AWAY FROM THE PRECIPICE: THE MISSION OF THE CHURCHES IN KENYA IN

THE WAKE OF THE 2007/8 POST-ELECTION VIOLENCE

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that

Away from the precipice: The mission of the churches in Kenya in the wake of the 2007/8 post-election violence.

is my own work and that all the sources that I have mentioned or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

Mr. Stephen Kariuki Apollo Warui   **Date: February 2014**

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Abstract

The phenomenon of the 2007/8 post-election violence in Kenya is complex and has numerous facets. This is because of the historical and socio-political dimensions connected with it, some of which the present study has attempted to discuss. The main objective of this research is to develop a missiological model of reconciliation by understanding and addressing the underlying causes of the 2007/8 post-election violence through an interpretive and missiological reading of the 2008 report of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights. The concepts of politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence are chosen as analytical units for this study and through an integrated approach to their interconnectedness, a more adequate framework to identify and analyze the causes of violence is created. The churches in Kenya have played ambiguous roles in the social-political arena and this study surveys these roles and suggests different missional approaches through which the churches in Kenya can participate in the mission of reconciliation.

Key Words

Missio Dei, politics, ethnicity, human rights, violence, reconciliation, 2007/8 post-election violence, truth, justice, forgiveness.

ABBREVIATIONS

AACC   : All Africa Conference of Churches
ACK   : Anglican Church in Kenya
AFCAST   : African Forum for Catholic Social Training
AfriCOG   : Africa's Centre for Open Governance
CIIAPL   : Commission of Inquiry into the Illegal/Irregular Allocation of Public Land
CIPEV   : Commission of Inquiry into Post-Election Violence
CJPC   : Catholic Justice and Peace Commission
CMDK   : Center for Multiparty Democracy- Kenya
CST   : Catholic Social Teaching
DJP   : Department of Justice and Peace
ECK   : Electoral Commission of Kenya
FBO   : Faith Based Organizations
GEMA   : Gikuyu, Embu and Meru Association
IDP   : Internally displaced persons
IEBC   : Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
IRC   : Independent Review Commission
IRF   : Inter-Religious Forum
TJRC   : Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission
JPRC   : Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Committee
KAMATUSA   : Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu Association
KNCHR   : Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
KNBS   : Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KYCS   : Kenya Young Christian Students
KLA   : Kenya Land Alliance
LCC   : Liberian Council of Churches
NCCK   : National Council of Churches of Kenya
NCIC   : National Integration and Cohesion Commission
ODM   : Orange Democratic Party
PCEA   : Presbyterian Church of East Africa
PHD   : Doctor of Philosophy
PNU   : Party of National Unity
SAPMC -   : South African partnership for Missional Churches
TRC   : Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNISA   : University of South Africa
WCC   : World Council of Churches

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1   RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The present study addresses the violence in Kenya that was sparked by the 2007 general elections from a missiological perspective. The phenomenon of post-election violence is complex and has numerous facets but the present study focuses on the report of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) which is subjected to a missiological analysis, reflecting on what it is saying to the churches in Kenya. The main objective of this research is to develop a missiological model of reconciliation by understanding and addressing the underlying causes of the 2007/8 post-election violence through an interpretive and missiological reading of the 2008 KNCHR report that addresses the 2007/8 post-election violence.

Four key words are identified from the report: politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence, which are chosen as analytical units for this study. This research suggests that the interconnectedness of politics, ethnicity, human rights, and violence creates a more adequate framework to identify and analyze the causes of violence. By developing a missiological model of reconciliation, this study reflects on how churches in Kenya could meet the challenges posed by bad politics, negative ethnicity, violations of human rights and violence.

1.2   PERSONAL STANCE

Dealing with the 2007/8 post-election violence calls for a clarification regarding the position of the researcher. The researcher is a Kenyan, a Kikuyu, a theological practitioner and a member of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. As such he was actively involved in pastoral ministry and theological reflection during and after the violence. As a Kenyan, the researcher grew up in the reality of a multi-ethnic society and as a Kikuyu the researcher belongs to the antagonizing ethnic group of the president that was entangled in the controversy about the election results. This ethnic belonging demanded allegiance and commitment in terms of politics. As a Christian belonging to the Kikuyu ethnic group, the researcher experienced internal tensions between these different identities. On the one hand, inspired by the ethno-political nature of politics in Kenya, Kikuyu identity demanded strict allegiance to the Kikuyu political opinion and also adherence to the collective Kikuyu siege mentality which called for hatred and retaliation towards those who were raping, maiming, displacing and killing the Kikuyu people during the violence. On the other hand, Christian identity demanded a different approach, an approach of love which called for a multi-ethnic unity and love for perceived enemies. It is in this context of

"battle of identities" that the researcher embarked on this study and is committed to finding a missiological model of reconciliation for the Kenyan situation.

1.3   LITERATURE OVERVIEW

Kenya had experienced relative peace until the disputed general election of 2007, which was followed by sporadic violence that led to the deaths of approximately a thousand Kenyans, the displacement of thousands, physical, sexual and psychological abuse and wanton destruction of property and animals. Various researches have been carried out from different perspectives to determine findings related to the violence. Firstly, there are various researches carried out by institutions. Soon after the cessation of the violence the government of Kenya in March 2008 formed two commissions to investigate matters relating to the violence: the Independent Review Commission (IRC) and the Commission of Inquiry into Post-Election Violence (CIPEV). The former was to investigate all aspects of the 2007 presidential elections and make findings and recommendations to improve the electoral process (Office of Public Communications 2008a). The later was to investigate the facts and circumstances surrounding the violence, the conduct of state security agencies in their handling of it and to make recommendations concerning these and other matters (Office of Public Communications 2008b). From a religious perspective, the Inter-Religious Forum (IRF), a body that brings together Christian, Muslim and Hindu leaders in Kenya, also carried out research on the violence (Inter-Religious Forum 2009). From a human rights perspective, the KNCHR also carried out a research about the violence (KNCHR 2008). From all this research and all these respective reports, the report of KNCHR was chosen for this study[1].

