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Item Type	Book chapter
Authors	Chitando, Ezra
Publisher	Regnum Books International
Rights	With permission of the license/copyright holder
Download date	2026-11-07 11:03:53
Link to Item	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/166477

(125) HUMAN SEXUALITY IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Ezra Chitando

Introduction

The theme of human sexuality has been a consistently problematic one since the arrival of the Christian faith in Africa. It has generated considerable debate, creativity and controversy. At stake has been whether churches in Africa have been realistic in their engagement with African understandings of human sexuality. Although the more recent debates over homosexuality threaten to dominate the discussion of it in Africa, it is only a fraction of the larger issue. Human sexuality has been an integral part of the story of African Christianity. Across different epochs and geographical contexts, churches have sought to address human sexuality in Africa.

This chapter summarises the key issues that have characterised the debate on human sexuality in Africa. In the first section, the chapter highlights the major issues that have emerged in the African churches' encounter with human sexuality. The second section draws attention to the trends and patterns that can be observed from the African churches' engagement with it. In the third section, the chapter offers some suggestions on how African churches can be more effective in their response to human sexuality.

African Christianity and Human Sexuality: Major Issues

One of the earliest areas of confrontation between missionaries and African Christians in many parts of the continent was around perceptions of African sensuality and sexuality. The dominant paradigm among missionaries was that African dances were too suggestive and that African men in particular had an insatiable sexual appetite. Furthermore, the prevailing notions of what was acceptable behaviour in the missionaries' home countries had an effect on their assessment of African sexual practices.[1]

The negative attitude towards African marriage practices was also felt in addressing polygamy. Most missionaries contended that the practice of African men in marrying more than one wife was un-Christian. In some instances, this gave rise to African Independent/Indigenous/Initiated/Instituted Churches (AICs), many of whom appealed to the Hebrew Bible to support the practice. In addition, there were also underlying social, cultural and economic reasons that were behind polygamy.[2] Other issues relating to sexuality/marriage and missionaries included the payment of bridewealth (dowry), the role of indigenous spirituality in marriage practices, and others. Most missionaries insisted on upholding western values which they mistook for gospel values. Even as the churches have enculturated and indigenised the gospel, the tension between African values and 'biblical' values continues to be experienced.[3]

Most churches in Africa are now led by Africans, particularly after the decolonising 1960s (some churches Africanised their leadership during their struggles for independence). Nevertheless, they continue to struggle with issues of human sexuality. This became patently clear in the churches' response to HIV and AIDS. When the epidemic broke out in the mid-1980s, the global Christian community struggled to

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[1] R. J. Priest, 'Missionary Positions: Christian, Modernist, Postmodernist', *Current Anthropology* 42 (2001): 29-68.
[2] Julius K. Muthengi, 'Polygamy and the Church in Africa: Biblical, Historical, and Practical Perspectives', *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* Vol. 14, no. 2, (1995): 55-78.
[3] See for example, Onesimus Ngundu, 'Mission Churches and African Customary Marriage: A History of Church Marriages and a Case for an African Christian Customary Marriage Ceremony', *African Journal of Evangelical Theology* Vol. 30, no. 1, (2011): 35-53.

address the theme of sex and sexuality in an open and empowering way. Shame, secrecy and silence dominated the churches' response to HIV and AIDS.[4] Donald Messer elaborates on this when he writes:

> Christians often get tongue-tied when speaking publicly about human sexuality. Christian leaders, so steeped in shame and often lacking in scientific or medical understanding and terminology, typically sidestep the important and life-saving realm of sex education. Too embarrassed to be forthright and honest, they leave the educational work to others who may or may not share their same relational values or ethics of responsibility.[5]

The struggle to address human sexuality by churches in Africa has come out more forcefully in the debate on homosexuality in Africa. Without deliberately setting out to cause harm or pain, many churches in Africa have come across as deeply and irretrievably homophobic. They have struggled to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of sexuality and social justice.[6] This is predominantly the result of an inherited theological conservatism and a refusal to be open to new knowledge and information regarding the complex nature of human sexuality.

Alongside the challenge posed by homosexuality, African churches have struggled to articulate progressive theologies around HIV prevention, especially in relation to the issue of condoms. Although attitudes had mellowed by the end of the first decade of the 21st century, many church leaders remained uneasy in mentioning condoms as an effective HIV prevention strategy.[7] In addition, the theme of comprehensive sex education and information proved divisive, with many church leaders resisting it being taught for adolescents and young people. Their main fear has been that introducing sex education to adolescents and youth will make them more adventurous and contribute towards them becoming sexually active at an earlier age.

African Christianity and Human Sexuality: Emerging Issues

There are a number of factors that can help to account for the attitudes of African churches towards the theme of human sexuality. Although a longer narrative is required to do justice to them, in this chapter I draw attention to the major issues. First, the influence of missionary Christianity on African Christianity needs to be acknowledged. Although African theologians have expended considerable energy in arguing for Africanisation and localisation of the gospel message, the effects of the missionaries remain discernible. This is particularly true in relation to responses to human sexuality. African Christianity has largely upheld the missionary attitudes towards human sexuality. The tendency to avoid discussing the subject, or approaching it from a 'hyper-spiritual' stance, remains pronounced.

Second, the impact of missionary Christianity and colonialism on African structures, institutions and approaches needs to be recognised. African structures and institutions were effective in addressing sex and sexuality in their own context. Consequently, there were rites of passage, sacred specialists and counsellors who equipped young people with knowledge relating to sex and sexuality. Although sex was associated with mystery and awe, connected as it was with spirituality,[8] it was also demystified through song and dance. Indigenous approaches to human sexuality tended to be more embracing of its power and

[4] See for example, Ezra Chitando, *Living with Hope: African Churches and HIV/AIDS,* Volume 1 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2007).
[5] Donald E. Messer, *Breaking the Conspiracy of Silence: Christian Churches and the Global AIDS Crisis* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 42.
[6] Marc Epprecht, *Sexuality and Social Justice in Africa: Rethinking Homophobia and Forging Resistance* (London: Zed Books, 2013).
[7] See for example, Gillian Patterson, ed., *HIV Prevention: A Global Theological Conversation* (Geneva: Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, 2009).
[8] Laurenti Magesa, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997).

complexity. For example, among the Shona people of Zimbabwe, there were poems to celebrate sex (although it was mainly the woman who was expected to praise the man's sexual prowess). However, the missionaries discouraged such 'sex positive' approaches to life, leading to the general demonization of sex among most indigenous people.

Third, there is an underlying, robust defence of an imagined, pristine African culture. It is striking that most church leaders will justify the general refusal to address human sexuality in its complexity by appealing to 'traditional African culture'. They claim that this culture upholds the sacredness of sex and sexuality. They argue that, as custodians of African culture, they cannot support 'un-African' and 'western' practices such as homosexuality. This ideological commitment to African culture can be understood within the context of African Christianity's quest for autonomy. It is tied to the continent's experiences with missionary Christianity and colonialism. Most African church leaders, like their politicians, do not want to be lectured to by people from the global North. They react very strongly as they want to resist patronising attitudes by their former colonisers.

Fourth, the Bible is featured quite prominently in African Christian responses to human sexuality. There is a deliberate effort to uphold 'biblical standards' in relation to shaping human sexuality. Literal interpretations of the Bible are quite dominant in African Christianity. This has been pronounced in the response to homosexuality. Many church leaders in Africa are staunchly opposed to homosexuality because they are convinced that the Bible is unequivocal in its denunciation of it.[9] The role of the Bible in shaping attitudes towards human sexuality in African Christianity needs to be explored in greater detail.

African Christianity and Human Sexuality: Some Proposals

The HIV epidemic has highlighted the urgent need for African Christianity to approach human sexuality with a greater degree of openness and realism. By the time churches had offered more effective responses, too many lives had been lost. There is a need to accept this basic truth: human beings are sexual beings. In many instances, sex does take place within the kind of relationships churches do not approve of – between unmarried people, across generations and between people of the same sex. There is a need for African churches to realise that young people are now accessing information, including information on sex and sexuality, from diverse sources. In order for churches to remain effective, they need to provide life-saving, accurate and relevant information on human sexuality in all its complexity.

In order for African Christianity to address the complexity of human sexuality more comprehensively, theological institutions in Africa must invest heavily in equipping their students and graduates with the relevant knowledge and skills. Considerable ground has already been covered in mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in the curricula of theological institutions and university departments of religious studies and faculties of theology. However, there is a need for addressing the theme of human sexuality in greater detail and to acknowledge its importance. Without suggesting that this becomes the most dominant theme on the agenda of contemporary theological education in Africa, one can still challenge theological educators to take human sexuality more seriously.

African Christianity will be able to cover more ground in addressing human sexuality by interacting more closely with the publications of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (the Circle). The Circle has been highly creative and consistent in addressing the theme of human sexuality in its writings. It has explored the relevance of such concepts as pleasure in the understanding of sexuality in Africa. It has also challenged the patriarchal tendencies controlling women's sexuality and have called for women's full liberation. Scholars such as (in no particular order) Isabel A. Phiri, Musa W. Dube,

[9] See, for example, Masiiwa Ragies Gunda, *The Bible and Homosexuality in Zimbabwe* (Bamberg: Bamberg University Press, 2010).

Nyambura J. Njoroge, Musimbi R. Kanyoro, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Fulata Moyo, Sarojini Nadar, Madipoane Masenya and others, have encouraged African male church leaders to take women's experiences seriously. This has also included the call to challenge sexual and gender-based violence and promote women's health and well-being.[10]

In the light of the foregoing, African Christianity will need to embrace less conservative interpretations of the Bible if it is to do justice to the complexity of human sexuality. This is not to suggest that African Christianity completely abandons its sense of identity. It is only to propose that more diverse and dynamic interpretations of the Bible be embraced in the face of rapid social transformation. Old questions need new answers, even as new questions need answers too! In this regard, African Christianity must approach the Bible in new and creative ways as it seeks to respond to human sexuality in all its complexity and diversity.

Conclusion

Human sexuality continues to challenge African Christianity in many ways. In this paper, I have outlined the historical factors that have shaped African Christianity's response to human sexuality. I have also proposed some steps that must be taken to ensure that African Christianity addresses human sexuality in a broader, more relevant and effective way.

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[10] See for example, Musa W. Dube and Musimbi Kanyoro, eds., *Grant Me Justice: HIV/AIDS and Gender Readings of the Bible* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2004).

(126) SECULARISATION AND AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Scott Everett Couper

Introduction

The acceptance of faith by the Ethiopian eunuch demonstrates Christianity's origins have roots in Africa. The writings of Augustine of Hippo and others demonstrate Africa to be a fount of Christian theology. Yet, Christianity's later seventeenth-century introduction to sub-Saharan Africa by western 'historic mainline' mission agencies and European colonisation rendered African Christianity greatly diminished due to the West's pejorative views of African culture. Modernisation, pluralism, urbanisation and formal education and the West's imposed divorce of African culture and orthodox Christian theology and the resulting emasculation of traditional African spirituality has rendered mainline African Christianity particularly susceptible to the threat of secularisation in the post-modern world. The author surveys Southern African history and highlights the thought of Steve Biko in arguing that African Indigenous Churches (AICs) have, since the turn of the twentieth century, best resisted white supremacy by countering the estrangement of African Christianity from indigenous culture. The flawed manner in which the West introduced Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa renders mainline African Christianity vulnerable to bureaucratisation and institutionalisation, and thus increasingly irrelevant to Africans. Furthermore, Pentecostalism in Africa harbours the seeds of secularisation with its western Protestant emphasis on a temporal and realised soteriology (health, wealth and individualism). The author argues that, for mainline African Christianity to halt its decline and resist secularisation, it must learn from the AICs' resistance to white supremacy and better graft itself onto an African consciousness, thus becoming more relevant, and must challenge and contest Pentecostal terrestrial soteriology.

Definitions and Parameters

'Secularism' has been understood by Christian polemicists to be any 'spirit' opposed to Christianity, regardless of its source or content; such an understanding is 'so broad to be useless'.[1] Hence, for the purposes of this chapter, a definition and parameters of 'secularisation' must be articulated. The word 'secularisation' derives from the Latin word *saeculum*, meaning 'the age' or 'the world'.[2] 'Secularisation' is a symptom of the modern world (the term not having been used before the nineteenth century) and post-modern world (the term being widely used only in the twentieth century). Generically, it is the *process* of

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[1] Jerald Brauer, 'Secularism', in *A Handbook of Christian Theology: Definition Essays on Concepts and Movements of Thought in Contemporary Protestantism* (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), 339. For example, Benno van den Toren arguably uses a polemic lens to define 'secularisation' (24-30). While, van den Toren eruditely qualifies and specifically defines secularisation and accurately articulates that which it is *not* (5), the *Zeitgeist* of his paper, and especially the abstract, blurs all the lines so carefully articulated. The paper alludes to the 'so broad to be useless' definition of secularisation by including as examples: declining church membership (4), the use of traditional healers (3) and religious convictions circumscribed to the private sphere (3). By failing to distinguish between advocating for living-out Christian values in the public realm and the public realm adopting and enforcing Christian values, van den Toren almost advocates for theocracy (22 and 28); Benno van den Toren, 'Secularisation in Africa: A Challenge for the Churches', *Africa Journal of Evangelical Theology* Vol. 22, no. 1, (2003): 3-30.

[2] Karen Armstrong, *Fields of Blood: Religion and the History of Violence* (London: The Bodley Head, 2014), 2-3. Armstrong cites: Wilfred Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind* (New York, 1962), 33.

becoming more 'of the world' and less 'religious, sacred or spiritual', and thus it is the process of becoming less 'subject or bound by religious rules'.[3] Arguably, the forces fomenting secularisation in the world, and thus in African Christianity, are, primarily, modernisation and pluralism, and, secondarily, rural to urban migration and formal (modern) education.[4]

When using the term 'secularisation' in this chapter as related to African Christianity, a key differentiation must be made between the secularisation of individuals (private) and social institutions (public).[5] Prominent Egyptian scholar Abdelwahab Elmessiri (1938-2008) made this distinction using the terms 'comprehensive' and 'partial' secularisation.[6] 'Comprehensive secularisation' is the process whereby:

> …the utmost efforts [are made] to restrict religion, absolute values and metaphysics from *all walks of life* …[because] a rationalistic/materialistic viewpoint sees… the universe… devoid of any sanctity or mystery (Couper's emphasis).[7]

'Partial secularisation' confines itself to the realms of politics and perhaps economics' – that is, it expresses a 'separation of church and state'.[8] While modernisation, pluralism, urbanisation and formal education inevitably and irreversibly foster 'partial secularisation', they do not necessarily foster 'comprehensive secularisation'.

This chapter does not accede to a [Max] Weberian (1864-1920) thesis, otherwise known today as the 'Secularisation Thesis', that societies (and thus Africans) are being increasingly 'comprehensively' (in the sense of publicly *and privately*) secularised – that is, that they believe in 'secularism' as an ideology. Till now, scholars have constantly argued for or against this thesis. The notable Peter Berger (b. 1929) has at different times in his career argued for, and later against, it. That Africans may leave mainline for schismatic denominations, syncretisticly visit a *sangoma* (a traditional healer) while also attending church, participate in a lifestyle not historically compatible with orthodox Christianity (e.g. in polygamy or homosexuality), or leave the Christian faith altogether and practise an existential spirituality does *not* constitute 'secularisation'. In short, individuals who change or fuse religious practices are *not* increasingly secular.

A [Émile] Durkheimian (1858-1917) thesis asserts that society can undergo 'partial' secularisation' (public and state) while its constituent individuals may not (private and religion). This is also known as 'compartmentalisation'. Societies are composed of macro-social systems and institutions (instrumentalities) that include laws (courts), economies (markets), polities (governments) and social services (hospitals and schools). This chapter affirms that while individuals may not be increasingly secularised, their instrumentalities – within modern democratic states that protect the rights of all its

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[3] Judy Pearsall, ed. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 10th edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1295. A crucial distinction must be made between the words 'secularisation' which is a *process* and 'secularism' which is an *ideology*. This chapter relates primarily to secularisation as a process. Michael Horton, 'The Secularisation Thesis', in 'Secularising Religion', *Modern Reformation* Vol. 22, no.5, (2013): 26.

[4] van den Toren, 'Secularisation in Africa', 3. Horton, 'The Secularisation Thesis', 26.

[5] One author refers to this distinction as 'differentiation' of the secular sphere from the religious sphere. Technically, this 'differentiation' is in and of itself a manifestation of secularisation. However, for the purposes of this short chapter, this study does not examine secularisation in such a nuanced fashion. Nonetheless, differentiation, or 'partial secularisation' is *not* indicative of a secularist (as an ideology) threat. John Coffey, 'Secularisation: Is It Inevitable?' www.jubilee-centre.org/secularisation-is-it-inevitable-by-john-coffey/ (accessed 27 September 2015).

[6] Nasir Sanaullah, 'Arab Islamic Response to Secularism: A Case Study of Dr. Abdelwahab Elmessiri', *Journal of Humanity & Islam* Vol. 3, no. 1, (2013): 13.

[7] Abdelwahab Elmessiri and Aziz Al Azmah, *Secularism under the Microscope* (Beirut: Dar al Fikr, 2000), 67.

[8] Elmessiri, 'Secularism under the Microscope', 120 and Abdelwahab Elmessiri, 'The Partial Secularization and the Comprehensive Secularization', (Cairo: Dar al Shorouk, 2002), 220.

diverse citizens, no matter their creed or lack thereof – are, or should be. Due to the advent of plural societies, Christianity should no longer control the world as it did before the Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment. In short, a heterogeneous religious or spiritual constituency that participates in 'partial secularisation' (and is thus anti-theocratic) is not synonymous with one that is undergoing 'comprehensive secularisation' (and thus the abandonment of public *and private* spiritual and religious values and practices). Populations are not necessarily becoming more ideologically secular as a result of 'the collapse of religious hegemony', though 'partial secularisation' has occurred.[9] For example, advocacy supporting the abandonment of draconian punitive legislation against homosexuality in Malawi is *not* an example of 'comprehensive secularisation' (it is rather 'partial secularisation'), as heterosexuals will still have strong negative spiritually-based sentiments against the practice and such disdain will govern their private behaviour, and thus they remain 'religious'.[10] This chapter, rightly or wrongly, sympathises with what John Mbiti declared the case: Africans are notoriously spiritual.[11] The question is: Will this always remain the case?

In a 1972 address entitled 'The Church as Seen by a Young Layman', Steve Biko (1946-1977) addressed elderly black *abafundisi* (ministers). In it, Biko asserted:

> In most cases, religion is intricately intertwined with the rest of the cultural traits of society. In a sense, this makes the religion part and parcel of the behavioural pattern of that society and makes the people bound by the limits of that religion through a strong identification with it. Where a people are subjected to a religion that is removed from their cultural make-up, then elements of disgruntlement begin to be noted, and sometimes open defiance is soon displayed. Hence, one can make the claim that most religions are specific, and where they fail to observe the requirements of specificity, then they must be sufficiently adaptable to convey relevant messages to different people in different situations.[12]

As one surveys the historical points of interface between Christianity and indigenous Africans, we observe, though certainly not without exception, a pervasive irrelevance of Christianity to its converts and adherents. Ironically, the introduction of Christianity itself initiated a process of secularisation in Africa with its distinction between the sacred and profane that previously did not exist in African Traditional Religions. Yet, this irrelevance is largely due to the manner, or brand packaging, of Christianity by those who introduced a western acculturated form of the religion and, seeing it as normative, imposed it on indigenous Africans without the required flexibility alluded to by Steve Biko. This irrelevance led to, for missionaries, disappointing conversion rates, the initiation and growth of separatist or dissenting movements (the so-called 'Ethiopian,' independent, or African initiated churches, AICs) and syncretistic faith practises that combine African traditional spirituality and Christianity. Therefore, the decline in numbers and influence of mainline or orthodox Christianity (inaccurately termed 'secularisation' by many) is actually a long-held historical pattern of Africans recognising Christianity's irrelevance to their spiritual and cultural consciousness, and their proverbial 'voting with their feet' and leaving the historic mission churches. Therefore, the decreased societal influence of orthodox Christianity is *not* due to the 'comprehensive secularisation' of Africans *per se*, but rather due to mainline Christianity's failure to be culturally and thus spiritually relevant to Africans.[13] In short, African Christians are taking their 'notorious'

[9] Coffey, 'Secularisation: Is it Inevitable?' 3.
[10] Faith Karimi, 'Amnesty: Malawi Suspends Anti-gay Laws', Cable News Network (CNN) 6 November 2012. http://edition.cnn.com/2012/11/06/world/africa/malawi-antigay-laws/index.html (accessed 30 September, 2015).
[11] John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann, 1969), 1 and 262.
[12] Steve Biko, 'The Church as Seen by a Young Layman' in *Steve Biko: I Write What I Like* (Johannesburg: Picador Africa, 2004), 59-60.
[13] A similar point has rightfully been made regarding theories of economic and social development in Africa. Mustapha Kurfi, 'Secularisation and Development in Africa: A Terrific Façade', *Global Journal of Human Social*

spirituality elsewhere. Furthermore, because of AICs' religious and cultural relevance in Africa, they are best resisting any nominal 'comprehensive secularism' that will soon, if it has not already, encroach on the African continent. If mainline Christianity desires Africans to resist 'comprehensive secularisation' (and remain within its fold), it would do well to note Biko's analysis and AICs' lessons regarding acculturation and spiritual relevance.[14]

Resisting Ecclesiastical White Supremacy

In his seminal text, *Introduction to African Religion*, John Mbiti rightly asserts that Christianity is indigenous to Africa.[15] The narrative of Philip and the unnamed Ethiopian in Acts 8 is evidence that the Christian faith is endemic to Africa. Tradition holds that St Mark brought the faith to Egypt in AD 42. Likewise, the writings of Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Athanasius, Cyril, Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine of Hippo demonstrate that the development of Christian systematic theology has its roots in Africa (as does, ironically, the origins of western civilisation).[16] Yet, with the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck and the Dutch settlers in 1652, Christianity as it was introduced to sub-Saharan Africa had a distinct western European veneer. One of the first converts to Christianity, a Khoikhoi girl named Krotoa, and then – following her baptism – 'Eva', demonstrates the degree to which western Christianity has perhaps been irrelevant. Eva's new faith did not sufficiently help her navigate within the limited space she found herself in, and she died succumbing to prostitution and alcoholism.[17]

The first missionary sent to Southern Africa, George Schmidt (1709-1785), baptised Vehettge Magdalena Tikhuie (d. 1800), or 'Lena', at Genadendal in 1742. But Dutch opposition caused Schmidt to abandon the Moravian mission in 1744, leaving Lena a remnant until the mission was later reconstituted. Lena's leadership of the mission by default is a rare example of indigenous Christian autonomy.

Beginning with the Baptist Missionary Society (Baptist) in 1792, the London Missionary Society (Congregational) in 1795, the Church Missionary Society (Anglican) in 1799, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregational) in 1810, mission societies rigidly instilled a westernised Christianity on African converts. The iconoclast Johannes van der Kemp (1747-1811) preached to Khoikhoi and black Africans. Two contemporary young mystical Xhosa prophets, Nxele-Makanna (1790-1820) and Ntsikanna (1780-1821), heard excerpts of van der Kemp's sermons and incorporated Christian theology into traditional African spirituality.[18] Ntsikanna proved more orthodox, becoming arguably the first modern African theologian who contextually wrote hymns, poems and liturgy. He represented 'a genuinely new birth of Christian insight within African culture and society'.[19]

From the mid-1800s, indigenous Christians in Southern Africa began to exhibit greater confidence and interrogated the new faith. Rivalry within the Anglican Church erupted between Bishop William Colenso (1814-1883) and the metropolitans in Cape Town and London. Colenso's troubles began when he endeared himself to the indigenous perspectives of his protégé William Ngidi over issues of biblical scholarship and

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Science: Sociology and Culture Vol. 13, no. 6, (2013): no pages indicated.

[14] Justin Ukpong, 'Christology and Inculturation: A New Testament Perspective' in *Paths of African Theology*, ed. Rosino Gibellini, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1994), 40-61.

[15] John Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (Oxford: Heinemann International Literature and Textbooks, 1975), 182-3.

[16] Rosino Gibellini, ed. 'African Theologians Wonder…and Make Some Proposals' in *Paths of African Theology*, 1-2.

[17] Jane McKinnon, 'Krotoa' in *A Tapestry of Lives: Cape Women of the 17th Century* (Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2004), 63-82.

[18] Noel Mostert, *Frontiers: The Epic Struggle of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People* (New York: Knoph, 1992), 424-91.

[19] Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa, 1450-1950* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 219.

Zulu traditional customs such as polygamy.[20] In 1879, Colenso's domestic antagonists, the missionaries of the American Zulu Mission, adopted the 'Umsunduze Rules', banning practices such as *ukulobolisa* (bride price). These rules caused irrevocable damage to Christian relations and served as a catalyst to at least two future American Board break-away churches.

At the start of the twentieth century, many black African Christians began to exert greater initiative. Frustration with western cultural norms and white supremacy within ecclesiastic polities led many black African clergy to secede from the mission churches that had ordained them. Nehemiah Tile (d. 1891) and James Dwane (1848-1916) broke from the Methodist Church in 1884 and 1896, respectively. Mpambani Mzimba (1850-1911) broke with the Presbyterian Free Church of Scotland in 1898. Enoch Mgijima (1858-1929) broke from the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1910. Simungu Shibe (dates unknown) and Gardiner Mvuyana (1886-1925) broke from the Congregationalists in 1898 and 1917, respectively.[21] At the same time, 'dissenting Zionist ministers in Johannesburg were participants in a transnational sphere of evangelical practice that highly prized individual autonomy and self-determination in religious matters'.[22] One mystical prophet, Isaiah Shembe (1870-1935), with Wesleyan, Baptist, Apostolic Faith Mission and secondhand Lutheran influences, initiated a new church (Nazareth Baptist Church) and faith (Shembe) in 1910 that intimately connected with the African consciousness.

Resisting 'Comprehensive Secularism'

Towards the conclusion of Steve Biko's 1972 message to his older clerical audience, he advised:

> In order to be able therefore to change the churches, we have to first gain ascendance over them in that white model, then thereafter turn that model into one we cherish, we love, we understand, and one that is relevant to us.[23]

In other words, Biko argued for Africans not to mimic western models of ecclesiastic governance but urged their indigenisation. Second, Biko advised in his conclusion:

> The second area in which we must focus our attention is a thorough understanding of Black Theology… Christianity can never hope to remain abstract and removed from people's environmental problems. In order to be applicable to people, it must have meaning for them in their given situation. If they are an oppressed people, it must have something to say about their oppression.[24]

Since the advent of imported Christianity through colonialism during the modern era, Africans have always countered the effects of white supremacy with secession, dissent and independence. Yet, a new

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[20] Livingstone Ngewu, 'John William Colenso and the Enigma of Polygamy' and Jonathan Draper, 'The Trial of Bishop John William Colenso' in *The Eye of the Storm: John William Colenso and the Crisis of Biblical Inspiration*, ed. Jonathan Draper (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2003), 293-325.

[21] William Wilcox, 'The American Zulu Mission in Its Relation to the African Congregational Church' and Frederick Bridgman, 'Ethiopian Movement and Other Independent Factions Characterised by a National Spirit', in *The South African Deputation Papers: Presenting Some Aspects and Problems of the Work of the Two South African Missions of the American Board* (Printed for the American Zulu Mission, Natal and the East Central African Mission, Rhodesia, 1904), 9-12 and 29-30, respectively.

[22] Joel Cabrita, 'Revisiting 'Christian Independency': Urban Moderns and the Pursuit of Self-Perfection in Early Twentieth-Century Johannesburg', unpublished draft paper (work in progress). See also: Robert Houle, *Making African Christianity: Africans Reimagining Their Faith in Colonial South Africa* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2011).

[23] Biko, *The Church as Seen by a Young Layman*, 63.

[24] Biko, *The Church as Seen by a Young Layman*, 64.

ideological hegemony possibly approaches: 'comprehensive secularism'. If mainline African Christianity wishes to remain at the forefront of the opposition to 'comprehensive secularism', and therefore remain 'notoriously spiritual', then it must respond to 'comprehensive secularism' as effectively as AICs responded to white supremacy. Mainline Africans must fuse traditional polities and spiritualities into Christianity, thus making the faith more relevant to its continental constituency. If mainline African Christianity fails, its now diminishing remnant will seek further relevance in syncretistic schisms or 'comprehensive secularism'.

Secularisation *in* African Christianity

While the majority of this chapter focuses on secularisation *and* (that is, as separate and opposed to) African Christianity, a word must be related to secularisation *within* (that is, as a component part of) African Christianity. To this, Steve Biko comments on two forms of secularisation within African Christianity – bureaucratisation and institutionalisation:

> It must be noted that the Church in… Africa as everywhere else, has been spoilt by bureaucracy. No more is it just an expression of the sum total of [African's] religious feelings; it has become, in fact, highly institutionalised, not as one unit but as several powerful units, differing perhaps not so much on scriptural interpretation as in institutional aims… This bureaucracy and institutionalisation tends to make the church removed from important priorities and to concentrate on secondary and tertiary functions like structures and finances, etc. And because of this, the Church has become very irrelevant and in fact an 'ivory tower', as some people refer to it.[25]

Secularisation in the form of bureaucratisation and institutionalisation is a manifestation of the manner in which the West introduced Christianity to sub-Saharan Africa. First, as mentioned earlier, the West imposed a new culture on Africans. Christianity brought 'new styles of clothing, new customs, new forms of customs, new forms of etiquette', the former ways 'were described as being pagan and barbaric'.[26] Second, and closely related to the threat of secularisation within African Christianity from the outset, the West introduced Christian division to Africa. John Mbiti notes: 'Another major problem facing Christianity in Africa is the large number of church divisions, denominations, groups and sects. Many of these were imported from abroad.'[27] The West brought a fractured and factionalised faith, separated not so much by belief but more by style (internal western Christian culture) and polity (itself highly western). The competition within areas for constituencies by Lutherans, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Anglicans mirrored the balkanisation initiated at the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) of African geo-political areas and constituencies into colonial nation-states.

Again, the secularisation of African Christianity in the form of bureaucratisation and institutionalisation has historically been best countered by AICs who, for good or bad, do not emphasise an allegiance to western cultures of administration and formal education, nor even to autochthonous hierarchies. Rather than procedures and protocols, AICs emphasise the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the 'cult of personality' (perceived as a conduit of the Holy Spirit). AICs, such as the Zionists and Shembe, are therefore perceived by most Africans to be more intimate and relevant to their lives. Mainline African Christianity, unless it has allowed sufficient cultural flexibility, is thus viewed by most Africans to be alien: western, codified and rarefied.[28] Those Africans who remain within the historic mainline mission churches become, like western Europeans, more 'comprehensively secularised'.

[25] Biko, 'The Church as Seen by a Young Layman', 61-2.
[26] Biko, 'The Church as Seen by a Young Layman', 60.
[27] Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 184.
[28] Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 185.

Strongly related to Steve Biko's warning to African Christianity not to mimic western Christianity's institutional paradigms, as imported by mainline historic missions, is an extrapolated thesis derived from Max Weber which argues that rationalism and materialism (consumerism) within Protestantism (in particular, Reformed and Calvinist Protestantism) fosters secularisation *within* African Christianity. Weber explains:

> Protestants especially seem to promote rationalism and materialism as a means to find prosperity. Wealth and worldly prosperity have been interpreted by Protestant groups to indicate the blessing and grace that God has bestowed upon them. This love for the material and worldly possessions that has been identified with Protestants will eventually distract attention away from religion.[29]

The explosive exponential growth of Pentecostalism (originally derived from North America) within Africa is the greatest evidenced-based argument that 'comprehensive secularisation' is not taking hold in Africa. However, Lovemore Togarasei postulates that Pentecostalism is a Trojan horse harbouring 'comprehensive secularisation' (as its foci are on health, wealth and individualism, otherwise known as the 'prosperity gospel'). Modern Pentecostalism's soteriological concerns relate primarily to the proximate and worldly rather than the ethereal and eternal.[30] Togarasei highlights His People Christian Church in Johannesburg that uses secular symbols and practices that tap into values of social reconstruction and economic achievement…' His People Church in Johannesburg offers secular music styles and media to engender immediate pleasure and entertainment. Togarasei cites the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa [in] Africa, the United Family International Church and the Christ Embassy as ministries that focus on healing (a very present soteriological emphasis). Pentecostal preachers in Zimbabwe, such as Uebert Angel and Emmanuel Makandiwa, preach and demonstrate a theology extolling wealth by owning luxury vehicles and offering 'modern, well-adorned institutions in architecture, furnishings and… administrations', such as at the Celebration Church.[31] In short, a growing African Christianity is in fact emulating the trajectory of secularisation *within* Protestant Reformed Christianity through its mainline historic missions and a recently morphed version of Pentecostalism.

Conclusion

Africans are 'notoriously spiritual'. Yet, nothing is absolute, not even Africans' seemingly inherent proclivity for the sacred. To resist 'comprehensive secularism', mainline African Christianity should not be seduced to reverting back – back to some half-contrived primordial 'roots'.[32] Rather, African Christianity should contest 'comprehensive secularism' with its present and future dynamic *African* consciousness. While contesting white supremacy, Congregationalist lay preacher and the first black African Nobel Peace Prize-winner Albert Luthuli warned:

> This exultation of an almost obsolete way of life, tribalism, was a studied effort by [white supremacists] to gain acceptance by Africans of a reactionary policy of the [white supremacists], a 'back to tribalism', African 'policy.' It would be more correct to call [their policy] a caricature of tribalism, for *fortunately* irreparable

[29] Jaco Beyers, 'The Church and the Secular: The Effect of the Post-secular on Christianity', *HTS Theological Studies 70*, no.1, Art. #2605 (2014): 8.
[30] Lovemore Togarasei, 'Modern/Charismatic Pentecostalism as a Form of 'Religious' Secularisation in Africa', *StudiaHistoriae Ecclesiasticae* 41, no. 1, (2015): 56-66.
van den Toren (2003) and Horton (2013) also make excellent cases that secularisation occurs *within* Christianity *and* African Traditional Religions.
[31] Togarasei, 'Modern/Charismatic Pentecostalism', 60-1.
[32] Van den Toren, 'Secularisation of Africa: A Challenge', 25.

> damage has been done to tribalism by our two hundred years of contact with an aggressive civilisation, itself subjected to the dynamic forces of a highly scientific and technological age and a dynamic revolutionary religion, Christianity (Couper's emphasis).[33]

African Christianity's future is brighter than its past. 'Comprehensive secularisation' will fail to take hold in Africa if mainline African Christianity charts a course forward rather than back and remains loyal to its dynamic African consciousness. Perhaps the best means to contest 'comprehensive secularism' is for mainline churches to partner with AICs, receiving the gifts of a Christianity fused with an African consciousness while sharing the gifts of education and administration, and to partner with Pentecostal churches so as to challenge and contest 'comprehensive secularisation' originating from a temporal and materialist western spirituality.

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[33] Albert Luthuli, 'Back to Tribalism is Unrealistic', *Golden City Post*, 18 October 1959, 7.

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(127A) THE PROSPERITY GOSPEL IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Lovemore Togarasei

Introduction

One major characteristic of African Christianity of late is the prominence of the 'prosperity gospel'. Although this gospel was initially associated with Pentecostal churches, with the 'pentecostalisation'[1] of African Christianity, this gospel is now found even in some mainline and evangelical churches, in one form or another. But what is this gospel of prosperity? What is its history and what are its major tenets? How has it been received in Africa by both its followers and critics? This article addresses these questions. It is based on various works that have been published on the subject of the prosperity gospel in the past few years.

The Prosperity Gospel: Definition

The prosperity gospel is known by a number of names: 'dominion theology',[2] 'faith gospel',[3] 'faith formula theology'.[4] 'name it and claim it', or 'health and wealth gospel'.[5] Basically, the teaching of this gospel is that God wants believers to prosper physically, materially and spiritually. Thus, according to this gospel, getting rich is seen as God's will and an outward manifestation of his blessings. One only needs to have faith in God through Jesus and blessings will follow. Several scriptures are cited in support of the gospel of prosperity (Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:10; John 10:10).

A Brief History of the Prosperity Gospel

The roots of the prosperity gospel can be traced back to American prosperity preachers such as E.W. Kenyon, Oral Roberts, William Branham and Kenneth Copeland. Sufficient work has been done in tracing this history (Gifford 1998 and Chilenje 2013). Suffice it to say that, by the 1960s, the prosperity gospel had become a major feature on the American Christian landscape. This gospel came to Africa through American evangelists and through African Pentecostals trained in American Bible schools. For example, the Fire Convention conference was held in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1986, and several prosperity preachers from America and Europe spread the prosperity gospel there. African preachers who had accepted the prosperity gospel also helped spread it through establishing Bible colleges that emphasized this gospel. Examples are the All Nations' Bible Seminary of Benson Idahosa in Nigeria, and Africa Multination for Christ College (AMFCC) of Ezekiel Guti in Zimbabwe. We also need to highlight the role played by

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[1] 'Pentecostalisation' here means adopting Pentecostal-like characteristics with Pentecostalism marked by the centrality of the Holy Spirit manifested in signs like speaking in tongues.

[2] A. Corten and R. Marshal-Fratani, 'Introduction', in *Between Babel to Pentecost: Transnational Pentecostalism in Africa and Latin America*, eds. A. Corten and R. Marshal-Fratani (London: Hurst and Company, 2001): 5.

[3] Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its Public Role* (London: Hurst and Company, 1998), 62.

[4] J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments with Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 203.

[5] Adré Droogers, 'Globalisation and Pentecostal Success', in *Between Babel and Pentecost: Transnational Pentecostalism in Africa and Latin America,* eds. Adré Droogers and Ruth Marshall-Fratani (London: C. Hurst and Co., 2001), 41-61.

books, pamphlets and other publications by prosperity preachers, in spreading the prosperity gospel in Africa.

The Major Tenets of this Gospel

The prosperity gospel emphasizes that God has good plans for every individual. God did not intend human beings to suffer and so prepared only good for them. All that is required of individuals is to have faith in God through Jesus Christ, a faith that unlocks the entrance to all the good prepared for them by God. Thus, the prosperity gospel does not despise wealth. God did not create human beings to be poor. The Old Testament provides proof texts for this gospel. For example, a favourite text on wealth is Deuteronomy 8:18, 'You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth…' (RSV). The prosperity gospel also has a political theology of its own. Advocates of the prosperity gospel believe that, if Africa is to prosper, it needs God-fearing leaders. Thus, as a God-fearing born-again leader, the late President of Zambia, Frederick Chiluba, declared the country a Christian nation in 1991, stating, 'Since Zambia had entered into a covenant with God, the nation would be blessed to the point where it would stop borrowing from others and become a lender of resources instead.'[6] The prosperity gospel discourages borrowing, arguing that since God owns all that is in the world, believers can claim this ownership too and should therefore not owe anyone.

These tenets are emphasised by nearly all prosperity gospel preachers in Africa.[7] The prosperity gospel in African Christianity teaches Africans optimism, underlining the fact that God has great plans for the continent. All that the continent has to do is to surrender in faith to God, to obey God's commands – and prosperity will follow. Tithing is central to the unlocking of God's blessings in prosperity gospel theology, as well as other forms of offering to God.

Prosperity Gospel Attractions in Africa

Despite some negative appraisals, this type of gospel continues to attract many followers. What could be the attractions? A number of reasons could be given.

Pentecostal churches that promote the prosperity gospel became popular in Africa in the 1990s. This was the time when the Bretton Woods institutions were promoting economic structural adjustment policies in many African countries. The failure of these policies left a number of African countries impoverished, with many companies retrenching workers. It can be argued that people lost confidence in socio-economic policies and the ability of governments to improve their lives. In the midst of this came the prosperity churches offering divine solutions in the name of the prosperity gospel. Integrating the gospel with the African belief that human events are controlled by spiritual powers, the charismatic churches found a number of followers. The prosperity gospel resonated with the traditional African anthropology that emphasises those in right relationships with God and that the ancestors are blessed with abundant life, physically, materially and spiritually. Prosperity gospel preachers therefore offered a Christian version of the traditional African understanding of prosperity and well-being.

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[6] Simon Coleman, *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 33.

[7] Nimi Wariboko, 'Pentecostal Paradigms of National Economic Prosperity in Africa', in *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement*, eds. Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 35-62; Lovemore Togarasei, 'The 'Birth' of a Prophet: Andrew Wutawunashe's Break from the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe', *Exchange: Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research* 35, no. 2, (2006): 215-225.

Traditional African religion has rituals for honouring ancestors. Among the Shona people of Zimbabwe, families (or tribes) conduct libations that are meant to seek or maintain divine (ancestral) favours and blessings. In such rituals, the ancestors are symbolically given food and drink to the accompaniment of praise poetry, on the understanding that, when honoured, ancestors will bless the families and individuals with health and wealth. Asonzeh Ukah also observes the use of praise poetry among the Yoruba of Nigeria in a bid to seek divine favours.[8] As Nimi Wariboko says, 'Favors from the gods in (African) traditional societies are not limited to the care of souls, but they also include blessings of fecundity, riches and a long and healthy life.'[9] Wariboko goes on to say that the western binary approach of separating the spiritual from the material, making God concerned with the spiritual only, is not in line with traditional African beliefs. Thus the prosperity gospel concurs with the African belief that a good standing with God results in material and physical blessings.

The gospel of prosperity also found fertile ground in Africa because of the poverty and suffering that people experience. A number of African governments have failed to supply people with the basics of life, including health care, food and water. The gospel of prosperity then came, promising a miraculous supply of these needs. In fact, the gospel of prosperity thrives in contexts of poverty. In these contexts, prosperity should not be thought of only in terms of money and material abundance. This is true for a few of the rich Pentecostals, but for the majority of African Pentecostals, prosperity refers to the ability to afford the basics of life: to live a healthy life, to afford basic food, to be able to send children to school and to live in happy marriages. When they talk about prosperity, the majority of African Pentecostals talk about having *sadza /palichi/ nshima/ ugali* (staple food) on the table.

Debates on the Prosperity Gospel in African Christianity

The prosperity gospel raises debates as to whether or not it is biblical, contributing to the social and economic development of its followers, influenced by an American understanding of the gospel, or in line with indigenous notions of prosperity.

Those who think it is biblical base their arguments on several Biblical texts. For example, Old Testament stories of the success and prosperity of Abraham are used together with New Testament texts like 3 John 2 ('Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in good health, just as your soul prospers', NKJV). However, those against the prosperity gospel also find many texts in the Bible to support their position. For example, they find in Jesus and Paul lives of simplicity, quite contrary to what prosperity preachers teach.

As to whether the gospel contributes to the social and economic development of believers, again, there are different voices. There are those who believe that the prosperity gospel (with its emphasis on offerings and tithes as the ingredients for success) is bent on milking believers' hard earnings for the benefit of the pastors. But there are also many, especially the followers of this gospel, who think that the prosperity gospel is good for individual and social development. Even among scholars, a growing number think the gospel of prosperity contributes to Africa's social and economic development.[10]

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[8] Asonzeh Ukah, *A New Paradigm of Pentecostal Power: A Study of the Redeemed Christian Church of God in Nigeria* (Trenton: World Press, 2008): 34.

[9] Wariboko, 'Pentecostal Paradigms of National Economic Prosperity in Africa', 41.

[10] See for, example, Lovemore Togarasei, 'The Pentecostal Gospel of Prosperity in African Contexts of Poverty', *Exchange: Journal of Missiological and Ecumenical Research* Vol. 40. Issue 2, (2011): 336-350 and The Centre for Development and Enterprise South Africa, 'Under the Radar: Pentecostalism in South Africa and its Potential Social and Economic Role', in *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement*, eds. Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 63-85.

Concerning its origins in Africa, Paul Gifford believes the prosperity gospel is mainly influenced by the USA, and serves to comfort those who are already wealthy, by describing wealth as a sign of divine grace.[11] He therefore does not see the contribution of the gospel to the social development of the majority of the people in Africa. While it cannot be denied that the prosperity gospel was influenced by American evangelists, it is important to note its local appropriation. Rosalind Hackett has cautioned Pentecostalism scholars against over-emphasising the external influence on African Pentecostalism.[12] She notes that indigenous beliefs and practices also play a role in shaping Pentecostalism in Africa. This is very true of the gospel of prosperity. It fits in well with the traditional African emphasis on health and prosperity. African indigenous religion emphasizes that, when one's relations with the ancestors are good, then one's health and economic prosperity are assured.

Conclusion

We should end by pointing out that the prosperity gospel raises different reactions from different people on the continent. Be that as it may, its promise of wealth and health in contexts of poverty and limited health facilities gives hope and a positive mindset to Africans. It encourages believers to develop entrepreneurial skills for survival in contexts that offer very limited formal opportunities for one's sustenance. It is clear that the Bible does not celebrate poverty, and therefore to describe this gospel as unbiblical is rather unfortunate. Lastly, there are also prosperity preachers who have taken it to the extreme, especially for personal gain, and this should be condemned.

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[11] Gifford, *African Christianity.*

[12] Rosalind Hackett, 'The Prosperity Gospel in West Africa', in *Religion and the Transformation of Capitalism*, ed. R. Roberts (London: Routledge, 1995), 199-214.

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(127B) THE PROSPERITY GOSPEL AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Moji Ruele

Introduction

This paper explores the socio-economic implications of the prosperity gospel in the lives of African Christian in the 21st century. For the purposes of this chapter, the prosperity gospel or theology is used to mean that God wants to bless Christians spiritually, physically and materially. The paper starts by defining the main concepts used in the paper such as Pentecostalism, the prosperity theology and economic growth. It then goes on to discuss some of the methods used by African Pentecostals, before showing how economic crises in many parts of Africa have contributed to the emergence of African Pentecostal churches.

Defining Prosperity Theology and Economic Growth by African Christian Pentecostalism

In order to understand how prosperity theology plays a role in economic growth in the case of African Pentecostalism, it is important first to understand and define the following terms: Pentecostalism in general, prosperity and economic growth. Pentecostal is a nomenclature corresponding with the name of the Jewish feast of Pentecost, which took place fifty days after Passover (Greek: *Pentekonta*). As described in the New Testament book of Acts, which is central to Pentecostal spirituality, Jesus' followers gathered together following his death (around the time of Passover), resurrection and ascension; on the Day of Pentecost, 'they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance' (Acts 2:4 RSV). Prosperity means to live in abundance, or to flourish, spiritually and materially. In public discourse, the term 'prosperity' is often understood to refer to material goods, by assuming that material well-being can be accurately assessed by one common currency. Thus, money or material wealth becomes the measure of abundance (or scarcity), that takes place in human history.[1] According to Gerardo Marti, 'prosperity theology' as a term therefore has a historical dimension.[2] Specifically, prosperity theology developed amid the progressive globalization of modern capitalism. Economic growth as understood in this context can best be defined largely as a matter of good stewardship of the world's resources. It is a matter of using human skills, knowledge and experience together with the natural resources of animal, vegetable and mineral so as to achieve a greater output of the means of meeting human needs out of a given input of the means of production. By doing this, we get a more effective material basis for men and women to better our lives, and to be adequately fed, clothed and housed, and to be freed from the grind for survival. Economic growth, like any other economic or political aim, cannot be regarded as an end in itself. It is a means of giving us greater resources which can be used in ways which promote God's glory. The understanding in Pentecostalism is that this is in line with God's purposes, that men should enjoy the good things of this world, receiving them as his gifts and using them to his glory.[3]

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[1] Douglas A. Hicks, 'Prosperity, Theology, and Economy' in *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement,* eds., Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 240.

[2] Gerardo Marti, *Hollywood Faith: Holiness, Prosperity, and Ambition in a Los Angeles Church* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 132.

[3] John F. Sleeman, *Economic Crises: A Christian Perspective* (London: SCM Press, 1976), 137-139.

Prosperity theology, therefore, is fundamentally about how we understand God's action in relation to human actions, which requires us to reflect upon how God acts in the world. What is the relationship between human prosperity and divine and human actions? Prosperity theology tends to emphasize entrepreneurial initiatives which can certainly enhance a sense of human agency or ability to shape one's own economic future.

The Pentecostals' Methods for Economic Growth and Prosperity

This section offers an overview of some of the methods used by the African Pentecostals in pursuit of economic growth and prosperity. The aim is to show the relation between some of the approaches, frameworks and strategies used by African Pentecostal churches to attain prosperity, in response to economic deprivation, poverty and economic crises. In what follows I briefly discuss five approaches used by Pentecostals in promoting the economic message of prosperity.

The Prosperity Model

The first is the Prosperity Model which presents a comprehensive picture of individualization and summarizes profound structural shifts in advanced capitalist structures, the welfare state, and corporate-backed commercialization (which are all aspects of globalization). Ulrich Beck sketches the model of individualization and summarizes how, amid increasing economic uncertainty, broad societal transformation leaves some individuals with greater economic development out of their own particular life course. He calls this approach an individualization thesis with chronic indeterminacy of risk and risk-taking, which must be followed by all Pentecostals, including African Pentecostals.[4] As an approach, the Prosperity Model encourages individuals to take risks in order to attain economic growth and prosperity in their lives.

The Covenant Paradigm

The second model is the Covenant Model that argues that God blesses nations, either according to the covenant of giving, or in response to the covenant of good efforts. According to this theory, the individual's prosperity, which starts with ceaseless sacrificial giving of money or time and effort to the church, will lead to prosperity, economic growth and national development. In the Covenant Model, irrespective of the overall state of the national economy in many African countries, poverty is perceived as a religious problem caused either by a lack of faith, or a failure to trust in whatever God promises. Therefore, all poor people who live according to the covenant and faith in God will become prosperous and gain economic growth, whereas those who do not will become poor.[5]

The Spiritualist Paradigm

The third model is the Spiritualist/Scriptural Model also known as the Spiritualist Paradigm. It often emphasizes spiritual warfare as the necessary first step to national prosperity. It is perhaps the earliest paradigm to emerge in the peneumatological imagination of African Pentecostals as it confronted both western modernizing cultures associated with globalization and African traditional cultures, which they regarded as demonic. It is also based on an exchange model in which God and Satan act in history. The success or failure of individual and national actions therefore depends on fidelity to Jesus Christ. According to this model, the demands of faithfulness to Jesus Christ include strict obedience to biblical

[4] Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (London: Sage Publications, 1992), 13.
[5] Amos Yong, 'Salvation, Society, and the Spirit: Pentecostal Contextualization and the Political Theology from Cleveland to Birmingham, from Springfield to Seoul', *Paxpneuma: The Journal of Pentecostals & Charismatics for Peace and Justice* Vol. 5, no. 2, (2009): 22-34.

commandments, and the rejection of African Traditional Religions and repudiation of certain indigenous cultural practices believed to be demonic. The key to development, therefore, is intercessory prayer and deliverance (exorcism) to redeem the land – in this case the African continent. Spiritualist pastors and congregants believe political and economic powers have both an outer form and an inner spiritual dynamic that animate their manifestation and uphold them.[6]

The Excellence Model

Fourth is the Excellence Model which encourages one to have a strong work ethic and to strive for excellence in everything. The Excellence Model builds upon the prosperity gospel by adding to it the perspective of human capability development and Afrocentric sentiments. If Africans are sowing and reaping material blessings, they must do so according to the proponents of this model, with the best machinery and organization.[7]

The Missional and Contextual Arguments

Fifth is the Missional Argument also known as the Contextual Argument. This method uses sermons that teach people to give in abundance and that money is not evil. According to Akoko, this changed the thinking of a lot of Pentecostals who started establishing businesses in response to the economy that was in crisis.[8]

The African Economic Crisis as a Context for the Growth of African Christian Pentecostal Churches

Since the end of the era of colonialism, many African countries have regrettably been going through a serious economic crisis that has left few untouched and retarded progress significantly. This crisis has given rise to compounding poverty, misery and unemployment, and at the same time ferments fear, doubt and uncertainty is due to increases in social insecurity. Causes of the crisis are many, complex and very difficult to identify – not just by the ordinary man, but even by academics.[9]

Post-colonial government efforts in Africa to control the crisis have also yielded few dividends in specific terms, though there has been much official rhetoric and contradictory claims of recovery in progress. The traditionally established churches (such as the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran and many others) have also been worried about the crisis. They have made their own spiritual contribution in explaining its causes and how to fight it. They have often expressed this through sermons in churches and in pastoral letters. However, they have neither succeeded in convincing their members nor the population at large on the practical relevance of their options and strategies.[10]

Since then, the most existential task facing Africans in general has been economic development to reverse the crisis. For African Pentecostal Christians, this raises the urgent question: what is the Pentecostal churches' understanding and teaching on the continent's economic predicament?

Part of the answer to this question was the rise and spread of Pentecostalism during this period of economic crisis in many parts of Africa. This was coupled with mass defections from the established churches to new Pentecostal churches, which could be interpreted as a public sign of dissatisfaction by

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6 Yong, 'Salvation, Society, and the Spirit', 22-34.
7 Yong, 'Salvation, Society, and the Spirit', 22-34.
8 Mbe Robert Akoko, *'Ask and You shall be Given.' Pentecostalism and the Economic Crisis in Cameroon* (Leiden: African Studies Centre, African Studies Collection, 2007), 13.
9 Piet Konings, 'Plantation Labour and Economic Crises in Cameroon', *Development and Change* 26 no. 3, (1995): 525-549.
10 Pierre Titi Nwel, 'The Churches and the Democratic Upheaval in Cameroon 1982-1993', in *The Christian Churches and Democratization of Africa*, ed.,Paul Gifford (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), 168-187.

African Christians. Many Pentecostal African Christians felt that the way the established churches have gone about addressing the spiritual and material needs of their followers in Africa was not helpful. Such increasing disillusionment shows that a surging number of Christians do not consider it enough for mainline churches to make critical statements about the worsening economic situation. They also condemned the few who lived in obscene opulence while the majority wallowed in poverty and misery.[11] During the time of economic crisis, many parts of Africa have witnessed the proliferation and flourishing of Pentecostal groups, particularly in English-speaking areas. Some of these groups are the Apostolic churches, Full Gospel Mission, Church of Christ, Church of God, True Church of Christ, Assemblies of God, Africa Bible Church, Christian Missionary Fellowship International, Winners Chapel, Deeper Life Bible Church, Arm of God Church, New Generation, Celestial Frontiers Millennial Church, United Pentecostal Church, Bethel World Outreach Ministry, Living World Church, Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, Living Faith Worldwide Church – and many others.

Based on the ever-increasing numbers of African Pentecostal Christian churches, it is becoming clear that the African Christian landscape is very different from a century ago when the historic mission churches – Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and Lutheran – dominated the scene in fighting for economic growth and prosperity. As already indicated, available examples indicate that considerable changes have now taken place with the arrival of the Pentecostal churches in many parts of Africa. In South Africa, for example, the Apostolic Faith Mission is numerically stronger than the Dutch Reformed Church. The Church of the Pentecost is probably Ghana's largest Protestant body. Indeed, in Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, 'born again' churches are so numerous and their leaders so influential that they may just be considered 'mainstreams', 'mainline' or as established as Anglicans and others.

An Application of African Christian Pentecostal Methods for Economic Growth and Prosperity

In order to apply African Pentecostal methods for economic growth and prosperity, one must first recognize that the most existential task facing Africans in general is economic development and prosperity. For African Pentecostals, prosperity theology emerges neither as a tool for the exploitation of workers nor a class pursuit of higher status. It is a practical process towards religious life to the demands of life, particularly with regard to economics.[12] Each of the Pentecostals, both on the African continent and the world over, adopts to a method of life figuring out how to acquire prosperity or a method of practical adaptation (developing practical ways of functioning in a particular society) as an economic message for the accumulation of wealth, in order to attain prosperity and fight poverty. Many of these methods have been used for a long time to persuade Pentecostals that God provides a solution to every problem, depending on the faith of the individual or people in general.

Below I make an attempt to show how these methods are applied by some African Christian Pentecostals. It is important to note that, generally, the processes of Bible reading and the application of the above-mentioned approaches and frameworks are very much dependent on the people's circumstances . As such, the African Pentecostal interpretation of the Bible and the application of this model is a result of their actual situation, due to prevailing socio-economic and political conditions. This context influenced their biblical exegesis. The socio-economic and political chaos that characterized post-colonial Africa became the springboard and a possible space for application of the above-mentioned methods. Below, I make an effort to blend these methods and frameworks within the African context described above.

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[11] Mbe Robert Akoko, *'Ask and You shall be Given.' Pentecostalism and the Economic Crisis in Cameroon* (Leiden: African Studies Centre, African Studies Collection, 2007), 13.

[12] Gerardo Marti, *Hollywood Faith: Holiness, Prosperity, and Ambition in a Los Angeles Church* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 132.

First, I start with the Prosperity Model, which is seen by many Pentecostals as a specific and pragmatic method to address economic crises in general. Amos Yong notes that prosperity theology has the potential to contribute to African economic growth and prosperity.[13] He posits a mentality that has the potential to transform global economies, suggesting that economic theory has the potential to focus on a new form of renewal economics. Christian missionary work, understood within this framework, is that there is not only the forgiveness of sins but also spiritual healing and deliverance for people from the powers and the forces that oppress them, such as economic factors. Thus it involves not only health and spiritual well-being, but wealth. It also engenders hope in impoverished situations; it may motivate actions that could gradually overcome poverty. The prosperity gospel message also puts emphasis on members achieving high levels of prosperity. It associates failure to thrive with the devil's machinations. People who use this method also appeal to the Bible to support teaching and preaching on wealth. Akoko singles out Cameroon as an example, where African Pentecostals have placed much emphasis on this method as a way of responding to the economic crisis bedevilling their country.[14] This view is shared by Jua, who notes that, when an individual or a group is deprived of certain things considered important to society such as education, nourishment or money (as is the case in many parts of Africa), two religious doctrinal alternatives could be used to help overcome deprivation.[15]

Secondly, I discuss the Covenant Model through which Christians demonstrate their faith in God to turn round their bad economic circumstances, by giving financial and other material resources to the church. The covenant model/paradigm is based on the agricultural metaphor of sowing and reaping: sow tithes and offerings (among other elements of a self-sacrificial way of life) into the church and reap a bumper harvest of wealth.

Thirdly, the Spiritualist Paradigm sees African economic crises as demonic forces. The underlying factor under this model or theory is that the continent has been mortgaged to evil forces, and needs to be bought back by persistent and fervent prayer. It sees national poverty as spiritual, and economic wisdom begins by seeking God's deliverance from powers, principalities and rulers (Eph. 6:12) who foul up the economies of Africa. Pastors who believe in this model (such as Emeka Nwankpa) argue that spiritual forces, demons and the devil hold back Africa's economic development. Therefore, they pray and cast out these powers.[16]

Fourthly, the Excellence Model is based on a strong work ethic. An African Pentecostal pastor identified with this model is Bishop David Oyedepo of Winners Chapel (Ota, near Metropolitan) Lagos. His Afrocentric perspective situates the task of economic development within a pan-African context. As an example of how he applies this method, he delivers his Afrocentric message in ways that transcend narrow identification. His method also has transnational and transracial appeal, because it is couched in the typical born-again rhetoric of destiny (*telos*). In applying this method, he claims God has given him a special task for African nations and African Pentecostals, to conquer their poverty and recover their dignity. He encourages his followers to pursue excellence. There is no doubt that his message harbours salient features of the prosperity gospel model but his ego goes beyond crass, vulgar wealth and health to the extent that it embraces a teleological conception of Africans, based on a vision of professional excellence. This pastor argues that African Pentecostals can uplift Africa to her glorious destiny when they execute their work at a

[13] Amos Yong, 'A Typology of Prosperity Theology: A Religious Economy of Global Renewal or a Renewal Economics?' in *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement,* ed., Katherine Attanasi & Amos Yong (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 15-33.
[14] Mbe Robert Akoko, *'Ask and You shall be Given.' Pentecostalism and the Economic Crisis in Cameroon* (Leiden: African Studies Centre, African Studies Collection, Vol. 2, 2007).
[15] Nantang Jua, 'Cameroon: Jump-Starting Economic Crises', *Africa Insight,* Vol. 21, no. 3, (1991): 162-170.
[16] Emeka Nwankpa, *Redeeming the Land* (Achimota, Ghana: African Christian Publishers, 1995), 7.

First World level of excellence.[17] Through this method, African Pentecostal sermons also quote popular verses such as 'Blessed are the poor'. In response to dwindling funding of local churches, they often quote: 'Jesus came to bring abundant life and prosperity.' In Jesus' teaching, the exorcism of evil spirits needs to be followed by receiving the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:43-45). Thus, with deliverance comes faith that can move mountains and make possible what is otherwise impossible (Matt. 17:20-21) so that, 'Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive' (Matt. 21:22). On numerous occasions, the synoptic evangelists affirm that Jesus healed all the sick who came to him (Matt. 4:36; Mark 1:34, 6:56; Luke 6:19, 9:11; Acts 5:16, 8:7, 28:9). The Prosperity Model thus involves not just wealth; it involves health *and* physical well-being.[18]

Going back to the Old Testament, the Prosperity Model advocates suggest that God not only called Abraham the 'father' of God's chosen and elect people, but also blessed him abundantly in every way: socially, economically and materially. Joseph's many-coloured robe foreshadowed his later prosperity as second-in-command over the whole of Egypt. Job's faithfulness was rewarded, not only with the full restoration of his health but also with double the prosperity that he had had before his calamity. In each instance and many others, the Bible portrays God's desire to bless his people with spiritual, physical and material abundance.[19] Above all, the operation of these purposes is sustained and advanced by the ethos of professional excellence. Thus, the Excellence Model is a triangle of nationalism (the Afrocentric view), professionalism (human capacity-building), and the prosperity gospel's orientation to development.[20]

Fifthly, the missional argument and contextual argument interface with the global economy through investing in development efforts or entrepreneurial projects. In applying both the missional and contextual argument to the African context, Amos Yong outlines and frequently quotes scriptural texts such as 3 John 2: 'Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul.' This prayer is understood by African Pentecostals as having three dimensions of blessings: the spiritual, the physical and life in totality.[21]

According to Kalu, the Scriptures, from this perspective, have promised salvation for souls (both now and in the after-life), divine healing for the body, and material prosperity for physical beings. Christ's ministry, understood within this prosperity framework, operates at each of these levels, as well as emphasizing material prosperity. It also teaches that there is not only forgiveness of sins, but also spiritual healing and deliverance of people from the physical and material powers and forces that oppress them.[22]

Conclusion

In approaching this paper, I started by defining its main concepts such as the prosperity gospel, before briefly outlining and discussing five examples of the methods of Pentecostalism. I have attempted to show

[17] Nimi Wariboko, 'Pentecostal paradigms of National Economic Prosperity in Africa', in *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement,* eds., Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 36-59.
[18] Gary S. Greig & Kevin N. Springer (eds), *The Kingdom and the Power: Are Healing and the Spiritual Gifts Used by Jesus and the Early Church Meant for the Church Today? A Biblical Look at How to Bring the Gospel to the World with Power* (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1993).
[19] H.L. Bosman, I.G.P. Gous and I.J.J. Spangenberg (eds.), *Plutocrats and Paupers: Wealth and Poverty in the Old Testament* (Pretoria: Van Schaik, 1991).
[20] Jean-Francois Medard 'Les eglises protestantes au Cameroun, entre tradition autoritaire et ethnicité', in *Religion et Transition Democratique en Afrique*, eds., F. Constantine and C. Coulon (Paris: Karthala, 1997), 17.
[21] Amos Yong, 'A Typology of Prosperity Theology: A Religious Economy of Global Renewal or a Renewal Economics?', in *Pentecostalism and Prosperity: The Socio-Economics of the Global Charismatic Movement,* eds., Katherine Attanasi and Amos Yong (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 15-33.
[22] Ogbu U. Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 9.

how the African economic context creates a breeding ground for the spread of Pentecostalism, before showing in conclusion how such methods are applied in that context. When making an application of the five methods used by African Pentecostals, it becomes very clear that they all agree that the African context which is characterized by economic crisis, corruption and mismanagement requires some form of moral regeneration and spiritual uplift. They also see poverty as demonic, evil and blasphemous. Therefore it requires some form of spiritual intervention as well as relevant biblical exegesis.

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(128) THE IMPACT OF EUROPEAN RACISM ON CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA[1]

Linda Naicker

Introduction

The origins of European racism can be traced to the nineteenth century when a pioneer in the study of comparative anatomy and skull analysis, Professor Johann Blumenbach, developed the idea that the people of Europe belonged to one race.[2] Blumenbach claimed that Europeans represented the highest racial type within the human species. This newly established racial order set the stage for racial formation in European colonies and was used to justify European domination, paternalism and imperialism. These scientific and scholarly developments in Europe coincided with missionary expansion into Africa and other newly discovered continents and promulgated dispossession, discrimination and subjugation through racial prejudice in all spheres of life. This article traces the development of European racism and examines its impact on Christianity in Africa from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century.

The Roots of Racism in Africa

In his book 'Origin of Species', published in 1859, British naturalist Charles Darwin asserted that a species' ability to survive was determined by a natural selection of inherited variations. Darwin's species thesis led to the development of race theory, in which Africans were placed in the category of inferior intermediates in the chain of human existence.[3] The fields of sociology, psychology, anthropology, theology, biology and medicine became instruments to prove the inferiority of various race groups in comparison to the white race and maintain patriarchal dominance over colonized peoples. Influential scientists in the field of eugenics[4] provided a scientific brand of racism which determined variables of phenotype, intelligence and ability to achieve, in terms of civilization or culture, based on genetics.[5] This led to the treatment of Africans as sub-human and justified European domination and exploitation.[6]

The science of eugenics was contested in the twentieth century, with scientists finding little evidence of the existence of biologically different race groups. Scientists found that the average genetic difference between two randomly selected individuals is 0.2% of all the genes and that the physical traits used to

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[1] 'Racism' is defined as a social group or cultural entity that denies the dignity of another group and leads to the ultimate assertion that this group is superior and demonstrates a desire to dominate. See World Council of Churches, 'Program to Combat Racism' https://wwwaluka.org/struggle/collection/WCC.

[2] Gill Sutton, 'The Layering of History: A Brief Look at Eugenics, the Holocaust and Scientific Racism in South Africa', *Yesterday and Today*, no. 1, (May 2007): 22-23.
'Race' can be defined as a social phenomenon in which contested systems of meaning serve as the connection between physical features and personal characteristics. See Ian F. Haney-Lopez, 'The Social Construction of Race', in *Critical Race Theory*, eds. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), 63.

[3] G. Sutton, 'The Layering of History', ', 22-23.

[4] The science of eugenics was developed as an off-shoot of the Darwinian Theory in Britain in the 1800s. Sir Francis Galton coined the term to mean 'well-born'. He claimed that biologically-determined leadership qualities were inherent traits of the British ruling class. See Linda Naicker, 'The Role of Eugenics and Religion in the Construction of Race in South Africa', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* Vol. 38, no. 2, (December 2012): 209-220.

[5] Naicker, 'The Role of Eugenics and Religion in the Construction of Race in South Africa', 211.

[6] Naicker, 'The Role of Eugenics and Religion in the Construction of Race in South Africa', 212.

distinguish individuals are determined by 0.1% of all the genes, proving that there is only one race – the human race.[7]

Before the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European involvement with Africa was largely transitory, with limited control of foreign lands. The dawn of the Industrial Revolution made Europe the master of manufacturing and gave new impetus for overseas exploration. Europeans in Africa and other newly discovered regions now began to think in terms of domination and colonialism, and consequently began to extend their settlements.[8] Europe's involvement with Africa became characterised by aggression, in the forms of political belligerence, destroying ancient kingdoms, tearing down societies, vigorously imposing European forms of thought and education on African peoples and imposing a European brand of Christianity on African people.

Christianity and Racism in Africa

According to Villa-Vicencio, for the most part the missionary endeavour coincided with the European age of expansion. The history of missionary expansion followed the same plan as the history of colonization. Churches in Africa and other European colonies became colonial stations for churches in Europe.[9] The prevailing sentiment was that European civilization and Christianity were indistinguishable.

The denigration suffered by Africans on the basis of race is well documented, particularly by proponents of Black and African Theologies, as is the belief that, in many ways, eighteenth and nineteenth-century Christianity collaborated with colonial oppressors in disparaging Africans.[10] The ruthless attack on the African psyche was intended to denigrate the African person and despoil the African heritage. In the words of Archbishop Tutu:[11]

> The worst crime that can be laid at the door of the white man (who, it must be said, has done many a worthwhile and praiseworthy thing for which we are always thankful) is not our economic, social and political exploitation, however reprehensible that might be; no, it is that his policy succeeded in filling most of us with a self-disgust and self-hatred. This has been the most violent form of colonialism, our spiritual and mental enslavement, which we have suffered from, that can only be called a religious or spiritual schizophrenia.

There exists a plethora of literature that shows the association between the colonial mission to Africa and the Christian mission to Africa.[12] Explorers, missionaries and traders became representatives of European colonial interests in Africa, resulting in Africa's vulnerability to colonization and domination. By 1914, with the exception of Ethiopia and Liberia, Africa had been partitioned and occupied by the imperial powers of Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, Belgium, Spain and Italy.[13] Christianity came to Africa at the price of African people's freedoms, traditions and communities.

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[7] Haney-Lopez, 'The Social Construction of Race', 164.
[8] Stephen Neil. *A History of Christian Missions.* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), 211-214.
[9] Charles Villa-Vicencio, *Between Christ and Caesar: Classic Contemporary Texts on Church and State* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1986), 170.
[10] See Desmond Tutu, 'Black Theology and African Theology – Soulmates or Antagonists' in *A Reader in African Theology*, ed. John Parrat (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 37-44.
[11] Tutu, 'Black Theology and African Theology – Soulmates or Antagonists', 37.
[12] See John Parrot, *A Reader in African Christian Theology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
[13] A. Adu Boahen (ed.), *General History of Africa VII: Africa under Colonial Domination 1880-1935* (London: James Curry, 1990), 320; J. F. Ade Ajaji (ed.), *General History of Africa: Africa in the 19th Century until the 1880s* (London: James Curry, 1998), 300-320.

The Christian Response to European Racism in Africa

At its 2nd Assembly in 1954, the World Council of Churches (WCC) conveyed the conviction that any form of segregation based on race, colour or ethnicity is contrary to the gospel. It called its member churches to work towards the abolition of segregation and discrimination within their own life and society. The Geneva Conference on Church and Society in 1966 raised a strong voice against the sin of racial arrogance and oppression. At the 4th WCC Assembly in Uppsala in 1969, the WCC identified racism practised by the white-skinned against the darker-skinned as one of the world's basic problems and a blatant denial of the Christian faith. The WCC therefore set the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) in motion worldwide. The PCR is regarded as one of the most significant expressions of faith in world Christianity. Its objectives included providing financial aid to racially oppressed groups and organizations, supporting victims of racial injustice and promoting social justice.[14]

The 1950s signified a new era in church and political life in Africa, when African people demanded freedom from their colonial oppressors. By 1961, eighteen countries had received independence. This prompted the churches in Africa to form an ecumenical body to deal collaboratively with their new responsibilities. The All-Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) was established in 1963 and was tasked with dealing with the challenges of racism, civil war, the refugee problem and other pertinent issues facing the African continent.[15] At their 3rd Assembly in Lusaka, Zambia, in 1974, the issue of the liberation of Africa was discussed. The general secretary of the AACC, Burgess Carr, explained that those who resorted to the use of violence against oppressive regimes in South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal were not condemned for their actions.[16] Portugal relinquished its rule over Mozambique and Angola in 1975 and in 1980 Robert Mugabe's socialist liberation movement took power in Rhodesia after a landslide election victory.[17] The question then became whether South Africa would attain independence next.

Africa's Last Bastion of White Supremacy

South Africa became the last country whose racial policy was based on white supremacy. Christian concern grew rapidly as structural racism heaped tyranny on the lives of the country's black majority population by the white minority population. For example, a missionary policy document published by the Dutch Reformed Church in 1935 stated that Afrikaners fear equality between black and white and the consequent racial fusion such equality may engender. The document went on to state that Blacks and Coloureds must develop apart from Europeans. The policy laid the foundation for the Dutch Reformed Church's stance on race relations in South Africa.[18]

The National Party, consisting of a large number of Dutch Reformed Church leaders, came into power in 1948. Historians maintain that, to an extent, the racist ideology of the Dutch Reformed Church had its roots in the convictions of a secret Afrikaner group, the Broederbond. The Broederbond believed that the Afrikaner nation was placed in Southern Africa by God.[19] By 1933, the Broederbond had over 1,000 members, with the principle influence being wielded by a small group of academics steeped in neo-

[14] Jeremiah Manari, 'Special Projects of the WCC: The Project on Women and the Programme to Combat Racism', in *Essays and Exercises in Ecumenism,* ed. Christo. Lombaard (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 1999), 307-325.
[15] James Amanze, 'Some Large Ecumenical Organizations of the African Continent', in *Essays and Exercises in Ecumenism,* ed. Christo Lombaard (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 1999), 137-149.
[16] J. Adonis and Joan A. Millard, 'Christianity in South Africa since 1948', in *A History of Christianity in South Africa,* eds. J. W. Hofmeyr and Gerald J. Pillay (Pretoria: HAUM Tertiary, 1994), 280.
[17] Shubane Khehla 'The Black Consciousness Movement: The Soweto Uprising of 1976', in *New History of South Africa,* eds. Hermann Giliomee , Bernard Mbenga (Cape Town: NB Publishers, 2007), 359-361.
[18] Adonis and Millard, 'Christianity in South Africa since 1948', 254.
[19] Adonis and Millard, 'Christianity in South Africa since 1948', 254.

Calvinist thought. Many politicians were members of the Broederbond as well as the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). Shubane states that a 1934 Broederbond pamphlet declared, 'The Afrikanerdom shall reach its ultimate destiny of domination in South Africa… Brothers, our solution for South Africa's troubles [are] not that this or that party shall gain the upper hand, but that the Afrikaner Broederbond shall rule South Africa.'[20]

A Dutch Reformed Church synod in 1946 found that the Broederbond was not in conflict with the Bible or Christian principles. In 1947, a DRC congress took place in Johannesburg, the proceedings of which were published in a booklet entitled 'Kerk en Stad' (Church and State), giving guidelines for the white Dutch Reformed Church's policy towards other racial groups. The congress highlighted the need for segregation of white and black as well as the conviction that the church must take the lead role in drafting a workable racial policy. The document was finalized in 1951 under the title, 'Rapport oor die Skriftuurlike Gronde van Rasse-apartheid' ('Report on the Scriptural Basis for Racial Apartheid').[21]

Christianity can legitimise racist ideology, show disinterest in the face of racism or act as a mechanism of radical transformation. Many South African clergy, including the likes of Ambrose Reeves, Trevor Huddleston, Beyers Naudé, Desmond Tutu and Allan Boesak raised their voices against the racist ideology of the South African government. The WCC's Programme to Combat Racism was highly controversial among the churches in South Africa. It supported reflection and action among churches in Southern Africa and provided direct humanitarian support to liberation movements.[22]

The Kairos Document,[23] released in 1985, produced by a number of theologians, lay people and clergy, was signed by 150 people. It appealed to Christian churches to oppose civil authority, raise their voices against apartheid and stand in solidarity with the poor and oppressed. It criticized white Christian privilege for not defending oppressed people being tortured by the apartheid state. The document went on to name the Dutch Reformed Churches as being the most prominent proponent of the apartheid government's racial policies.

Two documents published in the late 1980s, 'A Relevant Pentecostal Witness' and 'The Road to Damascus', called upon South African Christians to reject injustice and hypocrisy which is contrary to the gospel.[24] South Africa obtained freedom from the oppression of apartheid in 1994.

The legacy of South Africa's racist past has far-reaching consequences for its future. Economic injustice is rife and the issue of land distribution is still a source of tension. Political corruption, unemployment, a weakening health care system and lack of service delivery have negative effects on the country, most especially on the poorest of the poor. While the nation is no longer legally defined by race, race is still a thorny issue. Notable amongst South Africa's problems is the xenophobic violence by South Africans against foreigners from other parts of the continent. This is testament to the bitterness and division that is still prevalent in South African society.

The churches and ecumenical organizations need to take a collective stand to deal with what can only be referred to as a devastating crisis. Just as they made a concerted effort to eradicate institutionalized racism in Africa, so too there needs to appear a moment of truth, a *kairos*, a point of reckoning, where xenophobic violence becomes unequivocally targeted and eradicated. What is most clear with regard to xenophobic violence in South Africa is that discrimination produces social chaos and life-threatening mayhem. The

[20] Shubane, 'The Black Consciousness Movement: The Soweto Uprising of 1976', 289.
[21] Adonis and Millard, 'Christianity in South Africa Since 1948', 254.
[22] See The World Council of Churches, 'Programme to Combat Racism, Struggle for Freedom', https://www.aluka.org/struggle/collection/WCC (accessed 1 April, 2015).
[23] Kairos Theologians. *The Kairos Document: Challenge to the Churches: A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa,* Revised Second Edition, (Braamfontein: Skotaville, 1986).
[24] Theological Education by Extension College, *Exploring our African Christian World: Workbook A* (Turffontein, 2011), 1-15.

fundamental values of equality, dignity and opportunity for all human beings must become the social norm in Africa and, most especially, in post-apartheid South Africa.

