te wete die tekstuele, sosio-kulturele, kommunikatiewe en organisatoriese verwysingsraamwerke aangewend. Deur die Boek Rut as vertrekpunt te neem vir die vertaling van חסד in Lomwe, word geargumeenteer dat dié benadering 'n beter verstaan van חסד se betekenis in Rut 1:8, 2:20, 3:10 tot gevolg het. Aangesien *osivela waya woororomeleya* nie reg laat geskied aan die betekenis van חסד in hierdie drie perikope nie, is die woorde *ikharari* (1:8 en 2:20) en *oreera murima* (3:10) as eksegeties en sosio-kultureel meer toepaslike alternatiewe voorgestel.

DEDICATION

This book is
dedicated
to my parents,
MANUEL ALFREDO COLIAL
and
ARGENTINA BELA COUTINHO COLIAL,
who continue to show me their
support, love and care.

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To all of you, I say, “Thank you, Obrigado, Merci, Dankie, Nothamala”.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Statement

It has been acknowledged in two recent studies that the translation of key biblical terms such as חסד [1] is an area that needs urgent attention (Van Steenbergen 2006 and Foster 2008). Many lexicons find the meaning of a word by describing its etymology, hardly paying attention to the socio-cultural context. According to Van Steenbergen (2006:2), lexicons are often of limited value for Bible interpretation and translation[2]. In cross-cultural semantics, however, it is emphasized that the meaning of a word can only be determined by taking into consideration both the linguistic and socio-cultural contexts within which it functions. The translation of the key biblical word חסד into Lomwe, a language spoken in northern Mozambique, is a case in point.

In the translation of the Old Testament into Lomwe that is currently in preparation, it is suggested that the word חסד should generally be rendered with *osivela* (love). The word *osivela* (found in the Lomwe New Testament of 1930), is normally used to indicate interpersonal relationships between relatives[3]. The Lomwe translators agree with this rendering because, according to them, *osivela* communicates the importance of kinship and marriage as cohesive elements in the Lomwe society. Although the word *osivela* has been identified as a general term suitable for חסד, in some instances, the translators felt it necessary to qualify this term with the adjective *woororomeleya* (which literarily means *faithful* in a domestic context)[4]. For example, in the published new Lomwe transla-

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1 The word חסד has been used in Biblical Hebrew throughout the development of the Old Testament. It appears in most books of the Old Testament (cf. Clark 1993:15).

2 As Van Steenbergen (2006:2) observes, the ongoing project of the United Bible Societies (UBS) aimed at developing a Biblical Hebrew lexicon based on semantic domains is a commendable attempt at drawing more attention to relevant issues in lexicography.

3 The use of *osivela* with other subjects and objects will be discussed in Chapter 6 of this study.

4 It should be noted that the word *woororomeleya* is not limited to a domestic context in terms of a husband and wife relationship, but it also indicates the faithfulness of a daughter or son to her/his parents.

tion of Ruth, חסד is rendered as *osivela waya wooororomeleya* (his/her faithful love). This expression, coined by the translators, is used in a non-poetic context, while *osivela* alone (without an adjective) is used exclusively in a poetic context to render this word. The current translators of the Old Testament into Lomwe have thus suggested that both *osivela* and *osivela* combined with *wooororomeleya* should be used to translate חסד, depending on the literary context in which it occurs.

This decision by the translators seems to be problematic, however. In the 1930 Lomwe translation of Psalms, חסד is exclusively rendered as *ikharari*. The word *ikharari*, according to Assane's description[5], is commonly used by the Lomwe Christians. It not only denotes a relationship that involves caring for one another in times of need, but also keeping a bond with someone with whom one is in relationship (Assane 2002:47). Although Assane did not make these comments in relation to חסד, his survey of the factors that influence the formation and function of mutual help among the Lomwe people has demonstrated how their day-to-day life, not only as Christians *per se,* but also as an agrarian people, influences their understanding of the concept *ikharari*. This could explain why the Lomwe people have no difficulty in understanding the rendering of חסד with *ikharari* in the Lomwe translation of the book of Psalms.

In the current translation of the Old Testament into Lomwe, a discrepancy could arise, because the translators choose to use *osivela* and *osivela* combined with *wooororomeleya* instead of *ikharari*. These words are not only inappropriate renderings of חסד in the book of Psalms, but they also fail to capture the Lomwe people's socio-cultural understanding of the meaning of חסד [6]. The basis of this afore-mentioned translation of חסד is not compatible with the Lomwe socio-cultural background and worldview and this will be discussed in chapter 5 of this study.

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[5] In 2002, Amade Assane, a student from *Universidade Eduardo Mondlane* (UEM) da Faculdade de Agronomia e Engenharia Floresta, conducted a survey as part of the programme for a Licentiate degree. It dealt with the factors, which influence the formation and function of mutual help among a group of farmers among the Lomwe people from Mugaveia in the northern Zambesia province (*Factores que influenciam a formacao e funcionamento dos grupos de componeses baseados na ajuda mutual)*.

[6] Any translation of חסד into Lomwe should take into account both the presence of *ikharari* in the older translation and its contemporary use among the Lomwe people (Assane 2002).

In order to contribute towards a solution of this problematic translation issue, the present study takes its departure from the original biblical hearers of the word and extends it to the Lomwe people of northern Mozambique. This is done in accordance with the translation theorist Christiane Nord who asserts that, "a translator has to be aware of the rich points relevant to a particular translation task between the groups and sub-groups on either side of the languaculture barrier" (Nord 1997:25)[7].

Although the present investigation is oriented within the broad field of semantics and biblical studies, its focus will be on the translation of חסד into Lomwe particularly in the book of Ruth. There are three reasons that motivate this choice.

1. Ruth is a narrative text, which is deeply embedded within a specific socio-cultural setting, where the roles of characters are significant especially in creating an awareness of society's responsibility for the poor and disadvantaged;
2. The similarity between the socio-cultural environment of the Ruth story and the current Lomwe socio-cultural setting, creates cross-cultural links in terms of which חסד may be understood and applied in translation;
3. Although חסד appears only three times in this book (with reference to Ruth, Boaz and Yahweh as subjects), it is a thematic key term (cf. Bell 1996) and provides an integrative framework within which the entire book may be better understood. My reading strategy would take seriously the narrative dynamics, beginning with the original hearers of the word, so that its sense, significance, and implications are adequately understood in terms of the original situation. Subsequently, the study will focus on the life situations and worldview of the Lomwe people of Mozambique.

Based on these three points, my study will investigate the following question: How can the recent developments in semantic studies and translation theory assist us in finding a more suitable way for translating חסד into Lomwe? The study will focus on one case study namely the

[7] "Rich points" are differences in behaviour that cause culture conflicts or communication breakdowns between two communities in contact. "Languaculture" emphasizes the interdependence of language and culture (Nord 1997:25).

translation of חסד as used in the book of Ruth, into Lomwe. It will attempt to determine the specific nuance of the word in each context of the book of Ruth by comparing the socio-cultural setting of both groups. The ultimate aim of this investigation is to provide further insight into the dynamics of translating the Hebrew text from a Lomwe socio-cultural and linguistic perspective. This exploration builds on a previous survey (Alfredo 2003) that was done on חסד in both biblical and secondary literature. The survey indicated that a proper evaluation of the translation of this term into Lomwe would have to consider new developments in translation theory. This aspect will be dealt with extensively in the present study.

1.2 Focus

In the light of the problem statement discussed above, the focus of this research is as follows: The study seeks to evaluate the suitability of the terms *osivela/wooororomeleya* and *ikharari* in relation to others Lomwe terms, which could convey the conceptual complexity denoted by the Hebrew word חסד. The book of Ruth will be used as a case study.

1.3 Hypotheses

In order to provide a more suitable translation of the Hebrew word חסד particularly in the book of Ruth, into Lomwe, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

1. Cognisance must be taken of recent developments in semantic theory (especially cross-cultural lexical-semantics and social anthropological studies) in order to provide an adequate translation of חסד into Lomwe;
2. The latest developments in translation theory must be taken into account in the translation of חסד into Lomwe as a means of facilitating more insightful and accurate cross-cultural communication;
3. A discourse-oriented, textual-contextual study of the book of Ruth will shed further light on the meaning and significance of חסד as used in this particular text.

1.4 Theoretical Points of Departure

Given the prominent link between semantics and exegesis as expressed in the first of my hypotheses above, the theoretical starting point of the study will be De Blois' work on semantics. The relation between these disciplines will be illuminated and sharpened by drawing on the important assumptions of a cognitive frames of reference approach to the source text (to be discussed in Chapter 2 of this study). While the different dimensions (e.g. socio-cultural, textual dimensions) of a biblical text always have to be considered in the translation process, an appropriate translation theory is required as well.

1.4.1 Lexical semantics

De Blois (2001:12) argues that:

> Throughout the last centuries, an enormous amount of linguistic research has taken place in the field of Biblical Hebrew in which semantics always played a very minor role. The main reason for this, of course, is that, up until recently, semantics was not really considered to be a scholarly discipline of importance. As a result of this, all kinds of claims were made about the biblical texts, including the culture and beliefs behind these texts, without solid linguistic arguments to support them.

Therefore, in a more recent paper, *Lexicography and Cognitive Linguistics: Hebrew Metaphors from a Cognitive Perspective* (2003), De Blois presents a summary of a new dictionary project (of which he is the editor), with the tentative title, *A Semantic Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew* (SDBH). According to him, the reason for this particular title of the new dictionary is to build "on a solid semantic theoretical framework, which cannot always be said about the more traditional dictionaries" (De Blois 2003:n.p)[8].

In his dissertation, De Blois (2001:12) notes that an important contribution to the field of Hebrew semantics is Barr's work which "sent a wind of change through modern biblical criticism" in the 1960s[9]. In his book, Barr (1962) complains about the haphazard way in which scholars use linguistic arguments to demonstrate their claims regarding the biblical texts and the theological and cultural background of the people who produced them. He stresses the importance of studying the whole of a lan-

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[8] The title of this new dictionary originates from De Blois' dissertation of 2001.

[9] Cf. also Sawyer (1972).

guage and not just a part of it. Only in this way, will we be able to understand the meaning of the biblical texts and the culture and beliefs behind them.

Scholars such as Cotterel and Turner (1989) have demonstrated the relevance of modern linguistics for biblical interpretation in relation to lexical studies. Like Barr, Cotterel and Turner argue that it is not words *per se,* which provide the basic unit of meaning, but the larger elements of discourse such as sentences and paragraphs. In other words, there is a need to embrace the whole discourse). Earlier, another significant work was published, Nida's *Componential Analysis of Meaning* (1979), which for a long time has been regarded as a "helpful tool in the analysis of referential meaning at a word level" (De Blois 2003:n.p). The basic theoretical assumption is that componential analysis describes the meanings of words in terms of binary distinctive features[10]. Subsequently, Louw and Nida (1988) published their *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains,* which bases its semantic framework on the same theoretical model of componential analysis of meaning.

However, Van Steenbergen (2006:17) notes that this theoretical model of componential analysis in its present form cannot present a comprehensive theory of natural language since it deals only with the lexicon. Thus, he makes some important modifications to the approach of componential analysis, adding in particular a contextually based socio-cultural dimension to refine lexical description and definition. Van Steenbergen: (a) discusses and evaluates the history and development of componential analysis; (b) formulates criteria for semantic analysis based on language and culture-specific data, emanating from the source language and culture, not imposed by the researcher and his or her theoretical inclination; and (c) develops this theory as a tool for semantic analysis of negative moral behaviour in Isaiah, whereby the special focus is on semantic description and worldview analysis.

Van Steenbergen attempts to develop a descriptive system that could do justice to both the linguistic and cultural aspects of the meaning of lexical items with reference to negative moral behaviour in the book of Isaiah. The present research intends to develop a model for translating the Hebrew word חסד , as used in the book of Ruth, into Lomwe. It should

[10] It should be noted here that componential analysis also allows for less rigorously organized and comparable "encyclopaedic" aspects of meaning.

be noted that this study would not utilise componential analysis as Van Steenbergen has done but rather would draw on the semantic domain theory of De Blois. In developing such a model, the current investigation takes cognisance of the fact that the Old Testament is a restricted corpus with very little contemporaneous extra-biblical comparative material. Despite this, חסד has been studied with great intensity, which has led to a vast tradition of interpretation. It is an enormous task to study this chain of tradition in order to glean dependable information on the meaning of specific words (Wendland and Nida 1985:88). Moreover, the Old Testament, as a collection of books, was written and finalized over a period of around a thousand years, and as a result, the meaning of many key biblical words may have undergone some sort of semantic shift (De Blois 2001:21).

For example, according to Salisbury (2002), it is reasonable to assume that the word חסד has undergone a shift in meaning due to changing contexts or circumstances. He argues that a "specific meaning that related to covenant agreements may have become a theological term, by association with the *Mosaic* Law and the covenant at Mount Sinai. This in turn may have led to a concept approximating *grace*[11] and as such entered into common usage in later times" (Salisbury 2002:n.p; emphasis as in the original). However, it appears that just a single perspective on the semantic field of חסד cannot give a satisfactory account of the meaning of the word. The perspective of cognitive frames of reference will (inter alia) be required, therefore, in order to enrich the semantic study of חסד in the book of Ruth (to be discussed in Chapter 2 of this study). This approach can help us to identify different dimensions of the text and its communicative context during the interpretation and transmission process. In addition to the different dimensions of the biblical text that have to be considered in the translation of חסד, an appropriate translation theory is required as well.

[11] It is unclear whether Salisbury uses this English word in its Hebrew or Greek sense. However, being an Old Testament scholar, I would assume that he refers to the Hebrew sense here.

1.4.2 Translation theory

Eugene Nida introduced a new direction in the theory and practice of Bible translation. The traditional method of Bible translation is frequently termed *formal equivalence*. This translation approach is oriented towards the source language in that it attempts (a) to be faithful to the text's grammatical form, (b) to be consistent in word usage with respect to the source language, and (c) to formulate meaning in terms of the source context (Nida 1964:165). Nida develops his theory against the backdrop of formal equivalence and calls it *dynamic equivalence,* which he defines as reproducing in the target language the closest natural equivalent of the biblical source language message.

The significant words in this definition are *equivalent*, *natural* and *closest*. The first term points towards the source language, the second towards the receptor language, and the last one binds these two orientations together (Nida 1964:166). In other words, Nida advocates that each language have its own formal characteristics, many of which cannot be transferred to another language without loss of effective communication.

In a subsequent work titled, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (referred to as TAPOT), Nida and Taber (1969), further developed this theory of dynamic equivalence, but did not add any substantial new element to it. They defined it as translation "in which the message of the original text has been so transported into the receptor language that the RESPONSE of the RECEPTOR is essentially like that of the original receptors" (Nida and Taber 1969:202). The same three-fold orientation, towards source language message (i.e., equivalence), receptor language (i.e., naturalness), and bringing them together in the notion of receptor response (i.e., closeness), is still there. However, the theory does not explain how the response of the original receptors can be measured, so there is little possibility of determining the degree of success of the translation, since it is to be evaluated against a standard that cannot objectively be determined.

Therefore, De Waard and Nida (1986) have attempted to clarify the notion of a meaning-based translation theory by means of the concept of *functional equivalence*. This new approach may sound like a major development in translation theory, but:

> [t]he substitution of "functional equivalence" is not designed to suggest anything essentially different from what was earlier designated by the

> phrase "dynamic equivalence". Unfortunately, the expression "dynamic equivalence" has often been misunderstood as referring to anything which might have special impact on and appeal to receptors (1986: vii-viii).

According to Mojola and Wendland (2003:9), this claim of De Waard and Nida muddied the waters considerably in terms of TAPOT. Even today one frequently sees the label *dynamic/functional equivalence*, although many contemporary writers supporting a functional equivalence approach to translation would accept neither the communication model, the understanding of linguistics, nor the prescriptivism of the TAPOT characterization of dynamic equivalence (Mojola and Wendland 2003:9).

Reflection on translation theory, approaches and practices, of course, did not come to a standstill among Bible translators after the publication of TAPOT. The work by De Waard and Nida, mentioned above, attempts to move the discussion forward by paying particular attention to the importance of translation as communication, that is the functional dimension process (Wilt 2003:27), an area to which this research will return later (in Chapter 6 of this study with regard to the translation theorist, Christiane Nord).

1.5 Preliminary Study of חסד

In this section, the use of חסד in the Old Testament and in other secondary literatures will be examined.

1.5.1 The use of חסד in the Old Testament

The Hebrew noun חסד occurs 245 times in the Old Testament (Stoebe 1997:449; Zobel 1986:45). The diagram below is a summary of the occurrences of חסד.

Type Literature	Narrative			Lyrical + Wisdom	Prophets	
	Pentateuch	Deut.Hist[12]	Ketubim		Minor	Major
Number of occurren in book	Gen 11x	Josh 3x	1&2 Chr 15x	Job 3x	Hos 6x	Isa 8x
	Exod 4x	Judg 2x	Ezra 3x		Joel 1x	
	Num 2x	1 Kgs 5x	Neh 5x	Psa 127x	Jonah 2x	
	Deut 3x	1&2 Sam 16x	Esth 2x		Mic 3x	Jer 6x
			Ruth 3x	Lam 2x	Zech 1x	
				Prov 10x	Dan 2x	

Table 1: Distribution of חסד in the OT

Given the fact that חסד appears in all the Old Testament *corpora*, one could assume that it was in use for a very long period. During this time, the word could possibly have undergone a shift in meaning due to changing contexts or circumstances. Therefore, in approaching this problem, the present study will consider recent developments in Hebrew semantics and biblical studies in order to deepen the understanding of the development of חסד in the different *corpora* of literature, viz. narratives, lyrical and wisdom texts, and prophetical literature.

It is evident that the word חסד is well-represented in the narrative literature, and studies show that it is used in this corpus with reference to interpersonal relationships in ancient Israel (e.g. husband-wife, parent-child, between friends, between sovereign and subject) (Zobel 1986:45). However, only rarely does narrative literature employ the word חסד to describe God's behaviour toward people (Stoebe 1997:457). One could argue that חסד functions in the narrative *corpora* of the Old Testament mainly in the realm of the family or clan.

The concept occupies a special place in lyrical and wisdom literatures with 131 occurrences. In lyrical literature, חסד usually, but not exclusively, characterizes an attitude of God, while in wisdom literature, חסד is used mostly of interpersonal relations (Stoebe 1997:455). While the word designates human attitudes and behaviour toward one another, it

[12] This stands for Deuteronomistic History.

frequently also describes the disposition and benevolent actions of God toward his people and humanity in general (Zobel 1986:52).

In the prophetic literature, חסד only occurs 29 times. It is employed to describe a personal attitude namely trust and belief in or devotion to Yahweh, the only God, as a divine requirement. Thus, it is extended to the sphere of God's people and it becomes a mark of faith.

This section has briefly presented the semantic variety of חסד that is apparent from its usages in different genre types of the Old Testament, an area which this discussion will return to in Chapter 3 of this study.

1.5.2 The discussion of חסד in secondary literature

Harris (1980:305) observes that, for centuries, the word חסד was translated into words such as mercy, kindness, and love. The *Septuagint* (LXX) usually uses *eleos* "mercy", and the Latin *misericordia*. The Targum and Syriac frequently use a cognate of *tob*. It should be noted that the root is not found in Akkadian or Ugarit.

In 1927, Nelson Glueck wrote a doctoral dissertation titled חסד *in the Bible*, which was published in 1967. In his monograph, Glueck examines three usages of חסד , viz. the secular usage, the religious usage and the theological usage. With regard to the secular usage of חסד , Glueck (1967:38) claims that, where חסד is shown, a previous interpersonal bond exists such as in a relationship of kinship, marriage, betrothal, guest-friendship, or alliance. This indicates that חסד exists between people who are in a close relationship with one another.

Glueck further notes that in ancient Israel, as in ancient Arabia, a mutual relationship of rights and duties existed among the members of a family or among those who believed themselves to be of similar tribal ancestry. The family and tribal bonds were of primary importance. Such members enjoyed common rights and had to fulfil mutual obligations. Their interpersonal relationships were governed by the concept of reciprocity. Therefore, חסד was shown only to those who participated in a mutual relationship of rights and duties of a family or a tribal community. It becomes a mutual obligatory relationship, which is based on a kinship and marriage relationship (Glueck 1967:39).

According to Glueck (1967:56), the usage of חסד was greatly expanded in the prophetic literature into the religious realm. He argues that from

the mode of conduct of certain groups standing in a "mutual relationship of rights and duties to one another, חסד becomes the conduct of all men toward one another. This conduct is pleasing to God and is at the same time regarded as the only proper relationship toward God" (Glueck 1967:56). Glueck concludes that the meaning of חסד can be best translated as religiosity, piety, kindness and love of humanity. Moreover, Glueck (1967:55, 102) claims that God's חסד is not to be understood as grace, favour, or kindness, but as Yahweh's covenantal relationship toward his people where חסד is the essence of the covenantal relationship. The חסד of God, while it is not to be identified with his unmerited favour or grace, is still based upon the latter, insofar as the covenantal relationship between God and his people was established by electing Israel through an act of grace. Therefore, the word חסד can be rendered as loyalty, mutual aid or reciprocal love.

Katharine D. Sakenfeld's revision of her 1970 Harvard dissertation was published in 1978. In her study, she sought to move beyond Glueck's approach by attempting to discern more clearly the contexts in which חסד functioned. Her methodological approach is diachronic, that is, a classification of the occurrences of חסד in terms of the putative contexts of origin in which the term was used. Having studied the word in various passages, Sakenfeld (1978:233) concludes that חסד may often be summarized as "deliverance or protection as a responsible keeping of faith with another with whom one is in a relationship".

Although, Sakenfeld does not attempt to provide a single translation - or even a few alternatives - that can be used to render חסד in its various contexts, she shows an appreciation for the flexibility of the term. She explains that there is no adequate English equivalent forחסד , and it is both difficult and dangerous to select a "single phrase to apply in all cases" (Sakenfeld 1978:233). The sense of mutuality, which is so strong in Glueck's discussion, is clearly played down by Sakenfeld, though the covenant as a most important aspect of the חסד relationship maintains its position particularly with regard to God's treatment of his people in the Mosaic and Abrahamic traditions.

In a more recent contribution, Clark (1993) studies the word חסד from a structural linguistic perspective. He is concerned with the relational dimensions of חסד in terms of an *Agent-Patient* relationship. His focus on the semantic field and associated usages is much more formal and systematic than the previous studies. In his work, Clark tries to determine

the different contextual meanings and the nature of the usage of חסד in Biblical Hebrew (BH) via a synchronic investigation. Clark (1993:267) argues that the use of the word in the Old Testament indicates that חסד is "characteristic of God rather than of human beings; it is rooted in the divine nature, and it is expressed because of who he is, not because of what humanity is or needs or desires or deserves". According to VanGemeren (1997:212), Clark's conclusion prompts the question whether the usage of חסד in connection with God's חסד to human beings is a primary (earlier) or a secondary (later) development. Van Gemeren's remark therefore indicates that, like Sakenfeld, he also feels the need for some sort of a diachronic distinction.

For nearly a decade after the publication of Clark's work, we witness an interruption in the study of חסד. Since that time, however, two studies in Bible translation (Salisbury 2002 and Bascom 2003) have given attention to this important biblical word. Salisbury (2002) highlights the significance of חסד in the Old Testament and proposes the English equivalent "love" as an option for translation. In doing so, he not only intends to facilitate the translation of the word, but also welcomes the possibility that other languages might have words that are closer to the meaning of חסד than English has. The key is not to impose a single, simplistic meaning on a word such as חסד that has so many facets (Salisbury 2002:n.p)[13].

Like Glueck, Bascom (2003) considers חסד as an indication of the fundamental biblical notion of reciprocity. He argues that the term, חסד, frequently used to refer to God's special commitment to his people and theirs to him, should be nearly always understood in the framework of reciprocal obligations, usually with the added component of hierarchy. His observation on "hierarchical systems of mutual obligations" (Bascom 2003:98) highlights the function of חסד in a society of hierarchical and social reciprocity.

In conclusion, it may be stated that since the publication of Glueck's works, several authors have worked on חסד in an attempt to shed light on the biblical usage and meaning of the word. The present research intends to evaluate these and more recent studies of חסד in the light of the developments in Biblical Hebrew semantics.

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[13] Given Salisbury's (2002) warning, one could ask whether that is not what the translation "love" in fact does as far as English is concerned.

1.6 Research Goals

In order to provide a more suitable translation of חסד particularly in the book of Ruth into Lomwe, this study:

1. Surveys the semantic domain of חסד in the narratives, lyrical, and wisdom literatures of Hebrew Bible;
2. Comparatively evaluates a set of words that belongs to the semantic domain of חסד in the Old Testament in order to further differentiate and specify its meaning;
3. Develops a model for the application of exegesis to translation based on the combined approaches of semantic domain theory and Cognitive Frames of Reference;
4. Applies a Cognitive Frames of Reference approach to the source text analysis of the book of Ruth with reference to its usage of חסד;
5. Determines through fieldwork an accurate and acceptable translation for חסד in Lomwe as an integral part of the Cognitive Frames of Reference model;
6. Evaluates the suitability of the specific Lomwe terms *ikharari* and *osivela,* unqualified or qualified with the adjective *wooororomeleya,* in relation to others that are potentially available in Lomwe to convey the conceptual complexity denoted by חסד;
7. Proposes a different approach for the translation of חסד in Ruth 1:8, 2:20 and 3:10.

CHAPTER 2:
A THEORETICAL MODEL FOR TRANSLATING THE HEBREW WORD חסד INTO LOMWE

2.1 Introduction

The introductory chapter has stated the theoretical points of departure (lexical semantics and translation theory) for translating חסד in the Old Testament. I have argued that, in order to provide a more suitable translation of חסד into Lomwe, cognisance must be taken of the recent developments in cross-cultural lexical-semantics. In this chapter, I will survey the recent developments in the field of semantics and provide an overview of De Blois' theoretical model for the study of semantic domains. In addition, I will propose a cognitive frames of reference approach for translating חסד , as used in the book of Ruth, into Lomwe.

2.2 Developments in Semantic Studies

As I mentioned in Chapter 1 (see section 1.4.1 on the historical development of semantics), lexical semantics has always played a relatively minor role in the study of Biblical Hebrew. The main reason for this is that, until recently, the study of meaning focused on etymological-type analyses and failed to pay attention to the wider context.

Since the heyday of the componential analysis of meaning approach, new insights have appeared within the field of semantics. Scholars now consider the cognitive reality behind a language and its usage. This explains why cognitive linguistics has come to the fore. Van der Merwe (2004a:8) explains the shift of focus towards cognitive linguistics as follows:

> CL [Cognitive Linguistics] is an approach to the study of language in which the meaning of language is central. It represents part of the cultural or pragmatic turn in the study of language. The study of language now more and more has as its focus, not on language as static abstract system, but as a means, which real people use to communicate meaningfully.

Highlighting the limitations of the componential analysis approach of Nida, De Blois (2003:n.p) also draws attention to the importance of cognitive linguistics:

> In our linguistic analyses we should not be merely aiming towards descriptive systems that work, but for systems that are intuitively adequate, that represents as much as possible the ways of thinking of the speaker of the language, and do justice to his/her organization of experience, his/her system of beliefs, experience, and practices. We are not supposed to impose a system on a language. Instead of that, we are to try to discover the semantic structure of the language. For that reason the semantic framework underlying SDBH will be not be based on componential analysis of meaning but on a number of important insights from Cognitive Linguistics instead and using the metaphor of conceptual frames.

Although cognitive linguistics is still a relatively new approach to the description of language, it is "a theory that is based on the capacities of the human mind rather than the capacities of the mathematical systems that happen to be used by logicians" (Fauconnier 1994: ix). Moreover, cognitive linguistics high-lights "people's experience of the world and the way they perceive and conceptualize it" (Ungerer and Schmid 1996:x). Whereas traditional linguists claim that words have meanings, cognitive linguists argue that, "meanings have words" (De Blois 2006b:2).

According to De Blois, this is quite an important difference in perspective. From a cognitive linguistic point of view, meaning precedes words because language is a product of a group of people who observe the world they live in. They reflect on it and try to make sense out of it. They perceive patterns, try to comprehend them and more than anything else want to communicate those things to their fellow human beings. Thus, he concludes that, "It is for that purpose that they need ... and create words" (De Blois 2006b:2)[14]. By using the insights of cognitive linguistics, and thus working with the notion that human beings categorize words on a cognitive level within larger conceptual frames, De Blois developed a theoretical model to guide the process of translation.

[14] De Blois (2002a:279) stresses that, "In our quest for meaning we have to start with the human mind. People look at the world they perceive around them. They try to make meaning out of it. They interpret it. And in order to be able to communicate it they assign names to the things they perceive". See also Dirven and Verspoor (2004: ix).

2.3 An Overview of De Blois' Theoretical Model for Studying Semantic Domains

This section will focus on two levels of semantic domains namely lexical semantic domains (including the categories) and contextual semantic domains (including the relationships).

2.3.1 Lexical Semantic Domains

A lexical semantic domain corresponds to a cognitive category (Wilt and Wendland 2008:255). All human beings think in terms of categories within certain conceptual frames of reference, even though most of our categorization happens automatically and on an unconscious level. For example, when someone thinks of the word "seat", s/he sees it primarily as a piece of furniture, in different shapes and sizes, etc. depending on the particular setting. According to De Blois (2001:280), categories are not universal but depend on the worldview (e.g. experiences, beliefs, practices) of particular societies and their cultures. De Blois uses the study by Ungerer and Schmid (1996) to highlight properties of categories:

- Categories have prototypes, i.e. a generic mental representation, a cognitive reference point for that category;
- Categories have typical and a-typical members;
- Categories have distinctive features and attributes;
- Categories are not homogeneous, but have fuzzy boun-daries. This means that a typical member of category A can be a less typical member of category B[15].

In his model, De Blois distinguishes between two levels of semantic domains namely lexical semantic domains and contextual semantic domains (De Blois 2003:n.p).

2.3.2 Contextual Semantic Domains

According to De Blois, the first domain deals with the meanings of words in their immediate textual context and the second focuses on their

[15] Cf. De Blois (2002b:280-281).

meanings in a wider situational context. Lexical semantic domains or cognitive categories deal with the *paradigmatic* relations between the same lexical items, while contextual semantic domains or cognitive frames highlight the *syntagmatic* relationships between lexical items from different cognitive categories based on the relationships between these items (Wilt and Wendland 2008:255). The following diagram indicates the difference between cognitive categories and cognitive frames (adapted from Wilt and Wendland 2008:256).

CATEGORY ↓ FRAME →

location/place of instruction	*seating*	*instructee*	*instructor*	*instruction material (e.g.)*
university	chair	student	professor	power point
rural primary school	stool	pupil	teacher	blackboard
carpentry workshop	bench	trainee	trainer	woodworking tools

Table 2: Cognitive categories and cognitive frames

A cognitive frame for the word 'CLASSROOM' shows the mental image of what such a place of instruction is like in a certain cultural setting. This may be composed of items belonging to frames (illustrated horizontally) such as location, seating, instructees, instructors and instruction material. When hearing the word "classroom", a person's cultural and socioeconomic experiences will lead her/him to think of a particular frame comprised of different categories (for example, the items indicated vertically in the above chart), but the broader their experience is, the more they will recognize other possibilities depending on the particular socio-cultural setting that is being referred to.

As noted in section 2.3.1 of this study, categories are always used in culturally specific contexts. According to Wilt and Wendland (2008:260), context should be defined as the lexical-semantic information, which precedes or follows an utterance. From a discourse point of view, context refers to the extra linguistic situation in which an utterance is embedded (Ungerer and Schmid 1996:45).

Let us consider the word חֶבֶל 'rope'. If we could have asked native speakers of Biblical Hebrew what a חֶבֶל is, they probably would have been able to describe what, in their worldview, the prototype of a 'rope' would look like. That would probably not go much further than a description of what a simple rope looks like, what material it is made of, and maybe a few examples of how it is used. In order to get a complete picture of this item, however, we need to have more information. That information is supplied by the cognitive frame in which the word is typically used, a mental image of a situation where we find חֶבֶל interacting with other objects. In the Old Testament, we find a number of distinct cognitive contexts that paint different pictures of the object represented by the word חֶבֶל (Wilt and Wendland 2008:260):

- It can be an item for sale in the market,
  for example, Ezekiel 27:24;
- It can be used by a person climbing down a wall,
  for example, Joshua 2:15;
- It can be used to hang curtains in a palace hall,
  for example, Isaiah 33:20;
- It can be used to tear down a wall during a siege,
  for example, 2 Samuel 17:13.

Thus, words are used in manifold contexts - lexical, textual, and conceptual. To know the complete meaning of a word, we need to observe its usage in different texts and in specific communication situations.

Although it is clear that De Blois' theoretical model alludes to the relevance of contextual semantics for understanding the meaning of a word within its wider context, he does not deal with it explicitly in his proposed model[16]. Therefore, De Blois' theoretical model needs to be refined. The cognitive frames of reference approach within the context of Old Testament may thus be utilised when searching for the meaning and translation of words. However, this approach too needs to be developed in a more detailed way in order to define a word with more accuracy in Biblical Hebrew and then also to render its conceptual meaning with greater contextual precision in another language, as the present study intends to do.

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[16] According to van der Merwe (2004b:133), this may be due to the absence of effective tools to conduct research in this regard. It could also be that a computer program is not able to identify the socio-cultural nuances associated with the meaning of a word.

Contextual semantics deals with a word in its cognitive context, including all the semantic features that are relevant to that context (the smaller/larger elements of discourse, e.g. sentences and paragraphs that comprise a complete text). This type of study has been called *exegesis*. Contextual semantics therefore provides a broader theoretical frame of reference for analyzing biblical texts. However, exegesis has suffered until recent times from the manner in which linguistic semantics and biblical studies tended to be isolated from one another in terms of their methodological endeavours, i.e. they were not often closely coordinated or integrated during exegetical work. According to Cotterel (1997:137), the work of James Barr signalled the end of this age of ignorance, when semantics and biblical studies tended to be isolated from one another[17].

Barr (1962:263) acknowledges two distinctive features of theological language as contrasted with the language of everyday speech[18]. Firstly, theological language exhibits a special semantic development in which words are assigned technical meanings in keeping with the religious corpus that informs and contextualises them. However, he points out the danger of presupposing that theological language represents a unique strand of language, separate from those of other specialized fields of academics (e.g. law and philosophy), technologies, professions, etc.

Secondly, Barr recognizes that the interpretation of theological language, and especially of biblical language, must have a significant datum in the past (Barr 1962:267). In other words, biblical language did not originate in a vacuum - concrete historical, political, social, economic and religious-cultic factors had some impact on its development. Thus, meaning is profoundly dependent on context (cf. Katan 1999:2, 243; Munday 2001:127, 182; Gutt 2000:104; Heimerdinger 1999:37-41; Sperber and Wilson 1986). "Meaning is not merely decoded from the text, but is in-

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[17] At the annual conference of the *Old Testament Society of South African* (OTSSA) held at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Pietermaritzburg in September 2005, African exegetes and linguists came together to optimize their resources. Different academic disciplines from societies such as the *South African Society of Near Eastern Study* (SASNES), the *Centre for Bible Interpretation and Translation in Africa* (CEBITA), and the *United Bible Societies* (UBS-Africa area) met in order to stimulate dialogue and interaction among themselves.

[18] Cotterell (1997:137) observes that the general science of the analysis of human language, i.e., linguistics, can and must be applied to theological language.

ferred from the dynamic interplay of text and context" (Hill 2003:2; cf. Wilt 2002:145).

The publication of *Bible Translation: Frames of Reference* edited by Wilt (2003) has helped analysts to focus more directly on the wider and narrower contextual dimension of meaning when studying the biblical text (Wilt 2003:43-58). Wilt's theoretical presentation of frames of reference provides a broad, contemporary cognitive linguistic perspective on Bible translation (cf. Wendland 2008; Wilt and Wendland 2008). The next section will consider the cognitive frames of reference approach as providing a manifold conceptual framework for translating חסד , as used in the book of Ruth, into Lomwe.

2.4 Cognitive Frames of Reference: A Practical Model for Exploring Contextual Domains

In this section, the different dimensions of a Cognitive Frames of Reference approach will be examined namely the textual, socio-cultural, communicational and organizational frames. These different dimensions will helps us to bridge the cognitive gap between the biblical and the receptor socio-cultural worlds.

2.4.1 Introduction - a general discussion of cognitive frames

Cognitive Frames of Reference are conceptual categories that incorporate the following overlapping and interacting sub-frames: socio-cultural, communicational, organizational, textual, and lexical perspectives. This complex cognitive structure is commonly termed a worldview or mental model. According to Wendland (2008:19), a worldview is a pervasive outlook on reality that is normally very broad in its range and inclusive in scope, embracing the composite cognitive environment of an entire society or community. He further argues that this context may also be taken in a more specific sense to refer to the psychological orientation of an individual or a distinct group of members within the society as a whole (Wendland 2008:19). The notion of cognitive frames, thus, refers to all

the "sub-frames" of semantic description that are active in a given socio-cultural setting as presented in the diagram below[19]:

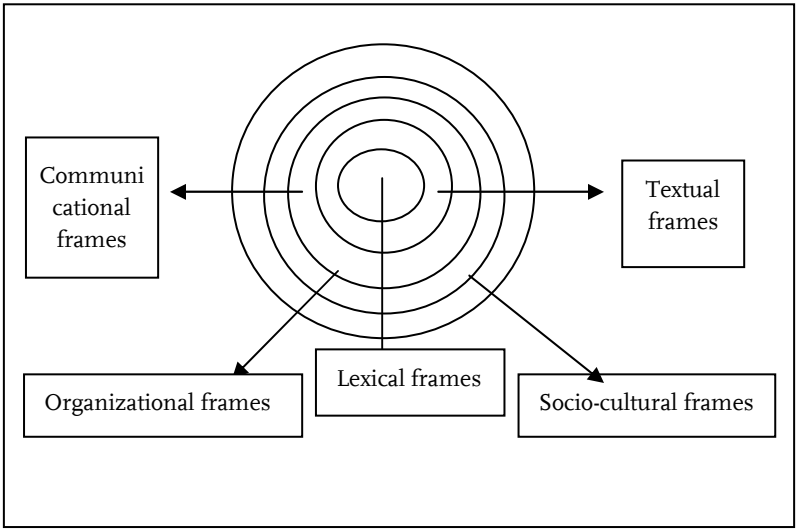

Figure 1: Cognitive Frames of Reference

This diagram indicates some (not necessarily all) of the principal cognitive frames of reference that are involved in the processes of reading and understanding a biblical text. It also suggests the close interaction of these different contextual layers during the interpretation of any transmitted text such as the final form of the book of Ruth. These different frames of reference are described below (the organizational frame is discussed later in this study)[20]. It should be noted here that this model

[19] Taken from the analogy of an onion (Wendland 2008:1).

[20] The "organizational" frame is a frame of reference created by the specific social groups to which a person belongs: religious, ecclesiastical, political, educational, and work-related. In an ancient theocratic state and community such as "Israel", the organizational frame merges with the socio-cultural to such an extent that it is difficult to distinguish them. They will therefore be considered together under the socio-cultural category. The organizational frame will be discussed more fully when describing the different organizations, past or present that affect or concern the transmission of Ruth from Hebrew in the contemporary context of the Lomwe people.

may be applied from the outer frame to the inner frame (from the general to the more specific, or vice-versa) when describing the relevant conceptual features of a particular cultural setting, for example, when analyzing a specific text, like the book of Ruth, or a particular word like חסד within that book. In the following sections, I will briefly describe the various frames of reference to be applied in my study from the inner to the outer frame.

2.4.2 Lexical frames

Lexical frames incorporate cognitive categories as well as the cognitive frames as discussed above (in section 2.3 of this study). To complement De Blois' theoretical model, I propose that more consideration should be given to the cognitive frames of Biblical Hebrew words. As highlighted above (in section 2.3.2 of this study), contextual semantics deals with a given word in its cognitive context as evoked by the particular linguistic setting in which it is used, including all semantic and pragmatic features that are relevant to that context. Furthermore, Biblical Hebrew words, as used in specific texts, are embedded within the larger body of Old Testament literature, and therefore an understanding of any given concept requires a consideration of one or more wider frames of reference (cf. Cruse 2004:137).

2.4.3 Textual frames

Textual frames integrate intertextual as well as intratextual sub-frames of reference, which I have incorporated in order to apply a fuller hermeneutical and communicative model when considering חסד in the cognitive context of Ruth. According to Wendland (2008:110), no text exists in isolation; i.e. it must always be studied in relation to other texts. He argues that a "given text is either partially or wholly derived from, based on, related to, or in some way conditione d by other texts with respect to general ideas, presuppositions, structural arrangements, particular concepts, key terms, or memorable phrases" (Wendland 2008:110; cf. Wilt and Wendland 2008:191). These different aspects of intertextual influence act as a reservoir of clues within the source text, serving as additional instructions to the intended addressees as they construct a concep-

tual model of the situation being evoked by the speaker or writer. In this respect, one will need to determine the degree of salience or relevance of any instance of intertextuality to the current message being conveyed (Wendland 2003:184)[21]. Furthermore, close attention also needs to be paid to how one portion of a text influences the exegetical interpretation of another portion of that same text, usually from the former to the latter as part of its intratextual frame of reference.

2.4.4 Communicational frames

Communicational frames relate to the different media of interpersonal text transmission: oral-aural, written or print media. Through these media, people can, for example, communicate their diverse cultural traditions, values and norms. In certain socio-cultural settings, people may prefer to utilise certain specific communicational frames such as the audio-visual dimension of traditional story telling[22], e.g. gestures and facial expressions. As a primary mode of human communication, story telling also features the element of *dialogue*.

According to Alter (1981:66), "Narration in the biblical story is ... oriented toward dialogue". In the book of Ruth, for example, the author freely uses dialogue between the different characters to express or to emphasize the importance of family, social, and religious values, which were necessary for the fulfilment of their cultural roles and responsibilities. While reinforcing the familial hierarchy based on role, Boaz's words and communication via actions as depicted by the narrator also demonstrate the responsibilities of members of the family to nurture and support each other. In particular, the role taken on by Boaz highlights the significance of the individual's obligation toward and communication with his/her fellow Israelites as the communal 'people of God'.

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[21] According to Wendland (2004:99), "The essential compositional unity of the text under consideration is assumed in a literary approach, but this does not mean that one looks at a particular text from a uniform, monolithic, or undiscriminating perspective. Rather, it is viewed holistically as composed of a hierarchy of integrated structural levels and units".

[22] "People live by stories - they use stories to organize and store cultural traditions" (Bohannan 1995:150; cf. Johnson 1987:171-2).

2.4.5 Socio-cultural frames

Socio-cultural frames are cognitive frames of reference developed from the observation and experience of one's socio-cultural environment and which, are passed down formally or informally as "tradition" from one generation to the next. For instance, the biblical texts normally target a particular receptor group living in a particular socio-cultural context. In this study, I shall present a detailed cognitive frame for חסד within the particular socio-cultural setting of the book of Ruth.

The book of Ruth focuses on family issues and family relationships within an agrarian society. Since in ancient Israel the identity of each individual was embedded in the larger society, the family as a whole was responsible for sustaining its individual members. Within the family, in turn, these individuals had to fulfil certain roles, which reinforced them and added to the cohesion of the wider social unit. However, the quality and character of a family could change because of adverse internal and/or external factors, which could affect the successful performance of individual roles within the family. Naomi's story about the death of her husband and two children illustrate the point.

Naomi was a widow with no family support in a foreign land (Moab) because her relatives lived some distance away in Bethlehem of Judah. Due to her vulnerable state as a widow, Naomi decided to return to her relatives in Judah. She, therefore, advised her two daughters-in-law to return to their father's house, for there they could remarry and enjoy the care and protection of the kinship group. However, Ruth refused to return in favour of care for Naomi, thus, adopting a formerly alien socio-cultural frame of reference in preference to her own. One could argue that the author recounts the Ruth story in order to communicate the importance of key social institutions such as kinship and marriage within the religious covenant community of Israel, which was governed by a detailed legislative and cultic frame of reference, the so-called "Law of Moses".

According to Mosaic covenantal law, a particular type of marriage arrangement within the family was the levirate marriage in which the next of kin had the responsibility to marry the wife of a deceased member of the family. However, in Ruth's case, her dead husband's first next of kin refused to marry her, apparently for socially acceptable reasons. After

this closest kin legally renounced his responsibility, Boaz, the next kinsman in line, agreed to marry Ruth.

From a socio-cultural perspective, therefore, the Ruth narrative is set in a family context, with a focus on mutual role-relationships and responsibilities, through which care and nurture could be offered. Thus, this divinely ordained social system provided the means by which not only members of the family but also the outsiders were offered effective care and protection. That implies that an understanding of the original socio-cultural setting of a biblical text is vital to the task of interpretation.

The preceding discussion has indicated that no meaning occurs in isolation without the influence of different conceptual frames of reference, and the moment one ignores or does not correctly perceive and interpret these different cognitive orientations, one runs the risk of missing or misinterpreting the intended meaning of the writer. Thus, close attention needs to be paid to text as whole and to its multifaceted situational context when carrying out a semantic study of חסד in the Old Testament in order to translate it adequately into Lomwe. This multiple frame of reference model will serve to guide the translation of חסד in such a way that the intended meaning this word evoked in the minds of the original Hebrew hearers may also be clearly evoked, at least to the extent possible, in the minds of the Lomwe people of Mozambique.