Secondly, various books have been written by different authors about the conflict. Most notably is Koigi wa Wamwere, a vocal voice in the fight against "negative ethnicity" in Kenya, a term that is now closely associated with him. In *Towards Genocide in Kenya* (2008), Wa-Wamwere has discussed ethnic polarization in Kenya in depth and named it as the major challenge in Kenya today. Kimani Njogu has edited two books: *Healing the Wound* (2009), with narratives of violent conflict in Kenya − which he argues must be told so that the multiple voices from the citizens are heard − and *Defining Moment* (2011), which points at hotspots, the mediation process and ways of ending impunity in Kenya. Mbugua wa Mungai and George Gona have edited (*Re)membering Kenya* (2011), a collection of articles

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[1] The reasons that informed this choice are discussed in the next chapter.

discussing the surroundings of the violence under three topics: identity, culture and freedom. Most notably, one of the contributors to this book, Betty Caplan, has done a comparative analysis of strategies of dealing with past violence in Northern Ireland and South Africa and has made recommendations to efforts of healing and reconciliation in Kenya.

Thirdly, there are various articles written from perspectives of different academic disciplines. Joseph Kahiga (2009) discusses the role of education in transforming society to a better quality interrelationship of multi-ethnic community. From theological perspectives, the article of Philomena Mwaura and Constansia Martinon focuses on the actions of local churches after the violence and argues that, despite the Church's shortcomings it is still perceived as the national institution capable of transcending ethnic boundaries, seeking reconciliation, and developing long term solutions (Mwaura & Martinon 2010). Elias Opongo's article is a challenge to the churches in Kenya to be prophetic by guiding Kenyans to peace, reconciliation, and justice by being vigilant, analyzing social trends and advocating social transformation (Opongo 2010)

Fourthly, there has been some academic research carried out by postgraduate students. Isaack Kubai Kaberia has written a doctor of Philosophy (PhD) thesis entitled "Just Reconciliation: The Church's Response to Ethno-political Violence in Kenya." Kaberia (2013) argues that lack of inclusive justice has made reconciliation difficult among conflicting communities in Kenya and as such the Church needs to embark on integrating justice and reconciliation as a holistic process of establishing a just society (Kaberia 2013). Another PhD thesis was written in 2011 by Nguchie Gathogo, entitled: "Ethnicity, peace, and violence: The voices of Kenyan church leaders." Gathogo (2011) building his argument on ground of the complacency of Church leaders in Kenya, argues that the Church leaders have the potential to restore their status as the conscience of the nation and play an active role in peace building, justice, but that this restoration requires a paradigm shift from their ethnically biased lived reality to a lived reality of Christian identity and national (Kenyan) identity, so that their prophetic voice can be heard and respected on a national platform.

Reading the signs of the times, even after relative peace has returned to Kenya, some scholars have indicated that there is a lot that needs to be done to prevent the country from slipping back into anarchy. Peter Kagwanja (2008:367, 384) uses the term "courting genocide" to argue that Kenya's democracy is at risk of negative ethnicity, populism and manipulation of informal violence, unless relevant measures are put in place to counter these factors. Susanne D. Mueller (2011:99) notes that, "the root causes of the violence still persist, have not been addressed, and easily could be reignited.

Faced with a situation where institutions and the rule of law have been weakened deliberately and where diffused violence is widespread, both Kenya's transition to democracy and the fate of the nation remain vulnerable." Though some structural reforms were put in place, like the promulgation of a new constitution and judicial reforms − which perhaps contributed to a relatively peaceful transition in 2013 − the country remains vulnerable. From the above review of literature, not much seems to have been written from a missiological/theological perspective and this research is an addition to the missiological discourse on violence in Kenya.

1.4   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the light of the aforementioned background, the research question of this present study is "What is the mission of the churches in Kenya, in relation to the 2007/8 post-election violence with regard to the interconnectedness of politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence?" To unpack this research question, there are four sub-questions that are asked: Firstly, what were the nature and underlying causes of the 2007/8 post-election violence according to the KNCHR report? Secondly, what is the missiological interpretation of these interrelated concepts of politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence? Thirdly, how do the concepts of politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence relate to the churches in Kenya? Fourthly, what could be an appropriate model for reconciliation[2] which could address the issues of bad politics, negative ethnicity, violations of human rights and violence in Kenya?

1.5   VALUE OF THE STUDY

The value of the current study is derived from its significance and relevance. It is significant because it addresses current and real issues that affect all Kenyans and it is relevant because of its transformative teleology and practicality in missiology as an academic discourse and in mission as a practical strategy of transformation. This value is discussed here under missiological value and missional value.

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[2] The other alternative that could have been used here is "to avoid violence in the future" but violence is the end result of other underlying issues hence the term "reconciliation" is deliberately used here, because it addresses these underlying issues. In other words, the absence of violence doesn't necessarily mean that there are no divisions and tension among the people.