Conclusion

The historical development and impact of racism on African Christianity and the Christian response to it points the way for how we must address all forms of oppression in God's world. Wherever racism, xenophobia, inhumanity, indignity and exploitation exist, the church must take a stand. The words of liberation theologian Allan Boesak still ring true today, as they did a decade before the last racist regime in Africa fell:

> Violence, greed and the demonic distortion of human values continue to destroy God's world and God's people. Economic exploitation is escalating, rather than abating, and economic injustice is still the dominant reality in the relationship between rich and poor.[25]

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[25] Alan Boesak *Black and Reformed: Apartheid, Liberation and the Calvinist Tradition* (Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers, 1984), 154.

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(129) DECENT WORK AND AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Rowanne Sarojini Marie

Introduction

Work is central to the well-being of people. In addition to providing needed income within households, work can also pave the way for broader social and economic advancement, thus strengthening individuals, their families and communities. Both individual and social identity is conditioned by work, which is indispensable for the survival and security of people.

The subject of 'decent work' and African Christianity is a broad one which cannot be adequately addressed here. However, the purpose of this chapter is to highlight some of the key areas in which this important topic is being considered. It is essential to commence with an understanding of the notion of 'work'.

Notions of 'Work'

Generally, society tends to refer to 'work' as 'paid employment'.[1] Because of technological innovations, the character and nature of work is going through a deep transformation such that new types of work are rising to prominence.[2] In addition to technological advancements which change the character of work, the aspect of culture with different people considering different activities to be work, creates confusion about what work really means. In many societies, when we say that someone is 'working' we are not merely indicating that a person is involved in a particular kind of activity, but we are also implicitly ascribing value to that person. 'To work is good; not to work is bad. A person who does not work is less valued in a society.'[3] Thus, for example, we hear deprecatory remarks about people who are 'only housewives' or 'only domestic helpers'. Since paid work gives access to monetary power, and hence to independence, it becomes a door to active participation in the home and society at large.

Work can be defined as 'the carrying out of tasks which enable people to make a living within the environment in which they find themselves,'[4] or a set of activities that are associated with performing one's paid occupation, thus providing money for the purchase of goods and services.[5] Miroslav Volf, who writes from a theological perspective, describes work as honest, purposeful and methodologically specified social activity whose primary goal is the creation of products or a state of affairs that can satisfy the needs of working individuals or the co-creators.[6] Such human activity, which includes both paid and unpaid activity, must ensure compatibility with human dignity, which remains at the core of work activities.[7] Added to these various notions, Caroline Moser[8] makes us aware that work is much more than paid roles, enabling us to understand the multi-faceted nature of work. She proposes that work can be divided into three spheres:

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[1] Rowanne Sarojini Marie, 'Towards a Gendered Theology of Work', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa,* no. 149 (2014): 126-141.
[2] Marie, 'Towards a Gendered Theology of Work', 127.
[3] Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 4.
[4] Tony J. Watson, *Sociology, Work and Industry* (London: Routledge, 1980), 83.
[5] Carol J Auster, *The Sociology of Work, Concepts and Cases* (California: Thousand Oaks, 1996), 1.
[6] Volf, '*Work in the Sprit',* 11.
[7] Darryl Cosden, *A Theology of Work: Work in the New Creation* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2006), 179.
[8] Caroline Moser, *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice and Training* (London: Routledge, 1993).

productive, reproductive and community. Productive work is defined by Moser as the production of goods or services rendered for income or subsistence, while reproductive work includes tasks such as cooking, cleaning, washing, looking after children; and finally community work is voluntary or unpaid work.[9] Having broadly described the notion of work, how then do we understand the notion of 'decent work'?

Understanding 'Decent Work'

The notion of 'decent work' 'is based on the understanding that work is not only a source of income but more importantly a source of personal dignity, family stability, peace in community, and economic growth that expands opportunities for productive jobs and employment.'[10] The concept was introduced and promoted by the International Labour Organization (ILO)[11] in 1999, who summed up as its priorities the need to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

The three 'rights' as pointed out by the ILO are the right to work, rights in work and the right to adequate social protection. In this regard, the ILO advocates that decent work is not confined to wage employment, but extends to self-employment, home-working and other income-generating activities.[12] The strategic objectives of the ILO are listed as full employment, workers' rights, social protection and social dialogue.[13]

The ILO emphasised that within its overall 'decent work' strategy, 'social protection' is a critical component. The absence of social protection results in neither work nor lives being decent. 'Social protection seeks to protect workers at their workplaces in the formal and informal economy against unfair, hazardous and unhealthy working conditions.'[14] While social protection is a basic human need, there are some groups that are particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged in Africa, for example, migrant workers and their families,[15] people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS,[16] women and children[17] as well as people in the informal economy. It is these groups of people who experience weakened productive potential due to the absence or inadequacy of social protection.

An important underlying value within the decent work paradigm is that labour is not a commodity and should therefore not be considered as one more product on the market upon which a cost worth is placed. The fact that work involves human life makes one consider the moral and ethical values of work since it engages much more than material components.[18] The notion of 'decency' does not have a uniform standard

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[9] Moser, '*Gender Planning and Development',* 31.
[10] Draham P. Ghai (ed.), *Decent Work: Objectives and Strategies* (Geneva: International Labour Office, 2006).
[11] International Labour Organisation, 'Decent Work Agenda 1999', www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/decent-work-agenda/lang--en/index.htm (accessed 10 November, 2014).
[12] ILO, *'Decent Work Agenda 1999',* 1.
[13] Juan Somavia. 'The ILO Decent Work Agenda as the Aspiration of People', in *Philosophical and Spiritual Perspectives on Decent Work,* ed. Dominique Peccoud (Geneva: International Labour Office, 2004), 5.
[14] International Labour Organisation, 'Decent Work Agenda 2007-2015', www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/rgmeet/11afrm/dg-thematic.pdf (accessed 25 February, 2015), 8.
[15] See Roswitha Golder, 'Towards a Theology of Work from the Perspective of Women Migrants', in *Dignity of Work: Theological and Interdisciplinary Perspectives,* ed. Kenneth Mtata (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2011), 79-88.
[16] See Veikko Munyika, 'The Impact of the HIV and AIDS Epidemic on the World of Work and Development', in *Dignity of Work: Theological and Interdisciplinary Perspectives,* ed. Kenneth Mtata (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2011), 99-108.
[17] Decent Work for Africa's Development, Tenth African Regional Meeting, Addis Ababa, 2003 Report of the Director-General, International Labour Office, www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/rgmeet/index.htm (accessed 1 March, 2015).
[18] Dominique Peccoud (ed.), *Philosophical and Spiritual Perspectives on Decent Work* (Geneva: ILO Publications,

and evolves in different societies embracing flexibility. However, at its basic core is the 'value' that is attached to human life. Due to the diverse nature of 'decency' it becomes essential to search for a 'global ethic' which provides the hermeneutical keys to move from one value discourse to another, thus locating those core universal values that seem to be compatible with one another.[19] Therefore, *decent* work seeks to challenge the dual nature of work, where in some parts of the world workers attain high levels of material welfare, while in other places, gross violations of human rights such as child labour, slavery and forced labour are still being practised.

African Notions of 'Decent Work'

The African continent is said to have potential for growth and development. It is also a continent scourged by poverty and inequality, since the gap between the poorest and the richest in Africa is also one of the widest in the world.[20] The unemployment and underemployment challenge on the continent continues to contribute to the vicious cycle of poverty which is perpetuated by a deficit of 'decent work'.

As in most cultures and traditions around the world, work in the Africa context is held in high esteem, carrying significance economically, socially and spiritually. A work ethic is 'the attitude of a group or society towards work', and embedded in African thinking is the notion that work is good and remains higher on the society scale of values than play or leisure.[21]

In order to analyse the work ethic in traditional African society, one must do so in the context of religion and traditional values. An African is a very religious person. In fact, the African human is said to be 'incurably religious', so it becomes difficult to divorce any aspect of life, including work, from religion.[22] Whatever values, virtues or ethics are ultimately discovered, they are based on the religious inclination of an African.

Kenneth Mtata argues that there is a significant connection between our work and faith practices, as he develops an 'African theology of work'.[23] He states, 'Work is one significant area of contact between faith and the world and as such must form an important topic not only for faith communities.'[24] In traditional African societies, work was carried out by groups of people who worked together, usually with the household constituting a production unit, resulting in much work being done in a shorter space of time.[25] In the African context, there is a deep connection between the world of work and the spiritual world. 'Whether the hunter had good dogs, the farmer had many cattle to plough the field, or one had a great voice to sing, in order to be successful, in one's work, Africans believed in the final capital that came from the supernatural, be they Ancestors or God or other benevolent powers.'[26] The understanding that work is the co-operation between human beings and the spiritual world is deeply entrenched in traditional African

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2004), 5.

[19] Konrad Raiser, 'Conflicting Values: Dialogue of Cultures on Decent Work', in *Philosophical and Spiritual Perspectives on Decent Work* (Geneva: ILO Publications, 2004), 17.

[20] Decent Work for Africa's Development, Tenth African Regional Meeting, Addis Ababa, 2003. Report of the Director-General, International Labour Office, www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/rgmeet/index.htm (accessed 1 March, 2015).

[21] Ezekial Ajibade, 'African Traditional Work Ethics and the Challenges of Decent Work Agenda', www.academia.edu/6139384 (accessed 20 September, 2015).

[22] See Ajibade, 'African Traditional Work Ethics and the Challenges of Decent Work Agenda', www.academia.edu/6139384 (accessed 20 September, 2015).

[23] Kenneth Mtata, 'An African Theology of Work: A Lutheran Perspective', in *Dignity of Work: Theological and Interdisciplinary Perspectives,* ed. Kenneth Mtata (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2011), 35-49.

[24] Mtata, 'An African Theology of Work', 7.

[25] Mtata, 'An African Theology of Work', 37.

[26] Mtata, 'An African Theology of Work', 38.

thinking. Hence the concept of decent work in the African context cannot be separated from religious dialogue. Such dialogue, together with deeper reflection on the concept of decent work, becomes a key building-block for development strategies aimed at combating poverty, social exclusion, unemployment and underemployment that plagues Africa. The ILO, as well as other organizations, are convinced that decent work remains at the core of addressing such needs, thereby having potential to lead to a socially inclusive and economically dynamic African development framework.[27]

Christian Convergence and 'Decent Work'

The immense need for a convergence between the decent work agenda and the Christian tradition becomes more evident and critical.[28] Such convergence has potential to open up opportunities for dialogue between politicians, practitioners and theologians. Examining the pillars upon which the decent work agenda is built, Martinot-Lagarde states that each of these pillars touches on theological and anthropological questions, which are centred on the notion of human dignity.[29] The fundamental rights are expressed as: no forced labour, the eradication of the worst forms of child labour, freedom of association, collective bargaining and no discrimination, all of which are enabling and provide the basis for social improvement.[30] He links this understanding with the story of Exodus which speaks of the value of freedom, where the freeing of the Israelites from the domination of the Egyptians led to a process of liberation.[31] He comments that freedom of association is central to the way we understand the faith and that forcing children to work in inhumane conditions not only deprives them of their personal future, but of that of the whole of society.[32] The Christian tradition must respond to the notion of 'decent work' understanding the necessity for convergence.[33] An example of such convergence is that of the World Council of Churches partnering with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to facilitate dialogue between the Christian and Muslim leaders in Egypt to address issues of social justice, specifically as this relates to honest work and youth employment.[34] One of the key features of such a partnership was to raise the awareness of community leaders to give a better understanding of the work agenda, resulting in all participating stakeholders implementing processes that led to the specific creation of employment for young people.

Similarly, in South Africa, the ILO partnered with the International Poverty Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG) under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to find synergies between social security interventions and public employment programmes as an important contribution towards achieving the Decent Work Agenda (DWA).[35] The Eleventh Africa meeting report of the ILO declares that decent work is not a motto, it is a movement which strives towards the dignity of decent work

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[27] *Decent Work for Africa's Development*, Tenth African Regional Meeting, Addis Ababa, 2003 Report of the Director-General, International Labour Office, www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/rgmeet/index.htm (accessed 1 March, 2015).
[28] Pierre Martinot-Lagarde, 'Theology of Work, Opportunities and Challenges', in *Dignity of Work: Theological and Interdisciplinary Perspectives,* ed. Kenneth Mtata (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press 2011), 71-78.
[29] Martinot-Lagarde, 'Theology of Work, Opportunities and Challenges', 72.
[30] Martinot-Lagarde, 'Theology of Work, Opportunities and Challenges', 73.
[31] Martinot-Lagarde, 'Theology of Work, Opportunities and Challenges', 73.
[32] Martinot-Lagarde, 'Theology of Work, Opportunities and Challenges', 74.
[33] Martinot-Lagarde, 'Theology of Work, Opportunities and Challenges', 74.
[34] The project agreement title is: 'Advancing peace through social justice' and is spearheaded by the WCC in conjunction with the ILO. Such convergence led to the establishment of an interfaith platform for social justice issues in Egypt.
[35] Rudi Dicks, et al, 'Achieving a Decent Work Agenda in South Africa: A New Growth Strategy', National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI), 2011, www.global-labour-university.org/fileadmin/GLU_conference_2011/papers/Rudi_Dicks.pdf (accessed 1 September, 2015).

for a decent life.[36] It is clear that such an agenda becomes possible only by strengthened co-operation and mutual reinforcement by national governments and other key role-players such as the 'World Bank, the IMF and the European Union, particularly in terms of the follow-up to the Africa Union Extraordinary Summit on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa'.[37] Such partnerships become further reinforced by aligning with the religious sector for greater benefit (as illustrated by the example in Egypt).

Interreligious dialogue becomes an effective and important tool for building peace and justice, and it is to this end that organizations such as the ILO have been facilitating the spirit of interreligious dialogue as part of continuing exploration of the meaning of work and social justice.[38] Together with civil society partners and other faith-based organizations, it is imperative for Christianity to identify common values and goals. Through these discussions, they are positioned to form a deeper understanding of work and social justice, thus intensifying the exploration for universal decent work values.

Conclusion

'Decent work' is a human right and is an issue of social justice which must be prioritized within the discourse of African Christianity. In addition to the need to create jobs with extended social protection, is the need to promote social dialogue. To combat the evil of 'indecent work', it is imperative that African Christianity partners with organizations which prioritise the decent work agenda. The important ingredients in this discourse are 'social dialogue' and convergence that is driven by religion, and Christianity in particular. In addition, and of importance, is an ongoing quest for an 'African ethic' of values which seeks a common framework for promoting and understanding decent work.

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[36] The Decent Work Agenda in Africa: Eleventh African Regional Meeting, Addis Ababa, 2007, ILO: Geneva.
[37] See The Decent Work Agenda in Africa: Eleventh African Regional Meeting, Addis Ababa, ILO: Geneva, 2007:27
[38] Juan Somavia, 2012. *Convergences, Decent work and social justice in religious traditions*, ILO: Geneva, 2012,10.

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(130) MIGRATION IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Rose Nyirimana Mukansengimana

Introduction

African people are renowned for their strong religious beliefs that contributed to making the continent a fertile ground for the spread of Christianity. On the other hand, it has been argued that Christianity has made African culture even more openly religious.[1] Consequently, as Christianity seemed to lose ground in the land where it originated, the church in Africa has not ceased to grow – to the extent that many believe that the centre of Christianity has now moved to Africa. It is, however, observed that this continent has often experienced challenging situations that threatened the welfare of the people, forcing them to migrate tovarious parts of the world. It is important to note that most immigrants are Christians on the move, carrying their religious identity to new contexts. This chapter looks into the actual or potential impact of African migration on the spread of Christianity. It contends that the waves of migration affecting African people and the resulting movement of African Christians constitute an opportunity for Christianity to expand. After a brief description of the concept of migration, the chapter explores God's attitude toward the migration of his chosen people. This will shed light on what may be God's design for the contemporary African Christian migrants.

The Concept of Migration: A Theological Dimension

Migration refers to different types of human movements. Carrol differentiates between migrants who move to other places of their own volition, usually seeking lengthy or permanent residence, and refugees who flee their country out of fear of persecution or those who run away from armed conflicts.[2] Migration is a universal and a timeless phenomenon. As Aboagye-Mensah asserts, 'Migration as a movement of people from one place to another within and across geographical, ethnic, cultural and religious boundaries, is an integral part of human existence.'[3] Basing his view on the Bible, Aboagye-Mensah argues that 'migration is as old as human beings'.[4] Indeed, in biblical traditions, migration is often willed by God or used by him to fulfil divine purposes.

God and Migration in Scripture

While God's ability to be with the chosen people wherever they go may be understood to be a result of God's omnipresence, sometime scripture describes God as a migrating God. In the exodus story, God is reported to be on the move with the people. As they leave Egypt, God leads the way in a pillar of cloud by day and escorts them in a pillar of fire by night (Ex. 14:21-22). Later in the wilderness, the same cloud covering the tabernacle moved with the people, leading the way and instructing them when to set out and

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[1] Harvey C. Kwiyani, *Sent Forth: African Missionary Work in the West*. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2014), 23.
[2] Daniel M. Carroll, *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church, and the Bible*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 21.
[3] Robert K. Aboagye-Mensah 'Perspective and Biblical Migration and Mission', in *Babel is everywhere! Migrant Reading from Africa, Europe and Asia*. eds, Asamoah-Gyadu, Adrea Frochtling and Andrea Kunz-Luncke. (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang. 2013), 15.
[4] Aboagye-Mensah, 'Perspective and Biblical Migration and Mission', 15

when to settle (Num. 9:15-24). Moreover, God, who was understood to be seated on the mercy seat covering the Ark, would accompany the people as the Levites carried the Ark. When God told Moses, 'My presence will go with you…' (Ex. 33:14) it was as if God meant this literally.

In the New Testament, God is described as a migrant in the person of Jesus, the Word that was with God and came to dwell in a new environment (John 1:1-14). Not only did Jesus live among us as a migrant, he also experienced migration with his family to Egypt. This migration is understood to have been planned by God who used it to accomplish his divine will (Matt. 2:14-15).

Migration Willed by God

The God of the Old Testament wants people to migrate. In the creation story, for instance, God wants mankind to fill the earth (Genesis 1: 28). Obviously, migration was a prerequisite for accomplishing this plan. In the story of the tower of Babel, humanity attempted to resist the plan and to stay in one place. God intervened and forced them to migrate (Genesis 11:8). The promises given to Abraham are subject to his willingness to migrate (Genesis 12:1-2). It was as migrants that Abraham and his descendants could fulfil God's plan to bless the nations. God may not be the root cause of all situations that forced the people to leave their locations and migrate to other places, but once these situations happened, God used the resulting migration to accomplish his divine will.

Migration Used by God

The Joseph narrative makes it plain that Joseph was made a migrant as a result of the evil plans of his brothers. Yet Joseph's migration was used by God to bless the Egyptians and to preserve the house of Jacob. Jacob's family arrived in Egypt as economic migrants. God used their presence to reveal his identity, attributes and character to both the Israelites and to all the nations who heard all that he did in Egypt. Later, forced migration of Israel under the Assyrians and the Babylonians seems to have served the same purpose of God's self-revelation to the Israelites and to their host nations.

In the New Testament, Jesus insists twice that the work he left to his followers will be accomplished only through migration. The so-called Great Commission of Matthew 28:18 spells out what Jesus expects his followers who remain on earth to do, making disciples by baptizing and teaching. Going to all the nations was the prerequisite for doing this. The need to migrate is re-emphasized in Acts 1:8 where Jesus repeats that his followers are to be witnesses from Jerusalem to the ends of the world.

However, succumbing to fear, they decided to stay in the same place. God, who wanted them to go out, overcame this fear at Pentecost. They were given the boldness to speak fearlessly, and the ability to speak the languages of all the surrounding nations. They were equipped for migration. It appears, however, that the disciples were not ready to leave the comfort of their place. They were ready to be witnesses but within Jerusalem (Acts 2:42-47). It was when their comfort was broken by persecution that they were forced to migrate, preaching the word all over Judea, Samaria and all over Asia (Acts 8:1-10).

This abrupt persecution that forced the believers into the life of migrants became an opportunity to fulfil the Great Commission. Carroll argues that 'migration is not only about the reasons and mechanics of the move to another place; it is about life in that new setting'.[5] The migration of Christians is therefore a life of proclamation in a new setting. Christian settlement in new places results not only in personal uplifting but also in the foundation of churches in new places. The persecution that caused migration did not originate from God but he used migration as an instrument to promote the growth of Christianity. There is no reason God could not do the same with today's many situations of migration.

[5] Carroll, *Christians at the Border,* 71.

The Impact of African Waves of Migrations on Christianity across the Globe

In recent centuries, Africa has been experiencing huge trajectories of mass emigration, involving a significant number of Christians. The major causes for such movements have their roots in 'failed leadership, patrimonial political culture, civil wars and drought'.[6] While the visible reasons are rooted in existential concerns having not much to do with religion, the migration phenomenon has caused African Christianity to move beyond the continent and to become global in nature, with the establishment of churches across America, Europe and Asia. There seems to be a theological dimension in the phenomenon of migration.

Those who find a 'theological dimension' in the waves of migration see in migration God's given opportunity for taking the gospel to the far ends of the globe. Carroll argues that all of us have a certain way of looking at ourselves and the world in which we live; meaning that each individual has a set of lenses through which we interpret the reality that surrounds us and our identity and role in that context.[7] It is not strange therefore that some see behind the African migration a commission to take the gospel into distant places.

African Migration and Church Growth in the Diaspora

Kwiyani argues that African immigrant congregations which started appearing in the West in the 1970s have in the past twenty years multiplied greatly all across the Americas, Europe and Asia.[8] He asserts that by the time he produced his work in 2014, the two largest churches in Europe were African-led, founded by Nigerians. These are the Blessed Embassy of the Kingdom of God located in Kiev, Ukraine, with 30,000 members, and the Kingsway International Christian Centre located in London with 12,000 members, almost entirely African. There are other African immigrant congregations in Germany, Canada, the USA, etc.[9]

Haugen also observes a sizable number of African churches founded by immigrants in the Chinese city of Gwangzhou. Despite the state-sanctioned institutions imposed on foreign religions, the 'underground Pentecostal churches led by Africans attract a large number of African migrants…'[10] Hence, in recent years, Christianity in Africa has been a mobile faith sending out missionaries. In Kwiyani's judgement, 'It is as if God has preserved God's Church in Africa while it was dying out in Europe and North America, and now, God is calling the church out of Africa to reinvigorate world Christianity'.[11]

Major Characteristics and Challenges of African Migrant Churches

African migrant congregations in the diaspora are described as vibrant communities that respond to immigrant conditions by providing a conducive spiritual environment for experiencing God in the midst of urban chaos, poverty, racism, confusion, anomie and alienation. It is also argued that in cities across

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[6] Ogbu M. Kalu, 'The Andrew Syndrome: Models in understanding Nigerian Diaspora', in *African Immigrants Religions in America,* eds. Jacob K Olupona, and Regina Gemignani (New York: University Press, 2007), 61-85.
[7] Carroll, *Christians at the Border,* 63-64.
[8] Kwiyani, *Sent Forth,*18.
[9] Kwiyani, *Sent Forth,*18.
[10] Heidi O. Haugen 'Take over Asia for God: The Public Face of African Pentecostal Churches in China', In *The Public Face of African New Religious Movements in Diaspora: Imagining the Religious Other*, ed. Afe Adogame (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited 2014), 105.
[11] Kwiyani, '*Sent Forth', 17.*

America, faith-based community organizations meet the needs of immigrant communities by offering social services that state and local government often fail to provide.[12]

However, immigrant life is not prestigious. Most of the time, immigrants are looked down upon and discriminated against in their host communities. It is in reaction to such challenges that many African immigrants seek to maintain their cultural identities through developing communal links, religious institutions and social support structures. Immigrant churches then seem to focus more on helping their members to cope with the new environment, rather than doing a purely missionary ministry. They often care for the emotional, psychological, spiritual and material needs of their members, and encourage them to preserve their Christian identity in new cultures. This is what Akinade alludes to, stating: 'I argue for a death-refusal stance of African spiritual sensibilities even when they are being open to an intrusive, and corrosive, wider world. And this resilience has enabled African churches to flourish in the new cultural environments'.[13] This focus on the needs of migrants often overshadows the drive to reach out to the 'nations'. This may explain the low representation of the local members in many African immigrant churches.

But the focus on the socio-economic and cultural situation of immigrants is not the only factor affecting immigrant churches. Sometimes they are not warmly welcomed in the host community, as is the case in China[14] and in Brazil.[15] In Brazil, the African migrant church, particularly the recent spread of a so-called 'Yoruba tradition', is perceived as competing with other Afro-Brazilian religious communities.[16] 'The consequence of this competition is a growing demarcation between *terreiros* (religious communities) and less willingness to co-operate.'[17]

Moreover, there is a challenge arising from generational conflict. In this case, Mossiere observes that migrant youth usually possess the ability to adapt better to new environments. Youth embrace more easily the norms found in new places, which they often find to be relatively modern compared to those of their home context advocated by their parents. He goes on to argue that more often than not, inter-generational relationships are driven by the language issue, such as when older members want to maintain their home tongue in worship services, while youth seek to adopt the language of their social environment. The problem may even lead the church to split or simply disappear.[18]

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the migration of God's people, regardless of its causes, has often been an important tool that God has used to reach out to the nations. The chapter proposes that the frequent waves of migration in Africa that involve a significant number of African Christians could be viewed as an opportunity given to African Christianity to impact the world. In order to exploit fully this opportunity,

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[12] Jacob K. Olupona, and Regina Gemignani, eds. *African Immigrants Religions in America*. (New York: University Press, 2007), 16.
[13] Akintunde Akinade, 'Non-Western Christianity in the Western World: African Immigrant Churches in the Diaspora', in *African Immigrants Religions in America,* eds. Jacob K. Olupona, and Regina Gemignani (New York: University Press, 2007), 96.
[14] Haugen, 'Take Over Asia for God', 107
[15] Bettina E. Schmidt, 'The Discourse about 'Africa' in Religious Ritual goes global', in *The Public face of African new religious movements in Diaspora: Imagining the religious other*, ed. Afe Adogame (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited 2014), 32.
[16] Bettina, 'The Discourse about 'Africa' in Religious Ritual goes global', 29-44.
[17] Bettina, 'The Discourse about 'Africa' in Religious Ritual goes Global', 29-44.
[18] Geraldine Mossiere, 'Juggling Multiple Identities to Overcome Minority Status: Young Congolese Pentecostals in Montreal (Quebec)', in *The Public face of African New Religious Movements in Diaspora: Imagining the Religious Other*, ed. Afe Adogame (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited 2014), 147-162.

however, there is a need for the African immigrant churches to revisit their routine of catering mainly for immigrant members and to adopt deliberate strategies for reaching out to the host communities. On the other hand, the impact of the migrant churches depends much on the willingness of the churches in the host communities to embrace the migrant churches for better collaboration.

This chapter has portrayed Africa as a new cradle of Christianity. Hence, it urges African scholars and interested Christian bodies like the WCC and AACC[19] to recognise the importance of this topic within the African continent, because 'No serious study of Africa can ignore Christianity and the role it has come to play in Africa'.[20] The chapter advises African scholars to explore not only how African Christianity has transformed other continents but also how the 'explosion' of African Christianity is transforming the African continent as well. Kwiyani's grandfather's wisdom can be our inspiration: 'Until the lions can tell their stories, the story of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.'[21] In other words, the story told from a secondhand source will always be biased and incomplete.

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[19] The details on the role played by some Christian bodies such the WCC, the CICARWS, the CCM and many others in response to migration from at least 1956 to 2005 are provided by Manchala in his article : Migration: 'An Opportunity for Broader and Deeper Ecumenism''.

[20] Akinade, 'Non-Western Christianity', 9

[21] Kwiyani, *Sent Forth, 30.*

(131) MARTYRS AND WITNESSES OF FAITH IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Ssekabira Vincent and Brigitte Rabarijaona

Introduction

Martyrdom is central to the Christian faith. Indeed, Christian history begins with the life and death of Jesus Christ. Its history continues with the formation of the early Christian church, Emperor Constantine's Holy Roman Empire and the great schism into Eastern and Western Christianity. Its first martyr is Jesus himself. The history of Christianity focuses on the life, death and resurrection of one person, Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Jesus Christ stated publicly and without fear that he spoke with the authority of God. This claim angered the religious authorities in Palestine and they handed Jesus over to the Roman authority as a revolutionary. He was tried, condemned, and put to death through crucifixion.[1]

'Martyr' is a transliteration of the Greek and is a legal term meaning 'witness'. It refers to a person who has firsthand knowledge of a fact or an event and was often used to refer to a followere of Christ. According to Sauer and Howell, the terms martyr and martyrdom are enshrined within the definition of a Christian who voluntarily suffers death as the penalty for witnessing to and refusing to renounce his faith, or a tenet, principle or practice belonging to it.[2] Biblical law requires the testimony of at least two witnesses to establish the guilt of an offence.[3] In the case of a charge of murder, and presumably any capital offence, it was a duty of the witnesses to cast the first stone.[4] The story of Susanna may express a polemic against hasty judgments and hence care in the examination of witnesses.[5] False witness is prohibited.[6] Sometimes God is brought in as a witness and judge.[7] The biblical legal aspect is well-documented by articles of various scholars like M. Greenberg,[8] John L. McKenzie[9] and F.W. Danker.[10]

'Martyr' is used in relation to Christ himself in the New Testament. The mission of Paul after his conversion had a lasting impact in spreading the message of the work of Jesus, his death and resurrection. Gentiles and Jews had equal access to the Christian faith. However, the church remained small and was persecuted, particularly under tyrannical Roman Emperors, under whom being a Christian was an illegal act. Christians became martyrs. The term moved from just being a legal term, a 'witness' in court, to being

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[1] On Jewish authority, he was condemned for 'blasphemy'; before the Roman authorities they presented it as political and him as 'revolutionary.'

[2] Christof Sauer and Richard Howell (eds), *Suffering, Persecution and Martyrdom: Theological Reflections Vol 2* (Kempton Park: AcadSA Publishing, 2010), 42.

[3] See Deut 19:15; Num 35:30. The rule is illustrated in the trial of Naboth (1 Kgs 21:10, 13). Nothing is said in the Bible regarding qualification of witness.

[4] Deut 17:6-7.

[5] Charles George Herbermann, et al. eds., *The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, and History of the Catholic Church* (New York: The Encyclopedia press, inc, 1908).

[6] Ex 23:1.

[7] Mal 3:5.

[8] George Arthur Buttrich (ed.), 'Witness', *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. IV (R-Z) (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 864.

[9] See John L. McKenzie, 'Witness', *Dictionary of the Bible*, Macmillan, New York, 1966, 933-935.

[10] Geoffrey W. Bromiley (ed.) , 'Witness', *The International Bible Standard Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV (Q-Z) (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1988), 1086-1087.

a 'witness' to the truth of Jesus Christ to the extent of pouring out one's blood. The Christian martyrs acted as an inspiration of courage and determination in the way one lived a Christian life.

Martyrs and Witnesses of Faith in Anglophone Africa – Examples from Uganda and Congo

Marsh and Kingsworth speak of the Buganda martyrs that were killed largely for their Christian faith, also because of their refusal to engage in sodomy as demanded of them by King Kabaka Mwanga of the Buganda Kingdom.[11]

Oduyoye observes that, faced with persecution, the early Christian church in Northern Africa chose martyrdom and thus a new way of life.[12] Martyrdom's theological base was absolute loyalty to God, which made participation in the imperial cults and local kingships unthinkable.

Anderson recounts the martyrdom of Simon Kimbangu from Congo, the founder of the Kimbanguist Church. He was imprisoned in 1921 by the Belgian Government and died in prison in 1951. In Uganda, one example of recorded Christian martyrdom was the execution of 31 Buganda martyrs at Namugongo, on Ascension Thursday, 3rd June 1886. The Christians were martyred for their faith under the order of Buganda Kabaka Mwanga.[13] These Buganda martyrs were killed largely for their beliefs and aspirations for a new way of social organization and form of life. Faupel notes that the Ugandan martyrs were resigned to die for Jesus Christ. Those who were executed on 3rd June 1886 were not the first Ugandan martyrs to be executed and tortured for being Christians. Faupel also narrates the death of two Ugandan Basoga who were martyred for their faith on 27th May 1886.[14]

Other African martyrs include those African Christians who were massacred in the seventeenth century in the Kingdom of Monomotapa, present-day Mozambique, under Portuguese domination.[15] Zimbabwe also had martyrdom where thirteen mission workers of the Elim Pentecostal Church died on the night of 23rd June 1978, as they had lived for their faith.[16]

During the period of the struggle for Kenya's independence,[17] the Christian faith was put to the test by the Mau Mau. Duiker and Speilvogel narrate that the Mau Mau was an amorphous organization whose members were primarily from the Agikuyu community and who sought independence for Kenyans from British colonial rule.[18]

James Hannington, a missionary bishop, was killed by King Mwanga as he was travelling to Uganda. The first native martyr in Uganda was a Roman Catholic, Joseph Mukasa Balikuddembe. On 3rd June 1886, a group of 32 men and boys (22 Roman Catholic and ten Anglican) were burned at the stake. Most of them were young pages in Mwanga's household, from their head-man, Charles Lwanga, to the thirteen-year-old Kizito.

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[11] Zoe A. Marsh and G. W. Kingsworth, *An Introduction to the History of East Africa. 3rd ed* (Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 1966), 28, Figure 1, Column 2.
[12] Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Hearing and Knowing: Theological Reflections on Christianity in Africa* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 20-21.
[13] John F. Faupel, *African Holocaust: The Story of the Uganda Martyrs* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1969), 198-206.
[14] Faupel, *African Holocaust,* 198-206.
[15] Alfred John Wills, *An Introduction to the History of Central Africa, 2nd ed.* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 38-43.
[16] William Purcell, *Martyrs of our Time* (London: A.R. Mowbray and Co. Ltd, 1983), 141-142.
[17] Richard Frost, *Race against Time: Human Relations and Politics in Kenya before Independence* (London: Transafrica Press, 1978), 28, 149.
[18] William J. Duiker and Jackson J. Spielvogel, *World History* (Minneapolis: West Publishing Company, 1994), 254-257. Also included is Oliver Roland and J. D. Fage, *A Short History of Africa* (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1972).

The Uganda martyrs are a group of 23 Anglican and 22 Catholic converts to Christianity in the historic kingdom of Buganda, now part of Uganda, who were executed between November 1885 and January 1887. The Catholic Church beatified these martyrs to its faith in 1920 and canonized them in 1964.

Kabaka Mwanga II succeeded to Uganda's throne in 1884. A year later, he ordered the execution of Yusufu Rugarama, Makko Kakumba and Nuwa Serwanga, who had converted to Christianity. Encouraged by his prime minister, on 29th October 1885 he had the incoming Anglican Bishop James Hannington assassinated on the eastern border of his kingdom.

Martyrs and Witnesses of Faith in Francophone Africa – the Case of Madagascar/Martyrs et Témoins de la foi en Afrique Francophone – L'example de Madagascar

Le christianisme est venu en Afrique avec la colonisation: les colons sont venus avec la Bible dans une main et le fusil dans l'autre. C'est par ce cliché que se résume l'arrivée 'systématique' du christianisme en Afrique au dix-neuvième siècle. En Europe, on dit que le christianisme est venu par défaut par la conversion des empereurs des premiers siècles. En tout cas, on ne peut pas nier le fait que le christianisme a eu des trajectoires différentes dans ces deux continents. Ce qui les rapproche c'est l'enjeu politique qu'elles revêtent. Il est vrai qu'il y a des églises chrétiennes africaines plus anciennes que la colonisation comme celles de l'Éthiopie et du Soudan,[19] l'époque coloniale reste un tournant majeur pour le christianisme en Afrique.

Quand on parle de religion, on touche à un élément identitaire important. Il n'est alors pas étonnant si le christianisme n'a pas toujours été accueilli à bras ouverts par les africains qui avaient déjà leurs religions.[20] Résistance et adhésion allaient ainsi de pair à cette époque. Résistance pour ceux qui voyaient leur identité et leur intérêt menacés par cette religion nouvelle, et adhésion pour ceux qui ont été touchés par le message de l'évangile. De la résistance naît la persécution, et de l'adhésion naît un témoignage de foi qui va jusqu'à payer de sa propre vie. Nous allons alors par cet article essayer de donner un aperçu de cette situation en prenant le cas de Madagascar avant d'analyser la portée et les enjeux de ces témoignages de foi pour l'église de l'époque et d'aujourd'hui.

La Résistance au Christianisme, le Cas de Madagascar

Le premier contact de Madagascar avec le christianisme n'avait pas de lien direct avec la colonisation. Ce fut des missionnaires dominicains qui ont essayé timidement de l'introduire dans le nord de Madagascar en1585. Mais le christianisme n'a pas tenu le coup face à la religion traditionnelle de la région et l'influence de l'islam qui commençait aussi à cette époque.[21] D'autres « tentatives » missionnaires ont eu lieu: au début du dix-septième siècle par des prêtres Jésuites qui étaient assez maladroits dans leur relation avec l'autorité de la côte ouest Malagasy.[22] Une autre vague de missionnaires catholiques est venue suite à

[19] Ces églises datent du quatrième siècle de notre ère. Cf. Stéphane Ancel, Eloi Ficquet, « L'Eglise orthodoxe tewahedo d'Ethiopie et ses enjeux contemporains » in *L'Ethiopie contemporaine,* ed. Gérard Prunier (Paris: Karthala, 2007): 185-236.

[20] On parle ici de 'religions', au pluriel, car il n'y a pas une seule religion africaine. Mbiti dit: « We speak of African Traditional Religions in the plural because there are about three thousand African peoples (tribes), and each has its own religious system », see John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, (Oxford; Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1990), 1. Il faut toutefois noter que dans la deuxième édition de cet ouvrage, Mbiti lui-même parle aussi de la religion africaine au singulier pour souligner le potentiel d'unité dans cette diversité des religions en Afrique. Mbiti, *Religions and Philiosphy,* xiii.

[21] Bruno Hübsch, « Ny nifandraisan'I Madagasikara voalohany tamin'ny fivavahana kristianina » (Taonjato faha 17 sy faha 18), in *I Madagasikara sy ny fivavahana kristianina,* Collectif (Fianarantsoa: Ambozontany, 1992), 163-184.

[22] Hübsch, 'Ny nifandraisan'I Madagasikara', 169.

la création de la congrégation « De Propagande Fide » en 1622.[23] Portugais et français se relayaient dans ce cadre mais n'ont pas pu aller plus loin puisque l'envoi de missionnaires le lien avec le commerce et la traite d'esclaves posait des problèmes. Il fallait alors attendre l'arrivée des missionnaires protestants anglais de la LMS (London Missionary Society) en 1818 pour mieux comprendre le christianisme. Ces missionnaires – pasteurs et artisans – ont commencé par séduire le pouvoir royal Merina[24] qui cherchait à avoir des alliés afin de réussir à conquérir tout le pays. En échange de la facilitation de l'acquisition d'armes depuis l'Angleterre, le roi Radama I (1810-1828) leur a permis de construire des écoles et enseigner. Cela rendait services aux missionnaires qui commençaient à réunir autour d'eux les plus brillants élèves malagasy qu'ils ont par la suite engagés dans la traduction de la Bible qui commença en 1820.

A la mort de Radama I, la reine Ranavalona I prit la relève. Cette dernière commençait à se méfier de la proximité des missionnaires britanniques avec l'administration royale mais pour des raisons diplomatiques, elle ne les a pas empêché de faire leur travail. D'où l'autorisation de baptiser une vingtaine de personnes converties au christianisme en 1831. La ferveur de ces nouveaux chrétiens a fait que leur nombre grandisse significativement. Leurs rassemblements attiraient de plus en plus de monde. Cela était vu d'un mauvais œil par la reine qui trouvait sa position menacée.

Dans la culture malagasy, le roi ou la reine était considéré-e comme un dieu avec toute l'adoration et le respect qui lui sont dus. Toute activité rassemblant un certain nombre de personnes était vue par l'autorité royale comme une provocation, voire une concurrence. C'est cela qui sera l'enjeu principal de la persécution du christianisme à cette époque. Ce fut l'autorité royale et non le peuple qui devenait résistante. Ainsi, en 1832, la reine commençait à s'en prendre aux chrétiens autochtones, sans encore inquiéter les missionnaires,[25] diplomatie oblige! Les missionnaires continuaient donc à prêcher l'Autre royaume et ses principes. L'entourage de la reine devenait sensible à ce genre de discours qu'il considérait comme une incitation à s'opposer à l'autorité royale, et à vénérer des ancêtres étrangers. Se sentant déstabilisées, ils ont alors commencé à inciter le peuple à réagir contre ce mouvement naissant. Pendant ce temps, les églises continuaient à se remplir et les rencontres dans des endroits secrets se multipliaient.

En 1835, la persécution se radicalisait, la répression des chrétiens et chrétiennes devenait de plus en plus violente. Cela a duré jusqu'en 1861, date de la fin du règne de Ranavalona I. Les missionnaires qui ont essayé de protéger les chrétiens en accueillant les rencontres chrétiennes chez eux ont été contraints de quitter le territoire. Il y eut alors des chrétiens et chrétiennes qui ont fait machine arrière en reniant leur foi, ceux-là ont eu un allègement de peine. En revanche, ceux qui sont restés fermes et prêts à mourir pour leur foi devenaient de plus en plus fervents. La parution de la Bible en malagasy, le 21 juin 1835, leur servait de tremplin. Ils continuaient à se voir en cachette pour prier, lire, et méditer les Saintes Ecritures. Il leur était toutefois difficile de limiter les infiltrations dans leurs rassemblements. L'autorité royale était régulièrement informée de tout leur plan, et les dirigeants de ces rencontres ont été dénoncés. Des centaines de chrétiens ont été dépouillés de leurs biens et jetés en prison.

Ce fut dans ces circonstances que les premiers martyrs ont été tués en 1837. Refusant de renier sa foi après plusieurs semaines de prison, et une nuit entière de torture, la jeune Rasalama, âgée de vingt sept ans, une des premières jeunes élèves des missionnaires, était tuée, percée de lance le 14 août 1837. D'autres ont été brûlés vifs, décapités, jetés du haut d'une falaise, ou réduits à l'esclavage. Leurs Bibles ont été collectées puis brûlées à la place publique. Quelques unes ont pu être cachées en lieu sûr et servaient d'outil pour nourrir la foi des rescapés qui ont réussi de fuir ou de se cacher dans des grottes. En 1856, les

[23] Fondée par le Pape Grégoire XV en 1622 pour la propagation du catholicisme, cette congrégation a changé de nom et est devenu « Congrégation pour l'Évangélisation des Peuples ».
[24] Peuple de la partie nord des hautes terres centrales de Madagascar.
[25] Micheline Rasoamiaramanana, « Ny nitsipahan'ny fanjakana teto Madagasikara ny fivavahana kristianina », in *I Madagasikara sy ny fivavahana kristianina,* Collectif (Fianarantsoa: Ambozontany, 1992), 217-240.

missionnaires repartis ont pu faire venir en cachette 1500 Bibles. Cela renforçait de plus en plus la foi des chrétiens qui réalisaient qu'ils n'étaient pas abandonnés.

En 1838, quelques chrétiens malagasy ont réussi à fuir à l'île Maurice puis en Angleterre grâce à l'aide d'anciens missionnaires. Ceux-là sont devenus des missionnaires à leur tour.

Quels Enjeux pour la Persécutions et Quels Avantages Pour les Martyrs?

Nous pouvons en tirer que comme au temps de la première église, la persécution n'a fait qu'élargir les territoires du christianisme et renforcer la foi des rescapés. Grâce au témoignage des martyrs, le christianisme malagasy a survécu à cette épreuve sanguinaire. Madagascar n'était pas le seul pays à être passé par ces moments de résistance. Il y eut des histoires similaires dans d'autres pays d'Afrique et nous savons que les persécutions continuent de faire des martyrs jusqu'à nos jours. Depuis le temps des apôtres, les enjeux de la persécution ne changent pas, il s'agit de politique et de leadership.

Si la reine Ranavalona avait une stratégie moins violente et plus élaborée, elle aurait pu empêcher le christianisme de se répandre. Le fond du problème ne se trouve pas dans le fait que les chrétiens vénèrent un ancêtre étranger ou servent un autre royaume car nous savons que le respect des anciens et des dirigeants reste de mise en Afrique. Il ne s'agit pas non plus d'empêcher une quelconque concurrence entre le Dieu des chrétiens et le ou la demi-dieu qui est le roi ou la reine, ces derniers savent pertinemment qu'ils restent de humains limités. Les raisons des persécutions ne sont pas religieuses, elles se trouvent plutôt dans la crainte de ne pas pouvoir maîtriser le développement du mouvement des chrétiens et de perdre le contrôle de l'influence de leurs dirigeants. C'est pourquoi, au delà d'une démarche de foi et de piété, certains empereurs et rois, occident comme en Afrique, n'ont pas hésité à se convertir au christianisme. Cela pour des raisons purement politiques: garder une place influente, maîtriser les situations, et continuer à asseoir le pouvoir. C'est ce qui s'est passé à Madagascar à la mort de Ranavalona I en août 1861.[26] A peine arrivé au pouvoir, son successeur, le roi Radama II, a aussitôt autorisé les chrétiens à se réunir en publique. Ceux qui ont fui ont pu revenir sur les hautes terres, les missionnaires ont été autorisés à revenir, et des églises ont été bâties en mémoire des martyrs. Le règne de Radama II fut de courte durée (1861-1863). Assassiné en mai 1863, son épouse, Rasoherina (1863-1868) lui succéda, suivie par Ranavalona II (1868-1883). Ces deux dernières ont continué la politique de Radama II, accordant une liberté au christianisme qui est même devenu une religion d'état. Ranavalona II a troqué les idoles royales contre la Bible qui trônait au palais. Elle s'est fait baptisé avec son premier ministre le 29 février 1869. Le christianisme est alors devenu une religion d'Etat. Une église fut construite dans l'enceinte du palais. Par la suite, des milliers de gens se firent baptiser.[27] Cette politique a permis à l'autorité royale de contrôler les allées et venue des missionnaires et des chrétiens et avoir le dernier mot sur l'organization de l'église.

Face à ce retournement de la situation se pose la question de savoir si un tel christianisme politique rend encore service à l'Eglise et à l'évangile. Les martyrs et témoins de la foi ont-ils donné leur vie pour de telles 'paix' et 'entente' de façade ? Paix et entente artificielles qui n'ont pas pu empêcher les colons de prendre possession des terres africaines. De nos jours, les persécutions revêtent une autre forme: le système politique et économique mondial imposant une « laïcité » aveugle, ne laissant aucune place aux plus faibles. Les martyrs et témoins de la foi de nos jours seraient alors ceux qui sont prêts à risquer leur vie pour instaurer plus de justice et d'équité politique, économique, écologique… et religieux.

[26] Françoise Raison-Jourde, « Fifehezan'ny fanjakana ny fiangonana sy adim-pivavahana », in *I Madagasikara sy ny fivavahana kristianina,* Collectif (Fianarantsoa: Ambozontany, 1992), 277-298.
[27] Raison-Jourde, 'Fifehezan'ny fanjakana', 279.

Conclusion

The examples of martyrdom, referred to above in short case studies from Uganda, Congo and Madagascar, point to the fact that living witnesses of faith, including those who gave their lives to Christ, are an integral part of African Christianity and its history, in many parts of the African continent. A comprehensive study on martyrs and other extraordinary witnesses to faith still needs to be written. What has become clear in this initial survey is a key conviction common to many facets of Christian faith on the African continent – that to be a Christian is to identify oneself with Jesus' example of suffering, self-denial and self-sacrifice in doing God's will (Matt. 16:24-27; 23:12-12; John 12:25-26). There is a need to take up one's cross daily (Luke 9:23). In some cases, this can lead to explicit martyrdom (as in the case of Coptic Christians beheaded in Libya in 2015). In this sense, martyrdom is part of being a Christian. But the end, as is confessed in many hymns and faith statements in Africa, is not the final victory of death, but the final victory of God's eternal justice as revealed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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(132) AFRICAN SPIRITUALITY AND AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Francisca Hildegardis Chimhanda

Introduction

The spirituality of a people can be understood as the driving force or innate capacity for maintaining an authentic God-human-cosmos reciprocal and mutual relationship. It is what causes human beings to overcome their limitations in knowing and responding to God. From this perspective, African Christian spirituality is seemingly embedded in cultural and Christian values for attaining the creation and baptismal dignity of the *imago Dei/Christi* (image of God/Christ; cf. Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 8:17; Gal. 4:6). But African Christian spirituality is complex and therefore defies simplistic definition. However, there are commonalities and divergences in African culture(s) and Christian spirituality. This is because what unites African culture and Christian traditions (God/Christ) is greater than what divides them. This chapter on African spirituality concentrates on the commonalities rather than the divergences.

African Christian spirituality is culturally and historically conditioned. It is thus dynamic and this posits a challenge for its relevance in responding to current contextual issues. The latter include Christian monotheism in relation to ancestral belief, post-colonial challenges (including land ownership, re-distribution, good stewardship, and environmental sustainability), and gender equality. We will draw practical examples of African Christian spirituality from the Shona people of Zimbabwe[1] and the Roman Catholic Church.

A creative dialogue of culture and the gospel shows that there is mutual influencing of enculturation, evangelisation and the incarnation. This is justified by acknowledging that, prior to Christian evangelisation, Africans knew God through their experience of the transcendent. Christianity introduced the concept of special revelation of God in and through Christ, and thus reinforced African spirituality and expanded the view.

Pope John Paul II explains the mutual influencing of the incarnation, evangelization and enculturation as follows:

> The purpose of evangelization is 'transforming humanity from within and making it new'. In and through the Only Son, the relations of people with God, one another and all creation will be renewed. For this reason the proclamation of the Gospel can contribute to the interior transformation of all people of good will whose hearts are open to the Holy Spirit's action.[2]

Pope Francis[3] is emphatic that God is the gospel, who is 'a source of newness'.

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[1] The Shona people of Zimbabwe are grouped into five major Shona dialects – Karanga, Zezuru, Manyika, Korekore and Ndau.

[2] Pope John Paul II, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, Ecclesia in Africa* [EA], 42, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_14091995_ecclesia-in-africa.html (accessed 16 July, 2015).

[3] Pope Francis, in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*(EG), 10-11, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html (accessed 11 September, 2015).

African Christian Spirituality

It appears that the key to unlocking African Christian spirituality is the Great Commandment to 'Love God… and your neighbour as yourself' (Matt. 22:34-39; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 10:25-27). In the African Bantu Shona religious worldview, 'neighbour' includes the environment[4] and *Ubuntu* ethic (which in Shona is '*unhu*' meaning personhood). Consequently, salient features of African Christian spirituality to be examined include belief in God or the Supreme Being,[5] *Ubuntu* ethic or the attainment of full humanity,[6] and belief in unity between the spiritual and the physical environments.[7]

African Belief in the Supreme Being

In the critical dialogue of culture and the gospel, Shona Christians located God at the apex of the ancestral mediation ladder[8] in cases of petition for rain, harvest thanksgiving, peace and deliverance from drought, disease and pestilence. The Shona area spirits are known as *Mhondoro* (lion spirits) and these are proto-ancestors in the dynasty of chiefs. At the foot of the ancestral mediation ladder are *vadzimu* (family spirits) who also have living mediums (men and women). They have called the Christian God, *Mwari.* Although the Shona pray to *Mwari* and the ancestors, they do not equate *Mwari* with the ancestors. The Shona assign to *Mwari* prerogatives of *Musiki* (Creator) and, in particular, *Musikavanhu* (Creator of human beings) and ultimate giver and source of all life and redemption.[9]

For the Shona, *Mwari* is elusive, neither male nor female, and is a universal God, who gives rain and sunshine and 'fruitful seasons' to all people (Matt. 5:45; Acts 14:15-17). The Shona understand the environment as a catholic (universal) space for encounter with the gracious God. Consequently, the forests are holy and things found in it (mushrooms, wild fruits, honey, medicinal herbs, trees and shrubs, etc.) are to be made available to everyone by picking them sparingly and in such a way as to promote continued growth and propagation.

If traditionally the Shona considered *Mwari*a remote god, only interested in national issues, Christianity introduced or reinforced the immanence and dynamic agency of God in and through Christ. Shona Christians have internalised this concept as attested by theophoric names, for example *Tinashe* (God amongst us), that is Emmanuel (Matt. 1:23), *Simbarashe* (power of God) and *Ngonidzashe* (mercy of God). The suffix '-*she*' stands for Chief, also called *Mambo*. Shona Christians have called God and Christ *Ishe* and *Mambo,* respectively.

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[4] Francisca Chimhanda, 'The Liberation Potential of Shona Culture and the Gospel: A Post-Feminist Perspective.' *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, Vol. XL (2014): 308.
[5] Vincent Mulago, 'Traditional African Religion and Christianity.' In *African Traditional Religion and Christianity,* ed. Jacob K. Olupona (New York: Paragon House, 1991) 119-134.
[6] Luke Lungile Pato, 'Being Fully Human: From the Perspective of African Culture and Spirituality', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa,* issue 66, (1997): 53-61.
[7] John Pobee, *Skenosis: Christian Faith in an African Context* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1992), 66; Pato, 'Being Fully Human', 56.
[8] Francisca Chimhanda, *Christ the Ancestor: Shona Christianity and the Roots for Feminist Liberative Praxis* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag, 2011), 82; Michael Bourdillon, *The Shona Peoples: An Ethnography of the Contemporary Shona, with Special Reference to their Religion* (Gweru: Mambo Press), 24.
[9] Chimhanda, *Christ the Ancestor,* 82-84; Nisbert Taringa', 'African Metaphors for God: Male or Female?', *Scriptura* Vol. 86, (2004): 174-179.

African Ancestral Belief

African ancestral belief posits God and the environment in anthropomorphic existential analogy. Pope Francis concurs with this view in alluding to 'human ecology'.[10] For the Shona, land is mother, the big breast that feeds its children to satiety and the great womb from which people come (at birth) and return (at death).[11] For Christianity, the environment is our mother who 'opens her arms to embrace us… sustains and governs us… and… produces various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs'.[12] Sacramentally, God is in creation but transcends it. Ontologically, the earth and all that is in it is God's (Ps 24:1-2). African ancestors are not gods. The historical Bantu migration shows they became owners of the land by default (through conquest and occupation). *Ivhu* (soil) is personified as the ancestors, and their living descendants are *vana vevhu* (children of the soil). This is biblical and, to a certain extent, Christian. In the second creation myth in Genesis, Adam is created from dust (Gen. 2:7).

The chief's lordship over the land can be best understood in terms of servant leadership and stewardship over God's graces (Gen. 1:28-30). Good stewardship is shown in the Shona practice of *Zundera Mambo* (the community works in the chief's field and proceeds are used to provide for *vanhu vaMwari* – (the widow, orphan, stranger and the mentally and physically challenged). This is also echoed in sacramental Christology that portrays the encounter with Christ in the distressing disguise of the poor, sick, prisoners, etc. (Matt. 25:35-46). The *Zundera Mambo* concept can provide a correction to post-colonial Africa in general, and Zimbabwe in particular, where the leaders have succumbed to dictatorship and massive looting of the national coffers. This has produced a minority of black elites and made the poor majority poorer.

Ancestral spirituality is a powerful tool in curbing ecological disaster. It means that land is communal and a priceless heritage. Consequently, the present generation has a responsibility to preserve the environment and pass it on to future generations.

Ubuntu spirituality

As shown above, *Unhu* (*Ubuntu*) spirituality is concerned with the attainment of full humanity or newness of life. Christian parallels to this include the attainment of 'eternal life', 'fullness of (life) God' (Eph. 3:19) and 'life… abundantly' (John 10:10). Four pillars of *Unhu* are elaborated below.

Unhu (Personhood)

Becoming 'fully human' is a process that takes place from before birth to life after death. Communal ontology and epistemology as aspects of African Christian spirituality mean that both the person and church need to exist with and for others. Life is celebrated in a series of rites of passage. According to the Shona, in this process *unhu* can be enhanced or diminished. In the liberation struggle against colonialism, political slogans like *ivhukuvanhu* (land to the people) implied that the colonial oppressors had no *unhu* or were not human. This was because, from the outset, they regarded Blacks as non-persons, when they acquired vast tracts of already inhabited ancestral land.

Shona communal identity is undergirded by totemism. *Mutupo* (totem – animal or part of it) and *chidavo* (praise names) are used in greeting, thanking, and for correct burial and inauguration of the dead as the powerful protective ancestors. Thus, it is the whole family, clan and ancestors that are greeted,

[10] Pope Francis encyclical *Laudato Si(LS)*, 5 http://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si_en.pdf (accessed 13 November, 2015).
[11] Francisca Chimhanda, 'Land is our Mother: A Shona Bantu Feminist Perspective', in *Tradition: Fixed and Mobile: Essays in Honour of Rev. Prof. Rodney Moss*, eds. Itumeleng D. Mothoagae and Anselm Laurence Prior (Pretoria: UNISA, 2013), 123-149.
[12] Pope Francis, LS, 1.

thanked and praised. In the Roman Catholic tradition, Pope John Paul II asserts that African ancestral veneration is 'a preparation for belief in the Communion of the Saints'.[13]

But in corporate personality, there is the risk that the individual's unique dignity and rights can be compromised, in what Gordon Chavhunduka calls 'extended patience'.[14] This is the case, for example, with substitute and pledged, levirate marriages that impinge on the dignity and rights of the girl-child and widows. Alternatively, the individual can be a liability to the whole extended family, as in the case of murder.

Umwe (Togetherness)

Traditionally, among the Shona, *umwe* was shown in the practice of *humwe* (families, village community and neighbouring village communities join in common tasks like ploughing, weeding, harvesting etc.). Today, with urbanisation and the erosion of the extended family, *humwe* practice has almost died out. However, the *humwe* concept is used in projects like running children's homes (in particular for HIV and AIDS orphans) and educating children from poor families.

Ushamwari (Friendship)

Although African religion does not proselytise, it is inclusive of all people beyond the boundaries of the family, clan and tribe. This orientation is captured in the Shona adage: 'Friendship is greater than consanguine relationships.'

Kugamuchira Vayeni (Hospitality)

The Shona put a high value on hospitality. This is evidenced by the fact that they have a time of day called *Ruvhunzavayeni* (dusk – when 'visitors' begin to arrive and 'ask' either for direction to their destination or to be put up). The *Zundera Mambo* practice described above is an element of Shona hospitality.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how African Bantu Shona spirituality is rich in life-affirming elements critical to the God-human-cosmos interrelationship. The creative dialogue of culture and the gospel exposed the mutual influencing of evangelisation, enculturation and the incarnation. The great commandment of love and the Bantu ethic of being fully human were recognised as the key for unlocking African Christian spirituality. African Christian spirituality was acknowledged as dynamic and, therefore, offering the possibility of responding to current social, economic and political issues, for the ultimate purpose of the attainment of fullness of life for humanity (including a sustainable environment), all to the greater glory of God.

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[13] Pope John Paul II, *EA*, 43.

[14] Gordon L. Chavhunduka, 'Traditional Medicine and Christian Beliefs', *Christianity South of the Zambezi,* Vol. 2, (1977), 131-146.

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(133) African Church Choirs and the Role of Music in Africa

Felix Muchimba

Introduction

Singing is an integral part of the African culture and lifestyle. Music has always played a central role in African education, communication, celebration and entertainment. Hence, singing occupies a leading role in the existence of Africans. As a matter of fact, one cannot imagine most public activities in Africa unaccompanied by music.

The role that African choirs play in contemporary Africa is multi-faceted. It is diverse in the sense that choirs' functionalities range from informal to formal community activities, and from traditional to civil gatherings. Often these gatherings serve as conduits of civic and social development as well as being places of worship and political participation. Such gatherings and activities may also fulfil the task of community mobilization. Therefore, the songs composed and sung by the choirs have to fulfil and reflect these functionalities and also bring a sense of unity, solidarity and community to the those present.

The Role of Music in Spiritual Empowerment in Africa

The primary role of the choir is to support and enhance the congregation in singing worship songs. A well-rehearsed choir will make the worship of the congregation 'come alive' by breathing life into the text as it sings with clear understanding and insight into the words and their meaning. Consequently, the texts shape the faith of those involved in worship. It is for this reason that the choir plays an integral function in worship, guiding the gathered assembly in prayer and praise through song.

Music is one of the most obvious learning activities emphasizing the process of 'learning by doing' or better still 'learning by singing'. People tend to remember things better when they are sung. The hymnal is a valuable aid in teaching the Bible since much of the hymnal is scripture set to music. The choir is more than a musical organization in which songs are rehearsed and learned; it is a Bible-teaching tool. Even in New Testament days, it seems that songs had an admonishing or teaching function. This is made clear especially when we compare Colossians 1:28, 'We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ' with Colossians 3:16:

> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

Choirs are also a tool for teaching theology as some of the fundamental doctrines of Christian faith have been incorporated into some of our greatest hymns. In most parts of rural Africa, where people are illiterate, choir music plays a major role in teaching Christian doctrine and practice. Christian music is always music with a message and good choir music is that which functions by reinforcing and emotionalizing the message of the words. Hymns also help in the interpretation of the Scriptures because the songs are able to take Biblical teaching from its original cultural setting, interpret it and apply it to the current context.

Furthermore, because the words in the hymns include praising and thanking God for His love toward Christians, teaching Christians how they should live, focusing on the future and asking for God's help and guidance as they live each day, they can assist the church in worship.

In this way,biblical truths can be a great resource of comfort and help during trying and difficult times. It is for this reason that Church choirs in Africa remain a great resource in times of celebrations such as weddings and during times of bereavement, funerals and burials as a source of hope and comfort. Africans retain their faith in God and find comfort and strength in the songs they sing. Indeed, choirs offer a means of catharsis, and listening to these songs and having them in our mind's storehouse is a precious treasure as these hymns can bring much comfort and peace to the spirit and soul. It is little wonder that today there are many songs being sung by African choirs that reflect the African spirituality in terms of trusting God to meet their daily needs and healing their diseases in the midst of harsh economic conditions – songs that may not be appreciated by western friends who do not know what abject poverty feels like.

The Role of Music in Community Building in Africa

Christopher I. Ejizu explains what constitutes an African Community (notwithstanding the fact that in our post-modern world 'community' is being redefined):

> The sense of community and human living are highly cherished values of traditional African life… Traditional Africans share the basic instinct of gregariousness with the rest of human-kind. Families and members of kin-groups from minimal to maximal lineages, generally live together and form community. Africans share life intensely in common. For traditional Africans, community is much more than simply a social grouping of people bound together by reasons of natural origin and/or deep common interests and values. It is both a society as well as a unity of the visible and invisible worlds; the world of the physically living on the one hand, and the world of the ancestors, divinities and souls of children yet to be born to individual kin-groups. In a wider sense, African traditional community comprehends the totality of the world of African experience including the physical environment, as well as all spirit beings acknowledged by a given group.[1]

Community-building is developing authentic relationships between people. Music has the unique opportunity to build community and help participants develop a sense of belonging. Muchimba observes, '… in African worship everyone participates in some way by singing, dancing, ululating, playing an instrument, or by clapping hands. When Africans make music, a spirit of community is created…'[2]

Music is indeed a potent symbol of identity. Like language, it is one of those aspects of culture, which can readily serve the aspect of 'ethnic identity'. People gather where the music is, and celebrate the human experience together humbly as a participatory experience where everyone is part of the activity. It is here where the central heartbeat of a community is formed, providing ongoing contact, shared interests and the opportunity for social interaction and fun. Amy Izushima and Alicia Ramirez state, 'Music, then, has many functions, like the energy, that gives birth to what is almost a soundtrack to life. It is the social, emotional, and cognitive vehicle of society, reflecting the imprint of our present identity and the always-evolving identity.'[3] In African society, various rites of passages and ceremonies are marked by music and celebrations which give the participants a sense of community and identity. Each participant at such ceremonies is acknowledged as a significant contributor to the magic of the moment. Hence, the participant's sense of appreciation and significance within the community is enhanced, especially through the songs that reflect such a belief. In connection with this, Muchimba states, 'Music also serves as a

[1] Christopher I. Ejizu 'African Traditional Religion and the promotion of community-living in Africa' www.afrikaworld.net/afrel/community.htm (accessed 11 November, 2014).
[2] Felix Muchimba, *Liberating the African Soul – Comparing African and Western Music and Worship Styles* (Colorado Springs: Authentic, 2007), 38.
[3] The Suvvy Musician Blog Home base for music careers & entrepreneurship 'The future and role of music in modern society' www.savvymusician.com/blog 'The-future-and-role-of-music-in-modern-society' (accessed 5 December, 2014).

powerful symbol of social interaction and identity, and Africans share keen feelings as to what kind of music belongs to them. It is little wonder that in the days of slavery, African Americans used 'Black Music' as a major symbol of group identity.'[4]

Furthermore, music in Africa is a primary contributor to values that create supportive and responsive family relationships. It reinforces the formal religious structure that helps African families cope with life and social stresses, such as economic and various inequalities in the community. John Allan states that music is often used to strengthen resolve in moments of crisis within a given community.[5] Allan further states that music can be a very powerful tool in providing a vehicle of expression for the less articulate in society.[6] Within a community, choral music can also serve to provide solace and solidarity, a positive self-image, emotional and spiritual release. Most choirs in Africa are mainly made up of young people and, within these choirs, songs are composed and sung that teach youth values, morals, and human ethics.

The Role of Music in Political Witness in Africa

The relationship between choral music or music in general and politics is evident in many cultures because music has been employed to present a particular political message. It can certainly motivate people towards political goals, and it can connect people to ideas and thoughts that they never would have realized without hearing the words spoken. For example:

> In 1970s Nigeria, Fela Kuti invented Afro Beat music as a way to protest the oil company regime of Nigeria. His song 'Zombie' became a global hit that railed against Nigeria's military dictators. In South Africa, the indigenous Mbatanga music helped bring about the end of apartheid and it spread a message of peace and reconciliation in that nation. The reason this works is because music gets people thinking, talking, and doing.[7]

Hill shows how music has an intrinsic power to propagate political ideologies as compared to a political pamphlet. Music can be both entertaining and educative and informative. Unlike a stirring speech, its echo could last beyond the starting-point of the pulpit. Music is not like a manifesto which is often full of political and economic jargon, familiar and appealing only to the enlightened minds. Music can easily be memorized by anyone, repeated and disseminated even by the less educated. In this way, "A pamphlet, no matter how good, is never read but once, but a song is learned by heart and repeated over and over"[8]

Over the years in Africa, as any other part of the world, music has been used as a means to communicate political messages that may not be acceptable across the political divide. Indeed, such music has provided the means to transmit political messages that would otherwise not have been expressed in common political language or speech. In some societies, politicians have made attempts to control its use because of the influence it has on individuals in the community regardless of their social status. This is more so when those in power feel threatened or exposed by the messages being conveyed in the songs. Within the context of politics, choral music can be an agent of change – an implicit or explicit commentary on power.

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[4] Muchimba, '*Liberating the African Soul*', 80.
[5] John Allan '*Music, Movement and Silence in Worship*' in Harold Rowdon (ed), *Declare his Glory, Congregational Worship Today* (Carlisle: Partnership Periodicals, 1998), 78.
[6] Allan, 'Music, Movement', 91.
[7] Barrett Martin 'Music and the Politics of Resistance' www.huffingtonpost.com/barrett-martin/music-and-the-politics-of_b_4087557.html (accessed 10th November, 2014).
[8] Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, *Music and Social Movements: Mobilizing Traditions in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: University Press, 1998), 59.

Conclusion

Music has been around for thousands of years and it appeals to everyone. Choral music and African society have always been intimately related. Music has always played an important role in teaching and communication in general as one listens to the lyrics and understands what is being said in the song. Music reflects and creates religious, social and political conditions that facilitate change in these three disciplines of African life.

In Africa, music is crafted by composers to educate, inform and entertain the listeners. As people are educated, the hope is that they will perceive the world within the light of the lyrics – to better themselves and their communities. Hence, music transforms not only those who perform it but especially those who listen to it. Religious, social and political beliefs, once embodied fully and convincingly in the lyrics of the singers, have the power to influence others to make a change.

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(134A) THE AFRICAN CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE

Priscille Djomhoue et Paulin Poucouta

Les anthropologues considèrent la famille comme la cellule la plus fondamentale des groupes sociaux. Elle est le socle social, économique, juridique, et religieux de la vie d'un peuple : « une société sans famille est comme un fruit sans noyau », comme dit le proverbe africain.

Mais la famille s'organise différemment selon les cultures et selon les convictions religieuses. Qu'en est-il de l'Afrique? Nous nous proposons de présenter la famille africaine, puis la famille africaine chrétienne. Aujourd'hui, face à la crise qui secoue la société, ne convient-il pas de s'investir dans la ré-évangélisation des familles?

La Famille Africaine

La famille large

En Occident on parle de famille nucléaire pour désigner la cellule constituée du père, de la mère et des enfants, et on utilisera l'expression « famille élargie » pour désigner les autres membres à qui on est d'une manière ou d'une autre liés par le sang. En Afrique, par contre, les liens familiaux de mari, femme et enfants sont aussi importants que ceux qui nous unissent aux grands parents, tantes, oncles, cousins et autres. Comme le relève si bien Setri Nyomi et Kasonga Wa Kasonga[1], l'expression « famille élargie » n'a pas d'équivalent dans la plupart des langues africaines. De plus, en Afrique lorsque deux personnes se marient, elles acquièrent l'une envers l'autre, la responsabilité des relations sanguines. Les cérémonies de mariages traditionnels, encore pratiqués aujourd'hui, incluent des rites symboliques qui consolident les liens familiaux indestructibles.

Jean Gaston Roland résume bien ces caractéristiques de la famille africaine : «La famille africaine traditionnelle est très étendue. Elle ne se réduit jamais au père, à la mère et leurs enfants, vivant à part dans l'intimité d'un appartement séparé.»[2]

On comprend pourquoi le mariage traditionnel n'engage pas uniquement deux personnes, mais deux familles. D'ailleurs, autrefois, les parents initiaient les rencontres entre les jeunes gens ou alors arrangeaient tout simplement des mariages pour eux. Certes, cette pratique disparait progressivement, mais cela ne supprime pas l'influence culturelle du processus qui légitime le mariage. Même si les futurs mariés se choisissent, ce sont les membres de leurs familles respectives qui prennent les contacts nécessaires avant l'organisation des différentes cérémonies.

Les personnes âgées

Les personnes âgées occupent une place importante dans la famille africaine. En effet, les enfants leur doivent respect et assistance. De nombreux pays n'ont ni des structures qui s'occupent des personnes âgées ni des assurances pour régler les questions financières. C'est pourquoi, à un certain âge, les parents ou grands-parents sont pris en charge et récupérés par la famille jusqu'aux derniers moments de leur existence.

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[1] Setri Nyomi, Kasonga Wa Kasonga, *Guide des familles chrétiennes d'Afrique au vingt et unième siècle,* Nairobi, CETA, 2002, p. 86.

[2] Jean Gaston Roland, « la famille africaine et l'éducation », http://jeangastonrostand.centerblog.net/1-la-famille-africaine-et-education, consulté le 6 janvier 2015.

Les enfants

Les enfants sont considérés comme le bien le plus précieux de la famille. De nombreux proverbes le soulignent. Tous les enfants ont les mêmes droits : ceux issus du couple, ceux venus de la famille de l'homme et de celle de la femme. En même temps que les valeurs culturelles et traditionnelles, ils partagent avec l'ensemble de la famille les valeurs chrétiennes, la vie de foi et d'adoration. L'éducation de l'enfant concerne l'ensemble de la famille. C'est pourquoi, les vacances passées auprès des grands parents ou d'un oncle au village permettent à l'enfant d'en apprendre plus sur sa culture et ses traditions. En ville, les membres de la famille qui sont sans emplois peuvent assurer périodiquement la garde des enfants, ce qui est bénéfique aussi bien pour l'enfant que pour eux.

Homme et femme

Si la famille est large, elle se structure néanmoins autour du couple, l'homme et la femme. Les rôles entre les deux époux sont répartis selon les coutumes diverses d'un continent pluriel dans ses us. Néanmoins, presque partout, le père est le chef incontesté de la famille. Il la dirige et veille à la discipline des différents membres. Il a la responsabilité de nourrir les siens. Il est le garant de la tradition. Dans les familles matrilinéaires, c'est l'oncle maternel, le frère de la maman qui détient cette autorité.

La femme, elle, est essentiellement celle qui donne la vie et l'entretient. Elle se doit d'être une bonne ménagère, une épouse fidèle, une mère féconde. Elle donne la vie, l'entretient et éduque. Sa situation socio-juridique est quasiment limitée inférieure à celle de l'homme. Certes, aujourd'hui, la situation a énormément évolué, principalement grâce à l'école, à l'emploi et aussi à l'évangélisation. Pourtant, les représentations traditionnelles, elles, restent fortement ancrées dans les esprits autant des hommes que des femmes.

La Vie Familiale Chrétienne en Afrique

Le mariage chrétien

En Afrique, le mariage chrétien se moule quelque peu sur la configuration culturelle de la famille. Ainsi, le mariage se célèbre en trois étapes : le mariage traditionnel, le mariage civil et le mariage religieux.

Le mariage traditionnel s'organise selon les coutumes de chaque tribu. Néanmoins, presque partout, la cérémonie du mariage traditionnel est précédée de contacts entre les familles du futur couple. Ces rencontres se déroulent en plusieurs étapes : les futurs conjoints rendent visite à leurs belles familles respectives pour se faire connaître ; puis les parents du jeune homme vont visiter plusieurs membres de la famille de la jeune fille, en commençant pas ses parents, puis les grands parents et les oncles et tantes. Ces visites permettent aux membres des différentes familles de faire connaissance et d'échanger des présents. A la fin de la phase des visites, les familles déterminent la date du mariage traditionnel, qui sera scellé par divers rites.

Quant au mariage civil, il est contracté devant une autorité établie par l'Etat. Il est reconnu par les pouvoirs civils. Les deux familles considèrent également cette étape comme un autre moment de rencontre.

Le mariage religieux, lui, arrive à la fin de ces cérémonies parce que l'Église, dans plusieurs pays, exige l'acte de mariage civil comme pièce nécessaire à la bénédiction nuptiale. L'acte du mariage civil doit porter nécessairement la mention : régime matrimonial monogamique accepté. C'est ici que l'on établit l'une des différences fondamentales entre le mariage chrétien et le mariage non chrétien. Mais la réalité est tout autre : il existe aujourd'hui des polygames chrétiens. Beaucoup sont engagés dans les Églises même si les pasteurs et les prêtres refusent de bénir leur union et les excluent de la participation à la sainte cène ou à la communion eucharistique.

Ces trois étapes du mariage posent le problème de leur coût financier qui peut dissuader les jeunes à s'engager. L'Église ne doit-elle pas aider à harmoniser ces trois formes de célébration, tout en gardant à chacune son sens originel ?

La famille chrétienne, un lieu œcuménique

Les Africains attachent une importance capitale aux relations familiales, par de-là les disparités idéologiques, sociales et religieuses. C'est pourquoi la famille est souvent occasion de rencontres œcuméniques. Tous les événements de la vie mettent ensemble les membres de la famille.

Ainsi, la naissance d'un enfant est toujours une occasion de réjouissance pendant laquelle toute la famille se donne le devoir de faire un geste symbolique. Il s'agit de rende visite au nouveau-né et à ses parents ou d'envoyer un cadeau si on est très éloigné. C'est ainsi qu'on accueille le bébé et qu'on l'intègre dans la famille. Son baptême sera l'occasion de rassembler les différents membres de la famille. Même les non- chrétiens ou adeptes d'autres religions y prennent part. Ce qui favorise la cohabitation religieuse.

De même, les deuils sont occasion de retrouvailles des différents membres de la famille et des voisins, toutes confessions religieuses confondues.

Les défis de la culture traditionnelle

Pourtant, la famille chrétienne rencontre de nombreux défis liés à la tradition. Ainsi, la société africaine accorde une grande valeur à la procréation. Ce fait constitue un défi pour les couples chrétiens qui n'ont pas d'enfant. Plusieurs hommes se voient obligés, sous la pression de leurs familles, de contracter un second mariage parce que la première épouse « n'a pas été capable de procréer ». Cela d'autant plus que jusqu'à une certaine époque, on estimait, traditionnellement, que la stérilité est féminine : ainsi, lorsque l'enfant ne vient pas, la femme est la coupable. Mais l'évolution de la science et l'incitation faite aux couples à consulter un médecin ont permis de dissiper ce malentendu. Alors, lorsqu'il est établi cliniquement que l'homme n'est pas capable de procréer, il arrive que la famille de la femme lui recommande d'être infidèle, afin d'offrir une progéniture à son mari. Ces deux attitudes menacent constamment l'unité et l'harmonie du couple chrétien. Ils s'éloignent alors de l'Église qui n'encouragent ni l'adultère ni la polygamie.

Ailleurs, on remédie à la stérilité par l'adoption. En Afrique, la réalité de la famille large devrait aider à apporter une solution au problème douloureux. En effet, élever et éduquer l'enfant d'un autre membre de la famille paraît tout à fait normal. Pourtant, la société et la famille posent un méprisant sur les couples sans enfants. Ce qui affecte même les couples chrétiens.