2.5 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has presented a survey of some recent developments in the field of semantics that are pertinent to this study. I have argued that although De Blois' theoretical model alludes to the relevance of contextual semantics for understanding the meaning of a word within its wider socio-cultural context, he does not deal with this explicitly in his proposed model. To complement De Blois' theoretical model, I have proposed, therefore, the Cognitive Frames of Reference approach for analyzing and translating the Hebrew word חסד in the Old Testament. This methodology will help to integrate the semantic domain theory and biblical studies as a broader, at the same time, more nuanced conceptual framework to guide the translation of חסד into Lomwe.

CHAPTER 3:
A STUDY OF THE SEMANTIC DOMAINS OF חסד IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to survey significant aspects of the meaning of the word חסד in the Old Testament. This investigation is based on the assumption that the meaning of a word can only be determined when all of the major linguistic and socio-cultural contexts within which it functions are taken into consideration.

In the previous chapter, I proposed the Cognitive Frames of Reference model for analyzing and translating חסד in the Old Testament, with special reference to the book of Ruth. However, before embarking on a textual-contextual study of חסד in Ruth, it is important to gain an understanding of how חסד is used in different texts and different communication situations. An attempt to summarize the usage of חסד in different contexts in the Old Testament will help us to arrive at a working definition of this word.

Therefore, this chapter will analysze the usage of חסד in the narrative and poetic texts of the Old Testament[23]. This inter-lexical componential analysis provides a delineation of the semantic field within which חסד must be placed. Subsequently, the word will be compared with several semantically related key terms in the Old Testament. The available data will enable us to identify the distinctive semantic features and contexts of חסד.

3.2 A Survey of חסד in the Old Testament

This section will consider the usage of חסד in the narrative and lyrical literatures of the Old Testament. The two types of literature will help us

[23] To limit the scope of this study, the usage of חסד in the prophetic literature will not be considered. In the prophetic literature, חסד is primarily employed to describe a personal attitude, for example, trust and belief or devotion toward Yahweh, the only God (cf. section 1.5.1 of this study).

to conceptualize the meaning and significance חסד in the Old Testament.

3.2.1 חסד in the narrative literature

As already noted (in section 1.5.1 of this study), חסד is well represented in the narrative literature, where it is used with reference to interpersonal relationships. My aim in this section is not to list all the available occurrences of חסד, but rather to identify generic "frames" that can most clearly and effectively illuminate the range of contexts in which the word is used in narrative texts of the Old Testament. The lexical frames of חסד are suggested by its diverse co-texts, i.e. the passages surrounding the verse in which the word occurs. Appendix A shows the distribution of חסד in different narrative contexts.[24] Based on this distribution, seven categories that describe the primary social relationships in which חסד is used were initially identified. The selection of these seven categories was made using the standard semantic case terms *Agent* and *Patient*[25]. These concepts are employed because they help us to delineate more precisely the wider context in which חסד is used.

After a careful examination of the context of each occurrence (using concordances), I have concluded that the seven categories can be combined into two main categories[26] namely (i) God doing חסד to human beings, and (ii) human beings doing חסד to their fellow human beings. God does חסד to individuals and to his people as a whole. The human instances of חסד can be distinguished as follows: between men and fellowmen, leader and follower, leader and leader, wife and husband, and between son and father.

In some cases, the *Patient* or the *Agent* of חסד is not a person but an inanimate entity (e.g. the Temple). This particular usage has been classified here as part of the instances in which the object or receiver is hu-

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[24] Narrative contexts here are determined by the role relationships of event participants; see appendix A.

[25] The *Agent* and *Patient* are semantic terms that apply no matter how the referents appear in the clause syntactically. On the other hand, Subject and Object are syntactic terms that do not always clearly represent semantic functions or case relations as in passives (Clark 1993:39).

[26] Clark (1993:259) indicates that while חסד is used with both God and humans as *Agent*, the *Patient* is always human but never divine.

man because the word is being used figuratively. For example, the Temple is employed meto-nymically to refer to the priest, all religious personnel or the people of Israel as a whole in terms of their behaviour and attitude towards Yahweh. Thus, the *Agent-Patient* distribution has been adopted as a general cognitive frame for investigating the semantic field of חסד. This method of categorization is used in linguistics to interpret the definition of the domain or the frame of a word (Salisbury 2007; Evans and Green 2006).

Further explanations of my seven preliminary categories are provided in the set of tables below. The first column is a list of one or two representative passages in which חסד occurs in the Hebrew text, the second is the English translation[27], and the last column presents an analysis of how חסד is used in different narrative contexts (with the exception of Ruth, which shall be discussed in detail in the next chapter). The discussion of each of the seven categories involves analyzing the contexts – the semantic domain or lexical frames in which חסד is used.

According to Wilt and Wendland (2008:221), conceptual categorization is an activity that is continually done, with varying degrees of consciousness, in our daily activities. We usually carry out this categorization informally and intuitively, but biblical interpreters need to be as systematic as possible if they want to explain linguistic data in a responsible way. Thus, as discussed in chapter two of this study, the SDBH has proposed a set of labels to aid the categorization process. Very importantly, the SDBH attempts to use "categories that are suggested by the biblical texts themselves, so that the categorization is in terms of ancient biblical perspectives, trying to avoid the imposition of foreign categories" (Wilt and Wendland 2008:221)[28].

As regards the use of חסד in narrative texts, it occurs in the general contexts of *Blessing* and *Crisis*, which involves two persons or parties who are in some form of 'covenantal'[29] relationship. In the tables below, such

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[27] This study prefers the Revised Standard Version (RSV) because it is a relatively literal translation of the Hebrew Bible.

[28] As noted in Chapter 2 of this study, the best way to categorize a label for contextual semantics is not always evident from a cognitive linguistic point of view, but it is important that closely related terms are grouped together, thus enabling a quick comparison.

[29] Foster (2008:14) indicates that the Old Testament concept of 'covenant' has a close association with חסד (cf. also Sakenfeld 1978).

relationships are designated by the categories *Crisis* and *Blessing* (or vice versa, i.e. in cases where God's blessing precedes a crisis). The rationale behind these two categories is based on the fact that חסד is always done or shown by covenantal partners within a setting of explicit or implicit crisis. As Sakenfeld (1978:218) rightly indicates, חסד regularly involves a rescue[30]—past, present, or future (anticipated) - from some dire straits, which may only be assumed in a particular context as its specific action content (as illustrated in the table below)[31].

Table 3: Different contexts of חסד in OT narratives

1) Genesis 24:12 (1 Kings 8:23): God's חסד to Individuals

וַיֹּאמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנִי אַבְרָהָם הַקְרֶה־נָא לְפָנַי הַיּוֹם וַעֲשֵׂה־חֶסֶד עִם אֲדֹנִי אַבְרָהָם:	And he [Abraham's servant] said, "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, grant me success today, I pray you, and show steadfast love [חסד] to my master Abraham."	Example of crisis חסד that involves personal loyalty or an attitude of commitment between Yahweh and individuals in a context of 'guest-host' relationship (cf. Gen. 19:19; 24:14, 27; 32:10; 39:21).

[30] This is a "rescue" of some person or group (the *Patient*), by another person (the *Agent*), who is bound to the former through a covenantal relationship or an agreement of some sort.

[31] According to Sakenfeld (1985:3), the word חסד encompasses both the attitude and the action of the *Agent* of חסד. Moreover, she argues that the Hebrew noun is often the object of the verb 'to do', and keeps its action-implication even when such a verb is not present. This is due to the fact that interpersonal action is an essential semantic feature of חסד.

וַיֹּאמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵין־כָּמוֹךָ אֱלֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ מִתָּחַת שֹׁמֵר הַבְּרִית וְהַחֶסֶד לַעֲבָדֶיךָ הַהֹלְכִים לְפָנֶיךָ בְּכָל־לִבָּם׃	And said: "O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you, in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love [חסד] to your servants who walk before you with all their heart."	Example of the action-attitude of a commitment between Yahweh and indi-viduals in a context of specific aid to the person (cf. 2 Sam. 2:5, 6; 7:15; 15:20; 22:26, 51; 1 Kgs 2:7; 3:6; 1 Chr. 17:13; 2 Chr. 1:8; 5:13; 6:14, 42; 7:6; 32:32; 35:26; Ezr. 7:28; Neh. 13:14, 22).

2) Exodus 15:13: God's חסד to His people

נָחִיתָ בְחַסְדְּךָ עַם־זוּ גָּאָלְתָּ נֵהַלְתָּ בְעָזְּךָ אֶל־נְוֵה קָדְשֶׁךָ׃	You [Yahweh] show steadfast love [חסד] to [the people of Israel] whom you redeemed; you guided them by your strength to your holy abode.	Example of crisis חסד that involves a rescue or deliverance within the context of the 'covenant relation-ship' (cf. Exod. 20:6; 34:7; Num. 14:18, 19; Deut. 5:10; 7:9, 12; 1 Chr. 16:34, 41; 17:13; 2 Chr. 7:3, 6; 20:21; Ezr. 3:11; 9:9).

3) Genesis 40:14 (Genesis 24:49): Men's חסד to Fellowmen

כִּי אִם־זְכַרְתַּנִי אִתְּךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר יִיטַב לָךְ וְעָשִׂיתָ־נָּא עִמָּדִי חָסֶד וְהִזְכַּרְתַּנִי אֶל־פַּרְעֹה וְהוֹצֵאתַנִי מִן־הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה׃	But remember me, when it is well with you, and do me the kindness [חסד], I pray you, to make mention of me to Pharaoh, and so get me out of this house.	Example of crisis חסד that involves personal loyalty or an attitude of commitment between human beings in the context of a socio-political agree-ment (cf. Josh. 2:12, 14; Judg. 1:24; 8:35; 1 Sam. 15:6; 20:8, 14, 15; 2 Sam. 3:8).
וְעַתָּה אִם־יֶשְׁכֶם עֹשִׂים חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת אֶת־אֲדֹנִי הַגִּידוּ לִי וְאִם־לֹא הַגִּידוּ לִי וְאֶפְנֶה עַל־יָמִין אוֹ עַל־שְׂמֹאל׃	Now then, if you are going to show steadfast love [חסד] and faithfulness to my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left.	Example of human חסד of blessing to-ward a fellowman within the context of kinship-in-law.

4) Genesis 21:23: Leader's חסד to Leader

וְעַתָּה הִשָּׁבְעָה לִּי בֵאלֹהִים הֲנָּה אִם־תִּשְׁקֹר לִי וּלְנִינִי וּלְנֶכְדִּי כַּחֶסֶד אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי עִמְּךָ תַּעֲשֶׂה עִמָּדִי וְעִם־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־גַּרְתָּה בָּהּ:	Now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my offspring or with my posterity, but as I have dealt loyally [חסד] with you, you will deal with me and with the land[32] where you have sojourned.	Example of crisis חסד that involves caring or rendering assistance between allies or friends in the context of a mutual obligation (cf. 2 Sam.10:2; 1 Chr.19:2; 2 Chr. 24:22).

5) 1 Kings 20:31: Leader's חסד to Follower

וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיו עֲבָדָיו הִנֵּה־נָא שָׁמַעְנוּ כִּי מַלְכֵי בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־מַלְכֵי חֶסֶד הֵם נָשִׂימָה נָּא שַׂקִּים בְּמָתְנֵינוּ וַחֲבָלִים בְּרֹאשֵׁנוּ וְנֵצֵא אֶל־מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אוּלַי יְחַיֶּה אֶת־נַפְשֶׁךָ:	And his servants said to him, "Behold now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful [חסד] kings. Let us put sackcloth around our waists and ropes on our heads and go out to the king of Israel. Perhaps he will spare your life."	Example of crisis חסד that involves personal loyalty or an attitude of commitment between leader and follower in a socio-political context (cf. Esth. 2:9, 17).

[32] It is important to note here that the land is also involved in the חסד relationship. The land is blessed or cursed depending on the behaviour and character of the person or group to which it is attached or associated.

6) Genesis 47: 29: Son's חסד to Father

וַיִּקְרְבוּ יְמֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל לָמוּת וַיִּקְרָא לְבְנוֹ לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם־נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שִׂים־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי וְעָשִׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת אַל־נָא תִקְבְּרֵנִי בְּמִצְרָיִם:	And when the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh, and promise to deal loyally [חסד] and truly with me. Do not bury me in Egypt".	Example of חסד in a crisis that involves a son caring for or rendering assistance to a father in the context of swearing a covenant within a familial/kinship (consanguineal) relationship.

7) Genesis 20:13: Wife's חסד to Husband

וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִתְעוּ אֹתִי אֱלֹהִים מִבֵּית אָבִי וָאֹמַר לָהּ זֶה חַסְדֵּךְ אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשִׂי עִמָּדִי אֶל כָּל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר נָבוֹא שָׁמָּה אִמְרִי־לִי אָחִי הוּא:	And when God caused me to wander from my father's house, I said to her, "this is the kindness [חסד] you must do me: at every place, to which we come, say of me, 'He is my brother'."	Example of crisis חסד that involves caring or rendering assistance within the context of 'wife-sister' and 'husband-brother' relationships, which are the relationships of marriage and of blood (affinal) kinship.

3.2.1.1 Discussion of the analysis of חסד in narrative literature

As a *relational* term, חסד functions both vertically and horizontally in social (interpersonal) contexts. For example, categories 1 and 2 describe the vertical relationship (God doing חסד to his people), while categories 3 to 7 illustrate the instances of horizontal relationships in which human beings do חסד to their fellow human beings. As far as the demonstration of חסד in horizontal relationships is concerned, participants have a

moral responsibility to reciprocate any acts of חסד at a later stage[33]. Furthermore, the Hebrew word describes the responsibility of those in powerful positions to care for the powerless.

Within the broader context of the seven categories, it may be noted that in both vertical and horizontal relationships, the roles of participants extend beyond their immediate circumstances. For example, the חסד Sarah showed to Abraham was not based on a husband-wife relationship, but on a brother-sister relationship (cf. Gen. 20:12). Another example is that of Yahweh's חסד to Jacob, which was not based on Jacob's request for protection, but on the covenant relationship (cf. Gen. 32:10). Although these instances do not clearly illustrate the notion of commitment inherent in a חסד relationship, a mutual, bilateral commitment between the two parties is implied, which is unlike the unilateral commitment proposed by Sakenfeld (1978)[34]. Thus, the word חסד is a bi-directional expression of mutual and reciprocal obligations (between men and fellowmen, leader and follower, leader and leader, wife and husband, son and father), an essential aspect of the meaning of the word, which shall be discussed below.

From the analysis of these seven categories, we observe that חסד involves two additional semantic features. The Hebrew term involves the idea of **reciprocity**, which is framed within four-constituent frames of reference of חסד as presented in the following diagram:

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[33] It should be noted that some of the horizontal relationships in which חסד is shown are explicitly stated (categories 3 and 5) while others are implied (categories 4, 6 and 7).

[34] One of her reviewers, Dennis Pardee, observes that Sakenfeld refuses to allow the acts associated with חסד to be limited to a formal covenant relationship (Pardee 1980:244). As noted in section 1.5.1of this study, Sakenfeld's work sought to move beyond Glueck's approach by attempting to discern more clearly the circumstances in which חסד was supposed to operate. Although her inductive approach when dealing with theological or religious concepts is useful, it is problematical when dealing within the context of primary or secondary human instance of חסד. Since the external biblical data is not sufficient, Sakenfeld relies more on content than on philological analysis.

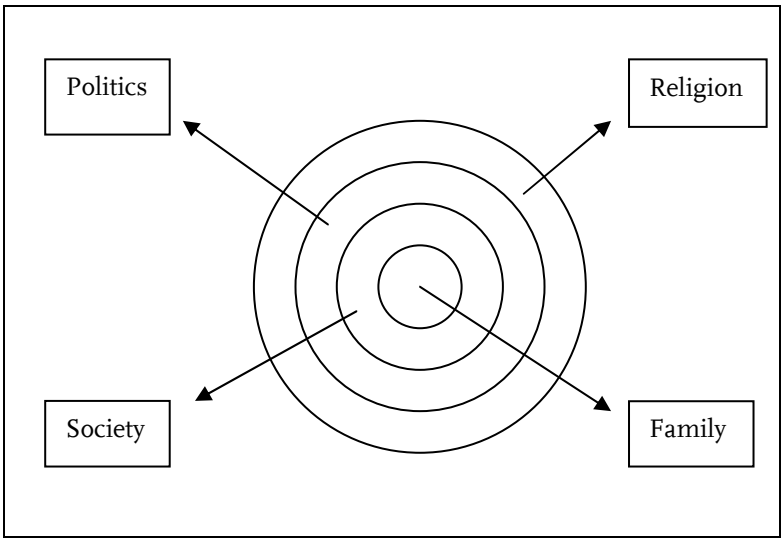

Figure 2: Constituent Frames of Reference

These four-constituent frames of reference are important for an adequate understanding of the meaning of חסד in the Old Testament. Firstly, the principle of reciprocity, which is framed within the narrow circle of the *family*, compelled all members of the family household to assist one another. This family relationship provided the primary care system for its members, which included blood relatives (consanguines) and relatives by marriage (affines). The biblical example is that of a husband-wife relationship in which Abraham, who believed his life was in danger, pleaded with his wife Sarah to remember her חסד obligation to him and therefore to save him by claiming that she was his sister, which in fact she was (cf. Gen. 20:12, 13). This means that their marriage was a covenant of alliance between the two families through which both became members of one family unit (cf. Gen. 2:24). Thus, the marriage union served as the basis on which חסד was demanded and offered.

Secondly, the principle of reciprocity emerged not only from within the family-type relationship, but also within the wider *society* in which those

who rendered help to one another lived[35]. The person who had been helped was obligated to reciprocate in kind. The helper became his 'brother' (the designation for a partner in a covenant)[36], so to speak, because he acted toward him as a blood relative. On the part of the helper, an act of assistance signified a readiness to enter into a mutual relationship. The person to whom assistance was rendered had to recognize the necessity of acknowledging this mutual relationship and had to act accordingly (in future).

For example, the Israelite spies who were sent to reconnoitre Bethel, requested help from a man they saw emerging from the city. They promised to show him חסד if he would show them how they could force their way into the city. They assured him that they would reciprocate his aid, that is, they would consider him a member of their ethnic group by showing חסד to him. Later, when the city was attacked, only that man and his family were spared (Judg. 1:25). This example illustrates that חסד could be extended to people who were not members of Israelite society. Showing חסד was, therefore, not limited to the covenant relationship between Yahweh and His people; that is, people outside of this relationship could also be recipients ofחסד .

The third principle of reciprocity is framed within *political* contexts, where the demonstration of חסד is based on the behaviour of people who are not necessarily related in terms of nationality. For example, people from different nations might show חסד to each other[37]. The text of 1Samuel 15:6 could be regarded as a case in point. In this text, Saul warns the Kenites of his impending attack on the Amalekites: "Go away, leave the Amalekites so that I do not destroy you along with them; for you showed kindness [חסד] to all the Israelites when they came up out of Egypt". It is argued that this particular reference emphasizes the principle of reciprocity in a political context, for Saul's action is not based on any kinship obligation in terms of which members of the same group show חסד to one other. He shows חסד to the Kenites, a non-Israelite

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[35] This is a typical feature of an agrarian society. According to Borowski (1987:10), agriculture influenced ancient Israel's ideology through religion and laws in which the survival of the in-group members was very important.

[36] According to Kalluveettil (1982:205), a covenant establishes an artificial brotherhood. It implies an adoption into the household, an extension of kinship.

[37] Cf. Boaz, the Israelite, who shows חסד to Ruth the Moabite as discussed in Chapter 4 of this study.

group, because of what they had done in the past. Since the Israelites were recipients of Kenite חסד , Saul's warning to flee can be seen as an instance where an original act of חסד is later reciprocated.

Finally, the principle of reciprocity is framed within a *religious* context, which is the expression of חסד between Yahweh and His people as a whole or between certain individuals among them. Here, the term is used to communicate the central character of God's action both in conditional and in unconditional types of covenant traditions summarized as follows:

1. The conditional (Mosaic or Sinaitic) tradition emphasizes the importance of human obedience. That arrangement had certain ways of providing for the continuation of the relationship once it was broken by sin through sacrificial offerings and rituals of penitence, which are significant aspects of the ancient Near East culture. God's חסד encompasses deliverance or protection and provides the ever-surprising basis upon which the covenant was maintained.
2. The unconditional (Davidic, Abrahamic) tradition, by contrast, handles the problem of sin by describing God's relationship to the people as one based on the divine promise alone, and, therefore, is not subject to collapse because of human failure. This means that God acted favourably towards the people of Israel as a whole despite their sinful behaviour (Sakenfeld 1978:148).

In light of the distinction made by Sakenfeld, one could argue that the meaning of חסד cannot be understood apart from Israel's covenant traditions. The Mosaic tradition assumed that recurrent sin would result in the end of the relationship between Yahweh and His people. The preservation of the community despite repeated instances of disobedience is understood in terms of God's *surprising* and/or *unexpected* חסד . In the same way, the Abrahamic and Davidic traditions understood the preservation of a covenant relationship in terms of God's *promised* חסד . Therefore, the two types of covenant traditions provided a covenantal framework within which every person could embrace Yahweh, the God of Israel as his or her God,[38] and be protected or delivered by him.

[38] Cf. Gen. 12:3; 17:4-5, 12-13, 16, 20, 23-27; 18:18; 26:4; 28:14; Exod. 12:19; 20:10; 22:21; 23:9, 12; Lev. 19:33-34; 24:22; Num. 15:14-16; 35:15; Deut. 1:16; 10:18-19; 14:29; 16:10-14; 23:7-8; 27:19; 1 Kgs 8:41-43; 2 Chr. 6:32-33; Isa. 2:1-4; 49:6b; 60:1-3; 66:23; see

For example, in Genesis 32:9, 11, Jacob prayed to Yahweh: "O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, O LORD, who said to me, Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper .... Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children". The essential need of Jacob was the preservation of life, that is, his and his household's, and since there was no human being to assist him, Yahweh became his only source of protection.

Another important element of חסד is that of **hierarchy**. This particular aspect, which is apparent in the respective roles of people in a structured relationship, operates within the context of social inequality. This can be observed when someone in a powerful position shows solidarity with someone in a less powerful position based on the moral responsibility of caring for each other. Although it is expected of the powerful to do חסד to the powerless, it remains their prerogative to show or refuseחסד . The incident where Abimelech, the king of Gerar, showed חסד to Abraham can be seen as a case in point (Gen. 20-21). Since Abimelech was aware of Yahweh's presence with and his protection of Abraham, he invited him to remain in his territory: "My land is before you; live wherever you like" (Gen. 20:15). Abimelech's hospitality towards Abraham was based on his commitment to the guest whom he allowed to enjoy his protection (cf. Gen. 21:22-23).

In conclusion, it can be stated that human חסד existed among people who were in some form of a covenantal relationship. The narrative literature not only provides accounts of God's חסד to individuals and his people, but also of human חסד to fellow humans. Of these two types, human חסד is more frequent, and the details of how this particular חסד is shown are clearer in these narratives.

3.2.2 חסד in the lyrical and wisdom literature

Evidently, חסד occupies a special place in the poetic sections of the Old Testament. The word occurs frequently in the Psalms, where it characterizes an attitude and/or activity of God. On the other hand, in wisdom literature, חסד is used mostly in the context of interpersonal relations.

Goldingay (2003:224-226); Allen (1999:497); Keil and Delitzch (1975:130) and Seow (1999:79).

Hence, the understanding of חסד which can be gleaned from the biblical texts[39] to be discussed here accords well with the narrative usage discussed above. The categorization procedure applied in the previous section will be continued in this section. Therefore, the following tables represent an analysis of the use of חסד in the lyrical and wisdom literature.

Table 4: Different contexts of חסד in OT lyrical & Wisdom literatures

1) Job 6:14: Men's חסד to Fellowmen

לַמָּס מֵרֵעֵהוּ חָסֶד וְיִרְאַת שַׁדַּי יַעֲזוֹב:	He who withholds kindness [חסד] from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty.	Example of crisis; חסד that involves personal loyalty or attitude of commitment between friends in a close relationship, but who are not blood relatives (cf. Psa. 109:12, 16; Prov. 20:6).

2) Psalm 23:6 (Psalm 25:6-7): God's חסד to Individuals

אַךְ טוֹב וָחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּי וְשַׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים:	Surely goodness and love [חסד] will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.	Example of a crisis; חסד that involves personal loyalty or an attitude of commitment between Yahweh and individuals in the context of a 'covenant' relationship (cf. Pss.18:26; 26:3; 31:22; 32:10; 57:10; 59:10; 62:13; 66:20; 77:8; 86:5; 86:15; 89:2, 14, 24; 92:3; 103:4; 138:2; 144:2).
זְכֹר־רַחֲמֶיךָ יְהוָה וַחֲסָדֶיךָ כִּי מֵעוֹלָם הֵמָּה:	Remember your mercy, O LORD, and your steadfast love [חסד], for they have been from old.	Examples of a crisis (past, present, or future-anticipated); חסד that involves not only deliverance or protection, but also forgiveness of sins as part of the

[39] Because of the absence of concrete contexts, the following passages do not provide any overt clues to the content of the word. For example, Proverbs 19:22; 21:21; 25:10; 31: 26 speak of חסד that brings its own reward while in Psalms 48:10 God is simply praised for his חסד without further comment.

חַטֹּאות נְעוּרַי וּפְשָׁעַי אַל־תִּזְכֹּר כְּחַסְדְּךָ זְכָר־לִי־אַתָּה לְמַעַן טוּבְךָ יְהוָה:	Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love [חסד] remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O LORD!	divine promise within the context of a 'covenant' relationship (cf. Job 10:12; Pss. 5:8; 6:4; 13:5; 17:7; 18:50; 21:8; 25:7; 31:8,17, 22; 36:6, 10; 40:10, 11; 42:9; 52:8; 57:4; 59:17; 61:7; 63:3; 69:13, 16; 86:13; 88:11; 89:29, 33, 50; 94:18; 103:11, 17; 107:8, 15, 21,43; 109:21, 26; 115:1; 119:41, 76, 149, 159; 138:8; 141:5; 143:8, 12).

3) Psalm 44:27 (Psalm 107:1): God's חסד to His people

קוּמָה עֶזְרָתָה לָּנוּ וּפְדֵנוּ לְמַעַן חַסְדֶּךָ:	Rise up [LORD]; come to our help. Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love [חסד].	Examples of crisis חסד that involves deliverance or protection within the context of a 'covenant' relation-ship and the people's declaration as an expression of their gratitude to Yahweh (cf. Pss. 25:10; 33:5, 18, 22; 36:7; 51:1; 85:7; 90:14; 98:3; 100:5; 103:8; 106:1, 7, 45; 130:7; 145:8,11; 117:2; 118:1, 2, 3, 4, 29; 136:1-26).
הֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ :	Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love [חסד] endures forever.	

3.2.2.1 Discussion of analysis of חסד in Psalms

In lyrical and wisdom literature, as is the case in narratives, חסד functions as a *relational* term used to indicate the divine-human/human-human relationships. Moreover, the word entails specific acts done by one person to another. The occurrence of God's חסד to His people is more frequent (this can be seen in categories 2 and 3 above) than that of human חסד to another human, with only three occurrences (one each in Job, in Psalms, and in Proverbs as seen in category 1). This expansion of the realm of חסד to human relations is intimately link with the application of the concept of Yahweh as the *Agent* ofחסד . Within this broader

category of God's relationship to His people or individual suppliants, חסד acquires different senses (Baer and Gordon 1997:213-218; cf. Sakenfeld 1978:218-230). In this regard, three different usages of the term are attested in poetic literature. These are elucidated below:

1) **Deliverance**:

(a) *Act of Deliverance*: As noted, חסד is associated with the notion of deliverance; each section of the Psalms describes some disaster (e.g. desert wandering, bondage, illness, and a storm at sea) from which Yahweh provides rescue for His covenant people. This theme links with Israel's religious life, its tradition and conventions in which the elements of lament and praise are considered (cf. Terrien 2003:6; Weiser 1962:66; Mays 1994:21; McCann Jr. 1996:647). In Psalm 57:3, for example, God's act of sending to save is followed by "God sending his love [חסד] and his faithfulness [אמת]". In Psalm 119:41, the Psalmist asks that Yahweh's חסד come to him, that is, God's salvation in accordance with His promise. Through God's help, the Psalmist will be able to confront his persecutors. A similar theme appears in verses 76-77 of the same Psalm, where the Psalmist yearns for the promised comfort of God's חסד by which he may survive and his persecutors be shamed.

(b) *Ability to work Deliverance*: Often, חסד is defined as God's delivering power or the ability to work deliverance: "Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your unfailing love [חסד]" (Psa. 31:16). This verse summarizes a plea for deliverance from enemies and persecutors, and presupposes Yahweh's ability and willingness to do so. As a result, God is praised for Hisחסד , which upheld the suppliant when his foot was slipping (Psa. 94:18). In Psalm 109:26, the prayer is "Help me, O Lord my God; save me in accordance with your love [חסד]." The suppliant urges Yahweh to rescue him and to shame his accusers so that they may recognize God's saving power. A noteworthy illustration of this nuance appears in Psalm 143:12: "In your unfailing love [חסד], silence my enemies; destroy all my foes, for I am your servant." Thus, the Psalmist brings together, in succinct form, what is typical of many Psalms, i.e. Yahweh's ability to deliver the afflicted.

(c) *Willingness to work Deliverance*: A third major nuance of חסד is God's willingness to work deliverance. In Psalm 119:124, the Psalmist prays that his life be spared in accordance with God's חסד (cf. vv. 88, 149 and

159). The psalm is not concerned with God's power, but with his willingness to support those who delight in the Law. There is a repeated appeal for divine action in accordance with God's promise to deliver those in distress (e.g. vv. 38, 41, 74, 123, 133, 154, 169). In Psalm 119:149, God's חסד is defined as His justice expressed in His willingness to hear and answer the prayer of the obedient (cf. vv. 125, 135, 144, 146).

2) **Protection**:

A second usage of חסד in the Psalms might be described as maintaining a favourable *status quo*. On a broad level, this involves protection, the continuation of a faithful action, which prevents distress or a crisis from occurring, just as deliverance involves a rescue from distress. Two passages exemplify this theme in particular. Psalm 36:10, "Continue your love [חסד] to those who know you," introduces a plea for protection from the arrogant and wicked who would do harm to the faithful. Similarly, in Psalm 32:10, where חסד could be described or translated as 'protective care', the supplicant utters the following: "Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord's unfailing love [חסד] surrounds the man who trusts in him". This variation in the theme of protective maintenance has to do with the preservation of the royal line. For instance, Psalm 18 ends with an ascription of praise to Yahweh who increases the victories of the king and does חסד to His anointed (to David and his seed forever). On the other hand, Psalm 23 is an expression of trust in God's protection and may be regarded as a "psalm of trust". The Psalmist is convinced that Yahweh's goodness and חסד will always be with him; blessing and protection from harm will be his, so that he can worship in the temple (cf. Psa. 5:8 in which the greatness of God's חסד enables the upright to enter God's house).

3) Forgiveness:

A final and important usage of חסד in the Psalms, one that stands somewhat apart from those previously discussed, is Yahweh's faithfulness as expressed in His forgiveness. This aspect of חסד cannot be completely divorced from the notion of deliverance and the willingness to deliver, for misfortune was often regarded as an indication of God's displeasure, while a change of fortune was seen as an expression or sign of forgiveness. This co-joining of deliverance and forgiveness appears

most clearly in Psalms 85 and 90, which are both communal laments. In Psalm 85, the people pray for restoration, revival, and the turning away of Yahweh's anger. Since their distress is occasioned by sin, they ask for חסד and salvation (v. 7). Likewise, in Psalm 90, the people recognize their plight as the expression of God's wrath because of their sins. Two other Psalms put greater emphasis on the blotting out of sins as manifestation ofחסד . Psalm 130:7 parallels Yahweh's חסד with His redemption of Israel from her sins; and in Psalm 25:7, the Psalmist prays that he will be remembered according to God's חסד rather than according to his sins.

In view of these different usages of חסד in the Psalms, it can be assumed that the notions of deliverance, protection and forgiveness are key semantic components of the word. Individual members of the covenant community and the people as a whole pray for deliverance, protection and forgiveness as manifestations of Yahweh'sחסד [40]**.** While this section focused on the usage of חסד in terms of its meaning and nuances in narratives and Psalms, it did not highlight the occurrences of חסד with related terms in other corpora of the Old Testament. Determining these related terms can illuminate the meaning of חסד in the Old Testament[41] because "if we want to be able to describe the meaning of a word in an effective way, we should compare the meaning and usage of all words that belong to the semantic field or domain" (De Blois 2007:3). Since the semantic models on which Hebrew lexicons are based could be questioned, it is important to investigate how חסד is treated in the main Hebrew dictionaries[42].

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[40] It is worth mentioning here that the nuances of "deliverance" and "protection" are also echoed in narrative texts.

[41] To avoid any misunderstanding, it should be noted that although the usage of חסד in narratives and Psalms was the focus, חסד also occurs in the prophetic literature. As already mentioned, the aim was not to examine the use of חסד in this particular corpus, but only in narratives and Psalms.

[42] As Imbayarwo (2008:153) rightly indicates, most dictionaries show no evidence of adequately subscribing to insights that theoretical lexicography has to offer. He argues that they neglect the guide to the use of a dictionary, which is a prerequisite functional component for a successful consultation of the dictionary.

3.3 Comparative Summary of חסד in the Main Hebrew Dictionaries

This comparative summary deals with the five commonly used Hebrew-English lexicons namely *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* by Koehler and Baumgartner, *et al* (referred to as KB); *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* by Brown, Driver and Briggs (referred to as BDB); *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* by Clines (referred to as DCH); the *Dictionary of Biblical Language with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (referred to as Swanson) and the *Semantic Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew* (referred to as SDBH).

3.3.1 חסד in BDB and KB

When we consider the entries made under חסד in BDB (1907) and KB (1999), it becomes clear that these two lexicons approached the entry in a very similar way. A comparative study of the two shows only minor differences. The first "meaning" of the noun חסד described in BDB is goodness, kindness, and in KB, it is loyalty. In BDB, this main meaning is sub-divided into the kindness of man, the kindness of God, and faithfulness (between individuals - only in KB). Subsequently, to express the relational context of 'God to people', the noun is translated as faithfulness, goodness and, graciousness. The verb for חסד is entered in both BDB and KB and is generally translated as to seek or take refuge.

In his critical review of BDB (1907) and KB (1999), Van der Merwe (2004b:121) discusses the lack of use of semantic models[43] in these lexicons. One of the major reasons for this state of affairs is the fact that semantics had not yet developed as an independent discipline when BDB and KB[44] were compiled, and it played only a minor role in Biblical Hebrew (De Blois 2001:12). This observation agrees with Lübbe's (1990:1) claims that on the basis of surveys of the development of Hebrew lexicography, from the first known Hebrew dictionary of Saadia

[43] Van der Merwe (2004b:121) defines a semantic model as "an explicit theoretically well-justified model for analysing and understanding the meaning of linguistic expression".

[44] Although the KB was revised in 1999, the original compilation was done in the early part of the last century.

Gaon to the most recent revisions of Koehler-Baumgartner, "little has changed regarding the methods of ... determining and reflecting meaning ... original meanings are assigned on the strength of etymological evidence. From the original meanings additional meanings are extrapolated". This can be seen in BDB and KB's treatment of חסד where the primary meanings or senses are given first, and the other meanings are then derived from this meaning.

Both BDB and KB treat syntactic information in a less rigorous way by today's standards. For example, in their entries of חסד , KB only once refers to its combination with the particle /כ/, while BDB makes two references to prepositions or the comparative particle namely the combination of חסד with /ב/ and /כ/. Although both of the lexicons make reference to these prepositions, they do not explain their relevance for the translation of חסד . This does not help to clarify the different meanings of חסד . As Van der Merwe (2004b:123) correctly notes, BDB and KB often do not make clear "whether the syntactic information provided has any semantic significance or not. This reflects the absence of any clear distinction between syntax and semantics that is typical of most so-called traditional approaches to language description". Very little attention (if any at all) is given to the influence of syntactic combinations and sociological dimensions on the meaning of חסד.

3.3.2 חסד in DCH

The DCH (1993) by Clines claims to focus mainly on the syntagmatic relationships between words. In the introduction, Clines (1993:14) explains this endeavour as follows:

> ... The Dictionary ... has a theoretical base in modern linguistics. This theoretical base comes to expression primarily in the overriding concern in this dictionary for the use of words in the language. The focus here, then, is not so much on meanings, or the translation of equivalents, of individual words as on the patterns and combinations in which words are used.

Although Clines' description of his approach seems very promising, the DCH manifests a mere listing of the usages of words without utilising any real semantic model[45]. In his dissertation, Imbayarwo (2008) also

[45] Cf. Van der Merwe (2004b:121, 124-125). In his book review of DCH, Eng (2000:725) comments that, "Some reviewers have remarked that using DCH is like using a mere listing of syntagmatic data with little analysis and interpretation... This is not strictly

observes that although Clines claims to be 'sure' of the user's needs, he does not help the user with the most important data, i.e. the meaning. Thus, Imbayarwo (2008:195) concludes that Clines "has fallen into exactly this trap by merely recording data".

Considering the entry made on חסד in DCH (1993), it is clear that the same pattern as BDB and KB is followed. The translation equivalents are given as loyalty, faithfulness, kindness, love, mercy, and (deeds of) kindness. However, the main difference in these entries is that, DCH exhaustively lists the entire corpus of contexts (subjects, objects, and the nominal sentences) in which חסד appears. The question, however, is whether this exhaustive listing really affords us much insight into the meaning and translation of the word. What is needed is a distinction between the semantic features, which are shared and those that are distinct in determining the meaning of חסד in particular contexts.

3.3.3 חסד in Swanson

Swanson's (1997) dictionary has been associated with the semantic domain approach of Louw and Nida (discussed in previous chapters). In his the preface to his book, Swanson (1997) explains the purpose of this connection as follows:

> .... [T]he connections of the Louw and Nida domains are not completely dissimilar... there is at least an analogical connection between the domains of meaning in the Greek New Testament and Hebrew/Aramaic culture. Many of these domains could relate to nearly any culture of the world, which is why Louw & Nida was designated by its editors as a lexicon for *translators* (Swanson 1997:n.p. Italic as in the original)[46].

Swanson's observation is important particularly with regard to the semantic study of words with a shift in meaning. However, it is unfortunate that the semantic framework applied in this dictionary imposes a

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true... Still, what has frustrated reviewers is the lack of semantic elaboration or discussion within each lexical entry as to how the lexicographers themselves arrived at their determinations... In addition, DCH still relies, for the most part, on providing 'glosses' (word-for-word translation equivalents) rather than real definitions in their lexical entries allowing for even greater semantic vagueness and ambiguity... It is a bit of a disappointment therefore that after all the work has been done that no further lexical semantic description and delineation is provided".

[46] It should be pointed out that Louw and Nida deal with the Greek New Testament, not the Hebrew Bible - it is Swanson who applies Louw and Nida to Hebrew lexicography.

'foreign' set of domains on the Hebrew language. That happens because Swanson refers to other dictionaries (such as Strong's lexicon and Louw & Nida)[47] in his attempt to describe the semantic value of חסד and אמת. This does not only depart from his basic presupposition that the meaning of words should be determined in their contexts of usage, but it also makes it difficult to understand the semantic relationships between the two words, as illustrated below:

חֶסֶד	אֱמֶת
2876 II חֶסֶד (*chesed*): n.masc.; ≡ Str 2617; TWOT 698a—**1.** **LN 25**.33-25.58 **loyal love**, unfailing kindness, devotion, i.e., a love or affection that is steadfast based on a prior relationship (Ex 34:6, 7); **2.** LN 79.9-79.17 **glory**, i.e., lovely appearance (Isa 40:6); 3. LN 88.66-88.74 **favor**, i.e., the giving benefits (Est 2:9), note: for another interp in Ps 52:3 (EB 1), see 2875.	**622** אֱמֶת (emet): n.fem.; ≡ Str 571; TWOT 116k—**1.** **LN 31**.82.31.101 **faithfulness**, reliability, trustworthiness, i.e., a state or condition of being dependable and loyal to a person or standard (Gen 24:27); **2.** LN 72.1-72.11 **true**, certain, sure, i.e., that which conforms to reality, and is so certain not to be false (Dt 13:15), see also domain LN 70; **3.** LN 88.39-88.45 **honesty**, integrity, i.e., be in a state or condition of telling the truth, and living according to a moral standard (Ne 7:2); **4.** LN 33.35-33.68 unit: (אֱמֶת) (אֱמֶת וּבְרִית) a reliable book, formally, Book of Truth, i.e., a writing in a heavenly scroll giving details of future things, with a focus on both certainty and reliability (Da 10:21+); **5.** LN 67.78-67.117 **lasting**, enduring, i.e., a duration of time, without reference to other points of time (Jer 14:13).

Table 5: Excerpts 1 and 2 (Swanson 1997:n.p)

These two words are very closely related in their respective semantic fields (this aspect will be discussed later in this study). In Swanson's entries above, however, nothing of this similarity is visible because חסד has been assigned to "Attitudes" and "Emotions" (see LN 25), whereas אמת is found under "Hold a View", "Believe", and "Trust" (see LN 31). It is rather difficult then to discern and understand the semantic relationships between the two words.

[47] In his recent review, De Blois (2006b:4) justifiably stresses that Louw and Nida's semantic framework lacks inner coherence, i.e. it does not reflect the cognitive reality of the Biblical Hebrew language.

The translation equivalents (indicated in bold below) are in some instances followed by another entry that suggests a different translation equivalent, for example,חסד : **loyal love**, *unfailing kindness, devotion*, and the word אמת: **faithfulness**, *reliability, trustworthiness*. This prompts the question: Do the terms loyal love and faithfulness represent the most prototypical senses over the subsequent ones? Since Swanson's dictionary does not indicate the relationship between חסד and אמת, a comprehensive semantic framework is needed to establish the inner semantic relation between these terms.

3.3.4 חסד in SDBH

The SDBH is currently being developed under the direction of Dr Reinier de Blois. This dictionary, which deviates from traditional BH dictionaries, presents the user (primarily Bible translators) with an improved lexicon with reference to the semantic model being used, as well as to the structural layout or presentation of the data. The structural layout, which is organized according to semantic domains, allows the user rapid access to data and easy retrieval of information (Imbayarwo 2008:196). Thus, De Blois's dictionary differs from BDB, KB, DCH, and Swanson (including other existing BH dictionaries) in that it is a "semantic domain" [48] based dictionary.

Concerning the entries onחסד , SDBH provides the lexical meaning and distinguishes these from its contextual meanings. In other words, the different usages of חסד in different contexts are given (as presented below):

חֶסֶד
(1) Noun, m | חֶסֶד

(a) ***Faithful (State/Process)*** // בְּרִית, אֱמֶת
= attitude of commitment towards fulfilling one's obligations; these may be obligations defined within the context of a cov-

[48] The term semantic domain has always been closely linked to componential analysis as discussed in Chapter 2. However, the semantic model of SDBH departs from the theoretical foundation underlying componential analysis; rather it is based on insights from cognitive semantics, a more recent theoretical model for the semantic analysis of Biblical Hebrew.

enant or agreement, or moral obligations to do well to someone who did well to you before; an attitude that is meaningless if not translated in actions - *loyalty, kindness, love, devotion* (EXO.15:13; 34:6; NUM.14:18,19; RUT.2:20; 3:10; 1SA.20:15; 2SA.15:20; 16:17; 1KI.20:31; 1CH.16:34,41; 2CH.5:13; 7:3,6; 20:21; ISA.40:6 ...)

Faithfulness

- - *loyalty, kindness (between individuals)* (PSA.85:11; PRO.3:3; 11:17; 14:22; 16:6; 19:22; 20:6,28,28; 21:21; 31:26; DAN.1:9; HOS.4:1; 12:7; MIC.6:8; ZEC.7:9 ...)

Affection - *loyalty, kindness (between friends)* (1SA.20:15; 2SA.16:17; JOB.6:14)

Affection; Marriage; Individual > God // אַהֲבָה - *devotion (of people towards God, as a wife towards her husband)* (JER.2:2)

God // צְדָקָה - *loyalty, love, devotion (towards humans and God)* (PSA.85:11; PRO.3:3; ISA.40:6; HOS.6:4,6; 10:12)

God חֶסֶד אֲנָשֵׁי־ // צַדִּיק - *men of loyalty > devout, pious people* (ISA.57:1)

God // אֱמוּנָה, אֱמֶת, צְדָקָה, תְּשׁוּעָה :: מַכְאוֹב, שֶׁבֶט - *love, devotion (of God towards his people)* (EXO.15:13; 34:6; NUM.14:18,19; RUT.2:20; 2SA.15:20; 1CH.16:34,41; 2CH.5:13; 7:3,6; 20:21; EZR.3:11; NEH.9:17,17; 13:22 ...)