1.5.1 Missiological value

The missiological value of this study is to offer a missiological perspective on the events connected to the 2007/8 post-election violence, which are also discussed from the perspectives of other academic disciplines like law, political science and sociology. By doing this, the study sets the topic on the agenda of theological/missiological thinking. The research will elaborate dimensions of contextual missiology, especially with regard to the interrelatedness of ethnicity, politics, human rights, and violence in the Kenyan context, dimensions which have hitherto been neglected. The research will contribute to the broader discussions about the role of missiology as a discipline in offering models of preventing violence and building peace and reconciliation in both conflict and post-conflict societies. By doing this, it adventures into some inter-disciplinary dialogues with political and public theology.

1.5.2 Missional value

The missional value[3] of this study is based on an agency approach. To the researcher the study provides an academic framework to address the tensions between ethnicity and Christianity as described in the personal stance. To missiologists, the study can help in broadening the research interest especially connected to ethnicity, politics human rights, and violence. To the churches in Kenya, the research will assist in improving existing models and developing new initiatives of justice, peace and reconciliation within the Church and the society. The research will also contribute to the evaluation of processes through which churches in Kenya attempts at (re)defining their role in the public sphere and also gives churches a basis of reflexivity with regard to the four concepts mentioned above. To the society, the study by working with a transformative missiological model serves national interest. This underpins the importance of a theology/missiology that addresses societal issues and therefore the outcome of the research can contribute to the initiatives of justice, peace and reconciliation processes in Kenya.

1.6 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Due to the wide scope of the area of study (2007/8 post-election violence), the current study is limited to the 2008 KNCHR report. The conceptual criterion is used to limit the study to four concepts drawn from the report ethnicity, politics human rights and violence. Delimitation of this study is also done in

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[3] Missional value is used here to refer to practical value. It is inspired by missional church discourses as mentioned in section 1.8.4, where mission can be understood as practical ways through which the church participates in God's work in the world.

the area of agency, with attention being given to only four mainline missionary church groups in Kenya: the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church in Kenya (ACK), the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) and the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK). To avoid confusion of terms, the word "churches" is used to refer to the churches in focus. The word "Church" is a theological term, used to refer to the body of Christ. The word "Roman Catholic Church" is used to refer to the body of Christ in the Roman Catholic Church and the word "Catholic Church" is used to refer to the members of the Roman Catholic Church in Kenya.

1.7   DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

It is important to give relevant demographic information at the beginning of this study. The demographic information given here is firstly ethnic affiliation and a map of Kenya that shows how ethnic groups are distributed. Secondly there is religious affiliation and thirdly youth statistics.

1.7.1   Ethnic Affiliation
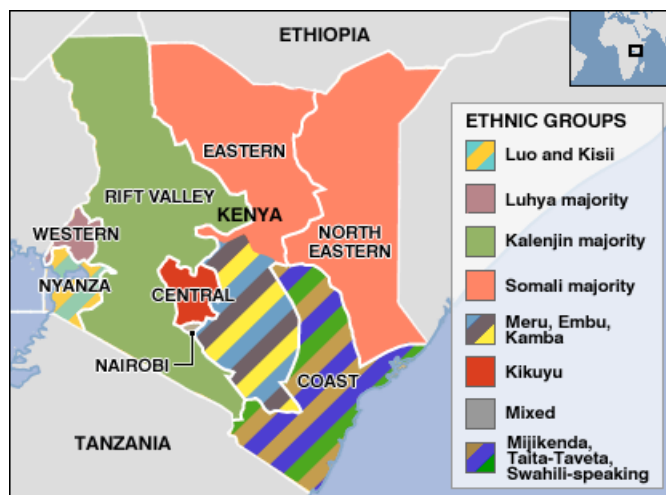
Figure one (taken from Google)

ETHNIC GROUP	TOTAL %
Kikuyu	17.2
Luhya	13.8
Kalenjin	12.9
Luo	10.5
Kamba	10.1
Kenya Somali	6.2
Kisii	5.8
Mijikenda	5.1
Meru	4.3
Turkana	2.6
Maasai	2.2
Others	9.3

Table one (KNBS, Kenya population and housing census, 2011)

1.7.2   Religious Affiliation

	RELIGION	TOTAL
	Protestant	47.5
	Catholic	23.4
	Other Christian	11.9
	Muslim	11.1
	Hindu	0.2
	Traditionalists	1.7
	Other religions	1.5
	No religion	2.5
	Do not know	0.2

Table two (KNBS, Kenya population and housing census, 2011)

1.7.3   Youth Statistics

The demographic definition of youth as used in this present study refers to any individual between the age of 15 and 35 years. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), based on the 2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census, the total population is 38,610,097 million, with those aged less than 34 years constituting about 78% of Kenya's population, with majority of the total population under age 25. The youth aged between 15 and 34 years account for about 35% of the total population (KNBS, 2011). Research has established that unemployment rate in Kenya is approximately 40%, with about 21% being unemployed youth (UNDP 2013: 7, UNICEF 2012:30).

1.8   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section focuses on the research methodology that is applied in this current study, which is a threefold methodological approach. Firstly, there is the theoretical framework as inspired by the praxis matrix. Secondly there is a missiological framework as encompassed by the concepts of church-with-others and *missio Dei,* and finally there are research methods that are used in every chapter of this study.