De même, la dot initialement conçue comme un symbole, un échange de cadeaux et approfondissement des relations entre familles s'est dénaturée. Elle freine l'engagement de nombreux jeunes. De plus, elle dévalorise la dignité de la femme considérée comme une marchandise. Il convient alors de travailler à restituer à la dot sa valeur symbolique initiale.

Les défis des transformations socio-culturelles

Comme partout dans le monde, en Afrique aussi, la famille subit les contrecoups des mutations socio-culturelles. Les tensions socio-politiques se répercutent de manière insidieuse sur la cellule familiale. Les nouvelles valeurs culturelles qui résultent de l'ouverture facilitée par la télévision, internet et les autres médias constituent aussi un défi dans la mesure où elles divisent très souvent les membres de la famille qui se sentent bousculées dans leurs habitudes et leurs repères. Cette déstructuration pénalise l'ensemble de la famille, mais particulièrement les enfants, les personnes âgées et les femmes.

En effet, aujourd'hui, les enfants et les jeunes ont perdu le statut de rois qu'il avait dans la tradition africaine. Parfois, ils sont parfois instrumentalisés dans les conflits, exploités dans les plantations ou utilisées comme domestiques. D'où l'importance d'investir dans la formation des jeunes et des enfants. En

maints endroits, les personnes âgées sont exclues et subissent de nombreux sévices sous la fallacieuse accusation de sorcellerie. Les femmes sont également les principales victimes de la violence lors des conflits ou dans les foyers, mais aussi de nombreuses discriminations[3]. Sans céder aux modes, il faut réaffirmer plus fermement et défendre la dignité des femmes. Enfin, la misère croissante, les nouvelles formes d'existence et l'égoïsme ambiant ont parfois raison de la solidarité traditionnelle.

Devant tous ces défis, on comprend l'appel de Marcus Ndongmo à « sauver la famille africaine »[4].

Conclusion: Évangéliser la Famille Africaine

En effet, dans une société où les valeurs morales s'effritent, la famille chrétienne doit être le lieu où l'on retrouve la joie de vivre, où se réveillent, se renforcent et se purifient les valeurs d'unité, de cohésion, de responsabilités partagées, de confiance, et surtout de profonde et réelle fidélité. Ce qui passe par une évangélisation permanente qui repose sur la parole de Dieu[5], en l'occurrence les quatre piliers que proposent les Actes des Apôtres : l'enseignement des apôtres, la fraction de pain, la prière et la communion fraternelle (Ac 2, 42-47). En somme, selon le mot du Cardinal Albert Joseph Malula, « Si nous voulons christianiser la société africaine, nous devons commencer par la famille qui en est la cellule »[6].

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[4] M. Ndongmo, *Sauver la famille africaine*, Yaoundé, PUCAC, 2008.
[5] Cf. Setri Nyomi, Kasonga Wa Kasonga, *Guide des familles chrétiennes d'Afrique au vingt et unième siècle,* p.19-20.
[6] Léon de Saint Moulin, *Œuvres complètes du Cardinal Malula vol.7 : textes concernant la famille. Théâtre et chants*, Kinshasa, Facultés catholiques de Kinshasa, 1997, p. 63.

(134B) THE AFRICAN CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE

Kapya Kaoma

Introduction

As a child, I remember embarrassing my father in the presence of fifth graders. My father was teaching a class on the 'family' as understood in the West: father, mother and children. Since we lived within the school premises, my father invited me to his class. He then asked me the following question, 'How many are you in your family?' As a first grader, then, I failed to answer his question; something that did not only embarrass me but also confused me. With indignation, he answered his own question – telling the class that we were six. 'Well, that's not true. We are more than that,' I thought as I left his classroom. As an African, my *ulupwa* (family) is made up of all my relatives as well as those who share my *mukowa* (*totem*), and not just my biological siblings as my father told his class. Our home was filled with people, and many more visited us nearly every month. We were all told they were *ulupwa* (family) since we shared the same *mukowa* (totem). We were repeatedly reminded that *ifikolwe fyesu* (ancestors) were also part of the family.

My childhood encounter was again repeated during my time in England. As a single person then, people asked me whether I had a family. Yes, I had a family – though not married – I had both small and big fathers (*batata mukalamba nabatata mwaice*), both big and small mothers (*bamayo mukalamba na bamayo mwaice*), sisters, brothers, etc. – they made our family. People would remind me that they wanted to know whether I was married and had children. All I would say is, 'No, I am not married but I have a family.' I am sure they thought I was too backward in my outlook – little did they know that I sought to teach them about the diversity of families in the world. It is from this perspective that African Christian family life should be addressed.

The concept of Christian family life presupposes the existence of African Christianity. The question is: Can we speak of African Christianity or Christianities? What is the relationship between the Roman Catholic, the Anglican, the Pentecostal theology and the theology of African Initiated Churches? In the light of marriage, are plural marriages and customary marriages Christian? And how can Christian family life appear in contemporary Africa amidst so many denominational theologies and socio-economic and political challenges?

In order to address these questions, I seek to define family life within the African framework. Whereas some Christians link the family to marriage and procreation (father, mother and children), and others to community, in this chapter I argue that the Christian family life needs to model the concept of the family of God. This model suggests a radical concept of Christian family life since it invites Africans into loving relationship with other members of God's family.

The Colonial Transformation of the African Family

As a teacher, my father was taught to view the family as father, mother and children. Yet at home, the family was something wider that we were born into. His students did not accept his interpretation either; they were part of the bigger 'family' of many fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins, aunties, sisters, brothers and so on. Whereas 'the biological factor is necessary in constituting kinship relations,' in African cosmology, other societal factors can 'equally form new relations that are akin to blood ties'.[1]

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[1] Peter Assenga, 'The African Family Spirit: A Nexus of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation', *African Ecclesiastical*

One example is the concept of *Mukowa*. All those who shared our *mukowa* (totem) were equally part of the family. This is because in Bantu cosmology, identity is established 'through *mukowa*. Totems symbolize belongingness; they define and interconnect families, clans and kingdoms… What genealogies are to westerners, totems are to the Bantu'.[2] In fact, when two people meet, their first obligation is to establish their relatedness through *mukowa*. In Chishinga, Ushi and Bemba cosmologies, 'people who share the same *mukowa* cannot get married no matter how distant they might be'.[3] This understanding moves the family from the sexual realm to that of relationships.

African family life in the face of colonialism

In 1960, Anne Barnett wrote, 'In Africa today, the Christian home and family life are being subjected to severe tests. Past customs are discarded and new situations are encountered for which there has been little preparation.'[4] Reflecting on the September 1959 Christian Council of Kenya's conference on the Christian family, Barnett outlines some issues churches faced then. Polygamy, bride price, the upbringing of children, sex education, Christian home life and family planning were among the many issues the conference addressed – albeit from the western worldview. To Barnett, African cosmology was dying; hence Africans needed a new way of living. Barnett, however, did not define what constitutes the Christian home and family life – apart from monogamy and children.

After fifty-fives years, the issues the church sought to address are still alive. Yet the context is different. Barnett wrote, when Africa was under colonial rule, and her statement about the 'past customs' being 'discarded' was not entirely true, since many Africans experienced modernity from a traditional cosmological perspective.

How then can Christian family life be understood? In the last decade or so, 'defending traditional family values' is repeatedly used from the USA to Russia to Africa. Yet what constitutes the 'traditional family' is assumed rather than defined. While the African 'traditional family' includes all relatives, in the West the term refers to the nuclear family. For example, Daniel Aleshire writes, 'It was one of those good and tough days of our family – particularly for four year-old Jonathan and his mother.'[5] Like my father, Aleshire's understanding of the family is limited to his wife and child. To explain the diversity of families, Thomas E. Breidenthal proposes a shift from family to household. To him, what constitutes a household is 'a very high degree of familiarity,' which is found in all households. Breidenthal writes,

> Christian marriage is not the only form of Christian householding, if only because marriage and family life is not the only form that human life together takes. The range and variety of Christian households is wide and rich, and in affirming the natural goodness of life together, Christian faith must begin affirming this diversity. This does not mean every form of householding is acceptable, because not every living arrangement stands up to the demands of justice and love.[6]

Review Vol. 51, issue 1-2 (March-June 2009): 52-77, 59.

[2] Kapya J. Kaoma, *God's Family, God's Earth: Christian Ecological Ethics of Ubuntu* (Zomba, Malawi: Kachere Series, 2013), 73.

[3] Kaoma, *God's Family, God's Earth,* 74. See also Karla O. Poewe, 'Matriliny in the Throes of Change: Kinship, Descent and Marriage in Luapula, Zambia, Part One', *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* Vol. 48, no. 3 (1978), 210. In other African cultures, however, marriage between people who share the same totem is encouraged.

[4] Anne Barnett, 'Christian Home and Family Life in Kenya Today', *International Review of Mission,* Vol. 49, issue 196 (October 1960): 420.

[5] Daniel Aleshire, 'Family Life and Christian Spirituality', *Review and Expositor*, 86 (1989), 209-214.

[6] Thomas E. Breidenthal, *Christian Households: The Sanctification of Nearness* (Cambridge, Mass: Cowley Publications, 1997), 93.

Although he accepts same-gender households, he argues that polygamy is not appropriate for Christian households.

If demands for justice and love are the basis for Christian households, Breidenthal's rejection of polygamy while accepting same-sex relationships is another example of how western Christianity favours its values over those of others. Africans, on the other hand, are likely to accept polygamy over same-gender households. Regardless, the exportation and imposition of the limited 'nuclear family' as a default Christian family has led to the disintegration of the African family – leading to many social problems such as street children, destitution and various forms of violence – from domestic to sexual.

The African Christian family life

The question of Christian family life assumes the existence of a distinct Christian definition of the family. In Africa, this distinct element is linked with the colonial or missionary era. In the colonial cosmology, the African traditional concept of the family was demeaned and abandoned in favour of the nuclear family: father, mother, and children. This shift followed a shift from the land-based to the urban-based economy. Since rural life depended on the land, the African traditional family worked to secure one's wellbeing. In the money economy, however, an individual's meagre income was just enough to sustain one's life – forcing Africans to ignore their obligations to their kin.

Besides, in matrilineal communities such as the Chishinga and Bemba cultures, maternal uncles were said to be responsible for their sisters' children. Yet colonial governments only recognized wife and biological children as the man's 'family' members. Since missionaries shared this limited understanding of the family, they confirmed and somehow sacralized it. They divided the African family into two; the father, mother and children became primary members, while the rest, including one's own parents and siblings, were now 'extended family' members. One's primary responsibility was to the first; responsibility to the extended family was deemed secondary.

It is critical to realize that the concepts of 'extended family' and 'nuclear family' were of a colonial and missionary origin. As Peter Assenga contends, the Chagga of Tanzania lack these concepts since an 'African belongs to a web of relations far beyond the nuclear family'. One 'is born into a community of relatives (not only a household consisting of a father and a mother, with or without siblings)'.[7] As a family member, an African is socialized to put 'others before one's own needs'.[8] This understanding is in line with the teaching of Jesus. In the Kingdom of God, we don't have extended family brothers and sisters – rather, we are all primary members of God's family.

African Christian Family Life – Is it about Marriage?

Discussions on the family in Africa have conflated the family with marriage. Generally, heterosexual marriage is perceived as the African family. This is understandable since the Christian family life is associated with the story of Adam, Eve and their children. In the Christian Bible, this assumption is linked to the Holy Family – Joseph, Mary and Jesus. Although Jesus grew up in the socio-cultural context in which the family went beyond father, mother and children, missionaries presented the heterosexual and monogamous marriage in the Church as the Christian family.

In many African societies, however, the family and marriage are two distinct institutions. Whereas marriage was part of the family, it was not the family per se. Among the Bemba, Chishinga and Ushi people of Zambia, *ulupwa* (family) is not '*in'ganda yandi*' (implying marriage). Whereas sex or marriage

[7] Assenga, 'The African family spirit', 62.
[8] Assenga, 'The African Family Spirit', 69.

constitutes *'in'ganda',* it does not define the family. On the contrary, marriage builds and expands family life since it brings two families together.

In line with Breidenthal above, belongingness defines and, to some extent constitutes, an African family. Just as a married person belongs to the family of both the living and the living dead (ancestors), so does the single mother, the divorcee, a child, and the single person. For instance, the Chishinga people say, *eko nafuma, kwaliba abantu* (where I come from, there are people) or *nalikwata abantu* (I have people). Usually, these words are meant to be a reminder to others that if something wrong happens to that person, his or her people will seek justice on one's behalf. In fact, the bigger the family, the bigger the respect one is accorded. Aptly stated, the family is bigger than the household; though every household is part of the family. Thus the Christian family life is inclusive – divorcees, single parents, widows, and people of various sexual orientations and gender identities are all members of this family.

Belonging to the family also implies wider socio-economic, religious, and cultural obligations and benefits. When disaster strikes, for example, all family members are equally affected. In this ethical system, the 'I' is minimized while the 'we' is maximized; sharing is both an individual and community virtue to which every individual ought to aspire. Whereas western civilization disconnected Africans from their families, in reality, Africans belong to a much bigger family than the church has accepted.

Apart from arguing that the African family life revolves around the ethics of *Ubuntu,* Desmond Tutu writes that if we accept:

> … that we do belong together, that our destinies are bound up in one another's, that we can be free only together, that we can survive only together, that we can only be human together, then a glorious world would come into being where all of us lived harmoniously together as members of one family, the human family, God's family.[9]

Similarly, Bujo argues that one 'becomes a person only through active participation in the life of the community'.[10]

In theological terms, the Christian family life is a kenotic process through which we empty ourselves (*kenosis*) for the sake of others in the world of violence, greed and selfishness. To live is to exist within the web of sacred communal relationships with one's kin, ancestors and the Supreme Being.

Is African Christian family life possible?

It is important to note that conflating marriage with family carries hetero-normative assumptions of patriarchy. It places masculinity at the centre of the family – raising gender justice issues as well as leading to the oppression of women and those who choose not to marry. For instance, can Christian family life exist in the absence of males, as is usually the case in contemporary Africa? Fulata L. Moyo writes:

> The increasing reality of female-headed households… and the religio-cultural teaching of men as heads of the family as well as the research finding that HIV/AIDS is more prevalent in societies which have gender imbalances, raise many questions for faith-based communities in Africa today. How do we define men as household heads in families of widows, and divorced and single mothers? How can faith-based communities transform the concept of headship so as to encourage mutuality and communion of partners who complement each other?[11]

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[9] Desmond Tutu, *God Has a Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time* (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 23-24.
[10] Benezet Bujo, *Foundations of an African Ethic: Beyond the Universal Claims of Western Morality* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2001), 87. For the ecological implication of the family of God, see Kaoma, *God's Family, God's Earth,* 92-114; *The Creator's Symphony: African Christianity, The Plight of Earth and the Poor* (Dorpspruit, Pietermaritzburg, Cluster Publications, 2015).
[11] Fulata Lusungu Moyo, 'Religion, Spirituality and Being a Woman in Africa: Gender Construction Within the

Moyo's point is critical to the understanding of family life. With the increasing number of child-headed households due to wars, terrorism, AIDS and other disasters across the continent, where do we place child headed-households? How is the family to be conceived in the absence of both parents? How about sexual minorities?

The family is a social unity in which life is lived, shared and experienced. Being human means being connected to the wider family. Yet the African family transcends the physical – it connects one with the ancestors as well as with those to come and with the Creator. Since African family life is 'collective', possessing *Ubuntu* (to be truly human) means upholding traditional values of care for all members of one's family.

Towards an African Christian Family Life: Some Observations

Scholars in Africa, especially Roman Catholic theologians, have wrestled with the question of family life. Is the church's teaching on family life in line with the African life-world? What do we do with those who are married to more than one wife or husband? And what is the role of the African family in the life of religious brothers, nuns or celibate priests? In addition, are those who belong to other churches still part of the Christian family? If the family is *ecclesia domestica* (domestic church), what is the place of single people in the Christian family life?[12]

Brian Hearne explores these questions in detail. Accepting that the African family is becoming narrower each passing year, he proposes the church community as 'the new extended family, where the bond of grace sets up not only new relationship but also new kinship patterns, transcending ethnic, national and racial boundaries'.[13] Christian family life, he argues, ought to be 'geared towards the common wellbeing of both women and men and is based on more inclusive beliefs and teachings, especially acknowledging that both women and men are created in the image of God'.[14]

Hearne's argument seeks to replace the African traditional family life with the western Christian definition of the family. I propose a different route – Christianity needs to become African if it is to transform the continent. African Christian family life needs to revisit its traditional understanding of life in which families were intricately connected. Regardless, the emphasis placed on the nuclear family paints an heretical picture of Christianity. Christianity is a communal religion and no isolated Christian exists – we are one family, and one body of Christ. This understanding is closer to the African understanding of the family than to the western one.

Consequently, to replace African family life with western Christian family life will not fully address the crisis of Christian family life on the continent. This is because an African Christian is not fully planted in the western worldview but lives between the two worlds – that of ancestors and that of post-colonial Africa. To this end, Christian family life ought to revolve round the concept of the family of God which has wider application than the western understanding of the family. In God's family life, we are all members, regardless of our socio-economic or religious differences. Since the Triune God is the Creator, sanctifier and sustainer of this family life, all Africans are full members as well as participants in the common life of the people of God. Unlike in the hetero-normatively defined family, in God's family, grandmothers, single mothers, fathers, sexual minorities as well as children all find acceptance. This concept puts greater responsibility on all Christians – we are called to care for all of God's people and especially the least of these (Matt. 24). As Jesus said, 'Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister

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African Religio-cultural Experiences', *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity* No. 61 (2004): 75.

[12] Brain Hearne, 'Christian Family Life: Some Pastoral Priorities', *African Ecclesiastical Review* Vol. 24, no. 5, (1982): 290.

[13] Hearne, 'Christian Family Life', 290.

[14] Moyo, 'Religion, spirituality and Being a Woman in Africa', 76.

and mother' (Mark 3:35; Matt. 12:48). Note that Jesus did not say they are extended family members but his siblings.

In addition, the concept of the family of God confronts the narrow definition and application of the Christian family life. It calls us to care not just for our brothers and sisters of the nuclear family, but for strangers and the outcasts; it has no Jew or Gentile, male or female and it is not sexually defined. To become the centre of love, peace and dignity, family life must become inclusive of all humanity and all Creation.

African Christian family life ought to be a place of peace and harmony. It ought to address all forms of violence that demean and destroy life. The over-empowering of males over women, and the boy child over the girl child are issues that African Christian family life ought to address. As God's family, both male and female, have a special role to play in the family. Here, African customs as well as Christian teachings which demean women or sanction violence against women must be confronted. Moreover, Christian family life should address the issue of 'girl child rape' (child marriages) that continues to destroy African girls.

Furthermore, the Christian family life ought to confront the violence associated with sexual minorities. The Church can aid the acceptance as well as the protection of our fellow human beings who do not fit into our colonial-gender-defined roles. Besides, the church needs to explore ways of providing pastoral care to inter-sex children, and their families.

Finally, the Christian family participates in the life of the justice-loving God. Our narrowly defined family life is in contrast to the African family life as well as to the gospel of Christ. A good African Christian family ought to uphold the positive values of both traditional life and the Christian faith – it must participate in the *missio Creatoris Dei* (the mission of the Creator God). These religious values form and inform how Christian family life is upheld – it calls us to love our neighbours as ourselves while looking out for the Earth and the least of Jesus' brothers and sisters. And there are billions of them.

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(135) GENDER JUSTICE IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Lilian Cheelo Siwila

Introduction

In almost all spheres of life, research on gender has become more pronounced. As such, it is no longer possible to do theology without relating our theological engagement to gender pedagogies. Despite the discussion that the concept of gender still raises within church circles, there are still some forms of resistance to gender justice. From an African Christian perspective, issues of gender are in some cases said to be a foreign imposition, associated with feminism. Yet the concept of gender is as old as humanity. Historically, humanity has always lived in gendered frameworks, even though this is not usually acknowledged. For African women theologians, the issue of gender has been part of their agenda right from the inception of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (the Circle). In their fight against patriarchy, African women theologians have always been aware of the need for an all-inclusive theology that brings both men and women into the fight against gender injustice within religio-cultural and patriarchal circles. This chapter demonstrates how African women theologians have responded to gender justice by calling for a theology of partnership with male theologians. Using a selected number of male theologians who are also called friends of the Circle, the chapter shows how the proposed partnership by African women theologians has helped to promote gender justice within African Christianity.

Dealing with the Backlog of Mission Biases on Gender

A brief background on missionary perception on gender can assist in demonstrating the development of gender discourses within African Christianity. Missionaries who introduced the gospel to Africa operated within a patriarchal framework that was embedded in their patriarchal culture and that of a Christian heritage. Therefore, despite the participation of women in mission work, male missionaries still emerged as superiors and the gospel was still presented in a patriarchal framework. This meant that the kind of African theology which emerged as a reaction to mission work was also formulated around patriarchal ideologies.

It is these ideologies that justified the exclusion of women from participating in theological education and church activities such as ordination. This is because most of the ecclesial duties were still under male influence as such offices as ordination were still viewed as a male space. Gender roles in terms of maleness and femaleness were so distinct that both parties almost found it a taboo to cross over and perform roles that were defined for ‘the other’. The idea that some of these roles are socially constructed was not usually entertained, since the roles themselves were seen as societal norms. From an African theological perspective, the concept of enculturation was a reaction to the missionary way of addressing culture and paved the way for discussions on gender justice. At first, African theology was criticised by African women theologians for the way in which it embraced enculturation. Women theologians felt that African male theologians failed to address women’s struggle for gender justice. Despite this critique, the presence of enculturation created space to address mission and colonial identities within African Christianity that were also affecting issues of justice.

Following these perceptions, it is evident that African theologians at first found it difficult to include issues of gender in their articulation of an African Christianity. Women’s concerns continued to be sidelined, both in the church and in theological education. From an academic perspective, most of the literature that was written during this period carried patriarchal biases rooted in both African and western

worldviews. This patriarchal bias was also found in the church, where the liturgy remained male-oriented to the disadvantage of women. Maluleke argues that:

> … for a long time African Theology has been at peace with the patriarchy inherited from both western and African cultures. The logic of patriarchy has been internalised in such a way that even when dealing with issues of oppression and exclusion African theologians could not easily make the connection. Ideologically and spiritually, African Theology remained largely beholden to chauvinist ideas when it came to gender relations.[1]

It was not until the emergence of African women theologians[2] that a paradigm shift in discussions on gender issues arose among African theologians. African women theologians emphasised the need for gender justice in all spheres of life. Although the Circle emphasised the liberation of women, they were aware that this could not be possible without involving men in this fight. Therefore, right from the inauguration of the Circle, scholars such as Oduyoye advocated a two-pronged theology that calls for the participation of male theologians in the fight against gender injustice.[3] Oduyoye has always argued that African women theologians are not against male theologians. Instead, their fight is against patriarchy and cultural practices perpetuated by some men in the name of preserving culture.[4] From this background, this chapter hopes to address the role played by male theologians in promoting gender justice within the work of African women theologians.

African Male Theologians' Contribution to the Project of Gender Justice

From the time the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians was inaugurated in 1989, African women theologians have always advocated for an all-inclusive theology.[5] African women theologians have also been aware that the fight against gender injustice can not be achieved without involving male theologians. Discussing the contribution of male theologians to the Circle project, Oduyoye singles out the contribution of John Pobee to the first conference of African women theologians, which saw the birthing of the Circle. Pobee, who was then Executive Secretary for the WCC Theological Education programme, adopted the vision of the Circle as his own project. He helped to raise funds for the 1989 Pan-African Conference.[6] Phiri and Siwila observe that African women theologians' partnership with African male theologians has always been part of the Circle's agenda.[7] It is from such accounts that the Circle has journeyed with male theologians in its search for gender justice within African Christianity.

Apart from the account provided by Oduyoye on Pobee, there are other African male theologians who have been involved in gender advocacy as part of the Circle project, especially in the fight against HIV and

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[1] Tinyiko Maluleke, 'An African Theology Perspective on Patriarchy', *The Evil of Patriarchy in Church, Society and Politics* (a paper presented at a consultation hosted by Inclusive and Affirming Ministries, the University of the Western Cape and the Centre for Christian Spirituality, Cape Town, 2009), 33.

[2] The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians was born in 1987 through its founding member Mercy Amba Oduyoye. One of the main objectives for its inception was the need for women to find their voices in African Christianity, both in the Church and in academic circles. In this way, women have managed to challenge the patriarchal ideologies through their writings. For further reading see Isabel Apawo Phiri, 'Major Challenges for African Women Theologians in Theological Education (1989-2008)', *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* XXXIV, No. 2, (2008): 63-81.

[3] Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Talitha Cum! Proceedings of the Convocation of African Women Theologians* (Ibadan: Daystar, 1989).

[4] Mercy Amba Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women Theologians* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001).

[5] Oduyoye, *Talitha Cum!* 1989.

[6] Mercy Amba Oduyoye, 'The Story of the Circle', *Ecumenical Review* Vol. 53, no 1, (January 2001), 97-100.

[7] Isabel Apawo Phiri and Lilian Siwila, 'The Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians: Transforming Theological Education', in *Handbook of Theological Education in Africa,* eds. Isabel Phiri and Dietrich Werner (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2013), 698.

AIDS and gender-based violence. However, it was not until the 2007 Pan-African Circle Conference which was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, that male theologians were officially recognised as friends of the Circle. This was a five-day conference, attended by 130 participants, who included women theologians, ordained women serving in local congregations, partners of the Circle and male theologians.[8] One of the goals of the conference was to facilitate dialogue between male and female theologians in working together to address issues such as HIV and AIDS and gender justice.[9] In response to male theologians' involvement in gender justice, Phiri states that there is a serious and deliberate critical engagement from a number of male theologians on issues raised by women theologians. This paradigm shift became more pronounced on issues such as HIV and AIDS and gender-based violence.[10] The Circle's Yaoundé report states that the conference was ground-breaking in that it was the first Circle conference where male theologians were invited to take a prominent role in dialoguing with the Circle members on masculinity and HIV and AIDS.[11]

The outcome of the participation of the male theologians at the Circle conference was a book project on masculinity which was published by WCC/EHAIA. The presence of male theologians in the Circle conference also created a space for these male scholars to discuss issues of masculinity from a gendered perspective. It also helped to challenge the essence of African Christianity, to create space for dialogue on gender justice.

Projects that have Contributed to Gender Justice through the Work of the Circle

Although a number of male theologians have taken the initiative to address gender justice through different means, it is important to point outthe work of two projects. The Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA), in collaboration with the World Council of Churches (WCC), created a strong partnership with the Circle in the fight against HIV and AIDS. The partnership between the Circle and the WCC through EHAIA has demonstrated in many ways male involvement in the Circle, through scholars such as Ezra Chitando.[12] The male scholars working in this field have addressed the call for gender justice through their research on masculinity. Scholars such as Chitando have focussed on different forms of masculinities that either promote or are a threat to gender justice. He uses the concept of masculinities to show how patriarchy and religio-cultural practices contribute to gender injustice.[13] As Kanyoro argues, culture is a double-edged sword which can also be used as the main form of justification for oppression and injustice, especially to those whom culture defines as 'the other' or the 'outsider', who in most cases are the women.[14] Chitando further observes that some of the religio-cultural patriarchal beliefs and taboos that are imposed on women in the name of culture also make women silent about the oppression that they experience. This is because both religion and culture can also present themselves as enemies of gender

[8] 'Yaoundé Circle report', compiled by Isabel Apawo Phiri, 2007.
[9] Phiri, 'Yaoundé Circle Report'.
[10] Phiri, 'Major challenges for African women theologians', 63-81.
[11] Phiri, 'Yaoundé Circle Report'.
[12] Chitando is one of the male theologians who has been actively involved in the work of the Circle through research and publication. His focus on gender justice is concentrated around HIV and AIDS and masculinities. Some of the publications that have been published in relation to the Circle and gender justice by EHAIA can be obtained from www.wcc-org/wcc/what/mission/ehaia-docs-ehtml – EHAIA documents – World Council of Churches.
[13] For further reading see Ezra Chitando and Notando Hadebe (eds.), *Compassionate Circles: African Women Theologians Facing HIV* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2009).
[14] Musimbi Kanyoro, *Introducing Feminist Cultural Hermeneutics: An African Perspective* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2002).

justice.[15] The collaboration between the Circle and EHAIA has led to a number of research projects around issues of gender justice, especially in relation to HIV and AIDS.[16]

Another project that has been instrumental in partnership with the Circle in promoting gender justice is the Tamar Campaign under the Ujamaa Centre at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Through the use of contextual Bible study, Gerald West is one of the African male (biblical) scholars who has made a significant contribution to the fight against gender-based violence.[17] His contribution to the Circle project on gender justice led to the launch of the Tamar Campaign during the 2007 Yaoundé Pan-African conference. Although many African women theologians have been involved in the Tamar Campaign, even before its launch, the 2007 partnership still remains significant. This is because it was here that the Tamar Campaign was owned as part of the Circle project. West's work becomes significant in that it brings out a male perspective in the fight against gender-based violence, using the Bible as a resource among ordinary readers in local communities.

The Way Forward for Gender Justice in African Christianity

Following the two examples stated above, it is evident that African Christianity has also played a role in advocating for gender justice through the involvement of male theologians in the work of the Circle. Maluleke, however, warns that male theologians should not just join the women theologians, but they need to be 'born again.'[18] This calls for a challenge to respond to issues that affect women and the urge to promote gender equity and partnership that inform transformation. At the same time, gender justice should not just be seen as a form of inclusivity. This is one of the critical misconceptions that has been commonly used in misrepresenting the definition of gender. Under this concept, gender is conceptualised as a way in which society uses equity in terms of statistics to create gender balance. Therefore, gender representation is used to show gender justice. If numbers were used to qualify gender justice, then most African churches would be free of the oppression of women, since women are the majority in the church in Africa.[19] Yet the opposite happens: the majority find themselves being ruled over by the minority. According to Millennium Development Goal 3, gender equality should be seen in terms of equal representation, equal value and treatment for both men and women.[20] Therefore, as African male theologians engage on issues of gender justice, a more in-depth understanding of gender is needed. This will help African Christianity to be more effective in its conceptualisation of gender equity that is authentically African. This will also call for new forms of theology that not only advocate for equal representation but also for justice for all.

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[15] Ezra Chitando, *Troubled but Not Destroyed: African Theology in Dialogue with HIV and AIDS* (Geneva: WCC publications, 2009).
[16] Chitando and Hadebe, *Compassionate Circles* (2009). This was one of the volumes published by EHAIA in partnership with the Circle.
[17] For more information on Contextual Bible Study see the Ujamaa website at www.ujamaa.ukzn.ac.za.
[18] Tinyiko S. Maluleke, 'The 'Smoke Screens' called Black and African Theologies: The Challenge of African Women Theology', *Journal of Constructive Theology* Vol. 3, no. 2, (1997): 39-63. Also Laurent Magesa, 'The Challenge of African Women Defined Theology for the 21st Century', in *The Challenges and Prospects of the Church in Africa: Theological Reflections of the 21st Century,* eds. Nahashon W. Ndung'u and Philomena N. Mwaura (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2005), 88-101.
[19] Brigalia Bam, 'Women and the Church in (South) Africa: Women are the Church in South Africa' in *On Being Church: African Women's Voices and Visions* Geneva, eds. Isabel Apawo Phiri and Sarojini Nadar (Geneva: World Council Churches, 2005), 11.
[20] www.ippf.org/our-work/what-we-do/advocacy/millennium-development-goals (accessed 07 January 2015).

Conclusion

African Christianity has entered another era in doing theology. As a result of this, gender issues are now emerging in different forms. While we talk about gender as the socialisation of men and women, today gender is also talked of in terms of identity leading to homosexuality. This calls for a need to address the issue of gender justice from an African Christian male perspective. African women theologians have provided a platform for this kind of engagement. This is because the call to break the chain of gender injustice in African Christianity cannot be over-effective without placing emphasis on a partnership of equals between men and women.

It is therefore important to appraise the works of African male theologians who adhered to the call for a two-pronged theology in an effort to promote gender justice. Henriot calls for a church that seeks to say something to today's African context.[21] Oduyoye further adds that a church is only a church when it seeks justice.[22] Therefore, the challenge for African Christianity to embrace gender justice also involves the re-evaluation of the prophetic presence of gender in our theological debates, as well as a reconsideration of what it means for the church to be at the intersection between power relationships and gender.

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[21] Peter J. Henriot, 'Grass Root Analysis: The Emphasis on Culture', in *Liberation Theologies on Shifting Grounds,* ed. Georges de Schrijver. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1998), 348.

[22] Mercy Amba Oduyoye, 'Ecclesiology in African Women's Perspective', in *On Being Church: African Women's Voices and Visions,* eds. Isabel Apawo Phiri and Sarojini Nadar (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2005), 152.

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(136) AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY AND AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY[1]

Julius Gathogo

Introduction

African Philosophy is expressed in almost the entire life of an African life. *Ubuntu* is one of the concepts that express it well, despite some of its shortcomings. This chapter sets out to show that the concept of *Ubuntu* (humanness) is an aspect of African hospitality; and in turn, African hospitality and *Ubuntu* are expressions of African Philosophy. The paper demonstrates the wealth of African songs and proverbs in building on African hospitality, and hence African Philosophy. These theologies of reconstruction, in African Christianity, are driven by the need to re-write our own stories; hence reconstruct our past histories, in order to genuinely move forward; and this can be seen as the key to addressing the concerns of our contemporary Africa. The biblical Nehemiah's rebuilding project, following his discovery that the wall of the city of Jerusalem was in ruins after years in Babylonian captivity (refer to the book of Ezra-Nehemiah), serves as an inspiration to these post-exilic theologies. In view of this, the chapter demonstrate the reconstructive impact of *Ubuntu* in the post-colonial Africa.

In view of this, the vital role of African Christianity in the reconstruction of post-colonial Africa, within ideals of African philosophy (*Ubuntu* and hospitality), can be seen especially when we mull over the fact that African cultural practices and philosophical outlook is the raw material for African Christianity. The African philosophical world is a religious world. Christianity in Africa finds itself enriched by the ideals seen in *Ubuntu* philosophy, which is an aspect of African hospitality.

Religion and Philosophy in Africa

In his authoritative book, *African Religions and Philosophy*, John Mbiti discovered that religion and philosophy in Africa are intertwined. In other words, religion and culture, which in Africa are hard to distinguish, express the philosophy of the African people. He noted thus, 'Religion is the strongest element in traditional background, and exerts probably the greatest influence upon the thinking and living of the people concerned.' And while religion can be discerned in terms of beliefs, ceremonies, rituals and religious officiants, 'philosophy is not easily distinguishable'.[2] Mbiti thus uses 'philosophy' to refer to 'the philosophical understanding of African peoples concerning different issues of life'.[3] He goes on to say:

> Philosophy of one kind or another is behind the thinking and acting of every people, and a study of traditional religions brings us into those areas of African life where, through word and action, we may be able to discern the philosophy behind. This involves interpretation of the information before us, and interpretation cannot be completely free of subjective judgement. What, therefore, is 'African Philosophy', may not amount to more than simply my own process of philosophising the items under consideration: but this cannot be helped, and in any case I am by birth an African. Philosophical systems of different African peoples have not been formulated, but some of the areas where they may be found are in the religion, proverbs, oral traditions, ethics and morals of the

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[1] This is a revised version of an article that first appeared as 'African Philosophy as Expressed in the Concepts of Hospitality and *Ubuntu*', *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 130 (March 2008), 39-53.
[2] John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Nairobi: EAEP, 1969), 1.
[3] Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 1.

> society concerned… 'African philosophy'… refers to the understanding, attitude of mind, logic and perception behind the manner in which African peoples think, act or speak in different situations of life.[4]

While rightly acknowledging that African religion permeates all the spheres of life, Mbiti however fails to appreciate the same with regard to African hospitality. For in Africa, an ideal person is primarily hospitable. This hospitality is ideally extended to all people: friends, foes, and/or strangers. It is also extended to all areas of life. Thus, in looking at *Ubuntu* (humanness and/or respect for human dignity) as an aspect of African hospitality, one realises that the post-colonial Africa cannot fail to uphold human dignity after stints under the pre-colonial *unyama* or *ubulwane* (that is, animal like behaviour).

What is African Philosophy?

In view of the above, an understanding of what African philosophy is can best be premised on the fact that every human mind works on the principles that are philosophically hinged even though they might not be clear to an individual. If philosophy is defined as love (or reasoning about) wisdom (of the people), then every person has philosophy in him or her, even though one may not be conscious of it, or may never know how to articulate it. To this end, every human society has a philosophy both in the strict and loose sense of the word; for indeed, people's thought systems and actions constitute a philosophy.[5] It is by this premise that the phrase 'African Philosophy' is defined.

In attempting to define 'African philosophy', it is critical to underline the two major schools of philosophical thought that lay a claim in defining it. That is, 'ethno-philosophical school'; and 'professional school'. A brief look at them will suffice. Ethno-philosophy holds that an African philosophy indeed exists; and that it is not a phenomenon that is being created, established or developed. Rather, it is something that needs revelation and interpretation.[6] To this end, ethno-philosophers make a bold statement to their European counterparts that Africans possess a system of thought that reveals a system of philosophy of religion and of cosmology similar to that of Europeans. As a matter of fact, ethno-philosophy came into existence in 1945 following the publication of Placide Tempels' book, *Bantu Philosophy*.[7] This school of philosophy was given the name 'ethno-philosophy' because it attempted to translate African ethnic thought into categories and language of western philosophy. Some of the categories are ontology, substance, essence, and being; while its chief proponents are John Mbiti of Kenya, Alexis Kagame of Rwanda, Tempels, and Marcel Griaule of France. All in all, different ethno-philosophers portray diverse views to qualify and distinguish this philosophy. In particular, Mbiti employs the notion of time,[8] Griaule, the notion of Nommo,[9] and Kagame, the notion of being.[10]

The second category is the 'professional school' of African philosophy. It was started in the 1960s by professionally trained philosophers, all of whom studied philosophy at European universities, and later taught it at African universities.[11] They include Kwasi Wiredu of Ghana, Odera-Oruka of Kenya, and Peter Bodunrin of Nigeria. Accordingly, this school of thought has many elements in common with western philosophy. That is, its mode of argumentation and criticism, plus its insistence that logic, in its strict and academic meaning, is the only tool of philosophising. Again, its emphasis is individualistic, as opposed to

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[4] Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 1-2.
[5] James N. Mburu, *Thematic Issues in African Philosophy* (Nairobi: Acacia, 2003), 1.
[6] Mburu, *Thematic Issues in African Philosophy,* 8.
[7] Placide Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy* (Translated by Rev. Colin King), (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1959, 1969).
[8] Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy.*
[9] Marcel Griaule, *Conversations with Ogotommeli* (Translated Dieu d'eau) (London: Oxford University Press, 1965).
[10] Alexis Kagame, *La Philosophie Bantu Compare* (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1976).
[11] Mburu, *Thematic Issues in African Philosophy,* 4.

collective thoughts. It is mainly a personal reflection on specific issues and concepts that are problematic to an individual.[12] Odera-Oruka denies its link with western philosophy when he says:

> There is a tendency to accuse African philosophers such as P. Hountondji,[13] Kwasi Wiredu,[14] Peter Bodunrin[15] and myself of subjecting the criteria of what constitutes African philosophy to the canons of Western philosophy. And according to these accusers, such criteria are embodied in the demand that philosophy must be scientific, foundational, critical, analytical, and systematically reflective. These, we are told, are the characteristics of a western philosophy. And African philosophy would fail to demonstrate its identity if it were to be anchored on such characteristics.[16]

Ethno-philosophers such as Mbiti, Kagame and others, however, insist that African philosophy consists of a body of logically coordinated thought on the nature of the universe, of existence, of humanity, and of the things that surround humanity. This logically coordinated thought is obtained from the interpretation of basic cultural beliefs.[17] To this end, this chapter is in working agreement with ethno-philosophers, that there is a distinct African philosophy, which is expressed in the belief systems among the Africans from time immemorial. Hence, this chapter considers African philosophy as that which is articulated through general acts of hospitality or *Ubuntu*; political ideologies such as Negritude and African Socialism, among others; proverbs that attempt to shed light on the universe, human beings; African stories that attempt to explain the origins of life and death; African rituals that attempt to explain the rites of passage such as birth and marriage; African traditions such as beliefs and attitudes; and African arts such as dance and song.

What is African Hospitality?

Basically, African hospitality can be defined as that extension of generosity, giving freely without strings attached. It can also be seen as 'an unconditional readiness to share'.[18] This sharing has to be social and religious in scope. In view of this, it can be simply seen as the willingness to give, to help, to assist, to love and to carry one another's burden without necessarily putting profit or rewards as the driving force. Oduyoye and Olikenyi link hospitaity with African philosophy when they contend that it shapes and defines the being and the existence of an African person (ontology). In particular, Olikenyi explains that African hospitality, which he contends is a vital aspect of existence in Africa, is one of the few facets of ancient African culture that is still intact and strongly practised today by most Africans in spite of all the forces of recent external influence or even internal pressure.[19] He quotes Uzukwu, who develops this view further when he says:

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[12] Mburu, *Thematic Issues in African Philosophy,* 5.
[13] See Paulin Hountondji, *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983).
[14] Kwasi Wiredu, *Philosophy and African Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).
[15] See Peter Bodunrin, 'The Question of African Philosophy', *Philosophy* Vol. 56, No 216, Cambridge University Press, (1981): 161-179.
[16] ee Henry Odera-Oruka, *Practical Philosophy* (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1997), 167-168; see also Henry Odera-Oruka, *Trends in Contemporary African Philosophy* (Nairobi: Shirikon Publishers, 1990).
[17] See Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy.*
[18] A. Echema, *Corporate Personality in Igbo Society and the Sacrament of Reconciliation* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1995), 35.
[19] Gregory I. Olikenyi, *African Hospitality: A model for the Communication of the Gospel in the African Cultural Context* (Nettetal: Steylerverlag, 2001), 102.

> Despite the destabilization of traditional life by colonialism, foreign world views, technology and modern living… African hospitality has held rather well to the extent that it could be described as a way of being an African.[20]

In Oduyoye's view, hospitality is 'inherent in being African, as well as in adhering to a religion that derives from the Bible…' It is 'given a religious meaning, and linked with the ancestors, Christ and God.'[21] Similarly, Moila sees African hospitality as that which embodies the entire philosophy of African peoples. To begin with, he defines it as simply African cultural and moral values, which are not theoretical, but a way of life.[22] This indicates that the understanding of hospitality is as wide as that of the concept of religion in African permeating all spheres of African life.[23]

While defining African hospitality as the brotherhood or sisterhood 'between the members of the same family group and/or of the same clan,' Moila goes on to say that:

> Each member of the same family group is bound to offer food and shelter to any member of his or her group who needs it. However, it is also an African custom to offer hospitality even to strangers. Hospitality is perceived and practised by Africans as open-handed, instinctive and the most natural thing in the world.[24]

By saying that hospitality as practised by Africans is 'instinctive and the most natural thing in the world', Moila is alluding to the fact that African hospitality is more unique in comparison to other versions that are practised in many other parts of the world, especially in Europe and North America.

> On the whole, the study of hospitality, in Africa today, is crucial considering that it is not seen as a mere academic issue that is simply exercised by 'arm-chair' practitioners; but rather, as a reconstructive and practical element in post-colonial Africa that remains a common denominator to all regardless of our educational backgrounds. To this end, it can be exploited positively to build better relationships among various peoples living in continental Africa. It can also be used to conscientize people on the need to work hard so that they can have something to be hospitable with. Clearly, revisiting this element of culture (hospitality) is critical in our times; for indeed, it is an idea whose time has come. Clearly, it is in tandem with St Paul's words in Roman 15:7 'welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you'.

Ubuntu Philosophy

In the social domain, *Ubuntu* philosophy can best illustrate African hospitality. As an aspect of African hospitality, *Ubuntu* enriches African philosophy by its clear and concise way in which it expresses the thinking of the ideal African person (*Muntu*). In various publications, it is critical to underline that *Ubuntu* has been referred to as *Ubuntu* philosophy. Why? It embodies the positive thinking of the Africans. Nevertheless, this reference takes us back to our introductory definition of 'African Philosophy'. In other words, can we talk of 'African philosophy'? Are Africans capable of philosophising in quite the same way as we talk of Greek philosophy or Indian philosophy or Chinese or even European philosophy? Is the traditional African mind capable of philosophising? And must African philosophy be on a par with western philosophy?

This debate, however, started over 200 years ago when the renowned German idealist, G.F. Hegel (1770-1831), in his famous *Philosophy of History* ignored Africa, as he argued that Africans were

[20] Uzukwu quoted in Olikenyi, *African hospitality:* 102.
[21] Mercy A. Oduyoye, *Introducing African Women's Theology*. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 94.
[22] Moeahabo Phillip Moila, *Challenging Issues in African Christianity* (Pretoria: CB Powell Bible Centre, 2002), 1.
[23] Compare Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 1-2.
[24] Moila, *Challenging Issues in African Christianity,* 2.

incapable of philosophising. Seen from that perspective, he felt that they deserved no place in his research on philosophy through the history of the peoples of the world. Similar, such racial biases are evident in the works of Lucien Levy-Bruhl's, *The Notebooks on Primitive Mentality*; J.C. Carothers', *The Mind of Man*; and Dietrich Westermann's, *The African Today*.[25] In acknowledging *Ubuntu* as one of the expressions of African philosophy, we are puzzled that a philosopher of Hegel's status could pass a wholesale judgement on the African mind. Hence an attempt at correcting Hegel's error. For indeed, there is no tenable logical basis for his polemical position, which denied traditional Africans, philosophy, culture, history or even religion.

In defining *Ubuntu* as an aspect of African hospitality or as a philosophy, it is important to stress that the concept is described differently among the various African communities. For instance, it is called *Unhu* among the Shona of Zimbabwe; *Ubuntu* among the Nguni speakers of Southern Africa; *Utu* among the Swahili speakers of East Africa; and *Umundu* among the Kikuyu of Kenya. Basically, it is both a philosophical and a religious concept that defines the individual in terms of his or her relationships with others. In the African context, it suggests that the person one is to become, by behaving with humanity, is an ancestor worthy of respect or veneration. In other words, those who uphold the principle of *Ubuntu* throughout their earthly lives will be rewarded or promoted in death by becoming ancestors. In turn, they will achieve a unity with those still living.[26]

African Philosophical Concepts and African Christianity

As noted, African philosophical concepts such as *Ubuntu* which is an aspect of African hospitality enriches African Christianity, especially in its emphasis on respect and love for 'the other'. By 'the other' is meant the love of one's neighbour, the love for those who are not like us, the underprivileged, the marginal, the minorities, the poor, the rich and others. This resonates well with the eight beatitudes that were uttered by Christ as recorded in Matthew 5:3-12, during the Sermon on the Mount. This is especially the case when we consider the fifth beatitude: 'Blessed are the merciful: for they will be shown mercy.' Certainly, *Ubuntu* philosophy is a **s**piritual foundation of African societies. It is a unifying vision or worldview enshrined in the Nguni maxim *Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*, that is, 'a person is a person through other persons'.[27] This *Ubuntu* concept is also found in other African communities, even though there are different vocabularies and phrases that are used to describe it; and it will suffice to illustrate it by citing a few examples. The Kikuyu idiom, which says that, *Mundu ni mundu ni undu wa andu,* means that, 'a human being is a person because of the other people'. The same can be said of the Sotho whose idiom says that, *Motho ke motho ka batho ba bang* with a similar translation to those of other African communities. It is also the same as *Munhu munhu nekuda kwevanhu* among the Shona of Zimbabwe. This African motto articulates a basic respect and compassion for others – as its bottom line. It can be interpreted as both a factual description and a rule of conduct or social ethic. It both describes human being as 'being-with-others' and prescribes what 'being-with-others' should be all about. As such, *Ubuntu* has a certain Africanness and religious commitment in the welfare of fellow human beings that is manifestly African in essence.

As an African philosophy, *Ubuntu* expresses the African sense of community. That is, instead of, 'I think, therefore I exist' (*cogito, ergo sum*) of the French philosopher René Descartes, the African asserts, 'I am because we are' or 'I am related, therefore, I am' (*cognatus ergo sum* or an existential *cognatus sum, ergo sumus,* meaning *I am related, therefore we are*).[28] This compares with Mbiti's summary of the

[25] See Cletus N. Chukwu, *Introduction to Philosophy in an African Perspective* (Eldoret: Zapf Chancery, 1995), 301ff.
[26] Kwesi. A. Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, (Marykholl: Orbis Books TTCL, 1984), 198; cf. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, 83.
[27] Augustine Shutte, *Ubuntu: An Ethic for a New South Africa*. (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001), 46.
[28] *cf.* Julius Gathogo, *The Truth About African Hospitality: Is there Hope for Africa?* (Mombasa: The Salt, 2001), 21.

philosophy underlying the African way of life, thus: 'I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am.'[29] The Akan of Ghana would say, 'I belong by blood relationship; therefore I am.'[30] Indeed, this parallels the concretisation of the Being (*Sein*) as Being-with in the *Dasein* Analytic in Martin Heidegger's 'Philosophy of Being'.[31]

In seeing *Ubuntu* as that which expresses the African sense of community, we are driven to appreciate that *Ubuntu* philosophy, just like African Christianity, addresses holistic living, and especially contemporary issues. In other words, what can one say about *Ubuntu* and clan systems, blood relatives, women, corruption and reconstruction? Why do we find many acts of *unyama* or *ubulwane* (animal-like behaviours) in a continent that is a hundred percent *Ubuntu*? The same question can be posed in another way: why do we find corruption, xenophobia, racism, ethnic animosities, gender disparities and other vices in a continent that boasts of being the most Christian in the 21st century? Seen in this way, Africa's humane philosophies speak from the same continuum with African Christianity. Indeed, their ideals of human fellowship and communality are basically the same. Put differently, African philosophies and African Christianities are not opposed to one another; rather, they enrich one another. In the light of the post-colonial reconstruction of Africa, African Christianity and African philosophies will be critical in rebuilding the declining or broken African walls in terms of governance, education, economy, leadership, ecology and gender relations. As in the words of Nehemiah 2:18, African philosophies resonate well with the call: 'Let us start [re]building.'

To this end, Charles Villa-Vicencio contends that South Africa would do well in establishing a 'heritage, which proclaims a message about human nature which provides an alternative to both western notions of individualism and ideological Marxist perceptions of collectivism'.[32] In view of this, Villa-Vicencio for example, sees the reconstruction of post-apartheid South African society as needing the people to transcend both the individualism and collectivism in order to form an all-inclusive and all-encompassing community. This, to him, is the ideal notion of *Ubuntu*.

Facilitating a process of reconstruction means being willing to reason out together as human beings who value other persons; and therefore being willing to work towards a better society that not only respects human dignity; but more importantly a holistic and prosperous society for all. For as Robert Schreiter notes, reconstruction is 'a different kind of liberating theology, because the opportunity for it is so rare'.[33] For whether we are in Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Rwanda, South Africa, Eastern Europe, Chile, Argentina or elsewhere – it is a moment of grace that should not be bypassed.'[34]

Conclusion

The chapter has attempted a definition of African philosophy. It revisited the two major African schools of philosophical thoughts that lay a claim to defining philosopy. That is, 'ethno-philosophical school'; and 'professional school'. And by dialoguing with both concepts of *Ubuntu* and hospitality, the chapter demonstrates that African philosophy is essentially one of the definite components of African culture. In this sense, African philosophy cannot be construed as that which represents the entire constituents of what is comprehensible as African culture. Indeed, they are not synonymous. Some interrelations however exist

[29] Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*: 108.
[30] Joseph Healey and Donald F. Sybertz, *Towards An African Narrative Theology* (Nairobi: Paulines, 1996), 62.
[31] Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit, Marx Niemeyer Verlag Türbingen* (Siebzehnte Auflage, 1993), 117-125.
[32] Charles Villa-Vicencio, 'Telling One Another Stories: Toward a Theology of Reconciliation', in *The Reconciliation of Peoples: Challenge to the Churches*, (New York: Orbis Books, 1997), 164.
[33] Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1999), 110.
[34] Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local*, 110-112.

between both concepts; and by critiquing *Ubuntu* in not fully 'including' African women in its schema of its all-embracing humanisation, the chapter has in turn demonstrated the task of African philosophy as that of scrutinising and evaluating the standards of African culture with its implied values.

Following the ideals of African Christianity as seen in Jesus' call for the love of 'the other' (Mark 12:31), African philosophies will be critical in, not only combating xenophobia, corruption, gender imbalances, and ethnic decisions but, more importantly, in facilitating the social reconstruction of Africa. For in recalling ancient hospitality and philosophies as an 'agenda' of our time, this points to the fact that the ancestral resources are critical in the reconstruction of our beloved continent. Certainly, this is the time to rewrite our history and reinterpret it in a relevant fashion. Clearly, these African philosophical resources have something to bequeath to Christianity in Africa and to the rest of the world.

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PART VII

THE PUBLIC ROLE OF AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

(137) AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY AND DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF ACT ALLIANCE[1]

Isaiah Kipyegon Toroitich

ACT Alliance Understanding of Development

When ACT Alliance was founded in 2010, it committed itself, among other things, to be engaged in high quality and effective transformational development programmes that contribute towards positive change in people's lives.[2] The Alliance's understanding of transformational development is drawn from its theological affirmation that all persons are created in the image of God, with the right and potential to live just, humane, and dignified lives in sustainable communities.[3]

This conceptualisation and understanding of development, which was also espoused strongly by ACT International and ACT Development,[4] therefore calls for working more towards a transformation that protects the dignity of communities. ACT Alliance finds its inspiration from the Christian faith, which challenges all to reject conditions, structures and systems that perpetuate poverty, injustice and violation of human rights.[5]

ACT Alliance also uses the Rights-Based Approach (RBA) to development, which is about deliberately and explicitly focusing on achieving the minimum conditions required for people to live with dignity. It does so by exposing the root causes of vulnerability and marginalisation, while empowering people to claim and exercise their rights and fulfil their responsibilities. RBA recognises poor people as having inherent rights essential to livelihood security – rights that are validated by international standards and laws. As Action Aid describes it, people are denied their human rights, not through mere omission, forgetfulness or lack of effort, but due to unequal power relations.[6] RBA thus involves the transformation of power relations, by empowering rights holders and strengthening the accountability and capacity of duty bearers.

In its approach and conceptualisation of development, ACT has twelve key concepts that undergird its development policy and practice: participation, empowerment, capacity development, non-discrimination, gender equity, cultural and spiritual sensitivity, reaffirming human rights, advocacy, promoting peace, reconciliation and right relationships, effective communication, environmental sustainability, and over-consumption and lack of sharing.[7] These twelve concepts broaden the methodology of implementing development work for ACT Alliance, its members and partners, to include development practice and development policy. This enables ACT Alliance to integrate its programmatic work with advocacy at all levels. In addition, as a humanitarian network, ACT Alliance has integrated its development work and

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[1] ACT Alliance is a network of 146 churches and church-based organisations from protestant and orthodox traditions, undertaking humanitarian, development and advocacy work in 140 countries.
[2] ACT Alliance, "ACT Alliance – Action by Churches Together Founding Document," www.actalliance.org/resources/policies-and-guidelines/legal-documents/ACT-founding-doc-ENG.pdf
[3] ACT Alliance, "Our Understanding of Development," www.actalliance.org/resources/policies-and-guidelines/our-understanding-of-development/Our_Understanding_of_Dev_ACTD-ACTA_ENGLISH_Jan2013.pdf
[4] ACT International and ACT Development were the predecessors of ACT Alliance. The two were merged in 2010 to form the unified ACT Alliance.
[5] ACT Alliance, "Founding Document."
[6] Action Aid, "Human rights-based approaches to poverty eradication and development," www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/the_rights_based_approach.pdf.
[7] ACT, "Our Understanding of Development."

advocacy with its disaster risk reduction work. This is elaborated in the Alliance's understanding of 'linking relief, rehabilitation and development' (LRRD).

In the spirit of LRRD, ACT Alliance recognises that implementation of a humanitarian response should not only meet immediate humanitarian needs but do so in a manner that ensures capacity and supports general conditions for recovery and long-term development.[8] The integrated approach also demands linking work at the grassroots to national, regional and international levels. In both cases, the Alliance recognises and emphasises the centrality of communities.

According to ACT Alliance's Global Strategy 2015-2018,[9] economic power is gradually shifting from the global North to the growing economies in the global East and the South. Emerging economies, such as China, India, Brazil and others, play new roles as donors and in international trade, while they face growing inequalities within their own countries.

Several countries and regions are plagued by protracted resource conflicts, war-lordism, large displacements and shrinking space for civil society organisations, adding to the already growing complexity of emergencies and sustainable development. Climate change, population growth, rapid and unplanned urbanisation as well as food and water insecurity, leave communities increasingly at risk of crisis. Extreme weather events are reported to intensify and cause increasingly climate-induced displacement.

In a sense, these analyses and discussions have affected how ACT Alliance understands and does development, all over the world, but specifically in Africa, where a majority of its members operate.

ACT Alliance in Africa

By the middle of 2015, approximately ninety member organisations of ACT Alliance worked in Africa. These include organisations whose origin is Africa, and others which do not come from Africa but either run or support development projects on the continent. Much of the work done by ACT Alliance in Africa is in the sub-Saharan region. In Africa, as in all other parts of the world, the members of ACT Alliance have organised themselves into national and regional forums, which are platforms that bring together members working within a specific country or region. Churches have a central role in the work of the Alliance, given the Alliance's primary identity as a church-based network.

To explore the work of ACT Alliance in Africa, it is necessary to begin by examining the context, in terms of development issues, of the continent. Africa is still grappling with high levels of poverty, which ranks as one of its key challenges. According to Martin, while Africa's recent economic performance has been quite impressive, the economic growth has not delivered corresponding benefits in terms of poverty reduction. He attributed this discrepancy to, among other things, the failure of African economies to generate sufficient productive employment.[10]

Most of ACT Alliance's development work focuses on poverty eradication. The Alliance acknowledges that poverty is mainly driven by a myriad of root causes, including historical and current injustices, inequality, bad governance, corruption, and destruction of the environment.[11] In undertaking development

[8] ACT Alliance, "ACT Alliance Response to an Emergency: Policy, Guidelines and Tools, and Annexes," www.actalliance.org/resources/policies-and-guidelines/act-response-mechanisms/act-alliance-response-to-emergencies/Response_to_Emergencies_ApprDraft_Dec11.pdf

[9] ACT Alliance, *Full Life and Dignity for All: Global Strategy 2015-2018, a Framework for Action*. Geneva: ACT Alliance, 2014.

[10] Pedro Martins, "Growth, Employment and Poverty in Africa: Tales of Lions and Cheetahs," http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTNWDR2013/Resources/8258024-1320950747192/8260293-1320956712276/8261091-1348683883703/WDR2013_bp_Growth_Employment_and_Poverty_in_Africa.pdf.

[11] ACT, "Our Understanding of Development."

work, therefore, ACT Alliance and its members support the empowerment of communities affected by poverty and oppressive structures to claim their rights, whilst seeking the transformation of values and structures that lead to over-consumption and lack of sharing of the available resources.

For the purpose of this paper, four examples where ACT Alliance has undertaken development work in Africa will be highlighted. The cases will only be briefly described, without giving detailed analysis. The cases are: strengthening women's participation in Mali; peace and development in South Sudan; economic justice and development in Southern Africa; and mobilisation for environment and climate justice.

Strengthening Women's Participation in Mali

In Mali, ACT member, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), together with five local organisations, have been working on the issue of governance, with a focus on the role of women in leadership structures. This is in a context where women do not have the opportunity to take up leadership roles, in spite of their contribution to society. In 2005, NCA and its partners in Mali conducted a baseline survey which confirmed that only 10% of parliamentarians, 6.5% of municipal councillors, and less than 1% of mayors were women.[12] It was particularly clear in Mali's northern regions of Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu that women were unable to exercise their right to engage in political processes. This project further engaged in expansive consultation processes with women, to gain their views on the question of political participation.

Consequently, the primary interventions under this project were to mobilise women into leadership roles, develop strategic partnerships with organisations that worked on governance and women's rights, raise public awareness and ultimately support women who were ready and willing to vie for elective positions in government at all levels. The immediate opportunity to measure the success of this project was in the 2009 general elections in Mali.

As part of the strategy, the programme mobilised women into groups, reaching over 30,000 women in the region. This was followed by capacity strengthening of the women who were members of the groups, on issues such as democracy, human rights, decentralised governance, women leadership and advocacy. It is within this group that women political candidates were identified and nurtured.

By the end of 2009, this initiative had resulted in a 54% increase in the number of women seeking elective positions, and a 42% increase in the number of women elected as councillors. In addition, the project had also contributed to a greater level of acceptance of women in decision making, and their right to participate politically.[13]

Mali, as a predominantly Muslim country, is an important case for ACT Alliance, which is a Christian network. It showcases the Alliance's commitment to the principle of impartiality – responding to human suffering irrespective of race, gender, belief, nationality, ethnicity or political persuasion.

Other parts of Africa where ACT Alliance members have engaged in issues related to women and governance include Kenya, where the National Council of Churches and the Anglican Development Services – Kenya, in partnership with international and national organisations, worked with election processes as well as the constitutional review process.

Peace and Development in Sudan and South Sudan

As a big credit to the work of churches during the conflict in Sudan (before the birth of South Sudan), Stein Villumstad,[14] then the regional representative for Norwegian Church Aid in Eastern Africa, reported that

[12] ACT Alliance. *Clapping with Both Hands: Promoting Gender Equality."* www.actalliance.org/resources/publications/ACT_Gender_Good-Practice-Report_%202012.pdf.
[13] ACT Alliance, "Clapping with Both Hands."
[14] Stein Villumstad, *Social Reconstruction of Africa: Perspectives from Within and Without* (Nairobi: Acton

throughout the more than two-decades-long war and conflict there were only two recognisable entities in the south: the churches and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). He further gave a strong profile of the role of organisations such as the World Council on Religion and Peace, All Africa Conference of Churches and others in peace and conflict resolutions efforts in Sudan. Practically all the members of ACT Alliance in Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda contributed in one way or another to peace-building and conflict resolution in Sudan, particularly in the process leading to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the government of Sudan and the People's Liberation Movement/Army in 2005.

The CPA, and the processes surrounding it, led to the creation of the new country, South Sudan, which was a dream-come-true for many people. Unfortunately, the new country has been bedevilled by many challenges, including continued insecurity and a tumultuous political and humanitarian situation.

Organisations like the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), a global member of ACT Alliance, have carried out humanitarian and development work in South Sudan right from the start, in conjunction with churches and related organisations. LWF has specifically worked to support refugees and internally displaced people fleeing conflict and violence in South Sudan. In conformity with ACT's selection of South Sudan as a priority country for the strategic period 2011-2014, a number of other organisations, both regional and international, have invested significantly in development programmes and in the humanitarian response and peace and reconciliation efforts. They include DanChurchAid (DCA), Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Inter-Church Organisation for Development Co-operation (ICCO), Christian Aid (CA), Sudan Council of Churches (SCC), World Renew and Swiss Church Aid.

In terms of long-term development work, DanChurchAid has implemented mine-clearing projects and helped local communities and authorities dispose of explosive remnants of war, including mines and unexploded artillery shells. According to DCA,[15] landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) pose a serious danger to civilians and humanitarian actors in South Sudan, and especially to internally displaced people (IDPs). These weapons make it nearly impossible for communities to pursue their daily lives and livelihoods. Following the recent political violence that erupted in late 2013 and led to the displacement of over 700,000, the need for education on disposal of landmines and other ordinances increased drastically, particularly because the displaced people often found themselves in unfamiliar areas, which may have land mines.

Through the implementation of the project activities, DCA provided life-saving risk education in Awerial County, Lakes State, where over 85,000 displaced civilians had taken refuge.[16] In addition to this, the DCA project provided briefings to UN and NGO staff that were engaged in humanitarian assistance in the area. DCA has implemented Mine Action activities from its regional base in Juba since 2012 and thus has a solid base in South Sudan.

In Darfur, Sudan, ACT Alliance, in partnership with Caritas Internationalis, has undertaken a large scale, multi-sectoral humanitarian programme since July 2004. According to a joint report of the two networks, the Darfur programme is unique because it has pooled human and financial resources from both networks into one organisational management structure, and because of its vastness, with over US$120 million being raised and expended between 2004 and 2014. It is estimated that the beneficiary population has been as high as 500,000 people in the initial years and in recent years, around 350,000 people.[17]

Publishers, 2001).

[15] DanChurchAid, "Mine Action Activities Extended at a Crucial Moment," https://www.danchurchaid.org/news/news/mine-action-activities-extended-at-a-crucial-moment-chf-gives-further-funding-for-dca-s-work-in-south-sudan.

[16] DanChurchAid, "Mine Action."

[17] ACT Alliance & Caritas Internationalis, *A History of the Joint ACT-Caritas Darfur Programme*, Geneva, ACT

Other instances where ACT Alliance and church communities and leaders played a key role in peace and development in Africa include the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the truth, justice and reconciliation process in post-apartheid South Africa and the conflict situation in Sierra Leone. In all these cases, national, regional and international faith-based organisations (FBOs) took up the responsibility to midwife reconciliation.[18]

Economic Justice and Development

Anglican Development Services – Kenya, for the last ten years or more, worked on economic justice issues including fair trade, international debt, justice for coffee farmers and the cash crop value chain. In partnership with other FBOs and NGOs, the organisation advocated for the halting of the proposed Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), a free trade area agreement that would lead to an unfair and unbalanced opening up of the African market to goods and services from the European Union.[19] This advocacy and campaigning for economic justice also forged good programming partnerships between ACT members operating in Kenya and their many partners, such as the establishment of the Kenya Small Coffee Growers Association (KESCOGA), which supports the capacity of small scale coffee farmers. An evaluation of the KESCOGA project found that the initiative had made a significant contribution in providing new insights into what had been going on in the coffee industry in Kenya from a historical perspective.[20]

In Southern Africa, ACT Alliance members Economic Justice Network, Church of Sweden, and church councils in SADC region, under the umbrella of the Southern African Regional Forum (SARF), have for the last six years been organising the Alternative Mining Indaba, which is a public forum to discuss issues related to mining and how it affects communities. Alternative Mining Indabas are organised in parallel with the annual international Cape Town Mining Indaba, which brings together mining companies, business and governments to strategize. At the Alternative Mining Indaba, people from all over the world, representing communities that are affected by mining, share testimonies, research and exchange ideas on human rights and justice in the context of extractive industries.[21]

This initiative has grown and become a well-recognised annual forum for people and communities, as well as civil society and churches working on mining and extractive industries. It has further become a strong advocacy tool, enabling ACT members, churches and partners to engage with governments and multi-national companies. In this regard, in 2012, ACT members played a key role in the mediation and negotiations that led to the end of the high-profile dispute at the Lonmin platinum mine in Marikana, South Africa.[22]

Still on the question of economic justice and development, members of ACT Alliance in Mozambique implemented a microcredit project, which led to the promotion of equality through savings and credit unions targeted at women. The microfinance project was supported by ACT member, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund. From the onset, the project aimed at reducing household poverty, while at the same time giving women the opportunity to run a financial institution that catered for their needs.

Alliance 2015.

[18] Villumstad, "Social Reconstruction of Africa."

[19] Ongwen, Oduor, *"Engaging Economic Partnership Agreements: Critical Issues for Africa"* (Nairobi: Beacon, 2007).

[20] NORAD, "Small Scale Coffee Farmers Project: Evaluation Report," www.norad.no/globalassets/import-2162015-80434-am/www.norad.no-ny/filarkiv/ngo-evaluations/15a-evaluation-of-the-beacon-coffee-advocacy-initiative-2008-kenya.pdf.

[21] ACT Alliance, *Strength in a Changing world: ACT Alliance Annual Report* (Geneva: ACT Alliance, 2012).

[22] ACT Alliance, *Strength in a Changing World*.

The project area covered Nampula, Nacala and Pemba regions of Mozambique, where women had little or no access to banking facilities. It was inspired by a group of women in 1996, who wanted a loan to support their cassava cake business. These women became the very first 47 members of the microcredit initiative. By 2012, the initiative had 4,500 members, and a majority of the loans taken by the women were used to set up businesses, or expand existing ones.[23]

The success of this project has been attributed to the integration of key development policy and best practice, such as empowerment and capacity building, gender equality, rootedness and a keen understanding of the local context.[24]

Mobilising for Environment and Climate Justice

Africa is among the regions of the world that is most affected by the impacts of climate change, and is extremely vulnerable to environmental degradation. For most members of ACT Alliance in Africa, just like for many churches and faith-based organisations, engagement with climate change policy and politics increased significantly in 2006, when the 12th Conference of the Parties (COP 12) to the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was held in Nairobi, Kenya. COP 12 ushered in a new era of mobilisation, led by organisations such as the All Africa Council of Churches, ecumenical movements in Africa, and ACT members active in Kenya, including Christian Aid, Norwegian Church Aid, Bread for the World, Anglican Development Services – Kenya and Church of Sweden.

Since then, ACT Alliance in Africa has followed the negotiations under the UNFCCC and engaged in national and regional level advocacy towards governments in Africa and regional bodies such as the African Union and Southern Africa Development Community. The approach that the Alliance has used in Africa is primarily around mobilisation and advocacy, as well as the implementation of community programmes that address climate change adaptation and mitigation.

One of the most significant contributions of ACT Alliance was in 2011, when the continent hosted another Conference of the Parties; this time the 17th session (COP 17) in Durban, South Africa. Throughout the year, members of the Alliance in Eastern and Southern Africa participated in key mobilisation activities, including several high profile events like the international faith leaders' conference on climate justice and sustainable peace in Africa.

In addition, a convoy of 160 youth from Africa, supported by a few young people from the global ecumenical family, made its way from Nairobi to Durban in a climate justice caravan. The caravan, which was under the banner 'We Have Faith, Act Now for Climate Justice' mobilisation, targeted youth and faith communities and leaders with key activities such as awareness raising, capacity-building and political sensitisation towards COP 17.

It was received by the Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu and the petitions collected were handed over to the UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Christiana Figueres.

The members of ACT and other ecumenical partners have consistently worked towards highlighting the vulnerability of Africa to the impacts of climate change, and to call on governments and the international community to look at climate change from justice, moral and ethical perspectives. Climate change has since remained firmly on the agenda of the churches and many ACT members in Africa continue to prioritise it in their work.

In Ethiopia, for example, the Lutheran World Federation's Department for World Service implemented several projects that assisted communities to better prepare for droughts that occur as a result of a changing climate. The project supported pastoralist communities in Oromia region, Dawe District, to harvest rain

[23] ACT Alliance, *Clapping with Both Hands: Promoting Gender Equality* (Geneva: ACT Alliance, 2012).
[24] ACT Alliance, *Clapping with Both Hands*.

water, as a protective measure against drought.[25] By 2009, the project had constructed three large ponds with a capacity of 15, 35 and 18 million litres respectively. This ensured that there was water during the dry period, and that communities would not need to migrate in search of water.

Conclusion

The ACT Alliance's strategic direction indicates that the Rights-Based Approach to development will continue to be central in the Alliance's work. The economic inequality, conflicts and fragility of states and weak governance structures require continued engagement with both rights holders and duty bearers.[26] Churches and organisations whose work is mandated by churches have significant influence and leverage towards decision makers and communities. Therefore, in Africa, the ecumenical movement needs to continue supporting transformation of power relations at all levels. As shown by the examples of work undertaken by ACT Alliance in Africa, churches in Africa are often in a unique position to challenge decision makers and accompany communities. This dual role is central to the prophetic mission of the ecumenical movement in Africa.

The cases above also show that insecurity is a challenge for many humanitarian and development actors in many parts of Africa, calling for a focus on the security of personnel, particularly local and national staff. In spite of this, locally-rooted organisations such as churches and community-based organisations, including members of ACT Alliance, are often well positioned to operate.

Addressing humanitarian and development issues in Africa is increasingly seen primarily as the role of Africans themselves. ACT Alliance and other ecumenical organisations should prioritise support for preparedness, innovation and capacity in Africa. It is expected that the situation of communities in African countries, particularly those affected by conflicts and protracted emergencies, will remain dire. Given the changing development and humanitarian funding landscape, there is a need to mobilise resources, including within the continent, to ensure that these communities are served. This will continue to be a challenge for churches and networks, including ACT Alliance. In this regard, advocacy is required in order to ensure financial and technical support for local and national level initiatives.

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[25] ACT Alliance, *Tacking Climate Change, Communities Making a Difference* (Geneva: ACT Alliance, 2009).
[26] ACT Alliance, *Full Life and Dignity for All: Global Strategy 2015-2018, a Framework for Action* (Geneva: ACT Alliance, 2014).

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(138) DEVELOPMENT, THE BIBLE AND THE ROLE OF THE AFRICAN CHURCH[1]

McGlory Speckman

Introduction

This chapter primarily reflects on two aspects of development, namely, its definition and biblical concepts thereof. Secondarily, it briefly outlines the role played by the African Church in development. It argues that the ambivalent role of the church in respect of development is partly caused by the church's misaligned understanding of development, and partly by the lack of a biblical concept of development. The conclusion suggests that a closer look at the practice of the African Indigenous Churches and Pentecostal Churches be undertaken in future studies as this offers a different and interesting perspective of the African Church's role in development.

It is almost four decades since the World Council of Churches identified the church as an important grassroots vehicle for development.[2] Yet Africa, which at one point was thought to be 'notoriously religious',[3] is one of the few continents that are known to be lagging behind in many aspects of development. This ironic situation may, in part, be ascribed to a misaligned definition of development which impacts on the criteria for evaluating developmental projects and, in part, to the church's lack of a biblical concept of development. The church's zeal for development seems to have been affected by a drying up of funds from the former European mission agencies while the African Indigenous Churches (AICs) and Pentecostal Churches offer an interesting perspective. Hence, for the purposes of this contribution, my broadening of the definition of the church. My primary aim is to reflect on the aspects of definition and biblical concepts while the secondary aim is to briefly reflect on the role played by the African Church in development.

Definitions of Development in Retrospect

The term 'development' is both elusive and contested. Conservative sociological definitions associate it with a 'quantum jump'[4] from the old and traditional to the modern.[5] The latter had elements of imperialism which entailed shedding one's culture in favour of western culture, exchanging traditional technology for modern technology and aspirations towards economic growth.[6] Outside its sociological context, the term defined the church's missionary activities that led to conversions and transformed individuals from a

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[1] By "African Church" is meant the African Indigenous Churches and the Pentecostal Churches operating in Africa. "Church" here refers to the churches that have been established by the missionaries and are often referred to as the "mainline churches".

[2] This is reflected in the booklets commissioned and published between 1981 and 1993 which I came across in Geneva, Switzerland in 1994. A much earlier book which was also among the collection of the WCC was by Peter Sartorius (1975), *Churches and rural development: guidelines for action*, Geneva: Commission on the Church's participation in development, WCC. It also placed similar confidence in the church.

[3] Mbiti 1990. *African Religions and Philosophy*. Port Harcourt: Heinemann, 1

[4] Jolly, R 1977:22 "Changing views on development". In Nossin, JJ (ed). *Surveys for development: a multidisciplinary approach,* Amsterdam, Elsevier, 19-48.

[5] Coetzee, JK. 1989, *Development is for people*. Johannesburg: Southern Books.

[6] Ibid. 20-22

'heathen' to a 'Christian' status as development.[7] This was based on the jump of the 'heathen' – voluntarily or by coercion, from the traditional (African) to the western way of life, this being regarded as 'civilisation' or, in the Xhosa language of South Africa, *ukugqobhoka*.[8] Interestingly, the term in Mndende means 'the one with a hole'. In other words, it refers to an 'empty shell'. This is how some traditional Africans view western forms of religion.

In the aftermath of World War II (1948), 'development aid' was introduced in terms of the Marshall Plan,[9] ostensibly to assist nations who had suffered economic losses as a result of the war. Critics of the manner in which such aid was administered, who were initially based in Latin America, responded with a 'dependency theory' whose analysis revealed that 'aid' was, in fact, leading to dependency.[10] The Alternative Theory of Development (ATD) which focused on the power of the people and transformation of socio-economic structures, evolved out of this (Korten 1990, initially confined to People-Centred Development).[11] It basically emphasized the power within individuals and communities which could be utilised to bargain for improvements and transformation of living conditions.[12] More importantly, it portrayed the focus on economic growth which manifested in the form of 'community development' or 'self-help schemes' as they were known, as being 'reductionist'.[13] It was upon this that the Asset-based Approach to development built its case,[14] taking the potential of the community further to an auditing and listing of assets.[15] For a while, this was thought to be the ultimate radical approach. The School of Theology and Religion at the University of KwaZulu Natal, for example, under the leadership of Steve de Gruchy (RIP), embraced the Asset-based Approach, offering a postgraduate course on it which, from 2003, was co-ordinated by Clint Le Bruyns. Some educationists at the University of Pretoria saw it as a potential approach for nurturing the young.[16] A very important contribution of this approach was the exposure of the fact that the previous approaches (no matter how well-intentioned), started from a point of deficiency.[17] However, this has not led to a paradigm change. Nor was it sustainable in underdeveloped communities.