God; Idolatry - *(those who worship idols forfeit God's) loyalty* (JON.2:9)

King // אֱמֶת, מִשְׁפָּט, צֶדֶק - *loyalty, kindness (between people in authority and their subjects)* (1 KI.20:31; PSA.101:1; 1SA.16:5)

Kinship - *loyalty, kindness (between relatives)* (RUT.3:10)

Politics - *loyalty, kindness (between nations)* (1KI.20:31)

Punishment - *(a rebuke can be seen as) an act of kindness* (PSA.141:5)

(b) ***Faithful (Action)*** **verb, qal** עשׂה חֶסֶד נסתר, חֶסֶד נטה, חֶסֶד משׁךְ שׁקר :: טוֹבָה, אֱמֶת // חֶסֶד

= to act in accordance with the attitude described under [a] - *to act with loyalty, faithfulness, kindness, devotion, love* (GEN.19:19; 20:13; 21:23; 24:12,14,27,49; 39:21; 40:14; 47:29; EXO.20:6; 34:7; DEU.5:10; 7:9,12; JOS.2:12 ...)

Faithfulness

Affection // בְּרִית - *to show one's loyalty (of friends to one another or to one's friend's descendants)* (1SA.20:8,14; 2SA.9:1,7; PSA.109:16)

Affection ; God אֱלֹהִים חֶסֶד עשׂה - *to show God's faithfulness (to one's friend's descendants)* (2SA.9:3) (HOS.2:21)

God חֶסֶד עשׂה // חַיִּים, מִשְׁפָּט, צְדָקָה - *to show one's loyalty (said of God)* (GEN.19:19; 24:12,14; EXO.20:6; DEU.5:10; RUT.1:8; 2SA.2:6; 22:51; 1KI.3:6; 2CH.1:8; JOB.10:12; PSA.18:51; JER.9:23; 32:18)

God חֶסֶד נטה :: עזב - *to show (one's) faithfulness (said of God)* (GEN.39:21; EZR.7:28; 9:9)

God חֶסֶד נצר - *to remain faithful (said of God)* (EXO.34:7)

God חֶסֶד נתן // אֱמֶת - *to show (one's) faithfulness (said of God)* (MIC.7:20)

God חֶסֶד סור מִן - *to withdraw (one's) faithfulness from (someone; said of God)* (2SA.7:15; 1CH.17:13; PSA.66:20)

God חֶסֶד עזב - *to withdraw (one's) faithfulness (said of God)* (GEN.24:27)

God חֶסֶד הפליא (PSA.31:22)

God חֶסֶד פרר (PSA.89:34)

God חֶסֶד |הראה<SDBH:ראה>| - *to show (one's) faithfulness (said of God)* (PSA.85:8)

God חֶסֶד שׁמר (DEU.7:9,12; 1KI.3:6; 8:23; 2CH.6:14; NEH.1:5; 9:32; PSA.89:29; DAN.9:4)

God חֶסֶד שׁלח // אֱמֶת (PSA.57:4)

King // יְשׁוּעָה, טוֹבָה - *to show one's loyalty (to a king or leader or his descendants)* (JDG.8:35; 2SA.2:5; 3:8; 22:51; 1KI.3:6; 2CH.1:8; PSA.18:51)

Kinship // אֱמֶת - *to show one's loyalty (between relatives)* (GEN.24:49; 47:29)

Marriage - *to show one's loyalty (of a wife towards her husband))* (GEN.20:13)

Politics :: שׁקר - *to show one's loyalty (between nations)* (GEN.21:23; 1SA.15:6; 2SA.10:2,2; 1CH.19:2,2)

Punishment חֶסֶד מִשְׁפָּ *- to show kindness (which will not be done to someone who refused to show kindness to other people)* (PSA.109:12)

Reward // טוֹבָה, אֱמֶת *- to show kindness (in return for another act of kindness)* (GEN.40:14; JOS.2:12,12,14; JDG.1:24; RUT.1:8; 2SA.2:6; 1KI.2:7; 2CH.24:22)

(c) חֶסֶד נשׂא (EST.2:9,17)

(d) ***Faithful (Action)*** **noun, m, pl** // אֱמוּנָה, אֱמֶת, בְּרִית, טוּב, פלא, תְּהִלָּה, תְּשׁוּעָה, רַחֲמִים

= acts that reflect the attitude described under [a] - *acts of loyalty, kindness, devotion, love* (GEN.32:11; 2CH.6:42; 32:32; 35:26; NEH.13:14; PSA.17:7; 25:6; 89:2,50; 106:7,45; 107:43; 119:41; ISA.55:3; 63:7,7; LAM.3:32 ...)

Faithfulness

God // אֱמוּנָה, אֱמֶת, בְּרִית, פלא, רַחֲמִים, תְּהִלָּה, תְּשׁוּעָה (GEN.32:11; 2CH.6:42; PSA.17:7; 25:6; 89:2,50; 106:7,45; 107:43; 119:41; ISA.55:3; 63:7,7; LAM.3:22,32) **God** (2CH.32:32; 35:26; NEH.13:14)

(2) noun, m | חֶסֶד

(a) ***Shame (Action)*** :: רום

= event that brings disgrace upon the person performing it - *disgrace, shameful act* (LEV.20:17; PRO.14:34)

Shame ; Sin

(3) noun, name

See: בֶּן־חֶסֶד

Excerpt 1 (SDBH 2006a:n.p)

The excerpt above shows that the SDBH is helpful for translators because it includes both lexical and contextual meanings in the process of semantic analysis, as the following example also illustrates:

(a) Faithful (State/Process) //...= attitude of commitment towards fulfilling one's obligations; these may be obligations defined within the context of a covenant or agreement, or moral obligations to do well to someone who did well to you before; an attitude that is

meaningless if not translated in actions - *loyalty, kindness, love, devotion...*

Meaning extensions stemming from the lexical meaning are then provided at the contextual domain level, for example: *faithfulness, affection,* etc. These contextual domains cover the range of social relationships in which the word חסד is used in the Hebrew Bible. The two levels of semantic domain namely lexical meaning and contextual meaning, represent paradigmatic relations, which involve a semantic substitution frame of lexical correspondents. With regard to the lexical meaning in the table above, De Blois provides both a paraphrase of meaning and translation equivalents, for example **loyalty**, **kindness**, **love**, **devotion** in the abovementioned section.

However, with regard to the SDBH's entries on חסד, there is a possibility that the user may be left with some uncertainty as far as the meaning of the word is concerned. For example, in the subcategory 1b in the excerpt above, the general entry at the lexical level, i.e. faithful (action), is followed by the specific acts of loyalty, faithfulness, kindness, devotion and love. What these terms simply tell us is that, when translated into English, חסד may be rendered by one of these five glosses, depending on the context. However, this does not adequately convey the meaning of this biblical concept.

According to Imbayarwo (2008:168), one of the main functions of a dictionary is to focus on the reception, production and translation of texts, that is, on their communicative dimension - from the native language to the foreign language or from the foreign language to the native language. Based on these distinctions, he explains the lexicographical function of a BH dictionary for translators noting that it is primarily to help translators and general users to **understand** the BH language text (text reception) in order to **translate** these texts from the foreign language (Hebrew) into the selected target language (Imbayarwo 2008:170, emphasis as in the original).

Therefore, Imbayarwo claims that, in order to perform this communicative function, it is necessary to provide a broader context that can open new ways of thinking about a certain contextual domain and an improved procedure for the contextual components of exegesis and translation. As noted in section 2.2 of this study, although De Blois alludes to

contextual semantics as being relevant for understanding the meaning of a word within its wider socio-cultural context, he does not deal with it explicitly in his proposed model.

In his critical evaluation of the SDBH, Imbayarwo (2008:159) suggests "frequency of attestation"[49] in BH, the analysis of which belongs to corpus linguistics, as a possible solution to describing the meaning of a word. The basic premise of this frequency of attestation is that it should start from the most literal and proceed to the metaphorical or extended meanings of a word. However, in a footnote, he acknowledges that it is not always easy to draw a "line between what is literal and what is metaphorical" (Imbayarwo 2008:157) because Biblical Hebrew is an ancient language that is no longer spoken. Two questions then remain: How can we determine the meaning of a word in a particular context? What are the tools that one can apply to identify the translation equivalent of a biblical word? To answer these questions, one needs a more specific frame of reference that can help to bridge the cognitive gap between the biblical and contemporary receptor audiences. This issue will be discussed in the next chapter.

3.3.5 Summary of section

This section has presented a comparative summary of the analysis of חסד in the main Hebrew dictionaries. Based on this analysis, a list of different glosses of the word has been identified: kindness, goodness, graciousness, love, mercy, devotion, loyalty, and faithfulness. It became clear that, from this variety of terms, faithfulness appears in all the discussed dictionaries as an equivalent translation forחסד . Even in SDBH, which follows another approach, faithfulness is also identified as the meaning of the wordחסד . However, according to Barr (1973:119-120), glosses "are not themselves meanings nor do they tell us the meanings; the meanings reside in the actual Hebrew usage, and for real semantic analysis the glosses have no greater value then that of indicators or labels for a meaning which resides in the Hebrew itself". Hence, a word by itself does not determine meaning, but rather the contextual frames within which it is used.

[49] This term was coined by Imbayarwo (2008).

3.4 A Comparison of חסד with Related Words

An evaluation of existing lexicons has shown that it is not sufficient to try to provide the definition of חסד while ignoring related words. The word חסד is found in conjunction with אמת in narrative, poetic and prophetic texts, while it occurs with three other related words, viz. צדקה, רחמים, אמונה and ישׁועה in poetic and prophetic contexts[50]. It should be noted that although my analysis of חסד was limited to narrative and poetic books, the present section examines instances where חסד occurs with each of the five related terms in narrative, poetic and prophetic texts in order to obtain more information about the precise area that each term occupies within the overall semantic field. Absolute distinctions are of course difficult to demonstrate especially in the case of poetic passages[51].

3.4.1 חסד + אמת

The words חסד and אמת occur in close proximity in narrative, poetic and prophetic texts (e.g. Gen 24:27; 47:29; Exod. 34:6; Josh. 2:14; 2 Sam. 2:6; Mic. 7:20; Pss. 26:3; 40:11; 57:4, 11; 61:8; 85:11; 86:15; 89:15; 108:4; 117:2; 138:2; Prov. 14:22; 16:6; 20:28). The first instance is Genesis 24:27, where the two words are used in connection with God's חסד ואמת to humans: "Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken his steadfast love and his faithfulness [ואמת חסד] toward my master" (cf. Gen. 24:49; 2 Sam. 2:6; 15:20; Exod. 34:6; Pss. 61:8; 86:15). In other passages, these two terms are used with reference to humans' ואמת חסד to fellow human-beings. For example, when the time came for Jacob to die, he called his son Joseph and said to him: "If now I have found favor in your sight, put your hand under my thigh, and promise to deal loyally and truly [ואמת חסד] with me" (Gen. 47:29; cf. Josh. 2:14; Prov. 14:22; 16:6; 20:28).

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[50] Among biblical scholars, Clark (1993) was the first to concentrate on the link between חסד and other related BH terms, namely צדקה ,אמת ,רחמים, אמונה and ישׁועה.

[51] This is due to the stylistic feature of parallelism, which is characteristic of Hebrew poetry; thus, it is difficult to demonstrate or document any distinctions in the meanings of poetic word pairs (Clark 1993:141).

Although these two words occur together very often in the expression חסד ואמת [52], there are instances where they are not used in close proximity (e.g. Josh. 2:12; Isa. 16:5; 1 Kgs. 3:6; Mic. 7:20). In Micah (7:20), Yahweh extends אמת to Jacob and חסד to Abraham. Although אמת is used in connection with Jacob and חסד with Abraham, the expression "our fathers" indicates that the writer makes no distinction between Abraham and Jacob. Thus, Clark (1997:34) maintains that this passage cannot be used as a basis for distinguishing between these two words. Similarly, Psalm 117:2 does not indicate a semantic distinction between חסד and אמת. In Joshua 2:12-14, the two words are used figuratively. In 1 Kings 3:6, Solomon speaks of David's upright walk before Yahweh, showing that the אמת of David and the חסד that Yahweh extends to David are inter-related. The king's reign is established by his חסד, which enables him to judge in אמת, so that אמת becomes an expression, or a manifestation, of the king's חסד (cf. Isa. 16:5). One could conclude that the extent of overlap in the usage of חסד and אמת suggests that there must be significant semantic overlap between them as well[53]. Hence, חסד always stands in the first position.

3.4.2 חסד + רחמים

The word חסד and רחמים occur in close proximity in poetic and prophetic texts (e.g. Pss. 25:6; 51:3; 69:17; Isa. 54:8; 63:7; Hos. 2:21; Lam. 3:22; Jer. 16:5). In some instances, these two words refer to attributes of God (e.g. Pss. 25:6; 51:3; 69:17). The fact that חסד and רחמים occur in close proximity in the book of Psalms suggests a common semantic link between the two words. Other passages in which the words occur in close proximity contain the variant חסד ורחמים (cf. Psa. 103:4; Zec 7:9; Dan. 1:9). Although these texts draw attention to the intimate connection between the two words, they do not provide any means of distinguishing between the semantic areas that each covers.

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[52] The expression חסד ואמת is an example of hendiadys. According to Clark (1993:242), hendiadys is a "method whereby two formally co-ordinate terms - verbs, nouns or adjectives - jointed by 'and' express a single concept in which one of the components defines the other".

[53] According to Glueck (1967:55), God's חסד is paired with אמת in a "hendiadys indicating its element of faithfulness or loyalty".

In other passages, the combination occurs with the preposition בְּ. One of the many meanings of this preposition is "according to" or "in accordance with". For example, in Psalm 25:6, the Psalmist first links רחמים and חסד that have always been characteristic of Yahweh and then beseeches Him to overlook the sins of his youth and to remember him in accordance with (בְּ) His חסד (in v. 7). In Psalm 51:3, the Psalmist seeks God's mercy in accordance with Hisחסד . In Psalm 119:159, the Psalmist requests that he may live in accordance with Yahweh's חסד and His רחמים (in vv. 77, 156). Although it is difficult to differentiate between these two words, one can conclude that חסד is the more general term expressing Yahweh's covenantal relationship with His people. Usually, חסד occurs first and רחמים second, where people are the object of God's חסד (e.g. Jer. 16:5).

3.4.3 חסד + אמונה

The words חסד and אמונה occur in close proximity only in poetic contexts (e.g. Pss. 36:5; 88:12; 89:34; 92:3; 98:3; 100:5 and Prov. 20:6). In the example from Proverbs, חסד and אמונה refer to humans; in Psalms, however, the two words are used in connection with Yawheh. One example is Psalm 36:5: "Your love [חסד], O LORD, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness [אמונה] to the skies". Even though Yahweh's אמונה extends to all humans, the Psalmist regards the people of Israel - those who fear Yahweh - as the ones who both desire and experience his חסד (cf. Psa. 33:18). Again, as in the combinations previously discussed, חסד always stands in the first position.

3.4.4 חסד + צדקה

The words חסד and צדקה occur in close proximity in poetic and prophetic texts (e.g. Pss. 33:5; 36:11; 103:17 and Jer. 9:23). In Psalm 103:17, the Psalmist uses the two words with reference to the present and subsequent generations, to highlight the trans-generational and everlasting character of Yahweh's חסד and צדקה which He shows to those who obey His laws and keep His covenant. In Psalm 33:5, חסד and צדקה are used to distinguishe between the nations of the earth (vv. 8-10, 13-17) and the people whom Yahweh has chosen (vv. 12, 18-22). The

צדקה, which Yahweh loves, is seen in people's actions toward one another and, therefore, can be considered as human צדקה. Since Yahweh Himself is the source of justice, human צדקה emanates from divine צדקה. When people express Yahweh's צדקה toward one other, the earth is filled with Hisחסד . Hence in all the passages above, חסד always stands in the first position.

3.4.5 חסד + ישׁועה

The words חסד and ישׁועה occur in close proximity in poetic texts (e.g. Pss. 13:6; 98:3). These two words are used with reference to the attributes of God. In Psalm 13:6, the Psalmist proclaims that Yahweh's חסד is a sign of assurance in times of affliction. In Psalm 98:3, חסד occurs between the two references to Yahweh's ישׁועה, where it is joined with אמונה. This indicates a close connection between Yahweh's חסד and His ישׁועה. Here, one could argue that ישׁועה is a manifestation of Yahweh's חסד - the former being evident to the nations, while, in fact, Israel experiences both חסד and ישׁועה. In these two passages, חסד stands in the first position expressing the acts of Yahweh especially in His ישׁועה. While His people experience and recognize His חסד and ישׁועה, people of other nations only become aware of His ישׁועה (Clark 1993:158).

3.5 Summary and Conclusion

The present chapter has analyzed the semantic domains of חסד in the narrative and poetic texts of the Old Testament. The analysis focused on three key issues:

- The use of חסד in different biblical texts and communication situations;
- A comparative summary of how חסד is treated in the main Hebrew dictionaries and;
- A discussion of related BH terms that are used in conjunction with חסד.

Moreover, the chapter offers a working definition of the term in order to determine its more nuanced usage in different contexts. The inter-lexical componential comparison allows for the delineation of the semantic

domain within which the word occurs. The analysis of חסד in narrative and poetic texts clearly shows that it is a relational term used to indicate various aspects of the divine-human/human-human relationships. The existing BH dictionaries reveal that חסד is the prototypical Hebrew term for faithfulness, which is also the English equivalent for אמת. Besides this BH term, other relateds word, viz. צדקה, רחמים, אמונה, and ישׁועה used with חסד were investigated to distinguish between these words that occur in the same semantic field. It has been shown that חסד is based on the covenantal relationship between Yahweh and the Israelites, while the other related words are used to demonstrate Yahweh's dealings with humanity in general, but always within the same overarching notion ofחסד . This conclusion is supported by the observation in the present study that חסד always stands in the first position in these word combinations when found in the same co-text. The pattern suggests that חסד is the more generic or basic term, with the second terms all being synonyms or qualifiers ofחסד .

Now that the semantic field in which חסד occurs within the Hebrew Bible has been delineated, the next chapter will focus on a textual-contextual study of the term in the book of Ruth.

CHAPTER 4:
A TEXTUAL-CONTEXTUAL STUDY OF חסד IN THE BOOK OF RUTH

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the semantic analysis of חסד with reference to its usage in the book of Ruth. The Hebrew Masoretic text is the point of departure for discovering the meaning of this word in the aforementioned context. A basic assumption is that the source text serves as a frame of reference for the semantic analysis of חסד by providing an integrative semantic and pragmatic framework within which the biblical word must be investigated with reference to the wider context.

The book of Ruth is an example of how a study of narrative structure contributes to the semantic analysis of חסד within the context of the Old Testament. In view of this observation, this chapter will develop and use a Cognitive Frames of Reference approach (hereafter CFR) to analyze חסד in the book of Ruth. This approach focuses on the communicative aspect of the text by incorporating the insights from semantics and cognitive linguistics to the study of narrative structure into the hermeneutical process for a better understanding of the term חסד in the book of Ruth.

4.2 Developing CFR for Analysing Biblical Hebrew texts

In section 2.4 of this study, the CFR model has been proposed as a conceptual framework. This approach provides an integrative framework whereby the meaning of a key biblical term such as חסד can be investigated in relation to the various contextual dimensions namely the textual, socio-cultural, organizational and communicational perspectives that contribute to a better understanding of the biblical text. The methodology takes its point of departure from the reading process without neglecting the broader contextual dimensions of the biblical text (Barton 1996, 2000; cf. Talstra 1999).

In the reading process, one has to acknowledge an opposition between the general patterns and the specific features of a text. According to Tal-

stra, cited in Jonker (2006:68), the reading process should consist of three fundamental activities. The first activity is to draw up an *inventory* of texts related to the text that will be read in order to determine its textual context and co-text. The second fundamental activity is the *analysis* of the text in order to be acquainted with its language, structure, background and intended readership. The third activity is the *interpretation* of the text in order to grasp the religious claims being made by the text.

Based on these three fundamental activities, Talstra has postulated two assumptions for the reading process: (i) analysis in terms of the general aspect of texts precedes analysis in terms of the particular, and (ii) linguistic analysis precedes literary analysis. If one accepts these two assumptions, it leads to the following principled 'ordering' of methods of text analysis and text interpretation (in Van der Merwe 2004c:6-7):

1. Analysis of the language system precedes analysis of the text composition
2. Textual criticism precedes analysis of the text composition
3. Reconstruction of the text precedes dialogue with the text
4. Dialogue as a conversation between the present-day reader and the text

Given these fundamental principles, one can define exegesis as a broader communicative process, which involves an enormous amount of data that the exegete has to take into consideration when interpreting the Old Testament. These data include the various dimensions of socio-cultural reality as a part of the analysis of the total communication (reading) process of the biblical text. By incorporating the various dimensions into the analysis of a biblical text, the exegete hopes to avoid a certain exclusivity and circularity that have characterized the field of biblical studies. Thus, in my analysis of the source text, it will be necessary to use different contextual dimensions for a better understanding of the biblical text.

According to Jonker and Lawrie (2005:240), biblical texts in their present form were developed through a long process of interpretation and reinterpretation; therefore, their full understanding, which involves the understanding of the text from both *synchronic* and *diachronic* approaches, can only be attained through different dimensions. A synchronic approach takes the text as it stands written in the Hebrew Bible, while a diachronic approach looks at the historical development of the text.

These two different perspectives are closely related, i.e. they are complementary in the reading process.

Explaining synchronic and diachronic reading processes, Jonker (2006:63) asserts that they:

> [D]o not bring different realities into our interpretation processes. They rather are different perspectives on the same reality, namely the reading processes by means of which the ancient texts were produced, and by means of which we (like our fathers and mothers who have gone before us) interpret biblical texts.

Such reading strategies help to concretize the different aspects of CFR, discussed earlier. This approach provides a broader conceptual framework for researches that aim to offer solutions that are more adequate to problems of meanings at both syntactic and semantic levels in Biblical Hebrew texts. Therefore, the study intends to discuss different contextual dimensions namely the textual, socio-cultural, and communicational perspectives for a better understanding of the biblical text. The discussion will include information on those social institutions that contributed to the origin of the text of Ruth. However, this section will not deal with the organizational frame of reference since that perspective is closely related to the socio-cultural frame of reference. In chapter 6, the organizational frame will feature as an independent topic because a number of contemporary institutions affecting the translation of the Bible into Lomwe have been well documented, therefore, that factor will necessitate a separate treatment.

4.2.1 Textual dimension in terms of CFR

The first step, after carefully reading a narrative text, is the examination of the *textual* dimension. Since biblical narratives tend to focus more on action than on the development of a particular character, Ska (1990:17) is of the opinion that it is "more appropriate to study the plot *as the first aspect of narrative analysis* [emphasis added] before approaching other problems which are subordinate to the dramatic action"[54]. Two types of plots can be distinguished: (i) *unified* plot (in which all the episodes are relevant to the narrative and have a bearing on the outcome of the events

[54] According to Wendland (2004:246), the basic framework of a dramatic (plot-built) account for the analysis of narrative texts is as follows: plot/events, characters, setting, and the rhetoric of the text.

recounted); and (ii) *episodic* plot (in which every episode is a unit in itself and does not require the clear and complete knowledge of the former episodes to be understood). Normally, the episodes (in the case of an episodic plot) are united by one central character, and the achievement of his or her goal - the primary challenge or barrier of the narrative (Ska 1990:17). Furthermore, Ska (1990:21) argues that one can distinguish between the different moments of the narrative plot, viz. exposition, inciting moment, complication, climax, turning point, falling action, resolution, last delay, and conclusion[55].

For example, the exposition is the presentation of indispensable pieces of information about the state of affairs that precedes the beginning of the action itself (Ska 1990:21). It provides the reader with background information about the local and temporal setting of the narrative, about the main characters and the relations among them, and indicates the key to understanding the narrative (or the central problem to be resolved). After the exposition, comes the inciting moment in which the conflict or problem appears for the first time and arouses the interest of the reader (Ska 1990:25). The complication normally encompasses the unfolding of the narrative, the different attempts to solve the problem or the conflict. The narrative then builds up in tension and suspense[56] until the climax and turning point are reached.

The climax is "the moment of highest tension, the appearance of a decisive element or character, the final stage of a narrative progression" (Ska 1990:27). At the turning point, which normally inaugurates the falling action, "an element appears that will lead the movement of the narrative to its conclusion. But it is not always easy to distinguish the turning point from the final resolution of the plot and they can coincide in certain cases" (Ska 1990:27). The suspense of the narrative ends with the resolution, and it provides the solution to the initial problem.

In certain cases, there can be a moment of delay or retardation between the resolution and the conclusion. The conclusion of the narrative "contains the result and the sequels of the resolution, the final outcome of the events, the epilogue of the story" (Ska 1990:28). None of the above-

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[55] See the graphical representation of "The Structure of Biblical Narrative" in Longman (1987: 92).

[56] Ska (1990:26) states that, "The Bible often uses a staircase construction (climactic construction) to build up the tension of the narrative and lead it to resolution".

mentioned moments of the plot corresponds exactly to well-delimited sections of all narrative texts (Ska 1990:30). Thus, in the analysis of a biblical narrative, the exegete will have to investigate all the moments of the plot according to what is actually manifested in a given text.

The second narrative aspect, which is indispensable to the plot, is the *characterization* technique. This refers to the manner in which the character in a narrative is presented by the author. In a narrative, the plot and the character are closely related. According to Ska (1990:83):

> The predominance of action and the lack of interest in the psychological processes of the characters are two of the main characteristics of Biblical narrative art as well. Therefore the modern readers of the Bible must be careful here to avoid posing anachronistic questions. Briefly, in biblical narratives, characters are most of the time at the service of the plot and seldom presented for themselves[57].

This warning should be taken seriously. In her well-known book, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, Berlin (1983) presents the description of character types and techniques for characterization (1983: 23ff). She distinguishes[58] three categories of character[59]. The first category is the "full-fledged character"[60]. This category is complex because the characters manifest a multitude of traits or qualities. The next category is the "type". The description of this character focuses upon a single quality or trait. The last category is the "agent". Nothing is revealed in the text about this character, except what is necessary for the plot.

Several techniques for characterization are utilized in biblical narratives to develop the portraits of biblical characters in relation to all three of these character types[61]. For example, a more refined model of distin-

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[57] In biblical narratives, according to Sandmel (1972:15-16), "Characterization emerges from what the people say and do, and not from any extended description of them, for the author does not directly intrude. The narrator reveals the inner feelings of the characters through their actions and reactions; he will almost never disclose the inner psyche for its own sake".

[58] However, Berlin (1983:32) has suggested that there is no real line separating these three types; the difference is a matter of the degree or amount of characterization rather than the kind of characterization.

[59] Other distinctions are also possible. For example between a 'dynamic' and a 'static' character, a 'flat' and a 'round' character, etc. See the summary in Ska (1990:83ff.).

[60] This corresponds to the 'round' character in other descriptions.

[61] Chapter 2 of Bar-Efrat (1989) also offers a useful description of characterization. He distinguishes between (i) direct shaping (outward appearance, inner personality) and (ii) indirect shaping (speech, actions) of characters.

guishing between character types in narratives is the "actant" model (which will be applied later to the analysis of Ruth with special reference to the operation of חסד). According to Jonker (2005:97), this model not only offers the possibility of distinguishing the thematic roles of the characters, but it also attempts to establish a link between character types and story line. The roles relate to one another in the following way:

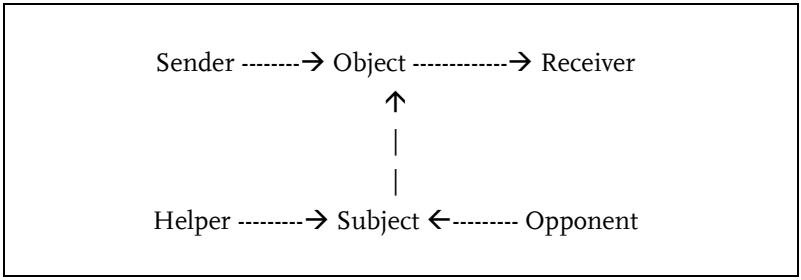

Figure 3: The actant model

The six roles shown in the diagram above may be defined as follows[62]: The Sender is the overall architect or originator of the narrative's primary sequence of plot-related "events". He or she desires to fulfil some lack or to supply a vital need in the life of the Receiver, or receptor group (which the Receiver may represent). The Sender is generally a rather remote figure who, if present at all, usually appears only at the beginning and/or the end of the story. The Object in turn is some essential item which must be conveyed, transmitted or communicated in some way to the Receiver by the Subject, who is normally the "hero" (or "heroine") of the plot as a whole.

Dramatic conflict is introduced into the account by the Opponent, that is, whatever/whoever stands in the way of the Subject or actively seeks to prevent him or her from carrying out his noble task or accomplishing his beneficial goal. Any personal Opponent, thus, maliciously endeavours, by whatever means possible, to keep the Receiver(s) in a state of weakness, need, deprivation, or oppression. The Helper, like the Opponent, may be either human or non-human, and in the latter instance, animate or inanimate. He/she/it either works to assist, or is utilized by

62 See Wendland (2004:121-124).

the Subject in his/her efforts to complete the difficult mission that he/she has undertaken. It is possible in this dramatic scheme for the same personage in the narrative to play more than one functional role; for example, the Helper and the Sender may be the same person. By discussing these thematic roles within a narrative, one has already said much about its structure in relation to the salient actions of the plot, or indeed, the manifestation of חסד in Ruth.

A third important narrative element is the *point of view*. Although some scholars (e.g. Licht 1978 and Alter 1981) are critical of certain applications of the theory of the point of view, Berlin (1983) and Brown (2007) argue that it is impossible to discuss character without reference to the point of view. After all, a character is not perceived by the reader directly, but rather only as mediated or filtered through the telling of the (implied) author, the narrator, or another character. The purpose of a discussion of the point of view is to understand whose telling or showing we are receiving and how these types of presentation are made (Berlin 1983:43; cf. Brown 2007:42)[63].

According to Berlin, it is generally accepted that a biblical narrative is narrated in the third person by an omniscient narrator. However, the narrative is not conveyed solely through the eyes or mouth of the narrator. Far from giving a uniform, detached presentation of a series of events, the biblical narrative employs a number of techniques, which give the reader a multi-faceted perspective of the story (Berlin 1983:43-44; cf. Bar-Efrat 1989:13). Berlin compares the mode of biblical narration with that of a film.

> The narrator is the camera eye; we 'see' the story through what he presents. The biblical narrative is omniscient in that everything is at his disposal; but he selects carefully what he will include and what he will omit. He can survey the scene from a distance, or zoom in for a detailed look at a small part of it. He can follow one character throughout, or hop from the vantage point of one to another (Berlin 1983:44).

Based on the above, one can argue that the role of the narrator is to guide and inform (or to conceal things from or surprise) the audience of what is happening at every stage of the story. In other words, the narrator is the sole means by which we can understand reality as it is por-

[63] According to Sternberg (1985:129), the point of view "... entails a relation between subject and object, a perceiving mind and perceived reality".

trayed in a narrative (Bar-Efrat 1989:13). Thus, a narrator who communicates in the third person may be seen as a distinct character who reports the story while other characters enact it. It should be noted that the author, via a narrator, controls the story's presentation; the narrator's point of view predominates over all others. In fact, the narrator determines how other points of view emerge and how one can evaluate those points of view (Gunn and Fewell 1993:53). This means that point of view of the biblical narratives is the perspective of the implied author.

According to Tolmie (1999:7), the implied author chooses, consciously or unconsciously, what we read; we infer him as an ideal, literary, created version of the real author; he is the sum of his own choices. Tolmie argues that the implied author is the organizing principle in the text through which the real author wrote the narrative text as the person responsible for its origin. Thus the reading strategy for the narrative texts, that is, from the plot to various perspectives, among other things, assumes a universal reader who analyzes the text according to its textual features. In this sense, these textual features serve as a guideline in the narrative analysis.

4.2.2 Socio-cultural dimension in terms of CFR (including the organizational frame)

The second step in a CFR approach to the interpretation of a text would be to give attention to the *socio-cultural* context in which it originated. No text originates in isolation, and no text is read in isolation. That would imply that biblical texts are not just related to the socio-cultural world of their origin, but also to the socio-cultural worlds of their first readers. This shows the significance of trying to determine the approximate dating of biblical texts.

With regard to the dating of the original Ruth story, there are two particularly possible views namely a monarchic/pre-exilic and a post-exilic dating. Since Spangenberg (2005:345) provides a good description of the arguments for and against each view, they will not be repeated here. Spangenberg argues in favour of the recent trend to accept a post-exilic date. The main reason, according to Spangenberg, is that during the heyday of Persian period, the Jewish society in Yehud consisted of two tiers, the wealthy and the poor, something that is reflected in the Ruth

narrative. Among the wealthy, there were those who did not care for the poor, but some others were moved by the plight of the impoverished.

In agreement with him (at least on the socio-cultural point of view)[64], this study locates the book of Ruth in the post-exilic period. It must be made clear here, however, that by locating the book's origin in the post-exilic period, this study does not intend to investigate family relations within that period. Rather, it would describe family relationships as they are reflected in the narrative of Ruth. Literature from a later period, of course, can portray the circumstances and conventions of an earlier period. The literary setting of the Book of Ruth is the period of the Judges. However, this literary portrayal of family relations can also be a reflection of the importance of those relations in the post-exilic era. In support of this statement, Albertz indicates that there was a return to earlier social relations in the exilic and post-exilic periods as a response to the lack of centralized institutions. According to Albertz (2003:135):

> In the Israel of the exilic period, the family or familial alliance became the primary social entity. Relics of tribal organization forms, never totally forgotten, took on new life. The elders once more became a significant force and took on limited functions of local political leadership alongside the priests and prophets. Instead of a restored monarchy, after the exile a subnational polity was introduced, consisting of a council of elders, a college of priests, and a popular assembly. This development is connected directly with the positive experiences the community had with premonarchic forms of organization during the exilic period.

In the case of the Book of Ruth, therefore, the actual dating is less important. We may assume that the social relations described in the book (which is set in the period of the Judges) is simultaneously a reflection of the socio-cultural values at the time of the origin of the book, i.e. the post-exilic era.

In general, the Israelite family system consisted of three primary units of social organization that shaped the kinship structures namely the tribe, clan, and family household. By attending to these general kinship structures, the interpreter may get a better understanding of the socio-cultural environment reflected in the narrative of the book of Ruth.

The **tribe** is a larger social unit that provided the major geographic and kinship organization for ancient Israel (Wright 1992:761; Perdue 1997:17; White 1975:497). Israel consisted of twelve tribes, named after

[64] See section 4.3.2 of this study.

one household (Jacob), which included the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh. The tribe combined structures for clans and households, provided a judicial council for settling disputes between clans, spoke the same language, and shared traditions and practices of law and custom. The units within the tribe practiced a common religion, offered the means for mustering a citizen militia for protection, and had an agreed-upon procedure for determining the leadership roles of the tribe (Perdue 1997:17; Wright 1992:761; Gerstenberger 2002:20).

The **clan** is a unit of kinship, but of a wider scope than the family. The most specific meaning is a residential kinship group of several families (Perdue 1997:177; Wilson 1985:302; Nunnally 2000:457; Strahan 1912:724). In ancient Israel, the clan was distinctively a unit of recognizable kinship as seen on the census lists (Num. 1 and 26). It is also known for its territorial identity (e.g. Josh. 13-19, where Joshua was allotted the land). Thus, the clan consisted of farm households related by kinship and marriage; clans were held together by language, economic co-operation, shared traditions of law, custom, ancestral stories, a common religion and an agreed-upon leadership (whether explicitly or implicitly). The description of the Israelite clan can be summed up in Wright's (1992:762) comments that when an Israelite gave his full name, including his house, clan, and tribe, it not only stated his kinship network but practically served as a geographical address as well. This was so because of the clan's territorial attachment; a clan was tied to a particular parcel of land within the tribe's political jurisdiction (Gerstenberger 2002: 21).

The **family** is the third level of kinship in Israel in which the people's identity was embedded as a group (Meyers 1997:21). An individual derived identity from his/her contribution to the survival of the family household rather than from individual accomplishment. The profound interdependence of family members in self-sufficient agrarian families created an atmosphere of corporate family identity, in which one could conceive, not personal goals and ventures, but only familial ones. The merging of the self with family led one to observe a collective, group-oriented mindset, with the welfare of the individual being regarded as inseparable from that of the living group. Meyers (1997:21-22) describes it succinctly thus:

> Family life was not distinct from whatever roles, prescribed according to age and gender, that individual members may have played. Work and fam-

> ily were not independent spheres just as property and family were not independent entities. The family as a residential, landed group was a collectivity, with its corporate goals and fortunes valued above the welfare of any of its constituent members.... A person was not an autonomous entity but someone's father, mother, daughter, son, grandparent, and so forth.

Based on the above description, one could argue that the Israelite family did not consist of a nuclear family in terms of married couples and their children, but rather of the wider family unit including the near relatives (father-mother, married brothers or sisters, etc.) as part of an extended family or ("household"). Within this compound family, i.e. the household unit, it was easy to create societal caring structures such as the redeemer, childcare, widow care, divorced women care, the sick and the aged care, debt servants and slaves, resident alien care, and hired labour care (Perdue 1997:192). Central to the household system of care for family members was the redeemer (*go'el*) who was a near kinsman or close relative responsible for the justice and well-being of the family. Gottwald (1979:263-267) summarizes the four major functions of the redeemer as follows:

> (1) [T]o raise up a male heir for a deceased family head; (2) to buy up or buy back property so that it remains in or returns to the social group; (3) to purchase the release of a group member who has fallen into debt slavery, or to pay off his debt so that he does not fall into debt slavery; (4) to avenge the death of a member of the group.

Thus, the redeemer (*go'el*) played a key role in providing care and support of the family in ancient Israel.

We have indicated above that recent developments in semantic theory[65] have shown that the socio-cultural context of communication contributes as much to meaning as the text itself. In this section, we have emphasized that texts are the products of authors/narrators interacting with their own socio-cultural environments. Therefore, it is not only important to take note of the socio-cultural context when analyzing the origin of texts, but also when reflecting on how those texts communicate in contemporary socio-cultural contexts. A study of the socio-cultural dimension is not only useful in the interpretation of a text, but it also

[65] See section 2.2 of this study.

becomes essential for successful communication of the meaning of the text[66].

4.2.3 Communicational/canonical dimension in terms of CFR

One of the goals of this study is to develop a model for the application of exegesis to translation based on the frames of reference model. In Chapter 2 above, we noted that communicational frames in a CFR approach "relate to the different media of interpersonal text transmission: oral-aural, written or print media." In terms of the analysis of a biblical text such as the book of Ruth, the communicational frame can open perspectives on the transmissional history of the text. The communication of ancient texts through the ages took place through processes of composition and transmission until a stage was reached when these composite transmitted texts gained authority in later interpretative contexts. The history of the transmission of biblical literature witnesses to stages when texts gradually became part of an authoritative canon. Therefore, the canonical context within which the biblical texts are read and interpreted today should be considered within a CFR approach. Van der Kooij (2003:27) is of the opinion that:

> Since the nineties of the 19th century, the so-called three-stage theory of the canonization of the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, has been the prevailing hypothesis. The idea is that the three parts of the Hebrew Bible, Law, Prophets, and Writings, were canonized in three successive stages in history: the Law in the fourth century BCE (Ezra), the Prophets a little before 200 BCE, and, finally, the Writings as additional part of the collection about 100 CE at the synod of Jamnia. Thus the full canon was established, according to this theory, at the beginning of the second century CE.

According to the canonization theory described above, the full canon of the Old Testament was established at the beginning of the second century CE. In recent times, however, the theory of the synod of Jamnia could not be defended convincingly. According to Van der Kooij (2003:27), the synod of Jamnia does not do full justice to the early Jewish sources. In the second century BCE (leading to the LXX translation), for some reason or another, a particular, undefined collection of ancient Hebrew

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[66] Cf. West's (2005:7) explanation that, more recently, (African) biblical hermeneutics has also embraced sociological forms of analysis as part of the biblical source text. A similar development is taking place in New Testament studies (cf. Malina 1993; Mouton 2002).

books was considered canonical in the sense of being highly authoritative. Thus, he concludes that the collection should not be seen as closed or fixed.

The process of the formation and canonization of the Old Testament was intrinsically a long and difficult one. According to Jonker and Lawrie (2005:238), the whole of the Bible was not available to ancient readers at once; rather, each new generation interpreted and re-interpreted the oral tradition and written texts that were available and were regarded as authoritative at that time. This resulted in the formation of an authoritative canon, which included some texts and excluded others. For this reason, they argue that the gradual process of closing the canon had two consequences for interpretation:

1. The process of re-interpretation, which did not stop, no longer led to the editing of existing texts or to the formation of new texts that could be added to the collection of biblical writings. A line was drawn between the fixed texts of the Bible and the various forms of interpretation of and commentary on the texts.
2. Selected Hebrew religious texts are now received in Christian communities and conservative circles in the Jewish community with a presumption that they are authoritative. This presumption of authority consciously or unconsciously influences interpretation, even among those who challenge biblical authority. In short, the question of biblical authority has become part of the interpretation process (Jonker and Lawrie 2005:239).

Jonker and Lawrie's comments strongly indicate that it is important for the exegete to account for the inseparable ties that bind the origin of texts and their interpretation so that meaning can be appropriated in a way that acknowledges Scripture as both historically located and situationally relevant. Brown (2007:14) rightly indicates that a commitment to the Bible as Scripture means that we are the people of God to whom these texts are addressed. She argues further that such a confessional reading of the Bible is one in which the reader identifies with God's people who were the first addressees of the text, even though that original address was made in a particular cultural context. Consequently, the canonical context opens up the treasures of traditions existing within the Hebrew texts, which still speak to us when we engage in biblical inter-

pretation[67]. It provides us with the opportunity to study both the compositeness of a text and the tradition processes that fixed it into an authoritative canon.

In this section (4.2), a general description of the different frames of reference that pertain to the Hebrew narrative has been carried out. This was done by exploring different contextual dimensions namely the textual, socio-cultural, and communicational perspectives. The interaction of these different dimensions implies several contours within which the reading process takes place. The CFR model, which will be applied in this study, was developed for the purpose of an exegetical study of the book of Ruth.

4.3 Applying CFR Model to the Hebrew Text of Ruth

In this section, the CFR model will be applied to the source text of Ruth using different dimensions namely the textual, communicational/ canonical, and socio-cultural/ organizational. The different contextual dimensions will help us to understand better the message of the book of Ruth.

4.3.1 The textual dimension of Ruth

Under the textual dimension, the discussion will focus on different elements of the book of Ruth such as the plot line, characterization technique, and the point of view as part of the interpretation process. However, before doing this, it is important to identify the genre of Ruth.

4.3.1.1 Genre of text[68]

Since Ruth is a narrative[69], it is important to evaluate the quality of the narrative. Wendland (1988:1) shows that, "A host of commentators

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[67] Childs (1979:83) observes that, "The interpreter is forced to confront the authoritative text of scripture in a continuing theological reflection".

[68] According to Wendland (2004:102), the concept of genre is crucial to the analysis and interpretation of any passage of Scriptures, whether large or small. In fact, he argues that the very first feature of a "text needs to be identified whether on the macro- or micro level of discourse organization" (Wendland 2004:102).

through the ages have observed that the book of Ruth is a 'splendid example of the storyteller's art'" (cf. Morris 1968:229). In recent years, biblical scholars have become more and more sensitive to literary techniques in relation to the genre of Ruth[70]. Bernstein (1991:15) maintains that, "It is no longer novel to acknowledge the sophisticated literary artistry of the author of Ruth". Consequently, it is necessary to discuss briefly the way the book of Ruth is analyzed in different schools of interpretation.

The first school of modern literary analysis of the book of Ruth is exemplified by Hermann Gunkel's work[71]. Although Gunkel defined the genre of Ruth as a novella, he realized that this is a rather broad term because the Ruth story is a description of a family's situation presented through characters and characterization techniques. For this reason, Gunkel decided to re-categorize the book of Ruth as a short story.

According to Bush (1996:41), the most obvious difference between the short story and the novella are the features of length and complexity. In general, he argues that the short story will be briefer than a novella and will have fewer characters, a less complex plot structure, and a more limited time frame. Campbell (1975:8-9) believes that the short story was a new literary form, which appeared in Israel with its origins in the time of the Judges up to the monarchical period.

The second school of interpretation argues for a narrative style of the book of Ruth. Sasson (1979) asserts that "it might well be that our *Ruth* was created *upon a folktale model* by scribally oriented intelligentsia, and it might well be that in its earliest moments *Ruth* was available solely among the narrowest of elite circles" (1979:214, italic as in original). Sasson makes these claims based on Vladimir Propp's analyses of a group of Russian folktales, and demonstrates that there is a clear structural similarity between those tales and the book of Ruth. He stresses that a folktale is a closed form with no loose ends left at its conclusion:

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69 Hebrew Bible narratives are characterized by the high incidence of the *waw* consecutive + Imperfectum clauses, a feature that is very prominent in the book of Ruth.

70 Besides the classification of Ruth as a novella or short story, idyllic narrative, and folktale its other designations include comedy, saga, and romance or a beautiful story (Freedman 1992:843).