1.8.1   Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework that is used in this study is critical theory in the form of the praxis matrix. According to Max Horkheimer, one of the fathers of critical theory, a critical theory is adequate only if it meets the criterion that is threefold: explanatory, practical and normative, all at the same time (Johnson

1995:67). The praxis matrix satisfies this criterion; hence its choice. The praxis matrix is concerned with understanding a particular situation for the sake of contributing to transformation within it (UNISA Tutorial letter, 13). Agreeing with this is Colin Graham Smith[4] who points that, "the relationship to critical theory is most evident in the concept of praxis. Praxis describes the dialectical relationship between reflection and action which results in the transformation of society" (Smith 2007:11).

The choice of the praxis matrix was informed by the nature and teleology of this study which is contextual and transformative. It is contextual because it integrates the analysis of the Kenyan socio-political context with regard to the 2007/8 post-election violence into a missiological reflection, and it is transformative because it suggests practical actions through which the churches in Kenya can "preach, serve and witness to the reign of God" (Bevans & Schroeder 2011:396, 397). This reign of God is transformative both at personal and community levels. In this regard, therefore, the praxis matrix is used to unmask and reveal the underlying causes of post-election violence in Kenya according to the KNCHR report.

The praxis matrix as developed by University of South Africa (UNISA) has seven dimensions which shape the concepts of contextualizing the gospel (Kritzinger 2013:38) and was developed under the influence of Joe Holland and Peter Henriot's pastoral cycle (Kritzinger & Saayman 2011:3). There are several questions attached to each dimension, which are meant to help in understanding the dimensions. The dimensions and their respective questions are: Agency – who are the actors? How do they position themselves in and identify with a community? Who are their interlocutors? Contextual understanding – How do they view their prevailing religious, economic, political, cultural and social circumstances? How do they read the signs of the times? Ecclesial scrutiny –how do they relate to churches around them and what did these churches do in the past? Interpreting the tradition – How do they read the Bible and their theological tradition? Discernment for action – What actions and projects do they plan and pursue? Reflexivity – Do they learn from their experiences? Spirituality – How do they experience God's presence and guidance? How does that motivate and direct their mission? (Kritzinger & Saayman 2011:4-5).

According to Kritzinger & Saayman (2011:4), the praxis matrix can be used both as a mobilizing and analytical tool. It is mobilizing because, "it can be used to mobilize a group of Christians to work

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[4] Although Smith is in reference to the pastoral cycle as developed by Holland and Henriot (1983), as it will be noted later, the praxis matrix was actually further developed from the approach of the pastoral cycle (Kritzinger 2011:3).

together for transformation in their context (:4). It is an analytical tool because it can be used as a research method to explore the transformational praxis (theory-and-practice) of another person and group" (:4), which means that "mission is studied through the matrix (as lens)" (Kritzinger 2013:38). However, "it is important to realize that it is in the first place a mobilizing instrument, rather than analyzing (research) instrument" (UNISA Tutorial letter:13). Below is a diagram that represents all the dimension of the praxis matrix (Kritzinger & Saayman 2011:4).
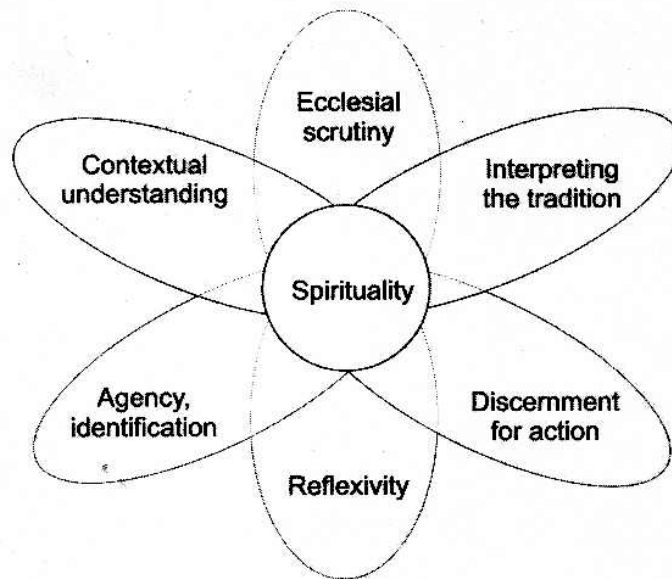
1.8.2   Missiological framework

Since this is a missiological study, it is important to state the missiological approach used. Mission is understood as God calling and sending the church to preach, serve and witness to his reign through active participation in his work in the world (Guder 1998). This means that God is actively working in his world to redeem and transform it through his reign and he is calling and sending the church to participate in this work. It is when the Church therefore discerns this call and duly responds to it, that it becomes a missional church (Hirsch 2006:82, Niemandt 2011:398), a term whose roots can be traced from Lesslie Newbigin (Van Gelder 2007, Guder 1998). In this light, one can argue that a missional church is always contextual and transformative. From this understanding of mission, missiology can be understood as "a theological discipline that seeks to understand and define both creating and redeeming works of God in the world" (Van Gelder & Zscheile 2011: 23).

The understanding of mission defines mission praxis. The churches in Kenya, building on the missionary legacy of the nineteenth century, understand mission as evangelism and church planting, and

this limited understanding has given shape to their mission praxis. The work of God in his world does not only involve conversion and church planting, as displayed by the mission praxis of the churches in Kenya,[5] but it should also be considered in its multi-dimensional interrelatedness. Philip Wickeri (2004:187) argues that "*missio Dei* sees all the ways in which God is involved in the world and not just the evangelistic mission of the church." Tormod Engelsviken (2003:487) notes that: "The old church-centred missiology was theologically deficient in that it did not fully realize the broadness of the missionary task as modelled, for example, by Jesus' own ministry to the poor, the suffering and marginalized."

