

## Research Article

# “Jesus Christ, The Supra-Ancestor: The Quintessential Image of A Bona Fide African Christology”, A Paper Submitted In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement of Conneporary Christologies and Soteriologies

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**Abstract:** It goes without say that an authentic African Christology emanates from a theology from below then it is augmented by a theology from above. It is a Christology that is pragmatic and has gumption and capacity to deal with the physical as well as the spiritual dynamics of the problems of Africans without disparaging the fact that most of the problem had a spiritual ramification or causation and that evil spirits were critical in the physical problems of Africans. As a result the Africans Christologies must of necessity view Jesus as the savior with power and redeemer from evil forces. He is also a mediator and intermediary with God. He is a healer. The truth is that none of this metaphors in the African worldview captures the reality of the African expectation of the reality of Jesus Christ as the supra Ancestor. Benezet Bujo an eminent African theologian in his Magnus opus African theology in its social context succinctly captured this truth when he assert that we a scribe to Jesus the titles of Jesus of “Ancestor par Excellent “or “Proto-Ancestor” ,this image he asserts that is entry point and the launching pad of doing Africa Christology.

**Keywords:** African Christology, God, Benezet Bujo, African theology, Ancestor par Excellent, Proto-Ancestor.

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## INTRODUCTION

It goes without say that an authentic African Christology emanates from a theology from below then it is augmented by a theology from above. It is a Christology that is pragmatic and has gumption and capacity to deal with the physical as well as the spiritual dynamics of the problems of Africans without disparaging the fact that most of the problem had a spiritual ramification or causation and that evil spirits were critical in the physical problems of Africans. As a result the Africans Christologies must of necessity view Jesus as the savior with power and redeemer from evil forces. He is also a mediator and intermediary with God. He is a healer. The truth is that none of this metaphors in the African worldview captures the reality of the African expectation of the reality of Jesus Christ as the supra Ancestor. Benezet Bujo an eminent African theologian in his Magnus opus African theology in its social context succinctly captured this truth when he assert that we a scribe to Jesus the titles of Jesus of “Ancestor par Excellent “or “Proto-Ancestor”<sup>1</sup>, this image he asserts that is entry point and the launching pad of doing Africa Christology.<sup>2</sup>

It must be noted that Christ is not just another ancestor but a supra-ancestor which implies that he is an ancestor’s district from other ancestors. This concept was grasped by Ghanaian theologian John Pobee who affirms in his classic masterpiece Towards an African Theology that there should be a water shed in the approach that we look on Jesus as the great and undisputed Ancestor in the Akan language referred to as nana who is vested with power and authority to judge the deeds of men, rewarding good, punishing the evil. This is further amplified by the fact that “he is superior to the other ancestors by the virtue of being closest to God and as God.”<sup>3</sup> It is the researchers considered option that Christ as the supra-ancestor is a classic presentation of Christology the African context for it is grounded on Christ work as a creator and his blood flows in our vein and indeed he is our ancestor, secondly on his salvation as a result he merits to be

<sup>1</sup> Benezet Bujo, African. *Theology in social context*, translated John Donohue, (Mary knoll:Orbis press, 1992) P 79

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> John Pobee, *Toward an African Theology*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon press, 1979), p 94

our supra ancestor he does as or propitiation on our behalf like our blood brother and lastly on his resurrection he is the first fruit from the dead and identifies with all who have died.

In this research paper, I will endeavor to highlight the Christ the supra-ancestor Christology clearly identifying the inherent challenges before giving a practical application to this doctrine of Christology to the African church orthodoxy before giving a pragmatic personal application.