71 Hermann Gunkel was one of the first scholars to point to narrative art in the Hebrew Bible (cf. Tolmie 1999:2).

> Because folktale leaves nothing that is unresolved, it becomes a self-contained entity. It is unnecessary, therefore, for a folktale to be burdened either by a historical background or by sequel meant to link it with datable narratives. Thus, unlike other biblical narratives that gain by, indeed depend on, a historical setting, Ruth could easily be lifted out of the period of judges and still be appreciated as superb work of art (Sasson 1979:216).

Although Ruth has been modelled after a folktale pattern, Sasson acknowledges that there is a difference, since it is unusual for a folktale to end with a genealogy. One could argue that Ruth is a narrative story that (re)describes and presents the family's situation in human understanding[72]. The narrative, with the genealogies as a later addition, opens the book for further interpretation. Ruth presents a particular event, that is, a family narrative and the line of descent or ancestral lineage. Thus, this textual dynamic (genealogies)[73] is the hermeneutical key that helps determine the purpose of the Ruth story as it has come down to us canonically in the Hebrew Bible. The following section discusses the various narrative aspects that are associated with the text namely the plot, the characters, and the point of view, each of which plays a role in developing the intended message of the narrator with specific reference to חסד in the story of Ruth.

4.3.1.2 Plot line

In the BHS, the book of Ruth is presented as a single narrative with four scenes. These scenes form a "circular pattern" (Nielsen 1997:2-5) whereby certain elements of the first and second are revisited in the third and fourth. The themes in the scenes can be summarized as follows: In scene I (Ruth 1:1-22), the focus is on the bitter life of Naomi. In scene II (Ruth 2:1-23), Ruth gleans in the field of Boaz. In scene III (Ruth 3:1-18) Ruth appeals to Boaz for help. Finally, in scene IV (Ruth 4:1-22), Naomi is blessed through Boaz and Ruth. Each scene unit is sub-divided into clauses (see Appendix B). The sequence of clauses illustrates a demarcation of the narrative structure (discourse) through major shifts in the

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[72] According to Sandmel (1972:26), the story of Ruth is the unfolding narration of subsequent incidents rather than consequent ones. The story begins with a statement of the time when the events took place, that is, in the distant past, "when the judges ruled" (Ruth 1:1).

[73] "A genealogy is a striking way of bringing before us the continuity of God's purpose through the ages" (Morris 1968:318).

temporal or spatial setting and/or in the cast of characters and the dramatic situation in which they find themselves. A few smaller passages exist outside the division of scenes, an observation also made by Jonker (1999:12-14).

1. It could be argued that the text of 1:1-2 does not form part of scene I, but should rather be seen as the introduction to the narrative as a whole. The setting is explained, the characters are introduced while their relationship to one another is also explained. From 1:3, the action of the story begins with the death of Elimelech.
2. The remark in 1:22 seems to stand outside the scene-division because it creates a transition between scenes I and II.
3. The same goes for 2:23, which creates a transition between scenes II and III.
4. It seems that the genealogical sequence of 4:17c-22 falls outside the scene-divisions. In a certain sense, it forms a conclusion to the whole of the narrative. A comprehensive discussion of the importance of this section is offered below.

Scenes II and III exhibit a similar structure since both begin and end with conversations between Naomi and Ruth. The story has a unified plot, that is, a plot in which all the relevant scenes of the narrative appear and in which all the scenes contribute to the ultimate result of the narration. The different moments of the plot, which cut across scene-boundaries, are described below (in the summary of the analysis in Appendix B):

Ref.	**Description of moments of the plot**
1:3-18	Exposition
1:19-21	Inciting moment
1:22	Summarized break/Delay
2:1-4:12	Complication
4:13-17b	Climax and turning point
4:17c-22	Conclusion

Table 6: Different moments of the plot

From the different moments of the plot of Ruth, the position of the conclusion is striking because of the genealogical registers (4:17, 18-22). This section, which many scholars consider a later addition to the book, may be viewed as an "integral part of the text as it has been received" (Wendland 1988:4). There is a dramatic change of status or circumstance that takes place between scenes I and IV. In 1:19-21 Naomi's situation is described as "empty" after she and Ruth returned from Moab to Bethlehem. In reaction to the women of Bethlehem, Naomi ("the lovely one") chooses to be called Mara ("bitterness"). This description of Naomi's status provides the inciting moment for the story to thrust towards the accomplishment of this need. In scene IV where the climax and turning point occur, the women of Bethlehem play the role of the community to emphasize the changed status or situation of Naomi[74]. Thus, it appears that her situation has been reversed and that her emptiness has been filled with an offspring. Her honour is restored. This movement from being empty to being full, as will be indicated later, forms the basic structure on which the resulting contexts of interpretation rest[75].

The next discussion will focus on the characters and the characterization technique in the book of Ruth.

4.3.1.3 Characters and characterization

From the preceding discussion, it is clear that the two women, Naomi and Ruth are the central characters in the story (LaCoque 2004:2; Van Wolde 1997:1). Naomi and Ruth are full-fledged characters that engage in some in-depth and complex conversations. The conversations fulfil the two principal functions of biblical narrative dialogues as noted by Bar-Efrat (1989:147-148):

> On the one hand, they serve as a vehicle for the development of the plot (story)... On the other hand, conversations serve to illuminate the human aspect, revealing such psychological features as motives and intentions, points of view and approaches, attitudes and reactions.

In Ruth 2:18-23, the narrator reviews what happened in Boaz's field during the first day of gleaning by Ruth, and interprets the events through

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[74] See Appendix B for more details.

[75] Thompson (1993:201) even claims that this binary opposition in the story forms the driving force behind the narration of the author: "The story that begins with a truly desperate situation for the women ends with a future opening up into boundless possibilities".

Naomi. Naomi opens the dialogue with two interrogative statements: "Where did you glean today? Where did you work?" She asks these two questions because she sees Ruth returning home with a considerable amount of barley as well as the remainder of her lunch. Naomi assumes then that the people in whose field she had gleaned must have given her those things, and concludes that her daughter-in-law must have experienced favourable conditions. In other words, Naomi has seen someone behind Ruth's successful day of gleaning. Even though she could not imagine who the person was, she opts to bless him.

Subsequently, in verse 19b, Ruth discloses the man's name: "... she told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz". Trible (1992:173) comments on the situation of the two women just before Ruth discloses the man's name: "Their conversation builds on incongruities. Naomi does not know in whose field Ruth has gleaned. Though Ruth knows the name Boaz, she herself does not know in whose field she has gleaned. Each woman has both more and less information than the other. The hearers of the story await full disclosure". The full identity of the man is revealed as soon as Naomi receives the information about Boaz's name.

Naomi resumes the discourse between her and Ruth about Boaz. She means to sing the Lord's blessing and, for this reason, describes Boaz as the one blessed by Yahweh. Her focus though is not on Boaz but on Yahweh. On the one hand, Yahweh is the type character around which the entire narrative is built (i.e. the story is about Yahweh's role toward His own people); on the other hand, Boaz is portrayed as a human agent of Yahweh, a point that will be discussed in the next sub-section. Thus, Naomi concludes with the news that Boaz "is close relative of ours; he is one of our kinsman-redeemers" (2:20).

The introduction of Boaz here is not just in the interest of the narrative plot line, but it also serves the interest of the characterization of the main characters as illustrated in the diagram:

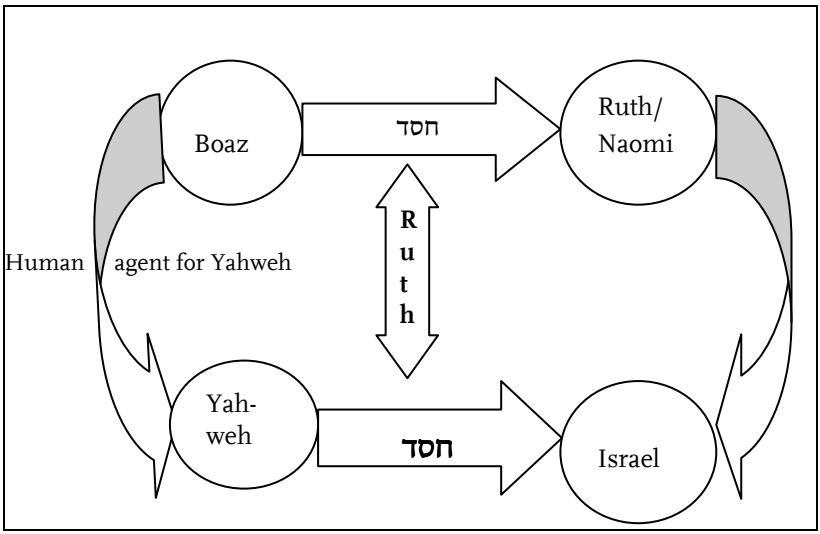

Figure 4: Characterization technique in the book of Ruth

The above description makes it clear that the narrator of the story employs the characterization technique to enhance the thematic emphasis of חסד. The first technique is the *explicit* occurrence in which Boaz is portrayed as an agent of redemption for both Ruth and Naomi. There is a close connection between Naomi and Ruth. They are both widows. Since Ruth is willing to return with her mother-in-law to her land, her role in changing Naomi's fate is emphasized[76]. It appears that, in scene II, Naomi benefits from the favour (חסד) Ruth found with Boaz. Therefore, Boaz volunteers not only to play the role of a husband for Ruth, but also to accept the role of the redeemer (*go'el*) for both Naomi and Ruth[77]. This double role emphasizes the link between Naomi and Ruth's fate.

The second technique is the *implicit* occurrence of Yahweh's presence in the narrative through which the characters become His presence to one another. As Hubbard (1988:65-66) rightly indicates: "On the one hand,

[76] "... [T]his lyrical speech ('whither thou goest, I will go ...,') advertises that the situation of the older and younger women are henceforth one situation, their tasks on task and the subsequent actions and triumph mutual" (Black 1991:25).

[77] See Appendix B for more details.

the story stressed that Yahweh practices חסד toward his people (Israel).... On the other hand, the story emphasized even more strongly the value of human חסד". In 1:8, Naomi wishes that Yahweh would show חסד to her two daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, as they have done חסד to her and their late husbands. In 2:20, Naomi speaks after she hears of the favour shown by Boaz to Ruth. Naomi calls him blessed because he has shown חסד to the living and the dead. This instance is ambiguous because the antecedent of the relative sentence that is introduced with אשׁר could be both Yahweh or Boaz. The narrator chooses to portray Yahweh's activity via the activity of people, and especially that of Boaz as the human agent. Therefore, the characters of Yahweh and Boaz are interwoven in an artful way[78]. This is achieved as follow:

1. In 2:12, Boaz reacts to Ruth's particular fondness for her mother-in-law by wishing her a well-deserved reward from Yahweh, the God of Israel. It is exactly under Yahweh's wings (כנף) that Ruth comes to find refuge, says Boaz. Probably the narrator alludes here to the fact that Ruth's search for Boaz's help corresponds to the refuge she came to seek under Yahweh's wings. This allusion is made explicit in 3:9 where, Ruth, at the threshing floor requests that Boaz take her under his wing (כנף)[79]. Thus, Ruth calls on Boaz to fulfil the prayers he uttered in 2:12.
2. The other technique through which the characters of Yahweh and of Boaz are interwoven is the ambiguous utterance in 2:20. As already noted, it is not entirely clear if Boaz or Yahweh is the antecedent of the relative sentence that is introduced with אשׁר. Even though Rebera (1985:317-327) offers rather persuasive arguments that Boaz is the antecedent, Bernstein (1991) maintains that this is a deliberate ambiguity[80].

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78 Thompson (1993:203-204) is of the opinion that "this blending together of divine and human initiative and activity... is a characteristic of the story in the book of Ruth". He claims that the interweaving appears in specific prayers especially the prayers of intercession.

79 Normally, the reference to כנף in 3:9 is interpreted as a symbolic gesture. To spread the garment over a woman was a symbolic gesture, which suggested a "union of marriage" (Viberg 1992:141-142).

80 "There is little double that these ambiguities were intended by the author", says Bernstein (1991:16).

Through this ambiguity, the reader or hearer becomes fully aware of the fact that Boaz acts on behalf of Yahweh. Yahweh, so to speak, acts for the greater part behind the character of Boaz. In 3:10, Boaz emphasizes the חסד of Ruth when he blesses her: "May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter; you have made this last kindness greater than the first, in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich". With this remark, one could argue that Ruth is the figure to whom the story attributes the term חסד. Although all the characters in the narrative perform חסד to one another, Boaz describes the חסד of Ruth as extraordinary behaviour.[81] This reference to her thus allows us to view the story from the perspective of Ruth, the Moabite, who left her family to ensure that the family of Naomi, the Israelite, survives. Ruth is better to Naomi than seven sons; for she has produced what Naomi's sons failed to produce: an heir. With the birth of the child, therefore, the story moves from emptiness to fullness. This movement is achieved through Yahweh's providence (4:13 and 1:6), which also manifests itself in the deeds of people.

In the following section, I will develop this perspective by discussing the point of view of the narrator and characters.

4.3.1.4 Point of view

In its present form, the book of Ruth presents two perspectives namely that of the narrator and of the characters[82]. From the narrator's point of view, all the characters in the story are related to Naomi except in 1:2 and 1:3 where the narrator names Naomi in reference to Elimelech. It is the same with the sons. The narrator introduces Mahlon and Chilion in 1:2 as Elimelech's children. However, in 1:3 and 1:5, he refers to them as her sons/children. In addition, Ruth and Orpah are mentioned as Naomi's daughters-in-law. This is a clear indication that the narrator focuses on Naomi's relationship with her daughters-in-law and not the daughter-in-law's relationship with their husbands. Although Boaz is actually

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[81] Ruth's חסד is doubly extraordinary, in her origin (coming from Moab) and in its reference, because she acts in the name of faithful obedience to the commandment; no law obliges her to do anything for her mother-in-law (see Ruth 1:8-15; cf. LaCoque 2004:30).

[82] The characters in the narrative do not constitute an archipelago of independent and autonomous individuals (LaCoque 2004:23). Instead, they reveal the socio-cultural environment of the text.

from Elimelech's family, and related to Naomi only by marriage, the narrator mentions Elimelech in reference to Naomi when he says; "Now Naomi has a relative on her husband's side". This shows that Naomi needs security that could be generated by a redeemer (cf. Cook 2009:106-121).

From the narrator's point of view, Ruth is a "foreigner"[83], i.e. a Moabitess (2:2, 21). The reference to Moab, suggests that the narrative intends to call attention to this unique phenomenon. According to Gitay (1993:179), the book of Ruth alludes to various biblical stories, thus, inviting comparisons and implications. The relationship between Moab and Israel reflects an animosity that was created in the past. Gitay argues that, on the one hand, the overstressed reference to Moab may allude to the historical, hated enemy and, on the other, it could be attributed to the Deuteronomic law that specifically prohibits the Israelites from marrying Moabites[84]. This clearly indicates that the problem of being a foreigner is central to the story. Being a "foreigner", Ruth is not covered by Israelite social security (LaCoque 2004:3). The phenomenon of mixed marriages will be discussed later.

Even though Ruth has no obligation to stay with Naomi, she decides to stay with her. Naomi then plans to find a husband for Ruth through the levirate marriage. This legal tradition provides a specific example, whereby a close relative had the obligation to marry the wife of his dead brother. Boaz marries Ruth and begets a child, Obed, the ancestor of David. The child is a continuation of the family-line that runs from the patriarchs (LaCoque 2004:3) who is to become not only the ancestor of David but also a continuation of the covenant relationship between Yahweh and His people. Thus, even though the story depends on family relations, the author also must have thought of the future of the entire

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[83] In our reading of the book of Ruth, it is necessary to understand the term "foreigner". According to LaCoque's (2004:4), the foreigner is the one who questions habits and traditions especially when these become purely labels. However, from the primary definition, a foreigner is any person who does not belong to the people of Israel or precisely someone who would not be recognized (Matthews 2009:25). For example, Ruth breaks the mould of the strange woman by being stubborn in an altogether different way. She is stubborn with Naomi in that she utterly refuses to abandon the Israelite family and the Israelite God.

[84] Cf. Deut 23:32-6.

people of Israel for whom the LORD also provides through His abundant חסד . This brings us to the wider socio-cultural dimension of Ruth.

4.3.2 The socio-cultural dimension of Ruth

In this section, three issues will be evaluated. The first deals with the origin and composition of Ruth, the second with the socio-cultural world of Ruth while the last one relates the textual dimension with the socio-cultural dimension to show their importance in successful communication.

4.3.2.1 Origin and composition of Ruth

As already noted[85], Ruth is a post-exilic book that originated in an agrarian setting. The book was read in synagogues as part of the celebration of *Shavuot*[86]. According to LaCoque (2004:2), the liturgical use of Ruth did not promote the legal reading of the book, but its contents determined its connection to the celebration of the gift of the Torah. From the perspective of the book of Ruth, the centre of the Torah is חסד , which is the subject of the whole story as illustrated above[87]. The goal thereof is to highlight Yahweh's חסד to people during the post-exilic period. It is achieved through the telling of the story of an ordinary family and its misfortune/fortune and its deliverance through unexpected means and the merciful provision of Yahweh.

At a later stage, the two genealogical registers were added to the story[88]. The shorter version in 4:17 was probably added first to indicate that Obed was the ancestor of David. The longer genealogical register in 4:18-22 was perhaps added later to further develop the shorter version and another theme (see below). At this point, it becomes clear that through

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85 Cf. section 4.2.2 of this study.

86 *Shavuot* is an agricultural festival that celebrates the end of the grain harvests. For further discussion, see section 4.3.3.2 of this study.

87 Brenner (1993:147) correctly states that חסד is one of the key words controlling the narrative text of Ruth.

88 Although the position of this double genealogical register is problematic, there is a general agreement among scholars that both genealogies in 4:17 and 4:18-22 were later additions to the story (cf. Childs 1979:566; Wendland 1988:4).

additions of genealogies, the story features in a wider socio-cultural context, as Hubbard (1988:277) rightly indicates:

> Just as the reader savored Naomi's sweet success, the narrator suddenly steps forward with a surprise – a kind of final exclamation point... This short genealogy quickly advances the story's time frame from 'long ago (i.e., 'the Judges' days') to 'recently' (i.e., a time closer to the audience).... Suddenly, the simple, clever human story of two struggling widows takes on a startling new dimension. It becomes a bright, radiant thread woven into the fabric of Israel's larger national history.

With the additions of these genealogical registers, a bridge is build between "then" and "now", between the period of the Judges when there was a need for a king and the time of the successful kingship of David. The wider context makes it clear that the change of fate of Israel was accomplished through Yahweh's חסד. Yahweh provides not just a son as an offspring, but also a king. In what follows, I shall discuss the socio-cultural worlds of Ruth in detail.

4.3.2.2 The socio-cultural world of Ruth

Ruth is a book reflecting a feminine perspective that concerns the experience of two women, Naomi and Ruth, in an androcentric world. The women assume men's responsibilities[89]: Ruth, Naomi's daughter-in-law, becomes analogous to her husband[90] (1:14; cf. Gen. 2:24), her means of support (2:2). Naomi becomes Ruth's father (3:1). Boaz also becomes a redeemer, Ruth's foster father (2:16; 3:15), her spouse, and the father of her child. This deconstruction of the social roles clearly indicates that the narrative of Ruth is "subversive" (Berquist 1993:36). When one reads the book against the background of the social conditions in Yehud during the Persian Period, the story of Ruth becomes a critique of the moral behaviour of the Israelites (Braulik 1999:19).

According to Spangenberg (2005:351), the narrator narrates his text with a particular group of readers and listeners in mind. Three socio-religious

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[89] Berquist (1993) argues that in crisis, the normal evolution toward an ever-greater variety of roles in society finds itself reversed. In the book of Ruth, for example, famine represents the crisis that triggers dedifferentiation (1:1). As the characters react to the famine, roles lose their stability.

[90] Even though Gunn and Fewell (1993:97) notice Ruth's caretaking of Naomi as represented in this term and understand this as a husband image, they fail to elaborate on Ruth's assumption of a specifically male role.

issues motivated the book of Ruth. First, the narrator tries to offer hope to *the returning exiles* by emphasizing that, through ordinary people, God can work miracles (figuratively). Naomi returns to Bethlehem so embittered that she wants to change her name to Mara[91]. Moreover, she sees herself as a lonely, childless widow with a bleak future. Toward the end of the story, however, she is once again Naomi, the joyful one, because God has radically changed the circumstance of her life with the assistance of Ruth, the faithful daughter-in-law, and Boaz the wealthy family member (Ruth 1:20-21; 4:13-16).

Secondly, through the story, the author encourages *the wealthy of Yehud* to fulfil their social obligations toward the returning exiles. Like Boaz, Yehud's aristocrats should take pity on widows and orphans and act righteously. If they act like the other self-centred redeemer in the story (4:1-6), then, they will become "wicked persons".

Lastly, the author also addresses *the community's socio-cultural prejudices*. In this story, Ruth plays almost the same role as a Samaritan[92]. According to Deuteronomy 23:3, a person of Moabite descent could not have become part of the Jewish nation, and Ezra and Nehemiah rebuked the people of Yehud because of their foreign wives (cf. Ezra 10:10-11; Neh. 13:23-31). However, this story emphasizes that through the goodwill and devotion of a "foreigner", God can create a new future for His people. God changes the circumstance of Naomi's life through the behaviour of a faithful Moabite daughter-in-law whom people in fact are expected to despise.

4.3.2.3 Relating the textual and the socio-cultural dimension

We have seen above that a focus on the socio-cultural dimension of the context of the text could contribute meaningfully to the interpretation process. An understating of the socio-cultural dimension, therefore, becomes vital to the task of the interpretation of the biblical text. As noted, texts do not exist in vacuum, i.e. they are related to the original social

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[91] By renaming herself Mara, according to Matthews (2009:24), Naomi may be communicating her unease with the 'world' of the Bethlehem community. He argues that her former identity does not match her current condition and therefore her ability to be at ease in the tiny social world of Bethlehem is not possible at this time.

[92] Cf. Lk. 10:25-37.

setting of the first readers. According to Iser (1978:72), texts (re)describe reality or present alternatives to the thought systems in the societies in which authors write. They do not duplicate a system of thought, but reflect on and react to it (cf. De Villiers 1984:73). This, of course, is achieved by means of a new combination of various dimensions of reality.

A thorough study of the book of Ruth, for example, reveals that the assumed time of its composition constitutes the immediate context of the work. This may seem a bold guess especially with the lack of explicit references to the context. Nonetheless, I find the exposition of Spangenberg (2005) on the issue quite plausible. Among other reasons, he argues that the State of Moab came into being during the tenth to ninth century BCE when some settlements in the region east of the Dead Sea became nodal points of economic production, commodity exchange, political power, legal authority and religious practice. Spangenberg (2005:353) concludes that contact "must have existed for some time in order for stories to be told about contact between Judeans and Moabites". The presumed contact between these two ethnic groups and their different traditions could be accepted as the plausible context within which the book of Ruth communicated. At this point, I shall consider the canonical dimension of Ruth.

4.3.3 The canonical dimension of Ruth

At this point, it is crucial to examine the the canonical dimension of the book of Ruth. To this end, the following points will be addressed namely (i) the redaction of the book of Ruth, (ii) Ruth as a festival scroll and (iii) different positions of Ruth in the biblical canon and (iv) Ruth as part of the Christian canon.

4.3.3.1 Redaction of the book of Ruth

Brenner (1993) proposes that at an earlier stage, there were two oral stories, which were later combined into one story namely a Naomi-story and a Ruth-story both of which had the same motive (Gitay 1993:184). Both stories shared a common theme, one that was well known from patriarchal and other biblical stories - the reversal of feminine fortune. Both stories originated in Bethlehem of Judah with similar social backgrounds, that of childlessness, which left Naomi and Ruth with no eth-

nic belonging. According to Matthews (2009:23), their status as widows marked them as women without sons, a real tragedy for them personally and for their household in particular. It seems therefore that this social background precipitated the two oral stories, which were eventually combined to form one story[93]. Naomi worries about Ruth's childlessness, and Ruth's eventual motherhood serves to redeem them both. The emphasis on motherhood thus becomes the core of their existence[94].

4.3.3.2 Ruth as a festival scroll

In the Masoretic canon, the book of Ruth is placed in the Writings, as a festival scroll that was read on the Feast of the Weeks. According to Robertson (1998:893), Ruth is one of the books contained in the Megilloth ("Festival Scrolls") set apart for liturgical use during the major religious festivals of Judaism. As noted, Ruth is read aloud in the synagogue as part of the two day celebration of *Shavuot*, the Feast of Weeks (which is also called Pentecost because it celebrated fifty days - seven weeks plus one day - after the beginning of Passover). The Feast of Weeks celebrates both the end of the grain harvest season and the giving of the Torah, marking the covenant between Yahweh and the people of Israel.

The celebration of *Shavuot* is a reminder to the people of Israel of their redemptive experience from Egypt in which foreigners such as Ruth who had embraced Yahweh, the God of Israel, could inevitably become part of the people of God. Such remembrance necessitates the location of the book in different positions in the Hebrew and LXX canons in order to highlight its relevance. This textual development has an influence on the interpretative process in which interpreters create an interpretation, which is both faithful to the source text and useful to the reader. Thus, the book was read at the Feast of Weeks not because of its liturgical usage, but because of its content, that of the Torah. Each of the characters in the narrative fulfils her/his legal and moral obligations under the Torah. The characters provide the means through which personal

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93 Although some written material was available, oral tradition among the Israelites remained of primary importance (cf. Fohrer 1976:37).

94 The genealogical lines at the end of the story could be a case in point since such internal evidence necessitates the location of the book in different positions in the Hebrew and LXX canons.

needs and desires are fulfilled in a way that resonates with life in the community (Sakenfeld 1999:11-14).

The ideal of the Torah law encompasses more than a minimal response to the Law's requirement. As noted, the thematic emphasis of חסד throughout the book embodies a vision of the fulfilment of the Torah that goes beyond moral obligation. The ideal of the Torah, of course, is demonstrated by the two central characters, Ruth and Naomi. Their centrality to the story, according to Kates (1994:197), unveils a theology of human partnership with God. Since they are women, she argues that they could have seemed to represent humanity as creatures acted upon, figures in someone else's design rather than designers themselves. However, this story insists on their essential role as mothers (Kates 1994:198).

More than that, the text, by focusing on women, points to an interpretation of the essential content of the Torah. Its central characters (Ruth and Naomi) are literally the poor, the widow, the stranger, those whom the Torah calls us to care for, continually reminding us that our care should go beyond moral obligation. We must provide the bare necessities and enter into their condition by remembering that we also have been strangers in the land of Egypt[95].

4.3.3.3 Different positions of Ruth in the biblical canon

In the different biblical canonical traditions, Ruth appeared in different positions in the Writings. According to Toews (1999:2), the three basic classifications of the Writings are as follows:

1. Literary order: Ruth is the first book in the Writings, followed by the book of Psalms. The placement of Ruth at the beginning of the Writings and its connection to the book of Psalms indicate the Davidic emphasis of the entire collection. The book of Ruth provides the genealogical and historical background to David in the line of Judah. In the book of Psalms, half of the psalms are attributed to David in the MT (even more in LXX). Thus, the Davidic introduction to the Writings provided by Ruth seems to perform a rhetorical function by setting the interpretive framework for the rest of the books. The Writings end with Chronicles, which conclude the Davidic ideal of kingship.

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[95] Cf. Lev. 19:34.

2. Chronological order: Ruth follows Job and it is then followed by the Psalms. Taking the events described within the book as the criterion for arrangement, the order begins with the time of Job (Pre-Mosaic), Ruth (the days of the Judges), the Psalms (David), Proverbs, Ecclesiasties, Songs of Solomon (Solomon), Lamentations (the fall of Jerusalem), Daniel (exile), Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah (post-exilic), and Esther (post-exilic).

3. Liturgical order: Ruth comes after Proverbs and before the the Song of Songs. This is the order of the traditional Masoretic Text. The order probably emphasizes the roles of Naomi and Ruth within the context of the conclusion of Proverbs namely Proverbs 31 where the אשת־חיל (worthy woman) is described. However, the New Testament suggests that the Writings begin with the Psalms (Lk. 24:44) and conclude with Chronicles (Mt. 23:35). This order is reflected in the BHK and the BHS.

These basic classifications of the Writings indicate that a synchronic contextual semantic methodology for studying the narrative text of Ruth will also require a diachronic approach in terms of the time of origin (prior to editing) and the time of canonization. Through the reconstruction of the text, synchronic and diachronic approaches can help us to recapture the multi-layered information. Besides the New Testament evidence, there are four reasons for considering the superiority of the liturgical order (i.e. that of the Masoretic Text) over the others presented above (Toews 1999:3). Firstly, Toews proposes that there is a thematic inclusion created by the Psalms and Chronicles around the themes of King, Kingdom, and Zion. This order of the Writings reflects the Davidic emphasis of the literary order (mentioned above) in that the Psalms and Chronicles emphasize David and the Davidic covenant/kingdom.

Secondly, Toews argues that the structure of the whole canon (i.e. its three parts) provides insight into the superiority of the Psalms as the introduction to the Writings. In other words, the Psalms, as a liturgical collection, illustrate that words and texts are to be studied together on the basis of their grounds of origin and use. This means, therefore, that all others texts must be looked at and investigated from the endpoint of the theology of the post-exilic community, in and for which they were in fact collected and re-interpreted (Gerstenberger 2002:249).

Thirdly, along the same lines as the previous point, Toews (1999:3) observes that the inter-textual relationship between Malachi, which ends the Prophets, and Psalms, which begins the Writings, is strong. For ex-

ample, the end of the prophets, Malachi 4:4-6 has interesting connections with Psalms 1-2. Malachi 3:18-4:6 and Psalm 1 contrast the righteous and wicked. Although the same terms are not used, plant imagery occurs in both Malachi and Psalm 1. In Malachi 4:1, the wicked are likened to stubble, which is burned, and a tree, which is left without root or branch. In Psalm 1:3-4, the righteous are portrayed as a living tree and the wicked as chaff, which the wind drives away.

In Psalm 2 the portrayal of the coming Son of God is like the day of the LORD of Malachi 4:1-6, a day of burning (Psa. 2:11; 4:1) and of crushing judgment (Psa. 2:9 and Mal. 4:3). Serving and fearing God is important in both texts (Psa. 2:11 and Mal. 3:18, 4:2). There is also a warning for not heeding instruction (Psa. 2:11 and Mal. 4:6). It could be argued that the similarities between the end of Malachi and the beginning of the Psalms create a link between the Prophets and the Psalms/Writings. Such religious connections were important for the people of God in the Old Testament. In the book of Ruth, for example, the narrator highlights Boaz as a representative of the righteous, who shows חסד, and the other relative as a representative of the wicked.

Fourthly, Toews (1999:3) insists that although the book of Ruth is written anonymously, and assigning to it any particular author/date is speculative, perhaps a general idea of authorship/date can be suggested. The genealogy at the end of the book makes its *terminus a quo* the Davidic era. Therefore, the Solomonic origin attributed to the book of Ruth may explain its placement among the wisdom texts in the Writings.

4.3.3.4 Ruth as part of the Christian canon

The LXX canon, like the Latin canon, places the book of Ruth between the earlier prophets namely after the Judges and before 1 Samuel. Beckwith (1985) indicates that the LXX sequence became settled in Christian circles but not in Jewish circles. Assuming that Beckwith (1985) is correct, one could argue that the Early Christian Church was more interested in the role of the book of Ruth in the transition between the period of the Judges and the Davidic ideal kingship than its role during the Jewish Feast of the weeks as discussed above. The LXX sequence is, in line with the additions of the genealogical registers, to emphasize continuity within the covenant history. Although not through direct and deliberate references, the genealogical registers of Matthew and Luke mention Boaz

and Obed. These genealogical registers indicate how the Messiah, Jesus Christ, stands in continuity with the covenant history of the old order. Interestingly enough, Matthew's genealogical registers explicitly mentions Ruth (together with Rahab and Tamar).

The New Testament references lead to a renewed process of interpretation in terms of inter-textual relationship with the book of Ruth[96]. The story of Ruth now becomes an indication of the way in which Yahweh abundantly provides חסד to His people by offering them a Saviour. This new context accentuates again the elements that were previously present in the Ruth narrative. The activity of Yahweh is implicit in the story, hidden behind the actions of various human characters. With regard to salvation through a Messiah, Yahweh's abundant חסד is also described as an implicit act through a human being. A further motif that gains renewed significance is the fact that Ruth is a Moabite woman. Although this aspect has been interpreted differently in various exegetical studies, it emphasises the universality of Yahweh's abundant חסד in the inter-textual relationship with the New Testament. The fact that David is the grandson of Obed is taken up in the Messiah narrative. The genealogical register depicts Jesus Christ as an offspring of King David.

4.4 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter developed and used the CFR model for analyzing the Hebrew text of Ruth particularly its usage ofחסד . The source text was used as a frame of reference for discovering the meaning ofחסד . Moreover, the source text provided an integrative framework whereby the meaning of חסד was investigated in relation to the various contextual dimensions namely the textual, socio-cultural, communicational and organizational perspectives. These different dimensions provided the meaning and significance of חסד and showed that it is important to focus on both the textual and contextual meaning when translating the complex conceptual meaning חסד had to the primary target language audience.

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[96] One could indicate, with a sense of justification, the inter-textual relationships between the book of Ruth and other Old Testament texts. Compare the analysis of Fisch (1982:425-437) in this regard.

CHAPTER 5:
A HISTORY AND ETHNOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION OF THE LOMWE PEOPLE

5.1 Introduction

The present chapter gives priority to the Lomwe people as the intended audience of the Lomwe Old Testament translation. The aim is to discuss the Lomwe's history, culture and worldview because an understanding of these ethnographic features is essential when translating חסד into Lomwe. Since the meaning of a word can only be fully determined by taking into consideration the linguistic and socio-cultural context within which it functions, a study of the socio-cultural background of both the biblical source text (as carried out in the preceding chapters) and the contemporary target text is necessary.

In an attempt to do justice to the complexity and variety of the dynamic reality of the Lomwe culture, this chapter will begin with the methodology and then define the target audience, the Lomwe people. Thereafter, I will employ various ethnographic sources to discuss the social structure and worldview of the people. By ethnographic sources, I mean the application of a cognitive frame of reference approach that focuses on analyzing the traditional way of life and worldview of a particular people within an organized social structure. Despite the fact that there is not much written material available, this study will draw on both existing literature and the researcher's intuitive knowledge of the Lomwe people.

5.2 Preliminaries

The preliminary discussion in this section will include a brief explanation of the method of analysis as well as an ethnographic description of the Lomwe.

5.2.1 Method of analysis

In terms of method, the chapter will focus on the conceptual frame of reference of the Lomwe people. My approach will provide a particular perspective or framework for discerning the Lomwe social structure and

worldview. In addition, I will evaluate the past and present influence of Christianity on the Lomwe people (whether they are rural folk or Westernized city dwellers) to determine the reasons for their particular worldview. I will also attempt to answer the question: What are the relative levels of influence of culture, translated Scriptures, historical experience, and missionary teaching on the people? The aim is to argue that a careful exploration of the people's total life experience is required before one can effectively translate and communicate the conceptually complex meaning of חסד into Lomwe.

Even though most of the relevant ethnographic publications on Mozambique deal with the Makhuwa people in general[97], it is possible to apply their findings to the Lomwe[98]. The key ethnographic summary published on the Lomwe and Makhuwa is Martinez's, *O Povo Macua e a sua Culture* (1989)[99]. Martinez's work attempts a description of Makhuwa culture from his perspective as a Spanish missionary priest in a part of Niassa province from 1971 to 1985. He describes in detail the great life-cycle rituals, which occur at birth, initiation, marriage, illness and death, while focusing on the value of life as a gift from the ancestors that should be passed on to one's descendants (Martinez 1989:104-105). As Ciscato's other publications on burial customs (1998), spirits (1999), and Namuli, the Lomwe holy mountain (2003), his *Apontamentos de Iniciação Cultural* (1987), focuses on the Lomwe people. As a Roman Catholic priest, Ciscato emphasizes the Lomwe's cultural distinctiveness by using the concept of *cosmobiologia*, whereby the human body is seen as a microcosm of the natural environment (Ciscato 1987:26).

A more recent work on the Lomwe is the dissertation of Foster, *An Experiment in Bible Translation as Transcultural Communication: The Translation of* ברית *'Covenant' into Lomwe, with a Focus on Leviticus 26*, which was published in 2008. Foster's work deals with the translation of the BH term ברית into Lomwe. His method of analysis is based on a collec-

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97 The name Makhuwa is also spelled *Makua* in English and *Macua* in Portuguese.

98 According to Foster (2008:3), Lomwe is a major dialect of the Makhuwa language family, which is predominant in northern Mozambique and reaches into southern Tanzania.

99 There are other ethnographic sources, which the author of this research could not access because they were published in French.

tion of Lomwe songs as representative of the people's cultural worldview. The next section links with Foster in a sense that it discusses the Lomwe as a people. However, it differs from him because the present study does not only focus on the contemporary situation of Lomwe people, but it starts with their history, which is presented below.

5.2.2 Defining the Lomwe as a people

The name Lomwe is derived from a certain type of grass called *"nlomwe"*, commonly found around the well-known Mountain of Namuli[100] because of its fertile soil (Ciscato 2000:22). According to Ciscato, the people who inhabit this territory were called *A-lomwe* (i.e. the Lomwe people)[101]. They spread their settlements around the whole mountain to form a large Lomwe tribe with its sub-tribes. Linguistically, the Lomwe people were divided in two major ethnic groups, each with its own sub-groups. The first ethnic group consists of the *Akokola*, the *Amarenje*, and the *Atakwane,* who resemble the *Amarenje*. The second ethnic group originated from territories stretching from the town of Chuwabo to the River Lugela. This ethnic group had several sub-groups such as the *Amanyawa, Amihavani, Ashirima, Ametto, Amakhuwa, Amunyamuelo, Amaroro,* and others. The two ethnic groups use different dialects, which can be distinguished by vocabulary, pronunciation and idioms (Ciscato 2000:22).

Moreover, the same clan names are recognized in variant forms. For example, the names Lomwe and Makhuwa imply two distinct ethnic groups, which are conventionally divided between the Lomwe living in Zambésia province of Mozambique as well as in Malawi, and the Makhuwa, who inhabit the Mozambican provinces of Nampula, Niassa, and Cabo Delgado, farther in the north, as well as Tanzania. The division sits awkwardly with the reality of a variety of related dialects shading into each other as one moves from the north to the south and from the coast inland (Foster 2008:85; cf. Martinez 1989:32-39). One might then speak of a Makhuwa language family, with Lomwe as one of its largest dia-

[100] Mt. Namuli is located in the northern part of Zambésia province near its convergence with Nampula and Niassa provinces.

[101] It should be noted here that Bantu languages use prefixes to distinguish between a language and a people. Thus, A-*lomwe* is Lomwe people and *E-lomwe* is the Lomwe language with the same rule applies to Makhuwa (cf. Foster 2008:85).

lects[102]. According to Foster (2008), a phonological distinctiveness of the Lomwe dialect is the absence of the voiced consonants, /*b*/, /*d*/, /*g*/, and /*z*/, which are found in other neighbouring language groups whose dialects are mutually intelligible[103]. He argues that throughout the area, different traditions of the origin of the people refer to one place: 'We came from Mount Namuli' (Foster 2008:85; cf. Martinez 1989:38-41; Ciscato 2003).

Historically, some Lomwe migrated southeast to neighbouring Malawi in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and again in the late 1930s. According to a publication of the Malawi Institute of Education:

> The Lomwe migrated to present Malawi because of searching for land for farming and hunting. They were also fleeing from their Yao... neighbours and the harsh rule of the Portuguese settlers. It is believed that when the Lomwe starved because of famine and poor harvest the Portuguese paid little attention to their suffering. Therefore, some Lomwe people migrated to Malawi in search for work in the European coffee and tea plantation in Malawi in Mulanje and Thyolo... the Lomwe movement to Malawi started before the Partition of Africa between the westerners and Portuguese (17th century), but many registered to be migrated into Malawi between 18th to 19th centuries (cited in Manyamba 2005:8).

Although the Lomwe people originated from what is now Mozambique in southeast Africa, it has been estimated that there are more Lomwe people in Malawi (1.5 million)[104] than in Mozambique (about 1.3 million)[105]. Nevertheless, the majority of Lomwe people who strongly maintain the Lomwe language continue to live in Mozambique, concentrated in the northern part of the Zambésia province, in a swath from the coast to the Malawian border[106]. This group of Lomwe people shares Mozambique's distinctive history:

> Five hundred years of Portuguese colonial [and Christianity] influence along the coast, with effective occupation of interior regions beginning at

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[102] As in the case of most African languages, Lomwe can also be analyzed into a variety of component dialects. See http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=NGL.

[103] For example, the Lomwe and Makhuwa are closely related in terms of both culture and language. According to Foster (2008:85), Lomwes and Makhuwas share a common identity rooted in three domains namely the myth, social structure and traditional religion.

[104] See http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=NGL. On their history, see Boeder (1984).

[105] See Foster (2008:83).

[106] In Malawi, Lomwe is dominated by the Chewa language and culture.

> the end of the nineteenth century (though slave raiding and trade had a much earlier impact). In the closing decades of the twentieth century, Mozambicans experienced colonialism, a guerrilla war for independence, Marxism, civil war, and then, after 1992, a slow rebuilding of society and economy (Foster 2008:83).

These social, economic, and political-religious realities merit study and attention in their own right. Therefore, before examining the contemporary situation of the Lomwe people, it is important to investigate their past life of subsistence agriculture to gain a better understanding of their present-day ethno-linguistic setting.

5.3 Lomwe Social Structure

In this section, we shall consider the following aspects of the Lomwe social structure, viz. kingship, kinship and marriage. These three elements are considered especially important here because they embody and express the social structure through which mutual responsibilities and care are primarily demonstrated among the Lomwe. It is within this socio-cultural context that concepts relating to the notion of חסד can presumably be best explored for translation purposes.

5.3.1 Kingship

Although the Lomwe people have never had their own unified government, the *Mwene, Regulo* and *Mambo* constituted the traditional authorities within the Lomwe society. The *Mwene* (King) held the highest position in the community in a given area or locality. The *Regulo* (Chief), who is second in the hierarchy, has the power to divide and allocate land and grant people access to other natural resources. Next to the *Regulo* is the *Mambo*, which in Lomwe means, the head of an extended family. One of the many responsibilities of the *Mambo* is to act on behalf of all the families[107], who together form a tribe. The term, "tribe", in this context, stands for a group of extended families who share the same values, customs and history, belong to the same bloodline, and enjoy equal in-

[107] For instance, when there is a cilvil disagreement between families, the matter is referred first to the Mambo. If the Mambo fails, the issue is referred to the elders of the community. The matter may also be referred to Chief, if the elders have not resolved it. The Chief can refer the matter to the King (Mwene) for a final decision. Where there is no Chief, the matter may move directly from the elders to the King for a final decision.

heritance rights. All the clan members of this group consider one another as brothers or sisters. Their society, in its clans, is ordered in accordance with kinship relationships, which will be discussed below.

To assist the *Regulo* in the fulfilment of his duties, an advisory body, the *Makholo* (elderly people), was appointed. This body of elders assists the *Regulo* in administration and in resolving a variety of social problems within the area of his jurisdiction. These problems range from divorce and sexual abuse to robbery, land conflicts, etc. The steering body of elderly people could act on behalf of the *Regulo,* when necessary, and represent him in his administrative functions.

5.3.2 Kinship

Within the traditional social structure, the kinship system is highly valued because it creates a bond between brothers of the same blood. One collection of Lomwe/Makhuwa fables highlights the saying, 'blood is thicker than water' (cf. Foster 2008:89)[108]. These fables represent a key component in the traditional oral wisdom literature. They serve as a vehicle for validating and expressing social values, norms and obligation, which are conveyed during initiation ceremonies[109]. The time of initiation of both boys and girls at puberty is when one becomes a 'full' person (adult) and a clan member (*nihimo*). The person is introduced to his or her clan and is taught some secret signs for identifying fellow clan-members. One of the secret signs used to discover one's relative (*muhima*) was through the ritual of sneezing[110]. On sneezing, any clan member would immediately chant the identity of his *nihimo*. By doing so, a Lomwe was able to recognize a fellow clan member and was then obligated to provide hospitality even if there had been no previous contact between them. As a member of the clan, the person was taught during the initiation that he had a responsibility to the clan. This would suggest

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[108] 'Nikhami wiinnuwa opwaha mahi' (my translation).

[109] The initiation is the true birth of a "new person". As Martinez (1989:110) rightly indicates, the entire community collaborates in the construction, i.e, in terms of the recognition and reception of the new person who emerges from the initiation process.

[110] The present researcher learnt about this ritual of sneezing from personal conversations with Manuel Alfredo Colial and Rosario Lopes on 24 November 2008.

that initiation into the *nihimo* gives the clan a "full covenantal character"[111].