Affirming this multi-dimensional nature of mission, Bosch (1991) discusses what he calls elements of an emerging ecumenical missionary paradigm, under which there are thirteen dimensions which he describes with the terminology of "mission as…" Bevans and Schroeder (2011) see this multi-dimensional nature of mission as "prophetic dialogue," which is manifested in six components of God's mission in which the church is called to share and witness.

To avoid taking a generalized approach with regard to the multi-dimensionality of mission, Kritzinger (2013:36-37) argues that there are three ways that it can be applied. First, there is an approach informed by Stephen Neill's statement, "If everything is mission, nothing is mission" (:37), which finds the definition of mission too broad and therefore the scope of mission is narrowed in some way. Secondly, there is an approach embodied in a particular context through a process of contextualization:[6] "Since a Christian understanding of truth is dynamic, relational and time bound, particular congregations and groups discern their contextual priorities in the light of the challenges facing them" (:37). Finally there is an approach that "emphasizes context analysis and reading the signs of the times but suggests that the present global context requires all Christians to identify one particular dimension of mission as a priority" (:37). In the light of these approaches, the preference for this study is the second approach because this study through contextual analysis discerns the main issues affecting the Kenyan context against the backdrop of the 2007/8 post-election violence and from this it seeks to determine missiological priorities and actions for the churches in Kenya.

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[5] This kind of praxis by churches in Kenya can be compared to mission practice informed by the view of Gisbertius Voetius that the aim of mission was *conversio gentilium* (conversion of the nations), *plantatio ecclesiae* (planting of church) and *gloria et manifestatio gratiae divinae* (glory and manifestation of divine grace) (see Smith 2002:6).

[6] Nico Botha (2010) uses the same approach to discourage a broad application of contextualization. Inspired by Stephen Neill, he argues: "If everything is contextualization nothing is contextualization."

1.8.3   Missiological approach

The missiological approach of this study can be characterised by explaining its ontology and epistemology. The ontology of this study is theistic and it is properly encompassed in the missiological concept of *missio Dei*. The epistemology of this study is communal and it is inspired by a hermeneutic of humility understood as "knowing with others" and is properly embraced in the missiological concept of church-with-others. These two dimensions of the missiological approach are interrelated and are drawn from elements of the "emerging ecumenical missionary paradigm" proposed by David Bosch (1991) and are compatible with the theoretical framework of this study. Through an integrated approach they enhance the task of analyzing and understanding the Kenyan context with regard to the 2007/8 post-election violence, with the deliberate goal of seeking a missiological approach that is both contextual and transformative.

1.8.3.1 Missio Dei

The concept of *missio Dei* as integrated in this study is based on the discussion of the Willingen Conference of 1952. Although the expression itself was not used during the conference, Wilhelm Richebächer (2003a:589) points out that the term *missio Dei* arose following the Willingen conference through the report of Karl Hartenstein. The main inspiration of this dimension is drawn from the Trinitarian understanding of the concept and how that relates to the church and the world. Thus, "The classical doctrine of *missio Dei* as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit was expanded to include yet another "movement": Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world" (Bosch 1991:390). It can be argued that it is in this context of sending that the church preaches, serves and witnesses to the reign of God that creates and transforms the world. This is better understood by the words from the conference as quoted from the official International Missionary Council minutes by Richebächer (2003b:464):

> The missionary movement, of which we are part, has its source in the Triune God Himself. Out of the depths of his love for us, the Father has sent forth His own beloved son to reconcile all things to Himself, that we and all men might, through the Spirit, be made one in Him with the Father in that perfect love which is the very nature of God…We who have been chosen in Christ,…are by these very facts committed to full participation in His redeeming mission. There is no participation in Christ without participation in His mission to the world. That by which the church receives its existence is that by which it is also given its world-mission.

In missiological circles, there have been many debates and critique of the concept of *missio Dei,* a discussion that falls outside the scope of this study. However, and generally speaking, many of these discussions evolve around the etymology of the phrase, the position of the church in the scheme of

things, and the goal of mission. Consequently, there are many approaches to *missio Dei* that emerge but for the interest of this study a pluralistic and relativistic approach is preferred, solely because of the comprehensiveness of the approach. The approach is pluralistic and relativistic because as both Engelsviken and Wickeri argue, *missio Dei* was supposed to interrupt the traditional church-centred missiology. To Engelsviken (2003:367), "The primary focus of *missio Dei* is therefore the world… The order is therefore not God-church-world, but God-world-church." According to Wickeri (2004:187),

> Indeed, *missio Dei* became a way of criticizing the whole missionary enterprise as it was then understood in the churches. God had been working in the world all the time, and in all places, creating and redeeming, liberating and saving, whether the churches in the West realized this or not ….*Missio Dei* called the triumphalism of the missionary movement all over the world to a prophetic judgement.

This view was also expressed by Lesslie Newbigin (2003:96):

> We are more conscious of the fact that God is already at work in the world outside long before the missionary arrives…God is already working in the world far beyond our little ecclesiastical ghettos. Our business is to go outside the church walls, become aware of what God is doing, and cooperate with Him.