While the church had not consciously embraced the Alternative Theory, its practice had been ambivalent. On the one hand, it organised and administered funds for 'self-help' schemes while on the other, it preached a 'pie in the sky theology'.[18] This is in contrast to what the World Council of Churches

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[7] Mndende, N. 2014. "African Traditional Religion". In: Lewis, C. & Sherbok, D. (eds) 2014. *Sensible Religion.* Surrey: Ashgate; Pato 1997 Pato, LL. 1997. "Being fully human from the perspective of African culture and spirituality". *JTSA* 97:53-61, Evans, BF. 1979. Campaign for Human Development: church involvement in social change. *Review of Religious Research*, 20(3):264-278.

[8] Mndende, ibid. 182.

[9] Rositter 1985:15-16, cited in Speckman, MT. 2007. *A biblical vision for Africa's development?* Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 3-4.

[10] Ekins, P. 1992. *A new world order: grassroots movements for global change*. New York: Routledge; Cardoso, FH. 1979. *Dependency and development in Latin America*. Berkeley: University of California.

[11] Korten (1990) Korten, DC. 1990. *Getting to the 21st century: voluntary action and the global agenda*. West Hartford: Kumaria Press, later developed his own model which was based on four phases: relief (1950s -1960s), community development (1970s-1980s), policy analysis (1980s-1990s) and People Centred Development (1990s to the 21st century).

[12] Korten, ibid., Desroches, J. & George, J. 1984. *A People Centred Development*. New Delhi: Commonwealth Publishers.

[13] Speckman, ibid., 25.

[14] Speckman, ibid. cf Kretzman, JP & McKnight, JL 1993 *Building communities from Inside Out: a path toward finding and mobilising a community's assets.* Chicago: ACTA.

[15] Eloff, I and Ebersohn, L. 2001: 150, "The implications of an asset-based approach to early intervention", *Perspectives in Education*, 19(3): 147-157.

[16] Eloff & Ebersohn, ibid.

[17] Kretzman & McKnight, ibid., 1-2, Eloff & Ebersohn, ibid. 149-150.

[18] In the course of his research, the Church Historian, H. Mogashoa, stumbled over documents of the Baptist missionaries in South Africa which taught people not to bother about earthly riches while they prepared for heavenly

meant by 'sustainable development'. It also misses the point made by Pope John Paul VI (1979) who defined development as enabling the 'release of a God-given potential' in each individual while not totally excluding economic growth. Instead of reflecting on how to facilitate the release of potential and the extent to which the church's structures and teaching free the individual to participate in a transformed life, the church preoccupies itself with polemical clauses such as 'triumphalist theology' or 'prosperity gospel', while criticising other churches' approaches to a 'holistic' ministry.

Plausible as the ATD approaches might be, they have not, in recent decades, demonstrated corresponding success at grassroots level. Instead, they seem to almost exclusively appeal to a limited audience, the academics. The model is difficult to implement as it offers nothing to the majority who need immediate material benefits. Even in countries such as India where the concept advocated by Latin American intellectuals initially bore much fruit and generated refined definitions of development,[19] attention currently seems to be turning to a robust industrialisation.[20] Despite India being one of the leading Third World countries in development, parts of it are like the former East Germany before the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) – modest to substandard infrastructure and visible poverty which contrasted sharply with a high sense of ethical values, intellectual prowess and responsible citizenship. On African soil, the *Ujamaa* system of Tanzania (1967-1985), fashioned along similar lines, produced similar results during the presidency of Nyerere which was in time reversed by reality on the ground. The latter two situations are not directly linked to the Christian faith or church doctrine but they illustrate what is to be expected in a context where there is no dialogue between ideology and reality.

While there may be some truth in the statement that Jesus called on his disciples to sacrifice,[21] it is only partially so. The church lacks a balance between, for example, the words appropriated by Jesus in Luke 4:16-20, sometimes known as his 'Liberation Manifesto' and other statements ascribed to him, for example, '… that they might have life, and have it abundantly' (John 10:10 NIV) on which some churches base their prosperity gospel. The missionaries who established churches (and themselves) in Africa led a self-sufficient life, sponsored by overseas missionary agencies, such as the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (USPG), in the big compounds they owned, often in the midst of dispossessed and poor communities. There are Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Methodist, etc. mission stations throughout Africa, most of which have become defunct since the withdrawal of funding for overseas missions. It has to be mentioned however, that despite some of the mission stations being run like manors by some missionaries, they remained the centre of life where people received education and some technical skills. It would seem that the ambivalence is caused by the church's misaligned definition of development, if it ever had one.

Given the above, I define development as the facilitation of 'a process of releasing an individual's potential (Pope John Paul XVI 1979) so as to enable him/her to contribute to the welfare of the *politeia*/city'.[22] It should be noted that this definition goes beyond Pope John Paul VI's and that it captures the spirit of the Alternative Theory, the Bible and Vatican II (on the common good) and the recognition of the fact that an individual's welfare is integrally tied to that of the city and vice versa. The difference between this and traditional understandings is that it creates a link between the spiritual and material needs which seemingly is what attracts African Christians to the Pentecostal and African Indigenous Churches.

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riches. Same documents appealed for second-hand clothing from overseas churches.

[19] cf Desroches & George, ibid.

[20] See the industrialisation policies of 1977 and subsequent years. May's (2006:10) optimism based on a link between work, assets and markets changes nothing as none of these belong to the poor either.

[21] Bonhoeffer, D 1963 Bonhoeffer, D. 1963. *The cost of discipleship*. New York. Macmillan cf Matt. 8:19-20, Luke 14:26-27).

[22] Winter, WB. 1994. *Seek the welfare of the city: Christians as benefactors and citizens*. Michigan: Eerdmans cf Jeremiah, 29:7.

Biblical Concepts of Development

It has to be stated at the outset that 'development' is not a biblical term.[23] However, this does not mean that the Bible is devoid of any concept of development. Depending on the tools used, it is possible to find concepts in the following clusters: i) miracle narratives in the gospels and Acts ii) teaching in the gospels, Acts and Pauline letters, namely, Romans, 1 Corinthians and 2 Thessalonians iii) preaching in the gospels and Acts.

I have argued elsewhere[24] that some biblical texts function well in a context of development. That was based on results obtained through the employment of the contextual-developmental approach which I had devised for the reading of Acts 3:1-10. The employment of the same approach in the reading of John 5:1-10 produced comparable results.[25] In terms of these, a few things define development in the *modus operandi* of Jesus and the early church. These include i) psychological emancipation ii) physical transformation iii) response by taking a step forward and iv) taking advantage of the new-found independence. Each of these manifests in a different way in different contexts, for example, in 1 Corinthians 12, the sudden realisation that each member has a role to play in the body is psychological emancipation; a shedding of whatever inhibits one from playing that role may be both physical and psychological and doing something about it equals both a step forward and taking advantage of the new-found independence.

The gospels almost invariably portray a Jesus who frees individuals from the power of sin, sickness and disability (Matt. 8:3, 16; Mark 1:41-42; 8:23-25; Luke 6:10) so they may tend for themselves and their families. This is deduced from the stories found in the non-Jewish religious background of the time (Luck 1986) which provide a *topos* for the interpretation of biblical narratives. The Acts of the Apostles has both the freeing of the individual for the same purpose (Acts 3, 16) and the teaching of Paul about the need for the healthy to work so they may earn (Acts 20:16). Romans (12:1-2) refers to the need for a transformed mind, an encouragement for a psychological emancipation which echoes John 5:1-10, the transformation of the man who had been lying at Bethsaida for 38 years, waiting for someone to help him into the healing water. 1 Corinthians contains teaching on the role of each individual in the Body (1 Cor. 12:12-40). 2 Thessalonians, on the other hand, contains an admonishment of the healthy and idle who are dependent on others for food and everything (2 Thess. 3:6-10). When these are read against the Graeco-Roman background albeit of Aristocratic prejudices, according to some experts in Roman social history (e.g. Saddington), a sharp contrast between the Jewish practice of almsgiving and well-motivated warnings against giving to beggars in the City States, becomes glaring.[26] The latter attitude resonates with the approaches of the Alternative Theory of Development.

If Jesus and the subsequent leaders of 'The Way' had not intended the above, his interaction with the beggars would have been characterised by charity and more charity, as there were many that looked up to him.[27] The miracle narratives instead invariably convey the message that a transformation of the mind and body create capacity for self-sufficiency. I have made the point elsewhere that this was the intended

[23] Speckman, MT 2001 "For Nolan's sake, let us move on: a plea for a developmental approach in contextual theology". In Speckman, MT & Kaufmann, LT (eds) 2001, *An agenda for contextual theology in South Africa: Essay in honour of Albert Nolan.* Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.
[24] Speckman, ibid., p. xxviii.
[25] Speckman, ibid. 221.
[26] Speckman, MT 1997, Beggars and Gospel in Luke-Acts: some emerging trends in the light of theories of human development in SA. Neotestamentica 32(2):309-337; Speckman, MT 2007.
[27] In Plautus we read: "To give to a beggar is to do him an ill-service" (*Trinnimus* 339) because giving once leads to having to give daily. In other words, the beggar will never be able to fend for himself/herself.

message of the miracle narratives as it was the case in the pleas of those who approached the healers and sages of the first century in the Common Era.[28]

The New Testament thus offers various concepts of development, most of which are based on the respective approaches of Jesus, the early church and Paul.[29] According to the narratives, Jesus transformed body and mind as a way of removing the obstacles to development. Paul, not being always able to do the same, focused on a psychological emancipation in the hope of freeing the body for action. In between, Peter, John and others emulated Jesus with healing miracles and economic redistribution (Acts 2:42-47; 3:1-10; 4:32-35; 14:8-10).

Development in the African Church

It would be incorrect to claim that the church in Africa is not involved in development work. The literature produced by donors and young African scholars affirms this.[30] In some cases, it is even involved in spite of itself. However, much of what it is doing differs from what I have stated above as my understanding of development. Hence I described its position as being ambivalent. The mainline churches often serve as conduits for income-generating community development projects on the one hand while on the other, they preach that Christians should not worry about the riches of this world and that they should look up to the 'birds of the air' which are provided for by the unseen Father (Matt 6:26-32). Either the original authors of the verses quoted were limited by their contexts which they could not transform, or the church today needs to urgently find an appropriate model of development.

The African Church on the other hand, appears to be offering something different although it may not be based on any developmental theory. As already stated above, it sees no tension between the spiritual and the material. On the contrary, anecdotal evidence from the African Indigenous Churches and Pentecostal Churches indicates that the latter is perceived as an outflow or a spinoff of the former. Africans, always wishing to appease the spirits so they may be blessed, find a natural home in the spiritual churches although, in order for them to be seen as 'civilised' people, they retain membership of the mainline churches. The discourse on enculturation between African theologians and the mainline churches (1970s-1990s) revealed that some people were 'devout Christians by day and African traditionalists by night'[31] in pursuit of a combination of needs. Some, especially professionals, choose Pentecostal churches because they offer both the spiritual and the material needs without them having to fall back on 'heathen' practices. There are numerous records of healings performed, successful prayers for employment, prayers for fertility, and in one case, a 'dead' person being raised back to life.[32] I tried to show above that the ministries of Jesus and the early church had a similar effect.

Despite the above, it would appear that the mainline churches seem not to be in a theological space to reflect on why their younger counter-parts are having a competitive edge ahead of them. They have not, for example, provided a credible reason why an African believer who worships in a Pentecostal Church should not interpret John 10:10 as meaning that life in its fullness incorporates their daily bread, money for electricity, monthly bond for their house and happiness at home… and that all these things have to be prayed for, followed by hard work – either as a self-employed person or someone else's employee. It

[28] Speckman, MT 2007: 134-35.
[29] A limited number of miracles by Peter and his companions in the Acts of the Apostles resembles those of Jesus. In addition, Acts 4 shows that the miracle in Acts 3:1-10 led to the challenge of the social structures and authorities.
[30] Kabuaya, B. 2013, *Transforming Africa: The role of the church in developing political leaders*. PhD thesis. Unisa. http://hdl.handle.net/10500/11871; Chu, IS. 2014, *The Church and development in Africa.* USA: Pickwick Publications.
[31] Dwane, S 1980 Lecture notes on African and Black Theologies. Fedsem.
[32] Speckman, MT 2007:97-99.

appears, instead, that they are stuck in the past where a limited form of development (community development) only took place with funding received from Europe.

Conclusion

The definitions as well as biblical concepts of development provided above shed light on what development is about and the extent to which the concept is undergirded by the scriptures. However, it has also become clear in the above reflection that the mainline churches have been slowed down in their developmental programmes by the erosion of overseas funds. African Indigenous and Pentecostal churches, on the other hand, need no external funding but seem to have a manner of drawing out the inner energy of believers, as did Jesus, to generate income and finance themselves as well as the church. The spirits are invoked in the process in order to connect the individual with the supernatural world, thus 'claiming' the material benefits awaiting them. This is a perspective future research in development and religion in Africa should explore.

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(139) CHRISTIANISME ET LES ECOLES EN AFRIQUE: CAS DE L'AFRIQUE CENTRALE

Levi Ngangura Manyanya

De très bonne heure, les premiers missionnaires protestants et catholiques se sont engagés dans l'action sociale en Afrique central,[1] dans des pays où les infrastructures scolaires étaient presque inexistantes. Ce qui est assez étonnant puisqu' ils étaient originaires des pays d'Amérique ou d'Europe où une tradition de séparation nette entre Eglise et Etat existait déjà. Comment peut-on interpréter leur changement d'approche en arrivant en Afrique centrale ou comment l'ont-ils fait ? Quelle vision sous-tend cette particularité de l'engagement des églises chrétiennes dans la formation de l'élite africaine ? Pour essayer de répondre à ces questions, nous commencerons par une analyse liminaire de la doctrine de l'Eglise en matière d'éducation et un bref aperçu sur le système éducatif traditionnel en Afrique centrale. Puis, nous poursuivrons cette analyse en insistant sur le rapport qui existe entre enseignement profane en Afrique centrale et évangélisation. Enfin, nous terminerons notre propos par dégager l'apport de l'action sociale de l'Eglise en Afrique centrale.

La doctrine de l'Eglise en matière d'éducation

Bien que les églises chrétiennes (protestantes et catholiques) gèrent actuellement des écoles et des universités en Afrique centrale, l'enseignement profane n'était pas, à l'origine, considéré comme faisant partie de la mission du christianisme naissant. Dès ses origines, et pendant plusieurs siècles encore, l'Eglise ne semblait pas avoir explicitement l'aspiration d'organiser les écoles pour l'enseignement profane. Même si en Matthieu 28,19, les apôtres avaient reçu l'injonction d'aller auprès de toutes les nations et de les enseigner, cet ordre de Jésus avait été compris par les premiers chrétiens, selon les avis des spécialistes actuels, comme fondamentalement l'évangélisation apostolique.

Ce n'est que plus tard – spécialement au Moyen-âge – que l'Eglise, devenue le principal corps stable de la société, s'adonne à l'enseignement; et là encore, il s'agissait en premier lieu d'un enseignement corporatif, et ensuite, peu à peu, d'un enseignement profane.[2] Cela voudrait donc dire que la formation de ses clercs fut quasi naturellement la préoccupation majeure de l'Eglise mais, progressivement, l'instruction des laïcs dans différents domaines du savoir l'intéressa dans le but évangélique. Ainsi, au fil des temps, l'Eglise s'est retrouvée, en fin de compte, en possession des écoles non pas en raison d'une vocation enseignante destinée aux profanes, vocation clairement définie au départ, mais presque par conjoncture naturelle, les faits ayant créé la fonction.

Certes, on ne pourrait pas contester à l'Eglise son droit presque inné de fonder les écoles lorsqu'on tient compte de ses visées universalistes, la conscience qu'elle a une mission pédagogique, l'indépendance qu'elle proclame ou la personnalité dont elle jouit.[3] Mais l'Eglise n'a pas le droit exclusif de fonder et de diriger des écoles, l'Etat ou la famille peut aussi s'en prévaloir. Naturellement, l'éducation des enfants revient avant tout aux parents. C'est un devoir quasi sacré que les parents exercent eux-mêmes ou par d'autres personnes de leur choix. Pourtant, tout le monde est en même temps conscient de limites de certains parents pour assurer une éducation publique de leurs enfants. C'est pourquoi, d'aucuns reconnaissent à l'Etat le droit et le devoir de s'occuper de la question scolaire.

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[1] En parlant de l'Afrique centrale, cette étude se fonde essentiellement sur l'histoire et les expériences des anciennes colonies belges. Il s'agit notamment de la République démocratique du Congo, du Rwanda et du Burundi.

[2] Voir BUSUGUTSALA GANDAYI GABUDISA, *Politiques éducatives au Congo-Zaïre: De Léopold II à Mobutu*, Paris: L'Harmattan (1997), 17-18.

[3] BUSUGUTSALA, *Politiques éducatives au Congo-Zaïre*, 19.

Pour revenir au droit de l'Eglise de fonder des écoles, il conviendrait de voir comment la doctrine de l'Eglise en matière d'éducation s'est développée chez les catholiques et les protestants. Même s'il n'y a pas de grandes divergences entre eux, on notera, du côté catholique, que la déclaration du Concile de Vatican II, telle que consignée dans *Gravissimum Educationis Momentum*,[4] s'ouvre sur le droit à l'éducation de chaque personne humaine en se fondant sur la dignité humaine. Le Concile affirme que la tâche de dispenser l'éducation revient en premier lieu à la famille qui requiert l'aide de toute la société. Quant aux responsabilités de l'Eglise en cette matière, le Concile proclame tout d'abord la compétence de l'Eglise pour donner une éducation. Il affirme ensuite la mission d'annoncer aux humains les voies du salut et de les aider à atteindre le plein épanouissement de la vie. Puis, il indique que l'Eglise est une mère tenue à assurer à ses enfants une éducation qui imprégnera toute leur vie de l'esprit du Christ. Enfin, l'Eglise doit aider tous les peuples à promouvoir la perfection complète de la personne humaine pour le bien de la société terrestre et pour la construction d'un monde humain.

S'agissant des protestants, les réformateurs s'accordent presque tous sur le fait que les fidèles doivent être formés. La formation étant l'une des voies appropriées pour leur permettre de mieux faire lire la Bible, comprendre les enseignements de la foi chrétienne et contribuer ainsi au développement du monde. C'est ainsi que la formation des fidèles fut, pour les réformateurs, un moyen ou une pratique, voire une nécessité pour la mise en œuvre du principe de la primauté de la Bible (*Sola Scriptura* en latin).

En effet, en 1530, au cours d'une prédication, Martin Luther élabore une recommandation importante aux termes de laquelle il oblige les parents d'envoyer leurs enfants à l'école.[5] Généralement, la réforme de Martin Luther est bien connue pour sa lutte contre les indulgences, et particulièrement l'impact de ses thèses, mais on n'insiste pas assez sur sa vision des écoles. Or, pour lui, une formation d'élite semble aussi bien importante qu'une formation solide de base. On sait aussi qu'il a toujours insisté dans sa vie sur l'opportunité de créer dans chaque ville ou village une école pour les garçons et une autre pour les filles.[6]

Bref aperçu sur le système éducatif traditionnel en Afrique centrale

En Afrique centrale, l'organisation des écoles de type occidental – du moins sous la forme que nous les connaissons aujourd'hui – coïncide avec l'arrivée des missionnaires protestants et catholiques au XIX^e^ siècle. Mais cela ne signifie pas que l'Afrique précoloniale était dépourvue d'un système éducatif qui préparait la jeunesse à la vie. Bien au contraire, une éducation dite traditionnelle visant à enraciner la personne dans son milieu de vie était d'usage et l'affaire de tous les membres de la communauté. Ainsi la société elle-même était une école où les jeunes gens apprenaient tous les jours non seulement le savoir et le savoir-faire mais aussi le savoir-être. En famille ou dans son entourage, avec la participation entière de la communauté, la jeune fille ou le jeune garçon apprenait les métiers ménagers ou tout ce qu'il pourra, une fois devenu adulte, transmettre à son tour aux générations futures.

Assurément, dans ce système éducatif, les jeunes filles et les jeunes garçons n'étaient pas préparés pour les mêmes fonctions.[7] Par exemple, la jeune fille devait assister sa mère ou ses grandes sœurs dans les travaux ménagers pendant que le jeune garçon était avec son père ou ses grands-frères au travail. En règle générale, cette division du travail selon le sexe attribuait aux hommes les travaux de défrichage des

[4] Le concile de Vatican II, convoqué par le pape Jean XXIII, est devenu le symbole de l'ouverture de l'Eglise au monde moderne; la première réunion de ce concile eut lieu 11 octobre 1962 et la dernière le 8 décembre 1965.
[5] Cf. LALA Unsi Libay, « L'enseignement protestant congolais: Hier, aujourd'hui et demain » in *Revue du CRIP* n° 1 (2002), 252.
[6] LALA, « L'enseignement protestant congolais », 252.
[7] Voir Yves-Valentin KANEZA HABIYAMBIRE, Efficacité de l'enseignement primaire aux pays de la Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs (CEPGL): Questions approfondies sur le Rwanda, Thèse de Doctorat, Université de Bourgogne, 2011, 87-91.

champs, la construction, les soins du bétail, la forge, la culture, la fabrication des objets en bois, etc. Quant aux femmes, elles s'occupaient ordinairement des travaux ménagers, des tâches agricoles estimées légères mais réclamant plus de patience (comme le semis ou le sarclage), les soins de petits animaux domestiques, etc.

Aujourd'hui, on peut encore noter quelques mérites en faveur du système d'éducation traditionnelle en Afrique. Ce système était par exemple intimement lié aux besoins réels de la communauté où la formation s'effectuait.[8] Mais, à l'heure de la mondialisation, il ne semble plus approprié pour répondre aux problèmes actuels de l'éducation dans les pays africains. On pourrait lui reprocher entre autres faiblesses le maintien de l'inégalité entre filles et garçons avec la grande estime aux garçons.

Les premières écoles missionnaires comme pilier au service d'évangélisation

En arrivant en Afrique centrale dans un contexte colonial, les missionnaires chrétiens considérèrent immédiatement les écoles comme un moyen privilégié pour évangéliser les Africains et une voie stratégique pour réduire progressivement la résistance des peuples autochtones. Ils implantèrent, certes, des postes missionnaires ici et là, mais ils devaient également et rapidement former des autochtones pour une communication efficace ou comme auxiliaires de l'administration coloniale.

Dans des pays presque sans routes, les premiers missionnaires éprouvaient de grandes difficultés pour se déplacer de villages en villages. Au premier moment, ils ne pouvaient le faire qu'à pieds ou alors sur des litières ou des « *tipoy* » pour de longues distances. C'est pourquoi, de premières petites écoles commencèrent à se former autour des stations missionnaires et les premiers élèves furent en majorité recrutés parmi les domestiques des missionnaires et leurs proches.

L'enseignement dépendant étroitement de l'œuvre de l'évangélisation, les classes étaient ouvertes à tout le monde sous la supervision d'un missionnaire ou d'un catéchiste. Toutefois, comme les infrastructures d'accueil faisaient défaut, d'autres écoles furent parfois organisées sous de grands arbres, voire dans des chapelles des paroisses.[9]

La vocation de ces écoles était essentiellement l'apprentissage de la lecture, l'écriture, l'évangélisation avec un accent sur les bonnes manières de vivre, l'hygiène et, souvent, l'apprentissage des métiers. Ce système scolaire offrait à vrai dire un enseignement utilitaire, l'enseignement religieux étant à son centre, malheureusement avec une appréciation souvent négative de la culture des autochtones.

Lors de cette première phase, les écoles fonctionnaient généralement ²dans une situation de grande précarité. Outre les difficultés liées au manque des manuels scolaires, des infrastructures, du personnel enseignant qualifié ou des langues d'enseignement, les premières écoles des missionnaires étaient également exposées à la réticence des autochtones. Elles n'avaient pas en effet suscité une adhésion massive comme c'est le cas aujourd'hui. Pour les Africains, les écoles paraissaient à l'origine comme des « établissements étrangers » c'est-à-dire implantées par des étrangers ou mises au service d'une philosophie extérieure. C'est pourquoi les Africains les appelaient souvent des « écoles des Blancs » et, pendant de très longues années, les Africains furent très méfiants vis-à-vis de ces écoles venues de l'Occident. Cela ne va pas sans dire que pour ramener des enfants à l'école et les y maintenir il fallait déployer des efforts considérables. Dans certains villages, un bon nombre d'enfants n'ont fait à l'origine que des apparitions éphémères à l'école. La tâche était encore particulièrement difficile pour la scolarisation des jeunes filles ou des garçons issus des familles jouissant des privilèges coutumiers de « gardiennes de la tradition ». Il fallait souvent, en différents lieux, faire usage des forces pour convaincre les parents et les enfants à accepter la scolarisation de type occidental.

[8] Tharcisse GATWA et André KARAMAGA, *Les autres Chrétiens rwandais: La Présence protestante*, Kigali, éditions Urwego (1990), 79.
[9] Ce sont les écoles appelées « chapelles-écoles » et qui évoluaient sous la responsabilité d'un enseignant-catéchiste.

Si déjà avant les indépendances, les écoles organisées par des missions chrétiennes mettaient un accent particulier sur l'enseignement religieux, elles n'étaient pas pourtant les seules institutions qui assuraient la formation aux jeunes. On pouvait aussi compter, dans certaines contrées et selon la législation en cours, différents types d'écoles. Tout d'abord, nous pouvons mentionner les écoles créées ou organisées par des missions chrétiennes (catholiques ou protestantes) avec des programmes agréés par l'Etat. Une charge importante de telles écoles étaient couvertes par des subventions gouvernementales à condition que leurs programmes soient agrées par l'Etat et que l'inspection assurée par l'Etat continue à donner un avis favorable. Puis, on connaissait quelques écoles officielles – en nombre très réduit sans doute – créées par le Gouvernement qui en assumait en même temps toutes les charges. Enfin, les écoles libres non subsidiées et organisées par des tiers (des missions chrétiennes ou non). C'est parmi ces dernières que l'on peut également compter à l'époque des écoles ayant un caractère confessionnel, comme les petits ou grands séminaires, les instituts de théologie, etc.

Il s'avère aussi indispensable de noter que dans certains pays africains, le pouvoir colonial ne traitait pas les écoles organisées par les missions chrétiennes de la même manière. Par exemple, en R.D.Congo, le roi Léopold II accorda, aux termes d'une convention signée avec le Saint-siège le 26 mai 1906, beaucoup d'avantages matériels, moraux et financiers aux missions catholiques en matière éducative. Les missions protestantes s'étaient vues purement et simplement exclues de cette convention qui accordait aux missions catholiques le droit d'acquérir des concessions allant de 100 à 200 hectares à titre gratuit en propriété perpétuelle n'importe où elles veulent s'implanter. De même, en 1925-1926 les écoles catholiques reçurent du gouvernement colonial, de façon généralisée des subsides sans égales par rapport aux écoles protestantes.[10]

Action sociale des Eglises et professionnalisation de l'enseignement après les indépendances

Tout le monde sait que l'enseignement vise d'une façon générale à assurer aux apprenants la formation dans tous les domaines (physique, intellectuel, moral, civique, spirituel, etc.). Mais encore vers les années 1960 où plusieurs pays africains accèdent aux indépendances, il se posait toujours l'épineux problème d'insuffisance de cadres autochtones et le peu d'écoles disponibles étaient organisées par les Eglises (catholiques et protestantes) en Afrique centrale. L'enseignement paraissait, jusque là, aux yeux de plusieurs observateurs, comme le monopole presque exclusif des Eglises protestantes et catholiques. Celles-ci étaient encore essentiellement constituées d'étrangers et ne prenaient d'importantes décisions que sous l'influence des missionnaires. Souvent, on reproche aux premiers missionnaires et aux Eglises de n'avoir pas à l'origine encouragé aux Africains d'envoyer leurs enfants dans les établissements officiels. Les Eglises avaient tendance à n'accorder leur confiance qu'à l'enseignement issu de leurs propres écoles. C'est ainsi que les querelles occidentales entre missions et de fois l'esprit d'intolérance ou un manque de collaboration entre Eglises en Occident se retrouvaient sur le terrain africain; elles n'avaient alors pas permis aux écoles de jouer pleinement leur fonction spécifique d'instrument nécessaire pour l'unité nationale.

Par ailleurs, face à la demande accrue des cadres dans les pays africains à peine sortis de la colonisation, des débats divers sur des questions scolaires eurent lieu et des gouvernements ont fait appel aux initiatives privées. Avec de nouvelles politiques scolaires, les églises chrétiennes continuèrent non seulement à créer d'autres écoles, mais se mirent également à diversifier les sections et les options à telle enseigne que des écoles devenaient un véritable noyau de développement des villages. Les écoles ne se concentraient plus seulement à la formation des instituteurs, mais aussi à la formation des agents médicaux, des agents des

[10] Thomas MUNAYI Muntu-Monji, « Les Missions protestantes et la question scolaire au Zaïre (1890-1960) » in *Bulletin de Théologie Africaine*, Vol vi, n° 11 supplément (1984), 161.

bureaux administratifs ou des jeunes intéressés par de divers métiers. Elles contribuaient en même temps à dessiner une image positive des églises ou à les placer même au « centre de la vie du village ». Puis, pour résoudre le problème de manque de cadres suffisants et compétents, les églises chrétiennes vont, au fil de temps, décider de s'engager dans l'organisation de l'enseignement du niveau universitaire.

L'essor des écoles organisées par les Eglises en Afrique centrale est remarquable. Actuellement, les cadres ayant fréquenté des écoles organisées par les Eglises se comptent en grand nombre. Ces écoles forment aujourd'hui, presque dans chaque pays un réseau important dont personne ne peut se passer si elle envisage mener une action de grande envergure dans le domaine éducatif.

Mais qu'est ce qui fait leur spécificité ? A vrai dire, les traits essentiels qui distinguent les écoles organisées par les Eglises chrétiennes en Afrique centrale ne se trouvent pas dans un mode de constitution des organes scolaires inconnu des autres types d'écoles. Même si ces Eglises restaient souvent, ou restent encore, confrontées à bien des difficultés liées à l'environnement socio-politique et économique, la spécificité de leurs écoles réside avant tout dans la vision et les valeurs qui sous-tendent leur action. Depuis leurs origines, les Eglises chrétiennes travaillent pour l'émergence des leaders du changement, des cadres qui regardent l'avenir avec confiance et optimisme. Cela signifie que les églises chrétiennes visent un enseignement qui assure la formation intégrale pour tous; qui incarne des valeurs morales et spirituelles dans la formation; qui promeut une formation diversifiée, sans oublier les écoles technique et professionnelles. Un tel type d'enseignement suscite chez l'apprenant un esprit de respect, de tolérance, de justice inspiré par les valeurs chrétiennes; il contribue également à la formation des cadres assumant leurs responsabilités avec initiative et détermination. Puis, il situe de plus en plus l'apprenant au centre de sa formation pour le développement efficient de ses aptitudes, cultive la fonction critique de la société, valorise les compétences professionnelles et la collaboration avec tous les partenaires éducatifs (parents, Église, gouvernement, enseignants). Enfin, il met à la disposition du personnel et des apprenants des outils et des supports pédagogiques et se préoccupe des conditions de travail de l'apprenant ainsi que de l'éducateur, etc.

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(140) THE FINANCIAL STABILITY AND SELF-RELIANCE OF AFRICAN CHURCHES

Evangelos Thiani

The last fifty years have been a time of many changes in religious demographics. The research done on global Christianity has shown a lot of interesting discoveries regarding the rise of Christianity in the global South in the period between 1970 and 2020, and it is expected that this trend will continue. According to the 2013 report, released by the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Massachusetts,[1] 41.3% of all Christians were from Africa, Asia or Latin America. By 2020, this figure is expected to be 64.7%'. In Africa alone, Christianity is expected to grow 'from 143 million in 1970 (38.7% of the continent's population), to 630 million by 2020 (49.3%)'.[2] This growth is shown across the board in all major Christian denominations in Africa: Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox.[3] According to this report, Christianity in Africa has grown at an annual rate of 3.02% as shown by the religion's data:

> In 1910, only 9% of Africa's population was Christian, and 80% of Christians lived in just four countries: Ethiopia, South Africa, Egypt and Madagascar. By 1970, Africa's Christian percentage had risen to 38.7%, many of whom were converts from ethno-religions in SSA. In 2010, the Christian percentage was 48.3%, and by 2020 it is expected to reach 49.3%.[4]

While the global South is growing in Christian numbers, the global North is experiencing the opposite, a decline that is expected to continue.[5] The *Pew Forum* found that 'more than 1.3 billion Christians live in the global South (61%), compared with about 860 million in the global North (39%)'.[6] This is proof enough that the global South Christianity in general has to wake up and create very strong foundations that will stand firm during the expected shift of Christianity. Africa in this case must be ready to be considered a Christian resource centre, sending future missionaries to the rest of the world. It is for this very reason that Africa must turn round and stop relying on the global North for anything, including missionaries, finance, research, theological education, strategies and all other resources because, if the same demographic pattern in the global South and global North continues, then Christianity will have a very difficult time in the future, being in the hands of people who will not be able to sustain it.

Moratorium and Partnership in African Missions

The African Church has shown a lot of potential in sustaining herself financially, but at the same time she has kept herself linked with her mother churches in Europe and America, and to some extent she has been unable to break from her dependency syndrome. Just as African nations strove for independence in the mid-1900s, so the African Church has struggled since then to fight the tendency to remain a 'big baby', that is, still depending on her mother churches, even after she has grown to maturity. This was made

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[1] Centre for the Study of Global Christianity, *Christianity in its Global Context, 1970-2020: Society, Religion, and Mission* (South Hamilton, MA: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, June 2013) hereafter Gordon-Conwell report 2013.
[2] Gordon-Conwell report 2013, 7-9.
[3] Gordon-Conwell report 2013, 22-33.
[4] Gordon-Conwell report 2013, 22.
[5] Pew Research Center, *Global Christianity: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population* (Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, December 2011) hereafter Pew report 2011.
[6] Pew report 2011, 13.

especially clear by the 'Moratorium on Missions' campaign instigated by the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) leadership and some of its member churches in the 1970s. The major proponent of this campaign was the Rev. Dr John Gatu, a minister of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) in Kenya, who was General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in Kenya and the Moderator of his church, and the Rev. Canon Carr Burgess, a minister of the Episcopal, and later Anglican, Church of Liberia, who was the General Secretary of AACC at that time.[7]

It all started in a 1971 missionary conference in Milwaukee, USA, where Gatu was invited to present a paper. In his paper, he called for the Africanization of the African Church by having western missionaries let the Africans fund and lead their church in their own ways and methods, as well as letting the Africans make the decisions of their church without any western or foreign influence. For Gatu, all the problems of the African churches could only be resolved if western missionaries withdrew from Africa. Let the Africans manage their own churches – that was his plea, and he believed the Africans to be capable of doing so. Gatu was angered by the fact that African church leaders considered going abroad like a fishing trip which they would take for fund-raising, a practice which, he explained, he regarded as shameful for the capable African Church that had turned her bishops, general secretaries, moderators and Presidents into 'good ecclesiastical beggars' by always singing the tune of poverty in the churches. Encountering the trend of always expecting others to decide about withdrawing funding and personnel, and always remaining dependent on the mentality of church leaders who would take what they could get from western partners, Gatu insisted that the Africans must themselves decide on their own affairs. He pointed out that they therefore needed to liberate themselves from what kept them from becoming an active missionary church. He pleaded for this transformation of colonial mentalities, knowing that not many African church leaders would at first accept his new way of thinking, but he still maintained it would be the only way to become an authentic African Church.[8] The 'Moratorium Debate' went beyond this missionary conference in Milwaukee. It was a major theme of discussion at the 1973 World Mission Conference held in Bangkok, Thailand, at the third AACC Assembly, held in Lusaka, Zambia 1974, and at the 5th WCC Assembly held 1975 in Nairobi, Kenya. As Mugambi explains, the 'Moratorium issue… became a theme of heated debate and controversy throughout the ecumenical movement during the 1970s, especially in Africa and the North Atlantic'.[9]

In the third AACC General Assembly held in Lusaka in 1974, Gatu was invited to address the same issue. Canon Burgess Carr at this stage had adopted a campaign deemed necessary for the African churches to attain self-reliance and authenticity in reclaiming their dignity, as he termed it. In his address to the Assembly, Carr explained that, 'self-reliance is actually a means toward achieving selfhood,' adding that 'the Church in Africa can never be itself so long as it depends primarily on foreign money, personnel, and decisions influence. For it is still true that 'he who pays the piper calls the tune'.[10] He thus asked the African churches to act upon a rediscovery and perhaps a redefining of their identity as African Christians. Carr explained to the Assembly that some African churches were ready to go on to self-dependency immediately, but also recognized the fact that others needed more time before letting go of foreign aid and foreign missionary personnel.[11] He encouraged those who thought it impossible, to look at the African

[7] cf. P. Wakatama, "Moratorium" in John Corrie (ed.) *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 246-248.
[8] John Gatu, "A call for the Africanisation of the Church in Africa", Unpublished presentation paper to the Mission Festival in Milwaukee, USA in October 1971; John G. Gatu, *Joyfully Christian Truly African* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2006), 132-178.
[9] J.N.K Mugambi (ed), *The Church and the Future in Africa: Problems and* Promises (Nairobi: All Africa Conference of Churches, 1997), 199-200.
[10] AACC June 1975 Report, "The Moratorium Debate: What is being said and done" (unpublished report from the AACC Archives).
[11] AACC June 1975 Report, "The Moratorium Debate".

Instituted Churches (AICs) which were founded by Africans, run by Africans and were also supported by funds received from Africans. As he later told the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, Carr believed that, for the Moratorium to succeed, it would need a comprehensive Africanization of the structures, orders and programmes of churches in order to contain African values and priorities.[12] In his definition of what the Moratorium on missions was all about, Carr explained to the assembly:

> It means that African churches must now find ways of financing and manning their own institutions and halt dependency upon foreign financial and administrative structures. [Such] structures prevent the Church in Africa from being itself, [and] from fulfilling its mission in the African context. When the Church in Africa becomes self reliant, then it would be able to be authentically African and yet remain a wholesome part of the universal Church. Only then would it be able to determine its own priorities and fulfil her mission in Africa and the world. Some Churches in Africa have always been self-reliant. Others are ready to take up this option today. And there are still others which cannot be expected to become self reliant immediately – for these, it will take time. But for all the Churches in Africa, one thing is clear: the moment of truth has come: no longer are they prepared to continue to receive foreign aid continuously. The aid they receive from now on will be not to ensure their dependency but to accelerate their self-reliance.[13]

After Lusaka, a taskforce was formed at the AACC headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, to advise the African churches on how to attain selfhood, independency and self-sustainability, and it was resolved that AACC was to help her member churches in the future to do the following: to be self-supporting through encouraging investment and other projects that could generate income in African church properties; to train church workers in planning, administration and stewardship; to encourage post-theological training for church workers; to facilitate the exchange of ideas among churches in Africa especially on how to become self-supporting and how to fund-raise and, finally, to help churches start projects aimed at community development.[14] This taskforce report complemented, and gave even more strength to, the findings of the Ministry for Social Justice Work Group reports given in Lusaka, Zambia, in May 1974.[15]

The Moratorium call 'asking the mission boards in Europe and North America to withdraw their money, personnel, and influence, in order to allow, and where necessary, force the churches locally to take a break from dependency',[16] was received with mixed reactions locally, regionally and internationally. The strongest reactions came from the mission agencies and mother churches offering the aid and personnel that the Africans were proposing to cut-off.[17] Such churches and mission agencies mainly did not understand why their generosity and patronage would be rejected or seen as harmful while it was considered a very Christian-based and acceptable gesture.[18] Furthermore, they saw the Moratorium as a danger to the catholicity of the church and thus counted it as an isolationist agenda, but never as an end to the dependency syndrome created in the African Church by well-meant Christian programmes from

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[12] Carr Burgess, "The Mission of the Moratorium", address to the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, Executive Committee of the Division of Overseas Ministry – Jan 10 1975 (Unpublished paper from the AACC Archives).
[13] Carr Burgess, "The Moratorium: A search for self-reliance and authenticity" (Nairobi: *AACC Bulletin*, Department of Information, June 1974), p.1. Cf. Efiong Utuk, *Visions of Authenticity: The Assemblies of the All Africa Conference of Churches 1963-1992* (Nairobi: All Africa Conference of Churches, 1997), 107-113.
[14] AACC, Self-Reliance Moratorium Task Force report of July 1976 (unpublished notes from AACC Archives).
[15] cf. The AACC Ministry for Social justice Work Group III Report to the AACC Third General Assembly in Lusaka Zambia, 11th-24th May 1974.
[16] Mugambi, *The Church and the Future in Africa*, 199.
[17] cf. E.M. Uka, *Missionary go Home? A Sociological Interpretation of An African Response to Christian Mission* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989); James A. Scherer, *Missionary, Go Home! A Reappraisal of the Christian World Mission* (Eaglewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964).
[18] Cf. J.N.K Mugambi, *Christian Theological & Social Reconstruction* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2003), 213.

western churches and mission agencies. It was only later that some missionaries, as in obvious example of Glenn Schwartz, would confess that the mother churches and mission agencies abroad kept the African churches dependent with money, personnel and decision-making.[19]

Partnership Response after the Moratorium Call

After reviewing the Moratorium call, some African churches decided not to follow it, their main fear being how to pay their clergy and continue their development projects that had been entirely funded from abroad. Such churches opted for a review of their relationship with their foreign donors; most of them calling it a 'partnership'. Although the term 'partnership' was used even before the Moratorium call, it was only after the 1970s Moratorium debate that excessive use of this term could be observed in church-based projects in Africa getting funding from the global North. The use of this term will later be proved to be simply a term used to continue the old system of the global North churches offering the global South funding, personnel and major decisions guidelines.[20]

While western missionaries believed they were partners with African churches, the Africans believed differently. This was observed during a mission conference in Canada, when Professor Elmer explained having asked the participants what 'partnership' meant for them: for the Canadian members it meant 'mutuality, sharing, respect, co-operation, collaboration and so on', while for those from the global South it meant 'another way for the White man to control' the African churches.[21] Jonas Dah, in an article, has explained that one of the major hindrances of real partnership was that the receiving churches in the South were not offered opportunities to offer something back to their partners in the North. Therefore the South never addressed the donors as equal partners, as the relationship was primarily defined as consisting of giving from one end and receiving at the other end, with the rules always being by the ones offering. This was aggravated by examples that some partners in the North used disturbing pictures and messages in their fund-raising campaigns which degraded the South, the South being shown to 'a large extent (as consisting of) those people with torn dresses, houses that depict slum conditions or barely huts with leaves or grass roofs, emaciated or bony-looking persons, those with ulcers or some deformation, etc.'.[22]

True partnership, however, is supposed to be a proper two-way activity, where both persons and groups partnering have something to offer to each other with their common goal leading which is 'to accomplishing great things for the Kingdom of God'.[23] Lederleitner therefore pleads not to cut off foreign funding where it is absolutely needed for meaningful joint projects, but that churches engaged in a partnership relationship should work on avoiding 'sinful behaviours' of distorted partnership, i.e. practices which deepen dependency and neglect mutual accountability. For a better way of practising partnership in mission and development, Lederleitner recommends that there should be biblical founded accountability and contextualized accounting processes on both sides relating to money and other resources offered in a partnership. She also asks that dignity and mutuality should be fostered, as well as processes that will help to offer capacity building and sustainability to the partners. Such actions, Lederleitner insists, have to be

[19] cf. Glenn J. Schwartz, *When Charity Destroys Dignity: Overcoming Unhealthy Dependency in the Christian* Movement (Lancaster, PA: World Mission Associates, 2007), xxv; Robert D. Lupton, *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help and How to Reverse it* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2011) 15-16.
[20] Mary T. Lederleitner, *Cross-Cultural Partnership: Navigating the Complexities of Money and Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010); David F. Hesselgrave. *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally: North America and Beyond, second edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics, 2000); Jonas N. Dah (ed.), *Mission in a Post Missionary Era: Papers Presented at the Consultation on Mission at the Presbyterian Church Centre Kumba* (Kumba: Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, 2008).
[21] Lederleitner, *Cross-Cultural Partnership:* foreword.
[22] Dah, *Mission in a Post Missionary Era,* 89.
[23] Lederleitner, *Cross-Cultural Partnership*, 21.

initiated at the beginning of the partnership and not just at a later stage. The partners must let the process of partnership grow with grace and patience in the pace of the church they are assisting, knowing that it is a great investment that will take the church being helped to the greatest heights God would like to take them.[24] In a similar direction, Dah explains that partnership in mission is the task of all Christians wherever the church is and that both the South and North have a lot to offer to each other as equal parties. Power-sharing among partners and participation of both ends in decision-making is an integral element in mutual partnership as well as openness, trust and elimination of prejudices. Honest and trustful partnership includes sharing, not only to include material resources like 'money, personnel and things', but also non-material resources like theologies, liturgies, songs, lifestyles and new forms of spirituality.[25] For an enlarged concept of partnership to be acted out, Dah recommends the following three principles:

1. The initiative and leadership will come from the people of the area itself knowing their talents, culture and socio-political conditions;
2. The local people must be helped to contribute and make their voices heard in the setting of priorities;
3. The nature of the participation in mission will have to take into consideration the universality of the church.[26]

Selfhood Response after the Moratorium Call

Those churches that took the Moratorium call seriously would later enjoy the fruits of their decisions, which led them to attaining a higher degree of selfhood. An example in point is the Presbyterian Church in Eastern Africa (PCEA) in Kenya, which asked their mother church and all mission agencies to stop funding them for five years. They formed an African structure for their church and methods of fund-raising that would work for them, naming this initiative *Jitegemea* (Swahili for self-reliance). Before their five years of the Moratorium on foreign missions funding, personnel and influence were over, they were already self-sustaining, offering a perfect example of how African churches could sustain themselves fully without any foreign help. Some examples of what they put into practice included paying their clergy regularly and starting a pension fund for them, building churches and business centres, buying church vehicles, and even offering their mother church in Scotland funds to resuscitate a house for homeless children in Edinburgh with KShs 200,000 (about US$30,000 at that time).[27]

African Churches' Efforts in Funding their Activities

While many African churches have no problem in uplifting the spiritual life of their flock, and thus there is a considerable rise in numbers of adherents of the Christian faith in Africa, the major challenge has been in how to raise funds that will sustain African churches. The African Instituted Churches (AICs) in Africa have been at the forefront in establishing ways of raising funds locally. Most of them have done this since their inception and proved for sure that African churches do not need to rely on foreign help unless it is of absolute necessity. In most instances, the AICs have had their clergy continue working and raising their funds from other non-ministerial jobs.[28] This is imitating the tent-making ministry culture of St Paul, who

[24] Lederleitner, *Cross-Cultural Partnership*, 101-144. Cf. Daniel Rickett, *Making Your Partnership Work* (Enumclaw, Washington: WinePress, 2002).
[25] Dah, *Mission in a Post Missionary Era,* 90-92.
[26] Dah, *Mission in a Post Missionary Era,* 91.
[27] Schwartz, *When Charity Destroys Dignity,* 12-13, 18-19.
[28] cf. Paul Makhubu, *Who are the Independent Churches. Black Theology Series Volume 7.* (Johannesburg: Skotaville Publishers, 1988).

took care of his needs and those of his companions in his missionary journeys without asking for anything from the congregations he formed and ministered to, as he confesses when he says: 'You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive''[29] (Acts 20:34-35 NIV; cf. Acts 18:1-4). A good number of African churches have used what Kiiru suggests below and in most cases a combined effort of all the following four efforts have proved to be very successful in the life of African churches:

1. Getting the most from church members in terms of offerings, tithes and donations;
2. Identifying some close friends who have ties with the church or ministry both locally and overseas;
3. Encouraging the sale of services and products which meet the needs of the congregations and local community;
4. Establishing income-generating activities and viable investment projects.[30]

Giving to the church through Sunday collection baskets as St Paul asked the Corinthians ('On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made' (1 Cor. 16:2 NIV)), is a very common practice of raising church funds in Africa. Other methods have been fund-raising and auctioning of business or farm products set in different times of the year in many churches. In some instances, the local clergy ask that fund-raising be made for specific work and request the people to give willingly, like Moses asked the Israelites (cf. Ex. 25:1-9, 35:4). The Africans, like the Israelites, give in amazing ways. Pledging to give a certain amount of money per month or per year is also catching up with many African Christians, while others pay monthly or annually a set amount for each individual or family, mainly termed as CESS (a local tax system). In recent times, African families that feel blessed come to church and give an offering in front of the congregation, and in return the local clergy prays and blesses such families. These thanksgiving offerings are becoming increasingly popular in African churches and in some instances they have been proved to produce more funds in churches than any other forms of fund-raising, probably because it is a gift given willingly (compare the biblical saying, 'Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver' (2 Cor. 9:7 NIV)). Other African churches have of late invested in buying properties that they rent for business premises, rental houses, and offices; either on land originally intended for parish buildings only, or on newly acquired lands intended for set investments. Some African churches are buying these investments with funds raised in the many ways already described, or in some other instances through bank loans.

A new phenomenon in Africa, borrowed from the early twentieth century American Pentecostal and Evangelical traditions and other faith movements, is fast developing. The so-called 'prosperity gospel' or 'prosperity theology' states that, if one offers to God material things like money, property or other things of worth through the church or her clergy, then God will offer them 'divine healing, the riches of this world, and happiness without suffering'.[31] The clergy in the churches preaching this theology emphasize giving in order to receive, asking their followers to name and claim what they desire and want God to offer them through faith. Some African Christians, wanting to protect their wealth, and those who don't have wealth wanting to attain the same, flock into such churches. Material gain and wellness prophecies are promised to

[29] cf. Thomas Oduro et al., *Mission in an African Way: A Practical Introduction to African Instituted Churches and their Sense of Mission* (Wellington: Christian Literature Fund and Bible Media, 2008), 155-170; Christopher R. Little, *Mission in the Way of Paul: Biblical Mission for the Church in the Twenty-First Century. Studies in Biblical Literature Volume 80* (New York/Oxford: Peter Lang Publishing, 2005). Robert L. Plummer and John Mark Terry, *Paul's Missionary Methods: In His Time and Ours* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012).
[30] Kiiru, *Mobilizing & Managing Resources,* 237.
[31] J.N. Saracco, 'Prosperity Theology' in John Corrie (ed.) *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 322.

all who want it, claim it and who 'plant a seed' (offer money or other forms of wealth) in the church. The mainline churches are losing many members, although many of their members have double membership. And several mainline churches also feel tempted to start fund-raising, using such theologies of divine healing and blessing related to giving. The mainline churches have always explained that suffering and evil as well as poverty are to be taken in perseverance and faith, knowing that we are only passersby in this world and thus should focus on the future of eschatological life, where all pains and sorrows will be put to an end. On the other hand, the proponents of the gospel and theology of prosperity are teaching that God will offer material wealth, wellness and health only to His faithful servants, first in this world and secondly also in the next life. As could be expected, many African Christians wanting to be part of the double inheritance of life and its goodies in the now-and-not-yet Kingdom of God, opt for the second option, following the promises of the Prosperity Gospel.

Globalization has opened another door of the expansion of these theologies through the internet, radio and television programs that are broadcasted internationally, regionally and locally, and hence the magnitude of its exposure and followers is growing on a daily basis. Prosperity theologies frequently also use biblical texts wrongly to convince their listeners. The commonly used scriptural texts in these theologies include Mark 10:29-30 (emphasizing sowing and reaping), and Mark 11:23-24 and Genesis 1 (emphasizing the power of words spoken in faith). Unfortunately, 'the challenge of the prosperity gospel is that people are attracted to its message of wealth and health, and do not recognize that the message is not biblical', as Chilenje has explained.[32] Some of the clergy in such churches have started in very small and open spaces, rented or borrowed premises, but within no time they become millionaires and billionaires, owning big premises and lands where their mega-churches and new businesses are started, some of them owning posh cars and their own television airtime in national and regional networks. Such immense financial growth and stability on the positive side shows that Africans can sustain their churches without any outside help, but on the other, negative, side, the problematic nature of some of the theologies involved can be viewed as stealing in the name of God from those who are needy and poor.[33]

A major problem of churches handling money is the unfortunate lack of transparency and accountability in those receiving and handling the funds (and this applies not only in Africa but elsewhere as well).[34] We should remind ourselves of the biblical approach applied by St Paul when he sent Timothy to collect the Corinthian church funds. This is something to keep in the minds of all involved in electing church treasurers and accountants, as the spiritual uprightness of persons involved in handling finances is emphasized in Biblical teaching:

> For Titus not only welcomed our appeal, but he is coming to you with much enthusiasm and on his own initiative. And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. What is more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honour the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help. We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of man. In addition, we are sending with them our brother who has often proved to us in many ways that he is zealous, and now even more so because of his great confidence in you. As for Titus, he is my partner and co-worker among you; as for our brothers, they are representatives of the churches and an honour to Christ (2 Cor. 8:7-23 NIV).

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[32] Victor Chilenje, "The challenge of the prosperity gospel for Reformed/Presbyterian churches in the 21st century", in Hermen Kroesbergen (ed.), *In Search of Health and Wealth: The Prosperity Gospel in African, Reformed* Perspective (Wellington: Christian Literature Fund, 2013), 10.
[33] cf. Kroesbergen, *In Search of Health and Wealth*; Saracco, 'Prosperity Theology' 322-326.
[34] cf. L. Scott, "Money" in John Corrie (ed.) *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 244-246; Daniel D. Busby, "Spending Church Money" in Berkeley, *Leadership Handbook of Management & Administration,* 527-536.

The African Church and Cultural Methods of Sustainability

Many African churches and faith-based organizations (FBOs) have managed to have their own local leaders and local missionaries within their countries, regions and even internationally and, even better, contextual theologies have been an ongoing venture in African theology all across the continent. The African church leadership should understand that raising money is a theological element that is imperative for the African Church to be termed local. Promoting ways of eradicating financial dependencies and deficiencies should be a theological vision as well as on the church's sustainability agenda.

Wherever possible, the African Church should strive to contextualize her methods of raising church funds. Africans have always been proud of their dignity, but when it comes to money, they seem to lose it. African dignity and work ethic should be instilled in all financial initiatives of the church, and henceforth the African Church should seek financial aid only when in extreme need.

Participatory community and economic development has been applied and practised in Africa since the 1960s, when the Africans realized the time had come to build up their liberated countries. As Mulwa puts it: 'People should, of necessity, participate in decisions that affect their lives. This serves to instil local responsibility as well as enhancing their sense of dignity and worth. It is believed that people will give their total support to initiatives that they helped to create.'[35] Raising funds through locally accepted African ethics such as the ethics of *ubuntu* (fraternity) and of *harambee* (solidarity) could offer the African Church even greater financial stability. As Turaki says, 'In traditional African thought, it is almost impossible to think of a human being in isolation. Humans are always conceived of in relationship with others.'[36] Generosity in African traditional society 'promoted the well being of the community and the welfare of the individuals in that community,'[37] while it was practised in a way that discouraged dependency on the neighbours or the extended family members. Using the African philosophies of solidarity would therefore mean bringing people of the same faith together as a family and community, to practise generosity by uniting their small contributions that would come together to a significant amount communally. The funds raised thereby would be dignifying, knowing that they originated from the local church and that everyone in the church participated in their own small way. A person of *ubuntu* and *harambee*, therefore, is one who shares, participates and who thinks of the well-being and growth of the community, and in this way, the spiritual community: the church.[38]

Conclusion

The African Church is growing on a day-to-day basis and, with time, Africa will bring back the old glory of African Christianity found in North Africa in the first six hundred years of Christianity. The African Church must enhance and support her own activities and make herself a comprehensively indigenous church by becoming self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating and self-theologizing. Financial or economic sustainability has been defined as promoting ways that will supply the church with her needs today, and help her continue using positive strategies and locally identified resources, without compromising the future. The church in Africa must pioneer new ways of raising funds from its local context in order to sustain herself and, at the same time, eliminate all unbiblical and unethical methods of raising funds, like certain ways promulgated by prosperity gospel theology. Those appointed to serve as

[35] Francis W. Mulwa, *Demystifying Participatory Community Development: Beginning from the People Ending at the People*, revised edition (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2013).
[36] Yusufu Turaki, *Foundations of African Traditional Religion and Worldview* (Nairobi: WordAlive Publishers Limited, 2006), 109.
[37] Hannah Wangeci Kinoti, *African Ethics: Gikuyu Traditional* Morality (Nairobi: CUEA Press, 2013), 123.
[38] cf. Stan Chu Ilo, *The Church and Development in Africa: Aid and Development from the Perspective of Catholic Social Ethics* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2013).

church finance officers and leaders should have proper managerial skills to bring in effectiveness and efficiency which will eliminate all misappropriation of funds.

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(141) African Churches and Good Governance in Africa

Titus Ogalo Pacho

Introduction

The issue of governance is at the centre of the biggest challenges Africa is facing today. Bad governance, including corruption, has become a cancerous growth in many African countries. It has seen proceeds from natural resources and revenue from taxation being diverted to serve a few individuals to the detriment of the many, instead of developing common goods such as education, health services and infrastructure. The 1989 World Bank report on sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, characterized the crisis in the region as a 'crisis of governance'.[1] Therefore, the question of governance becomes one of Africa's most important needs. Even though Africa is not one country, many countries on the continent have common problems related to governance, coupled with a startling lack of accountability among politicians, church leaders, civil servants and other individuals, amounting to widespread moral decay. However, the details, nuances and practical dynamics of the problem can vary from place to place. The church cannot afford to be quiet on the issues of governance. Both church leaders and the congregations are citizens who are affected directly or indirectly by those responsible for governance. In what follows, I shall examine the concept of good governance in the context of African churches and their role in promoting or hindering it. I do not mean to suggest this section exhausts the discourse but it serves as an introductory discussion on the topic. What ought to be the role of African churches in the realm of good governance? To answer this question, we need to understand first the concept of good governance and distinguish it from its opposite – bad governance.

The Concept of Good Governance

While there might not always be a common view of what governance entails, it operates at every level of human interaction including household, community, national, regional and global levels. A fundamental element of governance includes an interactive process by which individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It permeates economic, social, and environmental spheres.

Good governance is in itself a normative principle which determines what *ought* to be done in connection with governance issues. It holds that individuals and institutions are obliged to perform their functions in a manner that promotes good values of efficiency, public honesty, transparency, and responsiveness to society.[2] The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) describes good governance as, among other things, participatory, transparent and accountable, effective and equitable, and it promotes the rule of law. It ensures that political, social, and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources.[3] In considering good governance, democracy which refers to the legitimacy of government is an important component.[4] The above parameters can be viewed as the 'principles of good governance' although they might not be exhaustive. Conversely, bad governance

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[1] World Bank, *Sub-Saharan Africa, From Crisis to Sustainable Growth* (Washington DC: World Bank, 1989).
[2] Chowdhury, N. and C.E. Skarstedt, "The Principle of Good Governance, A Draft Working Paper" (Oxford, 2005), 4.
[3] UNDP, "Reconceptualizing Governance: Discussion Paper 2" (New York: Management Development and Governance Division, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, 1997).
[4] Lewis Akpogena, "The Church and Good Governance" (2012).

could entail, but may not be limited to, oppressive systems, rules and policies; corruption; political or social instability and conflict, unjust structures; and ineffective structures and systems.

Role of African Churches in Good Governance

African churches can serve as role models of best practice of good governance if they adhere to its principles. They should intervene in political and economic matters and advocate human rights protection, human freedom, dignity and socio-economic justice. Once they practise the principles of good governance themselves, they can have the moral authority to offer viable opposition to oppressive and corrupt governments while emphasizing values of good governance, servant leadership, transparency, responsibility, honesty, accountability, justice, love, integrity, generosity, industriousness and self-giving even amidst intimidation.

In many parts of Africa, Christianity has always been a factor in Africa's democratic processes.[5] African churches have a moral duty to contribute to the development of a social, economic, political and cultural order that facilitates the growth and fulfilment of every person. This order should be extended to the natural environment so that humans are to exercise responsible and caring stewardship of the earth and its resources. The view that the church can have no authority in the operation of the state is contrary to the objectives and vision of progressive society. It is clear in the Bible that besides Joseph being a man of God, he also served as a prime minister in Egypt; Moses was a liberator who led the people out of bondage to their Promised Land; and Daniel played a role in politics while in exile.[6]

Although Christianity cannot be equated with any system of government, it must remain critical of all social orders.[7] It is part of Christian witness within the political sphere to evaluate all the political systems prophetically from the perspective of the reign of God.[8] It is the prophetic duty of African churches to discern whether the systems that govern a country are in alignment with that of the kingdom of God. The establishment of a democratic order will not usher in the kingdom of God, but it is considered the best form of government that human beings are able to construct given the constraints of our ability and the extent of our fallibility.[9] Larry Diamond emphasises that Africa will not develop economically unless it develops institutionally a capacity for democratic governance.[10] In situations where democracy is limited and civil society is underdeveloped, the churches are sometimes the only civil organisations that can inspire and support a movement towards true democracy and development of a civil society which can counteract and change a monopolising one-party system which usually abuses power.[11]

It is the duty of the church to be committed to the holistic mission of combining preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments with a deep commitment to social justice. The church has always embraced a theological position for social justice but it should refrain from delving into partisan politics which divide rather than unite. 'The church must be the unifier not divider, to shepherd the flock despite different political orientations.'[12] The role of the church in the promotion of social justice is quite biblical as evidenced by the whole credo of the book of the prophet Amos, and even by the generality of the

[5] Munetsi Ruzivo, "A Mapping of the Church Groups in Zimbabwe," in *The Role of the Church in the Struggle for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe* (2008), 4.
[6] Edwin Mwase, "Church and Politics are Inseparable" *Sunday Mail* (29 July to 4 August, 2012), D3.
[7] John W. Gruchy. "Theological Reflections on the Task of the Church in the Democratisation of Africa," in *The Christian Churches and the Democratisation of Africa,* edited by Paul Gifford (New York: E.J. Brill, 1995), 48.
[8] Gruchy, "Theological Reflections on the Task of the Church in the Democratisation of Africa," 48.
[9] Gruchy, "Theological Reflections on the Task of the Church in the Democratisation of Africa," 48.
[10] Larry Diamond, "The Second Liberation," *Africa Report* 32, no. 6 (1992), 41.
[11] Frans J. Verstraelen, *Zimbabwean Realities and Christian Responses* (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1998), 75.
[12] World Council of Churches (WCC), "Churches in Africa Hope for Good Governance and Stable Democracy" (2013).

teaching of Jesus Christ himself.[13] However, 'neither justice nor freedom can flourish without the development of appropriate social structures'.[14] The role of African churches in enabling this to happen is part of the church's mission. African churches must therefore develop appropriate strategies based on a sound theological reflection to promote democracy and good governance, first among themselves and second in particular contexts and Africa in general. This role places the church as 'the conscience of society and the heartbeat of morality'.[15] African churches must emphasize and promote the kingdom values for democracy and good governance through seminars, training, workshops, sermons, press release, sensitization and community mobilization.[16]

Five trajectories may help the African churches to play their role in the democratisation process and good governance, namely, prophetic, personalist, covenantal, liberal and socialist.[17] The prophetic trajectory arises out of the experience of liberation, affirms human equality and seeks social justice. Theological reflection on democracy must of necessity continually return to this prophetic source of Christian faith which finds its focus in Jesus and his proclamation of the reign of God. The personalist trajectory focuses on an understanding that human beings are created in the image of the triune God. This agrees with the concept of *Ubuntu* where personal identity is relational rather than individualist.[18] It is therefore the role of African churches to emphasize human sociality, interdependence of persons and the common good which are central to democracy. The covenantal trajectory reminds people that they have a covenant with God and all their actions are therefore accountable to God. It stresses the need for human responsibility before God and towards others on the basis of God's reign in Jesus Christ. This leads to a strong emphasis on accountability not only to an electorate but also to God. The liberal trajectory focuses on the promotion of human rights based on their God-given dignity, which implies that all human beings are created the same and are endowed with the same physical and spiritual components.[19] The socialist trajectory is mainly concerned with economic justice and democracy. It emphasises that there can be no democracy without economic justice and responding to the plight of the poor. The above trajectories bring about a Christian theological contribution to the democratisation process and good governance.

When governments in Africa act or speak contrary to their own laws and international norms and standards, it is important for the churches to remind them of their responsibilities.[20] They must speak out boldly in cases of corruption, abuse of office and bad governance as 'guardians of public ethics and morality and to hold the government accountable to its citizens and to the law'.[21] The churches should also speak against draconian laws that are enacted to oppress citizens at the expense of a few powerful leaders' who act and speak with immunity. Furthermore, Africa churches should remind governments that they are not masters, but servants of the people who elected them to serve the electorate.

Nevertheless, African churches themselves face challenges in democracy and good governance. First, there is the problem of contradiction. African church leaders have often been told by secular leaders to clean the huge backlog of injustices, corruption, leadership struggles, poor succession plans, tribalism and mismanagement of resources before they dare to speak against the issues in politics and governance.[22]

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[13] Mwase, "Church and Politics are Inseparable," D3.
[14] Gruchy, "Theological Reflections on the Task of the Church in the Democratisation of Africa," 47.
[15] Mwase, "Church and Politics are Inseparable," D3.
[16] Lewis Akpogena, "The Church and Good Governance" (2012).
[17] Gruchy, "Theological Reflections on the Task of the Church in the Democratisation of Africa," 53-54.
[18] Gruchy, "Theological Reflections on the Task of the Church in the Democratisation of Africa," 53.
[19] Pacho, *Critical and Creative Education for the New Africa,* 135.
[20] Nicholas Mkaronda et al., eds. *Prophetic Witness in Zimbabwe: Critical Voices Emerging in Times of Crisis* (Harare: Ecumenical Support Services), 2003.
[21] Mkaronda, *Prophetic Witness in Zimbabwe: Critical Voices Emerging in Times of Crisis,* 77.
[22] Lewis Akpogena, "The Church and Good Governance" (2012).

African churches therefore ought to demonstrate a good example of good governance so that they can have the moral authority to challenge bad governance in other sectors. Second, we live in religiously pluralistic societies. Modern democracy began with the rejection of the church's temporal power and the affirmation of religious tolerance. This does not mean that churches do not have a vital contribution to make to the renewal of democracy both at the level of values and functionality.[23] Third, 'the affinity of Christian faith to democratic values' has been severely compromised by the 'historical distance of churches towards democracy'.[24] The church has too often been ambivalent about human equality, freedom, rights and justice. Theological reflection must, of necessity, critically examine the extent to which Christian belief has become perverted, and the extent to which the praxis of the church has been unfaithful to the gospel. At the same time, theological reflection needs to exercise a critique of democracy and the democratisation process in terms of the norms of justice, equality and freedom.[25]

Conclusion

The churches in Africa have a moral obligation to address governance issues on the continent. To accomplish this task, they must first and foremost embrace the principles of good governance themselves and address their own internal governance problems if they are going to have moral authority and relevance in addressing the subject on the continent, and in their respective regions, countries and communities. African churches must be the prophetic voice to the continent. Their role in good governance can be more effective and productive if they live what they preach by practically proclaiming and demonstrating the principle of good governance in their policies, values, processes, behaviour and institutions. They should help combat the problem of bad governance at all levels of society in Africa, perhaps by emphasizing values of good governance, transparency, responsibility, honesty, accountability, justice, industriousness and self-giving. From the beginning of the Christian movement, the role of the church in society has not only been to proclaim the message of the reign of God, but to seek to be a sign of that reign within its own ecclesial life and structures. Today there is much debate on whether or not the church should itself be more democratic in its own structures. The issues are complex because for some, hierarchy is of the essence of the church whereas for others the goal is an egalitarian community. We need to recognise that from the beginning, the idea of participation has been central to all forms of church government. This is symbolised most dramatically by the sacrament of baptism which declares that all those who are baptised, irrespective of gender, social class, or ethnicity, are united as equals within one body and share together in the mission of the church in the world.[26] However, since a human project cannot be achieved in isolation but demands collective responsibility, promoting a culture of good governance in Africa should be the collective responsibility of all stakeholders at the individual, household, community, national, regional and global levels.

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[23] Gruchy, "Theological Reflections on the Task of the Church in the Democratisation of Africa," 49.
[24] Wolfgang Huber, "Christianity and Democracy in Europe," *Emory International Law Journal* 6 (1992), 35.
[25] Gruchy, "Theological Reflections on the Task of the Church in the Democratisation of Africa," 49.
[26] Gruchy, "Theological Reflections on the Task of the Church in the Democratisation of Africa," 55.

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(142) African Churches, Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation and Peace-Building on the Continent

Samuel Kobia

Introduction

The idea of conflict resolution and reconciliation in the international community gained greater currency in the last decade of the twentieth century and into the beginning of 21st century. But it can be correctly argued that reconciliation is not a new concept for the church. A gospel imperative, reconciliation is intrinsic to the ministry of the church. Nevertheless we shall start this article by describing a simple theoretical framework against which the involvement of the African churches in conflict resolution, reconciliation and peace-building is to be considered. Then we shall look at a theological basis for the churches' involvement in which some imperatives will be spelt out. Given that conflicts occur within specific socio-cultural contexts, it will be shown that there is also a cultural imperative that informs, however indirectly, the churches' work in conflict resolution and reconciliation. Before highlighting a selection of actual situations in which African churches have been involved, we shall consider three types of conflicts to which churches have responded. The conclusion identifies key challenges to the churches' ministry of reconciliation.

Theoretical Framework

A major finding of researchers on socio-political determinants is that conflicts are prevalent in poor and weakly-institutionalized countries. Given its weak economic performance in the post-independence period and her high conflict prevalence, determinants of conflict in Africa are of particular interest. According to the Armed Conflict Database (ACD) measure of civil conflict (based on a threshold of 1,000 battle deaths) findings suggest that about 8.5% of country/years in Africa since 1950 are conflict years compared to around 5% of country/years in the rest of the world over the same period.

Suggestions offered in trying to explain this situation include: conflict in Africa is viewed as a reflection of its poverty, thus lowering the cost of fighting; conflict is the product of rent-seeking for natural resources; conflict is a reflection of polities that are ethnically polarized with weak institutions for conflict resolution. The last argument is based on the observation that Africa's modern political geography reflects a rather arbitrary division of territory by colonial powers, thus creating a particular challenge for nation-building and effective peaceful states.

The standard economic approach to political violence looks for factors that explain the costs and benefits of using violence to achieve specific ends, particularly in the form of either remaining in power or mounting an insurgency. Benefits from using violence are frequently couched in terms of capturing resources either directly, as in the capture of territory, or through winning political power. Conflicts can also be the product of long-standing grievances between groups. Moreover, ethnic polarization can be said to be positively correlated with conflict.

In 1992, the then UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, defined peace-building as 'action to identify and support structures, which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict'.[1] In effect then, peace-building is a term that describes interventions that are designed to

[1] UNSG, 1992 report, An Agenda for Peace, paragraph 21.

prevent the start or resumption of violent conflict by creating an atmosphere of sustainable peace, and puts in place processes that ensure peace is maintained at all times. Peace-building activities address the root causes or potential causes of violence, create a societal expectation for peaceful conflict resolution and stabilize society politically and socio-economically.

The Theological Basis for the Church's Involvement in Conflict Resolution, Reconciliation, and Peace-Building

Conflict resolution is conceptualized as the methods and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of conflict and retribution. In most instances, the church would be interested in peace-making, which usually takes place when there is already conflict or symptoms of conflict and thus used to bring the conflicting parties to a state of inaction. Peace-making is practical conflict transformation focused upon establishing equitable power relationships robust enough to forestall future conflict, often including the establishment of means of agreeing on ethical decisions within a community, or among parties that had previously engaged in inappropriate (i.e. violent) responses to conflict.

The involvement of the church in conflict resolution, reconciliation, healing and peace-building is founded on the gospel imperative in that according to Jesus, Blessed are the peace-makers, for they will be called children of God' (Matt. 5:9). This is reaffirmed by Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20. '... All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation…'; and in Hebrews 12:14, 'Pursue peace with everyone, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord'. James also emphasizes that, '… a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace' (James 3:18).

The biblical basis of peace-making, peace-building and reconciliation is not limited to the New Testament. We are entreated to 'seek peace and pursue it' (Psalm 34:14). And Isaiah foresees the eschaton when 'nation shall not lift sword against nation… neither shall they learn war any more' (Isaiah 2:4). The African churches' work on peace and reconciliation is complimented by the cultural imperative for peace.

In Africa, traditional conflict resolution processes are part of a well-structured, time-proven social system that is geared towards reconciliation, and improvement of social relations. The methods, processes and regulations are deeply rooted in the customs and traditions of the African people. The processes strive to restore a balance, to settle conflict, to eliminate disputes and to anticipate and stop or pre-empt conflict. Localized dispute resolution processes remain a key tradition within the African community. The church in Africa, being an integral part of modern African society, embraces these processes and is recognized as a mediator of conflicts and a peace-builder who is admonished to always be truthful.

Mapping of Conflicts in Africa

There are two types of conflicts in Africa: those that are to do with historical injustices, and those to do with contemporary issues and trends.

These conflicts can be classified as open or latent.

Open conflicts

Open conflicts involve open struggle or clashes between opposing forces. These can end up in prolonged fighting, battle or war. Examples include Libya (2009 to the present), Egypt (2010), Nigeria (2009 to the present), Mali (2009 to the present), Chad (2006), Central Africa Republic (2010 to the present), Democratic Republic of Congo (1996 to the present), South Sudan (1959-1972;1973-2005; 2013 to the present), Sudan (1959-1972; 1973-2005), Somalia (1992 to the present) and Northern Uganda (1987-2006).

Latent conflicts

Latent conflicts are conflicts in their own right, or the first phase of an open conflict. Latent conflict exists whenever individuals, groups, organizations, or nations have mistrusts that develop to differences that bother one or the other. However, these differences are not great enough to cause one side to act to alter the situation but could easily lead to an open conflict at the slightest of provocations. These include: Morocco-Western Sahara (1970s to the present); Algeria (2010); Kenya (1992-2014), Eritrea (1987 to the present) and Ethiopia (1987 to the present); Burundi (1994 to the present), Rwanda (1994 to the present); Madagascar (2004 to the present); Mozambique (2000 to the present) and South Africa (1994 to the present).

Specific Interventions

The church in Africa has undertaken mediation roles in countries such as Sudan/South Sudan, Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Ghana, S. Africa, and Uganda. For the purposes of this paper, we shall use Sudan/S. Sudan and Kenya as our case studies with a particular focus on interventions by the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and the National Council of Churches in Kenya (NCCK) respectively.

Before presenting the case studies, it is important to make a quick mention of three situations where churches have intervened and mediated successfully. In 1994, in South Africa, communities were involved in violent conflicts along political lines: ANC supporters versus Inkatha supporters in Johannesburg. The South African Council of Churches initiated dialogue, but the most effective was the mediation by the then Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church in Southern Africa, Mvume Dandala. At a high risk to his own safety, Dandala played a mediation role running over many months but eventually his efforts brought together the warring parties and peace was restored.

In Uganda, the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army from 1987 resulted in abductions and killings of hundreds of villagers. The Uganda Joint Christian Council initiated a conflict resolution programme which had a good measure of success. Moreover, the efforts of the Catholic Church, and those of Bishop Okello of the Anglican Church, led in the late 1990s/ 2000s to useful peace talks and the release of many abducted girls and women.

Thirdly, in 1995 a conflict ignited by a dispute over the price of a chicken at a market-place in the northern part of Ghana led to an ethnic war between Konkombas and Nanyumbas. Over several months, fighting between members of the two tribes resulted in the death of scores of innocent citizens. The Ghana Council of Churches, with technical assistance from Nairobi Peace Initiative-Africa, established mediation processes that led to signing of a peace pact whose ceremony was attended by the president of the country. Chiefs of the respective communities were also involved. Once peace was restored, the chiefs continued to nurture reconciliation using traditional and cultural approaches. Till now, the two communities have lived in peace and harmony.

Sudan/South Sudan

The 1972 Addis Ababa Peace Agreement brokered by AACC and WCC was the first ever mediated agreement in resolving the Sudanese conflicts. The Agreement was reached between the government of Sudan and Anyanya I[2], the Southern Sudanese liberation movement initiated to fight for freedom, justice and democracy in Sudan. The full account of the process leading to the signing of the Addis Ababa

[2] Anyanya (also Anya-Nya) was a southern Sudanese separatist rebel army formed during the First Sudanese Civil War (1955-1972)

Agreement has been well documented in the *Mediation of Civil Wars in Africa*,[3] and *Too Many Agreements Dishonoured*.[4]

Following the split in 1990 in the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement and Army (SPLM/A), the churches in Kenya undertook to resolve the conflict between the concomitant factions. The NCCK and the People for Peace of the Catholic Church in Kenya, with technical assistance from Nairobi Peace Initiative – Africa, mediated for eight months. Among the achievements of this process were: the release of prisoners of war held by the two factions; an agreement on the democratization of the movement; the recognition by SPLM/A of the role of traditional leaders in conflict resolution and reconciliation; the acceptance by SPLM/A of the churches' role in monitoring any future human rights violations by the SPLM/A.

In 1995, the WCC and Caritas International formed the Sudan Ecumenical Forum (SEF) which became the main platform and framework through which the major ecumenical partners would accompany the SCC and the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC). The SEF basic ethos was that the Sudan churches should occupy the centre of all that was done in the name of Sudan, and that the Sudan churches, through the SCC and the NSCC, would determine the agenda of SEF.