Although an ongoing relationship was formed on a covenantal level that involved a serious interpersonal obligation, this form of kinship does not forge a "bond horizontally with those who would otherwise not have been considered relatives" (Foster 2008:89). Rather, Foster argues, it reinforces the "vertical" connection to relatives who have gone before, i.e. the ancestral spirits, while it also establishes sexual and social maturity. This assertion was made after Foster had had a long discussion with about twenty senior Lomwe church leaders, whom he asked if they knew of any traditional customs that could create kinship, with its privileges and responsibilities. Their "unanimous answer was negative" (Foster 2008:90). To understand this imbalance, it is important to recall the history of the Lomwe/Makhuwa. In a footnote, Foster (2008) points out that:

> Up to the twentieth century, slavery was a routine part of Lomwe/Makhuwa society ... there were two distinct types of slavery, however. One focused on capturing and trading (primarily) *men* for export. This was a response to external demand (Arab, Portuguese, and French traders) and was tremendously disruptive. The other was a necessary ancillary of the social structure and focused on *girls*. Any lineage that ran short of women was in danger of extinction. Marriages and alliances could be no remedy. The solution was to capture girls from a neighbouring (ideally not-too-close) *nihimo*. These should be near the age of initiation, but not yet initiated, hence without any clear clan identity *(sic)*. They could then be initiated into capturing clan, using all the powerful rites for separating from past life and inaugurating a new identity that were already part of the initiation process. Henceforth, they would be full clan members and their wombs would perpetuate the lineage. There was some social distinction maintained between slave and free, but older slaves' children could be chosen as chiefs. This custom, prohibited along with the abolition of the other kind of slavery, is now a very dim memory, not a living tradition. Its chief value is as an illustration of the relation between initiation and *nihimo* identity. Despite all the language of womb and birth, there was a sense in which

[111] For example, among Lomwe people who immigrated to Malawi, in the context of life as migrant labourers on great tea plantations, women would commit to each other in mutual care and obligations, exchanging goods and services, with their children addressing each other in familial terms (Boeder 1984:54-55). This show of solidarity among the people is not an adaptation of matrilocal family group values to a new situation, but a continuation of the way things were in their home country, Mozambique (as an agrarian people).

clan members were made and not born (2008:88-89, emphasis as in the original).

This account demonstrates that initiation into a clan, *nihimo,* served the purpose of continuing the ethnic strength of the Lomwe/Makhuwa. It was a way of holding the family and clan together. Only the initiated could marry, participate in sacrifices, speak during meetings and attend funerals (Martinez 1989:109). However, as Christianity grew more influential, the ritual of initiation was completely forbidden for boys but maintained for girls[112]. No attempts were made by the Christian churches to accommodate male circumcision[113]. This aspect will be discussed later. Although the great symbol of Lomwe initiation is circumcision, the traditional focus is on *instruction*. The participants in initiation ceremonies were instructed to behave properly toward others in their family and in the society (Martinez 1989:112, 120-123). It was a group experience aimed at launching the Lomwe/Makhuwa youth fully into the society (Martinez 1989:153).

5.3.3 Marriage

Being set within a "matrilineal" culture, the traditional Lomwe marriage system gives a distinctive shape to family relationships.[114] The anthropological notion of "matrilineal" refers to communities in which chieftainship succession is traced through the mother. This means that marriage in a matrilineal system is important because it creates links with communities in which descent is traced through a line of mothers all the way

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[112] One of the reasons why the initiation ceremony for girls was maintained was because of the belief that a woman requires more instructions on personal hygiene; therefore, the initiation is carried out under supervision of Christian churches. For further explanation on this, see section 5.5.2 below.

[113] For example, Kayongo-Male and Onyango (1991:47) notes that with little knowledge of the values of the African, many of the early missionaries denounced sacrifice to ancestors and initiation ceremonies, etc. Such denunciations, over time, undermined traditional customs and beliefs, which had protected married life and kinship relationships. According to Kayongo-Male and Onyango, certain Christian groups encouraged individualism through such practices as urging parents to take more control over the moral upbringing of their children rather than relying on the community.

[114] In many cultures, according to Foster (2008:89), marriage is an obvious candidate for covenant analogies, since it creates genuine kinship among unrelated people both in the Scriptures and in the ancient world.

back to ancestral antiquity[115]. From the matrilineal perspective, the key term *erukhulu*, which means "womb", is used in an anthropological sense (Martinez 1989:62). Hence, the concept of womb is extrapolated to include all maternal relatives, going back to the earliest known ancestress, who defines the *nihimo* or "clan". According to Foster (2008:87), a fundamental corollary of this concept is that one's father is not strictly one's relative (though one's mother's brothers are). He argues that the "womb" of one's mother emerged from another womb, creating an image of nested wombs that defines who one's relatives are. In English, for example, it is common to speak of blood relatives, and the same metaphor is preserved in the Latinate anthropological jargon of consanguinity. However, in Lomwe, womb imagery replaces that of blood as an essential symbol of "life"[116] and "life-force"[117]. As a result, two different aspects of marriage practice exist in the Lomwe matrilineal system:

1. **Exogamic Marriage:** In this system, marriage and sexual relations between people who were born from the same womb are forbidden. Such a relationship would be regarded as incest. Therefore, before marriage, some prior family consultation was necessary in order to ensure that a man would not marry his own sister (Martinez 1989:163). In view of the fact that they could not intermarry, they had to live near people of other clans. In fact, people of one *nihimo* ended up being scattered all over the area where Lomwe (and Makhuwa) people live (Foster 2008:88).
2. **Matrilocal Marriage:** In a matrilocal marriage, a bride customarily does not leave her mother. The husband leaves his family and lives as an outsider, on probation for several years (Martinez 1989:158, 165-168), with his wife's family under the authority of his father-in-law

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[115] In a matrilineal system, the children belong not only to the mother's clan, but also to that of the father. Thus, children have the clan names of both parents, but the clan name of the mother is more important than that of the father. As Diop (1989:32) rightly indicates, "... it is almost everywhere thought that a child owes more from a biological point of view to his mother than to the father. The biological heredity on the mother's side is stronger and more important than the heredity on the father's side. Consequently, a child is wholly that which its mother is and only half of what its father is".

[116] In African culture, life is relational and seen as "a network of mutual interdependencies" (Maimela 1985:66).

[117] The notion of life force refers to "divinely-originated" and "spiritually-sustained" individual animating forces in continual variation and interaction with one another (Wendland 1987:8; cf. Sundermeier 1973:112-135).

and mother-in-law. After being on probation for several years, the husband, or son-in-law (*mukamwene*)[118], in whom the family now can put full confidence[119], becomes absorbed (integrated) into his wife's family[120].

The matrilineal marriage system defines the family relationship among the Lomwe. Although the women seem to be in control[121], the chiefs and heads of families are men (i.e. patriarchal governance). However, the authority of the heads of families is not over their own children, but over their sisters, their younger brothers, their sisters' children, and so on. This does not necessarily mean that fathers are strangers (*amalapo*). Instead, a father (*atiithi* or *paapa*, a loan word from Portuguese) is the "authority-figure"[122] in the family. "*Toda a grandeza da pessoa ('ser alguém') deriva do exercicio da função que lhe compete (função de pai, mãe, tio...), pelo lugar que ocupa ou lhe foi atribuido dentro daquela ordem universal*" (Ciscato 1987:43)[123]. For example, when a son desires to take unto himself a bride, he first informs his father who will inform the young man's oldest maternal uncle, that is, the father's brother-in-law. The senior maternal uncle (*ataata*) is the agent responsible for the marriage negotiation. Without him, there can be no legal marriage. It is both the mater-

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[118] In the case when a *mukamwene* dies, if he does not have any close relatives (i.e. a brother or a cousin) to substitute for him officially in the family of his widow (*mukelampa*), the family of the deceased has an obligation to give to the widow a symbolic amount of money (cf. Ciscato 1998:39).

[119] Sons-in-law are expected to be dutiful to their parents-in-law, at least, during the early stage of the marriage. However, if a son-in-law fails to impress and proves unworthy, he can be sent back home and the marriage is dissolved.

[120] It should be noted here that the man could then relocate, if he so desired, to his home village.

[121] Traditionally, a notable woman, the *apwiyamwene* (literally, "chief's lord"), functions as the senior adviser to the chief and plays a major role in the selection of a new chief (Martinez 1989:69, 74-76). Older women administer the stocks of staple food in each extended household, but this extensive influence does not remove men from formal leadership (cf. Foster 2008:88).

[122] See Wendland and Hachibamba (2007:105).

[123] 'All the grandeur of being a person, (to "be somebody") derives from exercise *(sic)* of his appropriate function (the function of father, mother, uncle, ...), by the place which he occupies or which was given to him within that universal order' (as translated by Foster 2008:94).

nal uncle and the father, who provide the sign and evidence that a union is firmly established[124].

Therefore, the marriage union is considered to be an important connection not only between the families involved (i.e. of the husband and the wife), but between the husband and the wife as well. In other words, traditional marriage among the matrilineal Lomwe creates the bond of kinship between a husband and his wife. One proverb that underlines this kinship relationship between the husband and wife is: *Othela etchu yoorera mutchu onnawasa amannya,* literally, 'Marriage is a good thing because a man finds a mother'. It should be noted here that Lomwe men refer to their wives honorifically as 'mother'. By designating one's wife as mother, one not only declares a kinship relationship but also assigns the woman a higher status in the family. Additionally, Martinez (1989:160) affirms that, "*Por tudo isto, podemos dizer que o matrimónio está ao serviço da comunhão vital dentro da própria família e do intercâmbio vital entre as familias que integram a sociedade*"[125].

The last observation will serve as the conclusion for the section on the Lomwe social structure[126] and its matrilineal, exogamic and matrilocal marriage practices. These elements of Lomwe (which present special challenges for Christian communication)[127] serve as a covenant framework through which mutual responsibilities, care and caring are demonstrated among the Lomwe people. The observation also relates to the usage of חסד where a mutual covenant relationship is an essential element. In order to provide a conceptual framework for these notions, the

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[124] Although the husband "pays" by living with and working for his in-laws, there is no payment of bride price among the matrilineal Lomwe people as commonly practised in many patrilineal African societies (cf. Vuyk 1991:87-88). Thus Foster (2008:89) remarks that there is no significant financial investment in a marriage by the families involved. Such a practice does not necessarily mean that marriages in a matrilineal society are unstable. On the contrary, in a matrilineal system, marriage is a "sacred" thing because it is a community affair involving families and clans of the marrying couples, who must get to know one another before the marriage ceremony.

[125] 'After all, one could conclude that marriage is a vital exchange between families which make up the society, and it serves as a vital union within the family' (my translation).

[126] Vuyk's (1991) discussion focuses on four other matrilineal peoples of Central Africa. Though distinctive, the Lomwe/Makhuwa social structure is not unique. See also Wegher (1995; 1999).

[127] Cf. Niemeyer (1993).

Lomwe people's worldview as part of their socio-cultural frame shall be discussed next.

5.4 Lomwe Worldview

To some extent, the precise definition of the term worldview is problematic and various definitions have been provided[128] in this regard. According to Palmer (1996:113-114), a worldview refers to "the fundamental cognitive orientation of a society, a subgroup, or even an individual". Kearney (1984:41) defines worldview as a people's way of looking at reality. He also states that, it consists of basic assumptions and images that provide a more or less coherent, though not necessarily accurate, way of thinking about the world. In view of these definitions, one can then argue that a worldview refers to a set of cognitive data, which one acquires through the process of socialization and uses to make sense of reality (in the world). In the following sub-section, three major components of the Lomwe worldview, viz. the belief in a Supreme Being, in spirits and ancestors, and in witchcraft and divination will be considered. These three aspects of the Lomwe worldview are important because they provide insights for understanding and communicating the notion of חסד in their language.

5.4.1 Supreme Being

As is the case in many African communities[129], one creator God, *Muluku*, is acknowledged among the Lomwe, though prayers and offerings are directed to ancestral spirits who maintain social order. God is the Supreme Being who lives far away from the normal life and activities of

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[128] For a detailed study on worldview theory in relation to biblical concepts, see Van Steenbergen (2006:35-49).

[129] Mbiti (1970) has exhaustively described concepts of God in Africa. In his study, Mbiti explains that Africans believe in a God who has created and sustains the universe. God is all-knowing (1970:8) and He is transcendent (1970:12). He is self-existing (1970:19). According to Mbiti, Africans do not believe that God has a wife. God does not wage war against other gods. He has no equal (Kaufmann 1961:23, 29). Mbiti records that Africans believe that God brings everything into being but is not bound to the laws of nature. He does not eat food nor practice magic. From Mbiti's study, it is clear that Africans are monotheists and not polytheists although there is a debate about this with regard to some West African traditional religions, which allow for many "divinities".

human beings, just as elders such as the Chiefs and the heads of families, normally do. Thus, God's role becomes analogous to that of a *father* in a matrilineal society, a person who is both near to his children (in terms of physical proximity) but also far from them (in terms of social responsibility and authority)[130].

According to Wendland and Hachibamba (2007:73), in a traditional African perspective, the ancestors always mediate this circular concept of the relationship between God, man, and life. They note that God may not play an overt role in the everyday religious affairs of people, but he is nevertheless always there, in a sense, for he is the First Cause and the Final Consummation of the 'one thing needful' namely life and all that it entails. Although the role of God may seem ambiguous, he is neither distant nor inactive (Ciscato 1989:95-98), God is stable and self-sufficient (Ciscato 1987:110-115) hence, he is prone to being taken for granted. He is not excluded, but neither is he in focus (Ciscato 1998:60; cf. Martinez 1997:112-113). His function seems to be in the background, stabilizing the overall system, and perhaps, only rarely intervening on a local scale. "*Ele, mais do que a causa última é o recurso último, actual, ao qual se recorre quando tudo desmorona*" (Ciscato 1987:99)[131].

According to Ciscato (1987), *Muluku* is the centre of all things. He is the one who holds the world together. He is the centre of the universe, who maintains the order and dynamism of the whole cosmos. From the different versions of the myth of Mt. Namuli (which is the highest mountain in northern Mozambique)[132], *Muluku* is the creator, the true source

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[130] As suggested in section 5.3.3 of this study, the real social "father-figure" for children in a matrilineal society is the maternal uncle. According to Wendland and Hachibamba (2007:105), the maternal uncle may be likened in mediatory function and attention to ancestral spirits as far as the direction of one's affections and attention is concerned. This is because he is responsible to these ancestral spirits even as they are responsible to him in social life (e.g. in such critical matters as initiation, education, marriage, the adjudication of disputes, and so forth).

[131] 'He, more than the ultimate cause, is the ultimate resource, contemporary, to which one has recourse when everything falls apart' (as translated by Foster 2008:97).

[132] According to Ciscato (2003:6), Mt. Namuli serves to order life symbolically. It is a point of intersection between various levels or axes: between the underworld (the dead), the earthly world (i.e. the navel of the earth) and the expanse of the sky or heaven (rain, clouds); between the visible and the invisible; between the primordial beginning (Namuli is the first mother) and its re-actualizations by other mothers; between the spirits of nature and of the ancestors; and between life and death.

of all life, and at the same time, the one who sustains the universe with his presence of ownership (*mwanene*), and as a father (*atiithi*) with a clear moral character. According to this myth, nothing exists without *Muluku*. However, the strengthening of life, the preservation of and respect for life, are by the very nature of creation the responsibility of the spirits of the ancestors, who are regarded by the Lomwe as the immediate collaborators of *Muluku*.

5.4.2 Spirits and ancestors

Like many other Bantu-speaking peoples, the Lomwe appeal to their ancestral spirits[133], in all crises and at every crossroad of life – whenever sickness or death strike, when rain is needed, when good luck on a hunt or journey is required. The spirits of the past are believed to be responsible for the health and welfare of the present, as well as the cause of calamities, epidemics, and frequent deaths in a family. To understand the notion of ancestral spirits, it is important to understand the concept of the human body.

The human body is a microcosm of an animated physical world, which, in turn, is often described as a macrocosm of the human body (Ciscato 1987:48). The community consists of and is full of the presence of *living* beings, which include the spirits of ancestors and elders, both living and dead. In addition to all these, it is necessary for living beings to fulfil their roles and sustain the delicate balance of life in the society. "*A sociedade revela-se como um convívio em volta de uma mesa em baixo da qual esconde-se um campo de batalha*" (Ciscato 1998:40)[134]. Hence, the role of the "living dead" (i.e., the departed persons in a "spiritual" state of being)[135] is to guard and police the society (Ciscato 1999:50) against all types of disruptions such as sickness and death, which are discussed below.

Sickness is understood not as a bodily mechanism that malfunctions, but as the result of social relations, which do (Ciscato 1998:18), that is,

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[133] Political power in the community derives its legitimacy from the ancestral spirits (Cuehela 1996:10-14).

[134] 'Society reveals itself as a celebration shared around a table under which is hidden a battlefield' (as translated by Foster 2008:96).

[135] Cf. Mbiti (1970:230).

sickness results from a "disruption"[136] of one's full participation in the group. On the other hand, healing involves a restoration of harmony (Ciscato 1999:59). Sickness can be caused by anyone (acting against the good of the individual, family, clan, or community), whether individually or in concert with others. Thus, most emotional and mental disorders are linked with the rupture of social relations (Ciscato 1999:63). The difficulty of discerning the precise agents of disruption in a complex and cosmic whole requires the service of ritual specialists, (such as the *namuko*, "medicine man/witchdoctor"[137] and *nahako*, "diviner"), who possess esoteric knowledge and the power to recognize certain types of traditional medicine (Ciscato 1987:84). These specialists can bring either good or evil to the community, affecting one's daily life and the well-being of the entire community; they can even cause death through witches.

Death is a more acute disruption than sickness and calls for an immediate and vigorous response. According to Foster (2008:97), this is a "paradox and comes despite a system that sees death, like birth, as part of the natural cycle and honours departed ancestors as being still intimately involved in life. Any individual's death threatens the harmony of the system". He observes that death (especially premature death) does not just happen. The Lomwe believe that it is caused by someone who must be exposed and stopped. To cope with this threat, extensive ceremonies are conducted to identify the cause of a person's death (Ciscato 1998:32-44). It is believed that evil has a personal cause or source, one that is discoverable if the correct process of divination or deduction, based on customary experience, is pursued.

5.4.3 Witchcraft and divination

Witchcraft has always been a major component not only of the Lomwe belief system, but also of those of many other African countries (such as

[136] This may be "active" or "passive", that is, one may cause or experience such a disruption.

[137] The medicine men/witchdoctors function as the 'power-brokers' of the typical African society (cf. Wendland and Hachibamba 2007:183).

Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia)[138]. Belief in witchcraft remains strong because it explains many of the seemingly inexplicable hazards of life, such as frequent deaths, sicknesses and various accidents. The following excerpts[139] taken from Foster (2008:96) illustrate several of the relational issues with which people still struggle:

> *I chatted to each of our workers today. They (and others) have often told me that 'this race' (pointing to their skin) is very complicated, and today's chats certainly seem to uphold that conclusion.*
>
> *Snr. José is back at work after absent (sic) for almost three weeks with serious back troubles. I gave him 300.000MT to travel to his brother's house, so they could take care of him - his wife was away (for almost 3 months!) staying at her mother's. I suspect that he went to a curandeiro [= healer] while he was there, since going to see family in the country is often the excuse church people use when they visit curadeiros. He explained to me that he knew who had "done this" to him. When I asked him to explain, he told me that his best friend had given him these back pains, because the friend was jealous of him and wanted his (Snr. José's) wife. They had played together as kids, fought together in the army, helped each other in troubles, but now the friend wanted to harm him. Snr. José couldn't understand why that would be, but he was certain it was true. He told me that when he came home from his brother's house, mostly free of the back pain; the friend had been shamed and had left his house and gone to visit relatives because of the embarrassment - apparently shamed because the curse had not "worked".*
>
> *Mama Louisa was feeling a little better. The really bad headaches had ceased, but she had had some other troubles. Se's convinced that Snr Vincent tries to get rid of anyone else who works with him. She thinks he had put some hexes/curses on her to make her sick so that we'll get rid of her (Monday, 18 August 2003).*

These excerpts illustrate the pattern found among the Lomwe people at large. The greatest source of offence is *nrima*, a broader term for a collection of anti-social motivations, including envy, jealousy, and hatred - attitudes which, if not checked and eliminated, eventually produce divisions, arguments, fights, separation, and even death (Ciscato 1987:89). Thus, *nrima* destroys kinship, ruins people's lives, and even kills. It is never missing from a person, and remains a destructive force within every group.

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[138] See Wendland and Hachibamba (2007:60) for the suggestion that belief in witchcraft has spread rapidly in some parts of central and southern Africa over the last few years at the expense of the ancestral cult.

[139] The excerpt is a letter by Philip Piper, an Australian missionary working in Cuamba, a town on the fringe of the Lomwe-speaking area of Mozambique.

According to Foster (2008:96), one response to witchcraft is the *ovosha ekhuma* divination ritual, during which the senior person in a kinship group gathers his family for interrogation under the guidance of a diviner (*mulipa a ehako*) in order to determine the person who has caused a sickness or disaster. Foster notes that the person who denies the allegations made during the *ovosha ekhuma* ceremony is the one 'eating the child' and who is acting as a *mukhwiri*, that is, a sorcerer/witch or an agent of a destructive spirit or power. It is then assumed that a human being is the cause of immediate evil in the world (but not necessarily great natural calamities like earthquakes, floods, droughts, etc).

Does this mean that God is regarded as being the "cause" or "source" of evil as well? Though they may complain about his dealings with them, most people admit that evil does not come from God. This belief is summed up in the Lomwe proverb: *yovan'he Muluku, honakhwa ohiya*, "God is the one who gave it [life] to you, it won't kill you to lose it", and its counterpart, *yoovahile Muluku, waakhele yeeyo*, "God is the one who gave [life], you receive it" (Foster 2008:97). Both proverbs discourage participation in any divination ritual. Thus, "God may allow misfortune to strike a person, but he cannot be blamed for what happened" (Wendland and Hachibamba 2007:89).

The implication here is that the God's relationship with His people *(muloko)* as a senior partner cannot be ended, but human relationships can be terminated due to some reasons such as those mentioned above and observed in the case of חסד in the previous chapter. In the ensuing part of this chapter, attention will be paid to the past and present influence of Christianity on the Lomwe people, which will provide important clues that can make the message of חסד in the book of Ruth culturally relevant to their contemporary situation.

5.5 Impact of Christianity on the Lomwe People

This section focuses on the impact of Christianity on three important areas of the Lomwe people's lives, viz. the political-religious situation, the social setting, and the language. The aim is to determine important influences that affect the worldview, belief system and values of the Lomwe people.

5.5.1 Political-religious impact

To understand fully the political-religious impact of Christianity on the Lomwe, it is important to discuss the Portuguese colonization of Mozambique. From 1498, when Portuguese explorers under Vasco da Gama arrived in the area, Portuguese trading posts were established as ports on the route from Europe to the East, and Mozambique came under Portuguese rule. By the early 1900s, Portugal had shifted the administration of Mozambique to a large number of private companies, whose policies were designed to benefit white settlers and Portugal, with little interest in the economic state of the country or the welfare of its citizens (Moreira 1936:4). Not surprisingly, the occupation of Lomweland became one of the main priorities in the expansion of their territories. Lewis Mataka Bandawe[140], comments on how the Portuguese occupied the Lomweland:

> A Portuguese military squadron under Senhor (Mr) Leandro de Rego arrived at the court of chief Khumbanyiwa near the Murumbu Church of Scotland Mission station. Rego summoned the Chief and using John Gray Kufa a mission teacher from Nsoni, in Chiradzulu as interpreter, he said he knew the "ingleses" (the English) were already there teaching people in their schools. 'Do you want the English or the Portuguese'? (cited in Phiri 2004:104).

Intimidated by the armed forces, Khumbanyiwa reluctantly replied, *Pwiya, Pwiya nnokhwelani nyuwano,* i.e. 'Lord, Lord we want you'. A week later, Leandro de Rego was back at the court of Chief Khumbanyiwa, and he summoned all the chiefs to appear before him. Chief Khumbanyiwa, as the most senior of the chiefs, was commanded to come forward with his senior wife. Leandro de Rego produced a brand new overcoat and presented it to Khumbanyiwa. To the Chief's wife, he presented a coloured cloth. Thereafter, Leandro de Rego proceeded to declare Lomweland as part of *Portuguese East Africa* (P.E.A), now known as Mozambique.

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[140] Lewis Mataka Bandawe, a Lomwe who was born east of Lake Chirwa in Mozambique, was adopted by a Scottish medical missionary, Dr Sam Knight Norris, in 1899 and taken to the Blantyre Mission in Malawi to be educated. In 1913, Bandawe with his wife Grace Bandawe, returned to his native Lomweland in the company of some Blantyre missionaries and established a station at Mihekani on the eastern edge of Namuli Mountain in Alto Molócuè district, halfway between Blantyre and the Indian Ocean (Bandawe 1996:40; cf. Boeder 1984:36).

Two years after the annexation, Chief Khumbanyiwa was ordered to shift his village from the fertile hill slopes to a flat malaria-ridden plain approximately two miles away. Leandro de Rego then went on to erect an administrative station on the vacated village site. While Khumbanyiwa reluctantly submitted to Portuguese occupation, another Lomwe chief called Namarohi put up a fight for a year before surrendering. Fully settled at Murumbu, the Portuguese now went about recruiting the *sepaios* whom they sent out to collect taxes from the Lomwe. The taxes had to be paid in kind rather than cash because the use of money was still unknown among the Lomwe as was the case in most parts of pre-colonial Africa.

Chiefs who failed to deliver their quota of foodstuffs were arrested and taken to the town as prisoners. Some of them starved to death while awaiting trial. Then came forced labour. Men were drafted and sent to work in slave-like conditions on sugar plantations in the Sena region (Sofala province) where the Portuguese had settled much earlier. Some were taken as far away as São Tomé in West Africa! There the captives toiled from dawn to dusk for the little pay that was handed to them when they returned to their homeland. Other men were forced to work at the administrative centre. They had to provide themselves with food and shelter even if they came from distant villages. There were no medical facilities of any type. Deaths from hunger, disease and sheer exhaustion were widespread[141].

[141] Bandawe, who at that time was teaching at Mihekani, one day, witnessed a shameful incident, which illustrates the hardship that the Lomwe went through during the Portuguese era. He writes:

A large mahogany tree had been felled with the purpose of making timber to be sawn at the boma (town) itself. A white foreman ordered twenty persons including a pregnant woman to carry the log on their shoulders. They trudged along singing doleful songs with the overseer or capitao perched on the log thereby adding his own weight to that of the log. He was urging the labourers to walk faster, flogging those who dragged their feet. At the boma (town), as the white man was getting off the log, the pregnant woman started giving birth to her baby. Men ran away from the scene as if they were fleeing from a marauding beast. The interpreter's wife rushed to the assistance of the poor woman, who fortunately delivered a live baby (cited in Phiri 2004:106).

In addition, there was the equally dreaded and infamous *palmatória*[142] of flogging as punishment for trivial offences. The Lomwe were given cottonseeds to plant in their gardens in order to sell the produce to the Portuguese at prices unilaterally fixed by the latter. Those who failed to deliver the produce were flogged with the *palmatória*.

According to Thompson (1989:33), the colonialists brought about changes in the entire social structure, for the Portuguese authorities introduced a system, whereby able-bodied men were recruited to go and work in factories or on plantations for several months each year for a pittance. Some of those who survived moved to the British territory of Nyasaland (now Malawi). As a result, the area became depopulated as women, old people and children struggled to survive. The whole of the north of the country had no Protestant church until 1913 when the Presbyterian Church of Scotland established a mission centre at Mihekani. Twenty years later, in 1933, the entire responsibility and authority for the work started by the Presbyterians was handed over to the Nyasa Mission centred in Nyasaland. Thompson (1989:34) notes that the Nyasa Mission lacked the personnel and finance to develop itself and, in 1939, it turned to the AEF Mission now SIM (Serving in Mission) for help, eventually, handing over its complete control to that society.

That move was the introduction of the first Evangelical Mission station in the Lomwe region by the missionaries from the Church of Scotland. Although the Evangelical Mission and the Roman Catholic Mission stations were less than a mile apart, they had nothing to do with each other. According to Moreira (1936:60), the Portuguese did not like the Evangelical Missions (in spite of having bound themselves by the Treaty of London, signed on 26 February 1884 to protect them). Instead, they viewed the Evangelical missionaries as "agents of British imperial expansion" (Phiri 2004:106). Consequently, the slightest blunder that members of the mission made would give the Portuguese an excuse for closing the mission schools. For instance, in September 1959, the Evangelical Mission of Mihekani station was officially closed down by the Portuguese authority. The following is the copy of a statement given to the General

[142] According to Thompson (1989:79), the *palmatória* is a sort of paddle with holes in it, which, when brought down sharply on the hand, sucked up the flesh, causing bruises and bleeding. The instrument had its equivalent in other parts of colonial Africa. For example, in Malawi it is called *chikoti* (=a whip made from hippo or rhino hide), in East Africa *kiboko* and in South Africa *sjambok* (Phiri 2004:106).

Director of Mihekani stating the reason why the Mission station has to be closed down:

> Resulting from an administrative enquiry, it has been verified that the presence and operation in the Province of the Missão Evangélica de Nauela are destitute of civilising action. The Government-General commands - the Mission is extinct (Thompson 1989:85)[143].

The Mihekani station had been a centre of healing and education for as long as many Lomwe people could remember. It was part of their lives, and they could not conceive of life without it. Mihekani was the place where the Lomwe Christians were trained in the Word of God and sent out to proclaim the Gospel to their fellow Lomwe. With the permanent closure of Mihekani, the church was shaken to the core, as its General Director wrote at the time: "Individuals were mystified. Satan, the great deceiver, had been at work, and terrible dishonour came to the name of the Lord Jesus and the work of God as a whole" (Thompson 1989:83).

Despite the fact that the Mihekani station was permanently closed at that time, Christian churches were widely established[144] among the Lomwe, and Protestant churches, in particular, became the first point of contact between the translated Scriptures[145] and the broader Lomwe culture. This Gospel encounter is a true people's movement, and the vision and energy displayed by its leaders in its evangelistic zeal are remarkable (Comrie 1988:27). The Gospel was transmitted orally, often by people whose own understanding of it was limited to what they had heard (Thompson 1986:46)[146]. In the critical years from 1975 (the year of Independence) to 1986 under the Marxist government and during the civil

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[143] For the full story of why Mihekani was closed down, see Thompson (1989:82-94). See also Ciscato (2000:106-107).

[144] Lomwe people have been subjected to distinct outside influences. According to Foster (2008:3), Islamic religion and culture were firmly implanted along the coast after a thousand years of Indian Ocean trade with Arabia. However, he argues that Islamic influence never penetrated far inland, where Christians were more prominent since the missionary work started early in the twentieth century. Among Christians, the largest group would be Roman Catholics, benefiting from a privileged position under the Portuguese colonial regime, which dominated the first three-quarters of the twentieth century and whose cultural impact is still strong.

[145] The history of the translation of the Bible into Lomwe will be discussed in section 6.3 of this study.

[146] According to Foster (2008:3), presently, traditional religion is not practiced publicly among the Lomwe people, though it is often practiced in secret especially in times of crisis.

war[147], Christian churches began to grow even though the government was persecuting religious institutions. Only from 1982 did the persecution begin to lessen. In 1992, Mozambique became a democracy, being liberated from Communist influence, and the first elections were held in 1994. Today churches enjoy freedom of worship[148].

However, despite the peaceful environment in which the Gospel is being preached in the Protestant churches and some other Christian churches in Mozambique, numerous challenges still confront the Church. These challenges, which include the influence of traditional beliefs, corruption, poverty, HIV/AIDS, and denominational rivalry and disunity, force the Church to reconsider its role within such a context. The situation prompts the following questions: (i) what are the effects on biblical understanding and Christian communication of terms such as *nihimo,* which are associated with the social structure as well as ancient religious beliefs in such a context? (ii) Do some similarities exist between the Lomwe and the Ancient Near Eastern biblical culture in terms of the hierarchical system of mutual responsibilities? These questions will be dealt with below.

5.5.2 Social impact

As an agrarian society, the most important unit of social structure among the Lomwe is the *nihimo* (clan), which forms a family care unit. The relationships between families are structured on the principle of *nihimo*. Due to colonialism, the aftermath of the civil war in Mozambique, and urbanization, certain social features are undergoing change such as a diminishing importance of having large families and close relationships within the extended family system. Despite these changes, social relationships in both urban and rural areas remain structured on the principle of *nihimo*. The term does not necessarily refer to a "closed

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147 For a balanced account of Mozambique's history in the period (1970-1995), see Hall and Young (1997).

148 The religious freedom can be attributed partly to the role that the Christian communities played in helping to foster peace in the entire country. This crucial role of the church is a cherished demonstration of Gospel principles that are consistent with the Christian faith confession in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a Mozambican Christian history demonstrating courage, perseverance and faith.

group"[149], but denotes a group of siblings that can include all the people who belong to the same tribe or an "extended family"[150].

As already noted in section 5.3.2 of this study, the concept of *nihimo* is a central feature of kinship organization, constituted not only by members of the same clan, but also by those of other clan members incorporated through marriage. Thus, marriage and procreation are permeated with the idea of the unity and the continuity of the society through matrilineal descent, which involves the living as well as the dead (i.e. ancestral spirits). This means that the continuity of Lomwe people is guaranteed through the marriage union. The idea is different from the Christian understating of marriage, which has its own implications. To explore these implications, which I shall now do, is to touch intimately on the social values that shape the Lomwe society.

The initiation into the *nihimo* among the Lomwe is a vehicle through which one is welcomed into the group. The group identity discourages people from acting selfishly and focusing on the individual. The individual is shaped by a dynamic and corporate conception of the person (Ciscato 1998:54). Physical birth alone does not make one a full human being. It is the assumption of responsibilities and the fulfilment of one's roles in the social structure that fully makes one a person; and it is to this end that the great rites of passage, in particular, initiation rituals, are shaped (Ciscato 1987:47). As has been noted in section 5.3.2 of this study, the Lomwe have an initiation ritual for girls, but no longer one for boys. Nowadays girls' initiations are normally carried out under the supervision of Christian churches. There are two ceremonies for girls namely puberty rites and wedding rites (which are followed by pregnancy and childbirth-related ritual events). These two ceremonies also include the provision of knowledge about personal hygiene of the woman, sexual matters, treatment of one's husband, care of children, moral be-

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[149] Here, the term group refers to a social organization (*nihimo*) through which people structure their lives. The individual does not just exist alone; he exists because others exist. Therefore, the individual has to blend the self into a group (cf. Mbiti 1975:109).

[150] According to Kayongo-Male and Onyango (1991:63), the extended family has been a noble characteristic of African societies especially at the time of bereavement, during disputes, and in the production and the upbringing of children. It was seen as a social security system. However, in some areas, this traditional practice is breaking down under the burden of AIDS' orphans as well as disruptive post-funeral inheritance-related activities that often disadvantage widows and orphans.

haviour, and various duties of a woman in the society. More importantly, the girls formally become mature women. They learn to bear pain and to discipline themselves, and are recognized by the entire community as women worthy of respect and acceptable for marriage.

As a mother figure, the woman/wife is often regarded as sacred and is portrayed as the guarantor of the clan (Kitoko-Nsiku 2007:87). In other words, the principle of procreation defines the woman's status. To procreate or have children perpetuates life and it is the most important blessing a woman can receive, which also overlaps with ancient Near Eastern traditions. As in Ancient Near Eastern marriages, the traditional Lomwe marriage is a union between a man and woman as well as their respective clans, intended primarily for procreating. Marriage enables a woman to fulfil the traditional obligation and custom to bear children and extend the name of the family/clan. It is not an option, but an essential stage for every member of the society. Marriage is a compulsory act; therefore, marriage relationships cannot be effected without a consensus between the partners concerned and their respective families and elders. The marriage union is incomplete if there are no children; it is a calamity both to the couple and to their families. This observation also overlaps with the Ancient Near Eastern tradition: "A person without children was considered less than a complete human being" (Van Rooy 1986:225). It is not surprising, therefore, that parents are seen as co-operating spiritually and physically with "God/ancestors"[151] in the act of bringing children into the world for the continuation of the family line.

Among the Lomwe, the inability to conceive is always blamed on the wife, and it is her responsibility to find a solution. If the husband is found (by the medicine man or diviner) to be responsible for the childlessness, the wife could normally seek for divorce. Since children were important to continue the family line, a childless wife might chase out her husband or encourage him to visit the medicine man for magical assistance. Moreover, if the husband fails to have sexual relations with his wife, the husband could be sent back to his relatives. Thus, the elders

[151] In the Bantu culture, there is no clear distinction between God's role and that of the ancestors. Thus, Martinez (1989:225) remarks that, in the wealth of their symbolism, the practices of the cult have some purpose (such as helping the people to make meaning out of their world) other than obtaining protection for the life of the individual and of the society from the Supreme Being by means of the irreplaceable mediation of the ancestors.

would nullify the marriage if they discovered that the man is impotent and is beyond treatment for his impotence.

On the other hand, if a man dies childless, his brother or closest male relative could take his wife so that she could have children in his name. This practice is comparable to the levirate marriage, which is attested in both the Ancient Near East and the Hebrew Bible. The example of Ruth and her re-marriage to Boaz is a case in point. Not only did Ruth show חסד to her late husband by marrying his relative to have children in his name, Boaz also showed חסד to the dead by marrying his widow. Therefore, apart from guaranteeing social security to Ruth, an important purpose of the levirate arrangement is procreation. This is also the case among the Lomwe.

5.5.3 Language impact

Apart from Portuguese, which is the official language[152], all the other languages spoken in Mozambique belong to the Bantu group[153]. Despite the fact that Bantu languages constitute the majority in Mozambique, Portuguese remains the language of governance, education and business today[154]. The reason for this is that the Portuguese colonisers had established a link between economic and language policy issues during the process of colonisation (Kitoko-Nsiku 2007:260). According to Kitoko-Nsiku, the Portuguese language was chosen by post-colonial leaders to drive the new political ideology, religion, education and the economy[155]. The colonisers' economic and language policies were pro-

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[152] English, as a *lingua franca* between the six nations with which Mozambique shares its borders (namely Malawi, Tanzania, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe), is increasingly used by educated Mozambicans in their regional (and, of course, international) dealings but it is not an official language. According to Lopes (1998:472), not only the neighbouring language factor, but also political events have contributed to Mozambique's acceptance as a Commonwealth member at the 1997 Commonwealth Heads of State and Government Summit in Scotland, moving into full membership from its 1987 status as observer.

[153] Bantu languages are indigenous languages, which constitute the major language stratum in Mozambique, both with regard to the number of speakers and the language distribution (Lopes 1998:441).

[154] It is important to mention here that Portuguese is used by most Christian denominations, but several Bantu languages are also used in the sermons (cf. Lopes 1998:447).

[155] It is reassuring to note that Mozambique is no longer the poorest country in the world – its economy is growing, much of the infrastructure destroyed during the war has

foundly discriminatory, intentionally leaving behind waves of illiterate Mozambicans[156].

From the beginning of the Portuguese colonial process in Africa, the Portuguese were the first to refer to the Bantu languages (or any African language) as "dogs' languages"[157]. According to Kitoko-Nsiku (2007:263), this colonial discourse had devastating psychological effects on the religious and socio-political life of many African people. He argues that it affected their self-esteem, damaged their sense of creativity, provoked a sense of grave inferiority, and put their languages in an inferior position compared with European languages. Such psychological aggression must be viewed as a deliberate act of commission aimed at excluding people from political, scientific and technological progress[158].

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been repaired, democracy is waxing stronger and the people are regaining their self-esteem (cf. Kitoko-Nsiku 2007:265).

156 Matusse (1997), for example, remarks that under Portuguese rule, the language teaching policy of the colonial government was, for the most part, exclusionary of Afro-Mozambicans who constituted the vast majority of the population - then and now. In his words:

The education front [under colonial rule] reflects these policies of keeping the African at bay rather than integrating him into the system and teaching Portuguese. The first decree on education for the natives was passed on 14 August 1885, but in 1955, there were only 2,041 rudimentary schools, with a total of 242,412 pupils. Of these, 2000 belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, 27 to Protestant churches, 12 to the Government, and two were privately owned... In 1926, secondary education was still limited in *(sic)* Lourenço Marques [Maputo], the capital and therefore the colony's centre for educational opportunity. Liceu 5 de Outubro (today Escola Secundária Josina Machel) opened in 1910, but only 16 mixed race students had matriculated by 1926, and no Africans were enrolled. The same institution had only 30 black students out of more than 1,000 in 1960. When the University of Lourenço Marques [Eduardo Mondlane] was opened in 1963, only five of the three hundred students were of African origin (Yorke 2004:66).

157 Besides the Portuguese in Mozambique who labelled Bantu languages as dogs' languages, according to Kitoko-Nsiku (2007:263), the Belgians who came to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) also identified the Congolese as "Macacos" or monkeys.

158 The issue of saving and revitalising Bantu languages and cultures has become a political concern in many African countries today. For example, in Mozambique, there is a programme called *Bilingual Education in Mozambique* (PEBIMO). According to Kitoko-Nsiku (2007:264), this programme aims at testing the efficacy of the implementation of a bilingual programme of education in order to see whether it can help people to overcome the lack of knowledge (science) and information (technology).

Furthermore, it is important to recall that the image of Africa and Africans as being inherently inferior to Europe and Europeans did not originate with the missionary movement. This image, as noted above, was largely drawn from secular Europe's first impressions of its earlier encounter with Africa and the African languages. On the other hand, the missionaries promoted African languages through Bible translation projects[159], which are their legacy among the Lomwe, as noted above (in section 5.5.2 of this study). The availability of the translated Scriptures in their languages is a crucial factor in the rise and formation of Christian churches, in particular, the Protestant churches among the Lomwe. However, the impact of the translated Scriptures[160] has become clear evidence of religion being used as a tool of ethnocentrism[161] or of exclusion. The following excerpt serves as a case in point:

> In the late 1990's congregations related to the Igreja Uniao Baptista located in the lower Zambezi river valley worshipped exclusively in Lomwe, despite the fact that the majority population of the area were speakers of Sena. Queried as to why more Sena-speakers were not participating in their worship services, the Lomwe speakers leading the churches explained that Sena-speakers were welcome, that the doors were open to them. However, it was important to use Lomwe as the language of worship because Lomwe had a translated New Testament [plus Psalm] and a published hymn book (Foster 2008:154).

In effect, according to Foster, the blessing of having a Bible in the vernacular is a sign of the prestige that favours one group (the Lomwe) and excludes others[162]. Although, conventionally, Christians are seen as a large extended family, the tribal notion of extended family presents its own challenges especially when one group is regarded and treated as being superior to the other. This exclusivity or ethnocentrism, of course,

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[159] African scholars such as Lamin Sanneh and Kwame Bediako have argued that despite its colonial trappings, the Bible's presence in Africa has been of considerable value. For a brief review of the history of Bible translation in Africa (see Renju 2001:196-197; cf. also Loba-Mkole 2008:169-184).

[160] This could happen even in a missionary and theological tradition that emphasizes individual conversion (cf. Fiedler 1994:330).

[161] Andrianjatovo (2001:182, 183) warns that identity crisis oriented hermeneutics easily leads to ethnocentrism.

[162] This is not to say that others are not free to initiate their own language translation projects under the auspices of the Bible Society of Mozambique. Actually, another organization, the *Summer Institute of Linguistics* (SIL), also known as Wycliffe Bible Translators, is handling translation issues of minority languages apart from their main work of promoting literacy in the country since 1986 (cf. Lopes 1998:472).

can also be compared with biblical examples in which people, blessed by a covenant relationship, claim to have a privileged and exclusive status[163]. The Gospel that once dominated the first Christian (Jewish) society is the same Gospel that now dominates the Lomwe Christian society. This means that the impact of the translation of the Bible and of the Gospel on the Lomwe has served as the main catalyst of their culture.

The Lomwe religious and socio-political system might have changed (due to the impact of colonialism and civil war)[164], but as an agrarian people, their cultural worldview remains very much the same especially in rural areas[165]. This brings us to the concept of *translatability*[166], which will be developed more fully in Chapter 6 of this study. Sanneh (2002:85) uses this term to emphasize the larger implications of Scripture translation, that is, "the liberating and empowering effects of Bible translation on the native idiom" (cf. Sanneh 1989:3). What this suggests is that the translatability of the Scripture provides the potential for the revitalisation of both the biblical message and the worldview of the receptor culture. An ancient message has a radical transforming impact on the vernacular culture when the very language and thought forms of that culture are used to transmit the message (cf. Bediako 2002; Mbiti 1994:27; Walls 1996:26-42).

5.6 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the Lomwe people's culture and worldview, including their belief system and set of values. First, I described exogam-

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[163] This theme of God's universal dealings features in the life of Jonah, who was reluctant to accept God's mercy on behalf of pagan oppressors though he welcomed it for himself (and, implicitly for "his" people). For the Early Church of the New Testament, the issues of disentangling relationship boundaries from the ethnic boundaries of Jews vs. Gentiles caused major conflicts. These are explicitly addressed in Acts 15, in Galatians, and in many other passages (cf. Walls 1996:16-18).

[164] According to Foster (2008:3), traditional chiefs, who have a priestly role in traditional religion, still exist but have limited influence after the vicissitudes of colonialism and civil war.