Flowing from this discussion, the Church cannot be viewed as the only or the main institution that God uses in the world to fulfil his will. God is actively at work in his world, and if the church does not participate in God's mission in the world, it does not mean that God is not doing anything in the world. By implication therefore, there is a need for a communal epistemology discussed under the umbrella of the missiological concept of church with others.

1.8.3.2 Church-with-others
This dimension of church-with-others was coined by Theo Sundermeier (1986) and adopted by David Bosch. However, the phrase is ambiguous and therefore three dimensions can be drawn from it. First, it is the sense in which Sundemeier and Bosch use the phrase with regard to the patronage of the sending churches over the receiving churches, what Sundemeier calls "helper syndrome of pro-existence" (in Bosch 1991:375). Here, the term was used to counter the philosophy of church *for* others, which had been promoted by Dietrich Bonhoeffer[7] (:375) and was negated due to the negative connotation it

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[7] However, it is important to note that Bonheoffer did not use church for others to mean a dominating church but rather a self-emptying and sacrificing church. The objection arises from the negative implications that can be drawn from the term "church for others."

carries. Apparently, this is echoed by Nyerere[8] who argued that, "The members of the church must work with the people…It is important that we should stress the working *with*, not working *for*. For it is not the task of religious leaders to try and tell people what they should do" (Nyerere 1973:115).

Secondly, the phrase can be used to imply ecumenism, partnership and cooperation. This is the dimension we get through a pluralistic approach to the concept of *missio Dei.* To this end, Wickeri (2004:187) connects the concept church-with-others with the concept of *missio Dei* and captures the relationship this way:

> *Missio Dei* implied a shift from a church-centered mission to a mission-centered church…There were different interpretations of how the church stood in relationship to other movements for humanization, but there was general agreement that *missio Dei* was about the renewal of the world, not just the renewal of the church. The church came to be understood as the "church with others" not the "church for others," and the Christian community became known through the rhythm of its relationship with the whole human community.

This means that the church needs to work with other institutions that participate in the mission of God. Engelsviken (2003:489) argues that the church should, "…Join in the sense of working with the movements in the world that further shalom, whether or not these movements have any Christian basis." To Wickeri (2004:187), "The church should be active alongside other movements which anticipate God's reign" and according to Julius Nyerere (1973:114), the church "…must itself become a force of social justice and it must work with other forces of justice wherever they are, and whatever they are called." David Bosch (1991:387) warns against an exclusive Christian approach, when he argues that, "When Christians work towards transforming the world, they run the risk of exceeding the competence of the church, of talking and acting pretentiously on matters about which Christians have no more expertise than the world outside have." This understanding therefore calls the church to ecumenism, partnership and co-operation, even as it participates in God's mission in the world.

Finally, the phrase can be used in an incarnational sense, where the church empathetically identifies with human beings and the society in which they live. This can also be referred as "insertion" as used by Henriot and Holland (1984:8) in the "pastoral cycle" to express the view that the basis of any pastoral action is involvement in the life of a community. This incarnational perspective corresponds with the conviction of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Vancouver assembly of 1983 which declared that, "…There will never be a time when the world, with all its political, social and economic issues, ceases to be the agenda of the church" (in Bosch 1991:386). Sharing these sentiments is Nyerere

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[8] Important to note, Julius Nyerere who was the first president of Tanzania, used this concept in a lecture to Maryknoll sisters in New York, which was first published in 1973.

(1973:114): "If the church is interested in man as an individual, it must express this interest in the society of which those individuals are members." As such, one can argue that this interest and involvement of the church with the world should not be superficial, sympathetic or distant. Nyerere (1973:115) captures this argument in the following words,

> What is necessary is *sharing*, on the basis of equality and common humanity. Only by sharing work, hardships, knowledge, persecution, and progress, can the church contribute to our growth. And this means sharing in every sense as 'members one of another'. For if the church is not part of our poverty, and part of our struggle against poverty and injustice, then it is not part of us.

In the light of the three dimensions discussed, the concept of church-with-others in this study will be used in the second and the third senses – partnership and ecumenism as well as incarnational. As such, this study analytically identifies political, social, cultural and economic factors in Kenya with regard to the 2007/8 post-election violence, it investigates what God is saying and doing about these factors and also mobilizes the churches in Kenya towards missiologically participating in what God is doing. In conclusion therefore, by making these political, social, cultural and economic factors the agenda and interest of the church, it can be said that the churches in Kenya will be participating in the *Missio Dei.*

1.8.4   Missional ecclesiology

In the light of the foregoing discussion, a suitable example of how the missiological concepts of *missio Dei* and church-with-others can be integrated to produce a missional church is the South African Partnership for Missional Churches (SAPMC). Cornelius Niemandt (2010:397) notes that SAPMC was formed in 2004 by a number of congregations in Southern Africa on a journey of spiritual discernment that empowers them to respond to God's mission. The vision statement of SAPMC is "To listen to God's specific call to us, to let God send us and, through the Holy Spirit, empower us to participate in God's mission in the world, so that both our outreach and our life together as a church as a witness to Jesus Christ" (:397-398). This vision is unpacked through five guideline questions that guide the missional congregations: Where are we? Whose are we? What is God doing? How is God sending us? How are we as a church currently living according to the pattern of God's future? (:398).

Looking closely at these questions through the lens of the praxis matrix, "Where are we?" is contextual understanding, "Whose are we?" is spirituality, "What is God doing?" is interpreting tradition, "How is God sending us?" is discernment for action, and "How are we as a church currently living according to the pattern of God's future?" is reflexivity. With an addition of one more question to the SAPMC list − "Who are we?" − the dimensions of agency and ecclesial scrutiny can also be taken

care of. In conclusion, this example of the SAPMC corresponds closely to the missiological model on which the theoretical and missiological frameworks of this study are based.