## **THE RATIONAL AND BASIS OF CHRIST THE SUPRA ANCESTOR CHRISTOLOGY**

African Christian Christology must be grounded in both scripture and the African world view for it to be authentically Biblical and totally African. The Christology that must be relevant to the Bible and appropriate to the Biblical message must of necessity be contextual. It must address the reality of an African world view which scribes to the belief that there is no dichotomy “between the sacred and the secular, between the religious and the non religious between the spiritual and material areas of life”.<sup>4</sup> As a result this Christology must be robustly relevant to all spheres of life and every form of human existence it must address appropriately all the issues of the African realities and questions. The belief in centrality of the community in the African context is pervading and overarching. This is affirmed by the patriarch of African Christian Theology Prof John S Mbiti who states categorically that:

“Traditional religions are not primarily for the individual, But, for his community of which he is part. Chapters of African religious experience are written everywhere in the life of the community and in traditional society there are no religious to be human is to belong to the whole community and to do so involves participating in the beliefs, ceremonies, rituals and festivals of their community.”<sup>5</sup>

Consequently a Christology that is worth the salt of being called African Christology must of necessity address the concept of an African world view and the issues of African perspective. It addresses the concept of an integrated African view of religion and also the place of the community. This is an antithesis of a Christological Theology of the historical Jesus and its logical conclusion of demythologizing the gospel and dichotomizing the Christ of the faith and historical Jesus that is prevalent in the west and regurgitated in African Theological Academia in the liberal theological circles. This has also been compounded by a theology of reducing Jesus to be a mere human being just as a good teacher. In the evangelical theology spectrum there has been a Christology that is orthodox that is Christ dual nature both divine and human but is presented in a very abstract, philosophical way that is devoid of practical implications to real life situations. Hence the presentations are for intellectual discourse and not practical living. As a result I do concur with the vivid description of the plight of the African church that suffers from genuine under development of theology that is necessitated by a cultural burden of western Christianity.<sup>6</sup> This over dependency on the sufficiency Western theology led to disastrous consequences in the 1960s as the eminent Anglican Theologian Prof John S Mbiti to observe that, “African Christological concepts do not exist.”<sup>7</sup> This barrenness has created a lacuna that many African theologians have sought to fill. However, the efforts have been lackluster in the past due to a lack, a coherent, innovative, systematic and pragmatic African Christology. This has resulted in 1980s to a state of a fluid Christology that resulted in, “the failure to produce a convincing African or Black theology”<sup>8</sup>

The African theology of Christology in seeking to be relevant crafted a Christology that was based on two presuppositions. One that was rooted in culture that was an inculturation Christology and one that addressed on the political reality which was liberation Christology based on overarching need of African Christians.

The Christology of inculturation sought to communicate Christology in more culturally relevant way to the African Christians. There are many images in these Christologies that presentation can be related to the African Christian world view and appropriate to the Biblical message. Secondly, this Christology is inextricably intertwined with the African context Christology is closely linked with holistic salvation that includes physical healing, exorcism of demons and deliverance from oppression. The synergy between the two perspectives has made African Theologians to be innovative in the presentations of their Christologies. It must be noted that among the African distinguished scholars of Christology or Christologies have sought to answer Jesus cryptical question in Matthew 16:15-18 But whom do you say I

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<sup>4</sup> John S Mbiti, *African Religious and Philosophy*, (London: Heinemann Publishing House, 1969), P 2

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Jean-Marc Ela, *African Cry*, (Mary Knoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1997) P 107

<sup>7</sup> John S Mbiti, “Some African Concept of Christology” *Christ and the Younger Churches*, eds G Vicedom (London: S.P.C.K, 1972), P 51

<sup>8</sup> A Shorter, “Folk Christianity and Functional Christology,” *After 24* (1982), P 134.

am? They characterized images of Jesus as Ancestor, Elder Brother, Elder, Healer, Liberator, Chief, King, Guest and Master of initiation.<sup>9</sup> These images I will seek to examine the most profound of images exposing their inherent strength and apparent weakness before expounding on the more apt image of Christ the Supra Ancestor its implication in African Christian Christology and its implication on soteriology.

## A CHRIST THE MASTER INITIATOR

The African cultural is fraught with a plethora of ceremonies and ritual associated with the various stages of life: birth, initiation, marriage and death. This analogy is in Christ as the master initiator is evident in his life, ministry, death and resurrection. In this way Christ come to be seen as, “The master of initiation”<sup>10</sup> This position is indeed very relevant in expressing Christ humanity that he per took at stages of human existence that he was no a mere phantom. However, it abysmally fails to express the uniqueness of Christ. It fails to express the divinity of Christ that we can contextualize the Christian message to African rites to express the significance of Christ in the contemporary church.