[165] Thirteen percent of the total Mozambican population live in urban areas. See www.uneca.org/aisi/NICI/country_profiles/Mozambique/mozamab.htm (24/3/2009).

[166] The language of a particular culture is intimately related to its worldview. Language serves as the medium through which a culture's worldview can be expressed (Basson 2006:34; cf. Baker 2001:233).

ic and matrilocal marriages as aspects of the matrilineal social structure. Through these marriage arrangements, kinship bonds are created between different families and important unions between husbands and wives. Second, I noted that the Lomwe worldview is marked by *cosmobiologia*, i.e. the life cycle that shapes their understanding of the world, and gives priority to the strengthening of, the preservation of, and respect for human life. Although colonialism and a lengthy civil war had devastating effects on the people's religious and socio-political life especially in the urban areas, the Lomwe worldview remains essentially the same. The implication of this is that in translating חסד into Lomwe, one must take into consideration their current socio-cultural milieu and the use of language as a tool to communicate their experience of this socio-cultural world. No language can be divorced from the culture of its speakers, in particular, their way of viewing the world and their place in it. Since translators work with language, they cannot avoid the issue of culture. In the following chapter, therefore, we will discuss some ways through which the translation of חסד into Lomwe can be carried out.

CHAPTER 6:
TRANSLATING THE HEBREW CONCEPT חסד INTO LOMWE

6.1 Introduction

One of the critical claims in Chapter 3 of this study is that existing BH dictionaries are of limited value for Bible interpretation and translation in the process of intercultural communication because BH dictionaries offer no more than the briefest of glosses. As noted, glosses are not themselves meanings nor do they explain meanings; the meanings reside in the actual Hebrew usage. What this suggests is that the actual usage of language in biblical texts offers the only reliable way in which the various aspects of the meaning of a particular word can be identified in a particular target language. Since this study seeks to translate חסד into Lomwe, first, the present chapter will offer a brief history of Bible translation into Lomwe (particularly the translation of this biblical concept) as part of the organizational frame of reference.

Second, I will discuss the notion of translation as a complex type of communication, which begins with a careful interpretation of the source text. Next, I will present the practical procedure(s) used in the current Lomwe Bible translation project in an attempt to find a suitable equivalent term (word or phrase) for the concept. Thereafter, the fieldwork, which was conducted as an integral part of the CFR model, will be discussed. This would help to bridge more fully the cognitive gap between the socio-cultural worlds of the biblical audience and the contemporary target audience. Finally, the CFR model will be applied in order to guide the adoption of an audience-focused translation strategy for rendering חסד into Lomwe.

6.2 A Brief History of Bible Translation into Lomwe

The translation of the Bible into Lomwe language dates back to 1913 with the establishment of the *Missão Evangélica de Nauela* in Mi-

hekani[167]. The first missionnaries among the Lomwe settled at Mihekani where they applied themselves to learning the local language, as well as to teaching and preaching in it as best they could (Thompson 1989:44). The concern of the missionaries during those early years in Mihekani was reaching the little villages that were scattered thinly over the hundreds of miles that spread southward to the Zambezi River and northward to the railroad that ran from Nyasaland to the coast. Mihekani was the only evangelical mission centre in the whole area. Thompson (1989:45) also notes with reference to the Portuguese language among Africans throughout the country, that literacy was only about eighteen per cent. Bibles were in short supply, and were only obtainable in Portuguese, Mozambique's official language. However, the missionaries later translated the New Testament and the book of Psalms into Lomwe language (Boeder 1984:36).

Historically, the first book of the Bible translated into any language was usually one of the Gospel(s), after which the translation committee proceeded to complete the whole New Testament. The "Gospel-first" principle dominated this translation strategy, because every translation of the Gospel was aimed at the *evangelization* of its believers[168]. However, the reason for the failure to translate the Old Testament is because most missionaries with biblical training had some competence in Greek but little in Hebrew (Harris 1997:182). Therefore, they often also had an inadequate understanding of the nature and purpose of the Old Testament in God's overall communication strategy.

Since the "Gospel-first" principle was seen, consciously or unconsciously, as such an important evangelistic tool, the following question arises: what purpose did the translation of the Psalms serve in the early history of Lomwe Bible translation? To answer this question, it must be stated that although the translation of the Psalms into Lomwe language was made available alongside the translation of the New Testament, the

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[167] Mihekani was a Blantyre Mission (Church of Scotland) station situated in the northern Zambésia province of Mozambique.

[168] Clement Scott, a missionary to Nyasaland (now Malawi) in the latter 1900s (quoted in Wendland 1998:21), was convinced that in order for the Gospel to take root firmly on African soil, the Word of God had to be expressed, that is, translated, preached, and taught in the languages of Africa.

Lomwe people were discouraged from preaching sermons based on the Psalms as it was regarded as "inappropriate"[169].

However, regardless of the restriction on preaching from this book, the Psalms is the most widely read book in every Sunday service in the Protestant churches today. For example, as part of its liturgical policy, the *Igreja União Baptista* (IUB) as rule makes room for a pastor or leader to read a portion of Scripture from the book of Psalms to be read at the beginning of the Sunday service without giving any explanation or comment. Afterwards, the second Scripture reading, also taken from the book of Psalms, would be read by another pastor or leader.

The initial translation of the Bible into Lomwe was undertaken jointly by Protestant missionaries and a mother-tongue speaker, Lewis Mataka Bandawe[170]. In his writings, Bandawe not only gives a first-hand account of the early mission work, he also reveals his personal involvement in the Lomwe Bible translation as a mother-tongue translator:

> I was at this time translating the New Testament into Lomwe. The translation was done in manuscript form. Miss Macnab undertook to type the manuscripts. In 1930, 5000 copies of the New Testament, complete with the Psalms, were printed in the Lomwe language by the National Bible Society of Scotland. The second impression of 7000 copies appeared in 1948; the third impression of 5000 copies appeared in 1964. These copies were circulated in Lomwe country, Mozambique, and among the Lomwe speaking people in Nyasaland, now Malawi. In 1967 I revised the whole of the New Testament and the Psalms. A revised copy was forwarded to the National Bible Society of Scotland through Mr. T. Price, formerly a missionary teacher in Nyasaland (Bandawe 1996:43).

Such was the result of fourteen years of teamwork in Mihekani. After Bandawe's return to Blantyre (Malawi), he was employed by the Nyasaland Government. He relates that,

> "In 1943 I started to translate Genesis. I kept on my task for ten years during any spare time I could find. In 1953 the task was done. I had completed the translation of Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament" (Bandawe 1996:44).

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[169] This information was obtained during personal conversations with Rosario Abel Lopes and Manuel Alfredo Colial on 5 December 2008. They remark that preaching from the Psalms was regarded as inappropriate because Psalms was viewed as a difficult book to preach from since (according to them) most of it is about lamentation. However, since the Psalms appeal to their challenging socio-cultural conditions, the book is popular in the Sunday readings.

[170] For Bandawe's biography, see section 5.5.1 of this study.

Bandawe's claim that he alone translated the entire Old Testament into *Chilomwe* (i.e. the Lomwe language) is confirmed by Boeder (1984:36). Although parts of this Old Testament translation were circulated in Mihekani, they were never published and it is not known whether the missionaries took the copies with them after the closure of Mihekani or they were lost or destroyed. After twenty-five years of missionary work in Mihekani, "…. [T]he Lomwe language was reduced to writing and [apart from] the New Testament, Psalms *(sic)*; Proverbs and Genesis were translated. Believers were firmly established in the Lord and numbered between 3000 and 4000 at the time of the expulsion" (Comrie 1988:27).

On the tragic case of the closure of Mihekani[171], the General Director of the mission station of Mihekani Gordon Legg remarked that, "… Since the majority of the African believers north of the Zambeze had only small portions of the Bible, if any, the task of Bible translation and teaching was seen to be even more urgent" (in Thompson 1989:83). Therefore, the AEF missionaries (now called *Serving in Mission*, or SIM) together with the Protestant and the Catholic churches undertook the translation of the Old Testament into Lomwe (currently in the final stage of production) under the auspices of the Bible Society of Mozambique[172]. According to project leaders of the current translation project of the Old Testament, the word חסד is generally rendered as *osivela* (love)[173].

Although the word *osivela* is identified as a suitable term, another word *woororomeleya* (which literarily means *faithful* in a domestic context)[174] has also been considered in the translation of חסד. For example, in the current published Lomwe translation of Ruth (new version)[175], חסד is rendered as *osivela waya woororomeleya* (his/her faithful love). This ex-

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171 For details of why Mihekani was closed down, see section 5.5.1 of this study.

172 It is important to mention here that although the Lomwe Bible translation was initiated as a joint project, the Catholics are no longer part of it. One of the main reasons for their pulling out was because of the alleged slow pace of the work.

173 See section 1.1 of this study.

174 In the SDBH, the word *faithful* (which has been registered for חסד with different glosses) means to act in accordance with the attitude of loyalty, faithfulness, kindness, devotion and love. What these terms simply tell us is that, when translated into English, חסד may be rendered as one of these five glosses, depending on the context. However, this does not really tell us the meaning of the biblical concept.

175 The new version of the Lomwe translation of Ruth, published in 2008, was made available to the author of this research by the Lomwe exegete via e-mail on 23 April 2009.

pression was coined by the Lomwe translators and is used in a narrative context, while *osivela* is used exclusively in a poetic context. The current translators of the Old Testament into Lomwe have suggested therefore that חסד be translated as either *osivela* or *osivela* combined with *woororomeleya*.

However, this decision by the current translators appears problematic because the 1930 Lomwe translation of the Psalms, another word *ikharari*[176] is used exclusively for חסד. Besides the fact that *ikharari* is used in the older translation, the concept is also in use among the agrarian Lomwe people (cf. Assane 2002). From this background information, the following questions arise: Why have the present Lomwe translators of the Old Testament moved away from the rendering of חסד as *ikharari* to *osivela* or *osivela* combined with *woororomeleya,* and what are the implications of this shift when viewed from the Lomwe's culture and worldview? What practical procedure(s) of research and translation did the Lomwe translators apply? These questions invite us to examine the current translation of חסד into Lomwe particularly in view of the latest developments in translation theory.

6.3 Translation as Communication

As already noted in section 1.4.3 of this study, a serious (re) thinking of translation models has emerged, as a result of which the theoretical underpinning of Bible translation be accounted for in terms of its methodological endeavours. Since the development of cognitive linguistics and pragmatics, relevance theory is receiving much more attention from Bible translation and is gaining ground in biblical hermeneutics (Brown 2007:35-38; cf. also Pattemore (2003, 2004). The field of cognitive pragmatics, from which relevance theory emerged[177], is concerned with the

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[176] After a thorough search and consultation with the Bible Society in Mozambique, I can confirm safely here that, to my knowledge, no translation minutes or records are found that document the decision of the older translation of 1930 to render חסד as *ikharari*.

[177] Relevance theory, originally expounded by Sperber and Wilson (1986) and applied to translation especially Bible translation by Gutt (1992 and 2000), introduced a fresh approach to communication, in general, and translation, in particular. As Floor (2005:n.p) indicates, in the field of cognitive pragmatics, this linguistic approach has introduced a valuable perspective in terms of the contextual and inferential aspects of

contextual and inferential aspects of language communication namely the fact that what is implied in language contributes to the overall meaning of what is explicitly said.

For decades, linguists worked with a model of communication that considered meaning to be encoded completely in verbal symbols or words. Distancing itself from the code model of language, relevance theory has instead turned to the principles of cognitive pragmatic orientation such as people's "cognitive environment"[178]. As already noted in section 2.2 of this study, the meaning of a word is related to people's life experience, which should be taken into account because language is a product of a group of people who observe the world they live in and relate socially to those around them. The special consideration for the target audience and their socio-cultural context has also become the focus of the so-called *Skopos*[179] School of translation:

> The Skopos rule thus reads as follows: translate/interpret/speak/write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function (Nord 1997:29).

Certain prominent aspects of this functional approach have become important also in translating the Scriptures. For instance, Nord (1997:137) states that the ideal translation *Brief* provides explicit or implicit "information about the intended target-text function(s), the target-text addressee(s), the medium over which it will be transmitted, the prospective place and time and, if necessary, the motive of production or reception of the text". Thus, every progressive translation development pro-

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language communication that need to be taught to Bible translators at the grass-roots level.

[178] According to Wendland (2008:19-35), relevance theory presupposes that every person has a "cognitive environment", the psychological component which is shaped by numerous factors, such as belief system, sense of identity, value system, range of capabilities, available resources, behavioural options, environment, etc. This theory describes how understanding happens in interaction with a person's cognitive environment. In a specific event of communication, one processes the "incoming information" in terms of his/her cognitive environment. The amount of relevance of the "incoming information" for the cognitive environment determines the extent to which the person will understand the particular communication.

[179] The origin of the term "*Skopos*" (which means 'purpose') is attributed to Hans J. Vermeer, who applied it in 1978 describes his general theory of translation, which he called the *skopostheorie*. Vermeer argued that the prime principle determining any translation process is the "*Skopos*" of the translation (Nord 1997:27).

gramme must incorporate a practical interactive strategy that both begins and ends with people, that is, with a significant measure of individual initiative as well as joint local community involvement.

According to Wendland (2004:26), the most important component of a *Brief* is the particular purpose or *Skopos*, for which the translation is being made for its primary audience. In some situations, however, the client may not be aware of all the technicalities that must be considered in view of the need being addressed by the translation. It could even be that the client has a vague or a wrong expectation of the desired translation (Nord 1997:30). As a result, it is necessary for the translator, as the professional service provider, to negotiate with the client (Nord 1997:30) and to convert the client's translation *Brief* into a practicable definition of the target text's *Skopos* (Nord 1991:9). This negotiation, however, should be carried out based on the information contained in the client's translation *Brief*, and this implies that the client's input is crucial for a translation *Skopos*.

In order to adhere to the process of implementing the project *Skopos*, it is important to consider the "function-plus-loyalty" principle. This principle is one of the outstanding features that distinguish Nord's functionalist approach to translation from other functionalist approaches. It is an explicit ethical rule, which requires the translator to be accountable to both the biblical source text and the contemporary target text. Nord establishes this ethical requirement as an amendment to the *Skopos* rule in Vermeer's *Skopos* theory, which seems to give the translator a limitless license to translate in whatever way he or she wants. Thus, the "function-plus-loyalty" principle is meant to serve as an ethical reminder to the translator not to act arbitrarily, but to be committed bilaterally to both the sender's intentions of the source text and the target text's communicative requirements.

With regard to the requirements of the target text, Nord (1997:125) observes that in the history of translation, at different times and in different parts of the world, people have had different understanding of what a good translation was and the type of translation readers expected. She states, for example, that readers in one situation might expect the translation to give the intended sense or meaning of the author, while in another situation, readers might want a translation that retains the formal features of the source text (Nord 1997:125). Whatever the situation, she emphasizes that translators must take the socio-cultural expectations of

a translation into account. Furthermore, she argues that although translators are not obliged to always do what the readers expect them to do, they have a moral responsibility not to deceive the readers or be unfaithful to the meaning and pragmatic intentions of the original author (Nord 1997:126).

In my opinion, Relevance Theory[180] is appealing because it seems compatible with Nord's functional approach, used in conjunction with the heuristic notion of conceptually orienting frames of reference. Such an approach, in which the principle of loyalty also regulates the relationship between the source text, the sender, the translator, and the current setting of communication, becomes an important development in translation studies. In this case, loyalty means that the purpose of the target text needs to be compatible with the intentions of the source text sender (Nord 1997:125). Nord explains that in some situations, the intentions of the source text sender are evident from the communicative setting in which the source text is used. In other situations, however, the author's intentions are also revealed by the structure and style of the text itself - where the author indicates emphasis by means of focusing devices such as paragraphing, repetition, rhetorical questions, vocatives and concentrations of figurative language. However, if it is impossible to access the intentions of the author due to the enormous gap in space and time, then it is preferable for the translator to produce a "documentary translation"[181] as the only way to resolve the dilemma (Nord 1997:126).

In this study, the "function-plus-loyalty" principle, as explained by Nord, is understood to be an ethical principle, which guards against misrepresenting the facts of the source text during the process of translation. This ethical requirement is of great significance in the field of Bible translation, where many stakeholders would resist any action that appears to interfere with the inspired Word of God. Thus, the principle of "function-plus-loyalty" obliges translators to be accountable for the kind of decisions they make during the translation process. This means that the

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[180] Brown (2007:35) notes that, "Relevance Theory at its center claims that (1) an utterance requires hearers to infer more than is provided in the linguistic features of the utterance itself and (2) hearers will select from among a host of contextual inputs those that are most relevant for understanding a particular utterance".

[181] Documentary translation refers to a type of translation in which the target language text retains the communicative function of the source text (Nord 1997:47-50; cf. Van der Merwe 2003:23).

Skopos of Bible translation becomes a priority in setting some of the practical guidelines for translating the Hebrew concept חסד. In the next section, some of the practical procedure(s) that were followed by the Bible translation project will be outlined.

6.4 Practical Procedure(s) Applied in Lomwe Bible Translation

Bible translation is a rather complex process, which involves the vagaries of language and cross-cultural communication further complicated by the need to recreate (or re-express) meaning across distant and disparate cultures and language families. Therefore, it is imperative that every Bible translation project has a set of working procedure(s) that guides and drives it as part of its organizational frames. The present Lomwe Bible translation project, for example, is composed of two translators and an exegete. The two translators are mother-tongue speakers[182], while the exegete is a missionary who has lived among the Lomwe since 1986. The following is a summary of the principal operating procedures that guide the Lomwe Bible translators in their daily practice, with special reference to their translation of the Old Testament[183]. These were obtained through structured interviews[184].

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[182] It should be mentioned here that the mother-tongue Lomwe translators have relatively little theological training. This, of course, is not unique to the Lomwe translators as similar cases can also be found in the northern half of Mozambique. According to Floor (2005:n.p), the following factors contributed to this state of affairs: (i) the slow start of the Catholic and Protestant churches in the country; (ii) the legacy of colonialism, the policies of which did not promote the national languages and did not provide secondary education for all; and (iii) the devastation of two subsequent civil wars, which only came to an end in October 1992. Floor also remarks that linguistics and translation theory have made great positive strides during the past twenty years, the most marked development being the progress of cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, discourse studies, and sociolinguistics - presumably, this also means the requirement of more linguistic skills on the part of all translators.

[183] For the *Brief* and *Skopos* for this project, see section 6.2 of this study.

[184] For the translator(s) questionnaire, see Appendix C1.

6.4.1 Source used

Since the Lomwe translators are not familiar with Biblical Hebrew[185], they follow the so-called *Base-Models* method of translation, which is essentially a comparative procedure whereby a relatively literal Portuguese Bible version (in this case, the Almeida version) is employed as the "base" to give translators some idea of the actual linguistic form of the original text. This is then compared with a selected number of freer Portuguese versions such as *A Boa Nova* (Good News Bible), which illustrate how the literal base text may be modified in various ways to express more clearly and in a more natural style the intended meaning of the biblical message in a given language. When working with these different versions, translators also use the Roman Catholic translation, *Bibiliya Nsu na Muluku* (first edition)[186]. This version helps the translators to access the biblical message already restructured, or pre-digested in the lexical and grammatical forms of the Lomwe language[187].

As regard the translation of חסד as *osivela* (love), the translators admit that their decision is indeed problematic. The acknowledgement came after the translators themselves noted that the Catholic version translated the word "love" (between God and people, as well as between people) as *okhwela* instead of *osivela*. The term *osivela* is used in the Protestant New Testament translation of 1930, which is currently under revision (again for both the relationships between God and people, and between

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185 In November 2008, the Bible Society of Mozambique organized a three-week Lusophone workshop. The aim was to introduce the Hebrew language to translators and to warn them of some dangers of basing translations on a secondary source (that is, on the Portuguese Bible Version, *Joao Ferreira de Almeida*), which is sacred to translators in the other four Portuguese-speaking African countries: Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and São Tomé and Principe.

186 Lomwe was one of the largest language groups in Africa without a complete translation of the Bible even though translations of the Protestant New Testament and the Psalms were published jointly in 1930. The first edition of a complete Lomwe Catholic Bible *Bibiliya Nsu na Muluku* was published in 2004. After some revisions, the second edition was published in 2008. It is important to mention here that although the Roman Catholic Bible version is finalized, it is not yet available to most Lomwe readers because of its exorbitant price.

187 The Catholic Bible *Bibiliya Nsu na Muluku* is the only Bantu language version that the Lomwe translators have at their disposal but they could have increased the effectiveness of their methodology if they had access to translations from other related languages.

people). The disagreement over the translation of the word 'love' ensues because Lomwe lacks a specific term for this particular English word. Whereas *osivela* connotes love, in general[188], *okhwela*, in ordinary conversation may have a sexual connotation (i.e. affection for the opposite sex). Not one of these terms, therefore, is specific enough to express the idea of love between God and His people.

As part of the revision of the Protestant version, a debate in church communities resulted in the decision to substitute the word *osivela* with *okhwela* - in spite of its possible sexual connotation - in contexts where the love between God and His people is expressed. Furthermore, the Protestant translators decided to retain the word *osivela* for the "love" between people, and reserve the word *okhwela* for the relationship between God and His people[189]. For instance, in the Gospel of John 3:16, God's love to humanity is translated as *okhwela*. Similarly, the word love (for one another) is translated as *okhwela* (1 John 4:8). Since *osivela* refers to love, in general, it fails to convey the specific meaning of חסד. During my interview, the translators pointed out that the use of *osivela*, the phrasal expression of *osivela waya woororomeleya* (literally, his/her faithful love) was invented to specify the intended area of meaning more precisely (by combining *osivela* with *woororomeleya*).

6.4.2 Language used

Since the translators pointed out that no prior research was conducted onחסד , the following questions arise: Which terminology did the translators and the exegete then adopt? Was it that of the Protestants or that of the Catholics or did they adopt their own, independent approach to the translation of this term?

The Lomwe translators and the exegete indicated that they used neither the language of the Protestants nor that of the Catholics in the translation ofחסד . According to the Lomwe exegete, the translators did not use

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188 For the usage of this term *osivela*, see section 6.6 of this study.

189 Although this distinction in usage is made by the Protestant translators, the decision can be faulted since the word *okhwela* has a sexual connotation in some contexts. If *okhwela* would be retained in the translation, a glossary entry should be added to explain its limited usage in the translation which would indicate that it is exclusively used as a reference for the love between God and His people, a context in which its sexual connotation will not ordinarily come up in minds of the Lomwe readers.

the terminology by either of the two existing versions in order to avoid the accusation of bias. However, the translators indicated that they value the opinion of the Lomwe elders during consultations on problematic terms because they obtained important information from the language of this group. Not surprisingly, the elderly play an important role in translation as Aroga Bessong points out:

> In Africa one cannot overemphasize the importance of the elderly in maintaining and perpetuating the cultural heritage in general and the language in particular... Youths, even adults, can feel that their linguistic competence is inadequate, limited compared to that of the elderly... The focus on the language of 25-35 year olds needs to be reconsidered in the African context (cited in Wilt 2007:120-121).

Although the intended audience of the Old Testament translation of Lomwe has been identified[190], there are some challenges, which undermine the usage of mother tongues because Portuguese remains the language of instruction today:

> The fact that less than 25% of Mozambicans are functionally competent in European Portuguese, has prompted many, such as Lopes to question whether Mozambique is a Lusophone country in any meaningful sense of the words. For him, and others, the country is Bantuphone through and through (Yorke 2004:67).

For this reason, there is a sustained call for the use of the mother tongue as the primary medium of instruction, at least, at the elementary or primary school level. According to Kitoko-Nsiku (2007:261), the revitalisation of Bantu languages in Mozambique would mean that the endangered languages would be the object of a newfound vigour, both in terms of their usage and promotion as well as study. For example, as part of its bilingual education program, leaders of FRELIMO[191], the current ruling party in Mozambique, believe that all Bantu languages should be restored[192] to their earlier prestige, and become real vehicles for education in each local area of the country where a large number of mother tongue speakers live. Kitoko-Nsiku (2007:262) further argues that the revitalisation of Bantu languages in Mozambique should be done in such a way that widely spoken languages such as Xichangana

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190 See section 6.2 of this study.

191 FRELIMO is the *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*, i.e. the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique.

192 For a discussion of the *Bilingual Education Programme* (PEBIMO) set up to restore Bantu languages in Mozambique, see Kitoko-Nsiku (2007).

and Emakhuwa are not imposed on lesser-spoken Bantu languages, as was the case with Kiswahili in Tanzania and Kenya.

6.4.3 Another technique used

Another technique used during the translation process is the application of a four-stage "method"[193] which involves analysis, transference, restructuring, and comparison. It should be mentioned here that the Lomwe exegete coordinates these four basic steps. The first is the stage of *analysis* where the text-drafter carefully studies the different versions at hand together with a selection of recommended commentaries and resource texts such as Bible dictionaries. The goal is to establish the central meaning and function of a given passage of Scriptures in its surrounding context of use in order to convey the intended meaning in the target language. Second, this central corpus of sense and significance is then *transferred* – first, into the appropriate thought forms or conceptual categories of the Lomwe and subsequently, into actual utterance units, discourse patterns, and rhetorical features that are natural in the Lomwe language and culture.

Third, the foundational text is *restructured* into a form that is compatible with Lomwe language style for it to be functionally equivalent to the biblical text in as many respects as possible. Afterwards, a review committee of church leaders are invited to scrutinize and critique a given pericope to ensure that it serves essentially the same primary communication purpose as does the original message in its given scriptural setting, both near (the immediate context) and far (the Bible as a whole).

Finally, the draft translation is *compared* with the original text or at least two of the versions that were referred to above, that is, the Portuguese Almeida version and the Lomwe Catholic version. At this stage, the translation consultant (who regularly visits the project) is invited to assess the final product. The aim of this step is twofold: (i) to ensure that no part of the basic biblical meaning is lost, distorted, or rendered incorrectly in the translation and, (ii) to ensure that the meaning is also conveyed clearly and naturally in contemporary Lomwe idiom.

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[193] While the first three steps of this method can be traced back to TAPOT, Wendland (1987:77) has added the last.

Next, I will consider fieldwork as an integral part of the CFR model, which can help to bridge more closely the cognitive gap between the socio-cultural worlds of the biblical audience and the target audience.

6.5 Fieldwork as an Integral Part of the CFR Approach in Translation[194]

In Chapter 5 of this study, I summarized the conceptual frames of reference of the Lomwe people, which provide a particular perspective for discerning their social structure and worldview as essential ethnographic features for translating חסד into Lomwe language and culture. To this, I now add fieldwork as an integral part of the CFR approach to translation in terms of the target Lomwe population living in the northern Zambésia province[195]. The aims of the fieldwork was twofold. First, it was to discover which words exist in Lomwe for the translation ofחסד . The following diagram contains sample definitions of a semantically related set of Lomwe terms[196], which can orient us in the effort to select a better term for חסד.

[194] See Lomwe's Linguistic Map in Foster (2008:84).

[195] As a representative sample, sixty Lomwe people were interviewed in the Zambésia province particularly in the Alto Molócuè and Mocuba districts. The sample was randomly selected in order to avoid bias.

[196] It is important to indicate here that the Lomwe terms for חסד were taken from existing biblical literature. Since the aim was to determine the Lomwe terms used for חסד, the table provides definitions of these terms and examples of how they are employed in their socio-cultural context during the interviews. See Appendix D.

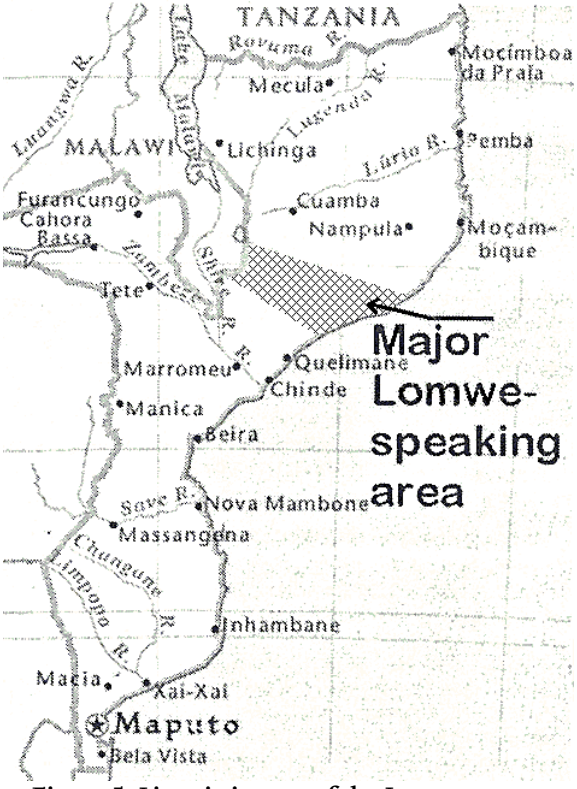

Figure 5: Linguistic map of the Lomwe

Terms	**Sample definitions**
ikharari	(i) to have pity for someone who is in a crisis, e.g. feeling pity for a hungry child; (ii) to care for and support someone[197]
osivela	to love someone or like something, e.g. I love my mother, or I like the food

[197] See section 6.7 of this study.

okhwela	to desire or want something in general, e.g. I desire to have a car or I want to be a pastor
(wo)ororomeleya	to be faithful or trustworthy, e.g. Our daughter is faithful or she is trustworthy
saphaama	to do good to someone who treated you well, e.g. I did good to Antonio because he helped me when I was in need of food

Table 7: Semantically related terms to חסד in Lomwe

Second, the aim was to read aloud to the Lomwe people the three selected passages from the translation/draft[198] of the book of Ruth where the word חסד occurs in order to determine if those listening to the translation could understand it clearly and correctly. As part of the overall approach[199], two different versions of the Lomwe Bible namely the Catholic version (CV) and Protestant version (PV) were read aloud. The reading was done without disclosing the two versions to the readers. Appendix E presents a chart that summarizes the interviews conducted in two districts[200], Alto Molócuè and Mocuba.

Five groups of Lomwe people were identified using four categories, viz. church affiliation, level of education, gender, and age. The members of the first group were all males, including one Protestant and five Catholics between the ages of 18 and 24 years. The Protestant chose the PV and the five Catholics opted for the CV, except one respondent who preferred the PV for the translation of חסד in Ruth 3:10.

The second group consisted of three Catholics and nine Protestants all aged between 25 and 35 years. All three Catholics chose the CV, except one who preferred the PV for the translation of חסד in Ruth 3:10. From

198 Since the current published version of the Lomwe translation of Ruth was not available during the time of my fieldwork, the interview was based on the translation/draft of Ruth provided by the Bible Society of Mozambique.

199 A pilot study was conducted in the Nampula province where twenty Lomwe people were interviewed. Two reasons prompted its failure. First, due to the lower level of education, the questionnaires were not answered properly. Second, during the interview, the Catholic version was not available to the writer of this research.

200 The interviews were conducted between November and December 2008 among Lomwe Christians from both Catholic and Protestant churches, which are the dominant Christian constituencies in the area.

the nine Protestants, three preferred the PV and six chose the CV except the three who chose the PV for the translation of חסד in Ruth 1:8 and 3:10.

The third group comprised two Catholics and eighteen Protestants aged between 36 and 45 years. The two Catholics preferred the CV, except for the translation of חסד in Ruth 1:8 and Ruth 3:10. From the eighteen Protestants, nine chose the PV, except for one who preferred the CV for the translation of חסד in Ruth 1:8. Another nine chose the CV, except for one who chose the PV for the translation of חסד in Ruth 3:10.

The fourth group consisted of six male and six female Protestants between the ages of 46 and 55 years. Out of the group of twelve, seven chose the CV and five preferred the PV. Among the seven respondents who opted for the CV, three chose the PV for Ruth 3:10, 1:8 and 2:20 respectively. From the five who opted for the PV, one preferred the CV for Ruth 3:10.

Finally, the fifth group comprised six male and four female Protestants above the age of 56 years. Six respondents chose the PV and four the CV for 1:8, 2:20 and 3:10. Out of the six interviewees who preferred the PV for all three verses, only two favoured the CV for 1:8. From the four who opted for the CV, three preferred the PV for 2:20, 1:8 and 3:10 respectively.

From the above results for the five test groups, it is interesting to note that of the sixty Lomwe people who were interviewed, 33 (55%) preferred the CV for Ruth 1:8 compared to 27 (45%) respondents who chose the PV. Moreover, 35 (58%) respondents preferred the CV for Ruth 2:20 compared to 25 (42%) who opted for the PV; and 37 (62%) respondents preferred the PV for Ruth 3:10 compared to 23 (38%) who chose the CV. My fieldwork, thus, indicates a discernible pattern for Ruth 1:8 and 2:20 namely that where *ikharari* was used, the respondents preferred the CV. However, in Ruth 3:10 the Lomwe word used to translate חסד in the PV is *woororomeleya*, while the CV uses the verbal phrase *oreera murima* (lit. *good heart*, i.e. [a person] of good heart). Therefore, of these two expressions, *woororomeleya* in the PV and *oreera murima* in the CV, *woororomeleya* was found to be more natural to the Lomwe people than *oreera murima*. It should be mentioned here that all these Lomwe terms including the word *ikharari* were tested with the translators of both projects

(i.e. the Lomwe and Emakhuwa)[201] in order to determine the correctness of the listed Lomwe words on the questionnaire (see Appendix C2). The following table is the distribution summary of respondents as per percentage.

Version	No. of respondents and percentages		
	Ruth 1:8	Ruth 2:20	Ruth 3:10
PV	27 (45%)	25 (42%)	37 (62%)
CV	33 (55%)	35 (58%)	23 (38%)
Total	60	60	60

Table 8: Summary of distribution of respondents

The result of the fieldwork indicates that the majority of Lomwe people (55%) understand and prefer the CV, which translates חסד as *ikharari* in general. However, older Protestants (over 56 years) prefer the PV. The lack of education of some members seemed to have a direct bearing on the choices they made. The younger people's preferences for the CV were not based on whether they were Protestant or Catholic, but on their level of education as indicated in the table (see Appendix E). As noted above, the purpose of the interview was to determine whether those listening to the translation understood it clearly and correctly because, as Barnwell (1992:186) rightly explains, people, usually, find it difficult to understand texts when read to them if the meaning is not clear or the language used is unnatural and unexpected. Thus, the results of the interviews and questionnaires reveal the variance in the translation of חסד and show the change in pattern of the respondents' choice with regard to Ruth 1:8, 2:20 and 3:10.

6.6 Application of CFR to the Translation of חסד in Ruth

We will now consider some ways in which the CFR, developed in this study, can be applied to the translation of חסד into Lomwe. In keeping with the focus on the selected passages of Ruth in which חסד appears, I

[201] The Emakhuwa project was included at this stage because these two groups are related in terms of their language and culture (cf. section 5.2 of this study).

would like to propose a rendering that uses certain literary features of the Lomwe language and culture as a means of preserving the textual meaning of חסד.

6.6.1 Translation[202] and comment[203] on Ruth 1:8

Hebrew text	Greek text	Lomwe[204] text with English back-translation
וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֳמִי לִשְׁתֵּי כַלֹּתֶיהָ לֵכְנָה שֹּׁבְנָה אִשָּׁה לְבֵית אִמָּהּ יַעַשׂ [?] יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד כַּאֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם עִם־הַמֵּתִים וְעִמָּדִי:	καὶ εἶπεν Νωεμιν ταῖς νύμφαις αὐτῆς Πορεύεσθε δὴ ἀποστράφητε ἑκάστη εἰς οἶκον μητρὸς αὐτῆς· ποιήσαι κύριος μεθ' ὑμῶν ἔλεος, καθὼς ἐποιήσατε μετὰ τῶν τεθνηκότων καὶ μετ' ἐμοῦ·	*Nawomi aahi wa yaawo: "Mmoha ni mmoha akookeleke wa amannya; nave Apwiya ewooniheryekeeni osivela waya woororomeleya* [חסד] *ntoko tho mwaawooniheryaanyu asiiyanyu akhwile ni miyo tho.* Naomi said to them [Ruth and Orpah]: "Each of you, go back to your mother's [house]; may the Lord show [חסד] as you did to your late husband and me.

Table 9: Ruth 1:8 in Hebrew, Greek and Lomwe texts

As already noted in section 4.3.1 of this study, Naomi wishes that Yahweh would show חסד to her two daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah as they have shown חסד to her and their late husbands. Naomi then tells

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202 The Translator's Handbook on the Book of Ruth written by De Waard and Nida (1973) was consulted. Although the *dynamic equivalence* was the dominant translation theory at the time the book was written the present study finds the approach unapplicable.

203 By "comment," I mean the usage of the four dimensions (i.e. textual, socio-cultural, organizational and communicational), which were developed in Chapter 4 of this study. Here, I will also engage with the translation itself as part of the interpretation process.

204 The Lomwe translations here and below are from SBM 2008.

205 Besides the occurrence of this phrase in the Ruth story, it is also found in the Rebekah story (Gen. 24:28) and in the Songs of songs 3:4 and 8:2 (cf. also Prov. 9:1; 14:1; 31:10-31). The inter-textual relationship with reference to mother's house highlights the role of a woman in the family.

her two daughters-in-law to go back to their mother's house[205]. This suggestion may seem unusual given that in most cases reference would be to the father's house[206]. However, given the influence that women had on affairs within the household (cf. Meyers 1991:50), it is not unusual for Naomi to refer to a mother's house. According to Meyers, this term draws us into the household setting that circumscribed the life activities of both Israelite women and men. Within that setting, she argues, "women's voices were heard, their presence was valuable and valued, and their deeds *and words* had a profound influence on others" (Meyers 1991:50, *emphasis added*).

That influence went beyond the family household.[207] Women participated in marriage arrangements for their children with some economic if not political implications. Arranging a marriage normally involved some perspicacity and diplomacy as part of the negotiation process. The negotiation process included the elders as important members of the community who act in a facilitating capacity. A man could acquire a wife through a personal purchase, which was more in the nature of compensation to the family for the loss of a valued member. In instances where payment was not possible, certain services could be provided to the family for a certain period before a man acquired a woman as his wife (e.g. Jacob who served Laban fourteen years for Rachel and Leah)[208]. After the conclusion of such a process (i.e. purchasing/rendering of services), the marriage took place and the woman left her father's house to live with her husband.

The role of women in a marriage relationship was very diverse in the sense that they performed a variety of essential tasks. In addition to being mothers with the obvious task of nursing and raising children, women were also involved in food production and processing, which indicate their control over the daily affairs of the family. Hence, the domestic scene was the realm of women where they had much impact on

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[205] Besides the occurrence of this phrase in the Ruth story, it is also found in the Rebekah story (Gen. 24:28) and in the Songs of songs 3:4 and 8:2 (cf. also Prov. 9:1; 14:1; 31:10-31). The inter-textual relationship with reference to mother's house highlights the role of a woman in the family.

[206] Cf. Gen. 24:38; 38:11; Num. 30:16; Deut. 22:21; Lev. 22:13; and Judg. 19:2, 3.

[207] For example, besides participating in marriage arrangements, women also acted as prophets (cf. Miriam in Exod. 15:20-21 and Deborah in Judg. 4:4).

[208] See Gen. 29:15-30.

the welfare of the family[209]. Ruth working on the fields is a good example of how women in an agrarian society contributed to the well-being of their families. It could be argued that the notion of caring for the family was closely linked to the idea of showing חסד particularly by a wife to her husband. Such an assumption also finds support in the story of Ruth in which Naomi stresses the חסד that Ruth and Orpah have shown not only to her, but also to their late husbands. Naomi's statement is a clear indication that in ancient Israel an act of חסד entailed more than just an expression of love within a marriage; it also manifested itself in the various roles of women within such a relationship. Moreover, it bears witness to the idea that the two daughters-in-law conducted themselves well while in their husband's house as far as the fulfilment of the above-mentioned roles is concerned.

Given that the Lomwe society is matriarchal; its marriage system differs from that of ancient Israel. Whereas in the ancient Israelite society marriage was patrical—a woman left her father's house to live with her husband's family—Lomwe custom obliges the husband to leave his family and join that of his wife, where he will be under the authority of the parents-in-law. Men are expected to be dutiful to their in-laws, at least during the early stages of marriage. If the man fails to impress the in-laws and proves himself unworthy, his parents-in-law can send him back home to his parents and annul the marriage.

If married man dies without any close relatives (i.e. a brother or a cousin) to replace him officially in his widow's family, his family has an obligation to pay the widow token and accompany her to her relatives. With that, the widow becomes eligible to re-marry and she gains the support of the community. Despite the differences in the two marriage systems, there is a similarity in the position of widows in the two societies. With the death of their husbands Naomi advised both Ruth and Orpah to return to their mother's house[210]. This case is comparable to the Lomwe matrilineal practice. Another similarity exists with regards to the role of Lomwe women and their ancient Israelite counterparts within the marriage as indicated above.

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[209] Although women took on various roles within the family, men were in no way marginalised as far as family issues were concerned. As head of the household, a man still had to protect his family and provide guidance on family related matters.

[210] The LXX recognises this ancient custom with its use of the phrase οἶκον μητρὸς ("mother's house").

Having discussed the socio-cultural milieus in which both marriage systems operate, it is important to consider at this point implication of rendering of חסד as *osivela waya wooororomeleya* (his or her faithful love) in Lomwe. The Lomwe translators have chosen this phrase as the most suitable term for חסד because it is used within a marriage relationship in Ruth 1:8. Although one of the contexts in which חסד is used is the marriage relationship, the structure of the sentence (particularly the second part of it) could also clarify the usage of the term. Ruth 1:8b refers to Yahweh's חסד to the two daughters-in-law of Naomi. Before she highlights Ruth and Orpah's חסד to their husbands, Naomi wishes that Yahweh would show his חסד to her two daughters-in-law who are now widows. Naomi's request implies the restoration of the former position of Ruth and Orpah as wives.

According to Meyers (1978:98), wives in ancient Israel had honour, prestige, self-esteem, and respect in the family by virtue of their position and roles. The wish here for Yahweh to show his חסד to Ruth and Orpah does not only imply restoration but also protection since in ancient Israel widows like orphans and the poor were vulnerable to exploitation. Since these groups had no rights and they were treated as social outcasts, they needed protection (cf. Fensham 1962:137). One could argue that Ruth and Orpah faced a similar situation now that their husbands have died. Hence, Naomi's request that Yahweh should show חסד to them could imply the restoration of their former position to prevent them from suffering the fate of so many other widows in ancient Israel. Given the precarious situation of widows, the call for Yahweh to protect Ruth and Orpah should come as no surprise. Once their situation is restored (being married again, having honour, prestige, self-esteem and respect) they will also have the necessary protection from their husbands. Until such a time, Yahweh should act as their protector and provider (request for divine חסד).

Up to this point, it is clear that in Ruth 1:8 חסד implies action. Just as Ruth and Orpah showed חסד to their late husbands (action), Yahweh would show חסד to them (acts of restoration and protection). Since חסד signifies action, one could ask whether *osivela waya wooororomeleya* captures this particular meaning of the word in Ruth 1:8. Although the word *osivela* has been combined with *wooororomeleya* to capture the idea of love, it fails to highlight the notion of action associated with חסד in this verse. Given this semantic failure of *osivela waya wooororomeleya*, the

word *ikharari* used with the associated verb *omorela* should be considered a more suitable translation of חסד because it underscores the idea of action[211].

It should be mentioned that in addition to the CV's use of *ikharari* in Ruth 1:8, the empirical results confirm the people's preference for this term (see section 6.5 of this study)[212]. Based on this evidence, one could therefore argue that *ikharari* seems to be a more appropriate rendering because it emphasises the aspect of action that involves care[213]. This idea resonates with the understanding of the Lomwe people, which is that, to show חסד involves action that focuses on the wellbeing of the one to whom חסד is shown. Given this exposition, one can argue that *osivela waya woororomeleya* is not an appropriate translation of חסד because in Lomwe "to love someone" implies doing something as an act of solidarity (notion of action: *ikharari*)[214]. This point is evident also in Ruth 2:20.

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[211] Although the word *ikharari* is a noun, it implies action, as song 166 from Foster's (2008:189) collection among the Lomwe people illustrates: *Muthiyana ahiloca, Mukimorele ikharari, Mwanaka ori ophariwe ti nsololo,* "A woman says, show me *ikharari* [pity], my child is possessed by an evil spirit" (my translation).

[212] Additionally, in song 254 (cf. Foster 2008:209) we find the following expression: *Muluku atiithi ninnovekaani ikharari ni epewe anyu Mukhale ni hiyo mahiku oothene, wi noone orwa wanyu;* 'God the father, we ask your [*ikharari:* protection] and favour upon us every day so that we can see your coming' (my translation).

[213] See section 1.1 of this study. For example, Genesis 47:29 reads: Mwaakhwelaka okimorela ikharari, mukuhe ntata nanyu vamweconi vaka, nave mulipele moosivela wi munamweerano mweeparipari yooveka ak (SBM 1999), i.e. 'If you wish to show Ikharari [care], put your hand under my thigh and swear that you will do my request' (my translation). Similarly, in 1 Kings 20:31 we read: Vaavaa anamuteko a Penehatate yaamuleela yoowo, eriki: Tiwi, nohiiwa wi mamwene a aIsarayeli anaamorela achu ikharari (SBM 1999), "Then his workers said to him [Ben-Hadad]: 'We have heard that the kings of Israel do Ikharari [care] about people'" (my translation).