1.8.5   Research methods

The present study is a literature study which involves a case study of the report by KNCHR titled: *On the brink of the precipice: a human rights account of Kenya's 2007/8 post-election violence* (2008). Chapter two is a description of the KNCHR report, which discusses the nature of the report through descriptive and analytical research methods by applying the analytical tool of textual/content analysis. This is done through systematic identification of the key issues (referred in this study as concepts) highlighted in the report and they were determined by the frequency with which they were used and repeated as well as the depth and emphasis with which they were discussed in the report. The data that is used in this chapter is the report by KNCHR.

Chapters three to six all have a similar three three-fold structure, following the logic of: a) KNCHR report; b) missiological reflection; c) churches in Kenya. Dialogical, polemical and analytical research methods are used to interpret the concepts of politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence by asking what the KNCHR report says about them (contextual understanding), what is God saying about them (missiological interpretation/interpreting tradition) and how the churches in Kenya relate with these concepts (ecclesial scrutiny & discernment for action). The data required in these chapters is drawn from academic journals, books, official websites, public documents (specifically newspaper articles), official Church documents (pastoral letters, websites, press releases and legal documents) and personal experience and involvement of the researcher.

Chapter seven develops a missiological model of reconciliation for the churches in Kenya discussed through four models. Due to the inter-relatedness of the concepts of politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence, an integrated approach is necessary hence a synthetic research method is used with an intention of developing a missiological model of reconciliation for churches in Kenya that is both contextual and transformative. The "discernment for action" dimension of the praxis matrix is used as a mobilizing instrument for a renewed ministry of reconciliation by the churches in Kenya. The model of reconciliation proposed here arises out of the discussion of the preceding chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

DESCRIPTION OF THE KNCHR REPORT

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to describe the report of KNCHR entitled, *On the brink of the precipice: a human rights account of Kenya's 2007/8 post-election violence*. The chapter has four sections: justification of the choice of the report, the background of the report, the structure of the report and the underlying issues drawn from the report, and how they synoptically fall under the interconnectedness of politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence.

2.2   BACKGROUND OF THE REPORT

KNCHR is an autonomous national human rights institution established by the constitution of Kenya in 2002 with the core mandate of promoting and protecting human rights in Kenya. The operations of KNCHR are guided by the United Nations approved principles on the establishment of independent national human rights institutions. In Kenya, the commission has two broad mandates: acting as a watchdog over the government in the area of human rights and providing key leadership in moving the country towards a human rights state (KNCHR 2003).

After the eruption of 2007/8 post-election violence, KNCHR initiated investigations on the character and scope of human rights violations between December 2007 and the end of February 2008, with the overall aim of documenting the violence to ensure that there "would be a comprehensive record of the violations committed during that period of time as a basis for enabling redress of such violations" (KNCHR 2008:6), to analyze the criminal responsibility of alleged perpetrators and to make general recommendations on governance that would enable Kenya to undertake an effective truth, justice and reconciliation process. To carry out these investigations, the commission trained and deployed teams of investigators to collect data from seven regions in Kenya which they refer to as principle theatres of the violence (:6). These teams comprised of commissioners and staff and they undertook thirty six missions with an average duration of eight days per mission. The data of the report was informed by interviews done by these teams, media stories, reports of organizations such as the Red Cross, and internet materials gathered from credible sources. A total of 1102 statements were collected, narrating over 7500 episodes of violence – or incitement to violence (:14).

The KNCHR had eight commissioners[9] (KNCHR, *Former Commissioners*, 2013) and there are two dimensions of agency drawn from these commissioners which largely shaped their approach and commitment. Firstly, there is professional qualifications, with most of them having a legal background and extensive interest in the field of human rights. Secondly, there is inclusivity, with the commissioners being largely representative in terms of gender, special groups, ethnic group and religion. Gender inclusivity is manifested by the fact that there are five women and three men. Special groups inclusivity is manifested by the fact that two of the commissioners are physically challenged and as such they have vigorously advocated for the rights of the physically challenged. Ethnic diversity is evident by having all the commissioners from different ethnic groups in Kenya and religious inclusivity with three of the commissioners being Muslims. This diversity is important because the credibility of a report like this in Kenya depends on inclusive representation, especially seen through the lens of the widespread perception of nepotism and discrimination in public offices.

2.3   STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report is divided into eight chapters. Chapter one (KNCHR 2008: 6-19) discusses the background of the investigations, the structure of the report and the methodology applied. Here also the terms of reference and a summary of the key findings and recommendations[10] are highlighted. The findings can be summarized in seven ways. Firstly, the violence was widespread, immediate and systematic. Secondly, politicians instigated the violence before and during the violence through incitement and together with business people financed and sustained the infrastructure of the violence. Thirdly, there was gross violation of human rights and crimes against humanity were committed. These violations were committed through murder, arson attacks, massive displacement, sexual offences, and wanton destruction of property and bodily harm which were selectively committed on the basis ethno-political considerations. Fourthly, the response of the government was slow and ineffectual, which saw a near collapse of the rule of law. Fifthly, the law enforcers used excessive force and some were ethnically partisan in their operations. Sixthly, some faith based organizations (FBOs) were ethnically and politically partisan and as such they played a negative role by not counteracting the violence. Seventhly, FBOs and

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[9] More information about the commissioners can be found at:
http://www.knchr.org/Aboutus/Structrure/Commissioners/FormerCommissioners.aspx. (Accessed on 4t April 2013).