Through this framework, the Sudan churches embarked on people to people grassroots peace processes which contributed significantly to the eventual signing in 2005 of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in Nairobi, Kenya.

In the run-up to the Sudan Referendum and eventually the Independence of South Sudan, churches in Sudan, with the accompaniment of AACC and WCC, engaged in high-level advocacy and diplomacy to help in securing a peaceful atmosphere for the referendum and independence.

Kenya

Since Kenya experienced the 'ethnic conflicts' or 'land clashes' of 1992 in the Rift Valley in the build-up towards the first multi-party general elections, similar conflicts have occurred in different parts of the country, most notably in the election years of 1997 and 2007. The latter would have far-reaching consequences with many victims left homeless, landless, destitute, injured, abused or dead. The NCCK was among the first organizations to respond to the 1992 violence in the Rift Valley and Western Kenya through a series of interventions under the *Land Clashes Project* later renamed *Relief and Rehabilitation Project*, *the Peace and Reconciliation Project*, *the Community Peace-building and Development Project* and finally, *Community Peace-building and Reconciliation Project*.

The project had a three-stage operation: emergency assistance to the internally displaced families in the camps; addressing the resettlement needs of the 'victims'; thirdly, focusing more on re-integration and healing of the 'clash victims' in which relationship and peace-building among the affected communities took centre stage under 'Good Neighbourliness' seminars.

NCCK's overall goal has remained to have communities in the Rift Valley co-exist harmoniously and to reduce the level of violence in the affected areas. 'Good Neighbourliness' has since become the leitmotif and a connecting point. In this context, a 'neighbour' refers to persons who were members of a community other than one's own. Secondly, kinship developed out of intermarriage became a starting-point to strengthen good neighbourliness. 'Good Neighbourliness' consisted of a series of community-level workshops, conducted in remote villages where conflict had occurred. These have targeted all sectors of the community, across the conflict divide and included a broad range of actors such as women, youth and elders. The guiding philosophy has been that reconciliation would only be achieved through constructive dialogue, mutual co-operation and respect for the rights of individuals and communities.

[3] Hezkias Asefa: Mediation of Civil Wars, Approaches and Strategies.
[4] Abel Alier: Southern Sudan: Too Many Agreements Dishonoured (Sudan Studies) Jan 1, 1999.

One of the major specific outcomes of the 'Good Neighbourliness' seminars was the establishment of localized platforms that would meet on a monthly basis to analyze the local peace situation and to plan an appropriate strategic response. They also constantly monitored incidences of violence within their locality and co-ordinated other local activities with NCCK and other stakeholders. Good Neighbourliness seminars have since become platforms where communities dialogue and reflect on their experiences. This is a very effective peace-building method.

Challenges

There are three main challenges to the church's mission in conflict resolution, reconciliation, healing and peace-building: to live and act in faith, hope and love; to overcome the fear of speaking truth to power; the capacity to bring about hope to those living lives of hopelessness and despair.

The churches could address these by embracing a ministry of presence where violence, poverty, suffering and pain is found; developing and adopting an integral and holistic approach to healing and reconciliation based on the realization that the consequences of conflict are not only vertical but also horizontal; regaining basic biblical principles and understanding reconciliation and forgiveness; and giving content, sharpness and clarity to reconciliation.

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(143) Climate Change and Food Security: A Challenge for African Christianity

J.N.K. Mugambi

1. Introduction

The connection between climate and food supply has been recognized and appreciated in all cultures, across generations, as a matter of common sense. Through cultural creativity, innovation, invention and adaptation, humans found ways and means to survive as long as they lived within the natural climate rhythms, and within the capacity of the natural ecologies to replenish year after year, season after season. Climate science confirms that since 1850 the natural climate cycles have continually deviated from the normal seasonal rhythm on a global scale, to the extent that flora and fauna have lost their natural capacity to adjust – in all climate zones on Planet Earth. It is this human disruption that has been identified as one of the major factors responsible for this climate variability, through the emission of increasing amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. At the same time, natural environments have been destroyed through urbanization, transport infrastructure, mining, plantation agriculture, and so on.[1]

Religion, especially Christianity, has welcomed and embraced this technological 'advancement', including environmental degradation, as an integral outcome of 'progress'. As early as 1910, the World Missionary Movement was enthusiastic about such industrial progress, then considered advantageous for the spread of Christianity outside Europe and North America. The two devastating world wars that followed (1914-18 and 1939-45) were to demonstrate the immense capacity of humans to annihilate each other, with environmental impacts that will continue for centuries. Africans have contributed least in destruction of the global environment, but they have suffered most. Christianity was introduced as 'Good News', but not everything associated with the missionary enterprise could be described as such. Africans welcomed biblical scriptures whole-heartedly, but response to the rest of the missionary initiatives evoked mixed responses across Africa, to the extent that Africa has the largest number of independent churches in the entire history of Christianity.[2]

Within the modern ecumenical movement, some visionaries have raised awareness about the destructive tendencies of science and technology, but their voices have been more peripheral than central. Preoccupation has been more with matters of 'Faith and Order', on the one hand, and 'Mission and Evangelism', on the other. In ecumenical circles, the relation between 'church' and 'society' remained more an 'academic' discourse than a practical 'vocation'.[3] The theme of the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches – convened at Amsterdam in 1948 – was 'Man's Disorder and God's Design'. This theme was a cryptic recognition among ecumenist theologians that human intelligence had been deployed more for destructive ends, than for constructive ones, with regard both to culture and the environment.

Despite the ecological crisis that has loomed since the 1940s, it is interesting that none of the ten Assemblies of the WCC (between 1948 and 2013) had 'Environment' or 'Ecology' as the main theme. Yet in Christian missionary outreach, Jesus is proclaimed as the herald of 'Life in Abundance'. From the WCC

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[1] John Houghton, *Global Warming: The Complete Briefing,* Fourth Edition, Cambridge: CUP, 2010.
[2] Allan Anderson, *African Reformation,* Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 2001.
[3] The late Professor Charles Birch was among those ecumenists most vocal on environmental stewardship. In his Address to the Fifth WCC Assembly at Nairobi in November 1975 he proclaimed the oft-quoted challenge: "The Rich must live more simply, so that the Poor may simply live." This challenge is yet to be heeded, in view of increasing economic inequality between and within nations.

Sixth Assembly at Vancouver (1983) emerged a phrase that remained in vogue for a while, but soon faded into oblivion: 'Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation'. There were inconclusive debates on the meaning of 'The Integrity of Creation', and on the relationship between this phrase and the struggles for Justice and Peace, especially in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.[4] On the basis of sound research, the WCC sub-unit on Church and Society, and the WCC Working Group on Climate Change issued several statements coinciding with secular international conferences. The purpose was to raise awareness on the theological and ethical dimension of political, economic decisions made at such conferences relating to environment and ecology.[5]

It is impossible for 'life in abundance' to be enjoyed by the majority in a global context where the global environment has been so degraded as to threaten the survival of the larger proportion of humankind, and where global inequality increases in inverse proportion year after year. Those few with the least capacity for ecological adaptation continue with profligate destruction of the environment, while the many with least capacity for coping continue to suffer marginalization. Oxfam has documented this extreme global inequality in its 2015 Report released during the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland, in January 2016 – with the implication that reducing poverty remains more a wish than an attainable goal.[6] As Professor Charles Birch pleaded in December 1975 during his Address to the Fifth WCC Assembly, '…the rich must live more simply, so that the poor may simply live'.[7] While a few have great capacity for adaptation, and can offer 'charity' and 'sympathy' for the majority, the fact is that we humans as a species have only one planet on which to survive, or perish. Archbishop Desmond Tutu advises:

> We often hear that we do not inherit the earth from our fore parents but are borrowing it from our children. This is not correct. We are stealing it from them! We cannot pay back all the resources we are devouring in order to feed our growth economy. Nor can we bring back all the species whose extinction we are bringing about.[8]

Pleas from the less industrialized nations have been for justice, and equity, but the responses from the most industrialized have been pity, empathy and condescension. Empathy is not part the vocabulary of climate change negotiations. Climate change has rendered subsistence agriculture unsustainable, especially in tropical Africa, Asia, South America and the Pacific – where the majority of people live. The low coastlands, islands and atolls are at risk of submersion by rising sea levels, and the fate of the peoples living there remains in doubt. Pope Francis in his encyclical *Laudato Si* reminds all people of goodwill to take care of creation, because the life of flora and fauna depends on the sustenance of an ecological balance for the global ecology as a whole.

> We know it is impossible to sustain the current level of consumption of more developed countries and the wealthiest sectors of society, where the habit of wasting and throwing away reaches unprecedented levels. Already they have exceeded certain maximum limits of exploitation of the planet, without the problem of poverty having been resolved.[9]

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[4] During the 1980s there was much campaigning against nuclear power, partly because of the Cold War that was raging; partly because of the risks associated with it, and partly because of its expensive outlay. Poor nations were discouraged to opt for it, but the rich nations continued undeterred.
[5] For example, www.climatejusticeonline.org/wp-content/uploads/WCC-climate-change-booklet.pdf.
[6] www.democracynow.org/2016/1/21/the_1_economy_the_worlds_richest.
[7] Charles Birch, "Creation, Technology and Human Survival", in *Ecumenical Review,* Geneva: WCC, January 1976, pp. 66-79.
[8] Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Sermon preached at Copenhagen Cathedral, 28 October 2014, http://reliefweb.int/videos/single/noedhjaelp/hJW70nSKDTQ.
[9] *Laudato Si,* 27, www.hillheat.com/files/Laudato_Si_formatted_translation.pdf.

The preliminary observations in this introductory section provide some background for the rest of this essay.[10] Food security and ecological stewardship are intricately related. If every human generation could add more to nature than it consumes, Planet Earth would become a paradise for future generations. Conversely, if each generation continues to plunder nature, humans will become an endangered species, as a result of their own self-destruction, as Professor Jared Diamond has illustrated.[11]

2. Historical Context

African Christians in the 21st century live a paradoxical existence, in a continent that, reportedly, has the fastest growing adherence to Christianity, and at the same time is the most impoverished, the most dehumanized and the most humiliated. Is this adherence to Christianity a response to the impoverishment, dehumanization and humiliation? Or is it a renewal of traditional African religiosity, expressed in Christian idioms?[12] History might perhaps hint at some clues. For several centuries Europe suffered imperial oppression under Roman rule. The Council of Trent (1545-63) declared the Reformers and their teachings anathema. This declaration was reiterated at the First Vatican Council (1869-70). The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) did not revoke the excommunication, but Pope John XXIII could say about the Protestants that they are 'our separated brethren', since the Lord's Prayer was common to both Roman Catholics and Protestants.[13] The Christians of western and northern Europe, together with their siblings in North America, having achieved freedom from the Roman and Ottoman Empires, appropriated the Christian ethos for scientific and technological modernization of their societies.

Christianity, having been spread across western and northern Europe by Roman priests, notable among them Francis of Assisi, Augustine of Canterbury and others, became normative for both élite and commoner. Roman missionaries and priests introduced literacy and literature, and this Roman literary background remains integral to European academia. Monasteries and abbeys remain an essential part of European cultural history.

In turn, Protestant and Catholic missionaries, following their compatriot discoverers, explorers, traders, adventurers and conquerors, went abroad and established mission stations in the colonies. These mission stations became the nuclei of the African Christianity we document at the beginning of the 21st century. The European missionary legacy in Africa is now archival. Hardly anything remains of the missionary past, which fits in squarely with the present expressions of African Christianity. Whatever remains of it is in the foreign languages, liturgies and vestments. The modern Christian missionary enterprise is a beneficiary, and an agent of the industrialization and urbanization whose by-product is the ecological disaster now recognized as a global crisis.

This fact was affirmed at the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910, and reaffirmed at the Centenary in 2010. In the name of 'Progress', natural habitats were destroyed and replaced with centres of 'modernity'.[14] African traditions were archived as remnants of bygone generations. While African converts were taught the virtues of the European Reformation and Renaissance, they were also taught to despise their cultural roots and their traditional wisdom. They were taught to discard the techniques through

[10] For authoritative impact of Climate Change globally see *IPCCC Fifth Assessment Report,* 2013.
[11] Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed,* http://aloki.hu/pdf/0402_205209.pdf.
[12] Principles to guide responsible stewardship of Creation see The Earth Charter, www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme_a/img/02_earthcharter.pdf.
[13] The phrase "separated brethren" and similar expressions have been used severally in the history of Catholicism. Despite the call for unity, African Christianity is much more diverse and much more fragmented than expressions of Christianity in any other region and at any other period. See "Separated Brethren" Term Before Vatican II (1962-1965)", ["Separated Brethren" Term Before Vatican II (1962-1965)].
[14] See Daryl Balia and Kirsteen Kim, eds, *Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing Christ Today,* Oxford: Regnum, 2010.

which their ancestors had navigated their survival for many generations, and through many landscapes. The 21st century has begun with the reaffirmation of the African cultural and religious heritage, expressed in a broad variety of languages and academic disciplines. This essay outlines the resulting ecological crisis, with reference to geography and climatology, concluding with some Christian theological insights derived from doctrinal and biblical syntheses. African Christian theology, having come of age, heralds the African Christian Reformation, rooted in the long African cultural heritage that predates many cultures on other continents, and provoked by the imperial and missionary legacy dating from the European voyages of 'Discovery, Expansion and Empire'.[15]

3. Africa's Place in Global Ecology

As human beings, we depend on our environment for survival. If we care for our environment it will care for us. If we mess up our environment it will mess us up in return. The greatest challenge for leaders in each generation is to be the vanguard of ecological rehabilitation, so that future generations in their turn will build on the measures taken now. Environmental degradation is not restricted within national and regional boundaries; it is trans-border and trans-continental. The consequences of irresponsible exploitation of the environment in a particular country at a particular time will cross to other countries, regions and periods. Owing to this complexity of environmental degradation, it is essential for all environmental rehabilitation to be locally based, but internationally co-ordinated. Adaptation to climate change is not a luxury, and should not be a hobby or charitable activity. It is a necessary strategy to restore ecological balance for the sake of the present and future generations on this planet.

Since 1850, some nations have contributed more than others towards the current ecological crisis. The nations suffering most are the ones that contributed the least damage. Adaptation will have to be local, but commitment to rehabilitation will have to be global, as a matter of necessity for the survival of all. Adaptation is a matter of equity, not charity. The demands of African nations on the industrialized nations for corrective action to rehabilitate the environment have often been interpreted as calls for 'help'. But the restoration of the environment cannot be confined within national, regional or continental borders. Restoration of tropical ecology is a global challenge, considering that the winds carrying pollutants perpetually cross the Equator twice a year in the annual seasonal cycles. Africa is the only continent that lies evenly within the tropics and, because of this planetary position, the continent is affected twice a year by seasonal shifts of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ).[16]

Africa is the only continent with two vast tropical deserts, the Sahara in the north and the Kalahari in the south. Although the equatorial zone strides across the continent from the Atlantic to the Indian Oceans, the continent of Africa has more arid and semi-arid than arable wetland. Thus Africans have to invest much more for agricultural production than other continents, especially in the arid and semi-arid regions north and south of equatorial Africa. The national boundaries are such that some African nations have to invest much more than others for basic necessities essential for survival, including water, food, wood, energy, shelter and transportation.

There are several major rivers on the continent, but most sections of these rivers are not navigable. Most of the larger rivers are shared by a variety of nations. The rivers and their tributaries originate in one nation and drain in another, passing through several more. Thus the management of river catchments and river basins is trans-national, and can be achieved only with effective trans-border co-operation. Such is the situation with the Nile (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Egypt, Tanzania), the Congo (Congo Republic, Zambia, DR Congo, South Sudan, Central African

[15] See Isaac M.T. Mwase and Eunice Kamaara, eds., *Theologies of Liberation and Reconstruction,* Nairobi: Acton, 2012; W.D. Hussey, *Discovery, Expansion and Empire,* Cambridge University Press, 1954.
[16] http://geography.about.com/od/climate/a/itcz.htm.

Republic, Angola, Uganda Rwanda, Burundi), the Zambezi (Angola, DR Congo, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique), and the Niger (Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Cote´ d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia).[17] When the rainfall feeding these rivers declines, the river volume also declines. Most Africans depend on rain-fed agriculture for their survival.[18]

4. The Impact of Industrialization on Africa's Ecology

If ecological balance could be maintained, human habitation could be sustained without endangering any of the co-existing species. But when the relationships between humans and other species are distorted, some of the species have either to migrate to other environments, or they risk becoming extinct. In Madagascar there was a large bird called the dodo, which could neither fly nor run fast. Sailors from Europe en route to Asia found that it had good meat, and its eggs were also big and nutritious. They hunted the bird and collected its eggs. By the year 1800, it had become extinct. Human survival in Africa is at great risk, unless we can learn to balance our existential relationships among ourselves, with other human beings, with other species and also, with future generations. This challenge is emphasized in the *Earth Charter* launched in 1992 during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Those environments that are easier to live in may support larger populations, up to a limit. When that limit is passed, survival becomes threatened for the species that live there. For illustration, let us consider Kenya's ecology. Other African countries can also be studied using the same principle. About 80% of Kenya is arid or semi-arid. The large area of semi-arid lands south of the Sahara Desert is called the Sahel, in which northern Kenya is located. The remaining 20% of Kenya is divided into two segments by the Great Rift Valley (which begins in Lebanon and ends in southern Malawi). On each side of the Great Rift Valley there are high mountain ranges, which attract moisture brought by the seasonal winds from the Indian Ocean. The ranges include the Mount Kenya Range; the Aberdare Range; the Mau Escarpment Range; the Mount Elgon Range and the Kilimanjaro Mountain.[19]

Researchers report that Mount Kilimanjaro has lost 80% of its permanent icecap since 1912. Proportionally, Mount Kenya has lost even more icecap than Mount Kilimanjaro during the same period. The permanent icecaps on these mountain ranges have for millennia supplied fresh water through the seasonal thawing. The forests on these mountain ranges have kept the environment cool, and for millennia they have stored the rain runoff in the humus piled underneath. The water stored on the slopes slowly seeped into the rivers and streams with a steady flow for most of the year. Today, most of the rivers and streams are almost dry between September and March. When the long rains fail in April and May, the volume on the rivers and streams remains low. Such was the crisis in 2008-2009, when hydro-based electricity had to be rationed nationally. Likewise, the peak of Mount Kilimanjaro, highest mountain in Africa and one of the highest in the world, has lost most of its permanent ice during the twentieth century, adversely affecting the local ecology in Tanzania and Kenya. The people of East Africa who depended on these mountain ranges are now food-insecure. The permanent ice caps guaranteed stable seasonal predictability, regular rainfall and predictable weather patterns. From the perspective of the local inhabitants in each ecological zone, global warming is experienced as a great threat to their survival. They are not aware of the debates and UN negotiations about the reduction, per capita, of carbon dioxide emissions, but they know that they and their descendants are food-insecure. Increasing temperatures have

[17] www.unep.org/dewa/vitalwater/article36.html.
[18] www.grida.no/publications/vg/africa/page/3126.aspx.
[19] http://na.unep.net/geas/getUNEPPageWithArticleIDScript.php?article_id=90.

led to the melting of mountain glaciers on Africa's major mountains.[20] Similar ecological disaster has been observed on the Ruwenzori mountain range in Uganda, where the permanent icecap has shrunk and the line of vegetation has risen considerably during the twentieth century, with disastrous consequences for the local populations.[21]

In October 2009, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization issued an alarm that Lake Chad had shrunk more than 90% – from 25 000 square kilometres in 1963 to less than 1500 square kilometres – between 1963 and 2001, due to climatic variability, climate change and population pressure over those decades. putting at risk the livelihoods of more than 60 million people in Nigeria, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Niger and Nigeria. The rivers draining into Lake Chad have declined in volume, the most important factor being reduced precipitation. By 2009, the decline in fish production was at least 60%; in addition there had been massive degradation of pasturelands, leading to a shortage of animal feed, estimated at 45% in some places in 2006, and a reduction in livestock and biodiversity.

This humanitarian disaster represented by the shrinking Lake Chad in Central Africa should be urgently addressed, according to the FAO. This lake was once one of the world's largest bodies of water. If water continues to recede at the current rate, Lake Chad could disappear within decades, according to NASA climate forecasts. The thirty million people living in the region are being forced into sharper competition for water. The drying-up of the lake and the deterioration of the production capacity of its basin have adversely affected local socio-economic activities. Degradation of water and land resources is a significant factor in migrations and conflicts.[22]

4. Successes and Failures of Science and Technology in Ecology Management

Global warming is an ecological reality, confirmed in the series of five official Reports of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It is also widely acknowledged that the rapid rate of global warming is induced largely by industrialization through the use of fossil fuels, particularly petroleum and coal, since the invention of the internal combustion engine. The luxury enjoyed by the industrialized countries in the Organization of Co-operation and Development (OECD) has been at the expense of the global environment. Global warming is caused mainly by emissions of exhaust gases from the machines which facilitate the necessities and luxuries especially in the industrialized nations. The exhaust gases cause a 'greenhouse' effect over the atmosphere, interfering with the natural ecology that would otherwise regulate itself. Human beings are challenged to work with nature, not against it. Science and technology, especially since 1850, has endeavoured to work against nature.

From the perspective of applied ethics, the impact of science and technology is both positive and negative. Positively, science and technology are manifestations of the human capacity to tame nature and appropriate its goods for the enhancement of comfort. Negatively, science and technology has no limits for human enquiry and experimentation. Thus the scientists and technologists, especially in the North Atlantic region, insist on their freedom to conduct research and to probe all aspects of reality – without restriction or sanction. This sanction-free approach to human enquiry is both a blessing and a curse.

Positively, human beings are endowed with curiosity, which urges them to enquire and explore far beyond their familiar immediate environment. Through that enquiry and exploration, culture is developed. Negatively, the urge of human beings to transcend themselves sometimes becomes an end in itself, rather than a disposition towards self-actualization. Technological competition between nations has led to many wars which have destroyed civilizations. Today, too much knowledge, effort and money is invested

[20] www.grida.no/publications/vg/africa/page/3104.aspx.
http://na.unep.net/geas/getUNEPPageWithArticleIDScript.php?article_id=90.
[21] http://epicureandculture.com/rwenzori-mountains-global-warming/.
[22] www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/36126/icode/, www.unep.org/dewa/vitalwater/jpg/0281-lakechad-EN.jpg.

in the development of weaponry, at a time when the majority of people in the world need the basic necessities for their survival. Responsible leadership requires that we focus our attention on priorities that ensure the survival of the most vulnerable communities: the basic necessities, such as food, water, shelter, health and transportation, and education.

The *Earth Charter,* launched in June 1992 during the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) at Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, provides the basis for global commitment for the peoples of all nations to take responsibility for ecological rehabilitation at local, national, regional and international levels:

> We must decide to live with a sense of universal responsibility, identifying ourselves with the whole Earth community as well as our local communities. We are at once citizens of different nations and of one world in which the local and global are linked. Everyone shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of the human family and the larger living world. The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature.[23]

Sir John Houghton, former Chairman of the Intergovernmental Scientific Panel responsible for the compilation of the UNFCCC Reports, has proposed three principles to guide the corrective measures necessary for the long-term measures humankind must embark upon to reverse the current ecological crisis:

> There are three principles that are frequently put forward as those that should govern such action. First, there is the *Precautionary Principle* that is included in the Climate Convention and that states that that the lack of full scientific certainty should not prevent appropriate action being taken. The second is that *polluters should pay* for the damage of their pollution, a well-known principle that has been built into environmental legislation for a long time. It can be applied, for instance, through the taxation of pollution or through the setting up of trading arrangements. The third principle, the most difficult to apply, is that of equity – *inter-generational equity* and international equity. At the moment, 55% of carbon dioxide emissions are produced by the richest one-sixth of the world's population, the United States alone being responsible for 25%. Just 3% is emitted by the poorest one-sixth of the world. There is obviously great inequity here.[24]

- *The Precautionary Principle:* All industrial activity should be done taking great precaution not to endanger ourselves, other peoples, other species and future generations. We must think of others, not only about ourselves. The resources from which we derive our luxuries are finite. We are not the only nation, race, religion or gender entitled to them. Even future generations are entitled.
- *The Polluter Pays Principle:* We must take responsibility for the historical emissions that have brought the world to this ecological global crisis. Our economic policies should include contributing towards the rehabilitation of local ecological zones that have been destroyed by our historical emissions.
- *Inter-generational Equity Principle:* It is essential for vulnerable communities to adapt themselves to the changing ecological conditions now threatening human survival. Policies and programs for adaptation to global warming will be local, but all nations, especially members of the OECD (which are responsible for most of the historical emissions that have brought about this global ecological crisis) will have to do their part, taking into consideration the most vulnerable in their midst – fellow humans, other species and future generations.

[23] www.earthcharterinaction.org/invent/images/uploads/echarter_english.pdf.
[24] www.jri.org.uk/resource/climatechangeoverview.htm; See also Sir John Houghton, *Global Warming: The Complete Briefing,* Fourth Edition, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

5. The Decline of Staple Food Production

Throughout the twentieth century, Africa's fragile ecology was severely disturbed. The forested slopes of most mountain ranges were cleared for large-scale and small-scale agriculture, with disastrous consequences. Before this disruption, the original natural habitat had sustained lush flora and fauna, which, for millennia, supplied staple food for the peoples that had co-existed with other species. The disruption caused by human settlement during the twentieth century has resulted in great shortage of staple foods at the beginning of the third millennium, caused largely by land-use policies and activities, which destroyed the ecological balance in each of these habitats. Before the disruption, each drop of rain would flow cleanly down the rivers and streams, which would be crystal clear. Today a drop of rain runoff it takes almost equal volume of fertile soil with it. Consequently, much of the fertile volcanic soil on the mountain ranges of Kenya has been washed downstream into the Indian Ocean and Lake Victoria. We are unable to feed ourselves because of our own mishandling of our habitats.

The claim that environmental degradation is caused by 'over-population' is not convincing, in view of the fact that there are countries with high population density but without deforestation, including some European countries, Japan and South Korea. According to UN Statistics for 2014, three out of the top twenty countries with the highest percentage of forest cover are also ranked very highly ranked in the UN Human Development Index (HDI) – Finland (73%), Japan (69%) and Sweden (69%). These facts confirm that it is possible for a nation to enjoy a high standard of living while at the same time caring for the environment.[25]

A report issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) shows that African nations engaged in export of cash crops have high rates of undernourishment. There is evidence also that in those countries undernourishment is most prevalent in cash crop-producing areas. These facts raise the question of the justification for land use policies that do not raise the quality of life of producers. Other than exploitation, there is no justification for a population to be forced into growing cash crops on the land where basic food used to be grown, then to be fed on 'Food Aid' procured through food subsidies from the former imperial powers. The campaign for the abolition of food subsidies has raged for many years in the World Trade Organisatiion (WTO) and other forums. Poor nations are discouraged from offering subsidies to their peasant farmers, because of the likely adverse impact on the export of subsidized food in the countries where cash crop farming is the main preoccupation of peasant smallholders. During the Tenth WTO Ministerial Conference in Nairobi, Kenya (December 2015), after intense lobbying, an agreement was reached for export subsidies to be abolished for all sectors including agriculture. It remains an open question whether the nations used to these subsidies will comply, considering that the agreement is voluntary rather than legal. There are no specified penalties for nations that do not comply.[26]

Prevalence of under-nourishment in key export countries of traditional cash crops – Country Proportion of undernourished in total population

Ethiopia	37.1	Fruit and vegetables
Former Sudan*	36.0	Cotton and other textile fibres (inclusive of South Sudan)
Tanzania	33.0	Tobacco
Zimbabwe	30.5	Tobacco
Mozambique	29.3	Tobacco
Cote d'Ivoire	20.5	Coffee, tea, cocoa; fruit and vegetables
Malawi	20.0	Tobacco

[25] www.blatantworld.com/data/the-most-forested-countries-in-the-world-by-total- of-land/; https://data.undp.org/dataset/HDI-Indicators-By-Country-2014/5tuc-d2a9.
[26] www.dawn.com/news/1227554; https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news15_e/mc10_19dec15_e.htm.

Kenya	15.7	Coffee, tea, flowers; fruit and vegetables; tobacco
Cameroon	13.3	Coffee, tea, cocoa
Nigeria	7.3	Coffee, tea, cocoa
Ghana	<5.0	Coffee, tea, cocoa
Tropical Africa	24.8	

[www.wageningenur.nl/upload_mm/7/b/b/a16b98bc-948d-41f0-8e58-6e1bd8070297_2014-015%20Achterbosch_WEB.pdf]

In July 2014, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) released a list of the thirty-three countries in need of food assistance, twenty-six of them in Africa: Central African Republic, Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Guinea, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. Again, this list shows that Africa's agricultural production has not increased since 1960, although agricultural land has been alarmingly degraded. The rapid growth of Africa's population is not matched with corresponding local production of basic foods. At the same time, land continues to be used for purposes other than basic food production as listed above, including flowers, rubber, sugar, lumber, and so on. A nation incapable of feeding its population will risk political instability and external interference. Food subsidies from industrialized nations are sent as 'Food Aid' to Africa, a continent with more than enough land to feed its citizens.[27]

6. Theological Reflection

a) The missionary background

David Livingstone was one of the leading campaigners for replacing the 'illegitimate slave trade' with 'legitimate agricultural trade'. His slogan was 'Christianity, Civilization and Commerce'. Malawi became one of the earliest British colonies to embark on Livingstone's model, which Christian missionaries replicated in other colonies. Thus Christian mission stations became the earliest centres where Africans were taught how to grow, on unviable small plots, the cash crops whose yield was primarily for exporting to cities of the colonial power. At the same time, settlers from colonial countries took vast stretches of land for large-scale production of the same agricultural commodities with the same markets in Europe, competing with the African peasant growers. Co-operatives could not compete with the settlers' large-scale production. Consequently, African peasants remained poor – on their own land. This cash crop policy remained entrenched in tropical Africa, even after national sovereignty had been achieved. A few African nations nationalized the settlers' farms (such as Tanzania and Zimbabwe), but nationalization did not make these large-scale farms more profitable. An agricultural economy based on the production and marketing of luxury-food commodities cannot feed a national population. It may enrich a few farmers with access to luxury markets, but the peasant producers will always be at the mercy of corporate producers and their sales agents.[28]

The colonial policy of exploiting African nations as sources of cheap labour and raw commodities has not changed. Since the trade in raw commodities is in strong foreign currencies, African countries have continued to be the net losers. The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) between the European Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries (ACP) will not reverse this inequity, owing to the dominant

[27] www.fao.org/3/a-i3899e.pdf.
[28] www.pambazuka.net/en/category.php/features/77990.

power of the EU in its dealings with the regional blocs in the African, Caribbean and Pacific regions. Ecological rehabilitation is not a priority in EPAs, not being profitable in the short term. Ecological damage under old colonial policies took many decades, and will take centuries to correct, even if it is at all possible.[29]

Christian mission stations became centres and models for environmental destruction, as missionaries destroyed the local habitat in order to replicate their temperate ecology in tropical Africa. Exotic flowers, herbs, shrubs, trees and crops were introduced from Europe, and Africans were discouraged from growing their traditional foods. European cuisine became normative among African converts. Although traditional African cuisine was cheaper and much more healthy, African Christians were indoctrinated into believing that the missionary cuisine was superior. This teaching was consistent with the disparagement of anything African, and the elevation of everything European. Christianity was inculcated in African converts as 'European' Christianity, with its variants in the specific denominations that came to particular parts of Africa. In tropical Africa the 'wedding cake' has become the symbol of a 'Christian' wedding – a delicacy that is not part of any African menu.[30]

The Europeanization of Africa was intended to be comprehensive; those who rejected it were condemned as rebels. African Independent Churches in various African colonies were voices of protest, and were condemned as both religious and political movements of rebellion. Consistently, African Independent Churches became the religious aspect of revolt against colonial domination, alongside the political movements that were banned in much the same way that the European Reformation and Renaissance were two sides of the same coin: the revolt against Roman Catholicism.[31]

b) Doctrinal creeds

i) The Apostle's Creed: The Christian faith affirms that the universe and everything therein is God's creation. This is the first article of the Apostles' Creed whose first affirmation is: 'I believe in God Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.' This affirmation is an echo of Psalm 24:1-2: 'The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; ² for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers' (NRSV). Church doctrine, especially under the influence of the European Reformation, has tended to undervalue the significance of this first article of the Apostles' Creed. In practice, what does it mean to affirm that God Almighty is the 'Maker of heaven and earth'? Did God create the world and retire (deism), or is God still actively involved the programme of creation (theism)? What is the role of human beings in the divine programme of creation? Is it responsible leadership for human beings to continually destroy the ecology that makes life possible on earth? These are theological questions, as much as they are ethical and technological.[32]

ii) The Nicene Creed: The Creed of Nicaea is even more explicit: 'We believe in one God, the Father of all, Creator of all things visible and invisible.' In the Nicene Creed, the attribute of divine progeny replaces that of divine omnipotence. God is the 'Father of all' and 'Creator of all things visible and invisible'. It might appear as though the Nicene Creed differs radically from the Apostles' Creed. The difference between the two is not in content, but in language. Both these creeds, in their First Article, emphasize that human beings are creatures, and must not conduct themselves as if to usurp God's authority as Creator. In Luke 10:21-24, Jesus Christ refers to God as 'Father, the Lord of heaven and earth'.

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[29] http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2009/september/tradoc_144912.pdf.
[30] J.N.K. Mugambi, "Christianity and the African Cultural Heritage" [epository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/21579/021_Chapter20_p516-542.pdf?sequence=25].
[31] Karl Holl, *The Cultural Significance of the Reformation,* op. cit.
[32] J.N.K. Mugambi, "Creation and Salvation in Theologies of Reconstruction", in E.M. Conradie, ed., *Creation and Salvation: A Companion on Recent Theological Movements,* Münster: LIT Verlag, 2012, Ch. 11, pp. 325-39.

> [21] At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.[d] [22] All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.'

These affirmations are derived from the first chapter of the book of Genesis, in which the origin of everything is attributed to God. It is through God's authority that everything comes into being: God speaks, and it is done. Human beings are not responsible for bringing themselves into the world. They are God's creatures, just like all others. The verses in Genesis 1 are a great poem expressing the omnipotence of God, and the finitude of human beings and other parts of God's creation. Creatures have neither power, nor authority. Their existence is dependent on the authority of the divine Creator.

iii). St Paul's Creed: St Paul, addressing the Colossians, affirms that Jesus is one with God the Creator:

> [15] He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; [16] for in[a] him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers – all things have been created through him and for him.[17] He himself is before all things, and in[b] him all things hold together. (Col. 1:15-17)

In this affirmation, St Paul is emphasizing that we human beings are finite, in contrast with the infinite Creator. The ecological crisis we suffer is the result of the human usurpation of divine providence, to the point that in our culture we conduct ourselves as if we were divine. This is blasphemy, with disastrous consequences. Sir John Houghton – as a scientist and as a Christian – reminds us that scientific enquiry and technological innovation do not exempt us from moral responsibility and spiritual discernment. As creatures that are endowed with intelligence and the capacity for tool-making, we have the capacity to become co-workers to improve creation, rather than to degrade it. From the perspective of the creeds cited above, the ecological destruction we continue to inflict on Planet Earth is our responsibility as humans, and it is our duty to rehabilitate the earth for future generations. John Houghton encourages us to shun despair:

> Lack of will is not a new problem, of course, for humans. It is largely a moral and spiritual problem, one that St Paul presented in his letter to the Romans (Rom. 7:18) in the New Testament, commenting that he had not completely solved it for himself in his own experience. People often say to me, 'The problem is so big, it will never be solved; you're not going to get anywhere; the politicians will never agree; greedy people will never change their ways.' So why am I optimistic?[33]

John Houghton gives three reasons for optimism, which he explains on the basis of his vocation as a meteorologist and as a negotiator within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, representing the UK when he was Chief Meteorologist:

> *First,* I have experienced the scientific community, many hundreds of scientists from a wide range of countries, ideologies, disciplines and backgrounds, come together with great commitment to agree a scientific assessment of likely climate change. *Secondly,* the necessary technology is available, or is becoming available and industry is beginning to see climate change as an issue that provides great opportunities for technical advance. And thirdly, I am a Christian, and I believe that God is committed to his creation, a commitment he has demonstrated by sending Jesus into the world to be the saviour of the human race. In delegating to humans the care of his creation, God has not left us to do it on our own. That he is there to help us with the great task has been a great source of strength to me in my work with the IPCC. I felt this particularly strongly as a few of us met for prayer during the very demanding IPCC Plenary in

[33] John Houghton, www.jri.org.uk/resource/climatechangeoverview.htm.

> Shanghai. *Finally* let me comment again on the need for commitment. If human communities are to be fulfilled and creative, they not only need goals related to economic performance but also moral and spiritual goals. Care for the overall health of the planet is such a goal. Scientists are already working hard and in concert to provide better information about likely climate change, governments in the FCCC have begun to set the necessary framework for change, and business and industry are beginning to recognize the need for action and the opportunities for innovation in new technologies. It is up to all of us as world citizens to support the action being taken, and contribute to it.[34]

7. What We Ought to Do

Is there any hope? What must we do? Yes, there is hope, and there are many things we can do – individually, collectively, nationally and internationally. Here are some of the strategies we can adopt:

a) Arable Land Recovery: Recover as much arable land as possible from the semi-arid areas. More than two thirds of the Netherlands was recovered from the sea. The people built little walls to keep the sea water out during low tides, and eventually a very large area was recovered for very productive farming. We must commit ourselves to convert our semi-arid areas into fertile farmland. We can do it. Libya has done it. South Africa has done it. Peru has done it. Australia has done it. California has done it. China has done it. India has done it. We can do it. Perhaps we should say with Obama, 'Yes, we can. Yes we can.' But this initiative can best succeed if individuals take initiatives. Government can provide incentives to encourage individuals to harvest fertile land from semi-arid areas. But we must not expect Government as an institution to embark on such projects. If we follow that route we shall end up with 'white elephants'.[35]

b) Staple Foods: Diversify our staple foods. Each ecological zone has carbohydrate, protein and vitamin foods best suited for them. We must work with nature, never against nature. Maize is not an East African crop. It came from Central America, and was introduced to Africa by the Portuguese during the sixteenth century. Rice came from Asia. Wheat and barley came from Europe. We have never been able to grow enough of these exotic cereals, because our region is not ecologically suitable for them. Our ecological zone is the natural home for bananas, sweet potatoes, yams, cassava, arrowroots and various millets. We need to develop these crops, and make them our staple diet. They are nutritious, and they are healthy. Vegetable proteins are healthy, and they grow well in our ecological zone. Animal proteins should also be diversified. Cattle may be prestigious to grow and eat. But are they economical to keep as livestock? We need to think very creatively and innovatively.[36]

c) Food Shelf-Life: Prolong the shelf-life of all our staple foods. A large percentage of the harvest of our foods is lost because of its very short shelf-life. We must learn how to keep our harvests fresh, nutritious and suitable for human consumption for as long as possible. Refrigeration is an option, but a very expensive one. Drying is another option, which is much cheaper, because we have much solar energy in our region. A third option is to keep the harvest on the farm for as long as possible, provided that it does not hinder the growing of the next crop. Yams intercrop with trees, and one harvests only what is needed, leaving the rest in the soil until another ration is required. Seasoning is another option,

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[34] www.jri.org.uk/resource/climatechangeoverview.htm.

[35] Jesse N.K. Mugambi and G. Kebreab, *Fresh Water to Eradicate Poverty: Understanding the Issues,* Norwegian Church Aid, 2006. https://www.kirkensnodhjelp.no/en/about-nca/publications/reports/; Mary Tiffen et. al, *More People, Less Erosion: Environmental Recovery in Kenya,* London: Overseas Development Institute, 1994.

[36] Frances Moore Lappé, *Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity,* Ballantine, 1981; William Byron, ed., *The Causes of World Hunger*, Paulist Press, 1983.

which is complicated by the risk of chemical poisoning. We need to develop methods of food preservation conducive to our own habitats, and simple enough for all of us to apply.[37]

d) Community Education: Educate everyone to rely on our own products rather than on imported subsidized foods. This can be done successfully if we begin from our own homes, and integrate it into our curriculum.[38]

e) Food Policies: Enact national food policies, which will require every ecological zone in Africa to become a source of staple foods not only for the people of that area, but for this region. Movement of foods from one area to another should be encouraged, so that we begin to diversify our staple foods, using varieties grown within this region rather than imported from abroad.[39]

f) Energy from Renewable Sources: Embark on a deliberate policy to generate most electricity from renewable sources, particularly solar, wind and geothermal steam. On 25th July 2015, Germany generated 78% of its national electricity output from solar panels and wind turbines. The national borders of Germany are between latitudes 47 and 55 degrees north.[40] If Germany can generate so much electricity from solar panels so far north of the Equator, Africa – most of it located within the tropics – can certainly generate much, much more, electricity from the sun and from the regular seasonal winds. With much success, Kenya has begun diversifying its energy generation from hydro-electric power generation to solar panels, wind turbines and geothermal steam turbines.[41]

g) Cost Reduction: At the regional level, each region in Africa should be able to feed its own population with staple foods grown within that region. Such a policy will reduce transport costs and wastage in transit.[42] Africa is the only continent that mostly consumes what it does not produce, and mostly produces what it does not consume. Wealth can never be created and accumulated under such policy and practice. Wealth is created through the production of what people consume, importing the deficit while at the same time consuming what they produce and exporting the surplus. Wealth is the net difference between these equations.[43]

h) Green Belts: Nobel Laureate Professor Wangari Maathai campaigned for the greening of Africa through afforestation at domestic, local, national and regional levels.[44] Africa can, and should, feed its population with food grown within the continent, on the basis of the strategy outlined above. Heeding the challenge and campaign of Wangari Maathai, the Great Green Wall of Africa is an example of the commitment of African peoples and nations to constructively respond to the ecological crisis of which they are more the victims than the perpetrators. It is a stretch of territory greened with planted trees, covering 7,775 kilometres in length and fifteen kilometres wide, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea, through eleven nations, along the edge of the Sahara Desert. The nations involved are Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti. Each nation within the strip is responsible for the afforestation of that section. The purpose is to create a natural barrier against the

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[37] http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTARD/Resources/MissingFoods10_web.pdf.
[38] Jesse N.K. Mugambi, "Responsible Leadership in Education and Development", in Christoph Stückelberger and J.N.K. Mugambi, eds, *Responsible Leadership: Global and Contextual Ethical Perspectives,* Nairobi: Acton, 2007; Globethics.net Series Vol. I, pp. 79-96.
[39] www.kilimo.go.tz/MAFAP/MAFAP-brochure-eng-WEB.pdf.
[40] On Germany see http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2015/07/29/3685555/germany-sets-new-renewable-energy-record/.
[41] On domestic solar units in Kenya see www.bloomberg.com/features/2015-mkopa-solar-in-africa/; file:///Users/mugambi/Downloads/24_Kenya-policy-report-note.pdf.
[42] www.fao.org/docrep/w0078e/w0078e03.htm.
[43] www.economist.com/blogs/feastandfamine/2012/05/food.
[44] Wangari Maathai, *Unbowed: A Memoir,* New York: Knopf, 2006; Greenbelt Movement, http://pats-eduent.net/xpeople_6maathai.pdf.

southward spread of the Sahara Desert. Co-operation in this long-term project is an illustration of the great potential for African nations to work together for the common good of global humanity.[45]

8. A Message of Hope

Yes, we can feed ourselves. Yes, we can. Let us not wait for other people to come to Africa to throw their surplus foods and clothes at us, as if we are incapable of feeding and clothing ourselves with food grown on our own fertile soils and fabrics woven on our looms. We can feed and clothe ourselves. Yes we can – especially if we live up to the imperatives of *The Earth Charter* with its emphasis on the necessity for all of us humans to work together to make the earth better than we found it, in consideration of other people, other species, and future generations.[46] African Christians cannot rehabilitate their continent on their own, since they share it with others, and in view of the fact that climate change as experienced by us today is the consequence of generations of environmental pollution, originating elsewhere. Ecological rehabilitation is the task for all people who care for the present and future generations. This insight is part of African wisdom.

Tragically, the twenty-first Conference of Parties to UNFCCC at Paris, France (December 2015) postponed remedial action to 2020, which will be nearly fifty years after the first UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) at Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972.[47] Hardly any politician who participated in the Stockholm negotiations will be alive then, and if alive, hardly any of them will have any influence on policy. For the sake of winning elections, the present generation of politicians in industrialized nations has reneged on the responsibility to act now, leaving the people of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) to fend for themselves – even though they are more victims than perpetrators in the deteriorating global macro-climatic indicators.[48]

The Beatitudes of Jesus remind us again that God's reign prevails, even when human adversity seems overwhelming (Matt. 5:1-12). Life in abundance will come, not from charity and patronage, but through retributive justice (John 10:10). It would be prudent and wise for us all to add more to nature than we extract from it. This is the way to become co-workers with the Creator (I Cor. 3:9) and the way to fulfil our aspirations as creative creatures.

The Interfaith Summit hosted by the Archbishop of Uppsala, Sweden, issued a manifesto urging political leaders of the most powerful nations to hasten consensus based on the Kyoto Protocol. The Manifesto was timed in anticipation of the 2009 Fifteenth Conference of the Parties. In one paragraph, the Manifesto states:

> We urge political and religious leaders to bear responsibility for the future of our planet and the living conditions and habitat preservation of new generations, assured in this of support and co-operation from the faith traditions of the world. The climate crisis is a fundamental spiritual question for the survival of humanity on Planet Earth. At the same time, we know that the world has never before been more capable of creating sustainable development. Humanity possesses the knowledge and technology. Popular commitment to doing what can and must be done is growing. We are challenged to review the values, philosophies, beliefs and moral concepts which have shaped and driven our behaviours and informed our dysfunctional relationship with our natural environment.[49]

[45] https://www.thegef.org/gef/great-green-wall.
[46] www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme_a/img/02_earthcharter.pdf.
[47] www.britannica.com/topic/environmentalism.
[48] Archbishop Tutu's Message at COP 15, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tuu6tOE8gKc.
[49] Uppsala Inferfaith Climate Summit Manifesto https://www.svenskakyrkan.se/interfaithclimatesummit/inenglish.

During the UN Copenhagen Climate Conference (COP 15), Archbishop Rowan Williams preached a sermon at Copenhagen Cathedral on 13th December 2009, in which he emphasized:

> We meet as people of faith in the context of this critical moment in human history; and so we are not here just to plead or harangue, let alone to encourage panic and terror. We are here to say two simple things, to ourselves, our neighbours and to our governments. First: don't be afraid, but ask how the policies you follow and the lifestyle that you take for granted look in the light of the command to love the world you inhabit. Ask what would be a healthy and sustainable relationship with this world, a relationship that would in some way manifest both joy in and respect for the earth. Start with the positive question – how do we show that we love God's creation? Second: don't separate this from the question of how we learn to trust one another within a world of limited resources. In such a world there can be no trust without justice, without the assurance of knowing that my neighbour is there for me when I face insecurity or risk… How shall we build international institutions that make sure the resources get where they are needed… Love casts out fear; and the promise that makes sense of all this is the promise we heard in the reading from St Paul's letter to the Romans: if we allow God to teach us trust and if we learn to live in trust and confidence, the whole created order feels the effects. The 'slavery' imposed on the created order by human sinfulness and selfishness gives way to liberation; human freedom and the fulfilment of the destiny of the world around are manifested together, and the result is glory.[50]

It is worthwhile to conclude this paper with the prayer of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si,* May 2015:

> God of love,
> show us our place in this world
> as channels of your love for all the creatures of this earth,
> for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
> Enlighten those who possess power and money
> that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
> that they may love the common good,
> advance the weak, and care for this world in which we live.
> The poor and the earth are crying out.
> O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
> help us to protect all life, to prepare for a better future,
> for the coming of your Kingdom of justice, peace,
> love and beauty. Praise be to you! Amen.[51]

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(144) The African Union and All Africa Conference of Churches

Bethuel A. Kiplagat

Setting the Stage

The All Africa Conference of Churches was inaugurated on 20th April 1963 in Kampala and a month later, on May 25, 1963, the Organisation of African Unity came into being in Addis Ababa. The All Africa Conference of Churches is a fellowship of 172 member churches and Christian Councils in 43 countries. The African Union (AU) covers the whole continent of 54 member countries except Morocco which suspended its membership because the organization recognized the Western Sahara Liberation Front. The two organisations celebrated their Golden Jubilee in 2013 in Addis Ababa and Kampala.

The African Union celebrated the Jubilee by launching a new vision for the continent, called Agenda 2063. The agenda is to be people-driven and owned. The Chairman of the African Union approached the Secretary General of AACC to organize a consultation for inter-faith organization that is Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Bahai, Hindu and African Traditional Religion to deliberate on the draft Agenda 2063. The Consultation was held on 5-6 November 2014 at the Headquarters of AACC in Nairobi. There were 93 participants, and I had the privilege of attending the Consultation. The report of the Consultation was tabled at the February Summit of the African Union.

The Agenda 2063 "The Africa we want" draws its inspiration and spirit from pan-Africanism as it 'seeks to galvanise and unite in action all Africans and the diaspora around the common vision of a peaceful integrated and prosperous Africa, driven by its citizens and taking its rightful place in the world' and it continues to argue for 'an inclusive growth and sustainable development'. Politically united and based on the ideals of pan-Africanism the vision unfolded here is for an Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law.

AACC is in a unique and privileged position to contribute significantly to the Agenda 2063 and the future of Africa and the world. Apart from the AU, I do not think there is another continental organization with such an extensive network and experience in dealing with the problems of the continent over these many years. Where did it start?

We have to go to Ibadan in Nigeria where it all begun with the holding of the first Pan-African Church Conference on January 10-19, 1958, attended by 195 delegates, the majority of whom were Africans. Race was still a factor in those days and in fact the report gave the racial breakdown of the delegates as follows: 'Racially, the conference consisted of 96 Negros, 92 Whites, and seven Asians.' George W. Carpenter who was the organizer of the conference wrote in a glowing and paternalistic manner when he observed Africans 'speaking capably, confidently and effectively and to watch the growing sense of personal responsibility, initiative and commitment with which they dealt with the issues before them'.

The conference came up with two important recommendations and a prophetic statement about the future of Africa. A decision was made to set up a Provisional Committee to explore the best ways and means of providing links between and among the Churches and this is what led finally to the establishment of a continental body to carry on with the work of the Church. Islam came up for discussion out of a concern that it was gaining more ground and spreading across the continent, and the reason for the perceived growth was noted as follows:

1. Islam is presented as the religion of the coloured people and Christianity the religion of the Whites. Further, a Muslim missionary approaches the African as a brother, a fellow sufferer from oppression and exploitation.

2. Islamic teaching and practice of equality between race and colour groups and its emphasis on the brotherhood of man are also attractive to sensitive Africans.

The delegates were concerned and felt that the issue of Islam is sensitive and should be approached prayerfully and with humility. The church needed to be equipped in order to share the good news with the Muslim brother or sister and neighbour. To this end, a suggestion was made to establish a movable study centre on Islam in Africa. But, instead of a movable study centre, the Islam in Africa Project was created with the objective of initiating dialogue between Muslims and Christians in Africa, and this has given birth to the Programme for Christian-Muslim Relations in Africa (PROCMURA) with its headquarters based in Nairobi. PROCMURA works very closely with AACC as a sister organization. PROCMURA has been on the ground for the last 56 years and has acquired deep knowledge of Islam in Africa. The African Union, being aware of the experience of PROCMURA with Islam in Africa, invited Dr Johnson Mbilah, the Secretary General, as key advisor to the workshop on 'Radicalisation, Violent Extremism, Deradicalisation, Counter Radicalisation and Counter Violent Extremism in Brazzaville for the Economic Community of Central African States'. Given the impact of religious radicalization on the continent of Africa, PROCMURA's work is cut out for the coming decade, and the African Union will rely on its experience and knowledge to combat the problem of the regionalization of politics.

The Challenge

Africa was on the move. The spirit of freedom was in the air. The message to the churches recognized and rejoiced in the advance of countries towards self-government but warned of the difficulties ahead, and this is what they said:

> The continent of Africa will see unparalleled events and changes during the rest of this century, welcome by some, feared by others. We pray that the Christian Church of Africa will play its role as champion, teacher, counsellor and shepherd during these crucial years. We are humbly aware of our responsibilities to God and this continent, and dedicate ourselves anew to their performance, trusting that we shall be led and supported by our fellow Christians throughout Africa and the World.

What an insight to discern what lay ahead. Changes came, and in the avalanche of independence, within a very short time from 1957 to 1965, Africa was liberated – except the Portuguese colonies, and countries where there were sizable European communities, such as South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Namibia, and these were to take several decades before they were liberated.

There was no time to settle and enjoy the hard-won freedom before the continent was plunged into a serious crisis. In January 1963, news came that the recently elected President of Togo was assassinated. For the next two decades, there were coups and counter-coups and assassinations of heads of states and political leaders. There were at least twenty-three heads of states assassinated between 1963 and 1980. The last one was Murtala Mohamed of Nigeria. The countries that suffered most were Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Burundi and Ethiopia. Coups led to civil wars or internal conflicts. Over thirty countries have suffered from internal conflicts and some of these wars are still raging. The wars caused major dislocation of people, internally displaced and refugees. These were part of the events predicted by the Ibadan message. Did the church act as a counsellor and shepherd at this critical period of African history? They were there in refugee camps, and did not shy from giving support to the liberation struggle, thus complementing the efforts of the Organisation of African Unity.

The coups, civil wars and assassination of leaders are one part of the picture. The question we need to ask is, what was the agenda, the vision articulated and expressed by the pan-African conferences starting in 1900 (London) and culminating in 1945 (Manchester), before being moved to Africa in 1958 (All African Peoples Conferencein Accra).

The New Agenda

The Agenda was tabled at the first gathering of Africans from the continent and the diaspora, at the London Conference of 1900, and Agenda included:

- The struggle against racism
- Colonies of Africa and West Indies to be granted self-rule
- Political and other rights for Afro-Americans

The Agenda was further expanded to include a call for a united front for Africans in the diaspora and Africa as they struggled for their liberation. There was the call for the exploitation of the resources of Africa for the benefit of the people. The idea of integration of markets was also included as part of the vision. Even the idea of the United States of Africa was mooted.

The first pan-African conference on the continent of Africa took place in independent Accra, Ghana, in 1958, attended by delegates from independent African countries and political leaders that were still struggling for independence. The 1958 conference in Accra strategised and articulated the road map for the realization of the great dream, namely:

- The total liberation of the whole continent of Africa.
- The struggle against racism and the elimination of racism in Africa.
- The call for political unity of the continent starting at regional level.
- Commitment to the development of Africa

This may seem to have been a tall order, but with independence of Ghana, morale was upbeat: freedom was not only possible but was coming. Unity was paramount to sacrifice in the process of decolonization.

Putting the Accra conference and previous pan-African conferences into the geo-political context, one can see that this was a mirror image of the famous Berlin Conference in 1885 when the great powers carved up the whole continent of Africa, creating their individual spheres of influence. Africa was divided into fifty-two states under Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain. The reason given was to avoid conflicts among these powers over resources – minerals and human. Africa was thus divided, colonized and its people subjected to racial discrimination.

Accra therefore planned to roll back what had been done to the continent – through decolonization and the dismantling of racist structures, thus uniting Africa and creating an integrated economy.

To a very large extent, the tide has been reversed. Apart from two islands, Mayotte being one of them, the whole continent has been liberated politically. The creation of the Organisation of African Unity and what has become the African Union is the first step towards a United States of Africa. Already, regional organisations – such as East African Community, the Common Market for South and East Africa and the Economic Community of West Africa – are on the road to economic and monetary integration. The year 1994 was an important milestone with the election of Nelson Mandela as the first black President of South Africa and with it the crumbling of the racist edifice of apartheid South Africa. That is not all.

The people of Africa longed for freedom, peace and dignity. The era of one-party states and military dictatorships is behind us. There are signs of hope on the horizon towards the process of the democratization of the continent. This process was given a major boost by events that took place outside Africa. The coming down of the Berlin Wall, and the subsequent collapse of the centralized one-party communist regimes of Eastern Europe, events which ushered in the collapse of the ideological walls which had been fertile ground for undemocratic regimes, whose leaders were never subject to the will of people. Competitive politics are now the practice in nearly all the countries of Africa. The Boku Haram of Nigeria, Al-Shabaab of Somalia, Al-Qaeda of Maghreb and the impact of the Arab Spring has halted the process of democratization of the continent. Let us hope that this is a temporary hiccup. What about Africans in the diaspora? They were not to be left behind.

With the wind of change blowing across Africa, it crossed over also to the New World, to the West Indies and America. Caribbean nationals did not have to struggle so hard when Britain peacefully handed over power to the indigenous people.

Freedom did not come easily; the Afro-Americans had to struggle. There were marches, sit-ins and civil disobedience. In their struggle, they were demanding:

- Meaningful civil rights legislation
- The elimination of racial segregation in public schools
- Laws prohibiting racial discrimination in employment

The high point of their struggle was the historic march on Washington and the famous speech of Martin Luther King: 'I have a dream'. In his speech, he longed for the day when his children 'will not be judged by the colour of their skin but the content of character', ending his speech with the words of the Negro spiritual, 'Free at last, Free at last, Thank God we are free at last'. The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom took place on August 28, 1963.

Their struggle was not in vain, and King's dream was and is being realized. In 1964, the American congress enacted what had been termed a landmark piece of legislation – the Civil Rights Act of 1964, that outlawed discrimination based on race, colour, religion, sex or national origin. The legislation ended segregation in school, the workplace and public accommodation. And there the foundation and groundwork was laid for an Afro-American to assume the highest office of the USA. King's dream has been fulfilled but that is phase one and more work lies ahead over the next fifty years.

Africa has begun the journey of the next fifty years with the launching of AGENDA 2063 and this was done at the Jubilee celebration in the 2013 in Addis Ababa. In order to achieve the objectives of Agenda 2063, the African Union is mobilizing the participation and inputs of key stakeholders in Africa and in diaspora. It is for this reason that AACC was approached to organize an inter-faith workshop on the Agenda. The workshop was opened by Mr Mandla Madonsela, the representative of the Chairman of the African Commission. The vision is inspired by the spirit of Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance, which will 'contribute to self-determination freedom progress and collective prosperity'. Mr Mandla Madonsela shared with the participants eight key points which will drive the realization of Agenda 2063. Among these points are to:

- Galvanise and unite all Africans and the diaspora in the common vision of a peaceful, integrated and prosperous Africa.
- Harness the continental endowments embodied in its people, history, cultures, natural resources and George-political position to effect equitable and people-centred growth and development.
- Offer policy space for individual sectorial and collective actions to realize the continental vision.

The AACC should take the advantage offered by the AU which is giving space to civil society to contribute effectively to the realization of Agenda 2063. Fortunately, AACC has observer status with the AU. The relationship was formalized by the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations on March 14, 2013 in Addis Ababa.

The objective of the Memorandum states:

> The objective of this memorandum is to strengthen co-operation between the Parties to facilitate the development and integration agenda of African Union. Subject to the terms of the present Memorandum of Understanding and consistent with all the Commission policy, both parties seek to share knowledge and resources (both human, in kind and monetary) in order to pursue an alliance focused on supporting the cause of socio-economic development, good governance, conflict prevention, and resolution across the African continent.

The doors of the Commission are wide open and it is up to the AACC to set up its own specific agenda where it can make an important contribution towards the achievement of the objectives set out in Agenda 2063. How can AACC creatively use the extended network and human resources it has, not only in Africa

but also in the diaspora? What contribution can Africans from the diaspora make to the realization of the great dream of the founding fathers of pan-Africanism, namely, the creation of a United States of Africa which will welcome them where they can feel at home? Let me pitch in what I believe the AACC can contribute.

The most important asset which we have is not so much the past but the present and the future. Let us learn the lessons and experiences of the past but not allow it to dominate or dim the present or the future. God has given us the gift of imagination and dreams. Martin Luther King had his dream and it has been realized. Let the church, the All Africa Conference of Churches, dream dreams – but dreams should not be limited, so let us come out with impossible dreams and, fifty years on, we shall be greatly surprised that it has indeed been realized.

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First hand practical knowledge of Issue affecting the continent
Work experience – Church State, Private Sector, NGO
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(145) THE AU AGENDA 2063 AND THE ROLE OF AFRICAN CHURCHES IN DEVELOPMENT

Obiora F. Ike

'I am black and beautiful, daughters of Jerusalem...
The sons of my mother disliked me,
They made me to work in their fields.
Yet my own fields – I could not take care of.'
(Song of Songs 1:5-6)

African Christianity is as Old as Christianity Itself

Christianity in Africa is not a recent arrival. It came to Africa during the time of the Apostles and can claim to be 'the new homeland of Jesus' (Pope John Paul II). Recent statistics show that Christianity has established her message beyond dispute in many countries within the continent of Africa and has become a force to be reckoned with. During his visit in November 2015 to Kenya, Uganda and the Central African Republic, the head of the Catholic Church described Africa as the 'Continent of Hope' (Pope Francis in Nairobi, Kenya, addressing young people, 27th November 2015), a description which contradicts the daily reality of the harsh conditions, sufferings and challenges which confront the peoples of the continent, even as we write. African Christianity has made the Bible its own. A large number of religious men and women devote their lives to the message of the churches. It is estimated that in 2063, Africa shall have the largest numbers of Christian missionaries compared with any other continent. In the ongoing dearth and absence of spirituality worldwide, Africa is moving forward to becoming a 'spiritual reservoir for the world' (Edward Blyden) and, in the words of Pope Benedict XVI, 'the spiritual lung of Christendom' (message at the Second Africa Synod, Rome, October 2009).

Jesus Christ himself as a baby found refuge with his foster father Joseph and mother Mary in Egypt (Matt. 2:13-15) because Herod the King slaughtered many innocent children in his bid to kill the infant child Jesus out of envy. Records show that Africa stayed close to the person and message of Christ, even to the extent of his cross being carried to Golgotha By Simon of Cyrene, an African from today's Benghazi in Libya (Mark 15:21).

Besides the work of Mark the evangelist who brought the faith to Egypt and from thence to the rest of North Africa, the pillars of Christendom rest on the great Augustine of Hippo, Clement of Alexandria, Athanasius, and even of Origen who wrote his history of early Christianity on African soil, all of whom bear testimony to the 2,000 years of Christian culture. Many stories in the Bible depict the relationship of Africa to Jesus. The Acts of the Apostles records the highly-placed administrator in the kingdom, an Ethiopian eunuch who received baptism from Philip the Apostle and travelled to his country to spread the Good News in those parts (Acts 8:26-40). To this day, history indicates that the Ethiopian Coptic Church has a claim to be the lead over Jerusalem, Rome and Antioch as the historically least interrupted of all Christian traditions since Apostolic times.

At a time when other continents wallowed in paganism and resisted the Christian message, as happened under Caesar in the ancient Roman Empire, the message of Christ found its way into Africa and was joyfully received. Development and civilization in Africa, particularly since the 19th and 20th century, is inconceivable without the history and impact of the Christian message and the work of Christian missionaries.

A Continent Constantly Ravaged but Never Extinguished

History shows that the African continent with all her beauty and glory has experienced the wickedness of other continents, especially of Europe, which devastated her 'gardens' and forced her to work in the gardens of other people, making 'the black and beautiful' (as the Song of Songs quoted above), who share equality and dignity as human beings under the Fatherhood of God, live in slavery, horrific poverty and injustice. What the European colonizers failed to understand was how much the African had to suffer from the invasion of Africa that placed a whole continent into a position of inferiority. The effects of that inglorious past of slavery, colonialism and ongoing marginalization stand as a blot on the continent until today.

It seems that in the present era, the joyful face of Africa has become the sorrowful face of the 'black mother', who cries over so many of her children who languish in misery. The reality on the ground is that of a continent ravaged, leaving millions of victims of injustice, exploitation and oppression – many of them young children and women, victims of famine and fraternal wars. It is in this context that the project of renewing the mission and identity of the church in Africa in service to integral education, reconciliation and human development, corresponds to the Africa Union Agenda 2063 and finds its *Sitz im Leben* and raison d'être.

John Baur, a Swiss missionary who worked in East Africa for several years and made the continent his home, narrates the continuity of the Christian presence in Africa. In one of his publications, he states: 'The Church had been flourishing on the northern shores of the continent for six hundred years before Islam was born... The subsequent history of Christian presence in Africa is, for many centuries, like a trickling stream through the desert. Yet God's providence never let it dry up and in our days it has become a great flood watering the whole continent.'[1]

The Role of African Christian Churches in Development

The foundation of most of the African churches was laid during the colonial period, 1880-1960. This era brought to Africa many of the modern tools for evangelization and a new method of human development through education, the apostolate of the schools, social and health services and the various economic and political infrastructures which have helped in decolonization and sustained the continent's access to modernization and the benefits of globalization. What would have happened if the missionary enterprise of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had not taken place?

Jesus Christ stated as his mission: 'I came that they may have life and have it more abundantly' (John 10:10). This mission is also the agenda for the role of African churches in development. Development is integral and includes social, economic, political, religious, technological, cultural and personal dimensions. Development implies the promotion and preservation of life, the enhancement of life, support for life and the fight to save life against all forms of the 'culture of death' which technology and the blind drive for development bring.

The churches have a role to play in development in Africa. Together with Agenda 2063,[2] there is a need to respond to the problems of the continent. These include working to heal the many divisions ravaging the continent and promoting a culture of unity, peace and development. They also include issues of religious peace and inter-religious dialogue, ecumenical dialogue within the churches and with the state; the application of Christian social principles in governance, leadership and family. These principles and values elucidate the values of solidarity and community, environmental consciousness, respect for Mother Earth

[1] John Baur, "2000 Years of Christianity in Africa- an African Church history", published by Paulines Kenya, 1994, 17.

[2] See „The Future we want for Africa". African Union Agenda 2063: http://agenda2063.au.int/.

and the responsible use of created goods, protection and respect for property including its equitable distribution, the value of work and its promotion through the use of skills, self-help initiatives, poverty eradication projects in agriculture and its allied products. Furthermore, the role of the churches in development go beyond the pulpit with a specific concern for the less privileged through health care programmes, protection and working for the aged, building up the young, protection of life for the unborn and respect for life at all stages.

The churches' legitimacy must be measured on its stand for life. African churches become relevant in the AU's Agenda 2063 if they challenge all elements that contradict the dignity and guarantee of life, whether in business, politics or economics. The Christian churches play a role in educating people to a culture of subsidiarity thinking and democracy founded on participation, respect of competencies and division of power, the rule of law and its respect by the high and the low. This role is promoted through massive education of the young and the aged towards justice, the integrity and preservation of creation, ecological practices, health and well being, the integral development of society and the human person. If the churches are to remain relevant, then they must teach, practise and work for the common good of all, while pointing to this need in wider society.

The AU Agenda 2063 Applied to Questions for the Christian Churches

With the benefit of hindsight and with envisioning of the next fifty years, using the AU Agenda 2063[3] as criteria, the challenges of the present – which impact on both the Christian churches, religious groups in general, the larger society and particularly the young who are the future – include the problems of secularism, urbanization, acculturation, westernization, modernization, globalization, relativism and growing individualism and its attendant alienation, especially evident in the cities of modern Africa. The questions which logically arise are the following:

First, how can religion, religious values and traditions, morality and the Christian message stand up to the 'Signs of the Times' in 2063, retaining its values as 'the light of the world and the salt of the earth'? (Matthew 5).

Secondly, how can the message of Christianity be authentic and convincing to the world of the African 'Areopagus' displaying a disunited Christendom with seemingly unending divisions and fragmented denominations, all claiming authority in the name of Christ? The constant influx of new sects, growing numbers of independent African churches, Pentecostal movements, American-style one-man-show preachers, and the occasional manifestation of 'dubious claims and deceit in some for monetary gain' over a poverty-stricken believing populace looking for healing and salvation, calls into question the role of the African churches in the unity and development of Africa.

Thirdly, how can African Christians feel at home in the 'European garb' of their culturally influenced churches at a time when the themes of enculturation hold sway with demands for culturally rooted authenticity, 'back to basics' movements and the need for a deeper incarnation of the gospel into the African personality?

Fourthly, how can the African churches, true to the message of Christ, construct and reconstruct an integral vision of development of the whole person? How can African churches in collaboration with the agents of the state, build up the development of the human family in Africa, founded on principles of justice, equity, mutual respect, the biblical concepts of mercy and forgiveness, healing, inclusion, the guarantee of freedom and human rights? How can these essential Christian values be made the charter for orientation in the formation of all agents of youth, schools, government institutions, and civil society? The AU Agenda needs to be communicated in harmony with the evangelization and social teaching of the

[3] See popular version: http://agenda2063.au.int/en/sites/default/files/agenda2063_popular_version_05092014_EN.pdf.

churches and brought into contact with initiatives of the World Council of Churches, the Second Vatican Council, the Ecumenical Association of African Theologians, and the Bishops' Conferences of the various regions and countries within the continent.

Finally, and indeed seriously, taking into consideration the divisions inherited from the past which has led to senseless wars ravaging the continent – how can we rediscover and emphasize the role African churches can play for healing, sanctifying, leading and teaching in prophetic service and exemplary leadership of the peoples of Africa.

The answers to these questions constitute the role of the African churches alongside the Agenda 2063 of the Africa Union in the development of the African woman and man. It remains an agenda which is open for participation by the churches, as it is the churches who know that such an agenda to be achieved is possible only under the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit who 'makes all things new'. The challenge and the role of the African churches in development is through the renewal of their own mission and identity in service to integral education, reconciliation and human development. Only a renewed church can truly contribute to the AU Agenda. Agenda 2063 is a sure path for a proper partnership of and with the Christian churches in Africa.

(146) PUBLIC THEOLOGY IN AFRICAN CHURCHES[1]

Nico Koopman

Introduction

Christian faith enjoys its highest levels of growth on the continent of Africa. Africa is a continent with immense public challenges. It is perhaps the continent where we struggle more than on any other to provide every inhabitant with water and food, health care and housing, education and employment, safety and security, peace and prosperity, well-being and wellness in body, soul and spirit.[2]

On this continent, reflection on the theme of Christian faith and public life is crucial. 'Public Theology' is the name that we might consider to describe this reflection upon faith and public life.

Public Theology – An Unavoidable Tautology

Public Theology is used in a variety of ways.[3] In this essay, the notion of Public Theology is used simply as an indispensable facet, aspect, emphasis, approach, perspective in theology. Public Theology as a crucial facet of theology has a threefold focus. The first focus entails reflection upon the inherent public contents, nature and thrust of the Christian faith. The Christian faith is public because it witnesses to the triune God, the Creator who made and sustains all reality, and the Saviour who reconciles and saves all reality, and the Holy Spirit who renews and accompanies all creation. It is for the fulfilment of the new reality that Christ lived and died, and rose and will return.

Secondly, Public Theology focuses on the inherent public rationality and reasonability of Christian faith. Jesus commands us to love God also with our minds. Anselm of Canterbury describes Christian faith as a faith that seeks understanding, *fides quaerens intellectum*. He argues that we believe in order to understand, that we are challenged continually to strive to understand what we believe, and that we are called upon to give a rational account of the hope that lives within us.

Thirdly, Public Theology is a crucial facet of theology that focuses upon the public significance, meaning, impact and implications of the Christian faith. It seeks to bring the Christian faith into dialogue with the questions and plights of human beings in all walks of life, and with the plights of the rest of creation. Public Theology assists our efforts to discern the liberating and dignifying meaning of Christian faith for our situation, especially the plights and pain of the vulnerable, the destitute, the poor, the wronged and the marginalized.

To reflect upon these questions is supposed to be the task of all theology. However, since we always run the risk of neglecting this public dimension in our theological labour, it is crucial that we in the meantime employ this disturbing tautology – to continuously remind us of the public nature, public rationality and public significance of our faith, and about the public calling of churches.

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[1] Originally written under the title: Public Theology in African churches. Christocentric, Trinitarian and dignifying.

[2] For a discussion of the public challenges of Africa, see N Koopman, Human dignity in Africa: A Christological approach, in *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, 2010, 240-249.

[3] For a very illuminating article on the origins and various uses of the notion of Public Theology see DJ Smit, The Paradigm of Public Theology – Origins and Development, in H Bedford-Strohm, F Hohne and T Reitmeier (eds), *Contextuality and Intercontextuality in Public Theology*. Proceedings from the Bamberg conference 23 – 25 June 2011. Munster: Lit Verlag, 11-23.

Public Theology – An Indispensable Facet of all Theologies

This humble and reserved understanding of Public Theology has many benefits. It helps us to recognize that all theology is in fact Public Theology. The notion of Public Theology is, therefore, not in competition with theologies like Liberation Theology, Black Theology, Feminist Theology, Queer Theology, Sexual Theology, Disability Theology, Eco-Theology, African Theology and African Womanist Theology. Public Theology as described above is a crucial facet of all these theologies – to such an extent that one could even speak of a Liberationist Public Theology, a Black Public Theology, a Feminist Public Theology, a Queer Public Theology, a Sexual Public Theology, a Disability Public Theology, an Eco-Public Theology, an African Public Theology, an African Womanist Public Theology. All these theologies are actually in a variety of ways dealing with the threefold question regarding the public contents, rationality and significance of Christian faith. The notion of Public Theology reminds and inspires these theologies, and other theologies, to deepen this threefold public focus.[4]

This less pretentious approach to Public Theology also means that we do not establish a new theological discipline or sub-discipline. Understanding Public Theology as an indispensable facet and emphasis of all theology means that theological disciplines are challenged to view their task in a fresh light. Each one of them is challenged to discern their contribution to a better understanding of the public contents, rationality and significance of the Christian faith.

Public Theology – Seeking Dignity in the Public Arena

Public Theology focuses upon the public contents, rationality and significance of Christian faith in all the public, terrains, areas, domains, environments of life, from the most intimate to the most global and cosmic dimensions of life. These include the lives of individuals, marriage, family, circles of friends, culture, work, churches, broader society – which includes political life, economic life, ecological life, civil society, public discourse and public opinion-formation.

In all these spheres of life, Public Theology strives to enhance the acknowledgement, affirmation and actualisation of dignity for all. One of the most recent bills of rights on the continent of Africa, namely, the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, describes a life of dignity as one of the healing of the wounds of the nation, justice and freedom. Churches and other religious communities do have a distinctive contribution to make to materializing healing, justice and freedom.

Public Theology – Christocentric and Trinitarian

The word 'theology' in Public Theology is of importance. This word suggests that the involvement of churches and theology in pubic life is a theological involvement. From the perspective of faith in the triune God contributions are made. No attempt is made to function as economists or political scientists. No room is made for the accusation that public theologians are social scientists with a religious interest.

Public Theology can be described as a Trinitarian theology. A Trinitarian approach assures that we drink from the rich wells and insights of the Christian tradition. A Trinitarian approach deals with all the

[4] Two African scholars recently wrote dissertations about this creative relationship between Public Theology and Black Theology, and Public Theology and Liberation Theology, respectively. See V Vellem, *The symbol of liberation in South African public life: A Black Theological Perspective* (Unpublished PhD dissertation, Pretoria University, 2007);N Tenai *The poor and the public. A critical evaluation of Public Theology from a Black Theological perspective*(Unpublished PhD dissertation Stellenbosch University, 2011).For a helpful discussion of the relationship between Black Theology and Public Theology see V Vellem, Allan Aubrey Boesak – A black public theologian from the belly of a kgodumodumo, in P Dibeela, P Lenka-Bula and V Vellem (eds.), *Prophet from the South. Essays in honour of Allan Aubrey Boesak*(Stellenbosch: Sun Press, 2014), 268-276.

loci of the Christian confession of faith and dogmatics, i.e. theology (the doctrine of God), Christology, Pneumatology, doctrine of creation and providence, anthropology, soteriology, ecclesiology, eschatology, etc.

The Trinitarian approach to Public Theology that I support is a Christocentric approach. This means that we reflect upon the triune God in the light of the culmination of God's revelation, i.e. in the light of Jesus Christ. Based on the description of Christ's Person and work in terms of the notion of his threefold office we can speak of a threefold Public Theology, namely, a Prophet Public Theology, a Priestly Public Theology and a Royal Servant Public Theology. All these three approaches contribute to developing a theological response to the immense challenges of Africa.[5]

Public Theology – Prophetic

The Heidelberg Catechism Question 31 describes the prophetic office of Christ as follows: '… our Prophet and Teacher who fully reveals to us the secret council and will of God concerning our redemption…'

In what he calls a contemporary hermeneutic, interpretation and understanding of the prophetic office, Methodist theologian, Geoffrey Wainwright[6] argues that the ongoing discernment of the will of God might illuminate the quest in contemporary societies, which are experiencing an information explosion, to develop *sapientia*, wisdom, amidst so much *scientia* and information. And in a context of meaninglessness and purposelessness, the ongoing discernment of God's will provides *telos*, purpose and meaning.

In the prophetic discourse of Public Theology in Africa, we might view our prophetic practices as witness about and participation in the life of Christ, the Prophet, who reveals the truth, the will of God, as a truth of our justification by Christ, and as a truth that entails our calling to seek justice in the world. The prophetic quest is therefore a quest for the truth of our justification and salvation in Christ, which is expressed in justice in the world, which is served by *sapientia* and discernment.