[214] Since the Lomwe and Makhuwa are related in terms of their languages and culture, it is interesting to note that the Makhuwa translators have opted for the word *ikharari* in Ruth 1:8.

6.6.2 Translation and comment on Ruth 2:20

Hebrew text	Greek text[215]	Lomwe text with English back-translation
וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֳמִי לְכַלָּתָהּ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לַיהוָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָזַב חַסְדּוֹ אֶת־הַחַיִּים וְאֶת־הַמֵּתִים וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ נָעֳמִי קָרוֹב לָנוּ הָאִישׁ מִגֹּאֲלֵנוּ הוּא:	καὶ εἶπεν Νωεμιν τῇ νύμφῃ αὐτῆς Εὐλογητός ἐστιν τῷ κυρίῳ, ὅτι οὐκ ἐγκατέλιπεν τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ζώντων καὶ μετὰ τῶν τεθνηκότων. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ Νωεμιν Ἐγγίζει ἡμῖν ὁ ἀνὴρ, ἐκ τῶν ἀγχιστευόντων ἡμᾶς ἐστιν.	*Nawomi aamwaakhula: "Apwiya yaawo ahinahiya osivela waya woororomeleya [חסד] wa achu akumi, nari wa achu ookhwa, emureelihe Powase". Aamuleela tho, wii: "Mulopwana yoowo mmusi ahu, mmoha a yaawo oophwanela onthokororya".* Naomi answered: "[May] the Lord who does not abandon his [חסד] to the living and the dead, bless Boaz". She then told her [Ruth]: "That man is one of our relatives, the one who has the re-sponsibility of caring for us".

Table 10: Hebrew, Greek and Lomwe texts of Ruth 2:20

As already noted in section 4.3.1 of this study, the passage above is not clear whether Boaz or Yahweh is the subject of the action. However, I have argued that through this deliberate ambiguity the reader becomes fully aware of the fact that Boaz, by acting on behalf of Yahweh when he allowed Ruth to glean in his field becomes the subject of this verse. Showing such hospitality was required of the people of God throughout the Old Testament as a legal obligations stipulated by custom and the Law (cf. Lev. 19:9-10; 23:22 and Deut. 24:19). The moral obligation was based on family values, which fostered solidarity among members of the

[215] Although the Greek text does not also play any significant role in the discussion of 2:20, it is shown in the table in order to present the texts consistently.

household. This solidarity manifested itself in the protection and care that members showed to one another. Of particular importance in this regard was the role of the "kinsman-redeemer" (*go'el*), who had the obligation to "redeem" that which was lost through purchase, to avenge the death of kinsmen, and should he happen to be the closest relative of a deceased male of child-bearing age, to marry his widow (in what was known as the levirate marriage).

The Deuteronomic law code underpinning the custom of levirate marriage allowed for an element of choice (see Deut. 25:5-10). The brother of the dead man could choose not to fulfil his responsibilities to his dead brother and the widow. For example, the nearest kinsman in the story of Ruth refused to assume his responsibility (4:6). However acting as Ruth's kinsman, Boaz decided to redeem Elimelech's inheritance and his family line through a levirate marriage (cf. also Gen 38). Ruth's marriage to Boaz brought support and hope to Naomi and the (re)assurance that Yahweh did not cease to show his חסד to the living and the dead. It was through Boaz that Yahweh's חסד to both Naomi and Ruth was fulfilled. As noted, Boaz's role highlights the significance of the individual's obligation toward and communication with his/her fellow Israelites as the communal "people of God"[216].

Since the Lomwe society is agrarian, the people practice mutual assistance by exchanging goods and services as part of their survival strategy. For example, Assane (2002:24) points out that *mpuha* is one of the popular labour sharing devices whereby Lomwe families assist one another to plough each other's fields in exchange for meals or beer brewed by women. This system of solidarity provides sustenance for families particularly in times of crisis. Another system of solidarity practiced by Lomwe Christians is called *ikharari* (cf. Assane 2002:47). This system provides support; for instance, if a person is sick, a member of the

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[216] The concept of Israel as the "people of God" is also linked with the concept of Yahweh as the God of Israel's "fathers" or "Patriarchs" (i.e. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). This concept of "people of God" is founded upon the covenant which Yahweh made with the Patriarchs as well as the covenant he made with Israel via Moses. The Israelites can legitimately be regarded as the 'people of God' based upon their acceptance of Yahweh's covenant. According to Usue (2006:209), the Mosaic covenant provided certain ways in which other nations, as well as aliens or foreigners such as Ruth could also be included in the covenant through marriage and thereby become by extension "people of God".

church helps to perform the core household functions until the person recovers. During this period, relationships are established and strengthened. As is the case in the Lomwe society, members of a household in ancient Israel had an obligation to care for each other.

Having established the analogous socio-cultural contexts of both groups (i.e. the Lomwe and Israelites), it is now time to focus on the rendering of חסד as *osivela waya wooororomeleya* in Ruth 2:20. According to Lomwe translators, this phrase was chosen as the most suitable translation for חסד in this particular verse because it highlights the everlasting חסד of God. Although Yahweh is the main subject of the story of Ruth, Boaz functions as the subject in this particular passage. Boaz becomes the subject when one reads the second part of the passage in which Naomi reveals the identity of the field owner. As the subject, Boaz provides care and support for both Ruth and Naomi. The action or behaviour of Boaz should be rendered with the same word used in 1:8, viz. *ikharari*, because it also emphasises care and support as important aspects of the socio-cultural situation depicted in 2:20. Since Boaz's חסד to Ruth and Naomi accentuates care and support, *ikharari* becomes the most appropriate rendering of חסד in 2:20[217].

I will now turn to the third occurrences of חסד in the book of Ruth, that is, in 3:10.

[217] In this passage, the Makhuwa translators have also opted for *ikharari* as the most suitable term for חסד. According to them, the verse highlights the important aspect of care and protection, which Boaz provided for both Ruth and Naomi.

6.6.3 Translation and comment on Ruth 3:10

Hebrew text	Greek text[218]	Lomwe text with English back-translation
וַיֹּאמֶר בָּרוּכָה אַתְּ לַיהוָה בִּתִּי הֵיטַבְתְּ חַסְדֵּךְ הָאַחֲרוֹן מִן־הָרִאשׁוֹן לְבִלְתִּי־לֶכֶת אַחֲרֵי הַבַּחוּרִים אִם־דַּל וְאִם־עָשִׁיר׃	καὶ εἶπεν Βοος Εὐλογημένη σὺ τῷ κυρίῳ θεῷ, θύγατερ, ὅτι ἠγάθυνας τὸ ἔλεός σου τὸ ἔσχατον ὑπὲρ τὸ πρῶτον, τὸ μὴ πορευθῆναί σε ὀπίσω νεανιῶν, εἴτοι πτωχὸς εἴτοι πλούσιος.	*Powase aahi: "Apwiya yooreelihe mwanaka! Osivela waa woororomeleya [*חסד*] wuuwu onnapwaha woopacerya waacharaka ap-wiyamwanaa, ohichunaka otheliwa ni mmiravo nari amuhakhu nari oohaawa.* Boaz said: "[May] the Lord bless you, my daughter! [Your present חסד] is greater than the first, in that you [decided] to follow your mother-in-law, instead of getting married with a young man either rich or poor.

Table 11: Hebrew, Greek and Lomwe texts of Ruth 3:10

As already noted in section 4.3.1 of this study, Boaz mentions Ruth's חסד to her mother-in-law when he blesses her: "May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter; you have made this last kindness [חסד] greater than the first, in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich". He tells Ruth that this new demonstration of חסד is greater than the earlier חסד that he praised her for namely Ruth's care for her mother-in-law. She is willing to abandon the secure environment of the father's house to follow her mother-in-law:

> Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will

[218] Again, although the Greek text does not play any significant role in the discussion of 3:10, it is shown in the table in order to present the texts consistently.

be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me (Ruth 1:16-17).

This declaration shows the commitment and determination of Ruth to stay with Naomi regardless of the circumstances. Such devotion must be read in conjunction with Ruth 3:10 because both verses emphasize Ruth's self-sacrifice and loyalty toward Naomi. Her self-sacrifice and loyalty ensures that the name of Elimelech would not be cut off from among his family or clan (Ruth 4:10). It should be noted that if Ruth had decided to remain in Moab, the family of Elimelech would have ceased to be. His family line would have died out among the people of Israel. Thus, Ruth's behaviour becomes not merely an act of preserving a family line, but a deed that would ensure the continuation of a family line within Israel's covenantal framework of the "people of God".

The Lomwe society is agrarian, and family relationships are structured on the principle of *nihimo* (clan) through which an all-encompassing family care unit is formed. As noted, the term *nihimo* does not necessarily refer to a "closed group", but denotes a group of siblings which may include all the people who belong to a given extended family. Hence, the concept of *nihimo* is a central feature of kinship organization that is constituted not only by members of the same clan, but also by those of other clans who are joined through marriage. As in the Lomwe society, marriage in ancient Israel created a bond between families of different clans (*mahimo* in plural)[219]. However, as a matriarchal society, the Lomwe trace their descent through the lineage of mothers, while the ancient Israelites traced their descent through the lineage of fathers.

Having established the socio-cultural world of both the Lomwe and the ancient Israelites, it is necessary to focus on the translation of חסד as *osivela waya woororomeleya* in Lomwe. The Lomwe translators have chosen this phrase as the most suitable translation for חסד because it emphasizes the aspect of marriage relationship. After Naomi tells her two daughters-in-law to go back to their mothers' houses, Ruth persists in following Naomi out of her own free will. If she is not under any obligation to stay, why does Ruth decide to stay with her mother-in-law? One could argue here that the willingness to stay with her mother-in-law is a result of her exceptional family loyalty (and not so much of any action).

[219] The idea that marriage creates a bond between families of different clans (*mahimo*) in Lomwe is contrary to the view of Foster (2008) who believes otherwise.

This particular verse communicates that showing חסד implies the attitude of loyalty. Linked with the notion of loyalty is the idea of self-sacrifice. Boaz's reference to Ruth's חסד in 3:10 is recognition of her self-sacrifice, the willingness to remain a widow and to relinquish the privileges of a married life among her own people (e.g. honour, prestige, respect and self-esteem). Hence, this verse highlights the exceptional attitude of Ruth.

Since the expression *osivela waya woororomeleya* (lit. *love his/her faithful,* i.e. his/her faithful love) which is used by the Lomwe translators, does not convey this particular connotation of "attitude/disposition" in 3:10, *oreera murima* (lit. *good heart,* i.e. [a person] of good heart) is proposed as an alternative rendering of חסד in Lomwe because it best describes Ruth's disposition.

Although empirical research was conducted among the Lomwe, the choice of *oreera murima* for 3:10 was not entirely informed by that research. The reason was that whenever this verse was read in both the Protestant and Catholic versions to the Lomwe people respondents in the course of the fieldwork, most of them asked that it be repeated before they chose their preferred translation. In the end, the majority chose the Protestant version using *osivela waya woororomeleya*, but the uncertainty of the people when they made their choice, convinced the researcher not to rely on their responses. They were equally uncertain about the expression *oreera murima* in the Catholic version, and asked that version be read repeatedly.

Due to the uncertainty among the Lomwe interviewees, I decided to crosscheck this case with the Bible translators. The Lomwe translators were first consulted by means of questionnaires, and they maintained the choice of *osivela waya woororomeleya*. Their preference was determined, however, by their translation decision to keep this expression in all three cases in Ruth.

Subsequently, the Makhuwa Bible translators[220] were also interviewed for further assistance in determining a suitable translation of חסד in Lomwe. They opted for *oreera murima* in 3:10 (which is the same expres-

[220] Since the Lomwe share the same culture with and belong to the same language group as the Makhuwa, the Makhuwa translators were then interviewed in order to crosscheck whether any other alternatives sterm would arise.

sion used in the Catholic version) because, according to them, it communicates the additional feature of "attitude".

It was decided, therefore, that the expression *oreera murima* be suggested as a translation alternative in the Protestant version on account of two reasons: (i) The expression *oreera murima* expresses the attitude/disposition involved in this verse more clearly than *osivela waya wooororomeleya*. Therefore, it is more in line with the CFR model proposed above, (ii) The expression *oreera murima* also provides the opportunity to distinguish the usage in 3:10 from 1:8 and 2:20. In those cases, it was suggested that the word *ikharari* (which carries the element of "action") be used. The recommended expression *oreera murima* in 3:10 takes into account the element of "attitude", which is more appropriate here in terms of the CFR model.

The choice is made being well-aware of the fact that the expression *oreera murima* created an equal amount of uncertainty among the Lomwe interviewees. However, it is proposed here because it is more in line with the CFR model that is used in this study – something that cannot be said of the alternative expression *osivela waya wooororomeleya*.

6.7 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter argues that any attempt to translate חסד into Lomwe should take into account both the older translation's usage of *ikharari* and the work of Assane (2002) on the everyday use of this concept among the Lomwe. My study evaluates the suitability of the terms *osivela/wooororomeleya* and *ikharari* in relation to others Lomwe terms which could convey the conceptual complexity denoted by the wordחסד . To evaluate the suitability of these terms as the translation of חסד into Lomwe, the CFR model for the translation was introduced. The approach offers a multifaceted method for understanding the meaning of חסד in Ruth 1:8, 2:20 and 3:10. Since *osivela waya wooororomeleya* does not do justice to the meaning of חסד in these three passages, the expressions *ikharari* (1:8 and 2:20) and *oreera murima* (3:10) have been proposed as being exegetically and socio-culturally appropriate for translation into Lomwe.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This final chapter comprises three parts. The first part represents a summary of the dissertation and the second part outlines the findings while the last makes recommendations for future research.

7.1.1 Summary

The first chapter of this study introduced the main research problem, the theoretical point of departure, the hypothesis and an overview of previous scholarly literature on the word חסד in the Old Testament. In the second chapter, the semantic model proposed by De Blois was examined and, to complement this model, a Cognitive Frames of Reference (CFR) approach for analyzing and translating חסד in the Old Testament, with special reference to the book of Ruth, was proposed. The third chapter surveyed the significant aspects of the meaning of חסד in the narrative and lyric-poetic texts using the standard semantic distinction of *Agent* and *Patient*. In addition, an investigation of Hebrew words which are used in conjunction with חסד in the Old Testament was conducted along with a study of the way חסד is presented in existing Hebrew lexicons.

The fourth chapter focused on the semantic analysis of חסד with reference to its usage in the book of Ruth. To accomplish this, the CFR approach was developed in order to provide an integrative framework for investigating the meaning of חסד in relation to various contextual dimensions namely the textual, socio-cultural, communicational and organizational perspec-tives. The fifth chapter presented the conceptual frames of reference of the Lomwe people, which provide a particular perspective for discerning their social structure and worldview as essential ethnographic features for translating חסד. Finally, in Chapter 6, the data from the fieldwork conducted among Lomwe speakers to obtain a suitable translation of חסד into the Lomwe language and culture was analyzed, again, using the CFR approach.

7.1.2 Findings

It has been noted that many of the existing Hebrew lexicons are often of limited value in translation because they focus more on the linguistic elements of the word without due consideration for the socio-cultural contexts in which the words occur. The same problem manifests in the current translation project of the Old Testament into Lomwe. It seems that the socio-cultural context of the word חסד in the book of Ruth is not taken into account in the new translation. Therefore, this study has attempted to demonstrate the need to consider not only linguistic elements in translation, but also the socio-cultural context of a word in explicating its meaning. Below, the findings from the research are enumerated:

1. The CFR approach helps us to understand that while the different dimensions of a biblical text always have to be considered in the translation process, an appropriate translation theory is required as well. In other words, with the CFR approach it has been shown that a biblical text should be interpreted more fully within its own communicative context. It must always be contextualised to a greater degree by applying different dimensions of interpretation namely the textual, socio-cultural, communicational and the organizational. Additionally, these dimensions of textual interpretation must deal with intertextual as well as intratextual contexts and their influence on the reading process of a given text with reference to a particular target audience and their linguistic and socio-cultural setting. All these components need to be considered and integrated within a unified interpretive framework in order to understand better the message of a text.
2. The study showed that *osivela waya woororomeleya* (the expression used in the current Lomwe translation project) does not do justice to the meaning of חסד in the three passages, which the word occurs in the book of Ruth. Instead, the expressions *ikharari* (1:8 and 2:20) and *oreera murima* (3:10) have been proposed as exegetically and socio-culturally more appropriate alternatives for translation into Lomwe. The CFR approach has offered enriching perspectives, while presenting adequate arguments for the translation alternatives offered here.
3. The use of the CFR approach has also emphasized the importance of being sensitive to the genre of the text considered in

this study. The text's artistic composition, marked by a distinctive style, form, or content as part of the communicative function(s) of the text in a given socio-cultural setting, is a vital element to consider in the translation process.

4. Finally, by examining the traditional way of life and worldview of the Lomwe people within an organized social structure as a crucial factor in the exercise of translation, this study could be regarded as an original contribution to translation study among the Lomwe. Again, the CFR approach provided the necessary perspectives for this task.

7.1.3 Recommendations

This study has been conducted within the scope proposed at its onset. However, there is room for further research and the following issues could be raised for future consideration:

1. Since the study did not consider the usage of חסד in the prophetic and lyric-poetic literature, it would be interesting to see whether the same strategy developed in this dissertation to evaluate the appropriateness of the Lomwe terms used for חסד could be applied to that corpus.
2. Any investigation into the suitability of Lomwe terms used to translate חסד should include fieldwork that is more comprehensive to determine the full range of the meaning of such Lomwe words. Where possible, such research should use multiple methods in conducting the fieldwork, for example, focus group discussions, detailed self-administered questionnaires and content analysis (i.e. the analysis of texts, newspaper articles, radio broadcasts, Christian songs, etc.) including also Bible study groups especially for the less educated.
3. It has been mentioned that the Makhuwa translators were also interviewed during the fieldwork. However, it would be interesting to consider, in addition, the Lomwe in Malawi who have a different socio-cultural setting from those in Mozambique, in order to see whether that setting influences their choice of Lomwe terms for a specific biblical word and if the choice differs from those of their Lomwe counterparts in Mozambique.
4. It could be worthwhile to consider the potential benefit of a glossary entry or an introduction to the book of Ruth in the Lomwe

translation that would provide a detailed explanation of the word חסד with appropriate cross-reference. For example, it would be important to describe, in the introduction to the book, that although חסד occurs only three times (Ruth 1:8, 2:20 and 3:10) with reference to Ruth, Boaz and Yahweh as subjects respectively, Ruth is "a חסד story".

5. The potential implication of this study for translating the New Testament into Lomwe could be investigated. One could determine whether the same expression(s) could be used to translate different Greek concepts such as "mercy" or "grace".

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APPENDIX A:
THE USAGE OF חסד IN NARRATIVE TEXTS

The table below shows the distribution of חסד in different narrative contexts. Based on this distribution, seven categories that describe the social relationships in which חסד is used were identified:

The key to the colours:

God's חסד to Individuals;
God's חסד to His people
Men's חסד to Fellowmen
Leader's חסד to Leader
Leader'sחסד to Follower
Son's חסד to Father
Wife's חסד to Husband

Scripture reference	Verb used with חסד	Agent	Patient	Relationship/ Covenant	Narrative context	Abstract/ Movement
Gen. 19:19	He [God] shows [עשׂה] great חסד to [Lot]	God	Lot	Guest-host	Hospitality	Crisis to blessing
Gen. 20:13	She [Sarah] shows [עשׂה] חסד to [her husband Abraham]	Sarah	Abraham	Husband-brother and wife-sister*	Marriage	Crisis to blessing
Gen. 21:23	He [Abimelech] shows [עשׂה] חסד to [Abraham]	Abimelech	Abraham	Diplomacy	Political	Crisis to blessing
Gen. 24:12,14	He [God] shows [עשׂה] חסד to [Abraham]	God	Abraham	Guest-host	Hospitality	Crisis to blessing
Gen. 24:27	He [God] has not abandoned [עזב] his חסד to [Abraham]					
Gen. 24:49	He [Laban] shows [עשׂה] חסד to [Bethuel-Isaac]	Laban	Bethuel-Isaac	Familyclan	Kinship-in-law	Crisis to blessing
Gen. 32:10; 39:21	He [God] shows [עשׂה]חסד to [Jacob/ Joseph]	God	Jacob/ Joseph	Covenant word, or divine promise	Religious	Crisis to blessing
Gen. 40:14	He [Cup-bearer] shows [עשׂה] חסד to [Joseph]	Cup-bearer	Joseph, the prisoner	Covenant word, or divine promise	Reward	Crisis to blessing
Gen. 47:29	He [Joseph] shows [עשׂה] חסד to [his father Jacob]	Joseph	Jacob-Israel	Father-son*	Kinship	Crisis to blessing

* The weaker party provides assistance to a stronger one.

Scripture reference	Verb used with חסד	Agent	Patient	Relationship/ Covenant	Narrative context	Abstract/ Movement
Ex 15:13; 20:6; Deut. 5:10	You [God] show [עשׂה] חסד to [the people of Israel]	God	Israelites	His people	Religious	Crisis to blessing
Ex 34:7	You [God] maintain [נצר] חסד with [the people of Israel]					
Ex 34:6; Num 14:18, 19; Neh. 9:17	No verb is used. However, there is an action-attitude of God toward His people					
Deut.7:9,12; Neh.1:5; 9:32	You [God] keep [שׁמר] חסד to [the people of Israel]					
Josh.2:12,14; Judg.1:24	They [Israelite spies] show [עשׂה] חסד to [Rahab/the man of Bethel and his family]	The Israelite spies	Rahab/ the man of Bethel and his family	Prior action based on 'prior relationship'	Hospitality	Crisis to blessing
Judg. 8:35	They [Israe-lites] fail to show [עשׂה] חסד to [Gideon]	Gideon	Israelites	His descendants	Family solidarity	Crisis to blessing (failed!)
1 Sam.15:6	They [Kenites] show [עשׂה] חסד to [the people of Israel]	Keites	Israelites	Neighbours	Community solidarity	Crisis to blessing
1 Sam. 20:8, 14; 2 Sam. 9:1, 3, 7	He [David] shows [עשׂה] חסד to [Jonathan/ Meribbaal]	David	Jothan/ his family	Friends	Affection	Crisis to blessing

Scripture reference	Verb used with חסד	Agent	Patient	Relationship/ Covenant	Narrative context	Abstract/ Movement
1 Sam. 20:15	He [David] did not cut off [כרת] his חסד to [Jonathan's family]					
1 Kgs 20:31	No verb is used. However, there is an action-attitude of the kings of Israel toward the Aramaeans	Kings of Israel	Arameans	Prior action based on 'prior relationship'	Political	Crisis to blessing
2 Sam. 3:8	He [Abner] shows [עשׂה] חסד to [Saul's brothers and his friends]	Abner, the commander of Saul's army	Saul's household	Covenant meal or eating together (shared meal)	Community solidarity	Crisis to blessing
2 Sam. 2:5, 6; 22:51; 1 Kgs 2:7; 3:6; 2 Chr. 1:8	You [God] show [עשׂה] חסד to [David/Solomon]	God	David/ Solomon or Temple	Covenant word or divine promise	Religious	Potential or implicit crisis regarding a "Temple" for Yahweh?? to Blessing
1 Kgs 8:23; 2 Chr. 6:14	You [God] keep [שׁמר] חסד to [David]					
2 Sam.7:15; 1 Chr. 17:13	You [God] will not take away [סור] your חסד [from David]					
2 Chr. 6:42	You [God] remember [זכר] חסד that you promised to [David]					
2 Sam. 15:20; 22:26; 2Chr. 5:13; 6:14; 7:6;	No verb is used. However, there is an action-attitude of devotion to-					

Scripture reference	Verb used with חסד	Agent	Patient	Relationship/ Covenant	Narrative context	Abstract/ Movement
Ezr. 3:11; 2 Chr. 32:32; 35:26; Neh.13:14, 22; Ezr.7:28; 9:9	ward the Temple					
2 Sam. 10:2; 1 Chr.19:2	He [David] shows [עשׂה] חסד to [Hanun]	David	Hanun, the son of Nahash	Prior action based on 'prior relationship'	Political	Crisis to blessing
2 Chr. 24:22;	He [King Joash] did not remember [זכר] the חסד shown [עשׂה] by the high priest, Jehoiada]	Jehoiada, the high priest	King Joash	Prior action based on 'prior relationship'	Political	Crisis to blessing (failed!)
Esth. 2:9, 17	She [Esther] won [תשׂא] חסד in the eyes of [King Xerxes]	King Xerxes	Esther	Prior action based on 'prior event' (banquet)	Political	Crisis to blessing

APPENDIX B:
Syntactic and literary analysis of the Book of Ruth

Levels
0 – *wayyiqtol* clauses
1 – Inverted word-order (voluntary or obligatory)
2 – Direct speech
3 – Embedded direct speech

RSV	BHS 3 2 1 0	Nr	Literary remarks
Ruth 1 1 In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his two sons.	וַיְהִי בִּימֵי שְׁפֹּט הַשֹּׁפְטִים	1a	**Introductory remarks** Setting (historical period; famine; movement from Judah to Moab) Introduction to characters and their interrelationships
	וַיְהִי רָעָב בָּאָרֶץ	1b	
	וַיֵּלֶךְ אִישׁ מִבֵּית לֶחֶם יְהוּדָה לָגוּר בִּשְׂדֵי מוֹאָב הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּשְׁנֵי בָנָיו׃	1c	
	וְשֵׁם הָאִישׁ אֱלִימֶלֶךְ	2a	
	וְשֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ נָעֳמִי	2b	
	וְשֵׁם שְׁנֵי־בָנָיו| מַחְלוֹן וְכִלְיוֹן אֶפְרָתִים מִבֵּית לֶחֶם יְהוּדָה	2c	
	וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׂדֵי־מוֹאָב	2d	
	וַיִּהְיוּ־שָׁם׃	2e	
2 The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there.			
	וַיָּמָת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ אִישׁ נָעֳמִי	3a	**Scene 1** Exposition (1:3-18) Characters: Naomi, Ruth,
	וַתִּשָּׁאֵר הִיא וּשְׁנֵי בָנֶיהָ׃	3b	
3 But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons.	וַיִּשְׂאוּ לָהֶם נָשִׁים מֹאֲבִיּוֹת	4a	
	שֵׁם הָאַחַת עָרְפָּה	4b	
	וְשֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִית רוּת	4c	

4 These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years;	וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם כְּעֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים׃	4d	(Orpah)
	וַיָּמֻתוּ גַם־שְׁנֵיהֶם מַחְלוֹן וְכִלְיוֹן	5a	Movement from Moab to Judah
5 and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was bereft of her two sons and her husband.	וַתִּשָּׁאֵר הָאִשָּׁה מִשְּׁנֵי יְלָדֶיהָ וּמֵאִישָׁהּ׃	5b	
	וַתָּקָם הִיא וְכַלֹּתֶיהָ	6a	
	וַתָּשָׁב מִשְּׂדֵי מוֹאָב	6b	
	כִּי שָׁמְעָה בִּשְׂדֵה מוֹאָב	6c	
6 Then she started with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food.	כִּי־פָקַד יְהוָה אֶת־עַמּוֹ לָתֵת לָהֶם לָחֶם׃	6d	
	וַתֵּצֵא מִן־הַמָּקוֹם	7a	
	אֲשֶׁר הָיְתָה־שָּׁמָּה	7b	
	וּשְׁתֵּי כַלֹּתֶיהָ עִמָּהּ	7c	
	וַתֵּלַכְנָה בַּדֶּרֶךְ לָשׁוּב אֶל־אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה׃	7d	Dialogue: Naomi and her daughters-in-law (1:8-13)
7 So she set out from the place where she was, with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.	וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֳמִי לִשְׁתֵּי כַלֹּתֶיהָ	8a	
	לֵכְנָה	8b	
	שֹׁבְנָה אִשָּׁה לְבֵית אִמָּהּ	8c	
	יַעַשׂ יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד	8d	
8 But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me.	כַּאֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם עִם־הַמֵּתִים וְעִמָּדִי׃	8e	
	יִתֵּן יְהוָה לָכֶם	9a	
	וּמְצֶאןָ מְנוּחָה אִשָּׁה בֵּית אִישָׁהּ	9b	
9 The LORD grant that you may find a home,	וַתִּשַּׁק לָהֶן	9c	
	וַתִּשֶּׂאנָה קוֹלָן	9d	
	וַתִּבְכֶּינָה׃	9e	
	וַתֹּאמַרְנָה־לָּהּ	10a	
	כִּי־אִתָּךְ נָשׁוּב לְעַמֵּךְ׃	10b	
	וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֳמִי	11a	
	שֹׁבְנָה בְנֹתַי	11b	

each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.	לָמָּה תֵלַכְנָה עִמִּי	11c	
	הַעוֹד־לִי בָנִים בְּמֵעַי	11d	
	וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לַאֲנָשִׁים:	11e	
10 And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people."	שֹׁבְנָה בְנֹתַי	12a	
	לֵכְן	12b	
11 But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands?	כִּי זָקַנְתִּי מִהְיוֹת לְאִישׁ	12c	
	כִּי אָמַרְתִּי	12d	
	יֶשׁ־לִי תִקְוָה	12e	
	גַּם הָיִיתִי הַלַּיְלָה לְאִישׁ	12f	
	וְגַם יָלַדְתִּי בָנִים:	12g	
12 Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons,	הֲלָהֵן | תִּשַׂבֵּרְנָה	13a	
	עַד אֲשֶׁר יִגְדָּלוּ	13b	
	הֲלָהֵן תֵּעָגֵנָה	13c	
	לְבִלְתִּי הֱיוֹת לְאִישׁ	13d	
	אַל בְּנֹתַי	13e	
	כִּי־מַר־לִי מְאֹד מִכֶּם	13f	
13 would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone forth against me."	כִּי־יָצְאָה בִי יַד־יְהוָה:	13g	Dialogue: Naomi and Ruth (1:15-17)
	וַתִּשֶּׂנָה קוֹלָן	14a	
	וַתִּבְכֶּינָה עוֹד	14b	
	וַתִּשַּׁק עָרְפָּה לַחֲמוֹתָהּ	14c	
	וְרוּת דָּבְקָה בָּהּ:	14d	
	וַתֹּאמֶר	15a	
	הִנֵּה שָׁבָה יְבִמְתֵּךְ אֶל־עַמָּהּ וְאֶל־אֱלֹהֶיהָ	15b	
	שׁוּבִי אַחֲרֵי יְבִמְתֵּךְ:	15c	
14 Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-	וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת	16a	

law, but Ruth clung to her. 15 And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." 16 But Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave you or to return from following you; for where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God; 17 where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if even death parts me from you." 18 And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more. 19 So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them; and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" 20 She said to them, "Do not call me Naomi,	אַל־תִּפְגְּעִי־בִי לְעָזְבֵךְ לָשׁוּב מֵאַחֲרָיִךְ	16b	Inciting moment (1:19-21) Location: In Bethlehem Dialogue: Women of Bethlehem and Naomi (1:19-21) Interlude (1:22)
	כִּי אֶל־אֲשֶׁר תֵּלְכִי	16c	
	אֵלֵךְ	16d	
	וּבַאֲשֶׁר תָּלִינִי	16e	
	אָלִין	16f	
	עַמֵּךְ עַמִּי	16g	
	וֵאלֹהַיִךְ אֱלֹהָי:	16h	
	בַּאֲשֶׁר תָּמוּתִי	17a	
	אָמוּת	17b	
	וְשָׁם אֶקָּבֵר	17c	
	כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה לִי	17d	
	וְכֹה יֹסִיף	17e	
	כִּי הַמָּוֶת יַפְרִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵךְ:	17f	
	וַתֵּרֶא	18a	
	כִּי־מִתְאַמֶּצֶת הִיא לָלֶכֶת אִתָּהּ |	18b	
	וַתֶּחְדַּל לְדַבֵּר אֵלֶיהָ:	18c	
	וַתֵּלַכְנָה שְׁתֵּיהֶם	19a	
	עַד־בֹּאָנָה בֵּית לָחֶם	19b	
	וַיְהִי כְּבֹאָנָה בֵּית לָחֶם	19c	
	וַתֵּהֹם כָּל־הָעִיר עֲלֵיהֶן	19d	
	וַתֹּאמֵרְנָה הֲזֹאת נָעֳמִי:	19e	
	הֲזֹאת נָעֳמִי:	19f	
	וַתֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶן	20a	
	אַל־תִּקְרֶאנָה לִי נָעֳמִי	20b	
	קְרֶאןָ לִי מָרָא	20c	
	כִּי־הֵמַר שַׁדַּי לִי מְאֹד:	20d	

call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. 21 I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the LORD has afflicted me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?" 22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.	אֲנִי מְלֵאָה הָלַכְתִּי	21a	
	וְרֵיקָם הֱשִׁיבַנִי יְהוָה	21b	
	לָמָּה תִקְרֶאנָה לִי נָעֳמִי	21c	
	וַיהוָה עָנָה בִּי	21d	
	וְשַׁדַּי הֵרַע לִי:	21e	
	וַתָּשָׁב נָעֳמִי	22a	
	וְרוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה כַלָּתָהּ עִמָּהּ הַשָּׁבָה מִשְׂדֵי מוֹאָב	22b	
	וְהֵמָּה בָּאוּ בֵּית לֶחֶם בִּתְחִלַּת קְצִיר שְׂעֹרִים:	22c	
Ruth 2 1 Now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. 2 And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me go to the field, and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter." 3 So she set forth and went and gleaned in	וְלְנָעֳמִי מיֹדַּע לְאִישָׁהּ אִישׁ גִּבּוֹר חַיִל מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ	1a	**Scene 2** Complication (2:1-22)
	וּשְׁמוֹ בֹּעַז:	1b	
	וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה אֶל־נָעֳמִי	2a	
	אֵלְכָה־נָּא הַשָּׂדֶה	2b	
	וַאֲלַקְטָה בַשִּׁבֳּלִים אַחַר	2c	
	| אֲשֶׁר אֶמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינָיו	2d	
	וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ	2e	Dialogue: Naomi and Ruth (2:1-4)
	לְכִי בִתִּי:	2f	
	וַתֵּלֶךְ	3a	
	וַתָּבוֹא	3b	
	וַתְּלַקֵּט בַּשָּׂדֶה אַחֲרֵי הַקֹּצְרִים	3c	
	וַיִּקֶר מִקְרֶהָ חֶלְקַת הַשָּׂדֶה לְבֹעַז	3d	
	| אֲשֶׁר מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ:	3e	

the field after the reapers; and she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.	וְהִנֵּה־בֹ֣עַז בָּ֔א מִבֵּ֖ית לֶ֑חֶם	4a	In Boaz's fields (2:5-18)
	וַיֹּ֤אמֶר לַקּוֹצְרִים֙	4b	
4 And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem; and he said to the reapers, "The LORD be with you!" And they answered, "The LORD bless you."	יְהוָ֥ה עִמָּכֶ֖ם	4c	
	וַיֹּאמְרוּ֣ לֽוֹ	4d	
	יְבָרֶכְךָ֖ יְהוָֽה׃	4e	
	וַיֹּ֤אמֶר בֹּ֙עַז֙ לְנַעֲר֔וֹ	5a	
5 Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose maiden is this?"	הַנִּצָּ֖ב עַל־הַקּוֹצְרִ֑ים |	5b	
	לְמִ֥י הַנַּעֲרָ֖ה הַזֹּֽאת׃	5c	
	וַיַּ֣עַן הַנַּ֔עַר	6a	
6 And the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, "It is the Moabite maiden, who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab.	הַנִּצָּ֖ב עַל־הַקּוֹצְרִ֑ים |	6b	
	וַיֹּאמֶ֗ר	6c	
	נַעֲרָ֤ה מוֹאֲבִיָּה֙ הִ֔יא	6d	
	הַשָּׁבָ֕ה עִם־נָעֳמִ֖י מִשְּׂדֵ֥ה מוֹאָֽב׃	6e	
	וַתֹּ֣אמֶר	7a	
7 She said, 'Pray, let me glean and gather among the sheaves after the reapers.' So she came, and she has continued from early morning until now, without resting even for a moment."	אֲלַקֳטָה־נָּ֣א	7b	
	וְאָסַפְתִּי֙ בָּֽעֳמָרִ֔ים אַחֲרֵ֖י הַקּוֹצְרִ֑ים	7c	
	וַתָּבֹ֗וא	7d	
	וַתַּעֲמֹ֞וד מֵאָ֤ז הַבֹּ֙קֶר֙ וְעַד־עַ֣תָּה	7e	
	זֶ֥ה שִׁבְתָּ֖הּ הַבַּ֑יִת מְעָֽט׃	7f	
	וַיֹּ֤אמֶר בֹּ֙עַז֙ אֶל־רֽוּת	8a	
	הֲלֹ֣וא שָׁמַ֔עַתְּ בִּתִּ֖י	8b	
8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Now, listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my maidens.	אַל־תֵּלְכִ֤י לִלְקֹט֙ בְּשָׂדֶ֣ה אַחֵ֔ר	8c	
	וְגַ֥ם לֹֽא־תַעֲבוֹרִ֖י מִזֶּ֑ה	8d	
	וְכֹ֥ה תִדְבָּקִ֖ין עִם־נַעֲרֹתָֽי׃	8e	
	עֵינַ֙יִךְ֙ בַּשָּׂדֶ֔ה	9a	
	אֲשֶׁר־יִקְצֹרוּן֙ |	9b	

9 Let your eyes be upon the field which they are reaping, and go after them. Have I not charged the young men not to molest you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn."	וְהָלַכְתְּ אַחֲרֵיהֶן	9c	
	הֲלֹוא צִוִּיתִי אֶת־הַנְּעָרִים	9d	
	לְבִלְתִּי נָגְעֵךְ	9e	
	וְצָמִת	9f	
	וְהָלַכְתְּ אֶל־הַכֵּלִים	9g	
	וְשָׁתִּית	9h	
	מֵאֲשֶׁר יִשְׁאֲבוּן הַנְּעָרִים׃	9i	
10 Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, when I am a foreigner?"	וַתִּפֹּל עַל־פָּנֶיהָ	10a	
	וַתִּשְׁתַּחוּ אָרְצָה	10b	
	וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו	10c	
	מַדּוּעַ מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ לְהַכִּירֵנִי	10d	
	וְאָנֹכִי נָכְרִיָּה׃	10e	
11 But Boaz ans-wered her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before.	וַיַּעַן בֹּעַז	11a	
	וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ	11b	
	הֻגֶּד הֻגַּד לִי	11c	
	כָּל אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂית אֶת־חֲמוֹתֵךְ אַחֲרֵי מוֹת אִישֵׁךְ	11d	
	וַתַּעַזְבִּי אָבִיךְ וְאִמֵּךְ וְאֶרֶץ מוֹלַדְתֵּךְ	11e	
	וַתֵּלְכִי אֶל־עַם	11f	
	אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַעַתְּ תְּמוֹל שִׁלְשׁוֹם׃	11g	
12 The LORD recompense you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!"	יְשַׁלֵּם יְהוָה פָּעֳלֵךְ	12a	
	וּתְהִי מַשְׂכֻּרְתֵּךְ שְׁלֵמָה מֵעִם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	12b	
	אֲשֶׁר־בָּאת לַחֲסוֹת תַּחַת־כְּנָפָיו׃	12c	
13 Then she said, "You are most gracious to me, my lord, for you	וַתֹּאמֶר	13a	
	אֶמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֲדֹנִי	13b	

have comforted me and spoken kindly to your maidservant, though I am not one of your maidservants.”	כִּי נִחַמְתָּנִי	13c	Dialogue: Naomi and Ruth (2:19-22)
	וְכִי דִבַּרְתָּ עַל־לֵב שִׁפְחָתֶךָ	13d	
	וְאָנֹכִי לֹא אֶהְיֶה כְּאַחַת שִׁפְחֹתֶיךָ׃	13e	
14 And at mealtime Boaz said to her, “Come here, and eat some bread, and dip your morsel in the wine.” So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed to her parched grain; and she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over.	וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ בֹּעַז לְעֵת הָאֹכֶל	14a	
	גְּשִׁי הֵלֹם	14b	
	וְאָכַלְתְּ מִן־הַלֶּחֶם	14c	
	וְטָבַלְתְּ פִּתֵּךְ בַּחֹמֶץ	14d	
	וַתֵּשֶׁב מִצַּד הַקֹּוצְרִים	14e	
	וַיִּצְבָּט־לָהּ קָלִי	14f	
	וַתֹּאכַל	14g	
	וַתִּשְׂבַּע	14h	
	וַתֹּתַר׃	14i	
15 When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, saying, “Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her.	וַתָּקָם לְלַקֵּט	15a	
	וַיְצַו בֹּעַז אֶת־נְעָרָיו לֵאמֹר	15b	
	גַּם בֵּין הָעֳמָרִים תְּלַקֵּט	15c	
	וְלֹא תַכְלִימוּהָ׃	15d	
16 And also pull out some from the bundles for her, and leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her.”	וְגַם שֹׁל־תָּשְׁלוּ לָהּ מִן־הַצְּבָתִים	16a	
	וַעֲזַבְתֶּם	16b	
	וְלִקְּטָה	16c	
	וְלֹא תִגְעֲרוּ־בָהּ׃	16d	
17 So she gleaned in the field until evening; then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.	וַתְּלַקֵּט בַּשָּׂדֶה עַד־הָעָרֶב	17a	
	וַתַּחְבֹּט אֵת	17b	
	אֲשֶׁר־לִקָּטָה |	17c	
	וַיְהִי כְּאֵיפָה שְׂעֹרִים׃	17d	
18 And she took it up and went into the city; she showed her mother-in-law what she had	וַתִּשָּׂא	18a	
	וַתָּבֹא הָעִיר	18b	
	וַתֵּרֶא חֲמוֹתָהּ אֵת	18c	

gleaned, and she also brought out and gave her what food she had left over after being satisfied.	אֲשֶׁר־לִקֶּטָה |	18d	Interlude (2:23)
	וַתּוֹצֵא	18e	
	וַתִּתֶּן־לָהּ אֵת	18f	
19 And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz."	אֲשֶׁר־הוֹתְרָה מִשָּׂבְעָהּ׃ |	18g	
	וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ חֲמוֹתָהּ	19a	
	אֵיפֹה לָקַטְתְּ הַיּוֹם	19b	
	וְאָנָה עָשִׂית	19c	
	יְהִי מַכִּירֵךְ בָּרוּךְ	19d	
	וַתַּגֶּד לַחֲמוֹתָהּ אֵת	19e	
	אֲשֶׁר־עָשְׂתָה עִמּוֹ |	19f	
	וַתֹּאמֶר	19g	
	שֵׁם הָאִישׁ	19h1	
	אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי עִמּוֹ הַיּוֹם |	19i	
	בֹּעַז׃	19h2	
20 And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or he dead!" Naomi also said to her, "The man is a relative of ours, one of our nearest kin."	וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֳמִי לְכַלָּתָהּ	20a	
	בָּרוּךְ הוּא לַיהוָה	20b	
	אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָזַב חַסְדּוֹ אֶת־הַחַיִּים וְאֶת־הַמֵּתִים	20c	
	וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ נָעֳמִי	20d	
	קָרוֹב לָנוּ הָאִישׁ	20e	
	מִגֹּאֲלֵנוּ הוּא׃	20f	
21 And Ruth the Moabitess said, "Besides, he said to me, 'You shall keep close by my servants, till they have finished all my harvest.'"	וַתֹּאמֶר רוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה	21a	
	גַּם | כִּי־אָמַר אֵלַי	21b	
	עִם־הַנְּעָרִים	21c	
	אֲשֶׁר־לִי	21d	
	תִּדְבָּקִין	21e	
22 And Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, "It is well, my daughter, that you go out with his maidens, lest in another field you	עַד אִם־כִּלּוּ אֵת כָּל־הַקָּצִיר	21f	

be molested." 23 So she kept close to the maidens of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests; and she lived with her mother-in-law.	אֲשֶׁר־לִֽי׃	21g	
	וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֳמִי אֶל־רוּת כַּלָּתָהּ	22a	
	טוֹב בִּתִּי	22b	
	כִּי תֵצְאִי עִם־נַעֲרוֹתָיו	22c	
	וְלֹא יִפְגְּעוּ־בָךְ בְּשָׂדֶה אַחֵר׃	22d	
	וַתִּדְבַּק בִּנַעֲרוֹת בֹּעַז לְלַקֵּט עַד־כִּלּוֹת קְצִיר־הַשְּׂעֹרִים וּקְצִיר הַחִטִּים	23a	
	וַתֵּשֶׁב אֶת־חֲמוֹתָהּ׃	23b	
Ruth 3 1 Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not seek a home for you, that it may be well with you? 2 Now is not Boaz our kinsman, with whose maidens you were? See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor. 3 Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put on your best clothes and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. 4 But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies; then, go and uncover	וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ נָעֳמִי חֲמוֹתָהּ בִּתִּי	1a	**Scene 3** Further compli-cation (3:1-18) Dialogue: Naomi and Ruth (3:1-5)
	הֲלֹא אֲבַקֶּשׁ־לָךְ מָנוֹחַ	1b	
	אֲשֶׁר יִיטַב־לָךְ׃	1c	
	וְעַתָּה הֲלֹא בֹעַז מֹדַעְתָּנוּ	2a	
	אֲשֶׁר הָיִית אֶת־נַעֲרוֹתָיו	2b	
	הִנֵּה־הוּא זֹרֶה אֶת־גֹּרֶן הַשְּׂעֹרִים הַלָּיְלָה׃	2c	
	וְרָחַצְתְּ׀	3a	
	וָסַכְתְּ	3b	
	וְשַׂמְתְּ שִׂמְלֹתַיִךְ עָלַיִךְ	3c	
	וְיָרַדְתְּי הַגֹּרֶן	3d	
	אַל־תִּוָּדְעִי לָאִישׁ עַד כַּלֹּתוֹ לֶאֱכֹל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת׃	3e	
	וִיהִי בְּשָׁכְבוֹ	4a	
	וְיָדַעַתְּ אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם	4b	
	אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב־שָׁם	4c	
	וּבָאת	4d	
	וְגִלִּית מַרְגְּלֹתָיו	4e	