Despite the relevance of initiation in belonging to a community and Christ being the chief initiator into the community of believers. This analogy has relevance in Christian Baptism and membership of the church. This comprehension of Jesus as the chief initiator is myopic and not comprehensive hence it fails short of being an image that clearly presents an African Christology. Secondly, it fails to accommodate other aspects of Christ dual nature of his divinity and humanity. The truth does not nullify that Christ is indeed the chief initiator of Christ sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion which are the indispensable means of grace to the Christians in this regard Jesus is the chief initiator but this is not an entire description of his authentic African Christology that is both divine and human the God Man Jesus Christ.

## CHRIST THE HEALER

The image of Christ as a healer resonates well with the Africa Christian. To the African disease or sickness has dual element the physical and the spiritual, it is no wonder that, “An African or Africanist can at times more easily understand the world of the Bible that a modern Westerner especially in regard to the causes of disease both physical and mental”.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, this term healer is sometimes unwittingly use of the healer and witch doctor are applied interchangeably though the witch doctor is used pejorative the healer may be right title. However these descriptive title is healer and witch doctor is indicative of the sickness has both the physical and the metaphysical and psychic orientation hence there was need for holistic healing that can only be effected by Jesus the healer who healed all manner of diverse sickness with his immense power as God.

The fact that Jesus healing manifestations and activity is evident in the modern presentation of Christology is grounded on the reality, “There can scarcely be a serious exegete who does not believe in a basic stock of historically certainty miracles of Jesus”<sup>12</sup> This is prophylactic against a historical Jesus Hermeneutic that are not grounded on historical faith. Jesus the healer is critical in presenting Christianity to the Africans since it healing has been irrefutably and irrevocably central in the African traditional religion since time immemorial. Hence for Christianity to address the needs and issue of Africa it needs a Christology of Jesus as the healer. This a Christology of an integrated healing that is Jesus, heals, “On several levels at once, physical, emotional, Psychic, social, religious. This is similar to the view taken by the traditional healer of Africa.”<sup>13</sup> The Western Christology that addressed inborn depravity and acts of sin with salvation that is justification, regeneration and sanctification which was to do with the soul without addressing the physical healing was deficient and impotent to the African Christians for the image of Christ as healer addresses conclusively the challenge of both physical and well as the spiritual healing. This image is indeed very progressive in developing the African Christology though it only addresses his work and never touches of his nature or personality. The uniqueness of Christ as his divinity, preexistence and his divine prerogative of forgiving sin cannot be comprehensively covered by this image as the healer. As a result the logical conclusion that this image of Christology is that it fails to adequately capture the true African Christology though it is critical to be integrated in the image of the African Christology.

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<sup>9</sup> Donald J George, *The Quest for Christ in Africa*, <https://www.scrbd.com>. Retrieved on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2016 at 17: 30 GMT.

<sup>10</sup> Raymond Maloney, “*African Christology*” *Theological Studies* 48 1987, P 505-507.

<sup>11</sup> Lucy Meir, *Witchcraft*, (London: World University Library, 1969), P 76-10)

<sup>12</sup> W Kasper, *Jesus the Christ* (London: Burns and Oats, 1976). P90.

<sup>13</sup> E de Rosny, *Healers in the Night*, (New York: Orbis Books, 1985) P 8

## CHRIST THE ELDER BROTHER

H Sawyer identified the image of Christ the elder brother as the most appropriate for African Christology. Christ is distinguished as "The first among many brethren who with him from the church."<sup>14</sup> In the church of Christ there is no distinction whatsoever of gender, age, tribe etc. in this image Christ is depicted in the African Christology. "Such an idea of Jesus as our elder brother is perfectly understandable, due to the role that the older brother has in our society and culture of a defender, mediator and protector."<sup>15</sup> This image is indeed intrinsically African and may be used to promote egalitarianism in the church. It adequately identifies with the divinity of Christ and his mediatory role. Hence the image falls short of doing proper justice to the African Christology. This concept of elder brother seems to be mechanically linked with Africans especially in terms of when it seeks to address the equality and racial segregation. It seems that the image is not organically African but it was an image in reaction to racial segregation and apartheid hence it may not be the ideal image of African Christology.