On the basis of this understanding of prophetic Christology, ecclesiology and ethics, one might venture to suggest five modes of prophetic speaking that might serve the prophetic calling of the church well.

Building upon, adjusting and appropriating the work of James Gustafson about the public speaking of churches, I have constructed five interdependent and complementary modes of prophetic speaking.[7] These are prophetic speaking as envisioning, criticism, story-telling, technical analysis and participation in policy-making.

Envisioning entails the spelling out of the ideal picture of a new society. The vision informs about a new and better reality. The vision also inspires to a new lifestyle, new practices and new habits and virtues. The vision of a new life transforms persons and systems, individuals and societies to reflect the values and the goods of a new society. A society of dignity that comes to expression in justice and freedom is the vision that South Africans, from a variety of religious and secular backgrounds, agree upon. This vision is expressed in the Bill of Rights of the 1996 South African Constitution.

Prophetic *criticism* refers first of all to self-criticism. Where churches fail to embody the vision of a new and transformed society, we offer self-criticism. Churches also offer courageous public criticism where

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[5] This last part of the essay draws upon a recent publication of mine. See N Koopman Public Theology and the public role of churches in South Africa today. Insights from the confession of the threefold office of Christ, in AH Cole (ed), *Theology in service to the church*(Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and STOCK Publishers, 2014), 139-152.

[6] G Wainwright, G Wainwright, *For our salvation. Two approaches to the work of Christ* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 133-135.

[7] For an extensive discussion of these five modes of prophetic speaking see N. Koopman, Modes of prophecy in a democracy?, in: Bedford-Strohm, H and De Villiers, DE (eds.) *Prophetic witness. An appropriate contemporary mode of public discourse? Theology in the public square/Theologie in der Offenlichkeit* Band 1. Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011, 181-192.

individuals, leaders and institutions betray this vision. Where the visionary task entails annunciation, the task of criticism entails denunciation. Where visionaries announce the liberating new, critics denounce the persistence of the oppressive old.

Prophetic *story-telling* refers to the telling of stories of pain and oppression. Story-tellers give voice especially to the pain and cries of the marginalized, outcasts and silenced people and creatures of society. Story-telling also tables the hopeful and inspiring stories of victory and liberation.

Technical analysis implies that, with the help of appropriate experts, thorough analyses are made of complex public problems and challenges. This technical discourse facilitates more credible and adequate responses by churches to complex and sophisticated public challenges.

Policy discourse refers to the participation of churches in the quest to make, implement and monitor policies that will enhance the plight of the most vulnerable in society. This discourse, however, implies that we need to move from merely offering broad visions for public life. We also should also avoid providing blueprints for policies. But churches need to provide parameters for policy-making that are less broad than visions, and less specific than blueprints. The notion of 'middle-axioms' that was developed in 1937 by the Life and Work section of the later World Council of Churches might still prove helpful in this regard.[8]

Public Theology – Priestly

The Heidelberg Catechism Question 31 describes the priestly office of Christ as follows:

> '… our only High Priest, who by the one sacrifice of his body has redeemed us, and ever lives to make intercession for us with the Father …'

In his contemporary hermeneutic for the priestly office, Wainwright[9] argues that Christ the Priest replaces our pain and suffering, which are expressed in alienation, with reconciliation, and he replaces our sin and guilt, which are expressed in estrangement, with atonement. Christ restores us to divine communion and to communion with each other. Wainwright[10] spells out the concrete and public forms that cry out for this reconciliation, atonement and restored communion:

Oppression is political alienation, for the disenfranchised are deprived of the privileges and responsibilities that go with the human vocation to live in society; poverty is economic alienation, for the impoverished are cut off from their share in the fruit of the earth that humankind is charged by God to cultivate; sickness is physical alienation, and a troubled mind is psychological alienation, and both remove the sufferers from the flourishing existence which God envisioned for his human creatures; slavery is alienation of identity, the profoundest infraction of the dignity of every child of God; bereavement displays death as the alienation of humankind from the life of communion for which it was made.

Jesus Christ, the Public Priest, entered into this human condition of alienation and estrangement. This estranged humanity is the humanity that Christ assumed and, in the words of Hans Us von Balthasar,[11] 'what had not been assumed would not have been healed'.

For African churches who seek to develop priestly public theologies, the recommendations offered by Wainwright might be very helpful in our context of so many manifestations of alienation and estrangement.

Public Theology challenges, invites and inspires churches to overcome political alienation. Many African countries have good democratic visions and policy documents in place. However, we need to work

[8] For a discussion of the potential of middle axioms see N Koopman, Churches and public policy discourses in South Africa, in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, 136, March 2010, 41-56.
[9] G Wainwright, *For our salvation*, 150-153.
[10] G Wainwright, *For our salvation*, 150.
[11] Quoted by G Wainwright, *For our salvation*, 151.

for social solidarity, social cohesion and the joint building of social capital. We have sound macro-economic policies and practices in place, but the benefits do not reach the poor, and we still have the biggest gap between rich and poor in the world. Beside our noble human rights principles of access to basic necessities, millions are still excluded from physical and mental health care. We still hurt each other on the basis of racial, national, tribal, gender and socio-economic identities, and on the basis of identity of sexual orientation, age and disability. We even hurt nature.

The priestly office calls us to work to overcome these alienations, hurts and violations of dignity, and so to work for the actualization of dignity, health, healing and for restitutive reconciliation and reconciling justice.

Public Theology – Royal Servant

The Heidelberg Catechism Question 31 describes the kingly office of Christ as follows:

> … our eternal King, who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us.

Wainwright[12] argues that the Royal Servant office teaches contemporary societies about authority, freedom, power and hope. In a world that seeks autonomy and, in the process, aims to become deistic and eliminate any idea of divine action and rule, the plea is not to burn down the house of authority, and not to bring down the Scriptures, creeds, liturgies and institutions of the admittedly imperfect historic church.

In a society hungry for cultural freedom and an absolute right of self-expression, this office calls for recognition that my neighbour is, negatively put, the limit of my freedom, and, positively put, a personal call to service. He lastly mentions that this office assures us of ultimate hope in the exalted Lord and King.

In the African context, this office might be employed to decontaminate imperialistic notions of power that seem to threaten the idea of the servant power that is characteristic of power in the democratic vision with its central words like *minister*, which literally means servant, and the word *president* which means the one that presides, that one serves as an example amongst the servants, the servant *per excellence*. More than that, the *Christocracy* tells of a Lord, a King who is Shepherd and the most humble of servants. Simultaneously, this office calls disciples to fulfil their calling as citizens to a public life of respecting authority, and living responsibly, in the church and in all walks of life.

The Royal Servant calling also entails that the life of freedom be defined as a life of freedom from bondage and freedom for a life of service. This view of freedom provides appropriate guidelines and parameters for developing a human rights culture, specifically to advance freedom and justice rights, and also to obey the call to freedom and justice responsibilities.

The Royal Servant office also prompts a life of hope. Hope can be described in a threefold manner. Hope is realistic hope because it is founded on the biggest reality of all, namely, the cross and resurrection, ascension and *parousia* of Jesus Christ, which is the fulfilment of the promises of God. Against this background, hope is responsive hope. Hope therefore pays attention, functions pro-actively, and is expressed in actual involvement in the matters of life. Hope is resilient hope. Despite the most difficult circumstances Christian hope perseveres with patience and fortitude.

Based on this calling, churches of authority and hope are moral communities for the formation of disciples and citizens of character and virtue. According to American theologians, Bruce Birch and Larry Rasmussen,[13] an etymological study of the word ‘character’ indicates that character has to do with the engraving of particular principles into a person. They refer to the Greek roots of the word, which means

[12] G Wainwright, *For our salvation*, 169-171.
[13] B Birch and L Rasmussen, *Bible and ethics in the Christian life* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1989), 124.

engraving tool and, by extension, the marks made by an engraving tool. Character, hence, has the notion of values, which are engraved into a person, over time, so that they become assimilated, incarnated, and embodied in the person. Character, like the virtues, therefore, develops over time in communion with God and other human beings.

Social and political scientists in various parts of the world argue that democracies with human rights cultures that serve the common good cannot become a reality without leaders and citizens of civic virtue and character. Societies hunger for people of public and civic virtue: public wisdom in contexts of complexity, ambiguity, tragedy and *aporia* (anxiety or perplexity); public justice in context of inequalities and injustices on local and global levels; public temperance in context of greed and consumerism amidst poverty and alienation; public fortitude amidst situations of powerlessness and inertia; public faith amidst feelings of disorientation and rootlessness in contemporary societies; public hope amidst situations of despair and melancholy; public love in societies where public solidarity and compassion are absent.

Public Theology – Growing in Africa

The notion of Public Theology as described above is growing in African churches, and in African academic settings.

The Beyers Naudé Centre for Public Theology (BNC) co-operates with various churches to explore with these churches the liberating, transformative and dignifying potential of congregational practices for all facets of public life. This collaboration is entitled Congregations and Public Life. The public meaning and significance of practices like prayer, worship, hymns, baptism, holy communion, diaconal services, witnessing, catechesis, church administration, church buildings, budgeting, fund-raising, etc. are jointly explored. The BNC cooperates with, amongst others, the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa, the Dutch Reformed Church, the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, the Methodist Church, the Moravian Church in South Africa, the Rhenish Church in South Africa, the Volkskerk of Africa, a variety of Charismatic and Pentecostal churches in especially black townships in South Africa, and with ecumenical bodies like the Consultation of Church Leaders in the Western Cape and the South African Council of Churches. The BNC played a major role in the development of a framework for co-operation between the Consultation of Churches in the Western Cape and the Western Cape government. At the request of the SACC, the BNC facilitated the development of a theological response to the international arms trade from a South African perspective.

The BNC and the Mkar Centre for Public Theology and Development in Nigeria co-operate with research and joint conferences, in which pastors of the Reformed Church in Nigeria are involved. Dr Olo Ndukwe[14] of Nigeria wrote a dissertation on the Social Ethics and Public Theology of John Howard Yoder and its potential relevance for the Nigerian context. He heads a Centre for Public Theology in Nigeria. Earlier in this essay, reference was made to the dissertations on Public Theology by a South African theologian, Vuyani Vellem, and a Kenyan theologian, Noah Tenai. In his public theological work, Moravian theologian, Karel August, strongly developed the notion of public church.[15]

Various theological institutions in Africa are now members of the Global Network for Public Theology that was established in Princeton in 1997, and that consists of theological institutions for Public Theology from all continents.

It is also important to note some churches and institutions do not use the notion of Public Theology explicitly, but they do address the three sets of questions of Public Theology described early in this essay.

[14] See O Ndukwe, *An evaluation of John Howard Yoder's social ethics from an African perspective* (Unpublished PhD dissertation, Stellenbosch University, 2006).
[15] See K August, *The Quest for being Public Church: The South African Challenge to the Moravian Church in Context 1737-2004* (RSA: The Moravian Printing Works, 2005).

Conclusion

The beautiful and wealthy continent of Africa where so much ugliness and poverty exist, can, by the grace of the triune God, be transformed into a continent that flourishes. Churches and theology, specifically public churches that are guided by a Prophetic, Priestly and Royal Servant Public Theology that reminds of the public contents and thrust, the public rationality and reasonability, and the public significance and impact of Christian faith, can play an indispensable role in this regard.

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(147) HEALING AND HEALTH IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Chammah J Kaunda and Isabel A Phiri

Introduction

The health and healing ministry of the church is rooted in the ministry of Jesus Christ. While acknowledging that the scope of some African churches' understanding of health and healing seem rather narrowed to miracles and physical healing, nevertheless most churches display strong beliefs in healing through prayer and various rituals. The believers are invited for prayers for good health and for relief from illness and pain. Healing is perceived as central to what it means to be a church in the context of human struggle for just access to health care. There is healing through prayer/intercession, through religious rituals, pilgrimages for healing to some renowned prophets such as T.B. Joshua in Nigeria, and also through some related forms of religious interventions.[1] Healing in some churches in Africa seems to 'fulfil certain functions not met by modern medicine' but to some extent also resonate with the Old and New Testaments, which have more commonality with 'African traditional practices than with modern medicine'.[2] The pertinent question for African Christianity is: How can reconceptualised traditional healing practices be broadened in scope in contemporary Africa amidst unjust access to health care, socio-political, economic, and ecological struggle?

Health and Healing in Traditional Africa

It is not possible to discuss health and healing in African Christianity without considering the traditional African conception of health and healing. In fact, some scholars see more in common between African traditional practices of healing and African Christianity than with modern medicine.[3] In traditional African society, the search for health and healing is deeply entrenched in religious beliefs and practices and manifest in greetings, in the kind of food people eat and every aspect of life. African Traditional Religions have been called religious traditions of wholeness or health or abundant life as termed by Laurent Magasa.[4] The onus of a search for health and healing is not merely on individuals but on the whole community. In African thought, an individual cannot achieve health alone, because health is embedded in cosmic relationships and can only be achieved through restoring harmony in these vital relationships. In actual fact, the sickness of an individual is an indication of a deeper communal malaise.

The community knew that dealing with the symptom is only a temporal solution. True healing requires the re-establishment of rightness in relationships.[5] This was the concern of African Traditional Religions. Health and healing in this system of thought was more than a physical cure but a process of re-aligning the patient with the origin of the influences so as to re-balance the disorder (sickness). It was about restoring

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[1] Sheila S. Walker, "Witchcraft and Healing in an African Christian Church," *Journal of Religion in Africa* (1979): 127-138; Willem Berends, "African Traditional Healing Practices and the Christian Community," *Missiology: An International Review*, *21*, no. 3 (1993): 275-288.
[2] Berends, "African Traditional Healing," 275.
[3] Berends, "African Traditional Healing," 275.
[4] Laurenti Magesa, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books 1997), 65.
[5] Newell S. Booth, "Tradition and Community in African Religion," *Journal of Religion in Africa,* 9, no, 2 (1978): 81-94 at 91.

the patient's balance in the universe which makes the process of healing a course of growth for the whole community 'towards ever greater and more complex wholeness'.[6] Thus, health and healing has to do with growth in just social ordering, equal political participation, fair economic access, and religious inclusion. This is a framework within which traditional Africa approached health and healing on the premise of bondedness.

The African religious conception of health and healing is steeped in tradition; it comes and flows from God through the ancestors to the whole community. Sickness or illness was understood as a breach in spiritual or social harmony, either internal or external.[7] There was a belief in some African societies that human beings are multi-dimensional beings (they are more than their physical bodies) with different levels which function together as a whole – communal or social, moral, physical and spiritual, and if any of these aspects are out of balance, the person is said to be sick – physically or spiritually.[8] Every individual in the community had a moral responsibility to keep these aspects balanced so as to ensure an uninterrupted flow of life from God into the community. It was imperative for members of the community to avoid altering these rhythms and patterns as their actions had direct implications on the wellbeing of the whole community.[9] Bondedness is the key to understanding traditional African community of life that 'whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual'.[10] In this worldview, where interconnectedness and interdependence are central guiding principles of the symbiotic community, *everyon*e is responsible for health and healing for the whole community.[11]

The African sense of community refers to the critical interlink of human beings (living, dead and unborn), natural environment and spiritual world in essential ways so that unity is indissoluble.[12] This means that individuals could not regard even their 'own life as purely personal property or concern. It is the group which is the owner of life, a person being just a link in the chain uniting the present and future generations. For that reason one's health is a concern for the community, and a person is expected to preserve this life for the good of the group'.[13] In this worldview, being healthy means that sound and harmonious relationships among human beings, the natural and the spiritual worlds are kept in intricate balance. The individual and the community must always be consciously of the symbiotic chain of relationships that constitute the category which is defined as 'life'. In short, to be in good health is to be at one and peace with all dimensions of life in the cosmos, to be within it and to interiorise the universe in its fullness within one's being. The universe and an individual are indivisible. The fullness of the universe is within an individual inasmuch as an individual is within the universe. Sickness involves the entire system of cosmic relationships within which the individual is but a tiny link in the chain of life. There is no such

[6] Rosemary Gordon Bridges: *Metaphor for Psychic Processes* (London: Karnac Books, 1993), 158.
[7] Magesa, *African Religion,* 65.
[8] Shana Davis, "Traditional African Healing: Medicine & Africa," in African Code, www.africanholocaust.net/news_ah/traditionalhealing.html (accessed 15 Dec. 15).
[9] Harvey J. Sindima "Community of Life: Ecological Theology in African Perspective," (1990) www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2327 (Accessed 15 Dec. 15).
[10] John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London, Ibadan, Nairobi: Heinemann, 1969), 109.
[11] Chammah J Kaunda, "Towards an African Theological Education for Gender Justice and Peace: An African Theological Reflection on the Concept of Just-Peace," *Journal of Gender and Religion in Africa,* 18, no. 1 (2012): 137-153.
[12] See, Munyaradzi F. Murove, ed. *African Ethics: An Anthology of Comparative and Applied Ethics* (Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009). See especially articles by Munyaradzi F. Murove.
[13] Peter Kasenene, "African ethical theory and the four principles," in *Cross-Cultural Perspectives in Medical Ethics, second edition,* eds. Robert Veatch, 347-357 (Sudbury, MA, Jones and Bartlett, 2000), 349.

thing as a solitary adventurer, the individual's action 'vibrates to the rhythm of the power of the universe and of the generations'.[14]

The implications are that failure to maintain harmonious relationships within oneself and every member of the community of life which extends to nonhuman creation and to do what is necessary to live in reconciliation in order to strengthen the community bonds, especially through justice and peace results in disorder/sickness.[15] Thus, the African sense of health and healing was based on sound relationships which should be kept in harmony. Without harmonious relationships, health and healing cannot flow in the community. Harmonious living (which includes ultimate community values such as justice, peace, hospitality, love, equality, respect and so on) was a precondition for health and healing which are prerequisites for progress and human development. The function of religion was perceived as that of enabling human beings to align their actions and understand their position in the universe and thereby continue to enjoy health and wellness which are essential characteristics of God. All moral values were based on an understanding that the good is that which promotes the well-being and wholeness of an individual and the community. Thus, African tradition's quest for health and healing was based on enabling an individual and the community members' recognition of their complex interconnectedness and their place on the earth, bringing their actions into equilibrium with the cosmos. Since the African concept of health and healing was holistic, bringing the reintegration of cosmic relationships through nurturing harmonious relationships, it remains quite difficult to understand fully the extent to which some African churches have absorbed this worldview into their healing traditions. In what follows, we look at the missional implications for healing and health ministry for churches in Africa today.

Towards a Missional Theology of Health and Healing in the African Church

From our analysis above, it is clear that health and healing are socio-relational issues rather than merely individual physical processes. This means that health and healing must be perceived within a socio-relational framework rather than in physical wholeness. Recent health issues have demonstrated the socio-relational nature of health and healing. HIV and AIDS and, more recently, the Ebola outbreak in West Africa are clear examples of the socio-relational nature of disease that affects individuals, lovers, couples, families and entire communities around the world and have profound political and economic implications. These diseases affect not just an individual but the entire universe. The Ebola tragedy demonstrated how interdependent and vulnerable human beings have become. The virus started spreading from West Africa to other countries through those who came in contact with it and crossed the borders to other countries. The airports were closed in some countries and others imposed a ban on Ebola-affected countries. Given the socio-relational nature of health and healing, the ministry of the church is intrinsically communal in which the community of believers are called alongside (*paraclete*) those suffering, into mutual transformation through justice and reconciliation.

This is what Jesus accomplished through his life, ministry, death and resurrection in which he transformed the worlds of human understanding of suffering. On the cross, Jesus became the symbol of human suffering because of sin (a breach in cosmic harmony). The effect of brokenness in the human and divine relationship was re-enacted by Jesus on the cross, as demonstrated in his loud cry, 'Why have you forsaken me?' (Matt. 27:46). The fall of humanity in Genesis 3 caused an imbalance in cosmic relational equilibrium. Jesus re-enacted this experience of brokenness in cosmic relational balance. Thus, his resurrection was the re-establishment of cosmic relational harmony. It was inevitable that the resurrection

[14] Alassane Ndaw, "Unity and Value in African Thought," in *Facts and Value: Philosophical Reflections from Western and Non-Western Perspectives*, eds. MC Doeser and JN Kraay, 171-175 (Dordrecht: Martinus Nihoff Publishers, 1986), 173-174.
[15] Magesa, *African Religion,* 65.

was to happen in Trinitarian socio-community of the Father and the Holy Spirit.[16] The argument here is that the resurrection was wrought through relationship, and this serves as the paradigm of authentic healing and thus provides the archetype of the human search for wholeness and health. Similar to the African worldview, health and healing within a Trinitarian perspective confronts the narrow definition and application of Christian health and healing as a merely physical cure. It underpins health and healing on cosmic reconciliation so that all recognize God's vision for universal wholeness and justice. This means that while healing processes could include praying with and for the sick, confession and forgiveness, the laying-on of hands, anointing with oil, and spiritual gifts of healing as outlined in 1 Corinthians 12, it cannot be reduced to such miraculous interventions. Healing demonstrates Trinitarian *shalom* – the God who is whole. This wholeness is a result of Trinitarian pilgrimage of love and justice.

Conclusion

This chapter argues that the Church has been a healing instrument since its inception. Given this tradition, contemporary mission cannot be done effectively without engaging in the ministry of healing and health. The following conclusions can be drawn from the discussion above:

- The mission of God in the world is a healing mission. God is in the world to bring about cosmic healing and reconciliation.
- Health is an attribute of God. The Trinitarian God exists in radical wholeness and health which he seeks to share within cosmic relationships. Thus, health and healing are deeply entrenched in the concept of salvation.
- Healing is a process of relational growth. It is a dynamic holistic process rather a merely physical cure.
- The church is an agent of God's mission of healing in the world. The church is called to be a healing community through which the power of God's healing can be mediated in the world. This means the role of the church is twofold: first, healing through religious ritual. Second is advocating for a proper health care system that includes the struggle for infrastructural development, adequately equipped medical personnel, justice, fairness, accountability and accessibility.

The church must become an instrument in searching for innovative ways to promote and advocate for access to quality health care for all. The members can be encouraged to live healthy lifestyles and consider ways in which mutual access to medical aids can be secured together.

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[16] God the Father raised Jesus (Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15, 26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33, 34, 37; Rom. 4:24; 6:4; 10:9; 1 Cor. 6:14; Gal. 1:1; Col. 2:12). God the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead (Rom/ 4:1; 8:11).

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Publikationen/Dokumente_AErztliche_Mission/healing (Accessed 15 Dec. 2015).

(148) AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY, PUBLIC HEALTH AND EPIDEMICS

Susan Parry

'I have come that they might have life, and have it abundantly' (John 10:10).

'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me… just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me' (Matt. 25:35, 36, 40).

The threefold mission of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 4:23-25 was 'to preach, to teach and to heal.' This has been at the forefront of the Christian expansion in Africa and elsewhere. Health services followed on or accompanied the establishment of churches and missions in the early days, from humble beginnings to the development of full-scale hospitals, health training institutions and multiple outreach services, predominantly for the poor and most marginalised in inaccessible areas.

Currently, faith-based organisations (FBOs) are among the major health providers in developing countries, and acknowledged to be providing 30-70% of health services in sub-Saharan Africa.[1] Whilst government health services are principally found in urban areas and along major transport routes, FBO health care facilities are most often located in the under-served areas, providing compassionate care to the marginalised, the poor and the vulnerable. Their services are not in competition with government services but are complementary and non-partisan. Whilst they are commonly recognised as providing the backbone of the rural health care provision, these same health care facilities are frequently not included in national statistics nor are their health providers included in policy and strategic decisions.

The Christian Health Associations

Over time, in many countries across Africa, the various Christian health service providers, principally Catholic and Protestant, chose to collaborate by forming national umbrella organisations that would coordinate the activities of the various Christian health institutions and health programmes, form joint procurement of drugs to reduce costs, and would liaise with their governments advocating for an enabling environment and for direct support (financial and personnel). In addition, these ecumenical organizations would provide administrative and technical support to all member units, especially those in inaccessible areas to provide holistic, quality, affordable and accessible health services with a preferential treatment option for the poor. Thus, proper collaboration was ensured in providing health needs that complemented government national efforts, as well as availing mechanisms for sharing and scaling up innovations. An example is the Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM) which currently operates 180 health facilities and twelve training colleges located throughout the country, providing 37% of health care and training up to 80% of the national health workers.[2]

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[1] Olivier J, Tsimpo C, Gemignani R, et al. Understanding the roles of faith-based health care providers in Africa: review of the evidence with a focus on magnitude, reach, cost, and satisfaction. *Lancet 2015; published on-line July 7. http:// dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(15)60251-3.* Bandy, G, Crouch, A, Haenni, C et al. Building from common foundations: the World Health Organization and faith-based organizations in primary health care. World Health Organization, Geneva; 2008.

[2] Christian Health Association of Malawi. Web site: www.cham.org.

In 2007, the Africa Christian Health Associations' Platform (ACHAP) was formed to act as a continent-wide umbrella organisation for the many Christian health associations.

Primary Health Care

In 1968, the World Council of Churches identified, following several studies, that church health facilities were focused primarily on curative and palliative medical care, a top-down approach, which made little sustainable improvement in the overall health of the populations being served. They concluded that there was a need to focus more on prevention, with community engagement to help communities be more responsible for their own health, coupled with a renewed focus on addressing the social determinants of health, development and empowerment, a bottom-up approach. Working examples were identified and shared and thus the WCC Christian Medical Commission was one of the prime movers towards what is now universally known as 'community-based primary health care'. This led to a unique collaboration between WCC and WHO, and a non-state relationship which has persisted to this day. The contribution of the churches in the evolution in thinking and practice of primary health care is a lasting contribution to public health.[3]

Public Health

Public health refers to all organized measures to *prevent* disease, *promote* health, and *prolong life* among the population as a whole. The focus is on entire populations, not on individual patients or diseases.[4]

The philosophy of primary health care stressed an integrated approach to preventative, curative and promotion of health services both for the community and for the individual.

In the 1970s, Christian communities began to train village health workers to educate communities on basic health, hygiene and sanitation. They were also trained to recognise common conditions and treat with basic medical supplies or refer where necessary. Small health centres were established to provide low cost patient care, as well as provide facilities for routine antenatal services and early childhood health services. In these new decentralised health care systems, many mission hospitals began to play an essential role by acting as intermediaries between local village health services and the centralised state supported hospitals.[5]

The emergence of epidemics is where the Christian community and Christian health services have been most challenged and have effectively risen to the challenge. The following represent the best-known epidemics affecting Africa in the recent past.

Cholera

Cholera is an acute, diarrheal illness caused by infection of the intestine with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*. It tends to be found and spread in places with inadequate water treatment, poor sanitation, and inadequate hygiene. In 2008-2009, the deterioration of sanitary and water supplies around the cities, and a declining the health infrastructure in Zimbabwe led to an outbreak of cholera of epidemic proportions, affecting 52 out of 62 districts in all ten provinces resulting in 98,424 cases and 4,276 deaths.[6] It was

[3] Litsios. S, 'The Christian Medical Commission and Development of WHO's Primary Health Care Approach,' American Journal of Public Health. November 2004, 94(11): 1884-1893. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1448555/.
[4] World health Organisation: www.who.int.
[5] Kurian. M. 'Transformation of Mission and Healing in the 20th Century,' Oct 2015 *Ecumenical Review*, forthcoming.
[6] World health Organisation. 2009. www.who.int/csr/don/2009_06_09/en.

described by *Médecin Sans Frontières* as 'the worst in years'.[7] In addition to suffering, cholera is well known for causing widespread fear and, as in most epidemics, common rumours and beliefs need to be considered and not underestimated or overlooked. In this case, religious believers had both negative and positive responses. A large sect (Johanne Masowe) resisted the community health educators during the outbreak and many infected members failed to seek treatment. Others sought treatment secretly from cholera treatment camps and were reported to have repented afterwards to the sect leaders.[8] In this crisis, as in other similar health challenges, many Pentecostal and other 'tent ministries' promoted 'divine healings' and encouraged adherents to put their faith in God and not in medications. Whilst miracles may happen, blind faith that is not supported by scientific proof is very dangerous, particularly in epidemics, and where people have ceased treatment, it has cost many their lives.[9]

On the other hand, leading Christian denominations supported health education campaigns by devoting Sunday worship time to health education. The priests and pastors ensured no crowding in pew benches, the 'Peace sign' was replaced by a non-touch gesture, and the common communion cup was removed. Community volunteers were trained, creating volunteer networks, and church assets (church halls, schools and health institutions) were made freely available, especially for health education purposes. By involving the communities to be proactively engaged, and to assume some responsibility, they were empowered, not only to deal with cholera but future epidemics as well.

When drugs were in critical supply, the Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network in Kenya facilitated supplies to be trucked across Africa to the Zimbabwe Church Health Association – in solidarity.[10]

HIV and AIDS

Coming to terms with HIV and AIDS and the resulting impact, and developing appropriate effective responses was a hard learning curve, especially for faith-based responders. HIV challenged the way we think and operate, and our traditional way of dealing with contentious or challenging issues. It flourished in a milieu of stigma and discrimination, increasing the isolation and suffering of those living with the disease.[11] In the early days of the epidemic, the mid-1980s to the late 1990s, the faith community was seen to be negative, especially where attitudes, based on fear, ignorance and prejudice, led to harsh moral judgements on those affected. It was accused of obstructing the efforts of the secular world in the area of prevention and of reducing issues of HIV to simplistic moral pronouncements, making churches places of exclusion rather than places of refuge and solace. Whilst in many instances these accusations were justified, it was not always or everywhere. Many congregations and parishes were at the forefront of care and support. A great number of these initiatives did not wait for funding in order to begin; they just responded and demonstrated real compassion in a world of deep suffering.

Theological reflection has been extensive, revisiting many of the beliefs of the time, re-examining interpretations of scripture in the era of HIV as to whether they were life-affirming or life-threatening. The faith community was the first to initiate home-based care initiatives and support groups and community care-givers, described by UNAIDS as 'the backbone of effective HIV care and support programmes'.[12] It

[7] Naafs. Jolanda 'Cholera in Zimbabwe. Kept quiet, not solved.' www.globalmedicine.nl 2009.
[8] Mukuruva. C.T; Community-based Emergency Management: A *Case Study* on a *Cholera Outbreak in Zimbabwe*: a Thesis Submitted to for the Degree of Master of Public Health (MPH), *2012*. http://aut.researchgateway.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10292/4681/MukuruvaCT.pdf?sequence=6.
[9] Chitando, Ezra and Charles Klagba. Eds., *In the Name of Jesus! Healing in the Age of HIV*. WCC, 2013.
[10] Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network. Annual Report 2009.
[11] Susan Parry, '*Beacons of Hope. HIC Competent Churches: a framework for Action*.' Geneva. World Council of Churches Publication (2008).
[12] UNAIDS. www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2013/september/20130909caregivers.

also purposely and meaningfully involved people living with HIV, particularly religious leaders living with HIV, to confront stigma and inform responses. The church has also been in the forefront of addressing many of the social determinants that drive the epidemic as well as involvement in advocacy for access to services and treatment, including the neglected area of treatment for children.[13]

The crucial role of the faith-based organisations in the collaborative response is now well recognised and acknowledged. Worldwide, the World Health Organisation estimated in 2004 that one in five organisations engaged in HIV programming is faith-based, and the Catholic Church alone is said to be responsible for providing up to one quarter of that entire care.[14] The extensive networks of support groups and responders to HIV that have been established over the years, are quite unprecedented and the lessons learned have informed responses to other emerging epidemics, such as Ebola.[15]

Ebola

In the initial weeks following the 2014 Ebola outbreak, the lack of accurate information and the media frenzy precipitated fear and panic that resulted in irrational responses and widespread stigma, discrimination and rejection. Mixed responses came from the religious communities, particularly when draconian measures were instituted that conflicted with cultural values, traditions and religious practices. Once they became involved, faith leaders played a transformational role, using every opportunity to raise awareness, de-stigmatise, encourage and accompany communities through the crisis.[16] Their historical continuous presence through war and peace, their accompaniment through significant life events and their voice on behalf of the people earned them the trust and respect of local communities. Throughout the crisis, they continued to provide essential services, particularly in keeping hospitals open to deal with all the non-Ebola cases. Many paid with their lives. A critical role they also played was in promoting the 'safe and dignified burial protocols', and in accompanying the grieving through this process.

In July 2015, the President of Liberia awarded the Liberian Council of Churches the highest distinction: the 'Grand Commander, Order of the Star of Africa' for their sustained response to Ebola through concerted prayer and community action.

The faith leaders played an essential role in social mobilization and behaviour change. However, when the UN agencies arrived, they failed to make use of the capacity or local knowledge of the faith responders until very much later. This delay was costly in terms of lives.

The Way Forward

A number of events are converging at this particular time in history. For a long while, the UN, most international agencies and governments have held preconceptions and prejudices that associate faith-based humanitarian services with proselytization and have failed to engage with them. There is thus an under-appreciation of the extent of the faith-based presence, capacities, local knowledge, socio-cultural

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[13] Caritas. www.caritas.org/what-we-do/health/haart-for-children
Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance: www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/.
[14] Susan Parry, '*Beacons of Hope. HIC Competent Churches: a framework for Action*.' (2008).
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[15] Parry S, '*Ebola and HIV: Faith based response – A presentation of the evidence, lessons learned and recommendations for future action'*. Religion and Sustainable Development Conference: Building Partnerships to end extreme poverty. World Bank, Washington DC, 7th-9th July 2015.
[16] Featherstone. A, '*Keeping the Faith. The role of Faith leaders in the Ebola response*.' Study carried out in Sierra Leone and Liberia for CAFOD, Christian Aid, Islamic Relief and Tearfund (July 2015).

understanding and their links with the community. Moreover, there is a lack of understanding that faith-based organisations provide essential complementary services to governments, and that their non-partisan service is both a *mandate* and an *expression* of their faith, rather than a means to proselytization.[17]

Ebola clearly demonstrated that a technical approach alone will not rapidly and effectively contain a disease that essentially requires behavioural change, and the faith communities are highly effective at community mobilization through their multiple networks and channels.

The World Bank President, Jim Yong Kim, has stated that the eradication of extreme poverty by 2030 will not happen without the involvement of the faith communities and that, further, 'Our alliance with faith leaders to end extreme poverty is rooted in our understanding that we need prophetic voices to inspire us just as we need evidence to guide us.'[18]

The world has recently adopted the Sustainable Development Goals – the 2030 Agenda – which focuses not only on the poor and developing countries but on all countries. There is an energy and enthusiasm to start working now on these goals and to find the most effective way of doing so. 'Faith communities, omnipresent in Africa, can be part of the solution if included as full partners, engaging their powerful communications networks and local knowledge.'[19]

This is thus a *kairos* moment for the church. Secular agencies want to engage but do not know how to, and are trying to overcome some of the barriers that have existed. The faith community is more than civil society. It provides more than health services and humanitarian support. Faith compels us to recognise the dignity of all and treat each with compassionate holistic care and love – it is our mandate – we must simply claim that space.

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[19] Marshall K, Smith S, *Religion and Ebola: learning from experience.* The Lancet Faith-based health care. July 2015. Article published on-line July 7, 2015. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140.6736(15)61082-0.

(149) HEALING AND RECONCILIATION AS A PASTORAL MANDATE IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Charles B. Manda

'Never break the pot that keeps you together.'[1]

Introduction

Mbiti alleges that 'Africa is severely wounded by the roughness of ugly struggles in political, social, economic, and religious spheres. These deep wounds from ruthless blows on the body, the mind, and the soul, affect the whole society'.[2] Latey adds, 'As human beings, we find ourselves broken and bruised in so many ways and we find ourselves in need of physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual restoration.'[3] This brief essay explores the meaning of healing and reconciliation in the African context and how pastoral ministry in African Christianity can use them to enhance the restoration of individuals and relationships that are broken and bruised in so many ways. The article concludes with what I call a 'to-do list' to enhance pastoral ministry in African Christianity.

Healing in the African Context

The traditional African worldview is that suffering is caused by sins and misdeeds that offend the gods and ancestors, or by being out of harmony with society.[4] Ward adds that 'for African people life is a continuum of social, cosmic, personal and communal events. When one breaks the moral codes of society then the ties between oneself and community are also fragmented'.[5] For example, in the case of illness, it is not the individual who is seen as needing healing but the broken relationships which needs to be healed. Mbiti adds: 'To be human is to belong to the whole community, and to do so involves participating in the beliefs, ceremonies, rituals and festivals of that community.'[6] For this reason, 'healing must be facilitated by the community'.[7] Mbiti notes that 'African people perform many rituals which are directed at ensuring good health, healing, preventing danger to health, curing barrenness, removing impurities in people and homesteads, and protecting people, animals and crops'.[8] These rituals seek to prevent death, to delay death,

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[1] John S. Mbiti, 'Peace and Reconciliation in African Religion', *Dialogue & Alliance,* Vol. 24, no. 1, Spring/Summer (2010) www.upf.org/resources/speeches-and-articles/3226-js-mbiti-peace-and-reconciliation-in-african-religion (accessed 20 November, 2015).
[2] John S. Mbiti, "Peace and reconciliation in African Religion," Dialogue *& Alliance,* Vol. 24, No. 1: Spring/Summer 2010, www.upf.org/resources/speeches-and-articles/3226-js-mbiti-peace-and-reconciliation-in-african-religion (accessed 20 November 2015).
[3] Emmanuel Y. Latey, *In Living Color: An Intercultural Approach to Pastoral Care and Counselling* (2nd Ed). (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2007)*,* 62.
[4] Aloysius Lugira, *African Religion: World Religions* (revised edition) (New York, Facts On File, Inc, 2004), 13.
[5] Edwina Ward, "Similarities and Differences in Cross-Cultural Pastoral Supervision," *Journal of Theology for South Africa* (July 2002), 51-64.
[6] John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (Nairobi, Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 1969), 2.
[7] Vhumani Magezi, "Community Healing and the Role of Pastoral Care of the Ill and Suffering in Africa," *In die Skriflig* 40, no. 3 (2006),505-521, 506.
[8] John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (2nd ed.) (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1975),139.

or to ward it off.[9] However, Jesse Mugambi stresses, 'when a person dies, he or she does not go to either heaven or hell or to another world, rather a person changes form from physical mode of existence to a spiritual (ghostly) one'.[10] Thus, in traditional African worldview, death is a rite of passage.

Reconciliation in the African Context

Emmanuel Latey sees reconciliation as involving bringing together again parties that have become estranged or alienated from each other.[11] In the African cosmology, reconciliation means restoration of relationships in the community. The community includes: ancestors, the living, the living-dead, and those yet to be born.[12] When these relationships are broken, ritual actions may relieve the problems and sufferings of human life. This relief may come either by satisfying the offended gods or by resolving social conflicts, which requires a remedy in order to bring back the wholeness of life to the people.[13] Therefore, rituals become vehicles that help facilitate the reconciliation and renewed commitment to the community's values and life.

To-Do List for Pastoral Ministry

Miroslav Volf[14] and Cori Wielenga[15] argue that, although churches are the presumed instruments of peace, in the face of violent conflict, they are instead often impotent, at best, or perpetrators of violence, at worst. Volf argues further that talking about reconciliation from the pulpit is not enough, but that the social meaning of reconciliation needs to become a reality in church practice. One may ask: How does reconciliation become a reality in African Christianity?

Making Public Spaces Intimate

It is vital that pastoral ministry creates safe spaces for people to share their stories. By 'making public spaces intimate', Van der Merwe and Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela mean bringing our most intimate hurts into the public space, so that 'the talking about the hurts' triggers something in the audience with which they identify, which they receive and respond to.[16] Anyone who attended the healing fishbowl at Busan, South Korea during the World Council of Churches (WCC) Conference in 2013 would agree with me about the power of 'making public spaces intimate' as participants shared their experiences from their hearts. Fr Michael Lapsley, an Anglican priest and founder of the Institute for the Healing of Memories (IHOM), facilitated the fishbowl, both in the plenary and small group sessions chaired by Dr Nyambura Njoroge. He had people sit in a circle. The idea of the circle resonates with African worldview. I still remember my Systematic Theology 101 class at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, where Professor Anthony Balcomb taught us that Africans think in circles. This means they include everyone in what they do because the one you exclude becomes your enemy. Indeed, Fr Lapsley invited everyone into the circle, regardless of their pain, experience, race, sexual orientation, gender, and all the other schisms that divide

[9] Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 139.
[10] J.N.K. Mugambi, *African Heritage and Contemporary Christianity* (Nairobi: Longman Kenya, 1989), 51.
[11] Latey, *In Living Color*, 65.
[12] Lugira, "*African Religion,"* 13.
[13] Thorpe, S.A., *African Traditional Religions: An Introduction* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1991), 24-25.
[14] Miroslav Volf, *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006).
[15] Cori Wielenga, "Shattered Stories: Healing and Reconciliation in the South African Context," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 34, no. 1 (2013), 6, Art. #747, 8 pages. http://dx.doi. org/10.4102/ve.v34i1.747 (accessed 26 Nov. 15).
[16] Van der Merwe, "*Narrating our Healing*," 47.

and conquer the church. Although surrounded by the audience in both sessions, members of the smaller community, i.e. the circle, shared from their hearts one at a time. When one finished telling his or her story, they left the circle to allow others to come in. The space gave people permission to face and confront their pain. In her book, *Trauma and Recovery,* Judith Herman argues that 'remembering and telling the truth about terrible events are prerequisites both for the restoration of the social order and for the healing of individual victims'.[17] She adds, 'When the truth is finally recognised, survivors can begin their recovery.'[18] Since African Christianity ministers to a majority of people who believe that the 'restoration of the social order'[19] brings healing, people who 'think in circles', and people who use oral tradition, the pastoral ministry would facilitate healing and reconciliation by adapting the healing fishbowl method of the WCC and apply it in their contexts.

Wielenga argues that healing and reconciliation take place in the mutuality of the sharing, and such sharing has the potential of bringing recognition of the sameness of the other that shatters long-held assumptions. Sharing stories involves not only listening to the other but having an opportunity to share one's own stories as well.[20] Thus Wielenga challenges the churches to learn from organisations that are involved in 'making public spaces intimate' for people to share their stories. In particular, Wielenga draws our attention to the work of IHOM and African Enterprise, which have experience in facilitating healing in multiracial congregations. I bear testament to the work of IHOM, because I have been part of the facilitating team since 2008. I have also travelled with Fr Lapsley, in South Africa, Europe, Asia and America, during which time I have listened to hundreds of stories from church, religious and non-religious people alike. I still remember facilitating two workshops in the Anglican Diocese of KwaZulu-Natal in 2013, which the bishop and over fifty clergy and their spouses attended. In almost all workshops across the globe, I have observed the tension between silence and disclosure that was palpable amongst participants at the beginning of the workshop. However, the creation of public intimate space permitted people to share their painful and challenging experiences, which ministers of religion usually hide and suffer in silence.

Koinonia Encounters

Wielenga suggests that churches 'plan to have story-sharing encounters around a meal or a *braai* fire at the church on a regular basis'.[21] She challenges congregations that reach out to impoverished communities to take the time to hear stories from the community and share their own stories which have the potential of transforming the encounter from the problematic one of the 'rich' congregation patronising the poorer one to a mutual sharing and learning experience.[22] For Wielenga, this is the way forward to minister healing and reconciliation in and across divided congregations and communities. African Christianity can take advantage of the fact that a majority of its congregants live in rural communities of Africa where reading and writing may be problematic. Nevertheless, storytelling or African oral tradition continues to flourish as a medium of transmitting intergenerational knowledge from one generation to another. Therefore, storytelling is a valuable tool to utilise.

[17] Judith L. Herman, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence – from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (New York: Basic Books, 1992), 1.
[18] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery,* 1.
[19] Herman, *Trauma and Recovery,* 1.
[20] Wielenga, "*Shattered Stories*," 7.
[21] Wielenga, "*Shattered Stories*," 7.
[22] Wielenga, "*Shattered Stories*," 7.

Publishing Relevant Children's Stories

Frederick Douglass once said, 'It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men [sic].'

His words resonate with the Malawian proverbs: *Mmela mpoyamba* (Charity begins at home) or *kuwongola mtengo mpoyamba* (literally translated: If you want to grow a tree that is straight, do so while it is still young, otherwise it is difficult when it is old). The thinking in these Malawian proverbs correlates with the Bible verse:

> Train up a child in the way s/he should go, and when s/he is old s/he will not depart from it (Prov. 22:6, RSV).

The sense here is that African Christianity flourishes in an environment where the oral tradition flourishes. According to Lugira, the African oral tradition, with its myths, legends, stories, and proverbs, instils the important elements of religion and culture in the minds and hearts of the African people. These stories, myths and tales teach Africans from early childhood about the ethics and beliefs of their community, why things are as they are, how life is lived, the power and majesty of God, etc.[23] While some churches like Pentecostals, missionary and African versions of the missionary churches teach Sunday school to children, it is an opportunity for African Christianity or theological education to publish children's stories, Sunday school materials or educational curricula for schools and theological institutions that teach social, moral and spiritual values, love and tolerance of the other, embedded in African indigenous knowledge systems. We should not only gather children around the fire, the table, Sunday school, etc, and tell them about why animals do not talk, or why chickens do not have breasts, or *The Adventures of Tintin*; we need to tell or read to them stories about the social, moral and spiritual values of their culture, community and God. This lays a foundation for them upon which to build their moral values, faith in God and the confidence they need to face daily challenges.

Conclusion

This paper explored healing and reconciliation concepts as understood in the African context with the hope that the pastoral ministry could derive lessons from them as it executes its mandate of facilitating healing and reconciliation in African Christianity. The findings show that the term healing has varied meanings, depending on the context it is used in. While healing may mean curing the disease in the medical model, in the African context healing comes as a result of restoration or reconciliation of broken relationships, making these two concepts to be interdependent. The paper recommends a to-do list which has implications for the role the pastoral ministry in African Christianity can play to bring about healing, not only to the individual, but also to his or her support systems.

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[23] Lugira, "*African Religion*," 33.

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(150) THE ROLE OF CHURCHES AND NGOS IN CIVIL SOCIETY – A SOUTH AFRICAN CASE STUDY[1]

R.A. Koegelenberg

Introduction

The best way to reflect on the role of churches and NGOs in civil society in Africa is to focus on a specific context or case study – in this case, the developments in South Africa – that could highlight some of the trends and challenges. The South African experience may not be applicable to all other countries or regions of Africa, although there may be broad similarities in the process from a liberation struggle for independence to the post-transition political developments in new democracies.

It is impossible (and almost irresponsible) to reflect on the similarities and fundamental differences between churches and NGOs in a short paper. Their roles in civil society may sometimes be similar – like responding to specific challenges facing citizens in society, e.g. in delivering social services; responding to the needs of local communities; or strengthening the voice of marginalised groups in advocacy.

But there are also fundamental differences, which could best be illustrated by an example: when former Archbishop Tutu led a march of a broad coalition of civil society and political organisations to the previous, undemocratic Parliament, he was confronted by a government official who asked: Where did you get your mandate from? His response to this implied lack of legitimacy was 'from God'. The rationale for the church's role in civil society is its understanding of being part of God's mission (in all its facets) in this world – in the first place, it is not dependent on democratic or grassroots support.

In this contribution, I will reflect on the following five points:

- First, the meaning of the concept of civil society and a brief and selective overview of the changing context and role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from the time of the opposition to apartheid, through a period of transition, to a constitutional democracy;
- Secondly, reaching the milestone of twenty years of democracy provides an opportunity to review achievements and failures. Many observers conclude that South Africa is at a crossroads, or even within a deep crisis (as a failing state) – what went wrong? The crisis manifests itself in two ways: (i) in the political culture – a former liberation movement that cannot distinguish its party interests from the responsibility of the government or state in constitutional democracy; and (ii) in economic terms – the poverty, inequality and unemployment evident in a rich country;
- Thirdly, the conflict or disconnect between government policies and reality: the policies on the role of civil society and the experience of decreased funding available for church-based programmes and NGOs delivering social services;
- Fourthly, the important role of churches and NGOs 'to give life to the constitution';
- Finally, I shall offer a few concluding remarks on the relationship between churches and NGOs, the unintended consequences of international donor policies on civil society, and the importance of international dialogue to address some of the challenges.

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[1] This is a shortened and edited version of a paper delivered at the colloquium on "Religion and Civil Society in South Africa and Germany", hosted by the "Forschungszentrum Internationale und Interdisziplinäre Theologie" (FIIT) in Heidelberg, 11-14 September 2014.

The Concept of Civil Society

Churches and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)[2] are two important components of the broader civil society in South Africa. There are many different definitions of civil society. According to Taylor: 'The essential elements of civil society are ordinary citizens coming together in community around issues of common interest or need.'[3]

De Gruchy defines civil society as 'that network of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), churches and other religious communities, trade unions, the media and voluntary associations, which in modern democratic societies provides the means whereby people can participate in pursuing social goals and protecting particular interests… a strong civil society is necessary if democratic transition from authoritarian rule is to be sustained'.[4]

In defining civil society in relation to the function of the state or government, Friedman emphasises that:

> Civil society is the realm in which citizens acquire a voice enabling them to ensure that government responds to their needs and is accountable to them[5]… Citizens do not band together in civil society to avoid the state – they do so to ensure that they have a voice in government decisions. The government needs civil society if it is to respond to citizens' desires and needs – civil society needs government to protect its freedom to associate and to implement the will of citizens expressed by the competing demands and proposals by organisations that give voice to citizens' concerns… an organization which provides a voice for as many citizens as possible… ensures maximum citizen participation in decisions – the prime rationale of democracy.[6]

According to Friedman, it is a weakness in South African civil society at the moment that it has a 'shallow base'– not really representing the majority of poor citizens – which hinders its influence in decision-making: 'civil society has often been reduced to making suggestions which government decision-makers are free to ignore'.[7] Since 1994 the new political leadership has been more interested in placing its stamp on society than in listening to independent voices.[8]

The Changed Political Context and its Effect on Civil Society

Taylor gives a good summary of the changing conditions that affect civil society in his paper 'Struggles against systems that impoverish: South African civil society at the crossroads'.[9]

In the era of the struggle against apartheid: the United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed in 1983 with 400 diverse organisations representing almost three million members. 'The aim of the UDF, through uniting different organisations such as trade unions, was to make South Africa ungovernable – thereby crippling the apartheid system.'[10]

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[2] Most of the literature distinguishes non-governmental organisations (NGOs – indicating well-established organisations with formal management structures) from community-based organisations (CBOs – smaller networks within local communities), or civil society organisations (CSOs – referring to a range of smaller or larger NGOs), or faith-based organisations (FBOs – referring to church-based or religiously linked, or religiously initiated organisations); or registered non-profit organisations (NPOs) – which all belong to the diversity of organisations that together constitute "civil society".
[3] J. Taylor, 2012, 4.
[4] J. de Gruchy, 2014, 104.
[5] S. Friedman & E. McKaiser, 2009, 12-13.
[6] Ibid. 13, quoted from S. Friedman & M. Robinson, 2007, 643-668
[7] Ibid. 20.
[8] Ibid. 23.
[9] See the good overview by James Taylor, 2012, 4.
[10] Ibid. 5.

Before 1980, support to civil society organisations (CSOs) often 'came via the church, political or trade union organisations. They had international links that created channels through which flowed relationships of solidarity and small amounts of funding'.[11] Local communities and role players were trusted and had the discretion to use the funding as they saw fit.

During the 1980s, representatives of international funding agencies started shifting more funding to non governmental organisations (NGOs) but, with the increase in funding, the regulatory framework also changed – it required new systems and formal funding contracts. The years between 1980 and 1990 were the heyday of the NGO sector, which received substantial funding from international partners – and this played a key role in the transition towards democracy.[12]

In the period of transition and reconstruction (from the 1990s): the role of NGOs changed from opposition to apartheid towards building a new democratic dispensation:

> The focus shifted from fighting for the rights of citizens to developing practical means of meeting human rights and needs. Now highly skilled NGOs were active in developing models of effective service in all areas of society… Those that participated in the struggle… started to explore what it means to lead a normal life as a member of a democratic society. Many of the people's struggle organisations disbanded or took on new roles in the democratic processes.[13]

Civil society and NGOs at the crossroads*:* over the last decade, new challenges have developed, placing civil society and NGOs at a crossroads: the relationship between NGOs and the state has become more complex. Initially, their role became less political – as non-profit organisations (NPOs), they did not act politically, but focused on the delivery of programmes (assisting the government).

The relationship between NGOs and government changed to one of increasing tension: many community-based organisations (CBOs) supported the struggle and recognised the frustration of people who lacked access to basic services – and they held the government accountable for this. The challenge was then how to interact with a democratic, legitimate government. Increasingly, NGOs were challenged as not having the legitimacy of being mandated by the people and were accused of being agents implementing foreign agendas.[14]

Over the last few years, the tension between NGOs with a human-rights focus has intensified: NGOs that challenged bad governance on national and provincial levels through court orders (for example, to ensure that schools receive handbooks or basic facilities) are repudiated by government representatives because they 'mess up the good story there is to tell about South Africa'. This tension was recently underlined by the legal procedures initiated by the South African Litigation Centre to try to force the South African government to arrest president Omar al-Bashir of Sudan during an African Union summit in South Africa.[15]

Nevertheless, it is widely recognised by many authors that religious institutions, churches and civil society networks played an important role in the struggle against apartheid and the process of democratisation and nation-building (from 1990 onwards).[16]

Coinciding with the milestone of twenty years of being a constitutional democracy, several authors have reflected on the country's positive achievements – but also on the fundamental challenges that endanger the vision for building a new society. What are the factors that have caused this crisis – what's gone wrong?[17]

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[11] Ibid. 5.
[12] Ibid. 6.
[13] Ibid. 6.
[14] Habib 2003, quoted in Taylor 2012, 7
[15] See article by Habib, *Sunday Times*, 21 June 2015, 13.
[16] See contributions of T. Kuperus (2011); J. Taylor (2012); M. du Preez (2013); A. Boraine (2014).
[17] See M. du Preez (2013) and A. Boraine (2014).

Reviewing Twenty Years of Democracy: Crossroads

The nature of the crisis is captured well by Neville Alexander:

> Our real concerns are the palpable signs of social breakdown all around us: the ever more blatant examples of greed and corruption involving public figures, who are expected to be the role models for youth; the unspeakable abuse of children, of the aged and of women; the smug dishonesty, indiscipline and slothfulness of those who are paid to render public services; the lack of respect for life-preserving rules… the violence in so many communities… in short, the mayhem and apparently suicidal chaos that ordinary people experience in their daily lives. These things are our everyday reality.[18]

Acknowledging the positives

In his book *A Rumour of Spring*, Max du Preez highlights the following truth: 'We South Africans – the political parties, government, business, civil society – have hugely underestimated the real impact and legacy of colonialism and apartheid.'[19]

He affirms this point before reflecting on the positives (the silver lining) of the new South Africa: the importance of our new constitution, which guarantees our freedoms and basic rights and is a blueprint for how we ought to behave as a nation. He refers to a speech by Judge Cameron in which he emphasised the value of the constitution: 'It is a practicable, workable charter. And it has proved itself modestly but practically effective as a basis for the democratic exercise of power in our half-broken, half-fixed country.'[20]

Du Preez also highlighted that 'We are free as any nation in the world to say what we want, do what we want, go where we want and to associate with whom we want… South Africa is still one of the most open societies in the world… Our media are diverse and freer from legal restriction than in most societies… The rule of law still reigns supreme… Our faith communities are strong and there is an almost complete absence of religious intolerance'.[21]

Our academic institutions are doing well: 'Our top five universities are also the top five on the continent… our sport teams punch far above their weight… our economy has grown substantially… Our tax revenue grew by 491% between 1994 and 2010 (from R114 billion to R674 billion).[22]

In terms of 'the delivery of services', he quotes Frans Cronjé: 'The ANC may be accused of many things… but the data we have published is unambiguous that the ANC and the government it leads deserve considerably more credit for improving the living standards of poor and black South Africans than it has received.'[23]

What went wrong? What is the nature of the crisis?

I restrict my reflections on the nature of the crisis to two factors:

- First, a general dissatisfaction about the lack of respect shown from the leadership of the ruling ANC for critical engagement with citizens and civil society institutions;
- Secondly, the nature of the economic crisis facing many South Africans.

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[18] N. Alexander, 2013, 39-40.
[19] M. du Preez, 2013, 7.
[20] Ibid. 41.
[21] Ibid. 42.
[22] Ibid. 43.
[23] Ibid. 46 – This is also the thrust of government's own assessment in the "Twenty Year Review" by the Presidency, The Presidency, 2014, 164.

ANC POLITICAL CULTURE: CAPTIVE IN STRUGGLE MODE AND SELF-ENRICHMENT

Former Archbishop Desmond Tutu has expressed his dissatisfaction with the entrenched culture in the ANC and its leadership in several public statements. Giving the Nelson Mandela annual lecture in 2004, during Mbeki's presidency and his denial of the HIV/AIDS national crisis, he reflected on 'What are our failures and challenges?' and remarked:

> We want our society to be characterized by vigorous debate and dissent where to disagree is part and parcel of a vibrant community, that we should play the ball not the person and not think that those who disagree, who express dissent, are ipso facto disloyal or unpatriotic. Unthinking, uncritical, kowtowing party line-toeing is fatal to a vibrant democracy.. It is lucrative to be on a party list. The rewards are substantial and if calling into question party positions jeopardises one's chances to get on the list then not too many are foolhardy and opt for silence to become voting cattle for the party.[24]

He further emphasised: 'We were involved in the struggle because we believed we would evolve a new kind of society. A caring, a compassionate society. At the moment many, too many, of our people live in gruelling demeaning, dehumanising poverty. We are sitting on a powder keg. We really must work like mad to eradicate poverty.'[25]

In his recent forward to a new book by Alex Boraine ("What's gone wrong? On the brink of a failed state"), he concluded: 'For the ANC members, their ultimate loyalty is not the country or the state. No, their loyalty is to the party. The party is *über alles*.'[26]

The same sentiment is expressed by Jay Naidoo, a former leader of the largest trade union (COSATU) and a member of President Mandela's cabinet. In his reflection on 20 years of democracy, Jay Naidoo asked:

> Are our lives better 20 years into democracy? The answer is a decisive 'yes'. We have made progress…. We are a constitutional democracy… Could we have achieved more? Again an unequivocal 'yes'… our leaders are inaccessible and out of touch… We are a nation on the ropes… South Africa's leaders have let us down. Our politicians show contempt for their public office – being elected seems to instil in them the notion that they are somehow born to rule over us, that citizens are subjects… They gave up on us, and in turn we have given up on them. An endless litany of scandals has left us exhausted… The quadruple evils of joblessness, poverty, rising inequality and corruption are sinking South Africa… if we do not create concrete pathways out of poverty for the next generation, we are sowing the seeds of our own destruction.'[27]

The danger of a political elite that uses political power for self-enrichment is evident in two areas: corruption, and the explosion of the public service, where loyal cadres of the party are awarded with highly paid positions.

Croucamp emphasised: 'The political, moral and economic crisis in society is evident from the fact that the tentacles of tender-entrepreneurship (abuse of procurement procedures) manifests in a tight network of opportunistic relationships (between party officials, business entrepreneurs, members of Parliament/ Executive) that is maintained through corruption and access to state funding – and legitimised through the quest for economic empowerment – both on national and provincial levels.'[28]

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[24] Tutu, 2004, 56.
[25] Ibid. 33.
[26] Boraine, 2014, xiii.
[27] J Naidoo, *Sunday Times*, 20/04/2014, 21.
[28] See P. Croucamp, 2014, "Separate Zuma from ANC flock", in *Die Burger*, 2 September, 12.

In his latest book on South Africa, Johnson concludes: 'After 20 years… an extremely serious situation had been reached by 2014… South Africa is heading fast for another investment crisis.'[29] The culture of enrichment through political office is best illustrated in the extended networks of President Zuma's family: he is head of the Masibambisane Rural Development Trust (MRDI), the Jacob Zuma Foundation and the Jacob Zuma RDP Education Trust, to which companies that wanted government favours were wise to contribute.[30] 'The Zuma era has brought about the sweeping criminalisation of the South African State.'[31]

He also highlights the explosion in the public sector: under ANC rule, the number of the ministers and senior state bureaucrats increased dramatically: 'Whereas in 1973 there were 18 ministers and directors-general, in May 2014 this has increased to 35 ministers, 38 deputy ministers, 159 directors-general – and additional 7,782 directors'[32] on highly paid salaries.

This does not mean that NGOs and churches have no weaknesses, or that that they are necessarily responding better to the needs in society. There is a long and critical tradition in re-assessing the strengths and weaknesses of NGOs.[33]

POVERTY IN A RICH COUNTRY: INEQUALITY AND UNEMPLOYMENT

In a previous paper 'Poverty in a rich country: South Africa',[34] I dealt with the question of whether economic growth created a new opportunity to address the challenge of social inequality (social justice, more equity). Two important considerations were highlighted, namely, the legacy of colonialism and apartheid, and the kind of economic and socio-development since South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994.

The Legacy of Colonialism and Apartheid

The close link between political power and economic dominance in the history of South Africa has been well documented by Sampie Terreblanche.[35] He also highlighted the increase in unemployment of the labour force between 1970 (20%, 1.9 million) and 1995 (40%, 4.8 million) – shortly after the transition to democracy.

Poverty in South Africa is characterised by three factors: first, 'the gulf between rich and poor', that is, the inequality expressed in the Gini co-efficient (a measure of inequality and poverty[36]), almost the highest in the world; secondly, the fact that poverty in South Africa exists as a direct consequence of deliberate economic and political policy (apartheid legacy); and thirdly, that it affects the human dignity of poor people.[37]

According to Terreblanche,[38] the turning-point in South Africa's history occurred in 1986, when a combination of political developments resulted in pressure from the Soviet Union on the ANC to negotiate, as well as pressure from western countries on the South African government of the time to negotiate. This cleared the way to start negotiations for a political settlement in South Africa.

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[29] R. Johnson, 2015, 17.
[30] Ibid. 36.
[31] Ibid. 45.
[32] Ibid. 113.
[33] See the whole edition of "Der Überblick, 2001. Zeitschrift für ökumenische Begegnung und internationalen Zusammenarbeit", Quartalschrift des kirchlichen Entwicklungsdienstes; September 2001: NGOs: Protest in wessen Namen? (provided by Renate Wilke-Launer, former editor).
[34] My unpublished paper, Brot für die Welt conference, Berlin, 8 and 9 April 2013.
[35] See S J Terreblanche, 2002, 373.
[36] See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gini_coefficient
[37] F. Wilson & M. Ramphela, 1989, 4.
[38] S.J. Terreblanche, 2012, 7-16.

New economic trends after 1994?

Did the transition to democracy change the patterns of unemployment, poverty and inequality that were the key features of the economic legacy of apartheid?

With the transition to democracy in 1994, new trends emerged. In the Presidency's (2008a) review, the changing structure of the economy is evident in the changing figures of employment in certain sectors. According to this report, there was a reduction in employment from 1994-2004 in the sectors that traditionally had employed the largest number of unskilled workers: mining (-29%), agriculture (-12.1%) and manufacturing (-1.7%).[39]

The criticism that the economic policy of South Africa since 1994 has produced 'jobless growth' has been contradicted by some studies. Bhorat has shown the shift to new sectors where higher skills are demanded.[40] Landman and others have shown a decrease in the percentage of poverty – even if the numbers of poor people have increased.[41] Van der Berg has concluded that poverty has declined since 2000, but that inequality has remained high.[42]

According to David Williams, South Africa's post-apartheid economic reforms have slowed and 'stalled'. He called South Africa 'a stalled state':[43] investors and the business sector have lost confidence, based on concerns 'about crime, corruption, labour market issues and political populism'.

Mills and Herbst further observed: 'South Africa's economy has remained schizophrenic, often characterized as both Third and First World. By 2011, 14.1 million South Africans were receiving a state welfare grant, this figure having increased from 3.5 million over a decade. The number of registered individual taxpayers in South Africa numbered 5.9 million in 2009/10, and the number of businesses 1.9 million.'[44]

The ANC government used South Africa's comparative advantage (natural resources), as well as a more efficient tax-collection system, to generate resources for the redistribution of wealth through an extension of the welfare system (especially child-care grants and pensions). At the same time, they transformed and rapidly extended the civil service (previously white): the greatest job gains in South Africa have occurred in the public sector!

Du Preez pointed out that, in 2012, about 1.4 million employees of the public service cost about R380 billion. According to the state treasury, 11.5% of South Africa's GDP is spent on state salaries – which is even higher when the employees of state-owned entities (such as SAA, ESKOM, Transnet) are included, raising it to approximately 14 per cent: 'This makes South Africa's civil service the most expensive in the world'[45] – in comparison with Russia (3.7%), Brazil (4.6%) and Nigeria (4%).

Mills pointed to a recent Stats SA Labour Force Survey that showed an increase of 42,000 civil service jobs in the year 2011, although 91,000 jobs were lost in the private sector. In an era when technological improvements should have made governments leaner, such a shift represents an ideological choice.[46]

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[39] The Presidency, 2008a, "Towards a fifteen-year review, synthesis report – a discussion document", Policy Coordination and Advisory Services (PCAS), Table 24, 97-98.

[40] H. Bhorat, 2006, "The possible state of unemployment and job creation by 2014", unpublished paper, Economic Policy Forum; EFSA Institute for Theological and Interdisciplinary Research, Lanzerac, Stellenbosch, 27 July 2006.

[41] Landman, J.P., Bhorat, H., Van der Berg S., Van Aardt, A., 2003, "Breaking the grip of poverty and inequality in South Africa 204-2014 – trends issues, and future policy options", Development Forum Series, EFSA Institute for Theological and Interdisciplinary Research, Stellenbosch.

[42] S. van der Berg, 2006, 'Dimensions of poverty', unpublished paper (slide 28), economic policy forum EFSA Institute for Theological and Interdisciplinary Research, Lanzerac, Stellenbosch, 30 August 2006.

[43] As cited in *Africa's Third Liberation, the New Search for Prosperity and Jobs* (ed.) G. Mills and J Herbst, 2012, 59-60.

[44] Ibid., 60-61.

[45] M. du Preez, 2013, 92.

[46] See Mills G., 'Economy needs a big dose of tough love – the interests of the unemployed must be put ahead of the

According to Mills and Herbst, this redistributive model is unsustainable.[47]

Moeletsi Mbeki agrees with this interpretation:[48] 'The (black) elite fought for democracy to achieve political equality; to achieve economic equality, it adopted a policy of wealth redistribution… But the downside to such an approach is that it diverts resources from investment to consumption… the scramble for wealth redistribution has also become a main driver of corruption.'

Conclusion: post-apartheid government economic policy has driven South Africa to the wrong kind of economic growth. The large corporations that dominated the economy (especially in mining and minerals) were allowed to internationalise their businesses, while there was no requirement to invest in South Africa. Government allowed them to shift capital abroad without increasing domestic investment.[49] This has led to a decline in the manufacturing and productive sectors. This growth is not sustainable. Economic policy in SA should focus on supporting industrial development and employment creation.

What went wrong with South Africa's transformation process between 1986 and 2012?

Terreblanche concluded: 'It is time for us as South Africans to acknowledge, in all sincerity, that the transformation has been a disappointing one – a huge failure, in fact. We replaced the immoral and inhumane system of apartheid with an immoral and inhumane politico-economic system.'[50] The political 'side' of the new dual system is pathetically inefficient and corrupt, while the economic 'side' is too powerful, too self-centred and too globally-oriented.

Neville Alexander put it differently: 'The demise of apartheid as a political-ideological system… did not lead to the kind of society that many of us… had imagined a post-apartheid South Africa would be… apartheid capitalism was succeeded by post-apartheid capitalism… There was no revolution; at best, what we got was no more than regime change.'[51]

Conflict between Policy and Reality

There is a conflict between government policy (emphasising co-operation and partnership), and the reality experienced by NGOs – as manifested in the funding crisis for NGOs delivering social services.

The Diagnostic Review and the 'National Development Plan 2030'

On 11th May 2010, President Zuma appointed the National Planning Commission – a committee of experts in different fields of society – to analyse the key challenges that South Africa is facing. A 'diagnostic report' was released on 9th June 2011 entitled *Combating poverty and inequality as key objectives*, which identified nine major challenges confronting South Africa: too few people work; the very poor quality of school education for black children; infrastructure is poorly located, inadequate and under-maintained; spatial divides hinder inclusive development (leaving the apartheid legacy intact); the economy is unsustainably resource intensive; the public health system cannot meet demand or sustain quality; public services are uneven and often of poor quality (especially at local, municipal level); corruption levels are high (in public service and society); South Africa remains a divided society.

On 15th August 2012, the Commission handed over the National Development Plan 2030 to the President and the country. On the release of the National Planning Commission's 2030 report, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, Chairperson of the Commission, stated: 'We need to work together if we are to ensure that it

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short-term pain of the employed', *Mail & Guardian*, 17-23 June, 2011, 27.
[47] Ibid. Summary, 61.
[48] Mbeki, M. (ed.), *Advocates For Change. How to Overcome Africa's Challenges*, 2011, 8-9.
[49] S. Mohamed, "Negative Trends in the South African Economy", in Moeletsi Mbeki, 2011, 15.
[50] S.J. Terreblanche, 2012, 124.
[51] N. Alexander, 2013, 41.

is a future our country deserves… it is a plan for the country. Responsibility for implementation lies with all of us: government, business, trade unions, civil society and citizens. No single social force, not even government, can implement the plan on its own. It requires a joint effort, constant dialogue and partnerships throughout society.'[52] On 6th September 2012, the cabinet adopted the Plan as the framework for South Africa's future development. The objectives of the Plan are the elimination of poverty and the reduction of inequality through specific programmes.

Partnership and co-operation between government and civil society?

Both the Diagnostic Review and the NDP 2030 are quite radical in acknowledging the failures and challenges facing South Africa in 'creating a better life for all'. In the NPD, there are key passages dealing with the importance of co-operation between the state and other sectors (civil society) to promote active citizenship.[53]

With regard to civil society's role: 'Civil society leaders represent citizens on issues closest to their hearts… they form an integral part of a vibrant democracy that involves people in their own development.'[54]

The emphasis on partnerships with civil society, especially with regard to NGOs delivering social services, is clearly spelled out in the 'policy on funding of Non-Profit Organisations' of the National Department of Social Development (DSD).[55]

For civil society and the religious sector, the danger is that the notion of 'real partnerships' with other sectors remains nothing more than lip service to an ideal. Although there is a general appeal 'to work together', the experience in civil society, as well as in the business and religious sectors, is that the government acts as if it has the sole mandate to implement programmes (event though it lacks the capacity).

Sampie Terreblanche is more outspoken in his chapter 'The fairy-tale optimism of the NDP versus the likelihood that the Poverty, Unemployment and Inequality (PUI) problem will be perpetuated'.[56]

The reality of decreased funding: a crisis for NPOs and NGOs

Substantial unspent budgets by key national departments (Health, Social Development, Education, Housing, etc.) are returned to the National Treasury annually as a result of bad management and the unwillingness to enter into functional partnerships with other sectors.

This is also reflected in the national crisis of NGOs and non-profits (NPOs), where state subsidy for welfare projects falls short and many face closure, or have already been forced to close. The lack of transparent and proper consultations between the Department of Social Development and NPOs has clearly

[52] *Mail & Guardian*, 17 August 2012, Opinion contribution.
[53] The NDP emphasises: "South Africa needs leaders that work together. Just as the transition from apartheid was a win-win solution rather than a short-sighted power struggle, the fight against poverty and inequality will have benefits for all – black and white … To successfully implement this plan, the country needs partnerships across society working together towards a common purpose. The Presidency, 2011. The National Development Plan 2030: Our Future – Make It Work, 57.
[54] Ibid. 58.
[55] "Government alone cannot address all the challenges facing society without the involvement and participation of all sectors of society … Many of our achievements have been possible because of the co-operation that we have with civil society organisations". See Department of Social Development (DSD): Draft policy on financial awards to service providers, 2013.
[56] S. J. Terreblanche, "Lost in Transformation", p.119. He concludes: "the main problem with the NDP is that it has not considered the historical trends of the past 130 years and it does not consider *the structural nature* of the PUI problem, the role that political and economic structures played from 1886 to 1994, and after 1994, in creating and perpetuation the PUI problem".

demonstrated the unequal levels of power in this relationship: there are roughly 100,000 NPOs who between them deliver almost 60% of all welfare services the government is obliged to deliver. In the case of child welfare services, NPOs provide closer to 90% of the services that are delivered.[57]

This situation became aggravated in 2012: many welfare groups, fulfilling many of the state's obligations, are being crippled by its inefficiency and indifference. Government funding is failing non-profit organisations serving children, the elderly, disabled and vulnerable people living in poverty. The government is constitutionally bound to deliver these services, but the non-profit organisations carry out most of the work. Inadequate funding levels for services rendered and late disbursements cause a lot of damage to NGOs. State subsidies for older persons in NGO homes are totally inadequate – they have remained unchanged for the last 20 years.[58]

Apart from the crisis in these 'service-delivering civil society networks' (which include many religious and church-based networks and NGOs), the transition to democracy in South Africa has had other negative consequences, exacerbated by the international financial crisis: well-established church networks (such as the South African Council of Churches) are in a severe financial crisis, while others have been forced to close already (e.g. the Institute for Democracy in South Africa: *Idasa*).[59]

Although management decisions could have contributed to these crises, the fact is that strong civil society institutions that could make a substantial contribution to the national debate on the kind of society South Africans want to build for the future are disappearing at a very crucial time of our country's history.

A strong democracy also needs strong civil society institutions and networks that are sustainable (in core staff and functions) in order to make a meaningful contribution. The costs in failing to create the democratic space and sustainable non-partisan civil society institutions could be extremely high in the long term. In South Africa, churches have elaborate social programmes that reach many beneficiaries, whereas the state cannot reach everybody.[60]

The Constitution: The Role of Churches and NGOs

Churches and NGOs have a crucial role to play in South Africa's relatively young democracy. Reflecting on 'What does it mean that we have a constitutional state?', Judge Edwin Cameron concluded:

> The Constitution is not self-executing. It needs us to give it life – us, the citizens and inhabitants of South Africa, young and old, male and female, rural and urban, township and suburb dwellers. The Constitution creates the practical structures that enable the rest of us – you and me, together with principled, honest leadership, a committed government, an active citizenry and vigorous civil society institutions – to perfect our future.[61]

In analysing the Constitution (especially the Bill of Rights) with regard to freedom and equality, Amy Meyer concludes:

> In South Africa, with such socio-economic extremes, many citizens are not politically empowered or aware, and are thus marginalized from real involvement in the decisions that affect them. The right, as it stands, is therefore

[57] See article by Ann Crotty, "Meeting with government further frustrates NPOs', *Business Report*, August 30, 2011, 16.
[58] See article by Heidi Swart, "Welfare groups fight for survival", *Mail & Guardian*, May 18-24, 2012, 19.
[59] See Carol Paton's report, "Idasa leaves a gap as it succumbs to lack of funding", *Business Day*, 28 March, 3.
[60] See NRASD presentation to President Mbeki that led to a formal Memorandum of Understanding (2005) to cooperate in social programmes.
[61] E. Cameron, 2014, 276.

> only protecting people from being excluded from voting. It does not necessarily create the space for citizens to realise this right. [62]

This is especially with regard to the socio-economic rights found in our Bill of Rights: the right to a healthy environment (section 24); the right to housing (section 26); the right to health, food and social security (section 27) and the right to education (section 29) – these provide 'strong evidence that we prescribe an inclusive society'.[63]

The former Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, focusing on the challenges of poverty and inequality, emphasised that 'the concern that we should all express is the risk that for many… the constitutional promise is now either extinguished or deferred'.[64] Although we now have a model constitution with democratic values and fundamental human rights, regular democratic elections, etc., the danger is that one can 'tick all the boxes' of the 'form' of democracy without realising the 'substance' of a constitutional democracy.[65] Key to realising this substance of democracy is meeting the demand for real participation.[66]

It is not only with regard to socio-economic rights that the Constitution is under threat, but also in terms of guaranteeing basic human rights to foreigners in South Africa. During the recent xenophobic violence that was unleashed against foreigners, it was often the NGOs like Lawyers for Human Rights that defended their expulsion from the Central Methodist Church in Johannesburg or gave them access to legal counsel.[67] At the same time, numerous churches and other faith groups supported the foreigners with food parcels and tried to protect them at community level.

Max du Preez highlights the crucial role for civil society:

> The question we should ponder is whether we are going to live up to our real potential in the next few decades; whether we are going to develop and prosper; whether we're going to succeed in bringing social and economic justice to all citizens… Visionary political and business leadership and a lot more civic activism are preconditions. We'll need leaders in all sectors of our society to forge a new social contract that most citizens will buy into.[68]

Steven Friedman elaborates on the challenge for civil society in democracy – not to focus on engagement with government alone:

> The task for civil society is to move beyond a reliance on direct engagement with the government to a strategy which stresses more the need to deepen roots in society. Actively defending the freedoms which make that possible is a core civil society concern – its immediate future may thus depend on how energetically and effectively it unites behind the institutions and rights which make civil society possible… As always, civil society and democracy feed off each other: neither will flourish unless the other does too… it is therefore of critical importance that they form more effective coalitions amongst themselves.[69]

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[62] Ibid. 19.
[63] Ibid. 20
[64] T. Manuel on the role of civil society in sustaining our constitutional democracy, in *Daily Maverick*, 12 November 2014.
[65] Ibid. 2.
[66] Ibid. 2, citing Michelle Bachelet's Nelson Mandela Memorial Lecture in 2013.
[67] *The Economist*: "South Africa's migrants – nice words, harsh deeds", 4 June 2015.
[68] M. du Preez, 2013, 269.
[69] S. Friedman & E. McKaiser, 2009, 47-48.