his feet and lie down; and he will tell you what to do."	וְשָׁכַבְתְּ֔י	4f	At Boaz's threshing floor (3:6-15)
	וְהוּא֙ יַגִּ֣יד לָ֔ךְ אֵ֥ת אֲשֶׁ֖ר תַּעֲשִׂ֑ין׃	4g	
5 And she replied, "All that you say I will do."	וַתֹּ֥אמֶר אֵלֶ֖יהָ	5a	
	כָּ֣ל	5b1	
6 So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had told her.	אֲשֶׁר־תֹּאמְרִ֥י ׀	5c	
	אֵעֶשֶׂ֛ה׃	5b2	
	וַתֵּ֣רֶד הַגֹּ֔רֶן	6a	
7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and lay down.	וַתַּ֖עַשׂ כְּכֹ֥ל	6b	
	אֲשֶׁר־צִוַּ֥תָה חֲמוֹתָֽהּ׃ |	6c	
	וַיֹּ֣אכַל בֹּ֔עַז	7a	
	וַיֵּ֖שְׁתְּ	7b	
	וַיִּיטַ֣ב לִבּ֑וֹ	7c	
8 At midnight the man was startled, and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet!	וַיָּבֹ֗א לִשְׁכַּב֙ בִּקְצֵ֣ה הָעֲרֵמָ֔ה	7d	
	וַתָּבֹ֖א בַּלָּ֑ט	7e	
	וַתְּגַ֖ל מַרְגְּלֹתָ֥יו	7f	
	וַתִּשְׁכָּֽב׃	7g	
9 He said, "Who are you?" And she answered, "I am Ruth, your maidservant; spread your skirt over your maidservant, for you are next of kin."	וַיְהִ֣י בַּחֲצִ֣י הַלַּ֔יְלָה	8a	
	וַיֶּחֱרַ֖ד הָאִ֑ישׁ	8b	
	וַיִּלָּ֣פֶת	8c	
	וְהִנֵּ֥ה אִשָּׁ֖ה שֹׁכֶ֥בֶת מַרְגְּלֹתָֽיו׃	8d	
10 And he said, "May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter; you have made this last kindness greater than the first, in that you have not gone after	וַיֹּ֣אמֶר	9a	
	מִי־אָ֔תְּ	9b	
	וַתֹּ֖אמֶר	9c	
	אָנֹכִ֣י רוּת֮ אֲמָתֶ֒ךָ֒	9d	

young men, whether poor or rich.	וּפָרַשְׂתָּ כְנָפֶךָ עַל־אֲמָתֶךָ	9e	
	כִּי גֹאֵל אָתָּה:	9f	
	וַיֹּאמֶר	10a	
11 And now, my daughter, do not fear, I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of worth.	בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ לַיהוָה בִּתִּי	10b	
	הֵיטַבְתְּ חַסְדֵּךְ הָאַחֲרוֹן מִן־הָרִאשׁוֹן	10c	
	לְבִלְתִּי־לֶכֶת אַחֲרֵי הַבַּחוּרִים אִם־דַּל וְאִם־עָשִׁיר:	10d	
12 And now it is true that I am a near kinsman, yet there is a kinsman nearer than I.	וְעַתָּה בִּתִּי אַל־תִּירְאִי	11a	
	כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־תֹּאמְרִי	11b	
13 Remain this night, and in the morning, if he will do the part of the next of kin for you, well; let him do it; but if he is not willing to do the part of the next of kin for you, then, as the LORD lives, I will do the part of the next of kin for you. Lie down until the morning."	אֶעֱשֶׂה־לָּךְ	11c	
	כִּי יוֹדֵעַ כָּל־שַׁעַר עַמִּי	11d	
	כִּי אֵשֶׁת חַיִל אָתְּ: |	11e	
	וְעַתָּה כִּי אָמְנָם	12a	
	כִּי אִם גֹּאֵל אָנֹכִי	12b	
	וְגַם יֵשׁ גֹּאֵל קָרוֹב מִמֶּנִּי:	12c	
	לִינִי | הַלָּיְלָה	13a	
14 So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another; and he said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor."	וְהָיָה בַבֹּקֶר	13b	
	אִם־יִגְאָלֵךְ	13c	Dialogue: Naomi and Ruth (3:16-18)
	טוֹב יִגְאָל	13d	
	וְאִם־לֹא יַחְפֹּץ לְגָאֳלֵךְ	13e	
	וּגְאַלְתִּיךְ אָנֹכִי	13f	
15 And he said, "Bring the mantle you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it,	חַי־יְהוָה	13g	
	שִׁכְבִי עַד־הַבֹּקֶר:	13h	
	וַתִּשְׁכַּב מַרְגְּלֹתָו עַד־הַבֹּקֶר	14a	

and he measured out six measures of barley, and laid it upon her; then she went into the city.	וַתָּקָם בְּטֶרֶם יַכִּיר אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ	14b	
	וַיֹּאמֶר	14c	
	אַל־יִוָּדַע	14d	
	כִּי־בָאָה הָאִשָּׁה הַגֹּרֶן:	14e	
16 And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, “How did you fare, my daughter?” Then she told her all that the man had done for her,	וַיֹּאמֶר	15a	
	הָבִי הַמִּטְפַּחַת	15b	
	אֲשֶׁר־עָלַיִךְ |	15c	
	וְאֶחֱזִי־בָהּ	15d	
17 saying, “These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said, ‘You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.’”	וַתֹּאחֶז בָּהּ	15e	
	וַתָּמָד שֵׁשׁ־שְׂעֹרִים	15f	
	וַתָּשֶׁת עָלֶיהָ	15g	
	וַתָּבֹא הָעִיר:	15h	
18 She replied, “Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today.”	וַתָּבוֹא אֶל־חֲמוֹתָהּ	16a	
	וַתֹּאמֶר	16b	
	מִי־אַתְּ בִּתִּי	16c	
	וַתַּגֶּד־לָהּ אֵת כָּל־	16d	
	אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה־לָּהּ הָאִישׁ: |	16e	
	וַתֹּאמֶר	17a	
	שֵׁשׁ־הַשְּׂעֹרִים הָאֵלֶּה נָתַן לִי	17b	
	כִּי אָמַר	17c	
	אַל־תָּבוֹאִי רֵיקָם אֶל־חֲמוֹתֵךְ:	17d	
	וַתֹּאמֶר	18a	
	שְׁבִי בִתִּי	18b	
	עַד אֲשֶׁר תֵּדְעִין |	18c	

	אֵ֣יד יִפֹּ֣ל דָּבָ֑ר |	18d	
	כִּ֥י לֹ֛א יִשְׁקֹ֥ט הָאִ֖ישׁ	18e	
	כִּֽי־אִם־כִּלָּ֥ה הַדָּבָ֖ר הַיּֽוֹם׃	18f	
Ruth 4 1 And Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there; and behold, the next of kin, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here"; and he turned aside and sat down. 2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here"; so they sat down. 3 Then he said to the next of kin, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land which belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. 4 So I thought I would tell you of it, and say, Buy it in the presence of those sitting here, and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to	וּבֹ֣עַז עָלָ֔ה הַשַּׁ֖עַר׃	1a	**Scene 4** Further complication (4:1-12)
	וַיֵּ֥שֶׁב שָׁ֖ם׃	1b	
	וְהִנֵּ֣ה הַגֹּאֵ֗ל עֹבֵר֙	1c	
	אֲשֶׁ֣ר דִּבֶּר־בֹּ֔עַז |	1d	
	וַיֹּ֣אמֶר	1e	
	סוּרָ֔ה	1f	
	שְׁבָ֥ה־פֹ֖ה פְּלֹנִ֣י אַלְמֹנִ֑י	1g	
	וַיָּ֖סַר	1h	
	וַיֵּֽשֶׁב׃	1i	
	וַיִּקַּ֞ח עֲשָׂרָ֤ה אֲנָשִׁים֙ מִזִּקְנֵ֣י הָעִ֔יר	2a	
	וַיֹּ֣אמֶר	2b	
	שְׁבוּ־פֹ֑ה	2c	
	וַיֵּשֵׁ֖בוּ׃	2d	
	וַיֹּ֣אמֶר לַגֹּאֵ֗ל	3a	
	חֶלְקַ֤ת הַשָּׂדֶה֙	3b1	
	אֲשֶׁ֣ר לְאָחִ֔ינוּ לֶאֱלִימֶ֖לֶךְ |	3c	
	מָכְרָ֣ה נָעֳמִ֑י	3b2	
	הַשָּׂבָ֖ה מִשְּׂדֵ֥ה מוֹאָֽב׃	3d	
	וַאֲנִ֣י אָמַ֔רְתִּי	4a	
	אֶגְלֶ֥ה אָזְנְךָ֖ לֵאמֹ֑ר	4b	
	קְנֵ֣ה נֶ֤גֶד הַיֹּשְׁבִים֙ וְנֶ֣גֶד זִקְנֵ֣י עַמִּ֔י	4c	
	אִם־תִּגְאַ֖ל	4d	

redeem it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it."	גְּאָל	4e	
	וְאִם־לֹא יִגְאַל	4f	
	הַגִּידָה לִּי	4g	
5 Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you are also buying Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of the dead, in order to restore the name of the dead to his inheritance."	וְאֶדְעָה	4h	
	כִּי אֵין זוּלָתְךָ לִגְאֹל	4i	
	וְאָנֹכִי אַחֲרֶיךָ	4j	
	וַיֹּאמֶר	4k	
	אָנֹכִי אֶגְאָל:	4l	
6 Then the next of kin said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."	וַיֹּאמֶר בֹּעַז	5a	
	בְּיוֹם־קְנוֹתְךָ הַשָּׂדֶה מִיַּד נָעֳמִי	5b	
	וּמֵאֵת רוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה אֵשֶׁת־הַמֵּת קָנִיתִי לְהָקִים שֵׁם־הַמֵּת עַל־נַחֲלָתוֹ:	5c	
7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning re-deeming and exchanging: to confirm a trans-action, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel.	וַיֹּאמֶר הַגֹּאֵל	6a	
	לֹא אוּכַל לִגְאָל־לִי	6b	
	פֶּן־אַשְׁחִית אֶת־נַחֲלָתִי	6c	
	גְּאַל־לְךָ אַתָּה אֶת־גְּאֻלָּתִי	6d	
	כִּי לֹא־אוּכַל לִגְאָל:	6e	
	וְזֹאת לְפָנִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל עַל־הַגְּאוּלָּה וְעַל־הַתְּמוּרָה לְקַיֵּם כָּל־דָּבָר	7a	
8 So when the next of kin said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal.	שָׁלַף אִישׁ נַעֲלוֹ	7b	
	וְנָתַן לְרֵעֵהוּ וְזֹאת הַתְּעוּדָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:	7c	
	וַיֹּאמֶר הַגֹּאֵל לְבֹעַז	8a	
9 Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses	קְנֵה־לָךְ	8b	
	וַיִּשְׁלֹף נַעֲלוֹ:	8c	

this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon.	וַיֹּאמֶר בֹּעַז לַזְּקֵנִים וְכָל־הָעָם	9a	
	עֵדִים אַתֶּם הַיּוֹם	9b	
	כִּי קָנִיתִי אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לֶאֱלִימֶלֶךְ וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לְכִלְיוֹן וּמַחְלוֹן מִיַּד נָעֳמִי׃	9c	
10 Also Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from the gate of his native place; you are wit-nesses this day."	וְגַם אֶת־רוּת הַמֹּאֲבִיָּה אֵשֶׁת מַחְלוֹן קָנִיתִי לִי לְאִשָּׁה לְהָקִים שֵׁם־הַמֵּת עַל־נַחֲלָתוֹ	10a	
	וְלֹא־יִכָּרֵת שֵׁם־הַמֵּת מֵעִם אֶחָיו וּמִשַּׁעַר מְקוֹמוֹ	10b	
	עֵדִים אַתֶּם הַיּוֹם׃	10c	
11 Then all the people who were at the gate, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the wo-man, who is com-ing into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you prosper in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem;	וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל־הָעָם	11a	Climax and turning point (4:13-17b)
	אֲשֶׁר־בַּשַּׁעַר וְהַזְּקֵנִים	11b	
	עֵדִים	11c	
	יִתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה הַבָּאָה אֶל־בֵּיתֶךָ כְּרָחֵל וּכְלֵאָה	11d	
	אֲשֶׁר בָּנוּ שְׁתֵּיהֶם אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל	11e	
	וַעֲשֵׂה־חַיִל בְּאֶפְרָתָה	11f	Dialogue: Naomi and Women of Bethlehem (4:14-17b)
	וּקְרָא־שֵׁם בְּבֵית לָחֶם׃	11g	
	וִיהִי בֵיתְךָ כְּבֵית פֶּרֶץ	12a	
12 and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the children that the LORD will give you by this young woman."	אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָה תָמָר לִיהוּדָה מִן־הַזֶּרַע	12b	
	אֲשֶׁר יִתֶּן יְהוָה לְךָ	12c	
	מִן־הַנַּעֲרָה הַזֹּאת׃	12d	
13 So Boaz took Ruth	וַיִּקַּח בֹּעַז אֶת־רוּת	13a	
	וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה	13b	
	וַיָּבֹא אֵלֶיהָ	13c	

and she became his wife; and he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son.	וַיִּתֵּן יְהוָה לָהּ הֵרָיוֹן	13d	
	וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן:	13e	
	וַתֹּאמַרְנָה הַנָּשִׁים אֶל־נָעֳמִי	14a	
	בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה	14b	
14 Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without next of kin; and may his name be renowned in Israel!	אֲשֶׁר לֹא הִשְׁבִּית לָךְ גֹּאֵל הַיּוֹם |	14c	
	וְיִקָּרֵא שְׁמוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:	14d	
	וְהָיֶה לָךְ לְמֵשִׁיב נֶפֶשׁ וּלְכַלְכֵּל אֶת־שֵׂיבָתֵךְ	15a	
15 He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daugh-ter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has borne him."	כִּי כַלָּתֵךְ	15b	
	אֲשֶׁר־אֲהֵבַתֶךְ יְלָדַתּוּ |	15c	
	אֲשֶׁר־הִיא טוֹבָה לָךְ מִשִּׁבְעָה בָּנִים: |	15d	
	וַתִּקַּח נָעֳמִי אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד	16a	
	וַתְּשִׁתֵהוּ בְחֵיקָהּ	16b	
16 Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her bosom, and became his nurse.	וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאֹמֶנֶת:	16c	
	17וַתִּקְרֶאנָהּ לוֹ הַשְּׁכֵנוֹת שֵׁם לֵאמֹר	17a	
	יֶלֶד־בֵּן לְנָעֳמִי	17b	
17 And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed; he was the father of Jesse, the father of David.	וַתִּקְרֶאנָה שְׁמוֹ עוֹבֵד	17c	**First expansion** Conclusion
	הוּא אֲבִי־יִשַׁי אֲבִי דָוִד: פ	17d	
	וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת פֶּרֶץ	18a	**Second expansion** Conclusion
18 Now these are the descendants of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron	פֶּרֶץ הוֹלִיד אֶת־חֶצְרוֹן:	18b	
	וְחֶצְרוֹן הוֹלִיד אֶת־רָם	19a	
	וְרָם הוֹלִיד אֶת־עַמִּינָדָב:	19b	
	וְעַמִּינָדָב הוֹלִיד אֶת־נַחְשׁוֹן	20a	
	וְנַחְשׁוֹן הוֹלִיד אֶת־שַׂלְמָה:	20b	
19 Hezron of Ram, Ram of Amminadab,	וְשַׂלְמוֹן הוֹלִיד אֶת־בֹּעַז	21a	
	וּבֹעַז הוֹלִיד אֶת־עוֹבֵד:	21b	

20 Am-mminadab of Nah-shon, Nahshon of Sal-mon, 21 Salmon of Boaz, Boaz of Obed, 22 Obed of Jesse, and Jesse of David.	וְעֹבֵד הוֹלִיד אֶת־יִשָׁי	22a	
	וְיִשַׁי הוֹלִיד אֶת־דָּוִד׃	22b	

APPENDIX C1:
TRANSLATOR'S QUESTIONNAIRE (LOMWE PROJECT)[221]

NAME OF TRANSLATOR _____

CHURCH DENOMINATION AND LOCATION _____

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF THIS CHURCH? _____

LEVEL OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION _____

FORMER OCCUPATION:

AGE: GENDER:

1. What source (s) did you consult prior to the translation of חסד ?
2. What approach did you use? Please explain the methods used in daily practice.
3. In translating חסד , which terminology did you prefer - that of the Protestants or of the Catholics? Explain
4. Who initiated the project, the National Bible Society or the Church? Please explain.
5. What study did you carry out before embarking on translating חסד into Lomwe?
6. How did you translate חסד in the following selected passages (from non-poetic and poetic contexts)?

Gen. 24:12	**Gen. 21:23**	**Gen. 47:29**	**Psa. 23:6**
Exod. 15:13	**1Kgs. 20:31**	**Gen. 20:13**	**Psa. 44:26**

7. With reference to three contexts in Ruth would you say that there is another Lomwe word or phrase that could be used in any one of these places?

Ruth 1:8	**Ruth 2:20**	**Ruth 3:10**

8. What would you suggest as a more suitable term or figurative expression for translating חסד?

[221] This questionnaire was translated into both Portuguese and Lomwe.

APPENDIX C_2:
TRANSLATOR'S QUESTIONNAIRE (LOMWE AND EMAKHUWA PROJECTS)[222]

DATE: _____

PLACE: _____

NAME: _____

AGE: _____

CHURCH: _____

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL: _____

—I—

1. Please read aloud the following examples of Ruth 1:7-10 carefully, paying special attention to the underlined words in each case.

EXAMPLE A

7 Aavinya vanipuroni areiyevo vamoha ni asipwiyamwanaawe ooweeli.8 **Nave erikimweeca ekookelaka elapo ya o Yuuta, Nawomi aahi wa yaawo: «Mmoha ni mmoha akookeleke wa amannya; nave Apwiya eweerelekeeni saphaama ntoko tho mwaaweerelaanyu asiiyanyu akhwile ni miyo tho**.9 Apwiya yoovaheeni wiichuwa, mmoha ni mmoha vachokoni vawe ni aiyawe.» Vaavaa ahaanuula, nto yaawo yaakhuwela ni wunla.10 Yaaloca: «Hooye. Nnakooka vamoha ni nyuwo oya onlokoni wanyu».

EXAMPLE B

7 Aavinya vanipuroni areiyevo vamoha ni asipwiyamwanaawe ooweeli.8 **Nave erikimweeca ekookelaka elapo ya o Yuuta, Nawomi aahi wa yaawo: «Mmoha ni mmoha akookeleke wa amannya; ntoko nyuwano mukimoreenlanyu ikharari vamoha ni ale akhwile**.9 Apwiya yoovaheeni

[222] This questionnaire was translated into Portuguese only.

wiichuwa, mmoha ni mmoha vachokoni vawe ni aiyawe.» Vaavaa ahaanuula, nto yaawo yaakhuwela ni wunla.[10] Yaaloca: «Hooye. Nnakooka vamoha ni nyuwo oya onlokoni wanyu».

EXAMPLE C

[7] Aavinya vanipuroni areiyevo vamoha ni asipwiyamwanaawe ooweeli.[8] **Nave erikimweeca ekookelaka elapo ya o Yuuta, Nawomi aahi wa yaawo: «Mmoha ni mmoha akookeleke wa amannya; ntoko moonihanyu osivela vamoha ni ale akhwile**.[9] Apwiya yoovaheeni wiichuwa, mmoha ni mmoha vachokoni vawe ni aiyawe.» Vaavaa ahaanuula, nto yaawo yaakhuwela ni wunla.[10] Yaaloca: «Hooye. Nnakooka vamoha ni nyuwo oya onlokoni wanyu».

EXAMPLE D

[7] Aavinya vanipuroni areiyevo vamoha ni asipwiyamwanaawe ooweeli.[8] **Nave erikimweeca ekookelaka elapo ya o Yuuta, Nawomi aahi wa yaawo: «Mmoha ni mmoha akookeleke wa amannya; ntoko moonihanyu okhwela vamoha ni ale akhwile**.[9] Apwiya yoovaheeni wiichuwa, mmoha ni mmoha vachokoni vawe ni aiyawe.» Vaavaa ahaanuula, nto yaawo yaakhuwela ni wunla.[10] Yaaloca: «Hooye. Nnakooka vamoha ni nyuwo oya onlokoni wanyu».

EXAMPLE E

[7] Aavinya vanipuroni areiyevo vamoha ni asipwiyamwanaawe ooweeli.[8] **Nave erikimweeca ekookelaka elapo ya o Yuuta, Nawomi aahi wa yaawo: «Mmoha ni mmoha akookeleke wa amannya; ntoko moonihanyu ororomeleya vamoha ni ale akhwile**.[9] Apwiya yoovaheeni wiichuwa, mmoha ni mmoha vachokoni vawe ni aiyawe.» Vaavaa ahaanuula, nto yaawo yaakhuwela ni wunla.[10] Yaaloca: «Hooye. Nnakooka vamoha ni nyuwo oya onlokoni wanyu».

EXAMPLE F

[7] Aavinya vanipuroni areiyevo vamoha ni asipwiyamwanaawe ooweeli.[8] **Nave erikimweeca ekookelaka elapo ya o Yuuta, Nawomi aahi wa yaawo: «Mmoha ni mmoha akookeleke wa amannya; ntoko moonihanyu othokororya vamoha ni ale akhwile**.[9] Apwiya yoovaheeni

wiichuwa, mmoha ni mmoha vachokoni vawe ni aiyawe.» Vaavaa ahaanuula, nto yaawo yaakhuwela ni wunla.[10] Yaaloca: «Hooye. Nnakooka vamoha ni nyuwo oya onlokoni wanyu».

EXAMPLE G

[7] Aavinya vanipuroni areiyevo vamoha ni asipwiyamwanaawe ooweeli.[8] **Nave erikimweeca ekookelaka elapo ya o Yuuta, Nawomi aahi wa yaawo: «Mmoha ni mmoha akookeleke wa amannya; ntoko moonihanyu oreera murima vamoha ni ale akhwile**.[9] Apwiya yoovaheeni wiichuwa, mmoha ni mmoha vachokoni vawe ni aiyawe.» Vaavaa ahaanuula, nto yaawo yaakhuwela ni wunla.[10] Yaaloca: «Hooye. Nnakooka vamoha ni nyuwo oya onlokoni wanyu».

2. In the space provided below, EITHER give a literal translation of the **boldfaced sentence** (verse 8) into Portuguese - OR - explain in Lomwe your understanding of the meaning of the sentence especially the underlined word:_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Now compare the seven examples of Ruth 1:8b that you *back-translated* (or explained) above. Which one of the key terms (underlined) best expresses the biblical writer's intended meaning? Explain why you thinkso._____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Is there perhaps still a better word or phrase that could be used to explain the meaning idiomatically, yet accurately, in Lomwe? If so, write that word/phrase in the sample sentence of Ruth 1:8b and state why you think that this is a more accurate word to use in the Lomwe translation._____
_____
_____
_____
_____

—II—

1. Please read aloud the following examples of Ruth 2:19-23 carefully, paying special attention to the underlined words in each case.

EXAMPLE A

19 Nave ola aamukoha: «Waacoca woowi olelo? Emaca yawani wapharaawewo muteko olelo? Muluku amureelihe yoowo oothokoronrye!» Nave Ruute aamuleela Nawomi wi aaphara muteko mu emaca ya mulopwana awichaniwa Powase.20 **Nawomi aamwaakhula: «Apwiya yoowo <u>oororomeleya</u> nari wa achu akumi, nari wa achu ookhwa, emureelihe Powase. Aamuleela tho wii: Mulopwana yoowo mmusi ahu, mmoha a yaawo oophwanela onthokororya.»** 21 Vaavaa Ruute, mMowaape, aahi tho: «Powase yoowo tho ookileela wii kilapeke vamoha ni anamuteko awe, ophiyerya ohepha omanle.» 22 Nawomi aamwaakhula Ruute: «Aai, ti waphaama mwanaka wi ophareke muteko vamoha ni anamuteko awe aasithiyana, opwaha oya emaca ekina. Hiihaa horwa otannyiwa.» 23 Mwawihiihaa Ruute aalapa vamoha ni anamuteko aasithiyana a Powase ophiyerya soolya soothene ihemphwe. Nto, aamanke ni apwiyamwanaawe.

EXAMPLE B

19 Nave ola aamukoha: «Waacoca woowi olelo? Emaca yawani
wapharaawewo muteko olelo? Muluku amureelihe yoowo oothokoronrye!»
Nave Ruute aamuleela Nawomi wi aaphara muteko mu emaca ya mulop-
wana awichaniwa Powase.20 **Nawomi aamwaakhula: «Yowo akhale**
oreelihiwa ti Apwiya, ntakhara ohisoneiha okhala a ikharari nari wa achu
akumi, nari wa achu ookhwa. Aamuleela tho wii: Mulopwana yoowo
mmusi ahu, mmoha a yaawo oophwanela onthokororya.» 21 Vaavaa
Ruute, mMowaape, aahi tho: «Powase yoowo tho ookileela wii kilapeke
vamoha ni anamuteko awe, ophiyerya ohepha omanle.» 22 Nawomi aam-
waakhula Ruute: «Aai, ti waphaama mwanaka wi ophareke muteko
vamoha ni anamuteko awe aasithiyana, opwaha oya emaca ekina. Hiihaa
horwa otannyiwa.» 23 Mwawihiihaa Ruute aalapa vamoha ni anamuteko
aasithiyana a Powase ophiyerya soolya soothene ihemphwe. Nto, aamanke
ni apwiyamwanaawe.

EXAMPLE C

19 Nave ola aamukoha: «Waacoca woowi olelo? Emaca yawani
wapharaawewo muteko olelo? Muluku amureelihe yoowo oothokoronrye!»
Nave Ruute aamuleela Nawomi wi aaphara muteko mu emaca ya mulop-
wana awichaniwa Powase.20 **Nawomi aamwaakhula: «Yowo akhale**
oreelihiwa ti Apwiya, ntakhara ohisoneiha okhala a osivela nari wa achu
akumi, nari wa achu ookhwa. Aamuleela tho wii: Mulopwana yoowo
mmusi ahu, mmoha a yaawo oophwanela onthokororya.» 21 Vaavaa
Ruute, mMowaape, aahi tho: «Powase yoowo tho ookileela wii kilapeke
vamoha ni anamuteko awe, ophiyerya ohepha omanle.» 22 Nawomi aam-
waakhula Ruute: «Aai, ti waphaama mwanaka wi ophareke muteko
vamoha ni anamuteko awe aasithiyana, opwaha oya emaca ekina. Hiihaa
horwa otannyiwa.» 23 Mwawihiihaa Ruute aalapa vamoha ni anamuteko
aasithiyana a Powase ophiyerya soolya soothene ihemphwe. Nto, aamanke
ni apwiyamwanaawe.

EXAMPLE D

19 Nave ola aamukoha: «Waacoca woowi olelo? Emaca yawani
wapharaawewo muteko olelo? Muluku amureelihe yoowo oothokoronrye!»
Nave Ruute aamuleela Nawomi wi aaphara muteko mu emaca ya mulop-
wana awichaniwa Powase.20 **Nawomi aamwaakhula: «Yowo akhale**

oreelihiwa ti Apwiya, ntakhara ohisoneiha okhala a okhwela nari wa achu akumi, nari wa achu ookhwa. Aamuleela tho wii: Mulopwana yoowo mmusi ahu, mmoha a yaawo oophwanela onthokororya.» [21] Vaavaa Ruute, mMowaape, aahi tho: «Powase yoowo tho ookileela wii kilapeke vamoha ni anamuteko awe, ophiyerya ohepha omanle.» [22] Nawomi aamwaakhula Ruute: «Aai, ti waphaama mwanaka wi ophareke muteko vamoha ni anamuteko awe aasithiyana, opwaha oya emaca ekina. Hiihaa horwa otannyiwa.» [23] Mwawihiihaa Ruute aalapa vamoha ni anamuteko aasithiyana a Powase ophiyerya soolya soothene ihemphwe. Nto, aamanke ni apwiyamwanaawe.

EXAMPLE E

[19] Nave ola aamukoha: «Waacoca woowi olelo? Emaca yawani wapharaawewo muteko olelo? Muluku amureelihe yoowo oothokoronrye!» Nave Ruute aamuleela Nawomi wi aaphara muteko mu emaca ya mulopwana awichaniwa Powase.[20] **Nawomi aamwaakhula: « Yowo akhale oreelihiwa ti Apwiya, ntakhara ohisoneiha okhala a othokororya nari wa achu akumi, nari wa achu ookhwa. Aamuleela tho wii: Mulopwana yoowo mmusi ahu, mmoha a yaawo oophwanela onthokororya.»** [21] Vaavaa Ruute, mMowaape, aahi tho: «Powase yoowo tho ookileela wii kilapeke vamoha ni anamuteko awe, ophiyerya ohepha omanle.» [22] Nawomi aamwaakhula Ruute: «Aai, ti waphaama mwanaka wi ophareke muteko vamoha ni anamuteko awe aasithiyana, opwaha oya emaca ekina. Hiihaa horwa otannyiwa.» [23] Mwawihiihaa Ruute aalapa vamoha ni anamuteko aasithiyana a Powase ophiyerya soolya soothene ihemphwe. Nto, aamanke ni apwiyamwanaawe.

EXAMPLE F

[19] Nave ola aamukoha: «Waacoca woowi olelo? Emaca yawani wapharaawewo muteko olelo? Muluku amureelihe yoowo oothokoronrye!» Nave Ruute aamuleela Nawomi wi aaphara muteko mu emaca ya mulopwana awichaniwa Powase.[20] **Nawomi aamwaakhula: «Yowo akhale oreelihiwa ti Apwiya, ntakhara ohisoneiha okhala a awera saphaama nari wa achu akumi, nari wa achu ookhwa. Aamuleela tho wii: Mulopwana yoowo mmusi ahu, mmoha a yaawo oophwanela onthokororya.»** [21] Vaavaa Ruute, mMowaape, aahi tho: «Powase yoowo tho ookileela wii kilapeke vamoha ni anamuteko awe, ophiyerya ohepha omanle.» [22] Nawomi aam-

waakhula Ruute: «Aai, ti waphaama mwanaka wi ophareke muteko vamoha ni anamuteko awe aasithiyana, opwaha oya emaca ekina. Hiihaa horwa otannyiwa.» [23] Mwawihiihaa Ruute aalapa vamoha ni anamuteko aasithiyana a Powase ophiyerya soolya soothene ihemphwe. Nto, aamanke ni apwiyamwanaawe.

EXAMPLE G

[19] Nave ola aamukoha: «Waacoca woowi olelo? Emaca yawani wapharaawewo muteko olelo? Muluku amureelihe yoowo oothokoronrye!» Nave Ruute aamuleela Nawomi wi aaphara muteko mu emaca ya mulopwana awichaniwa Powase.[20] **Nawomi aamwaakhula: «Yowo akhale oreelihiwa ti Apwiya, ntakhara ohisoneiha okhala a oreera murima nari wa achu akumi, nari wa achu ookhwa. Aamuleela tho wii: Mulopwana yoowo mmusi ahu, mmoha a yaawo oophwanela onthokororya.»** [21] Vaavaa Ruute, mMowaape, aahi tho: «Powase yoowo tho ookileela wii kilapeke vamoha ni anamuteko awe, ophiyerya ohepha omanle.» [22] Nawomi aamwaakhula Ruute: «Aai, ti waphaama mwanaka wi ophareke muteko vamoha ni anamuteko awe aasithiyana, opwaha oya emaca ekina. Hiihaa horwa otannyiwa.» [23] Mwawihiihaa Ruute aalapa vamoha ni anamuteko aasithiyana a Powase ophiyerya soolya soothene ihemphwe. Nto, aamanke ni apwiyamwanaawe.

2. In the space provided below, EITHER give a literal translation of the **boldfaced sentence** (verse 20) into Portuguese - OR - explain in Lomwe your understanding of the meaning of the sentence especially the underlined word:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Now compare the seven examples of Ruth 2:20 that you *back-translated* (or explained) above. Which one of the key terms (underlined) best expresses the biblical writer's intended meaning? Explain why you think so.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Is there perhaps still a better word or phrase that could be used to explain the meaning idiomatically, yet accurately, in Lomwe? If so, write that word/phrase in the sample sentence of Ruth 2:20 and state why you think that this is a more accurate word to use in the Lomwe translation

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

—III—

1. Please read aloud the following examples of Ruth 3:10-13 carefully, paying special attention to the underlined words in each case.

EXAMPLE A

10 **Nave Powase aahi: «Apwiya yooreelihe mwanaka! <u>Ororomeleya</u> waa wuuwu onnapwaha ororomeleya waa woopacerya waacharaka apwiyamwanaa, ohichunaka otheliwa ni mmiravo nari amuhakhu nari oohaawa**.11Vanonto mwanaka, ohuukhuwe. Kinamwerano soothene oloncaa.

Achu oothene a muceche ahu aasuwela wi weyo wa muthiyana aphaama.[12] Eparipari wi kammusi a iyaa, nave kiphwanenle woothokororya, ° nto ookhala mulopwana mukina oh eemusisha ya iyaa okipwaha miyo.[13] Okhale vaava ophiyerya osha. Nni noone omeelo, owo achuna woothokororya ti waphaama. Ahichuna, kinnalipela wa Apwiya mukumi, kinamoothokororya. Vano okone vaava mpakawooshishelo.»

EXAMPLE B

[10] **Nave Powase aahi: «Apwiya yooreelihe mwanaka! Ikharari saanyu sinnapwaha ikharari saanyu soopacerya waacharaka apwiyamwanaa, ohichunaka otheliwa ni mmiravo nari amuhakhu nari oohaawa**.[11]Vanonto mwanaka, ohuukhuwe. Kinamwerano soothene oloncaa. Achu oothene a muceche ahu aasuwela wi weyo wa muthiyana aphaama.[12] Eparipari wi kammusi a iyaa, nave kiphwanenle woothokororya, ° nto ookhala mulopwana mukina oh eemusisha ya iyaa okipwaha miyo.[13] Okhale vaava ophiyerya osha.Nni noone omeelo, owo achuna woothokororya ti waphaama. Ahichuna,kinnalipela wa Apwiya mukumi, kinamoothokororya. Vano okone vaava mpakawooshishelo».

EXAMPLE C

[10] **Nave Powase aahi: «Apwiya yooreelihe mwanaka! Oreera waa wuuwu murima womaliherya ti waphama opwaha ole woopacerya, ntakhara howansye amiravo oohaawa nari amuhakhu**.[11]Vanonto mwanaka, ohuukhuwe. Kinamwerano soothene oloncaa. Achu oothene a muceche ahu aasuwela wi weyo wa muthiyana aphaama.[12] Eparipari wi kammusi a iyaa, nave kiphwanenle woothokororya, ° nto ookhala mulopwana mukina oh eemusisha ya iyaa okipwaha miyo.[13] Okhale vaava ophiyerya osha.Nni noone omeelo, owo achuna woothokororya ti waphaama. Ahichuna,kinnalipela wa Apwiya mukumi, kinamoothokororya. Vano okone vaava mpakawooshishelo».

EXAMPLE D

[10] **Nave Powase aahi: «Apwiya yooreelihe mwanaka! Osivela waa wuuwu onnapwaha osivela waa woopacerya waacharaka apwiyamwanaa, ohichunaka otheliwa ni mmiravo nari amuhakhu nari oohaawa**.[11]Vanonto mwanaka, ohuukhuwe. Kinamwerano soothene oloncaa. Achu oothene a muceche ahu aasuwela wi weyo wa muthiyana aphaama.[12] Eparipari wi

kammusi a iyaa, nave kiphwanenle woothokororya, nto ookhala mulopwana mukina oh eemusisha ya iyaa okipwaha miyo.[13] Okhale vaava ophiyerya osha.Nni noone omeelo, owo achuna woothokororya ti waphaama. Ahichuna,kinnalipela wa Apwiya mukumi, kinamoothokororya. Vano okone vaava mpakawooshishelo.»

EXAMPLE E

[10] **Nave Powase aahi: «Apwiya yooreelihe mwanaka! Othokororya waa wuuwu onnapwaha othokororya waa woopacerya waacharaka apwiyamwanaa, ohichunaka otheliwa ni mmiravo nari amuhakhu nari oohaawa**.[11]Vanonto mwanaka, ohuukhuwe. Kinamwerano soothene oloncaa. Achu oothene a muceche ahu aasuwela wi weyo wa muthiyana aphaama.[12] Eparipari wi kammusi a iyaa, nave kiphwanenle woothokororya, ° nto ookhala mulopwana mukina oh eemusisha ya iyaa okipwaha miyo.[13] Okhale vaava ophiyerya osha.Nni noone omeelo, owo achuna woothokororya ti waphaama. Ahichuna,kinnalipela wa Apwiya mukumi, kinamoothokororya. Vano okone vaava mpakawooshishelo.»

EXAMPLE F

[10] **Nave Powase aahi: «Apwiya yooreelihe mwanaka! Okhwela waa wuuwu onnapwaha okhwela waa woopacerya waacharaka apwiyamwanaa, ohichunaka otheliwa ni mmiravo nari amuhakhu nari oohaawa**.[11]Vanonto mwanaka, ohuukhuwe. Kinamwerano soothene oloncaa. Achu oothene a muceche ahu aasuwela wi weyo wa muthiyana aphaama.[12] Eparipari wi kammusi a iyaa, nave kiphwanenle woothokororya, ° nto ookhala mulopwana mukina oh eemusisha ya iyaa okipwaha miyo.[13] Okhale vaava ophiyerya osha.Nni noone omeelo, owo achuna woothokororya ti waphaama. Ahichuna,kinnalipela wa Apwiya mukumi, kinamoothokororya. Vano okone vaava mpakawooshishelo.»

EXAMPLE G

[10] **Nave Powase aahi: «Apwiya yooreelihe mwanaka! Werela wa saphaama wopwaha waa woopacerya waacharaka apwiyamwanaa, ohichunaka otheliwa ni mmiravo nari amuhakhu nari oohaawa**.[11]Vanonto mwanaka, ohuukhuwe. Kinamwerano soothene oloncaa. Achu oothene a muceche ahu aasuwela wi weyo wa muthiyana aphaama.[12] Eparipari wi kammusi a iyaa, nave kiphwanenle woothokororya, ° nto ookhala mulopwana mukina

oh eemusisha ya iyaa okipwaha miyo.[13] Okhale vaava ophiyerya osha.Nni noone omeelo, owo achuna woothokororya ti waphaama. Ahichuna,kinnalipela wa Apwiya mukumi, kinamoothokororya. Vano okone vaava mpakawooshishelo.»

2. In the space provided below, EITHER give a literal translation of the **boldfaced sentence** (verse 10) into Portuguese - OR - explain in Lomwe your understanding of the meaning of the sentence especially the underlined word:

_____
_____
_____

3. Now compare the seven examples of Ruth 3:10 that you *back-translated* (or explained) above. Which one of the key terms (underlined) best expresses the biblical writer's intended meaning? Explain why you think so.

_____
_____
_____

4. Is there perhaps still a better word or phrase that could be used to explain the meaning idiomatically, yet accurately, in Lomwe? If so, write that word/phrase in the sample sentence of Ruth 3:10 and statel why you think that this is a more accurate word to use in the Lomwe translation.

_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX D:
COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE (LOMWE SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND)[223]

NAME OF INTERVIEWER _____

DATA OF INTERVIEW _____TIME_____

PLACE OF INTERVIEW _____

NAME OF RESPONDENT _____AGE_____

GENDER:

OCCUPATION:

EDUCATION:

CHURCH AFFLIATION:
(if any, and how long have you been a member?)

1. What language or dialect do you speak?
2. What do the following Lomwe expressions mean to you? Can you suggest any other words or phrases that are related to the ones listed here?

Osivela: to love someone or like something, e.g. *I love my mother, or the food tastes nice.*

(Wo)ororomeleya: to be faithful or trustworthy, e.g. *Our daughter is faithful, or she is trustworthy.*

Ikharari: to have pity on someone who is in a crisis, e.g. *Feeling pity for a hungry child.*

Saphaama: to do good to someone who treated you well, e.g. *I did good to Antonio because he helped me when I was in need of food.*

Okhwela: to desire or want something, e.g. *I desire to have a car, or I want to be a pastor.*

3. (a) Does each of the underlined words in the three verses below fit the context? If not, explain why.

[223] This questionnaire was translated into both Portuguese and Lomwe.

(i) Nawomi aahi wa yaawo: Mmoha ni mmoha akookeleke wa amannya; nave Apwiya eweerelekeeni saphaama ntoko tho mwaaweerelaanyu asiiyanyu aakhwile ni miyo tho (Ruth 1:8).

_____

_____

(ii) Nawomi aamwaakhula: Apwiya yoowo oororomeleya nari wa achu akumi, nari wa achu okkhwa, emureelihe Powase Aamuleela tho wii: Mulopwana yoowo mmusi ahu, mmoha a yaawo oophwanela onthokororya (Ruth 2:20).

_____

_____

(iii) Nave Poease aahi: Apwiya yooreelihe mwanaka! Ororomeleya waa wuuwu onnapwaha ororomeleya waa woopacerya waacharaka apwiyamwaana, ohichunaka otheliwa in mmiravo nari amuhakhu nari oohaawa (Ruth 3:10).

_____

_____

3. (b) Can you suggest a better term to use in place of the underlined words above and state why you prefer the words that you have suggested?

_____

_____

APPENDIX E:
SUMMARY OF RESEARCH INTERVIEWS

No. of Lomwe Christians inter-viewed	Church affilia-tion [P* & C*]	Level of Edu-cation [Grades]	Gender	Age	Preference of translation [PV* + CV*]		
					Ruth 1:8	Ruth 2:20	Ruth 3:10
6	P (1) and C (5)	10 - 12TH	Males	18-24	1P PV	1P PV	1P PV
					4C CV	4C CV	4C CV
					1C CV	1C CV	1C PV
12	P (9) and C (3)	5 - 12TH	Males (7P & 1C) and females (2P & 2C)	25-35	3P PV	3P PV	3P PV
					3P CV	3P CV	3P CV
					1P PV	1P CV	1P CV
					2P CV	2P CV	2P PV
					2C CV	2C CV	2C CV
					1C CV	1C CV	1C PV
20	P (18)	6 -	Males	36-45	8P PV	8P PV	8P PV

* P=Protestants
* C=Catholics
* PV=Protestant version
* CV=Catholic version

No. of Lomwe Christians inter-viewed	Church affiliation [P* & C*]	Level of Education [Grades]	Gender	Age	Preference of translation [PV* + CV*]		
					Ruth 1:8	Ruth 2:20	Ruth 3:10
	and C (2)	12TH	(7P & 1C) and females (11P & 1C)		4P CV	4P CV	4P PV
					5P CV	5P CV	5P CV
					1P PV	1P CV	1P CV
					1C PV	1C CV	1C CV
12	P (12)	4 - 12TH	Males (6P) and females (6P)	46-55	1C CV	1C CV	1C PV
					4P PV	4P PV	4P PV
					1P PV	1P CV	1P CV
					1P PV	1P PV	1P CV
					1P CV	1P PV	1P CV
10	P (10)	2nd - 12TH	Males (6P) and females (4P)	56+	4P PV	4P PV	4P PV
					1P CV	1P CV	1P CV
					1P CV	1P PV	1P CV
					2P CV	2P PV	2P PV
					1P PV	1P CV	1P CV
					1P CV	1P CV	1P PV
TOTAL					33 CV/60	35 CV/60	37 PV/60

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This volume contains the slightly revised version of the author's doctoral thesis, which was passed by the Faculty of Theology (Department of Old and New Testament) in the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. Taking the word HSD in the Book of Ruth as an example, the study argues that the meaning of a word can only be fully determined by taking into consideration the linguistic and socio-cultural contexts within which it functions. A basic assumption is that the biblical source text serves as a *frame of reference* for the semantic analysis of a particular word. The text provides an integrative semantic and pragmatic framework within which a biblical term must be investigated with reference to its wider socio-cultural setting.

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