## CHRIST THE CHIEF

Chieftaincy is indeed very profound and prominent in Africa most especially West Africa. J S Pobee persuasively elucidates a functional Christology which has chieftaincy at the core. The chief is expected to be the judge, legislature, religious leader, reader of the community, fire extinguisher and one who saves in battle which are the essential qualities of Christ hence he develops the royal priesthood Christology which fits into the African world view.<sup>16</sup> The danger of this image is the typical stereotype of a chief. The prominent reason among them all is that chiefs have lost their vitality which is their positive influence and power.<sup>17</sup>

This may have been occasioned by the breakdown of the African traditional society and the influence of modernity, Western consumerism and individualist. These chiefs were also secluded elitist and had no contact with the ordinary subject.<sup>18</sup>

This Christology is truly African in the sense of vindicating Christ divinity and his royalty as expressed in the gospel of Matthew, though it fails to address Christ image as a servant in gospel of Mark, his humanity in the gospel of Luke and this divinity and incarnation in the gospel of John. This image does not give the true representation of the African Christology in a way that is relevant to the Biblical witness and African the total images of Christ in the African context. This role of the healer could be fit into the ministry of Christ as the priest, while Christ the chief could fit his ministry of Christ as a king. Then the liberation Christology of Christ the liberator fits his role as the prophet.

In as far as the liberation type of Christology in Africa, this image of Christology is reactionary to the challenges of the African people. Georgian categorically affirms that the Christ the liberator is another significant image of Christ that emanated from the praxis-oriented, context-aware and politically conscious liberation Christology.<sup>19</sup> This image of Christology of Christ as the chief may not aptly reflect the true image of Christ for some chiefs were cruel, vindictive masochists and notorious land grabber hence it might not be an ideal image of African Christology.

The Biblical Christology is sometimes seemingly an antithesis of cultural images of Christologies that we contextualize but when we examine this cultural images circumspectly, we find areas of synergy and concurrence. This is true because the two are like two pieces of paper glued together that cannot be severed from one another, for there can be no inculturation apart from socio-political, liberation and no liberation apart from inculturation and Africanization of Christianity."<sup>20</sup>

## CHRIST THE SUPRA ANCESTOR: THE QUENTESSENTIAL IMAGE OF AFRICAN CHRISTOLOGY

It goes without say that if there is a priestly image of Jesus as healer then there must be a prophet presentation of Jesus as the liberator. None of the analogies of African Christology is authentic to the Biblical message and genuine to

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<sup>14</sup> Harmy H Sawyer, *Creative Evangelism: Towards a New Christian Encounter with Africa*. (London: Lutte North, 1968), P 266-267.

<sup>15</sup> Emilio J M de Carralho, "What Do Africans say That Jesus Christ is?" *Africa Theological Journal* 10: 2 (1981), 17

<sup>16</sup> J S Pobee, *Towards an African Theology*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1977, P 185-186.

<sup>17</sup> Sawyer, *Ibid*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>19</sup> Greagran, *Ibid*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*.