Are the churches and NGOs succeeding in playing this critical role in our constitutional state?

There are a few studies that focus on evaluating the role of the churches and NGOs/CSOs within the democratic dispensation that emerged in 1994.

In a contribution by Frans Cronje, he refers to the critical role of NGOs and the danger if the state should attempt to limit their role:

> By 2014 civil society had also begun to turn against the government. Civil society organisations routinely challenged new government policies in court on issues ranging from policing to education… (there is a) danger of controlling civil society formations by monitoring or de-registering them.[70]

In her research, Tracy Kuperus asked the question: 'Does the political involvement of churches in a democratic South Africa differ significantly from the apartheid era?… Do churches and interdenominational organizations, as key civil society actors, help or hinder the consolidation of democracy in South Africa?'[71] The results are mixed: 'Some argue that civil society can be a stumbling block to strengthen democracy (when they only serve selective interests), others argue that it contributes to democratic consolidation.'[72]

In her essay, she focused on the 'public policy advocacy role' in four case studies in South Africa: (NG Kerk, SACC, Rhema and ZCC),[73] whilst acknowledging that this forms only a selective part of the role of Christian churches. One of the interesting results highlighted in this contribution is the perceived diminishing role of mainline churches (and the SACC as a beacon in the struggle against apartheid) versus the strengthening of Evangelical and Charismatic churches (which were almost neutral in terms of opposition to apartheid).

With regard to the SACC: with its 27 member churches, it took a leading role in the struggle against apartheid – and produced the 'Message to the people of South Africa' which declared that apartheid was an unjust political policy and contrary to the biblical message of reconciliation.[74] It supported the Freedom Charter and its role was appreciated in the ANC. After the transition to democracy, its influence diminished rapidly – competing more and more with other Pentecostal and charismatic churches. Its 'critical solidarity' with government (selective support) and its 'watchdog role' (evaluating and criticising) of government contributed to its being side-lined by the ANC leadership.[75]

In evaluating the role of the different churches, Kuperus concluded: 'As civil society actors, churches and church leaders can play a positive role in democratisation *only if* they maintain an autonomous voice vis-à-vis the government.'[76]

The transition to democracy impacted directly not only on the formation and role of NGOs, but also on the traditional role of the SACC and numerous new and changing ecumenical initiatives. Ernst Conradie gives an overview on these ecumenical developments and concludes: 'It is at least evident from these rather confusing developments that the relationship between church, party, government and state calls for constant clarification. Many churches that supported the liberation movement in South Africa nowadays recognise the need to maintain their autonomy from any political structure.'[77]

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[70] F. Cronje, 2014, 171.
[71] T. Kuperus, 2001, 279.
[72] Ibid. citing L. Diamond and E. Gyimah-Boadi.
[73] Dutch Reformed Church, South African Council of Churches, Rhema Bible Church, Zionist Christian Church.
[74] John W de Gruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa*, 2nd ed., Grand Rapids Eerdmans, 1986, 120.
[75] T. Kuperus, 2001, 293.
[76] Ibid. 299.
[77] E. Conradie. 2013. 15.

Concluding Remarks

In his book *The Role of Civil Society in a Failing State,* Alex Boraine[78] refers to the prominent role of NGOs in challenging the government of the day on fundamental policies: the role of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) to force President Mbeki's government to start a treatment programme for HIV and AIDS; the Right2Know (R2K) coalition to oppose new legislation to control free access to information (the so-called Protection of State Information Bill); Corruption Watch and the Social Justice Coalition.[79] He concludes: 'Civil society was important under the apartheid state; it is equally important under a failing state.'[80]

The church is part of broader civil society, and often collaborates with civil society or NGO/CBO initiatives – it is often the church that enables civil society to function by providing the enabling space (physical and intellectually), the prophetic vision that enables civil society initiatives and networks to do their work. We have seen this in South Africa and in Germany (e.g. the Leipzig democracy demonstrations in the former Eastern Germany).

Crucial in many of these new initiatives is the fact that prominent church leaders like Archbishop Thabo Makgoba (Anglican) and the churches provide the space and support for these public campaigns to defend basic rights. Thus, the history of co-operation between churches and NGOs is repeating itself. This revived the model that was followed in the struggle against apartheid: church leaders act as custodians of the struggle to realise the rights of the marginalised. It is an omission in the book by Boraine that he pays no attention to the role of the churches… being a former church leader himself (turned politician).

Friedman has pointed out that democracy and civil society need one another to flourish. In a sense, the same applies to the relationship between churches and NGOs. Where they share common values and explore collaboration, they are more effective and together strengthen the role of civil society.

Formal collaboration and co-operation between ecumenical or church networks, NGOs and governments are a fundamental part of civil society today. 'Being church' could refer to international networks (globally), synod or regional networks, the local congregation, or even specific services (such as food services) of a local congregation. The ecumenical church always has been a global (catholic, universal) institution – long before 'globalisation' became a social and economic concept.[81]

One of the interesting case studies in this regard has been the formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) since 1999 between the Catholic Church (Caritas Internationalis) and UNAIDS (the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS). Despite fundamental differences in the social teachings of the Catholic Church and UNAIDS (e.g. the distribution and usage of condoms), they co-operate closely and respect their differences. This is reflected in the statement by UNAIDS director Michel Sidibé in 2009:

> The Church's uncompromising position on the need for social justice – to do what is right – and on the inherent dignity of individuals, inspires us to campaign for universal access to comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment, care and support as a moral imperative.[82]

Formal co-operation between churches and NGOs in the North and the South is necessary to counter some of the negative developments in international development co-operation: current policies of donors have a direct impact on the survival chances of NGOs and many church-based social programmes in the

[78] A. Boraine, 2014, 109.
[79] Ibid., 112-113.
[80] Ibid., 114.
[81] See my paper on "Poverty and Civil Society in a global perspective" – the role of church initiated networks, unpublished paper 2013.
[82] See M. Czerny, "Global Catholic responses to AIDS since the discovery of HIV", in S. Bate & A. Munro, *Catholic Responses to AIDS in Southern Africa*, 165.

South. Not only is there a substantial decrease in available funding, but the conditions attached to some of the grants are counter-productive and sometimes have serious, unintended, negative (and unethical) consequences.

One example will suffice. Germany is one of the main donors of the Global Fund to fight HIV and AIDS, malaria and TB – contributing annually approximately 200 million euros to the Global Fund's budget. In the financial management of this grant, the minimising of financial risk plays a key role. One consequence of this needs to be spelled out: where the funds are mostly needed (in poor rural areas of South Africa) there are no formal partners that can benefit from the grant (e.g. the largest African Independent Churches), since their financial systems are not sophisticated enough to manage these funds.

The effect of a risk-management approach is intensified and aggravated by a 'results-based' approach that has become popular in the 'evaluation industry': the quest for accountability and the measurement of results through linear logical frameworks (base-line studies; measuring inputs, outputs and impact). Thus in South Africa (and other parts of the world) the Country Co-ordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) increasingly formulate 'easily measurable targets' (called 'key population groups') to ensure that they can prove 'impact', or 'value for investment' (maximum impact with small amount of funding). The intention of such an approach may be good, but the unintended consequences are bad – it does not build long-term relationships of trust or capacity within the target communities (the moment donor funding stops, the programmes disappear). It also raises fundamental ethical issues.

How does one explain to a child who has lost both parents that you cannot support him/her any longer with food, clothes, supervision by care-workers – because the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) has decided that the infection rate is higher in another district – and the funds should be shifted?

We are at a very challenging political point in South Africa today, where the formal structures and procedures of a constitutional democracy are misused to trample on the core values of our democracy. The effect is to prevent and obstruct accountability, responsibility and transparency with regard to the Executive (the Cabinet, e.g. the case of the weapons procurement scandal and the Nkandla upgrading scandal involving R250 million of public funds for a private residence of the president).

In his Easter message of 2014, Anglican Archbishop Thabo Makgoba emphasised: 'It is vital that our political leaders start to focus on value-based decisions as they lead South Africa into the future. The question of leadership stands out as a key determinant of our future… Governance is navigated by our decisions and our decisions are navigated by our values… Governance has to do with how we exercise power, not lord it over others. Governance is how we lead, not how we order… acting to provide humanity with a contextual framework in how we build relationships of trust with others.' [83]

In his contribution on 'Economic Policy and Theological Reflection in South Africa', Piet Naudé concludes that 'theology should not give up on its proven strength of providing critical perspectives on society… Providing a social vision might be the prime Christian contribution to shaping policy'.[84]

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[83] T. Makgoba, 2014, The Sunday Independent, 20 April 2014, 19.
[84] P. Naudé, 2014, 470.

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(151) RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM AND THE UNITY OF NATIONS IN AFRICA[1]

Hans Spitzeck

Introduction

The phenomenon of religious extremism deserves special attention. 'Religious extremism' can be defined as a set of religious ideas and socio-political strategies favouring one segment of the population and denying the dignity and rights of minorities or opponents by religious exclusion. In many cases, religious extremism relies on an idealized tradition of a particular religion by narrowing it down to simplified rules and laws. Religious extremism is a descriptive concept applied from outside. It is widely used as a *terminus technicus*. Various questions are raised: Are secular concepts of the nation and state adequate to deal with the challenges posed by Al Shabaab[2] and Boko Haram?[3] How is religion being mobilized within the dynamics of power struggle? How can the politicization of religion and the religionisation of politics in contemporary Africa[4] be understood and countered? To answer these questions, an interdisciplinary approach is appropriate which begins methodically with the concept of social conflict.[5]

Political Islam and Religious Extremism

Political Islam opposes western patterns of social life. It strives to unite all Muslims and to overcome differences in teaching and separation by non-theological factors. It is not one homogeneous system of thought or a homogeneous movement. On the contrary, there exists a political tradition in Islamic societies that opposes western influence and counters the disorder caused by weak and corrupt Muslim leaders. Such postures took shape after the occupation of Egypt by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798 and expanded after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the abrogation of the caliphate in 1924. Today, opposition to the sovereignty of the people constitutes the uniting element of extremist thinking within political Islam.

Nigeria suffers a political crisis because of socio-religious conflicts. The vicious cycle of violence is not coming to an end. Nigeria's is not a religious conflict, but a complex mixture of local conflicts involving access to land, goods and political power, based mainly on ethnic affiliation. The federal government is not able to solve the problem and the introduction of Sha'riah law in twelve northern states with their predominantly Muslim populations has not calmed the situation. During colonial times, the British

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[1] This is a shortened version of a more elaborated essay under the title: Hakuna Baraka – Religious Extremism and the Unity of Nations in Africa which was presented to the all African Academy of Religious and Theological Studies, held in AACC, Nairobi 19-21 February 2015.

[2] *Ash-Shabāb* is an Arabic term meaning "the young". The full name of the movement is *Harakat al Shabab al-Mujahideen (HSM)*, English: Mujahideen Youth Movement.

[3] Boko Haram is a Hausa expression and means "Western education is forbidden". The groups denominate officially as *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad*, which means "People Committed to the Prophet's Teachings for Propagation and Jihad".

[4] We owe the expression "politicisation of religion and the religionisation of politics" to Johnson Mbillah, General Secretary of the *Programme for Christian Muslim Relations in Africa – PROCMURA*. Mbillah introduced it in the analysis of the 2013 crisis in the Central Africa Republic. Meanwhile African political leaders like the President of Tanzania Jakaya Kikwete refer to it. Cf. PROCMURA (Ed.), Briefing on the Tanzania Christian and Muslim Religious Leader's Conference, 6 to 9 October 2014.

[5] This approach to the relationship between faith and conflict is taken from Hans G. Kippenberg, "Keine Frage des Glaubens (No issue of faith)", *Welt-sichten Magazin*, no. 10 (2012): 28-31.

governed the northern part of Nigeria by indirect rule through the Fulani aristocracy that had formerly ruled the Sokoto caliphate. Today, both Christians and Muslims claim to constitute the majority of the population. Therefore political considerations require that Christian and Muslim representation in government be balanced.

When Goodluck Jonathan, a Christian, assumed the presidency in 2010, this factor ignited the conflict that developed subsequently with Boko Haram. 'Boko Haram' is the designation used by journalists to denounce the movement's avoidance of western values and its fundamental opposition to the democratic status quo. The name Boko Haram means 'western education is forbidden' or 'westernization is a sacrilege'; *haram* is the Arabic word for 'unclean' or 'forbidden', and *boko* is a Hausa expression, referring to the Latin alphabet and western education generally. The official name of Boko Haram is *Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda 'Awati Wal-Jihad* (People Committed to the Prophet's Teachings for Propagation and Jihad). It is a Sunni Islamic group advocating strict adherence to Islamic law (*Sha'riah*). The movement began with a religious school and community centre in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, which attracted poor people and unemployed youth. Right from the beginning, the centre declared its intention to create an Islamic state and voiced its condemnation of state corruption. It used the infrastructure of a Wahhabist organization, the Izala Society,[6] which had enjoyed the support of the government of Borno for a long period.

In 2009, the police attacked Boko Haram's headquarters in Maiduguri and killed 700 of its followers, including the leader Mohammed Yusuf**.** By doing so, it violated human rights. Yusuf was succeeded by Abubakar Shekau who transformed the group into a Salafist jihadist group by strengthening its operational capabilities. In 2011, it attacked the headquarters of the United Nations mission in Nigeria and a police station in Abuja by means of suicide bombings. Such incidents in Nigeria were unprecedented. Since then, Boko Haram has carried out many violent operations, mainly in the north-east of Nigeria. On 14th May 2013, Nigeria declared a state of emergency in three north-eastern states. Since then the military has been fighting Boko Haram with troops on the ground and with air strikes. Meanwhile, Boko Haram has shifted from hit-and-run tactics to the occupation of territory.

Since 2009, Boko Haram has killed more than 5,000 civilians, with the level of violence increasing in recent years. During the first half of 2014, the number of killings totalled 2,000. The group boasts a military strength of 9,000 fighters and has attracted international attention with its kidnapping of 276 school girls in April 2014. In August 2014 it declared that the territory under its control in north-east Nigeria constitutes an integral part of the Islamic caliphate and thus is no longer part of the Nigerian state. Boko Haram claims an unspecified territory in north-east Nigeria with operations in Cameroon and Niger as well. The Nigerian authorities and the Nigerian military have been unable to end the crisis. Negotiations with Boko Haram have failed. The challenge to the unity of Nigeria continues. A political solution is not in sight.

In Nairobi, Kenya, the Westgate shopping mall was attacked on 21st September 2013. The attack continued until 24th September with the building, meanwhile, set on fire. The attack resulted in more than sixty deaths and more than 175 people wounded. The Islamist group al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack as revenge for the Kenyan military's deployment in Somalia. The target and the reasons given for the attack were unambiguous. The Westgate mall had functioned as an upmarket shopping centre and had served as a symbol of the liberal western lifestyle. It attracted youngsters from affluent families who frequented it for leisure and conspicuous consumption.

During colonial times, the Muslim community in Kenya had succumbed to economic decline and political irrelevance. Today, the Swahili communities of the coast and the Somali population in the north-

[6] The Izala Society (Jama'at Izalatil Bidiawa Iqamatus Sunnah) is a conservative Muslim brotherhood which follows a strict interpretation of Islam opposed to the traditional forms of Islam in Nigeria.

east – both of them Muslim – are living in the two poorest provinces of Kenya. In 1992, the Swahili Imam Sheik Khalid Balal founded the Islamic Party of Kenya (IPC), among the first expressions of radical Islam in the country. With the attacks of al-Qaeda on the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salam in 1998, terror had become an instrument of resistance in Somalia and Kenya. The Mombasa Republican Council (MRC), which included Christians, meanwhile advocated independence for the coastal strip of Kenya, though by non-radical means. Later a segment of the movement broke away and formed al-Hidschra, the Kenya branch of al-Shabaab.

After the Westgate massacre, the Kenyan government intensified its operations against terrorism. Soldiers and police looted the Somali neighbourhood of Eastleigh in Nairobi and raped numerous Somali women. Additionally, the authorities revoked the citizenship of various Kenyan Somalis, rendering them refugees in their own country. This action intensified the ardour of extremists. Violence in the coastal region stems from various grievances. Kenya's body politic is characterized by various cultural and economic tensions. Religious affiliation of the coastal population is Islamic, while people from the highlands are Christians. Al-Shabaab exploits these divisions which cause the internal tensions of Kenya. Exactly who attacked the Westgate mall is still not known.

In the Central African Republic (CAR), President Bozizé was overthrown in 2013. The population in the northern and eastern parts of the country is mainly Muslim while Christians in the west and south comprise about 50% of the entire population. From 2006 onwards, the conflicts of Chad and Darfur spilled over into the CAR by means of a mobilised Muslim population. In 2011, the USA sent 100 military advisors to fight the Lord's Resistance Army which had relocated from Uganda to the CAR. In 2012, the armed conflict escalated. In August of that year, the Séléka was formed as a coalition of the *Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement* (UFDR) and the *Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix* (CPJP) for the purpose of overthrowing the government. Séléka is a Sango word meaning 'alliance'. Séléka's aim was to administer Islamic law (*Sha'riah*) in the country. In March 2013, President Bozizé was overthrown by a coup d'état organized by the Séléka rebels. Michel Djotodia, one of the leaders of the rebels, became the first Muslim president of the CAR. His administration was unable to prevent the country from the ensuing chaos. On the 25th July, the Archbishop of Bangui, the President of the Islamic Community, Imam Layama, and the President of the Alliance of Evangelicals visited the Prime Minister Tiengaye, calling unanimously for peace initiatives in response to the rising tensions. They were keenly aware of the risk of the religious radicalization of the conflict.

Djotodia tried to dissolve the Séléka militia in September 2013, but most of its members refused to disband. The Séléka had already become engaged in an armed conflict with the Anti-balaka militias,[7] which had been formed originally in the 1990s as village self-defense forces. In November, the country faced a rapidly escalating cycle of violence, characterized by massive killings. Anti-balaka forces killed Muslim civilians and forced thousands of Muslims to flee. They committed multiple atrocities and several massacres against the mostly Muslim Fula ethnic group. The African Union sent troops to halt the impending genocide. On 11th January 2014, Michael Djotodia and his prime minister resigned and Catherine Samba-Panza was elected as interim president. In February 2014, the United Nations deployed more troops to the country for peace-keeping purposes. On 23rd July 2014, following Congolese mediation efforts, Séléka and anti-balaka representatives signed a ceasefire agreement in Brazzaville.

Instruments of State, Civil Society and Religious Communities in Africa

It has become virtually de rigueur to address the root causes of poverty while disregarding social exclusion effected by public policy. Religious conflicts in Africa are surface manifestations of more deeply

[7] Anti-balaka means "anti-machete" or "anti-sword" in the local Sango and Mandja languages.

entrenched socio-political conflicts. Even if those conflicts can be traced to colonial times, the state always has the option of addressing them and restoring justice. Social exclusion and the political neglect of the people's will undermine the unity of the nation. Democratic participation opens up doors to development and sustainable peace. Without economic justice, African nations will not realize stability. Security and peace are the results of socio-political processes of integration, not of military or police action.

It is important to dissect the intentions of the political and religious extremist. 'Overcoming violence becomes possible when the intended enemy or victim refuses to accept his/her role in a relationship marked by violence.'[8] Samuel Kobia explains this insight: 'The culture of violence follows the logic of domination and oppression, of victory and defeat. In order to maintain itself, it needs an enemy or a victim, for through the fear or suffering of the victim the dynamic of violence is affirmed and renewed.'[9] All police action must be exercised cautiously in order to avoid impunity and to avoid the violation of human rights.

The peaceful transformation of conflicts requires active civil society engagement in a twofold task: firstly, to engage in civic education and to monitor compliance with human rights standards including freedom of religion and, secondly, to contribute to the transformation of structural injustices. Development work by religious communities must involve the general populace regardless of its religious affiliation. Development projects promoted by churches and Muslim organizations must address the causes of poverty and religious extremism. A study carried out in Nigeria has shown that 'community development with a strong focus on the participation of all local actors is able to bond people together, beyond identities such as faith and tribal affiliation or attempts at political participation'.[10]

On 24th September 2014, more than 120 Muslim scholars sent an open letter to Ibrahim Awwad Al-Badri, alias 'Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi', leader of the Islamic State.[11] This open letter was an important initiative to counter religious extremism, with relevance for Africa as well. It provides an example of how to address misleading teaching and forbidden action within the Muslim community.

In practical terms, inter-religious dialogue, encounter and co-operation are good instruments to overcome religious divides. In vast sectors of African society, there are initiatives to become better acquainted with each other. Once again, there is a twofold challenge: knowing the other requires knowing oneself. Civic education must include religious information and avert the politicization of religion and the religionisation of politics. In order for inter-religious councils to effectively engage with these issues, they must be included on the Agenda of Africa for the purpose of isolating and overcoming religious extremism.

Consideration of these issues leads to core theological challenges: How does one understand the co-existence of Christianity, Islam and other religions in Africa? Which concept of God is commensurate with the Holy Scriptures in the context of Africa? The answers to these questions must correspond with the traditions and realities of the African continent.

God is the source of life. 'Surely it is good to know that God (in the Christian tradition) created all of us (not only Christians) in his image, thus investing us all with infinite worth. God initiated a covenant relationship with all humankind, exemplified in the covenant with Noah by which God promised to not destroy his creation again with water.'[12] This covenant provides a theological foundation for the rejection of religious extremism with its tendency to subject followers of other religions to its understandings.

To worship God and to respect life are two sides of the same coin. In Africa, harmony is attributed to God. 'At any stage of life there are regulations and practices intended to restore broken harmony and,

[8] Samuel Kobia, *Dialogue Matters, The Role of Ecumenical Diplomacy in the Run-Up to the Independence of South Sudan*, Limuru, Kenya (2013), 7. By this Samuel Kobia builds on a concept of Konrad RAISER.
[9] Kobia, *Dialogue Matters,*7.
[10] Andrew Gwaivangmin, Wolfgang Kaiser, *Signs of Hope, Development Conflict and Religion in Northern Nigeria* (RURCON / EED, Jos, Nigeria / Bonn, Germany 2010), 35.
[11] See the key components of the statement from No. 3–6 of the Executive Summary, www.lettertobaghdadi. com.
[12] Desmond Tutu, *God is not a Christian, Speaking truth in times of crisis*, London (2013), 7.

therefore, restore good relationships with God.'[13] In a nutshell, all theology must be a learning theology, providing answers to today's questions in the context of Africa's realities.

There is no blueprint that provides guidance for engagement with religious extremism. Every single case must be addressed in its specific context. Nevertheless, political processes occur in an international context. Thanks to electronic media, the most remote areas in North Africa, in the Middle East and beyond can accompany the processes that impinge on extremism. The interdependence of political processes must not be underestimated. We remember the symbolic power of the attack on the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York or the Mohamed cartoons in a Danish newspaper. Huntington's Clash of Civilizations is a misleading theory. It ignores religious heterogeneity as a predominant social reality throughout the world and fosters international conflict along religious lines. It is not a strategy adequate to counter religious extremism.

The German scholar, Winrich Kühne, draws attention to the financing mechanisms of jihadist groups. Al Shabaab is involved in the trafficking of *quat* to Europe, the Taliban profit from the cultivation of opium in Afghanistan, and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) is engaged with contraband trade. Only by mobilising organized crime and international financing do religious extremists obtain the means by which to buy sophisticated weaponry.[14] Any policy designed to counter extremism must of necessity address its economic aspects.

Conflicts in Africa must be solved by Africans. The African Union (AU) has a leading role in the maintenance of stability in Africa with the unity of its member nations. Human security is a number one priority. The internationalization of regional conflicts is not in Africa's interest. All military action against terror will fail unless it goes hand in hand with a feasible political, social, economic and cultural project based on dignity. Without trust and public support, it is not possible to overcome violence and its root causes.

Ideologically, the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda – latterly in Central African Republic – and Boko Haram are not the same. But, politically, both have challenged the unity of the respective nation states. They have applied the mechanism of guerrilla war with determined leaders who do not hesitate to exercise violence.

Religious communities have a shared responsibility to work for and maintain peaceful co-existence. Personal encounter, conceptual dialogue and practical co-operation pave the way to flourishing inter-religious relationships in the context of social, political, economic, cultural, and theological considerations.

Conclusions

This essay argues that the African Union must recognize the important role that religions play with regard to the peace and development of the continent. In 2010 the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate of the AU Commission initiated a conference in Abuja, Nigeria that brought together Africa's religious leaders to deliberate on how the AU can work to promote peace on the continent. A structured partnership between the African Union, as the main regional continental organization, and the religious communities on the continent is a promising means by which to counter the religionisation of politics.

[13] André Karamaga, "African and Christian Concepts of God", in *God of Life*, ed. Edison M. Kalengyo (All Africa Conference of Churches, Nairobi 2013), 37.
[14] Winrich Kühne, Vom Terror zum Kalifat (From Terror to Caliphate), in *IPG Journal*, 15.09.2014, www.ipg-journal.de/kommentar/artikel/vom-terror-zum-kalifat-581/.

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(152) RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY[1]

Steve de Gruchy (+)

The call for Christians to be involved in some form of development action is perhaps best summarized by the powerful statement from James that, 'just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead' (Jas 2:26). This reminder that the Christian faith is not just about intellectual assent, but about a life lived in compassionate service to others, especially the vulnerable, sums up much of the Biblical witness from Moses and the Jubilee laws through to Jesus and the message of the Kingdom of God. This approach emerged as a key message in the vast array of writings calling the church in Africa to be involved in issues of national reconstruction and social development during the 1980s and 1990s.[2] Although Julius Nyerere penned these words decades ago, and in the sexist language of his time, we may take them as representative of this approach:

> I am suggesting to you that unless we participate actively in the rebellion against those social structures and economic organizations which condemn men to poverty, humiliation and degradation, then the Church will become irrelevant to man and the Christian religion will degenerate into a set of superstitions accepted by the fearful. Unless the Church, its members and its organizations, express God's love for man by involvement and leadership in constructive protest against the present conditions of man, then it will become identified with injustice and persecution. If this happens, it will die – and, humanly speaking, deserve to die – because it will then serve no purpose comprehensible to modern man.[3]

It would seem that faith, without the works of development, is not only dead, but deserves to die.

Whose Faith? Whose Works?

There is, however, an unasked question lying at the heart of this approach that hides a key set of issues facing the Church in Africa as it seeks to be engaged in social development, namely, 'whose faith and

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[1] The article in this form was first published under the title: "Of Agency, Assets and Appreciation: Seeking Some Commonalities between Theology and Development" in: Beverley Haddad (ed), Keeping Body and Soul Together: Reflections by Steve de Gruchy on Theology and Development (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2015), 66-86. It is reprinted here with permission.

[2] See for example: Joseph Agbasiere and Boniface Zabajungu (eds), *Church Contribution to Integral Development* (Eldoret, Kenya: AMECEA Gaba Publications, 1989); Renier Koegelenberg (ed), *Transition and Transformation: A Challenge to the Church* (Cape Town: EFSA, 1994); Barney Pityana and Charles Villa-Vicencio (eds), *Being the Church in South Africa Today* (Johannesburg: SACC, 1995); Renier Koegelenberg (ed), *The Reconstruction and Development Programme: The Role of the Church, Civil Society and NGOs* (Cape Town: EFSA, 1995); Isabel Phiri, Kenneth Ross and James Cox (eds), *The Role of Christianity in Development, Peace and Reconstruction: Southern Perspectives* (Nairobi: All Africa Conference of Churches, 1996); Liz Carmichael "Creating Newness: The Spirituality of Reconstruction" in Len Hully, Louise Kretzchmar, and Luke Pato (eds), *Archbishop Tutu: Prophetic Witness in South Africa* (Cape Town: Human and Rousseau, 1996), 182- 198; McGlory Speckman, "For Nolan's Sake Let's Move On: A Plea for a Developmental Dimension in Contextual Theology" in McGlory Speckman and Larry Kaufamnn, *Towards an Agenda for Contextual Theology* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 2001), 390-406; Jesse Mugambi, "From Liberation to Reconstruction" in Emmanuel Katangole (ed), *African Theology Today* (Scranton: The University of Scranton Press, 2002), 189 -206; Sipho Mtetwa, "Imperatives for Ecumenical Movement Participation at the WSSD 2002: Issues of Life and Death for Africa" in *Bulletin For Contextual Theology* 8, 2/3 (2002), 6-10.

[3] Julius Nyerere, "The Church and Society" in *Freedom and Development* (Dar Es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1973), 215.

whose works are we talking about?' The assumption underlying much of our theologizing about development is that Christians must *do* good things for those who are poor, less privileged, marginalized or helpless. These poor people are in need of our good works. *We,* who truly believe, need to roll up our sleeves, practise what we preach, and get involved in helping those who need help.

However, I am convinced that underlying this approach is the assumption that there is a divide between Christians and the needy that is similar to the divide between actors and beneficiaries, agents and clients, doctors and patients, and ultimately the subjects and objects of history. This is what leads me to ponder: 'whose faith and whose works?' What about the faith of the poor, and more importantly, what about *their* works? How is it that we have come to understand the parables of the good Samaritan and the sheep and goats, and the message of James as being aimed at a class of people who can *do*, whereas we do not understand it as part of the message for the class of people who are perceived to be needy, to be 'not able to do', to be simply *beneficiaries* of the good deeds of others? And in making this fundamental assumption of being 'not able to do', are we not simply mirroring the power dynamics that lie at the heart of the experience of poverty, and hence reinforcing the very problem we think we are solving?

This approach strikes me as foolhardy for two important reasons, the second one of which is the central concern of this essay. But first, it is clear – from a purely descriptive point of view – that it is simply wrong to make the assumption that poor people are 'not able to do'. Poor people are always engaged in strategies and struggles for survival, adaptation and freedom. The insights of James Scott[4] and Jean and John Comaroff,[5] three scholars who have attracted the interest of South African theologians,[6] have drawn attention to precisely this matter of acknowledging the agency of the poor. This theme has been taken up by (South) African theologians in a range of ways, as noted by Tinyiko Maluleke:

> I suggest that we are being called to a humble but careful observance of the struggles of Africans to be agents against great odds, not by ignoring or discounting the odds, but by confronting them. Africans have always been agents, never 'simply victims, wallowing in self-pity'; they have always exercised their agency in struggles for survival and integrity. However, their agency has not always been recognised let alone nurtured. Speaking from a South African perspective, my sense is that there is a new wave of awareness of the agency of ordinary, marginalized Africans. In fact, at their best and most creative, African theologies have always proceeded on some gut-feeling and almost stubborn insistence that Africans were agents and no mere doormats trampled upon by civilisers, missionaries and colonialists.[7]

The point is well made. At the same time, however, Maluleke's reference to *nurturing* this agency leads us to speak of another reason why we would be foolhardy to ignore the agency of the poor. This second, more prescriptive reason is the central concern of this essay, namely, that the gospel addresses the poor also with a call to translate their faith into works, and that this is crucial for the church's involvement in social development everywhere, and especially in sub-Saharan Africa. This means recovering the theological vision of the *vocation* of the poor themselves, as a key element for a contemporary theology of development. To do this we need to build upon the descriptive and interpretative task that helps us uncover

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[4] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990).
[5] Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution, Volume I, Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
[6] A helpful discussion of the implications of these insights for South African theology is found in Gerald West, *The Academy of the Poor: Towards a Dialogical Reading of the Bible*, Second edition (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2003). See especially Chapter Two, 15-45.
[7] Tinyiko Maluleke, "The Rediscovery of the Agency of Africans: An Emerging Paradigm of Post-Cold War and Post-Apartheid Black and African Theology" in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 108 (2002), 22.

this agency in the past. (Maluleke speaks of '(a) acknowledging, (b) valorizing and (c) interpreting') – but also to encourage it as a key element in the future (thus Maluleke adds, '(d) enhancing'[8]).

To recover a theological vision of vocation, my sense is that we need to move beyond an isolated focus on identity, which has tended to dominate African theology in the past while, and seek to integrate issues of identity with a focus on agency. I am mindful of the fact that the theological concern with the identity of the poor is deeply rooted in the struggle against the European colonial and Christianizing enterprise and, in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, against apartheid. Against the overwhelming political, economic and ideological apparatus that was ranged against ordinary people, all of which sought to strip Africans of their identity, we can appreciate the political power of the appropriation of such simple theological truths such as, 'I am a child of God. I bear his image. His Son died on the cross for me. He loves me as I am.' No-one made this more a central theological theme in the struggle against apartheid than Desmond Tutu:

> Yes, you are a God-carrier. God dwells in you. He dwells in me. That is why it is such a blasphemy for God's children to be treated as if they were things, uprooted from their homes and dumped in arid resettlement camps… Those who are victims of injustice and oppression would not have to suffer from a slave mentality by which they despised themselves and went about apologising for their existence. They would know that they matter to God, and nothing anybody did to them could change that fundamental fact about themselves.[9]

Today, this kind of faith conviction may provide a powerful bulwark against the dehumanizing experiences of domestic violence, HIV infection, homophobia and unemployment.

The Vocation of the Poor

This conviction is of course absolutely true, but it is not the whole truth. One of the inherent problems embedded in it, rather ironically in the face of the colonial project, is that it can be a message of passivity. It claims a status before God by virtue of one's *being*. It says nothing about one's *doing*. And yet the issue of doing is crucially important for one's identity, particularly for the poor. Bryant Myers puts it like this:

> When the poor accept their marred identity and their distorted sense of vocation as normative and immutable, their poverty is complete. It is also permanent unless this issue is addressed and they are helped to recover their identity as children of God, made in God's image, *and their true vocation as productive stewards in the world God made for them…*
>
> Who we are is a question of both being and doing… I believe that poverty mars both parts of the identity of the poor. The result of poverty is that people who are poor no longer know who they are (being) nor do they believe that they have a vocation of any value (doing).[10]

It is important to recognise that in both creation accounts from which the affirmation of identity is traditionally drawn, the truth of being made in the image of God (Gen. 1:27) or being filled with God's own breath of life (Gen. 2:7) is immediately coupled with the theme of *vocation*, the calling to be responsible actors in this world newly created by God (Gen. 1:28; 2:15). This understanding of vocation is at the heart of the theological understanding of labour as a constitutive part of what it means to be truly human, in the use of our gifts and talents to be co-workers with God in the world. From this is drawn the critique of alienated labour under slavery, feudalism, capitalism and communism, and the vision of human

[8] Maluleke, "The Rediscovery of the Agency of Africans", 22.
[9] Desmond Tutu, *Hope and Suffering* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1985), 140.
[10] Bryant Myers, *Walking with the Poor* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1999), 76. Italics added for emphasis.

beings working in harmony with God and the earth to create a better life, characterized by justice and peace.[11]

Drawing from these same roots, and standing in this same trajectory, James reminds us that faith without works is dead. Thus any vision of Christian involvement in social development cannot have as its assumption, as so much of it unfortunately does, the faith and works of Christians and the Church over and against those who are poor and needy; but has to affirm, enhance and appreciate the *faith works*[12] of the poor themselves. This is the message of the gospel for the poor, that they are both made in the image of God and called to be actors in the drama of creation and salvation itself. They are not, and cannot be, simply passive objects of history, but are invited to be the subjects of their own history.

One of the most influential attempts to move this kind of concern for the vocation of the poor from a purely descriptive level to a prescriptive programme for action is the work of the Brazilian educationist, Paulo Freire, as captured in his book concerning adult education, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Deeply influenced by his Roman Catholic faith and his partnership with the World Council of Churches, Freire promotes *humanization* as the good to which society should struggle, indeed as 'the people's vocation'.[13] Dehumanization is the process in which people are treated as 'things', as objects in other people's worlds, and because there is a fundamental relationship between ends and means, the struggle for humanization must itself be humanizing. As he warns us, 'to discourse on humanism and to negate people is a lie'.[14]

> The oppressed have been destroyed precisely because their situation has reduced them to things. In order to regain their humanity they must cease to be things and fight as men and women. This is a radical requirement. They cannot enter the struggle as objects in order later to become human beings.[15]

What makes us 'human beings', for Freire, is that we communicate, that we have a *word*. 'Dialogue imposes itself as the way by which [people] achieve significance as human beings. Dialogue is thus an existential necessity.'[16] Thus the deepest act of dehumanization, of treating people as things, is to strip them of their word, to censor, to refuse to communicate, to shun dialogue. *Anti-dialogical action* is the antithesis of liberating praxis[17] and needs to be replaced with *dialogical action,* for 'dialogue, the encounter among men and women to name the world, is a fundamental precondition for their humanization'.[18] Dialogical action implies that the 'oppressed' (an admittedly wide and contested term for Freire) cannot be passengers on the journey, but find their own sense of freedom via their agency in the struggle for freedom. And because this is dialogical action, this agency is not simply expressed through action, in some sort of politburo-led, revolutionary cannon-fodder way, but also through reflection. For Freire it is crucial that the insights, perspectives, rituals and symbols of the poor contribute to the very vision of the future that is being sought. Action and theory thus find expression in liberating praxis:

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[11] The Roman Catholic Church has a well-established theological tradition with regards to the humanizing role of labour. See especially John Paul II, *On Human Work: Encyclical Laborem Exercens* (Pretoria: Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, 1981).
[12] I take this term from the title of a book by Jim Wallis, *Faith Works: Lessons on Spirituality and Social Action* (London: SPCK, 2002).
[13] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Revised Edition (London: Penguin, 1996), 25.
[14] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 72.
[15] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 50.
[16] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 69.
[17] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 119-148.
[18] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 118.

> It is when the majorities are denied their right to participate in history as Subjects that they become dominated and alienated. Thus, to supersede their condition as objects by the status of Subjects – the objective of any true revolution – requires that the people act, as well as reflect, upon the reality to be transformed.[19]

Freire's concept of dialogical action is not without the problems inherent in moving from a descriptive theory to a prescriptive programme. He is, after all, wanting to be a teacher rather than a journalist, and that implies a likely conflict around just what is taught, and how it is taught. The vocation of the teacher and the vocation of the poor are not necessarily in harmony! His pedagogical method works hard at these issues, seeking to get beyond the reality of hegemony and ideology; but any concept of 'dialogue' has to be extremely sensitive in order to be sufficiently adequate to deal with all the implications of power represented in the teacher-pupil relationship, even (especially!) when these pupils are adults. Scott's notion of 'hidden transcripts', referred to above, reminds us that the authentic voice of the poor is not readily accessible simply through correct pedagogy. It is not even easily accessible through nuanced and committed scholarship, as pointed out by Gayatri Spivak's in her tortuous but classic essay, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?'[20] In the face of precisely these concerns, Gerald West has sought to develop such a sensitive and programmatic notion of dialogue for Christians in his book, *The Academy of the Poor: Towards a Dialogical Reading of the Bible.*[21]

Having laid out the contours of a theological vision of the vocation of the poor, therefore, what I propose to do here is to build on this project by engaging with three key themes that are at the cutting edge of 'secular' development theory, and that engage with this vision. It is clear to me that much of the writing and thinking about the involvement of the church in Africa in social development is long on Biblical mandate, exhortation and liberatory passion, but it is rather weak in the area of such theory. We lack a coherent vision of development that will enable us to talk with, and walk alongside, African civil society as it seeks to engage in transforming the worlds in which we live. My hope is to reflect on *agency, assets* and *appreciation* as significant commonalities between theology and development.

Of Agency

An extremely influential thinker in contemporary development theory is Amartya Sen, the Nobel-Prize winning, Bangladeshi economist. Sen has drawn his thinking on poverty, famine, economics and development over the past two decades to a climax in his book, *Development as Freedom*.[22] In this book he advances the fundamental argument that freedom is both the primary end, and the principal means of development. He argues that freedom is, firstly, the goal of development, a 'good thing in itself'.[23] In page after page, he advances clear empirical evidence and economic theory to support his contention that development is nothing other than 'the process of expanding human freedoms'.[24] For Sen, freedom is not the opposite of 'oppression', but is rather opposed to *unfreedom,* a word he defines to include the full range of hindrances to human flourishing or 'capability deprivation'. Freedom thus includes 'elementary capabilities like being able to avoid such deprivations as starvation, undernourishment, escapable morbidity and premature mortality as well as the freedoms that are associated with being literate and

[19] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 111.
[20] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-313.
[21] Gerald West, *The Academy of the Poor: Towards a Dialogical Reading of the Bible*, Second edition (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2003).
[22] Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York City, Random House, 1999), 282.
[23] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 18.
[24] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 36.

numerate, enjoying political participation and uncensored speech and so on'.[25] With this understanding of 'human capabilities' and the impact that freedom must have on the poor for it to be real freedom, Sen moves far beyond liberal notions of freedom, including those proposed by John Rawls.[26]

Secondly, and perhaps of more importance to Sen and to us in this essay, freedom is also the primary *means* of development. For him, freedom is 'a principal determinant of individual initiative and social effectiveness. Greater freedom enhances the ability of people to help themselves and also to influence the world, and these matters are central to the process of development'.[27] He notes that this affirms the 'agency aspect' of the individual, and his work supports what he calls an 'agent-oriented view':

> In terms of the medieval distinction between 'the patient' and 'the agent' this freedom-centred understanding of economics and of the process of development is very much an agent-oriented view. With adequate social opportunities, individuals can effectively shape their own destiny and help each other. They need not be seen primarily as passive recipients of the benefits of cunning development programmes. There is indeed a strong rationale for recognizing the positive role of free and sustainable agency – and even of constructive impatience.[28]

This insight leads Sen to stand firmly against the dominant neo-liberal paradigm that places economic concerns at the pinnacle of development strategies,[29] and to argue for the pre-eminence of political freedoms and liberal rights over economic growth.[30] Sen advances three reasons for this, namely, that political freedoms are of *direct importance* to human living; have an *instrumental role* in helping people get a hearing in expressing their claims to attention, and have a *constructive role* 'in the conceptualization of needs', including economic needs. This third reason has echoes of Freire's understanding of 'praxis'. Here Sen argues that freedom creates the space in which dialogue can occur, so that people can be agents in shaping not only the struggle for development, but the very vision of what that 'development' might be:

> Political and civil rights, especially those related to the guaranteeing of open discussion, debate, criticisms and dissent, are central to the process of generating informed and reflected choices. These processes are crucial to the formation of values and priorities, and we cannot, in general, take preferences as given independently of public discussion, that is, irrespective of whether open debates and interchanges are permitted or not.[31]

Sen recognises, like Freire, that if agency means anything, then it is not just a question of mindless action, but also of a contribution at the level of theory to 'values and priorities' so that the preferences for political, social and economic life can be shaped by all the citizens, including the poor, and not just the dominant elites: 'The reach and effectiveness of open dialogue are often underestimated in assessing social and political problems.'[32]

Sen illustrates and advances these insights when he considers the particular agency of women in social change. He is concerned that a focus simply on the sufferings and deprivations of women which society must somehow correct, misses the point that what is at stake here is the *agency* of women. This agency has a role to play in dealing with the 'iniquities that depress the well-being of women', but more importantly, 'the limited role of women's active agency seriously afflicts the lives of all people – men as well as

[25] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 36.
[26] See John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).
[27] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 18.
[28] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 11.
[29] See his clear rejection of the view which "sees development as a 'fierce' process, with much 'blood, sweat and tears' – a world in which wisdom demands toughness". Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 35.
[30] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 148.
[31] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 153.
[32] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 153.

women, children as well as adults'.[33] Sen provides economic data to underscore his claim that the enhanced agency of women increases their own life expectancy, through claims within the household to better nutrition and health care,[34] reduces the mortality rates of children as well as reducing fertility rates through the influence that comes with education and literacy,[35] and relates directly to a reduction in violence crimes in a given society.[36] He writes:

> The changing agency of women is one of the major mediators of economic and social change, and its determination as well as consequences closely relate to many of the central features of the development process…
>
> Nothing, arguably, is as important today in the political economy of development as an adequate recognition of political, economic and social participation and leadership of women. This is indeed a crucial aspect of 'development as freedom'.[37]

David Korten of the People-Centred Development Forum shares many of the concerns of Amartya Sen in his important book, *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda,*[38] especially the priority of political over economic concerns on the development agenda, and the agency of the poor. For Korten, like Sen, these two are intrinsically linked. He is convinced that the dominant development paradigm, with its growth-at-any-cost approach, has exacerbated the three major crises of the end of the twentieth century, namely, poverty, environmental stress, and communal violence. This dominant development paradigm 'equates human progress with growth in the market value of economic output and subordinates both human and environmental considerations to that goal'.[39] Against this, a new vision of transformation is needed, one that is shaped by the concerns of justice, sustainability and inclusiveness. For Korten, this is the agenda of 'a people-centred development vision', which sees development as a 'people's movement more than as a foreign-funded government project'.[40]

> The people have been expected to put their faith and resources in the hands of government. In return governments have promised to bestow on the people the gift of development. This promise has proven to be a chimera born of false assessment of the capacity of government and of the nature of development itself.[41]

One of the upshots of this growing recognition is the emerging development role of civil society. But this is itself problematic. Korten surveys the plethora of organisations that make up civil society, and notes how many so-called development NGOs are serving agendas that do not promote people-centred development. One of the fundamental problems with civil society organisations is that they are at heart 'third-party organisations'; they exist to meet the needs of people other than themselves.[42] People's Organisations (POs), on the other hand, are 'first-party organisations' and it is they who do and must play the central role in people-centred development. Self-reliant co-operatives, landless associations, irrigator

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[33] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 191.
[34] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 193ff.
[35] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 195ff, 198ff.
[36] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 200ff.
[37] Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 202ff.
[38] David Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda* (West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1990).
[39] Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century,* 3.
40 Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century*, 5.
41 Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century*, 95.
42 Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century*, 96.

associations, burial associations, credit clubs, labour unions, trade associations and political interest groups are among some of the collectives that may be POs.[43]

One of the crucial elements that they bring to the fore is that of citizens' voluntary action, a central part of Korten's vision as the title of his book suggests.

> If transformation is to come, it must come as a consequence of voluntary action, an act of human commitment to collective survival driven by a vision that transcends the behaviours conditioned by existing institutions and culture. We must look to people's movements as the key to transformational change in the current era.[44]

Korten does not use the terms 'agent' or 'agency', but many of his insights into volunteerism and citizens' action parallel the thinking of Freire and Sen around this concept, for it is in embracing such action that people become agents in their own development struggles. This agency aspect becomes clearer in Korten's well-known typology of 'four generations of voluntary development action'[45] in which he charts a movement from relief and welfare; through small-scale, self-reliant local development; and sustainable systems development; to the fourth generation, namely, *people's movements*. Thus, for Korten, fourth generation strategies look beyond those of the first three. 'Their goal is to energize a critical mass of independent, decentralized initiatives in support of a social vision'.[46]

Of Assets

Sen and Korten, each in their own way and drawing on their own experiences and insights, have provided a framework for understanding the agency of the poor in development, and have thus rooted our theological vision of vocation within a wider discourse. Their thinking on this theme has enriched our understanding of development by providing ways in which we can understand and interpret development theory and praxis congruent with our faith. As we acknowledge the importance of the agency of the poor in development, so we must move on – to ask what it is that the poor contribute to the process, and therefore to a consideration of *assets* and the insights of John Kretzmann and John McKnight in their paradigm-shifting workbook, *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets.*[47]

Kretzmann and McKnight resonate with much of what we have noted above, when they point out that a key challenge in the task of development is to avoid building a dependency syndrome between poor, needy people with lots of problems, and non-poor providers of services with lots of solutions. This kind of relationship leads to less and less confidence, dignity and empowerment for those who are on the margins of society, and so works counter to any real development of people and communities. They call this kind of approach, a 'needs-driven dead end', and propose in its stead the alternative path of 'capacity-focused development'. The traditional solution, or needs-driven approach, sees communities as simply full of problems. Here we are confronted with images of needy, problematic and deficient people living in needy, problematic and deficient villages, slums or neighbourhoods. There is clearly some truth in this picture, but the traditional approach takes this to be the whole truth.

Many poor people come to accept this image of themselves, as needy people whose well-being depends upon being a client of service providers. They become consumers of welfare help, rather than producers of

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[43] Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century*, 100.
44 Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century*, 105.
45 Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century*, Chapter Ten, "From relief to people's movement" 112ff.
46 Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century*, 127.
[47] John Kretzmann and John McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets,* Centre for Urban Affairs and Policy Research, Northwestern University (Chicago: ACTA Publications, 1993).

their own solutions. Their agency is undermined. The whole approach is guaranteed to create dependency, weaken the internal resources of a community, and lead to helplessness and despair. Problems in a community are not seen as symptoms of a deeper problem – the inability of a community to solve its problems. The more outsiders try to deal with the symptoms, the more the real problem is made worse!

The simple truth that Kretzmann and McKnight identify is that you cannot build a community on what people do not have. Successful community development grows out of policies and activities based on the capacities, skills and assets of poor people and their neighbourhoods. It is important to clarify at the start that this does not mean that these communities do not need additional resources, or that they are 'best left alone' in some kind of warped understanding of 'self-help'. What it does mean is that outside resources will be much more effective if local people are themselves investing and mobilizing their own resources, and are able to set the agenda for outside help on the basis of their strengths rather than weaknesses. The assets of poor communities 'are absolutely necessary, but usually not sufficient' to meet the challenges of development.[48]

There are three kinds of assets in a village or neighbourhood, namely, individuals (their skills, gifts and financial resources), associations (the resources represented by churches, clubs, and local organisations, etc.) and institutions (libraries, schools, police stations, etc). For Kretzmann and McKnight the task of a community-builder is to map these assets, and then to seek ways to build relationships among and between them, so as to strengthen the community's own capacity to enhance its well-being. Thus the 'three simple, interrelated characteristics' of the approach are that it is asset-based, in the sense that any development strategy starts with what is present rather than with what is absent in the community; internally-focused, with its stress upon 'the primacy of local definition, investment, creativity, hope and control';[49] and relationship-driven, in that the challenge faced by community-builders is to constantly build and rebuild the networks within the asset-base of the community.

Kretzmann and McKnight's model has drawn on the 'strong neighbourhood-rooted tradition of community organizing, community economic development and neighbourhood planning'[50] within the USA. Nevertheless, it exhibits some crucial affinities around the concept of *assets* with the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF), a widely used approach for understanding poverty in the third world. The SLF was first promoted by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987, and since then the approach has received widespread support and use amongst development organizations such as the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) at Sussex University, the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the British government's Department for International Development (DIFD), the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), the People-Centred Development Forum (PCD Forum), Oxfam and, importantly, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).[51]

We cannot here provide a comprehensive analysis of the framework as a whole,[52] and will simply reflect upon some key elements around our theme of *assets.* The SL approach recognises that poor and vulnerable people are *agents in* rather than *clients of* their development, and it does so by working with the already existing portfolio of assets of the household and the community, as well as the livelihood strategies that are already in place. Along with Kretzmann and McKnight, it recognises that you cannot build a community

[48] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities*, 8.
[49] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities*, 9.
[50] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities,* 9.
[51] United Nations Development Programme, *Sustainable Livelihoods Unit Home Page*, www.undp.org/sl/Overview/an_overview.htm
[52] For a comprehensive analysis see my essay, "The Contribution of Universities to Sustainable Development" in Robert Fincham, Susse Georg and Eskild Holm Nielsen (eds), *Sustainable Development and the University: New Strategies for Research, Teaching and Practice* (Pietermaritzburg: Brevitas, 2005), 53-74. See also Chapter Seven in this volume.

on what people do not have. Working with the assets and relationships that already exist in development efforts, 'a key objective is to remove the constraints to the realization of potential. Thus people will be assisted to become more robust, stronger and better able to achieve their own objectives'.[53]

At the household and community level, the SLF draws our attention to the portfolio of five key livelihood assets that people have access or entitlement to. These are:

> *Human Capital*, the skills, knowledge, good health, and ability to labour. It is the foundational asset that is necessary, though not sufficient, for positive livelihood outcomes.
>
> *Social Capital*, the social resources upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihood objectives. It includes networks and connectedness, more formal group membership and trust, reciprocity and exchange.
>
> *Natural Capital*, the natural resources that are available to households and communities in pursuit of their livelihoods. It includes everything from intangible public goods, such as the atmosphere, to direct resources such as trees and plants.
>
> *Physical Capital,* the infrastructure and producer goods that are required to support livelihoods. Infrastructure is only an asset insofar as it helps the poor to meet their needs.
>
> *Financial Capital,* the money that is available to the household, in a range of forms such as cash, livestock, jewellery, or the regular inflows of money. This is the most versatile asset, as it can be converted into other assets, and it can contribute directly to livelihood outcomes like purchasing food or medicines, or through leveraging social and political influence.

The SL Framework does not make a distinction between the micro and the macro levels of development activity. 'The SL approach, by using both participatory and policy (cross-sectoral) tools, highlights the inter-linkage between livelihood systems at the micro level and the macro policies which affect these livelihoods'.[54] As Butler and Greenstein put it, the SL approach emphasizes,

> the importance of macro level policy and institutions to the livelihood options of communities and individuals. It also stresses the need for policy development and planning to be informed by lessons learnt and insights gained at the local level. This will give local people a stake in policy and increase overall effectiveness.[55]

The SLF does this through its concept of the 'vulnerability context'. Apart from this typology of the portfolio of assets available to poor households and communities, the articulation of this 'vulnerability context' in which households and communities exist, is the other extremely helpful contribution of the SLF to our discussion about assets. This is an immediate recognition that we are dealing with people who are at risk, not because they are stupid or lazy, but because their portfolio of assets and their livelihood strategies are subject to a range of influences that prescribe and determine the opportunities and choices that they have for their livelihood strategies. We suggest that there are three key elements that make up this wider context of livelihoods.

> *Shocks, Stresses, Seasonality*, such as civil war, stock-market collapse, a live-stock disease such as foot and mouth, a flood, drought or even the onset of freezing weather.

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[53] Mark Butler and Ran Greenstein, *Sustainable Livelihoods: Towards a Research Agenda for the Church Land Programme* (Johannesburg: Community Agency for Social Enquiry, 1999), 46.
[54] UNDP, *Sustainable Livelihoods*, 6.
[55] Butler and Greenstein, *Sustainable Livelihoods,* 46.

> *Policy, Laws, Institutions,* referring to the *intentional* structures, institutions, formations and contracts that are set in place to regulate social and communal life.
>
> *Culture, Religion, Customs.* It is clear that in most African contexts, the portfolio of livelihood assets, the livelihood strategies, and the desired livelihood outcomes are deeply influenced by these elements, and any strategy that desires to enhance such livelihoods ignores them at its peril.

These three elements of the wider vulnerability context make the important link between the micro and macro levels of development. It is vital to see the asset portfolio of the local household or community in relationship to the institutions, organizations, policies, legislation, culture, religion and customs that shape livelihoods. These provide the reality in which the community resides, and which therefore has a direct link to the household, and the asset portfolio. Out of the vulnerability context, with the three elements mentioned above shaping and constraining their possible responses, people make use of their asset portfolio to pursue livelihood strategies. The result of this is a range of livelihood outcomes that could include more income, increased well-being, reduced vulnerability, improved food security and a more sustainable use of the natural resource base.[56] Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway argue that a livelihood is sustainable when it,

> can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term.[57]

One of the issues that emerges in our reflection on the SLF that is of importance for this essay, concerns the role and place of religion. Within the framework, religion is moved out of the household and community level and into the 'vulnerability context', with the assumption that it serves as a wider constraining net in which people construct their livelihood strategies. We are bound to ask if this is an adequate representation of reality, particularly in Africa. Is it not possible that religion, faith or spirituality functions as part of the asset portfolio; that it is something that people 'have' which they actively utilize in their livelihood strategies? Some may argue that this is present in the categories of human capital and social capital. One may, however, question if this highlights the role of religion and religious assets in the most appropriate way. For example, Kretzmann and McKnight have no hesitation in recognizing that some of the key assets in any community are the local religious institutions:

> Each particular religious institution offers a unique configuration of specific resources which can be utilized in the process of community building. Yet every religious institution, whether large or small, urban or rural, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, or other always offers certain common sets of resources which can be mobilized effectively to assist in community renewal.[58]

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[56] For further information on the SLF see Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway, *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century.* Institute of Development Studies Discussion Paper 296. (University of Sussex, Brighton: IDS Publications, 1992); Czech Conroy, "Preface" and "Introduction" in Czech Conroy and Miles Litvinoff, *The Greening of Aid: Sustainable Livelihoods in Practice* (London: Earthscan Publications, 1988), xi-xiv; Robert Chambers, "Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A Key Strategy for People, Environment and Development" in Conroy and Litvinoff, *The Greening of Aid*, 1-17; Koos Neefjes, *Environments and Livelihoods: Strategies for Sustainability.* (Oxford: Oxfam, 2000), 58- 112; People-Centred Development Forum, "Principles of Sustainable Livelihoods", http://iisd.ca/pcdf/1995/ princsl.htm.

[57] Chambers and Conway, *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods,* 7.

[58] Kretzmann and McKnight, *Building Communities*, 143.

This insight opens the way for us to begin to think of religion in itself as an asset for people, and especially for poor people, and even more especially for poor African people. I believe that this is a creative way in which we can understand the work of Beverley Haddad in her research amongst poor women in Vulindlela, KwaZulu-Natal.[59] She makes the point that,

> In planning programmes of development action, faith as an integral part of women's lives must be acknowledged as a community resource. Networks of religious women such as the *manyano* movement are a key site of survival practice and a place where poor and marginalized women are taking control of their lives. This movement accounts for one of the largest religious groupings of indigenous African women in South Africa. Through these churchwomen's prayer groups, poor and marginalized women find courage, strength and resources to persevere in the face of near death.[60]

Likewise, Jim Cochrane has drawn attention to religious health assets, which he labels as 'a kind of endogenous resource that may be leveraged for dealing with health crises as part of public health policy and practice'.[61] Through a contextual grounding of his theory in a case study of the historically black settlement of Imizamo Yetho, Hout Bay, Cape Town, he makes clear that these assets are not just those of large, rich and powerful institutions, but are rooted in the lives of the poor and marginalized.

Of Appreciation

Clearly, the relationship between faith, agency and assets presents itself with many creative possibilities in our desire to understand and be engaged in social development. Yet it does pose the question as to how we are to proceed, and what the role of 'outsiders' is within the process. An insight into the changed nature of the approach of outsiders towards the poor due to a growing awareness of their agency and assets can be gained by following the shift from Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) to Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) to Participation Learning and Action (PLA). The first approach, RRA, was an investigative method used by outside experts to quickly gauge the development needs of a given community through on-the-spot field work. This was itself an innovation, namely, the idea that it was better to send someone to go and look at the situation on the ground (however quickly), than simply to sit in a government office and make plans on paper!

However, as the RRA approach was applied, it began to be shaped by a range of concerns, key of which was the recognition, by development activists, of the value of the insights and wisdom of the poor who were the subjects of the appraisal. The PRA approach grew out of this, and the 'rapid' was replaced with 'participatory', signalling a conscious desire to both spend more time amongst the people in the community in an attempt to really try and understand 'what is going on', and to encourage the active participation of the poor in the process of appraisal itself. A whole range of creative exercises was developed to facilitate this process.[62]

The success of PRA tools and exercises meant that use was found for it in urban areas, and so the 'rural' part of the title seemed redundant. Furthermore, the concept of appraisal continued to carry within itself a clear distinction between the subjects and objects of research, a distinction that fails to recognise that both

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[59] Beverley Haddad, *African Theologies of Survival: Intersecting Faith, Feminisms and Development* (Unpublished PhD thesis, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal, 2000).
[60] Beverley Haddad, "Theologising Development: A Gendered Analysis of Poverty, Survival and Faith" in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 110 (2001), 16.
[61] James Cochrane, "Religion in the Health of Migrant Communities: Cultural Assets or Medical Deficits?" Paper delivered at Health and Migration in Southern Africa Conference, Cape Town, January 2003.
[62] See Robert Chambers, *Rural Appraisal: Rapid, Relaxed and Participatory,* Institute of Development Studies Discussion Paper 311 (University of Sussex, Brighton: IDS Publications, 1992).

development facilitators and poor people are engaged in a mutual learning process. Again, this process of participatory learning is not for its own sake, but for the goal of social, cultural and economic transformation of poverty. Thus the term 'action' was added, to create 'Participatory Learning and Action' (PLA). This movement from RRA to PRA to PLA, is responsive to the growing recognition of the role of the agency and assets of the poor in development, for as Bryant Myers notes, 'from the results of a properly done PLA exercise the poor can discover how much they really do know, what resources and skills they already have, and how resourceful they have been in the past'.[63]

Indeed, these tensions between the RRA, PRA and PLA approaches raise to prominence the vital relationship between giving priority to the agency and assets of the poor on the one hand, and the way in which non-poor outsiders can engage with the poor in the mutual struggle for justice in such a way that this agency and these assets are not compromised. For the very act of compromising the agency and assets is itself an act of injustice. Now we begin to come full circle in this essay, for this was the issue we noted in our reflection on Paulo Freire and his educational method, namely, the tension between the vocation of the teacher and that of the pupil, expressed now as the tension between the vocation of the poor and the vocation of the development agent.

This search for a process by which the agency and the assets of the poor can be enhanced in dialogue with outsiders, has given rise in some quarters to what is known as 'Appreciative Inquiry' (AI), and which bears some resemblance to the work of Freire and others in adult education. The fact that this approach has been adopted by, amongst others, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) to enhance its use of the SLF, should alert us to the congruence between it and the focus on the agency and assets of the poor. Neil Ford of the IISD makes precisely this point when he points out (in language remarkably similar to that of Kretzmann and McKnight) that the dominant model of development practice is a problem-centred one that 'can often disempower the community it is meant to help, by conditioning local people to view their village as a place full of problems that only outsiders can solve, and needs that only government can meet'.[64] The SLF, on the other hand, helps people understand their strengths, analyse their options, plan effectively and participate more equally; and AI becomes the way in which development agencies can facilitate this.

> Appreciative inquiry starts from a fundamentally different – and more positive – point. It is designed to help local people identify their achievements. This process can be very empowering for people who have always considered themselves poor and disadvantaged. When they look for their strengths, they are often amazed to discover how resilient, adaptive and innovative they are. They have to be – poverty is a cruel and unforgiving circumstance. By focusing on their strengths they can use the 'positive present' to build a shared vision of a better future, one that is grounded in reality. Appreciative inquiry creates a development pathway based on what is right rather than what is wrong.[65]

The AI approach makes creative use of memory and visioning around four stages, namely: *discovering*, which explores and appreciates what has been good in the past and what works at present;[66] *dreaming* about what might be if the good could be expanded into the future; *dialogue* amongst the participants to construct a vision of what can be achieved; and *delivery* of the vision through action. The circle continues, as this action itself becomes the focus of discovery. As with the Asset-Based approach and the SLF, Appreciative Inquiry does not minimize the problems that beset a community. Quite clearly the process

[63] Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 174.
[64] Neil Ford, "Foreword" in Charles Elliot, *Locating the Energy for Change: An Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry* (Winnipeg: IISD, 1999), vi.
[65] Neil Ford, "Foreword", vi.
[66] This seems similar to the focus of contemporary African theology as noted by Maluleke above. See "The Rediscovery of the Agency of Africans".

takes place within and seeks to overcome experiences which threaten 'the good'. However, instead of being incapacitated by the overwhelming sense of deficit, AI is driven by what Charles Elliot calls the 'heliotropic principle', which states that 'organizations operate like plants: they move toward what gives them life and energy'.[67]

The outsider, who seeks to assist through the AI approach, will therefore approach poor people and communities exhibiting some of the following characteristics:

- An assumption of health and vitality
- A desire to connect through empathy
- A sense of personal excitement, commitment and concern
- An intense focus to listen with the right side of the brain
- Generative questioning, pointing toward clues and guiding
- Belief in the community and its story
- Tolerance for ambiguity, generalization and dreams
- A passion for dialogue and a dislike of monologue.[68]

I am surely not alone in wishing that this list were simply the job description of the ordained clergy in my church! And, of course, by implication, of all baptized Christians!

Theological Themes

This intuitively positive reaction to the approach of Appreciative Inquiry suggests that we may have succeeded in our task. This was to explore the commonalities between the *secular* language of agency, assets and appreciation and *theological* themes so that as Christians we can begin to understand, interpret and engage with development practice alongside other role players in African civil society. In doing this we have done two things: we have explored these three themes in some depth, and noted how central to current development thinking they are; and we have seen how the three themes share a common vision, namely, the affirmation of the humanity and vocation of the poor, their role in the struggle for humanization, the gifts they bring to this struggle, and the role of the non-poor outsider in affirming this humanity, role and gifts.

We began by being reminded of James' strident words: 'Faith without works is dead' (2:26). Throughout this essay we have been reminding ourselves that this is not only a word for the non-poor, a call – as it were – to charitable acts towards the unfortunate poor who have no works of their own (and, by implication no faith). It is also a word for the poor. They too gain dignity when addressed by the fullness of the gospel. It is not enough that they have faith. Faith without works is dead. The gospel calls them to engage in the works of love, peace and justice in the struggle for their own humanization. This, as Freire reminds us, is the 'true generosity' that must be at the heart of any contemporary theology of development:

> True generosity consists precisely in fighting to destroy the causes which nourish false charity. False charity constrains the fearful and subdued, the 'rejects of life,' to extend their trembling hand. True generosity lies in striving so that these hands – whether of individuals or entire peoples – need be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work, and working, transform the world.[69]

[67] Charles Elliot, *Locating the Energy for Change: An Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry* (Winnipeg: IISD, 1999), 43.
[68] David Cooperider and Suresh Srivastva quoted in Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 177.
[69] Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, 27.

(153) THE BASIC INCOME GRANT IN NAMIBIA – A MODEL FOR DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Claudia and Dirk Haarmann

Introduction

This chapter examines the role of a universal basic income grant in poverty alleviation and development. The basis is the worldwide first Basic Income Grant pilot project implemented in Otjivero, Namibia, where, for a period of two years, every person in the settlement received an unconditional cash grant of N$100 (about €10) per month. The impact analysis of the pilot shows the potential of such a grant in addressing poverty, e.g. malnutrition and food insecurity, but also in fostering local economic development through redistribution. The chapter therefore argues that a universal, unconditional cash grant is an effective tool in development policy, not only in Namibia, but also in other countries.[1]

The second part of the chapter focuses on the role of the church in the project and how contextual theology influenced her advocacy work and vice versa, that is, how the pilot project enriched contextual theology.

Namibian Case Study

Namibia is a country rich in natural resources like gold, diamonds, uranium and fish. It is one of the least densely populated countries in the world, but the small population of 2.2 million people is very diverse, consisting of eleven different language groups. Namibia gained its independence in 1990. The years of colonialism and apartheid have created a system of structural inequalities along racial, class, language and gender lines. Despite efforts of the new government, these inherent social and economic imbalances have remained largely intact. A Gini co-efficient of 0.743[2] as the measure of income inequality illustrates that a small class holds most of the wealth while the majority of Namibians still live in poverty.[3] A recent study found that 42% of Namibia's population is undernourished (New Era, 8th June 2015), making it one of the eight African countries ranked at the highest level of undernourishment. The HIV prevalence rate stands at 16% and maternal deaths have doubled in the last fourteen years and are currently at 449 per 100,000 births.[4] These indicators give an idea of the poverty and hardship experienced by the majority of people in Namibia.

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[1] The chapter draws on the research results of the BIG pilot project and the first year report: *Making the difference! The BIG in Namibia, a* research and report jointly done by several researchers and authors, namely Claudia Haarmann, Dirk Haarmann, Herbert Jauch, Hilma Shindondola-Mote, Nicoli Nattrass, Ingrid van Niekerk and Michael Samson. For further details and background of the research see, www.bignam.org/Publications/BIG_Assessment_report_08b.pdf (accessed 10 September 2015).

[2] A score of 0 would indicate a perfectly equal distribution of income amongst the population, while a score of 1 would indicate that one person would own everything and the rest nothing. Countries like South Africa and Brazil have Gini-coefficients at 0.578 and 0.55 respectively.

[3] The United Nations Development Programme. *The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development. Human Development Report 2010* (New York: UNDP, 2005), 154, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/270/hdr_2010_en_complete_reprint.pdf (accessed 12 September 2015).

[4] Kerry Cullinan, "Namibia: Health Authorities Tackle Maternal Mortality," (2005), http://allafrica.com/stories/201002230101.html (accessed 29 September 2015).

The BIG Proposal in Namibia

The Basic Income Grant is an unconditional universal cash transfer that had originally been proposed by a Namibian government-appointed Tax Consortium, NAMTAX. NAMTAX reviewed the country's tax system to determine structural changes for economic growth. In its recommendations, NAMTAX pointed to the necessity to reduce poverty and income inequality in order to achieve sustainable economic development. NAMTAX found that by far the best method of addressing both would be a universal income grant (NAMTAX 2002a), which then became known as the Basic Income Grant (or BIG). The NAMTAX Commission made the proposal, based on financial calculations proving the affordability of such a grant within the macroeconomic framework of the Namibian economy.

At the time, only a few newspaper articles supported the proposal as 'good news for the poor', but while Government had been keen on taking on recommendations of the NAMTAX commission on the income revenue side, like the proposed capital gains tax, there was silence on the BIG.

The BIG Coalition

In 2004, concerns in the country about the widespread poverty, the high inequality and silence on the BIG proposal grew. The Evangelical Lutheran Church, under the leadership of Bishop Kameeta, spearheaded the setting up of a Coalition to promote a BIG for all Namibians. The BIG Coalition consisted of six umbrella bodies in Namibia, namely, the Council of Churches (CCN), the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), the Namibian NGO Forum (NANGOF), the Namibian Network of AIDS Service Organisations (NANASO), the National Youth Council (NYC) and the Church Alliance for Orphans (CAFO).

For the first two years, the Coalition embarked on an extensive lobby campaign based on research and economic modelling. However, even detailed economic models and tax effort analyses could not convince Government to introduce a basic income, and the debate did not move forward. While some in Government supported a BIG right from the beginning, critics claimed that a BIG would lead to dependency and laziness and pointed to the fact that a BIG had never been implemented anywhere in the world.

When, at the end of 2006, a delegation of the BIG Coalition attended an international symposium on basic income in Cape Town, the delegation realised that, in other countries, researchers had already discussed a BIG for decades without it ever being implemented. The understanding grew that something drastic and different needed to be done, since Namibia would not have the time to spend years debating it without any actual impact on people's lives. It was then that the BIG Coalition decided to move from words to action, for deeds speak louder than words. The idea of the worldwide first pilot project of a universal cash grant was born. It is, however, noteworthy that this understanding had grown among the Namibian delegation and some academics from South Africa, who had a similar experience. In fact, it did not find the support of the majority of the gathering. Despite the scepticism which the proposal received, it stimulated the debate at the conference and Namibia's BIG Coalition's chairperson Bishop Kameeta, who had motivated the new idea in the plenary, was termed 'the butt-kicker' of the conference.

The idea of the pilot was rooted in the experience of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, where, for example, English medium schools or township clinics often challenged the oppressive regime to revise otherwise ideologically hardened positions. Furthermore, it drew on the experience of pilot projects in other policy areas like the treatment of AIDS patients, where a successful pilot project led to the implementation of national programmes. For example, pilot projects in Haiti, Rwanda and South Africa demonstrated that antiretroviral treatment could be provided effectively to poor people – even to those living in deep rural areas. The pilots helped change national and international policy, thereby paving the way for the dramatic global roll-out of anti-retrovirals (ARVs). The BIG Coalition hoped that, by putting into operation a BIG pilot project, government leaders and others could see how the BIG could be

transformed into a national programme. In 2007, the BIG Coalition decided to implement a pilot project to move the policy debate forward and to evaluate and document the impact of a Basic Income Grant on poverty and on sustainable economic livelihoods of individuals as well as on the community.

The Situation before the BIG

After careful examination of several villages in Namibia, the Otjivero settlement, including the Omitara 'town' in the Omitara District, in the east of the country was chosen. Otjivero-Omitara was selected for its manageable size and accessibility, for its characteristics of the community reflecting the many population groups in Namibia, and for its extreme poverty situation. Otjivero mirrored many poor communities in Namibia. Furthermore, Otjivero was known for its bad reputation amongst the local farmers as an apparent hotbed of criminal activities. Otjivero-Omitara is located some 100 kilometres east of Windhoek. People (mainly laid off farm workers) started settling in the squatter camp Otjivero about 5 km away from Omitara in 1992.[5] After Independence in 1990, despite the commercial farmers' objections, people were no longer forcefully removed and could settle on this government-owned land. A feature of the area is the proximity to a large dam that supplies water to Windhoek and surrounding areas. Unusually, the people in Otjivero had access to a free water supply, but the area was impoverished, with no access to land and the people prone to diseases, such as TB and HIV/AIDS, with most of them living in shacks made out of plastic, wood and zinc. The settlement struggled to subsist as a viable community. The relatively small settlement has very little space for people to cater for their economic survival, since all around cattle and hunting farms have fenced in the estates, leaving nothing to the majority of the people but the mere place to put up a shack. Over time, the Government built a school and a clinic, but there has been persistent conflict with the surrounding commercial farmers because of illegal hunting, trespassing and the collection of firewood. The statement of Wilhelmina Gawises, a single mother of three children exemplifies the desperation and abject poverty people in Otjivero faced on a daily basis:

> There is a problem of unemployment and we don't have money to travel to Gobabis and Windhoek to look for work. I have three children, aged 10, 13 and a 7-month-old baby. Now I don't know where their father is and I have no job or money to send them back to school. I and my three children depend on my unemployed parents for food and accommodation. Sometimes I wish I was dead because I cannot stand this type of life any more. I am supposed to provide and protect my children and parents but I am failing to do that. Life is very difficult here, we live in poverty with no hope for the future.

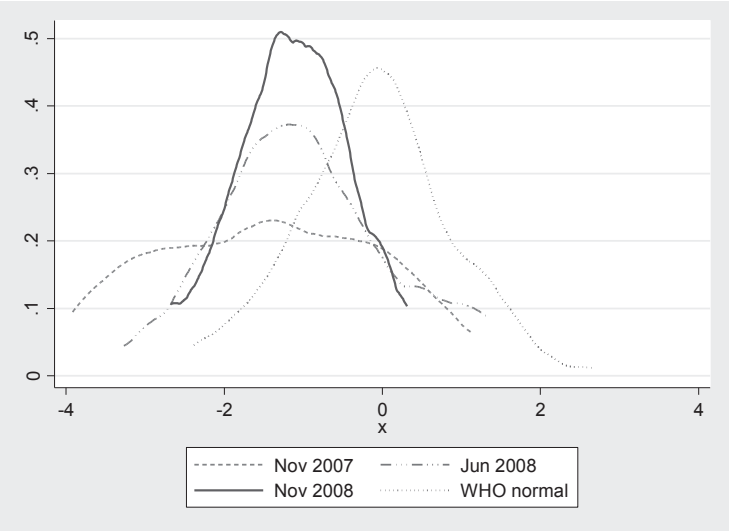
If a BIG had a positive impact in this hostile and hazardous environment, the success certainly could be replicated at least equally well elsewhere.

The pilot implemented the following policy: every resident under the age of 60 living in Otjivero received N$100 each month from January 2008 until December 2009, 930 residents receiving this grant without any condition. The money for children and youth up to the age of 21 was paid out to a person designated as their 'primary care-giver' which by default was the mother.

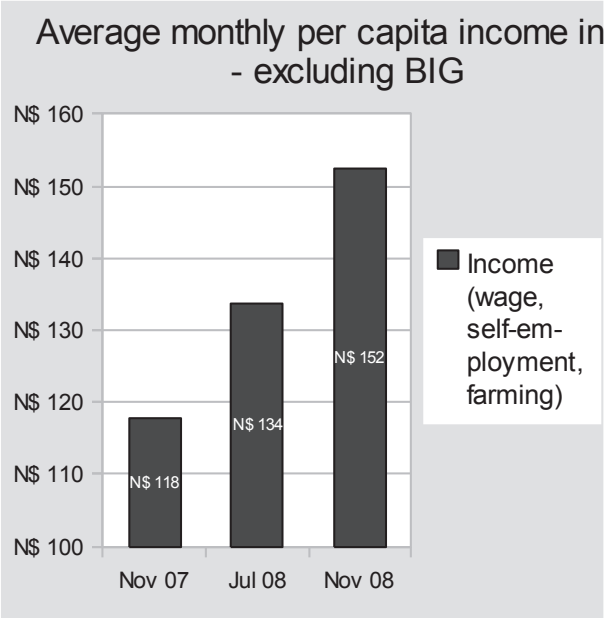
The BIG Coalition fund-raised for the pilot project within Namibia and internationally and received donations from individuals, congregations, churches, and both national and international organisations. This immense support enabled the BIG Coalition to run the two-year pilot project.

[5] In the remainder of the article we will refer to Omitara-Otjivero simply as Otjivero, as this is the name by which the Pilot Project has become known.