the African world view as that of Christ the Supra-ancestor. This is evident in the fact that the title Christ the supra-ancestor. Christ the supra Ancestor converges both theology from above and the theology from below. It sums both the dual nature of Christ the Theanthropic person equally divine and totally human. The ancestor image of Christology inextricably links the ontology and function of Christ can be attributed to both divinity and humanity. As the Arobator puts, "An Ancestor is a blood relative a living community, this relationship could be of common percentage or shared ancestry."<sup>21</sup> This underscores the irrevocable truth Ancestors are human and this analogy of image could be a spring board to enforce the humanity of Christ. He was a born with a human Mother (Matthew 1) he was tired, was hungry, slept and even died. This vindicates the great truth that Jesus was humanity of Christ as ancestors are also human. This truth of the humanity of Christ does not limit the ancestor to being beyond the blood line. Hence the ancestors are not necessarily Parochial or united to a blood line because, "It is worth nothing that not all ancestors have blood connection with those who venerate them among many of the African cultures. There are primordial ancestors transnational ancestors, national, communal and family ancestors."<sup>22</sup> This assertion makes is to acknowledge that this image of Christ to be our bona fide ancestor. Secondly, in his incarnation he was born in Nazareth and some can dispute that he cannot be our ancestor. However, he is abundantly clear that an ancestor is not limited to blood line but it can transcend geography region, "For instance Nelson Mandela is considered an all African ancestor. He is not only restricted to his tribe of origin in South Africa but he is venerated by all Africans."<sup>23</sup> This is because of his character, achievement and influence on the African society. This can also be attributed to Christ whose character was impeccable and his humanity was perfect. It is crystal clear that the image of Christ as the Supra ancestor effectively captures the humanity of Christ. The uniqueness of Christ in his divinity is also catered for in the African concept of the ancestor. The dead is who is an ancestor in Africa exclusively, "Enjoy a sacred super human status with special magi co-religious powers that can be beneficial or even harmful to the early kin".<sup>24</sup> The ancestor had a super human element of divinity. This was catapulted by general revelation and verified in Gods special revelation. The African traditional religion concept of the ancestor was rudimentary, preparation evangelic and it prepared by prevenient grace to accept the Christ. In Christ there is the supra-ancestor. Charles Nyamiti candidly explains this concept:

The Theology of the ancestor ship of the son of God is  
Incomplete without theological consideration of its link with  
us, for indeed Christ the head is incomplete without the body.  
the church of which we and the saints in the world are members.  
This has led to an examination of the relevance of Christ ancestors  
to the relevancy saints and those of purgatory.<sup>25</sup>

The Christ of the Supra- Ancestor as revealed in the special revelation is the perfect fulfillment of the concept of the ancestor in the African traditional religion.

The ancestors' role and place as a mediator between humans and the Supreme Being is very evident in the African traditional belief. This is anchored on the premise of the proximity between the ancestors and God. As a result "They perform mediating role in many African societies. The Supreme Being is so great that to approach this transcendent being, one must press through the intermediary of one's ancestor."<sup>26</sup> The distance between God and humanity is not only because of Gods greatness also because of his holiness that is Gods otherness that is in stark contrast to mans total depravity and propensity to seek evil. Hence the mediation of the ancestors was an anticipation of the mediatory work of Christ that bridged the gap between God and humanity through his proprietary work on the cross (1 Timothy 2:5). The concept of Christ the Supra ancestor depicts the Biblical truth that is indeed the mediator who supersedes and replaces the African ancestor as the ancestor per excellence who is the truest mediator.

Ancestors were men whose integrity exemplified impeccable character worthy to be emulated. The African concept of ancestor finds its perfect and complete representation. Christ indeed qualifies to be a bona fide ancestor to all humanity. This fact indicates that it is incontrovertible that Christ is the first born of creation. Luke's genealogy

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<sup>21</sup> A E Arobator, *Theology brewed in an African pot* (Nairobi: Paulines Publication, 2008), P 108.

<sup>22</sup> Bonki L Matthew, *Ancestral Cult in African Traditional Religious Belief Systems and Its Theological Relevance Today*, [www.Saintleo.Edu>media> veneration](http://www.Saintleo.Edu>media> veneration). Retrieved on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 15: 32 GMT.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Charles Nyamiti, *Studies in African Christian Theology: Jesus Christ, The Ancestor of Mankind, Methodological and Trinitarian Foundations*. Vol P66.

<sup>25</sup> Charles Nyamiti, "African Christologies Today," *Jesus in African Christianity*, JNK Mugande and Laurenti Magesa, eds, (Nairobi: Kenya Action Publishes, 1989), P 27.

<sup>26</sup> Matthew, 5

authenticates this truth that the genealogy of Jesus is drawn back to the first man in creation.<sup>27</sup> However, Jesus is also portrayed as the first born among the creation as expressed in Colossians 1:20-25. This depicts the description of Christ as the ancestor is grounded on his creation as well as his redemption for the two are inextricably intertwined.