The Impact of the BIG in Otjivero



Graph 1: Weight for age scores according to WHO standard – before and after BIG (for children in households without significant in-migration)



Graph 2 Average monthly per capita income in N$ – excluding BIG payments

With the introduction of the BIG, household poverty dropped significantly. Using the food poverty line of the Namibian government, 76% of residents fell below this line in November 2007. Within one year, with the BIG, this number was reduced to 37% amongst households not affected by migration, the rate even decreased to 16%. These statistics reveal the direct and fast impact of a cash grant on food security.

The BIG resulted in a huge reduction of child malnutrition. Using a WHO measurement technique, the data shows the significant improvement of children's weight-for-age in a short period of time. In November 2007, 42% of children in Otjivero were underweight. Six months later, this was reduced to 17% and to 10% after ten months.

HIV-positive residents had huge difficulties in accessing ARVs, due to food insecurity and the prohibitive cost of travel to the next hospital. The BIG enabled them to afford nutritious food and gain access to medication. This was further enhanced by the government's decision to make ARVs available in Otjivero, freeing residents from the need to travel to the next town.

Before the introduction of the BIG, almost half of the school-going children did not attend school regularly. Pass rates stood at about 40% and drop-out rates were high. Many parents were unable to pay the school fees. After the introduction of the BIG, more than double the number of parents paid school fees (90%) and most of the children now have school uniforms. Non-attendance due to financial reasons dropped by 42% and this rate would have been even higher without the effects of migration towards Otjivero-Omitara. Drop-out rates at the school fell from almost 40% in November 2007 to 5% in June 2008 and further to almost 0% in November 2008.

The residents used the settlement's health clinic much more regularly after the introduction of the BIG. Residents now paid the N$4 payment for each visit and the income of the clinic increased fivefold.

Further, the BIG contributed to the reduction of household debt, with the average debt falling from N$1,215 to N$772 between November 2007 and November 2008. Savings increased during that period, which was reflected in the increasing ownership of large livestock, small livestock and poultry.

The BIG made a positive impact in the crime situation. Overall crime rates – as reported by the local police station – fell by 42% while stock theft fell by 43% and other theft by nearly 20%.

The most striking finding was the increase in economic activity and income amongst residents. The data collected showed a decrease of the number of unemployed people from 60% to 45%. To put it differently: since the introduction of the BIG, employment rose from 44% to 55% of those aged 15 and above.

Thus the BIG enabled recipients to increase their work both for pay, profit or family gain as well as self-employment. The grant enabled recipients to increase their earnings, particularly through starting their own small businesses, including brick-making, baking of bread and dress-making. The BIG contributed to the creation of a local market by increasing households' buying power.

This increase in economic activity had a major and direct impact on the income situation. Personal incomes rose from an average of N$118 per capita per month to N$152, or on average by 29% in just one year without taking the BIG payment into account and despite the impact of migration into the area and into the households. The research observed that by providing the BIG as a small source of secure and reliable income, people were able to engage more effectively in income-generating activities and were able to take small risks by investing and setting up businesses. It refutes the notion and critique that people would withdraw from productive work when receiving 'free money'. This is an important finding especially in times when countries struggle to stimulate local economic development. The stimulus created by the BIG resulted in a sustained personal income increase beyond the money given from the outside and led to economic activity within the vicinity of the village.

The introduction of the Basic Income Grant reportedly reduced the dependency of women on men for their survival. The BIG gave women a measure of control over their own sexuality, freeing them to some extent from the pressure to engage in transactional sex.

The empirical evidence refuted the criticism that the BIG would increase alcoholism. The community committee tried to curb alcoholism by raising awareness within the community and by reaching an agreement with local pub owners not to sell alcohol on the day of the pay-out of the grants.

The Reciprocal Influence of the BIG on Development and Theology

As outlined in the introduction, the churches – especially the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN), played a crucial role in the BIG Coalition. The ELCRN hosted the BIG Coalition and led the practical implementation of the Pilot Project. Bishop Kameeta was the Chairperson of the Coalition and later became the first Minister of Poverty Eradication in the Namibian Government, undoubtedly because of his role as Chairperson of the BIG. While the Coalition was by no means a faith-based group but a broad civil society coalition, it is worthwhile to look at how contextual theology shaped the churches' involvement in the advocacy work towards a BIG and in turn how the pilot project shaped theology at the same time. The policy which shaped the policy enriched the theology at the same time.

In the tradition of Ernesto Cardinal and applying the methods of Gerald West, a central part of the church's campaign was to read biblical texts with the experience of the Basic Income Grant pilot project. In the light of the BIG, texts like the 'feeding of the five thousand', 'the healing at the pool', Psalm 23 and the Exodus story with the special focus on the manna, were interpreted with a different perspective.

The manna story can serve as one example of such an interpretation: In Exodus 16 it is described how the Israelites when travelling through the desert, unable to grow food, hungry and without hope, received manna. Each person was given the amount to cover their needs, without strings attached. It kept people moving and enabled them to journey through the desert, from slavery to the Promised Land.

This contextual reading opened the eyes that a cash grant can be compared to manna: it has been given to everybody, without strings attached, in the faith that it will be put to good use. In the situation of the Israelites, nobody would have said, don't give them manna, they will become lazy and dependent – so why are people saying it about a cash grant?

Likewise, one can also ask: Why did God not give them palm trees with dates or today it would maybe translate into a textile factory to create jobs? Some development experts would surely argue that this would be more sustainable and cost-effective, easier to implement, than manna… The intention and logic behind the manna is however clear: God wanted his people to move on, he gave them something to nourish them, they could pick it up, get out of slavery and move on – like the BIG in a poor and food-insecure community or a cash grant during the drought. The immediate need of food and nourishment was taken care of. But at the same time, it did not make people stationary or dependent on further interventions from outside like fertilizer or foreign machinery bought from development aid. Instead, the option to spend the grant according to their own needs and plans, the reliability and security of monthly payments enabled people to take the future in their hands, make plans and become independent.

Like the manna, the cash grant is given to everybody, creating a community without jealousy but with a deeper sense of solidarity towards each other. This was surely important also for the Israelites in the desert. Imagine the Israelites would have been divided by some officials installed by Moses into those who were to receive bread and those who are not? The same is true for communities in poverty or during a drought. Everybody is affected, everybody gets support without having to prove or do anything. The cash grant did not divide the communities but put everybody on the same footing. The community where the BIG was implemented stressed this point again and again. The fact that everybody received the grant created a new sense of community, unity and solidarity in contrast to jealousy and stigmatisation.

Coming back again to the role of the church in the BIG Coalition and the underlying thinking: the reading of the Exodus story revealed the potential of combining and applying contextual theology and development practice. By keeping them in dialogue with each other and by learning from each other, a new

understanding of the Bible texts as well as new development practice emerged. The churches were able to apply their reading of the Bible in this situation and act creatively and innovatively.

This interpretation of the biblical text served as a signpost for the churches how to do development work, and the experience with the BIG encouraged the churches to go against traditional approaches based on the principles of charity rather than social justice.

The contextual Bible studies with the experience of the BIG pilot enhanced the theology of the churches and changed their perspective in the development debate and practice. And conversely, development practice was enriched by theology. Just to give an example: two years ago, the Senator of Sao Paulo in Brazil, from the workers' party, asked at an international conference on development in Munich, how the churches in Namibia would interpret the manna story and its implications for development practice round the world. He explained that he was fully aware that the conference was not a theological one, but he had learned about the story, and that would really be of interest for him and his political work in Brazil. This was indeed a new experience for many development experts. And as odd as it might have seemed to some, it showed that theology in development is not a one-way street. Rather to the contrary, the 'by their fruits theology' was also recognized and brought into the debate. However, it required the churches to learn more about development, to learn how to do social action research, learn concepts of poverty, development, social transformation, advocacy, etc. and have the tools for project design, implementation and management. There was a clear need for that, as there was a huge discrepancy between many theological and developmental declarations and their practical implementation.

Conclusion

The BIG pilot in Namibia aimed to illustrate the impact of a universal grant as an immediate measure of poverty alleviation through redistribution. The results established the effectiveness of a BIG not only in fighting poverty, in providing food security and decreasing malnutrition, but most interestingly in kick-starting local economic growth in a rural setting and fostering social development. Although circumstances differ substantially in the various parts of Africa, the BIG pilot provides an important example in the ongoing debate about usage of universal grants in development policy. In more and more cash-based societies, a BIG enables people to improve their living conditions in an independent and self-determining way. The experience of the pilot is evidence that the majority use the money wisely, not only for their immediate needs, but for productive and long-term goals as well. Moreover, the BIG is an important tool for injecting much-needed cash into rural communities for sustainable development.

The BIG campaign also showed the important role of churches in development. However, to be meaningful, there is a need to become a community of true agents and visionaries in development based on the concept of equality, justice and love. Or, to stay in biblical language, the churches need to reject so-called development approaches that come with thorns and thistles but rather to engage with those that bear fruit.

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(154) THE RELEVANCE OF BODY THEOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Gerald O. West

Introduction

The Ujamaa Centre for Community Development and Research (Ujamaa Centre) began doing 'Contextual Bible Study'[1] work on the biblical story of Tamar, the daughter of King David, in 1996.[2] While King David is a familiar figure in Christian churches and faith-based organisations, his daughter, who was raped within his household by his son is less well known. Tamar has been deliberately marginalised in the formal liturgical life of the church, with her story hardly ever being read on a Sunday within church lectionaries.

The Ujamaa Centre does its Contextual Bible Study (CBS)[3] work within community-based organisations that invite the Ujamaa Centre to work with them as they struggle to use their faith resources – like the Bible – for the transformation of their communities. In this sense, our work with the story of Tamar can be considered as a contribution to community development, with a focus on the body.

Our first community-based invitation to work with this text came from a cross-sector of rural and urban African women who asked the Ujamaa Centre to work with them on the pressing issue of gender violence. The work that was done together then has generated a series of CBS on what has become known as the Tamar Campaign, focusing on gender violence, and also a series of CBS focusing on men, in what has become known as a Redemptive Masculinities series.[4]

Since 1996, the Tamar CBS has been taken up all over the world, particularly in contexts where the Bible continues to be a local community-based resource. Major international ecumenical networks like the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the related Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA), and significant continental African ecumenical organisations like the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCGLAHA) have adopted the Tamar CBS as part of their own gender programmes. In addition, the Ujamaa Centre has trained trainers from these and many other faith-based organisations, enabling them to use CBS methodology for the construction of their own 'local' CBS and theological resources.[5]

Central to the CBS work of the Ujamaa Centre is a 'theory of change' that draws deeply on the praxis cycle. From the praxis cycle the Ujamaa Centre has come to understand how and why its CBS work enables local faith-based formations to use the Bible for survival, liberation, and fulness of life – to resist the forces of death and to align with the God of life. This essay elaborates on what we in the Ujamaa Centre have so far discerned about our theory of change, using the Tamar CBS as an example.

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[1] Gerald O. West, *Contextual Bible Study* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 1993).
[2] Gerald O. West and Phumzile Zondi-Mabizela, "The Bible Story That Became a Campaign: The Tamar Campaign in South Africa (and Beyond)," *Ministerial Formation* 103(2004).
[3] 'CBS' is more than an abbreviation; the Ujamaa Centre has been asked by some of the communities we work with not to call what we do 'Bible study', because, they insist, what we do "is not what we do in church".
[4] http://ujamaa.ukzn.ac.za/.
[5] www.fecclaha.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=57&Itemid=197.

A Theory of Change

The Ujamaa Centre's theory of change is founded on the foundational tenet of liberation theology: the epistemological privilege of the poor.[6] The knowledge of the poor is vital to any project of social transformation. Development cannot be done without the presence of the poor themselves. They are the agents of their own development and they have assets. And among these assets is religion.[7] Faith, and faith-based resources like the Bible are potential assets which the poor (and other marginalised sectors) can deploy in projects of social transformation.

So in engaging with gender-based violence, it is the presence and participation and knowledge of the habitual victims of gender-based violence – women – that provide the starting-point of social transformation. Their epistemology is fundamental to an analysis of gender violence and provides the necessary 'logic' for the forms of action that they might choose to take as part of a transformative project.

For these reasons, the Ujamaa Centre favours organised communities of poor and marginalised women in its gender-based work. The use of the term 'organised' is deliberate. The organised poor and marginalised are central to our theory of change. By being 'organised', poor and marginalised sectors have already constructed their own safe and sequestered sites, and have already begun to assemble their own discourse concerning their oppression and marginalisation. They have already forged a vocabulary for talking about their realities (including their bodies), and they are in (partial) control of their own space.

Here the Ujamaa Centre's praxis is informed by the work of James Scott. The organised marginalised have 'a shared interest in jointly creating a discourse of dignity, of negation, and of justice'. 'They have, in addition,' Scott continues, 'a shared interest in concealing a social site apart from domination where such a hidden transcript can be elaborated in comparative safety.'[8] As Scott indicates, a safe social site enables an articulation. Put differently, the question posed by Gayatri Spivak, of whether or not the subaltern *can* speak,[9] should be recast as a question which takes space seriously. A more appropriate question would be: '*Where* can the subaltern speak?' For as Scott so eloquently argues, subordinate classes are less constrained at the level of thought and ideology than they are at the level of political action and struggle 'since they can in secluded settings speak with comparative safety'.[10] Human dignity, even in the most damaged and denigrated subaltern, demands some form of 'speaking'.[11] *How* the subaltern speaks depends almost entirely on local 'sectoral' control of space.

This is why women's faith-based groups are such important sites for dealing with gender-based violence. These are sites that have already been established by women in the face of patriarchy, with particular faith-based symbols and rituals playing a significant role in securing these sites.[12] CBS work only takes place in such sites when and if the Ujamaa Centre is invited by those who control particular sites to enter their site and to collaborate with them.

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[6] Per Frostin, *Liberation Theology in Tanzania and South Africa: A First World Interpretation* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1988), 6.
[7] Steve de Gruchy, "Of Agency, Assets and Appreciation: Seeking Some Commonalities between Theology and Development," in *Keeping Body and Soul Together: Reflections by Steve De Gruchy on Theology and Development*, ed. Beverley G. Haddad (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2015).
[8] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 114.
[9] Gayatri C. Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Gary Nelson and L. Grossberg (London: Macmillan, 1988).
[10] Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 91.
[11] Gerald O. West, "Newsprint Theology: Bible in the Context of HIV and AIDS," in *Out of Place: Doing Theology on the Cross-cultural Brink*, ed. Jione Havea and Clive Pearson (London: Equinox Publishing, 2011).
[12] Beverley G. Haddad, "The Manyano Movement in South Africa: Site of Struggle, Survival, and Resistance," *Agenda* 61(2004).

Such sites are already full of resources, full of assets. The constraint on marginalised African women is not their lack of assets, but how some of these assets, like the Bible, have been used by the dominant patriarchal structures and systems that govern their lives. The Bible is interpreted by institutional patriarchy, including the church, as consisting of a singular voice and conveying a singular message. This is where and why the Ujamaa Centre is invited to work with such women's groups. The resources of biblical scholarship enable the Bible to be read as a text with divergent and even contesting voices. We read unfamiliar biblical texts – those texts excluded from or on the margins of public ecclesiastical practice. And we re-read familiar biblical texts in unfamiliar ways, re-locating well-worn texts within their literary and socio-historical contexts and so rendering them alive in new ways. The resources of biblical scholarship enable the detail of the Bible to be visible, unconstrained by the dominant theological frameworks of institutional religion (or the naive and uncritical notions of religion prevalent in 'secular' development agencies).

The story of Tamar in 2 Samuel 13:1-22 is a good example. This text has little or no presence in the public life of the church anywhere in the world. Most lectionaries do not include this portion of the Bible in their set readings for a formal Sunday service. In our experience with this biblical text among women we regularly find that they are unaware that this story in the Bible. And though this story is a 'text of terror',[13] it has demonstrated a remarkable capacity to evoke the voice of a biblical woman and the kindred voices of contemporary women who share her experience of violence and abuse. As the Ujamaa Centre has often been told, 'If this story is in the Bible we will not be silent'. Recovering Tamar's voice – a remarkably articulate voice – has provided additional vocabulary – sacred vocabulary – with which contemporary women can tell their own embodied stories and work together to bring about the transformation of the patriarchal systems that both construct and condone gender-based violence.

The very decision to extract this part of the story from the larger story of David and his male dynasty within Samuel and Kings is significant. This part of the story may well have had an independent existence prior to its co-option by the dominant male narrative and its insertion into the story of great male leaders. The story told in 2 Samuel 13 may well be a part of a hidden, disguised narrative told among women. By identifying Tamar's voice as significant and sacred, we recover a part of the tradition that has struggled to be heard.

In identifying this scriptural voice and offering it to local communities of African women, we offer a potential site for the doing of what James Cochrane has referred to as 'incipient theology'.[14] As organised groups of church women – women of faith – gather together in safe spaces they control, the Tamar CBS offers an articulation of body theology. Tamar breaks the silence of abuse and speaks, both before the abuse and after it. Her words have the potential to set in motion a 'crystallization' whereby the other members of the group recognise 'close relatives' of their own experience, connecting them to a 'single power grid'.[15] James Scott is here describing a common experience among marginalised sectors, as they together construct a vocabulary with which to talk about shared realities. What we recognise within the Ujamaa Centre is that this experience is a form of body theology. What is present but inchoate and incipient within the bodies of individual women is catalysed by the Tamar CBS, and slowly the women forge a way of talking about what is in their bodies. As both James Scott and John Holloway have argued, the dignity of being human demands an attempt to articulate what is held within the body.[16] And as

[13] Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 37-63.
[14] James R. Cochrane, *Circles of Dignity: Community Wisdom and Theological Reflection* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 111.
[15] Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 223-24.
[16] http://libcom.org/library/dignitys-revolt-john-holloway See also John Holloway, "Dignity's Revolt," in *Zapatista! Reinventing Revolution in Mexico*, ed. John Holloway and Elíona Peláez (London: Pluto, 1998).

Philippe Denis reminds us, 'the elaboration of the painful experience and its validation through empathetic listening' enables a narrative of the embodied traumatic experience to take shape.[17]

The dignity of Tamar, present in her gracious and caring attitude to her brother, present in her analysis and articulation of why her brother should not 'force' her, present in her refusal to be silenced after she has been raped, invokes and kindles the dignity of contemporary women who have come to connect with her story in the Bible. Tamar's 'discourse', evident in both what she says and does, offers additional resources for the articulation of contemporary incipient women's theologies, which, when corporately constructed within a safe and sacred space, offer resources with which to confront the dominant forces of patriarchal control of the Bible, the church, and society at large. Body theology then becomes public theology.

In terms of our theory of change, the participatory CBS 'processes' and 'products' (see below) provide an array of additional assets or resources which organised groups of women can combine with the assets they already have and with which they can work for social transformation.

Social Change

In the late 1980s, the South African biblical scholar Itumeleng Mosala argued that a 'critical' reading of the Bible enabled a critical 'reading' of context.[18] Put negatively, Mosala is concerned that 'unstructural understanding of the Bible may simply reinforce and confirm unstructural understanding of the present'.[19] CBS is a response to this recognition, offering a critical-structural-systemic pedagogical framework with which to re-read the Bible. The dominant framework within which the Bible is read by the church, civil society, and even development agencies, is as a book with a singular voice and a singular message focused on the singular individual. Biblical scholarship knows a quite different 'text'. For biblical scholarship, the Bible is a geographically, historically and ideologically diverse text. Indeed, most biblical texts are constituted by distinct redactional layers, each of which has its own distinctive social location and ideology.[20]

Contextual Bible Study offers such detail to communities of the poor and marginalised, but in a manner that is pedagogically enabling. There are various ways of describing CBS praxis, but one way of conceptualising our work is to recognise a series of interconnected 'movements' that shape the collaborative interpretative-reading process.

The overarching movement is that of 'See-Judge-Act', a process formed in the worker-priest movement in Europe in the 1930-40s.[21] This movement begins within the organised formations of the poor and marginalised as they analyse ('See') their context, 'from below'. This analysis of their 'reality' is then brought into dialogue with the 'prophetic' voices of the Bible (and theology), enabling 'the God of life' to address ('Judge') their lived social reality. Through this dialogue with the Bible 'the shape of the gospel'[22] – namely, to bring good news – is used to plan a series of actions ('Act') that will bring about

[17] Philippe Denis, "Storytelling and Healing," in *A Journey Towards Healing: Stories of People with Multiple Woundedness in Kwazulu-Natal*, ed. Philippe Denis, Scott Houser, and Radikobo Ntsimane (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2011), 11.
[18] Itumeleng J. Mosala, *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989).
[19] Mosala, *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology*, 32.
[20] See for example Norman K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985).
[21] James R. Cochrane, "Questioning Contextual Theology," in *Towards an Agenda for Contextual Theology: Essays in Honour of Albert Nolan*, ed. McGlory T. Speckman and Larry T. Kaufmann (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001), 76-77; Gerald O. West, *Biblical Hermeneutics of Liberation: Modes of Reading the Bible in the South African Context*, Second Edition ed. (Maryknoll and Pietermaritzburg: Orbis Books and Cluster Publications, 1995), 188-93.
[22] Albert Nolan, *God in South Africa: The Challenge of the Gospel* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1988).

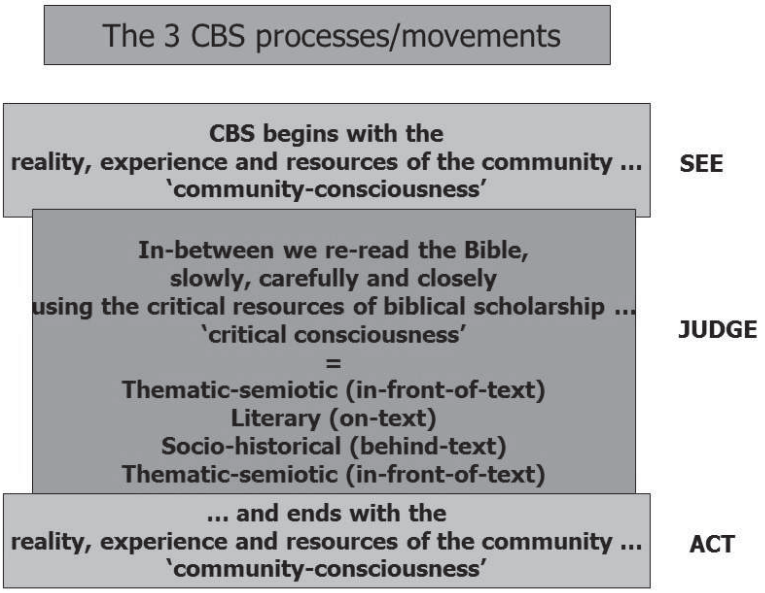
transformation of their social reality, so that all who live in this reality may have life, and have it abundantly (John 10:10).

Within this overarching movement, there is another movement, from 'community-consciousness' to 'critical-consciousness' to 'community-consciousness'. The 'See' moment of social analysis generates a particular contextual concern that becomes the 'theme' for the Bible study – a theme such as sexual gender-based violence. The engagement with the Bible (the Judge component) begins with a community's 'thematic' interaction with the biblical text being used ('community-consciousness'), allowing every participant to share their particular understanding of the chosen text. This moment not only makes it clear to the participants that the Bible study belongs to them, but also offers a reception history of that text's presence in a particular community, their own community. The Bible study then moves into a series of re-readings of the text, slowing down the process of interpretation, using the resources of socially-engaged biblical scholarship ('critical-consciousness'). The particular sets of 'critical' tools that are used by biblical scholarship are offered to the participants as additional resources with which to engage the biblical text, through a series of questions related to the biblical text. After a series of 'critical-consciousness' questions, the Bible study moves back into 'community-consciousness', as the participants appropriate (en-Act) the biblical text for the particular social project of transformation identified in the 'See' moment.

With respect to the particular critical resources of biblical scholarship, there is another layer of movement. The movement begins within the 'See' moment with an initial thematic 'in-front-of-the-text' engagement with the text ('community-consciousness'), bringing the generative contextual theme of the community workshop into dialogue with a particular biblical text. The interpretative process then slows down, entering the 'critical-consciousness' moment via a literary engagement with the text. Though a form of 'critical' engagement, the choice to begin critical engagement 'on-the-text' is deliberate because it offers an egalitarian entry point to 'critical-consciousness', enabling all participants to engage with the detail of the text. In most cases, literary engagement leads 'behind-the-text' to a socio-historical engagement with the text, as participants probe the world that produced the text, seeking for lines of connection between both the literary dimensions and the socio-historical dimensions of the text and their contextual realities, seeking lines of connection between contemporary communities of faith and struggle and 'biblical' communities of faith and struggle. While these dimensions of the biblical *text* are the focus of these second and third moments, the process moves in the fourth moment back 'in-front-of-the-text' (into 'community-consciousness'), as the participants now appropriate this critically re-read and reconstituted text for their particular project of social transformation ('Act'). Together, as the Tamar CBS examples that follow in the next section illustrate, these concentric and intersecting movements constitute 'the Contextual Bible Study process'.

Implicit within these CBS processes, facilitation 'practices' are vital to CBS community-based work, enabling both 'group process' – the active participation of each participant – and the CBS process – the slow but steady procession through the three movements of CBS process.[23] Part of the 'conversion' of the socially engaged biblical scholar is becoming 're-schooled' as a facilitator, collaborating with other community-based facilitators so as to enable participatory transformation. CBS begins and ends under the control of a particular local community, who use the resources of the CBS, along with a range of their own resources (and the resources of other agencies who may be invited to participate in the community-based initiative), to plan for and implement community-based action.

[23] Anne Hope and Sally Timmel, *Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers*, 4 vols., vol. Book 1 (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1984).



CBS processes are focused on generating a critical-structural-systemic interpretation of the Bible, reinforcing and providing additional critical tools to the capacities already present in an organised community-based group. As Mosala made clear, such structural interpretative resources are crucial, not only to a reading of the Bible, but also to a reading of reality. The unstructural-individual focus of the dominant forms of Christianity are the default orientation within the church, civil society, and development agencies. And yet religion and the Bible are far more complex, requiring a more critical engagement. CBS offers a more critical engagement with the Bible, and in so doing provides an array of additional tools for a particular community-based group to engage both with a significant faith resource – the Bible – as well as with the structural-systemic dimensions of their realities, and so too, of the potential areas of social change with these realities.

Religious Change

What Mosala is saying, in other words, is that social change requires religious change. This is a central tenet of the Ujamaa Centre's theory of change. Religion cannot be left 'as is' while development work is done. In order for development work to be done, religion, which is part of the very fabric and scaffolding of life for millions of Africans, must be transformed, otherwise it gets in the way of social transformation. CBS is about religious change.

The emphasis on the concept 'contextual' within 'Contextual Bible Study' is a recognition that religion must serve context. 'True service submits itself to the cause which it serves, deeming that cause holy.'[24] This is why the notion of the 'shape' of the gospel was so important to the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. Albert Nolan argued that what was determinant of the Christian faith (and indeed any faith)

[24] Stephen Donaldson, *The Last Dark* (London: Gollancz, 2013), 444.

was that its 'shape' ought to be 'good news for the poor' (Luke 4:18).[25] The significance of faith for social change is that it should offer a particular shape or trajectory to social change that is good news for the poor and marginalised. And just as CBS offers a set of tools for a structural-systemic interpretation of the shape of scripture, so it offers a set of tools for a structural-systemic analysis of South African reality and a set of tools for a structural-systemic trajectory for social change. Method, not content, is the crucial concern here; CBS does not offer fixed biblical content, it offers a set of methods that are useful for biblical interpretation, social analysis, and social change.

Among the contextual realities that demand social transformation is the ongoing problem of violence against women and children. Colonialism, apartheid, and patriarchy have wreaked a vortex of havoc on African women and children. And while the Bible has voices that collude with and even inspire these destructive forces, the Ujamaa Centre has been working with 2 Samuel 13:1-22, an unfamiliar text in the liturgies and lectionaries of almost every Christian church, but a text that has demonstrated its capacity through CBS processes to empower women in their struggle against gender violence. The CBS we use has the following shape:

> 2 Samuel 13:1-22 is read aloud, preferably dramatically. After the text has been read a series of questions follow.
> *1. Read 2 Samuel 13:1-22 together again in small groups. Share with each other what you think the text is about.*
> Each small group is then asked to report back to the larger group. Each and every response to question one is summarized on newsprint. After the report-back, the participants return to their small groups to discuss the following questions.
> *2. Who are the main characters in this story and what do we know about them?*
> *3. What is the role of each of the male characters in the rape of Tamar?*
> *4. What does Tamar say and what does Tamar do? Focus carefully on each element of what Tamar says and does.*
> When the small groups have finished their discussion, each group is invited to present a summary of their discussion. After this report-back the smaller groups reconvene and discuss the following questions.
> *5. Are there women like Tamar in your church and/or community? Tell their story.*
> *6. What resources are there in your area for survivors of rape?*
> Once again, the small groups present their report-back to the plenary group. Creativity is particularly vital here, as often women find it difficult or are unable to articulate their responses. A drama or a drawing may be the only way in which some groups can report.
> Finally, each small group comes together to formulate an action plan.
> *7. What will you now do in response to this Bible study?*
> The action plan is either reported to the plenary or presented on newsprint for other participants to study after the Bible study.

Questions 2, 3 and 4 are 'critical-consciousness' questions, slowing down the reading process by inviting a re-reading of the literary features of the text (and through them opening up space to explore behind-the-text). On either side of these questions that explore the detail of the text are questions that embed the CBS in 'community-consciousness'. Among these questions each does its own critical work. Question 2 moves the CBS from the spontaneous and varied responses of the participants to a more considered focus on the detail of the text. A focus on character is one form of analysis that anyone can do, and yet it is a form of critical analysis, enabling a recognition of the literary dimensions of the text. Question 3 builds on this preliminary literary analysis, using the theme of gender violence to give shape to how the characters are analysed. Participants are enabled, via this question, to recognise the relational

[25] Nolan, *God in South Africa: The Challenge of the Gospel*, 17. For what this would look like in terms of inter-faith relations see Matthew C. Palombo, "Interfaith Praxis in South African Struggle for Liberation: Toward a Liberatio-Political Framework for Muslim-Christian Relations" (University of Johannesburg, 2014).

dimensions of patriarchy. Patriarchy is not about individual 'bad men'; it is about the structural-systemic systems that support male power. Question 3 probes this matrix of male power. Question 4 then shifts the focus from male power to female agency. Tamar is a 'victim' of rape; but she is much more than this, she is an articulate agent who talks back to power and acts against power. Through her speech and action male power is both delineated and resisted.

More recently, we have constructed a variation on this CBS where we take up the challenge of the many women we have worked with, to do work with 'their men' around notions of masculinity. The advent of HIV and AIDS and the more recent roll-out of ARVs (antiretroviral drugs) has enabled men to take responsibility for their sexuality and their masculinity. The Ujamaa Centre has been invited into this space, where we have worked with local communities in a quest for redemptive forms of masculinity. At the moment its form is somewhat flexible, but a relatively stable version of it is as follows:[26]

1. Have you heard this text (2 Sam. 13:1-22) read publically… on a Sunday? Share with each other if and when and where you have heard this text read.
2. Who are the main characters in this story and what do we know about them?
3. What is the role of each of the male characters in the rape of Tamar?
4. How would you characterize Amnon's masculinity in this text? Consider:
What prevents Amnon initially from acting on his love for Tamar (v. 2)?
What is it that changes Amnon's love (v. 1) to sickness/lust (v. 2), and then enables him to act on his sickness/lust (vv. 4-6)?
How does he react to Tamar's arguments (v. 14)?
How does he behave after he has raped Tamar (vv. 15-17)?
5.What kind of man does Tamar expect or hope Amnon to be? What kind of man could Amnon be according to Tamar? What kind of man does Tamar want? Consider:
What does she say (vv. 12-13,16), and what do each of the things she says tell us about her understanding of what it means to be 'a man'?
What does she do (v. 19), and what do each of things she does tell us about her understanding of what it means to be 'a man'?
6. What are the dominant forms of masculinity in our contexts (in various age groups), and what alternative forms of masculinity can we draw on from our cultural and religious traditions?
7. How can we raise the issue of masculinity in our various gender and age-groups?

Questions 2 and 3 are the same as in the Tamar CBS and accomplish similar critical capacity building. Question 4 in what we have called the Redemptive Masculinity version is another critical question, probing notions of 'masculinity' in this biblical story (and providing resources for an analysis of masculinity in contemporary South African society). Question 4 also juxtaposes Amnon and Tamar, deconstructing the dominant stereotypes about male self-control and rationality. In this biblical story it is Tamar who is self-controlled and rational and Amnon who is emotional. Question 5 too is a critical question, allowing each of the elements of Tamar's argument to deconstruct dominant notions of masculinity and to reconstruct alternative masculinities.

These two Contextual Bible Studies inhabit the dialogical space between the epistemology of our primary dialogue partners – women who have experienced abuse – and the detail of the text made apparent through the critical capacities of biblical scholarship. Each CBS has the capacity to explore the personal-psychological and the social-structural dimensions of each of their respective areas of focus, namely, gender violence and masculinity. In both cases the sets of critical-consciousness questions are followed by a set of community-consciousness questions, where participants are able to apply and practise the critical

[26] In this case I have not included the facilitator guidelines as I have done in the previous case. Here I include the questions only.

tools they have acquired through the critical consciousness questions. If the CBS site is a safe and sacred space, the resources of the CBS processes combine with the resources that the community-based group already has, to plan for and implement forms of action for social change.

CBS is not about knowing one's Bible better. CBS is about changing an unjust world, using the Bible as a potential 'weapon'[27] of struggle. CBS is also uniquely placed to recognise and participate in the intersections between the related struggles of the poor and marginalised.

Intersecting Struggles

The Bible is already a significant resource in many African communities. CBS comes alongside this community-based resource and 'redeploys' it for social transformation, liberating it from it the dominant and normative theological paradigm, a paradigm that emphasises the personal and individual dimensions of faith. The poor and marginalised already know the God of life, but their Bibles are more ambiguous. The dominant theologies of our time tend to draw on those trajectories within the Bible that blame the poor for being poor, blame the unemployed for being unemployed, blame the HIV-positive for being HIV-positive, blame the abused for being abused, blame the disabled for being disabled, etc.[28] CBS recovers other biblical trajectories, those that situate the poor, the unemployed,[29] the HIV-positive,[30] the abused, the disabled, etc. within particular social and theological structures and systems, enabling these 'blamed' sectors to understand the structures and systems that marginalise them. And by so doing, CBS releases the blamed/stigmatised, both theologically and socially, enabling them to reassert their dignity and to work for structural and systemic change.

The theological system that is used to individualise and blame the woman abused by gender violence is the same theological system that is used to individualise and blame the unemployed person and the HIV-positive person. CBS 'reveals' this theological system, exposing it as just one theological system, not 'the' theological system. CBS deconstructs the dominant theological systems of our churches and offers other more redemptive theological systems, following other trajectories in the Bible.

The very act of interpreting the Bible in other ways develops social and interpretative resilience among the poor and marginalised. Social resilience resides in the recognition that individuals are not to blame for the social ills that confront them, enabling them to resist the systems that underlie the social ills. Interpretative resilience resides in the capacity CBS offers to the poor and marginalised to re-read the Bible for themselves, enabling them to resist dominant interpretations. CBS builds capacity for faith-based resilience.

Psycho-social resilience has been recognised as a substantive resource in trauma theory. The work of the Ujamaa Centre indicates that building the capacity of marginalised sectors to interpret the Bible from and for their own experience, recognising that there are contending biblical theological trajectories or voices, nurtures the 'interpretative resilience' of those struggling to live abundant lives in the context of gender violence (and other forms of oppression) in a context like South Africa.

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[27] Takatso Mofokeng, "Black Christians, the Bible and Liberation," *Journal of Black Theology* 2(1988): 40.
[28] Gunther H. Wittenberg, *Resistance Theology in the Old Testament: Collected Essays* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2007), 61-79.
[29] Gerald O. West and Sithembiso Zwane, "'Why Are You Sitting There?" Reading Matthew 20:1-16 in the Context of Casual Workers in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa," in *Matthew: Texts@Contexts*, ed. Nicole Duran Wilkinson and James Grimshaw (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013).
[30] Gerald O. West, "The Poetry of Job as a Resource for the Articulation of Embodied Lament in the Context of Hiv and Aids in South Africa," in *Lamentations in Ancient and Contemporary Cultural Contexts*, ed. Nancy C. Lee and Carleen Mandolfo (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008).

Conclusion

CBS is a resource for recognising and reading the neglected dimensions of the Bible, those that focus on the structural and systemic dimensions of life. While social activists and development agencies are adept at analysing society in structural and systemic terms, they tend to revert to a default one-sided and individualistic understanding of the Bible. CBS confronts those who would do development among the 'faith-ful' to analyse faith more fully, and in particular to understand the Bible as a complex and contested text.

But CBS is not simply another tool for development practitioners to wield in their work. CBS requires the presence of the poor and marginalised to activate and authenticate it. Their bodies are integral to the process of social transformation, and this includes their embodied faith. Tamar tells her story of gender violence in 2 Samuel 13:1-22. CBS offers a safe and sacred framework for millions of contemporary Tamars to tell their stories and to work together for social transformation. Others, including development practitioners, are welcome to participate, but only if they are willing to reconsider their one-sided and individualistic notions of religion.

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(155A) ROLE AND RELEVANCE OF THEOLOGY FOR THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

James Kombo

Background to Study

The Pew Research Center has just released the first-ever formal demographic projections using data on age, fertility, mortality, migration and religious switching for multiple religious groups around the world. Both the data and the results released totally change the texture of theology as we face the 2050 mark. Although the Pew Research Center makes seven conclusions, four are particularly significant for this present study:

1. **Islam is the fastest-growing major religion. The determinants for this trend are the** highest fertility rate and the youngest population. On account of this, the Muslim population is expected to increase from 1.6 billion people (23% of the world's population as of 2010) to 2.76 billion people (30% of all people in 2050). By 2050, Muslims will nearly equal Christians, and the two are expected to be roughly equal in numbers by 2070.
2. The world's Christian population is expected to remain steady (at about 31%), but the regional distribution of Christians is forecast to change significantly. **Nearly four in ten Christians (38%) are projected to live in sub-Saharan Africa in 2050**, this being an increase from the 24% who lived there in 2010. Note also that the number of the world's Christians living in Europe has fallen from 66% in 1910 to 26% in 2010. The indications are that there will be a further decline to about 16% in 2050.
3. The number of religiously unaffiliated people is increasing in the United States and Europe, and the growth is projected to continue. Conversely however, the overall percentage of the **unaffiliated is expected** to ***decrease*** b**etween 2010 and 2050 (from 16% to 13%).** This overall drop is attributed to the relatively old age and low fertility rates of large populations of religious 'nones'(those religiously unaffiliated) in China and Japan.
4. **Christians will decline from more than three-quarters of the population in 2010 in the USA to two-thirds in 2050**. The determinants of this are relative rise in religious 'nones', Muslims, Hindus and others.[1]

Previously, scholars of African Christianity have observed that the African Church has in the last few years been growing exponentially at a time when the church in the northern continents is visibly shrinking.[2]

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[1] Pew Research Center, The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050, 2 April 2015. www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/#projected-growth-map downloaded on 3 April, 2015.

[2] Scholarship on World/Global Christianity is generally agreed on this trend. Some of the kingpins of this persuasion include Philip Jenkins (*The Next Christendom: The Rise of Global Christianity*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002; *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), Lamin Sanneh (*Whose Religion is Christianity?: The Gospel Beyond the West*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003; *The Changing Face of Christianity: Africa, the West, and the World* (co-edited with Joel A. Carpenter). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1989) Andrew Walls (*The Missionary Movement in Christian History*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1996; *The Cross-Cultural Process in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission and Appropriation of Faith*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2002), Kwame Bediako (*Jesus and the Gospel in Africa*: *History and Experience*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004; *Theology and Identity: The Impact of Culture upon Christian Thought*

Further predictions have indicated that 'Africa has become, or is becoming, a Christian continent in cultural as well as numerical terms, while on the small scale the West has become, or is rapidly becoming, a post-Christian society'.[3] Philip Jenkins repeats the same sentiment although with a different accent as follows: 'All too often, statements about what "modern Christians accept" or what "Catholics today believe" refer only to what that ever-shrinking remnant of western Christians and Catholics believe. Such assertions are outrageous today, and as time goes by they will become ever further removed from reality.'[4]

It is now on record that the total sub-Saharan African population will grow at a faster pace than in any other region in the next forty years, and that this population is expected double from 823 million in 2010 to 1.9 billion in 2050. This population growth will catapult both Christianity and Islam to the point that both faiths will have doubled their adherents in 2050. Christianity will continue to be sub-Saharan Africa's largest religious group, thanks to fertility, age structure, religious switching, as well as migration, growing from 517 million in 2010 to more than 1.1 billion in 2050, but there follow three important considerations: 1) The Muslim population will in this period grow faster than the Christian population (170% vs. 115%), rising from 248 million to 670 million; 2) the African Traditional Religions and the religiously unaffiliated will in the intervening period, rather than diminishing, record modest growth; and 3) n**early four in ten Christians (38%) are projected to live in sub-Saharan Africa in 2050**, this being an increase from the 24% who lived there in 2010, thus confirming Africa as the undisputed centre of gravity for the Christian faith.

Theology Responding to African Christianity

With these demographics, one expects to see a fairly robust and agenda-setting theology in response both to the data and the identity of Christianity. Perhaps we could borrow from the experience of Christianity in its formative years in the second and third centuries. At that time, three things dominated the early church's theological agenda: i) there was remarkable focus on articulation, teaching and promulgation of orthodoxy and standards of faith; ii) then there was greater emphasis on the institution of church leadership with particular emphasis on definition of the office of bishop as the primary protector and defender of the faith; and then iii) there was heightened focus on the necessity of centres for academic theology. Theology for Africa, in my opinion, should present the burgeoning African Christianity with these dynamics for its own Christianization in the next four decades.

Theology for Africa must seek to inspire greater appreciation for doctrinal grounding, catechesis and worship

Note that sub-Saharan Christianity is largely touted as 'a thousand miles wide and one inch deep',[5] and now an even more complex situation arises: the reality of the ever-increasing Muslim population in the same region, on the one hand, and the rise in the population of adherents of African Traditional Religions and the religiously unaffiliated, on the other. In this situation, one sees the major theological task of the

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in the Second Century and in Modern Africa (Oxford, Oxford UK: Regnum, 1999 [1992]) and David Barrett (*World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World Volume I: The World by Countries: Religionists, Churches, Ministries*.

[3] Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West*. Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, MI, 2003: 36.

[4] Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom. The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2002:3.

[5] Those who think this way have not merely focused on the negative energies of the African Christianity. Generally the observation is that this is a blossoming Christianity that is weak in doctrinal grounding and devoid of discipleship. Some of the negative trends which have become part of African Christianity include the "Man of God" syndrome, "Cash for Christ" phenomenon, bossy and bully leadership, and to some degree, a *crossless Christianity* that preaches a *crossless Christ.*

church as formulating and teaching Christian doctrine in a manner which offers opportunity for deep, reflective, consistent and relevant interaction with both the African as currently presented, on the one hand, and in a manner that is consistent with the roots of Christianity in the early church, on the other. In this task, one sees focus on orthodoxy as a priority – recognition of false ideas, controversies, and internal inconsistencies. The need for strong pillars of orthodoxy is important primarily because of malignant controversies and internal inconsistencies within the African Church; and then in a secondary sense the need to challenge Africa's present reality which manifests increasing interest in Islam as well growing numbers among the African Traditional Religions and the religiously unaffiliated. This follows a lesson from the first Egyptian churches: although these churches successfully spread the good news in the Coptic language and planted robust churches throughout the interior of Egypt, the church in the region was tremendously weakened and reached near collapse, not on account of the onslaught of Islam or the growing interest in folk religions but by the emergence of false teachings and crippling internal theological controversies right from within itself.

One direction of holding this conversation is pinning it on the practical axis of advocacy for *catechesis*, on the one hand, and reconsideration for winning anew the largely ignored historical *creeds* of the church on the other. This strategy creates a culture and an environment in which the church is doing its catechesis around essential theological ideas and therefore becoming theologically astute while it at same time points the sub-Saharan African Church to its roots among the church fathers in the early church. In other words, the strategy is a demand on the church's commitment to methodological instructions in sound teaching that addresses both the historical and contemporary scandals of the church and society.

Note that *catechesis* and the *creeds* can very easily and inadvertently be an afterthought, particularly among African Pentecostals and charismatics, and even a blind spot, if the agenda is not raised high in the African Christian consciousness. However, at this time in the history of African Christianity, we must embrace the place of *catechesis* and win anew the early church's *creeds* as theological strategies for establishing the identity of the sub-Saharan African Church, and linking it with the early church, deepening the Christian faith among the converts, stimulating the mind with Christian content and satisfying the heart with the meat that is the gospel. The essence of this is knowing God and, as John Calvin wrote, 'To know God is to be changed by God; true knowledge of God leads to worship.'

If the *catechesis* and the *creeds* are about knowing God, and therefore about his worship, then one would as well conclude that by theology focusing the African Church along the paths of *catechesis* and the *creeds*, it is in fact stating the future of the African Church as essentially worship. The best example of what happens when proper worship is pushed to the periphery is well captured in Kuzimierz Bem's article 'Christianity Cannot Survive the Decline in Worship':

> Around the year 1510, a delegation of Christians from Sudan, which had been recently overrun by Muslim conquest, went to the Christian Ethiopian court and begged the emperor to send them bishops and priests. The Christians remaining in Sudan needed clergy to lead worship, administer the sacraments, and teach the people. But the emperor refused, sending them away empty-handed. With no Christian worship, within 100 years Christianity in Sudan became extinct and forgotten until the twentieth century.[6]

Theology for Africa then must guide the African Church towards a balance between *logos* and *praxis*, doctrine and devotion, word and spirit. There must not be a *theologia dogmatica* within the African context that is separated from *theologia vitae spiritualis*. Theology in this context must then indicate that the interest is not merely assenting to *creeds* and opening up to the possibility for *catechesis*, but more importantly, an engagement with the word that leads to experience with the infinite – a personal encounter

[6] Kuzimierz Bem, 'Christianity Cannot Survive the Decline in Worship', www.faithstreet.com/onfaith/2015/01/23/christianity-cannot-survive-the-decline-in-worship/35932. Downloaded on 2 May, 2015.

with God's word and a zeal for the glory of God. This engagement must be 'robust, faithful, engaging' but at the same time its focus 'must be the God revealed to us in Jesus Christ, God's free, abundant, deep grace and love shown for us on the cross.'[7]

Theology for Africa should prioritize the formation of leadership for itself, the wider African society and the African migrant communities of the diaspora

Leadership of the church injects completely new dynamics – nobody has prepared African church leaders for the dynamics raised by the findings of the Pew Research Center. Indeed, since Ali Mazrui's idea of Africa's triple heritage, there has not been a real follow-up on the status and actual proportions of the population of Africa's faiths (Christianity, Islam and African Traditional Religions) going forward. How is the African Church to respond to the need for reliable leaders for contemporary Africa, let alone forming dependable church leaders that will match the reality of contemporary sub-Saharan Africa church? It appears that the African Church has yet to respond to this question. As a matter of fact, the African Church is still unaware of these trends and is promoting a leadership that is a replica of what is available in the larger African society in which 'the high ideals of democracy, of an independent judiciary and economic growth gave way to autocratic rule, either in one party states or military dictatorships, where repression, injustice, human rights abuses, mal-administration, misappropriation of public funds and other resources, as well as corruption became the order of the day'.[8] Kretzschmar and Heifitz particularly speaking both to the African Church and the society write:

> Among the growing calls for the 21st century to be the African century, all Africans, including African Christians, need to pay serious attention to one of the vital components that will effect genuine transformation, namely, that of authentic leadership. Given the situation in Africa today, plagued as many countries are with leadership problems in government, business, churches, and civil society as a whole, there can be little doubt in our minds of the vital importance of the issue of leadership for our continent.[9]

There is every justification therefore for theology to focus for the start on leadership – a leadership that is 'expected to live by example, be socially and environmentally responsible, be ethical and moral, have a certain degree of humbleness, aim to serve and inspire others, promote leadership based on respect and love, not fear'.[10] Theology for Africa takes this position because we are well instructed by Linthicum that: 'Without leadership development, everything you have done will pass away. But with it, the future is constantly being created anew for the people of your community.'[11] The reality of African Christianity is that it desperately needs a critical manpower who will not only be capable of creating the future for the African Church and society, but a leadership that will steer the church in a generation where the demographics of religion will increasingly be driven by fertility, age structure, religious switching and migration.

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[7] Kuzimierz Bem, 'Christianity Cannot Survive the Decline in Worship.'
[8] PGJ Meiring, "Leadership for reconciliation: A Truth and Reconciliation Commission perspective." Downloaded on 16 Feb, 2015 in www.ve.org.za/index.php/VE/article/viewFile/1235/1677.
[9] Kretzschmar, L 2002: "Authentic Christian leadership and spiritual formation in Africa", *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 113 (July 2002): 41ff. See also Heifitz, R A 1999. *Leadership without easy answers*. London: Harvard University Press, 51ff.
[10] Mwambazambi, K. & Banza, A.K., 2014, 'Developing transformational leadership for sub-Saharan Africa: Essential missiological considerations for church workers', Verbum et Ecclesia 35(1), Art. #849, 9 pages. http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ ve.v35i1.849, 6.
[11] Linthicum, R.C., 1991, *Empowering the poor: Community organizing among the city's 'Rag, tag and bobtail*, Marc, Monrovia, 93.

PACLA II,[12] a follow-up to PACLA I and convened in Nairobi, agonized with the idea of church leadership and networking with specific interest on the theme 'Developing Godly Leaders for Africa'. The question raised by PACLA II was how Africa in its multifaceted crises was to focus on the task of building networks and developing godly leaders capable of dealing with its questions in every sphere of life. Among the issues identified and raised at PACLA II for in-depth consideration were leadership emergence, selection, development and succession. Note that this agenda has not included the present reality of sub-Saharan Africa in relation to Islam, the African Traditional Religions and the religiously unaffiliated. At the theological and ministerial formation level, I do not see significant activity towards the achievement of the PACLA II ideals. Consequently, the PACLA II agenda risks stagnation; meanwhile, significant time will be lost as theology struggles to grapple with the implications of the Pew Research Center's conclusions for the leadership of the church in sub-Saharan Africa.

What PACLA II envisioned for the church appears to have been the concern of Irenaeus. He, however, held the conversation within the confines of what he saw as the job description of the Bishop – leader *par excellence*. For him, the bishop represented a leadership that ably addressed the orthodoxy-heresy onslaught. The holder of this office did not only exhibit the much-needed traits of transformational leadership[13] in respect to defining orthodoxy that resonated both with the church's own life and experience as well as with its future, but he also modelled Spirit-led worship, administered the sacraments, and taught his congregations.[14] The clearest articulation of Irenaeus' idea of a church leader is captured in his *Adversus Haereses* 3.3.3:

> When the blessed apostles had founded and built up the Church, they handed over the ministry of the episcopate to Linus. Paul mentions this Linus in his Epistle to Timothy. Ancletus succeeded him. After him Clement received the lot of the episcopate in the third place from the apostles. He had seen the apostles and associated with them, and still had their preaching sounding in his ears and their tradition before his eyes – and not he alone, for there were many still left in his time who had been taught by the apostles. In this Clement's time no small discord arose among the brethren in Corinth, and the Church in Rome sent a very powerful letter to the Corinthians, leading them to peace, renewing their faith and declaring the tradition which they had recently received from the apostles… To this Clement there succeeded Evaristus. Alexander followed Evaristus; then, sixth from the apostles, Sixtus was appointed; after him, Telephorus, who was gloriously martyred; then Hyginus; after him, Pius; then after him, Anicetus. Soter having succeeded Anicetus, Eleutherius does now, in the twelfth place from the apostles, hold the inheritance of the episcopate. In this order, and by this succession, the ecclesiastical tradition from the apostles, and the preaching of the truth, have come down to us. And this is

[12] To understand Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly (PACLA), one has to go back to the 1974 International Congress on World Evangelization held in Lausanne, Switzerland. At the meeting, 45 Christian leaders from Africa broke into a group that discussed the possibility of a Pan African meeting of church leaders to discuss the challenges of the burgeoning Christian community on the continent. This group nominated Bishop Festo Kivengere of Uganda and Michael Cassidy of Africa Evangelistic Enterprise to explore what could be done. In February 1975, the Kenyan leaders put together an informal meeting to begin thinking through the concept. This *ad hoc* committee chaired by Osei-Mensah invited representatives from the rest of Africa to larger meeting in Nairobi. After about a year of planning, PACLA I was held in Nairobi Kenya, December 9-19, 1976. For an in-depth analysis of PACLA, refer to www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/GUIDES/172.htm.

[13] Mwambazambi, K. & Banza, A.K., 2014, 2-5.

[14] Mwambazambi and Banza argue that "spirituality is an important aspect of leadership which also determines whether someone's leadership is good or bad." Spirituality in this case as explained by Mihai (2009:1) "is more about how people identify themselves, how they view the world, interact with others, and make decisions." (Mihai, J., 2009, 'Spirituality and leadership: Would an organization benefit from spiritual leaders?', Spirituality in Higher Education Newsletter 1(4), 1–2).

> most abundant proof that there is one and the same vivifying faith, which has been preserved in the Church from the apostles until now, and handed down in truth.[15]

The new leadership of the African Church, like the succession of bishops in Irenaeus' mind, must direct itself and its audience towards a new and a different identity away from borrowed convictions, rootless beliefs and mere religiosity well informed by current demographics. Lewis Sperry Chafer, the founder of Dallas Theological Seminary, once said: 'Men, give them something to believe.' This is the yearning of the African Church – it is looking for something to believe, a different thing, the truth that it has ownership in. The worshipers are waiting for guidance, they must be pointed away from mere pietistic and charismatic forms of Christianity which neglects wisdom, discernment and holiness and knows far less about the Bible and the faith than one would hope. Theology therefore must show direction in forming leadership that will guide the African Church and its diaspora down this already beaten path.

Spaces for theological and ministerial formation have decreased significantly in recent decades

One would have expected that with the understood phenomenal growth of Christianity in Africa within the last few decades, there would be a corresponding expansion of theological and ministerial formation and specialization in areas of theological interest. At least, this is the pattern we see in the patristic period of the early church. During this period, the church responded to the needs of the church by opening up Alexandria which specialized in Greek philosophy and produced Clement, Origen, Didymus; then there was Antioch which emphasized the moral example and humanity of Christ as well as interpretation of Scripture in the light of the historical context, and producing such theologians as Diodore of Tarsus, John Chrysostom, the Cappadocian Fathers, and then the Western North Africa which in fact was the centre for Latin theology, and was more practical than their philosophically-minded Greek counterparts. Some of the well-known products of this school include Cyprian, Tertullian and Augustine.

This, however, is not the case here. The past two decades, 1990s and 2000s, were phenomenal for the rise of Christian university in the majority of Africa. During this period, practically all the renowned degree-granting theological colleges and seminaries in East Africa, for instance, transformed themselves into private Christian universities. The table below shows ten institutions in this category:

	Theological College/Seminary	University and year of change of status
1.	Scott Theological College	Scott Christian University (1997)
2.	Pan Africa Christian College	Pan Africa Christian University (2008)
3.	Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology	Africa International University (2010)
4.	Nairobi International School of Theology	Africa Leadership University (2010)
5.	Kenya Highlands Bible College	Kenya Highlands Evangelical University (2011)
6.	Bishop Tucker Theological College	Uganda Christian University (1997)
7.	Lutheran Theological College Makumira	Tumaini University (1996)
8.	St Paul's Theological College	St Paul's University (2007)
9.	Kaaga Rural Training Centre and Methodist Training Institute consecutively	Kenya Methodist University (2006)
10.	Graduate School of Theology, under the name, Catholic Higher Institute of Eastern Africa (CHIEA).	Catholic University of East Africa (1992)

[15] Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book 3, Chapter 3 Verse 3. Translated by Alexander Roberts and William Rambaut. From *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1. Edited by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885.) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight.

Note the following features: a) the institutions listed constitute what used to be East Africa's premier theological and ministerial schools from the 1960s-1990s then dedicated only to theological training and ministerial formation; b) all the listed institutions have since transformed into multi-faculty private Christian universities; c) the institutions continue to receive financial and material support from founding missions although the bulk of their support is locally generated from tuition fee collection; d) for all practical purposes, theology in all the new universities is no longer the institutions' flagship programme and therefore does not occupy a privileged position, other programmes have taken over; e) the phenomenon which indicates that theology is no longer a flagship programme and that it is steadily diminishing in prominence in the institutions is true for the protestant universities as it is for the Anglicans, the Catholics and the evangelicals; f) Kenya seems to be more affected than its neighbours; for instance, out of the ten institutions listed, eight are Kenyan.

The shift of domicile of theology from the theological college to the university is in my opinion a boon to the discipline. For the first time, theology in Africa can be said to have attained independence from the prying eyes of the missions abroad. Here, then, is another unnoticed but major shift: now theology has local initiatives as its major support base. The other important gain is what Dietrich Warner sees as the strategic role and accountability of theology to the society.[16] With this role highlighted, theology does not only ascend to its own platform but its position attains higher levels of recognition and transparency – that theology programmes in the universities are themselves accredited by the national regulatory bodies is itself a statement of endorsement by society; and now theology is respected as a significant contributor to the national grid and as an academic discipline in its own right. This has happened because it is understood that the environment in the university encourages quality assurance, inspires research and emboldens engagement with new knowledge. But there is a warning. The presence of theology in universities means that there has to be some engagement on how or in what form theology is to exist in universities. First, there is the increasing pressure of Islam and other religions to be balanced against the missionary agenda of theology; and then there is increasing secularization of the universities as environments for ideological discourses. These questions are being raised in the context of Europe where theology has always been in the universities; we too must raise them in the context of Africa.

Five conclusions, however, can be made from this shift: 1) that the African academy is experiencing a positive change of attitude towards theology and a clear break with the past thus admission of theology into its ranks. 2) It appears that this positive disposition to theology now means that the discipline is no longer functioning in a protected environment and therefore has to compete with other disciplines on the same footing. 3) For the first time, theology is really becoming independent from mission headquarters abroad and is adjusting to the dynamics of new and local forms of support. 4) Part of this adjustment has manifested in marked recession of academic theology in comparison to its global performance in previous years. 5) With time, and as the fledging universities solidify denominations, universities are increasingly doing in-house theological training. This approach means a complete remodelling of theology: less emphasis on academic rigour and a greater interest in enabling the faithful to understand the faith more fully and to equip them more diligently for witness to their faith in Christ.

Concluding Remarks: What Does the Church Do with the New Demographics?

This paper highlights three main things it sees as the areas the church in sub-Saharan Africa must pay attention to in the next few decades: 1) Greater appreciation for orthodoxy, catechesis, and worship; 2) prioritization of leadership formation; and 3) creating spaces for theological and ministerial formation.

[16] Dietrich Werner**, "**The future of theology in the changing landscapes of universities in Europe and beyond." www.globethics.net/web/the-future-of-theology-in-europe/mission**.**

Whereas this agenda is buoyed by a similar position taken by the patristic church, the recently released research conclusions by the Pew Research Center offer a particularly compelling justification. Its research indicates unprecedented growth rate of the Muslim population in sub-Saharan Africa by 2050; confirms that, in the intervening period, nearly four in ten Christians (38%) are projected to live in sub-Saharan Africa in 2050; then it reveals that African Traditional Religions are likely to experience some nominal growth in the next four decades. Although, on the whole, the African Christian situation appears optimistic, the global picture is rather pessimistic. The Pew Report indicates that 'people are leaving Christianity in droves**.** About 106 million Christians are expected to switch affiliation from 2010 to 2050 while only about 40 million people are expected to enter Christianity'.[17] This is the state of things for the church in sub-Saharan Africa. Theology must do something about this state of things. Perhaps in thinking through new trends, it may be important to listen to the counsel of the General Secretary of WCC, Dr Olave Fykse Tveit. For him:

> Theology is an imperative for ecumenism. And ecumenism is an imperative for doing theology today. Theological reflection today requires attitudes, a culture and structures of mutual accountability of theology within the wider ecumenical context. We all need to be challenged by others. And we also need to be able to challenge others in an accountable way. Ecumenical sensitivity and competence in theology and theological education widen the horizons of denominational theology. Proper Christian theology relates to, reflects and nurtures the mission of the church to serve the one humanity and the one creation, building a culture of a just peace day by day. Denominational identity and reference do not have to be contrary to ecumenical theology and theological education, but there is no future for any denominational identity or theology without solid ecumenical accountability and global responsibility.[18]

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[17] Pew Research Center, The Future of World Religions.

[18] Olave Fykse Tveit, "The future of theology in the changing landscapes of universities in Europe and beyond", Oslo Consultation, 6 June 2012. https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/general-secretary/speeches/keynote-address-on-theology-and-unity-in-oslo-consultation.

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(155B) Role and Relevance of Theology for the Future of African Christianity: A South African Response

Ian Nell

Introduction

It is a privilege to react to the insightful contribution of James Kombo on the role and relevance of theology for the future of African Christianity. I want to structure my own contribution in the following way: I will be making use of Kombo's three basic statements on the role of theology in Africa, but I want to reframe his arguments by making use of a theo-dramatic approach. By making use of this approach I hope to illustrate some of my own convictions concerning the future of theology from a South African perspective.

Kombo links the three components that he uses as framework for his article in an interesting way to the formative years of the church during the second and third centuries, of which a great deal took place on African soil. According to Kombo[1] there were three related aspects that dominated the early church's agenda and he translates them into three challenges for the decades to come and describes them as follows: a) theology for Africa should seek to inspire greater appreciation for doctrinal grounding, catechesis and worship, b) theology for Africa should prioritise formation of leadership for itself, the wider African society and the African migrant communities in the diaspora and c) spaces for theological and ministerial formation have decreased significantly over the last two decades.

Through my own reframing, I hope to pay respect to his contribution and want to reflect and think along with him concerning the challenges. The choice for a theo-dramatic framing relates to the following convictions: for dialogue and reflection on the role of theology, especially in the light of the historical relationship between North/West and South/East, we need 'bridging theories' that can link these worlds to each other. The so-called action turn and the innovative metaphor of drama as epistemological starting-point reinforce theo-drama as a 'bridge theory' that can stimulate meaningful discourse on the challenges that we face. By making use of three categories from the world of drama, namely, stage, plot and characters, I want to structure my reflection concerning the challenges for theology in South Africa.

Stage

I start with the stage and connect with Kombo's third point that relates to the meaning of creating spaces for theological and ministerial formation. De Gruchy and Chirongoma[2] worked in their contribution to *The Routledge Companion to the Christian Church*[3] with four images from Africa, helping us to understand the unique history of the 'South African stage'. The images are earth, water, fire and wind. Each of these elements points to an influence from the past that is still important for reflection on the role and relevance of theology in South Africa.

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[1] James Kombo. "Role and Relevance of Theology for the Future of African Christianity," in *Anthology of African Christianity*, ed. Dietrich Warner and Isabel Phiri. (Dorpspruit: Cluster, 2015.) Forthcoming.

[2] Steve de Gruchy and Sophie Chirongoma. "Earth, Water, Fire and Wind: Elements of African Ecclesologies," in *The Routledge Companion to the Christian Church*, ed. Gerard Mannion and Lewis S. Mudge. (New York: Routledge, 2007, 291-305).

[3] Gerard Mannion and Lewis S. Mudge (Eds). *The Routledge Companion to the Christian Church* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

- *Earth* – points to the long history of the Christian faith on African soil as well as the role of traditional African religions.
- *Water* – relates to the western influences that missionaries and colonists brought with their ships to the shores of Africa.
- *Fire* – refers to the struggle of African believers to stay Christian and loyal to Africa amidst the dehumanisation in colonial attire they experienced.
- *Wind* – relates to the presence of the Spirit in Africa in the forms of Pentecostalism, revival movements and emerging forms of being church as a reaction to the *missio Dei* (mission of God) on this fascinating continent.

As a first extension of Kombo's third point, it is important for institutions that act as 'spaces for formation' to take seriously the unique contextual challenges posed by the four images or symbols. In this regard De Gruchy[4] refers in another publication to the fact that we cannot avoid thinking about and reflecting within a South African context on topics such as 'religious pluralism, climate change, globalization and poverty, war and violence, refugees and xenophobia, HIV and AIDS, TB, malaria and cholera, rape and domestic violence, and the like'.

In Kombo's[5] reference to spaces for formation, he discusses the specific situation in East Africa and shows in what ways well-known colleges and seminaries were transformed into private universities. In South Africa one finds another dynamic at work. Since the dawn of democracy in 1994 there are quite a number of faculties of theology that had close relations with specific denominations that were transformed into departments of religious studies and incorporated into faculties of humanities. At the moment there are only four faculties of theology left in South Africa, located at the Universities of Stellenbosch, Pretoria, Bloemfontein and Potchefstroom.

According to Dreyer,[6] a number of other spaces for theological formation developed during the past twenty years in South Africa. It relates, inter alia, to a number of changes that took place in higher education in the country. Today, one finds seventy-eight privately registered higher education institutions and another twenty-two that were granted provisional registration for accreditation. From this number there are twenty that provide programmes for theological studies.

To summarise, concerning spaces for theological formation, one finds them in public as well as private institutions and although there was a reduction in the number of public institutions, there was also a considerable increase in the development of private institutions for theological formation. However, there is still a serious shortage concerning these spaces for formation if one looks at the tremendous growth of the Charismatic churches as well as the African Initiated Churches. Hendriks and Erasmus[7] discuss the dramatic way in which these groups grew during the last decades and their growing future importance concerning the role and relevance of the Christian faith in South Africa. This fact also calls for serious reflection, as Werner[8] discussed in a recent document related to his work at the World Council of Churches.

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[4] Steve de Gruchy. "Theological Education and Missional Practice: A Vital Dialogue," in *Handbook of Theological Education in World Christianity: Theological Perspectives, Ecumenical Trends and Regional Surveys*, ed. Dietrich Werner et al. (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2010: 42–50).

[5] Kombo, "Role and Relevance", 8.

[6] Jaco Dreyer. "South Africa," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*. (Chichester: Blackwell, 2012:508-509).

[7] Jurgens J. Hendriks and Johannes C. Erasmus. "Religion in South Africa: The 2001 Population Census Data," *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*121, no. 1 (2005): 88-111.

[8] Dietrich Werner. "Theological Education in the Changing Context of World Christianity: An Unfinished Agenda," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35, no. 2(2011): 92-100.

Plot

Kombo[9] places considerable emphasis on the importance of the dogmatic grounding of theology with the emphasis on creeds and confessions. He discusses this point in the light of a number of challenges posed to the content of the Christian faith in Africa. According to Vanhoozer,[10] creeds and confession are the 'local performances' of the plot of the gospel. These local performances of the gospel are, according to Kombo,[11] under threat – relating it to the popular saying 'a thousand miles wide and one inch deep' as well as the ever-increasing Muslim population on the continent. As an answer to this he is convinced that 'one sees the major theological task of the church as formulating and teaching Christian doctrine in a manner which offers opportunity for deep, reflective, consistent and relevant interaction with both the African as presently presented on the one hand and in a manner that is consistent with the roots of Christianity in the early church on the other hand'.

With this proposal one cannot disagree, but what makes the situation in South Africa and maybe also in other parts of Africa quite complex, relates to the fact that theological formation also faces a number of other challenges linked to the plot of the gospel. In this regard I will only briefly refer to the following five challenges within the South African context:

- A first challenge is the so-called lack of integration of the theological curriculum because of specialisation and fragmentation. According to Conradie[12] this challenge is related to the fact that it has an impact on the product of theological formation in the sense that one often finds leaders that have excellent academic qualifications, but lack spiritual wisdom, maturity and ministry competence.
- The second challenge relates to the problematic role that government played since 1994 by expecting tertiary institutions to be accredited according to a certain set of standards if they want to provide theological qualifications to people interested in furthering their studies and career. According to Dunsmuir and McCoy[13] this also describes the problematic discourses on the way that theological education has to fit in with secular underpinnings of higher education.
- A third challenge speaks to the cultural domination of the West and specifically the Eurocentric hegemony when one reflects on the 'script' of the drama. Therefore, according to Higgs[14] we need a reconstruction of theology specifically for Africa in which African indigenous knowledge systems should find their rightful place.
- A fourth challenge relates to the expectations concerning gender roles in Africa. According to Trisk,[15] relevant theological education in South Africa should be engendered. This should be put into practice by mainstreaming gender studies and transforming the structures of theological institutions.

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[9] Kombo, "Role and Relevance", 3.
[10] Kevin J. Vanhoozer. *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-linguistic Approach to Christian Theology*(Westminster: John Knox Press, 2005).
[11] Kombo, "Role and Relevance", 3.
[12] Ernst Conradie. "Is the Re-integration of Theological Education Viable?," in *Contested Issues in Training Ministers in South Africa*, ed. Marilyn Naidoo (Stellenbosch: Sun Press, 2015: 13-26).
[13] Craig Dunsmuir and Michael McCoy. "Accreditation and Ministerial Formation: Serving Two Masters?," in Naidoo (ed), *Contested Issues,* 27-42.
[14] Phillip Higgs. "The African Renaissance and the Decolonisation of Theological Education," in Naidoo (ed), *Contested Issues,* 43-56.
[15] Janet Trisk. "Choosing the Better Part: Engendering Theological Education?." in Naidoo (ed), *Contested Issues,* 57-68.

- A last challenge can be linked to the difficult process of managing diversity in theological education. According to Naidoo,[16] a deeper question ought to be asked and that is whether South Africans will manage to 'unthink' older categories of citizenship and refine them. According to her, this is very important if we want to move further than race categories and political bondage.

These challenges belong to the agenda of reflection on the different components of the plot regarding the role and relevance of theology for the future of Africa. Such reflection could be further supported if we pay attention to some of the questions that Guder[17] poses in a more global setting concerning theological education. He asks:

> How does theological formation equip churches to engage critically the Christendom legacy which so profoundly shapes western Christianity? How does theological formation take seriously the broad consensus that the gathered community (or 'local congregation') is the primary agent of God's mission in the world? How will theological institutions equip congregations, through the ministry of their graduates to lead their lives 'worthy of the calling to which they have been called' (Eph. 4:1)? How does the witness of particular congregations testify to the global scope of God's love and the global calling of his gathered and sent people? How does the vital dialogue of theological education and missional practice contribute to the church's witness to its God-given unity, in all of its cultural and contextual diversity?

This brings one to the last component of a theo-dramatic approach concerning reflection on the role and relevance of theology from a South African perspective, and this relates to the role of the actors or characters in the drama.

Characters

The actors are of special importance concerning the performance of the theo-drama in local contexts. Kombo's[18] remark on the formation of leadership in this regard emphasises an important point: 'Leadership of this church injects completely new dynamics – nobody has prepared the African church leaders for the dynamics raised by the findings of Pew Research Center.' In this regard he asks some questions:

> How is the African church to respond to the need for reliable leaders for the contemporary Africa, leave alone forming dependable church leaders that will match the reality of the contemporary sub-Saharan Africa church? It appears that the African church is yet to respond to this question. As a matter of fact, the African church is still unaware of these trends and is promoting a leadership that is a replica of what is available in the larger African society in which the high ideals of democracy, of an independent judiciary and economic growth gave way to autocratic rule, either in one party states or military dictatorships, where repression, injustice, human rights abuses, mal-administration, misappropriation of public funds and other resources, as well as corruption became the order of the day.

Without going into the dynamics of the questions and remarks of Kombo, I find the three suggestions by De Gruchy and Ellis[19] for a new generation of leaders very meaningful to answer some of his questions.

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[16] Marilyn Naidoo. "Dealing With the Other: Managing Diversity in Theological Education," in Naidoo (ed), *Contested Issues,* 69-84.
[17] Darrell Guder. "Theological Formation for Missional Faithfulness after Christendom: A Response to Steve de Gruchy," in *Handbook of Theological Education in World Christianity: Theological Perspectives, Ecumenical Trends and Regional Surveys*, ed. Dietrich Werner et al. (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2010:51-55).
[18] Kombo, "Role and Relevance", 4.
[19] Steve de Gruchy and Willem Ellis. *Christian Leadership in 'Another Country': Contributing to an Ethical Development Agenda in South Africa Today* (Amsterdam: Rozenburg, 2008:9-20).

They are of the opinion that leaders should keep their eyes on three things to play their roles with conviction in a dramatically changing context: power, collaboration and a dialogical pedagogy.

Power, according to De Gruchy and Ellis,[20] relates to 'relationship differences in terms of key factors such as race, age, gender, nationality, language and professional status' and will have a direct influence on a next generation of leaders. To tackle these tough issues it will be necessary to collaborate. Therefore, it is important to counter the temptation of individualism and models of teamwork should be developed and collaborative endeavours be enhanced. To address the previous two aspects, a dialogical pedagogy is a prerequisite. This means, inter alia, that 'the teachers need to learn, and the learners need to teach'.[21] Wisdom and knowledge develop through conversations and dialogue where we are prepared to learn from one another. All three of these aspects speaks to Kombo's[22] call for the formation of leaders for the new challenges that were addressed above.

Conclusion

By making use of these three concepts of stage, plot and character within a theo-dramatic framework, I have tried to support and enhance the thoughts of Kombo. I believe that these aspects should also be on the agenda of concerned people reflecting on the role and relevance of the Christian faith in Africa in the 21st century.

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[20] Steve De Gruchy and Willem Ellis, *Christian Leadership*, 19.
[21] Steve De Gruchy and Willem Ellis, *Christian Leadership*, 19.
[22] Kombo, "Role and Relevance", 3.

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PART VIII

RESOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

Isabel Apawo Phiri, Dietrich Werner and Roderick Hewitt

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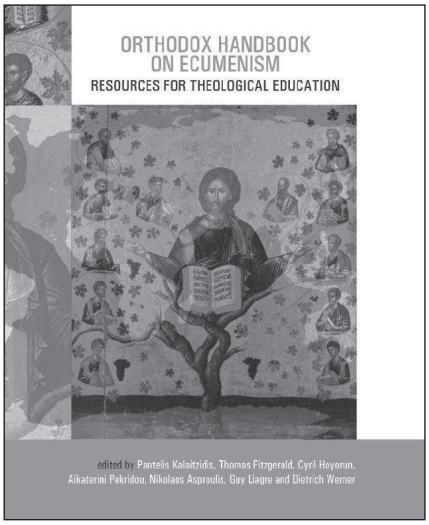
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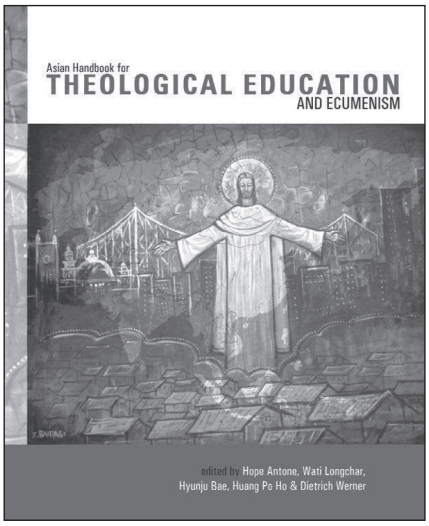
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Orthodox Handbook on Ecumenism:Resources for Theological Education
Kalaitzidis, Fitzgerald, Hovorun, Pekridou, Asproulis, Werner & Liagre (Eds)
2014 / 978-1-908355-44-7 / 962pp (hardback) (paperback 978-1-908355-41-6)

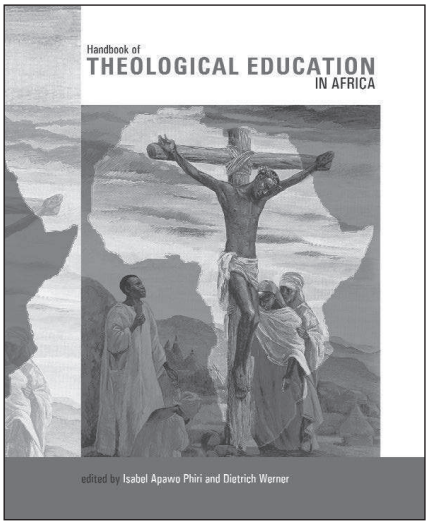
We highly recommend the publication of this new Orthodox Handbook for Teaching Ecumenism edited by a group of orthodox theologians in collaboration with WCC Program, the Conference of European Churches, Volos Academy for Theological Studies in Greece, and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts. This Handbook which is part of a broader ETE project of publishing resource books for theological education and teaching ecumenism in different settings is in many ways a historic publication. While this Handbook is written by Orthodox authors and is addressed primarily to the Eastern Orthodox, I am sure that it will be useful also for a broader constituency.

Olav Fykse Tveit, World Council of Churches, General Secretary



Asian Handbook for Theological Education and Ecumenism
Hope Antone, Wati Longchar, Hyunju Bae, Huang Po Ho &
Dietrich Werner (eds)
2013 / 978-1-908355-41-6 / 675pp
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Kim Young-Ju, National Council of Churches in Korea, General Secretary



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Isabel Apawo Phiri & Dietrich Werner (Eds)
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John Mbiti, Theologian and Philosopher

This Handbook of Theological Education in Africa has something for everybody.
Mercy Oduyoye, Director of Institute of Women in Religion and Culture in Accra, Ghana