The first born of creation denotes Christ pre-eminence, supremacy and overarching paramour over the other entire ancestor as the elder brother of the ancestors, consequently Christ has a profound role as a spiritual authority, community mediator and protector of the clan.<sup>28</sup> Christ as the supra-ancestor is dual based on his subordination as a result of his part in the redemptive work; hence he is identified with the creation in their genealogy and blood lineage of all humanity. Hence humanly speaking, he is a Bona Fide Supra-ancestor the first born among all the creation.

Christ the supra-ancestor derives this title also due to his divinity. In Colossian 1:15-20 it is abundantly clear that, "By him all things were created". The place of the supra-ancestor is here presented not only as, "an originator, but also as the one who represents the meaning for creation and unity of all things."<sup>29</sup> The divinity of Christ as the creator and sustainer of all vindicates his position as the source and proto-human being. As a result Christ is truly a bona fide Supra- Ancestor due to his creation. Humanity is part and parcel of his creation and Christ is a bona fide Supra- Ancestor of humanity regardless of race, creed and tribe. For his ancestry is based on him being the first born creation and also being the creator. It is here that we ascertain that Christ is a Supra-Ancestor by the fact of his incarnation and birth as authenticated in his genealogy in Luke 4 and his creation in Col 1:15-20.

Christ is also a Supra-Ancestor in life, death and resurrection. As Bediako succinctly puts it that, "Christ, by virtue of his incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension into the realm of spirit-power can rightly be designed in African terms, as ancestor indeed Supreme Ancestor".<sup>30</sup> Christ was the first born in creation so he is also the first born in resurrection, the first born from the dead. This Christ as the first born from dead gives hope and vindication of a validity of life after death and its viability as was expressed in the African traditional society. Life was considered sacred and Euthanasia, abortion and suicide were anathema. Christ to Supra Ancestor captured the critical element of celebrating life and the belief in life after death in the Traditional African society that if incorporated in Christian Christology will make it more intelligible and relevant to the African situation and context.

Christ the Supra-Ancestor is a manifestation of Christ impeccability, sinlessness and when this doctrine is purified in incarnation it can be a launching pad to the dogma of the virgin birth. It goes without say that in Africa, "Ancestors lived exemplary lives, were model leaders in their communities and are source of tribal solidarity and cohesion".<sup>31</sup> This authenticates the Bible truth that Christ was without sin as recorded in 1 Peter 2:22 and 1 John 3:5. This sinlessness of Christ of his impeccability finds perfect expression in Christ the Supra Ancestors.

The image Christ as the Supra-Ancestor here in is imbedded the antinomy of Christ as being both immense and transcendence of Christ. He is both remote and removed yet involved and engaged in the daily affairs of the family. The ancestors were depicted as, the invisible guardians of the family"<sup>32</sup> which implies that they are beyond the mundane; hence they are Supra Mundane in another realm. Yet in the same breath, "Ancestors are said to visit their living relatives through lions, gigantic trees, stones, leopards etc."<sup>33</sup> In Christ as the Supra-culture we can find equal expression of Christ pre-existence and detachment from the world that is found in his expression in John 8: 58 that before Abraham was, I am. But Christ in his incarnation was imminent and present in the world.

Christ is indeed a Supra Ancestor that his memory is re-enacted as we participate in the liturgy of the Holy Communion service which is a sacrament and a means of grace. This practice is evident in rituals and ceremonies that are evident in the African culture in honor of the ancestors or in their memory. Ancestors implied in the African community the sense of the community where the ancestors from a sacred solidarity in which, "Solidarity is lived and shared through

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<sup>27</sup> Walter Dietrich, *the Bible in a World Context*, (Gand Rapids, Michigan: WMB Eerdmans, 2002) 61.

<sup>28</sup> Pope-Levison Pricilla and John Levieson, *Jesus in Global Context*, (Louisville, New York: West Minister Press, 1992), P 102-105.

<sup>29</sup> Michael Shepherd, "Christ the Ancestor: All Illustrative Reading of Colossians 1:11-2". [www.global/Theology.org](http://www.global/Theology.org). Retrieved on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 at 15:33 GMT.

<sup>30</sup> Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa. The Renewal of Anon Western Religion*, (Mary knoll, New York: Orbis book, 1997), P257.

<sup>31</sup> Georgen , *Ibid*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*

prayers and rituals whereby human and cosmic solidarity in engaged.<sup>34</sup> In the ancestor according to the African traditional society there was a plethora of interaction between the living and the spiritual world. The same is true in Christ who is our ancestor and there is interaction between humanity and divinity through prayer and sacraments. Hence Christ as the Supra-Ancestor could be comprehended with the Africans who poured liberation as they communed in meals with the ancestor which is a type of the Holy Communion that is done in memory of Christ. Hence Christ the Supra- Ancestor is the epitome the perfection of African rituals and ceremonies related to the ancestors that ought to be purified in their superstitions and excesses may take us appreciate and embrace the Christian sacrament in a deeply profound way to the African Christian. Christ the supra Ancestor is truest and most profound presentation of Christ's divinity and humanity. It depicts a Christology that is both organic and incarnational. It is organic in the sense that Christ the supra ancestor is not a foreign and exotic image like that of the historical Jesus. This image is essentially African hence it is intelligible and tangible to the Africa. In Christ the supra Ancestor we find a pragmatic Christology that will deal with the challenges of the African Christians. Christ the Ancestor Christology addresses the need to relate African ritual to Christian Sacraments. This image of Christ as the Supra Ancestor will indeed be a quintessential Christology when it incorporate the image of Christ the healer for ancestors were critical in healing and hence the supra healer was the ancestor who was consulted by the traditional healers hence Christ the healer will be embedded in Christ the supra Ancestor image. The Christ the supra ancestor image also encapsulate the image of Christ the chief initiator for the ancestor were an integral part of each and every ceremony warp and all. It is indeed true that the ancestors were the initiators of all the ceremonies. Hence for Christians Christ is the initiator our two Christian Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Community in Matthew 28:19-20 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-30. Therefore it is bonafide and legitimate to have Christ the supra Ancestors as the chief initiator of the Christian sacraments. The image of Christ the Supra Ancestor could integrate Christ the chief initiator image. Christ is also depicted as the elder brother but also this image of Christ can be incorporated in the image of Christ the supra Ancestor for Christ is the first fruit of resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:20. This vindicates the truth that the images of Christ as the elder brother and the ancestor are mutually compatible and can be amalgamated into the image of Christ the Supra ancestor for Christ is the first fruit of resurrection and the elder brother in terms of our adoption as children of God Romans 8:15-18. Christ is lord and a great Chief in the African but all the authority was given to him after his resurrection Matthew 28:18 this power was vested to our first our quintessential ancestor who can be depicted as our elder brother, presented as the master initiator, and envisaged as a bonafide healer.

## CONCLUSION AND APPLICATION

It goes without say that African Christology converges and diverges in the quintessential image of Christ the supra ancestor. It diverges because it is the distinct image that candidly expresses the African Christology in essentially Biblical and thoroughly African. This image is truly African and yet it can accommodate the message of the Biblical Christ who is fully divine and totally human. Christ is depicted with a paragon of virtues who is impeccable in character and virtues. The birth, life, miracles, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and second coming of Jesus Christ indeed reify and vivify Christ as the supra Ancestor. This is where the African Christology divergence for Christ as the supra Ancestor is uniquely African, theologically innovative and Biblically tenable. The convergence of African Christologies is in Christ the Supra Ancestor for it the epitome and embodiment of all the African Christologies. This image of Christ the Supra Ancestor perfects and complements the images of Christ: the elder brother, the chief initiator, the chief and the healer. In this intense, laborious and engrossing study I have learned that it is feasible and tenable to have an authentic African Christology this is anti thesis of the current practice in African Theological Academia's where western oriented Christologies are uncritically or sheepishly regurgitated giving us a Christology that is exotic and irrelevant to the African Christian life's and situations. This study has emboldened my resolve to formulate an organic African Christology this can be only be possible through critical contextualization. However to address the African needs I will need to embrace the pastoral circle theological methodology. We also need to incorporate the critical correlation methodology in my quest for genuine African Theology that seeks the synergy from the Christian texts and African experience in formulating a genuine biblical and a truly African Theology. This consolidated approach of integrating critical contextualization, critical correlation and pastoral circle is the methodology that I will endeavor to employ in my quest for African Christology specifically and African Theology in general.

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