[10] The recommendations are highlighted later in this chapter.

humanitarian organizations like the Red Cross performed exemplarily to ameliorate the suffering of the victims, especially the internally displaced persons. Chapter two discusses the triggers, catalysts and root causes of the violence. This takes a historical analytical approach with the argument that the post-election violence was a consequence of both the mismanaged tallying process as well as underlying issues predating the 2007 elections. These past realities include historical land injustices and grievances, politics of ethnic mobilization and divisive campaigns, a culture of impunity, contending citizenship narratives, and stalled constitutional and institutional reforms (KNCHR 2008:20-30).

Chapter three focuses on the chronology of the events of the violence from the process of voting and tallying, to the announcement of results, to protests, to violence and finally dialogue. The events can be summarized this way: Word spread that there was rigging of the presidential votes. This caused suspicion and anxiety among the opposition, mainly Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) who vainly made some demands to the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK). In the midst of this discontent, confusion and anxiety, all the people in the national tallying centre were forcibly driven out and ECK announced on the state-owned National television that Mwai Kibaki, the flag bearer of Party of National Union (PNU), had been re-elected. ODM declared their refusal to acknowledge the results and therefore they did not recognize Kibaki as the president. They then called for mass action in the form of countrywide demonstrations to pressurize for a re-run of the election. It is in the context of these demonstrations that violence erupted, which was characterized by looting, destruction of property, physical attacks, sexual violations, displacements and murder. This raised tension and anxiety in the country, with the aggrieved ethnic communities organizing reprisal attacks. The international community initiated mediation efforts which were started by the then African Union chairman John Kuffuor and taken on by the panel of prominent African leaders led by former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan. Despite the hard line positions taken by both sides (PNU and ODM), the Annan-led team managed to get a breakthrough that saw the formation of a coalition government with Kibaki as president and Odinga as prime minister. Both sides agreed to a number of reforms, which included an overhaul of the electoral system, the enactment of a new constitution, judicial reforms and formation of a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission [TJRC](KNCHR 2008:31-36). All these reforms have since been implemented. There was an overhaul of ECK, which saw the formation of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), promulgation of a new constitution, judicial reforms and establishment of the TJRC, which submitted it findings in 2013. However, even with these significant reforms, there is still disgruntlement among some Kenyans. This was exhibited in the 2013 general

elections where the conduct of IEBC was questioned by the opposition, an act that led to a legal battle in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court ruled against the opposition and the conduct of the Supreme Court has been questioned by a section of Kenyans. The public discourses around these issues may be politicized but it excites the emotions of some Kenyans and as such it is a recipe for violence.

In chapter four, the report identifies the main theatres of conflict: Nairobi, central, coast, North Rift, Nyanza and Western regions. Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, has a multiethnic population of about four million people. Violence in Nairobi was only rampant in about seven informal and low income settlements (Kibera, Mathare, Korogocho, Kangemi, Mukuru, Dandora and Huruma). The internal boundaries of these areas are marked ethnically according to the dominant ethnic group living in a particular settlement. The patterns of violence in Nairobi were spontaneous and systematic and were shaped by interruptions of the tallying process in some centres, killings, forced circumcision, physical attacks by organized illegal gangs operated by politicians, arson, looting, destruction of property, gender based violence, forced displacement and evictions (KNCHR 2008:37-48).

The South and the North Rift[11] region are areas perceived to belong originally to the Kalenjin ethnic group, who largely supported ODM in the 2007 elections. The Rift Valley is host to other ethnic communities especially those who had worked on white settlers' farms and had bought land there. The violence in that area was carried out by organized raiders and it was characterized by murder, physical attack, gender-based violence, destruction of property and massive displacement of persons. Perhaps the most tragic form of violence that was carried out in this region was in Eldoret, where the Kenya Assemblies of God Church (which had hosted a number of Kikuyu people) was burnt down with about thirty five people burning to death and about fifty seriously injured. Leaflets, vernacular radio stations and short messaging service were the common tools used to propagate hate speech in this region (KNCHR 2008:49-69).

The central Rift Region was different from other regions in that most of its parts are ethnically heterogeneous and the region is strategically positioned geographically, economically and politically. Unlike the other regions, in the Rift Valley a lot of violence took place in urban areas, specifically Nakuru, Molo, Kuresoi and Naivasha. The region is an economic hub and for this reason there was rampant looting and destruction of business premises. Geographically, the region is strategically placed as a connecting region and for this reason many illegal roadblocks were set up by armed gangs in order to intercept targeted people who were trying to mov to other regions. It is in Naivasha that another

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[11] The Central, North and South Rift form the larger Rift Valley province which was the main theatre of violence.

horrifying incident occurred, where some people from one ethnic community were burnt to death in a house. Violence in this region took the shape of gender-based violence, physical attack, murder, looting, and destruction of property, forced circumcision and displacements (KNCHR 2008:70-85).

Nyanza region is predominately occupied by the Luo community and largely supported ODM. It experienced violence in three phases. The first phase was precipitated by the delay in the announcements of the presidential results. The second phase was the period in which mass actions were called for. In the third phase the region received an influx of members of their community displaced from other areas. Violence in this region took the shape of massive looting and wanton destruction of property, physical attack, gender-based violence and displacement (KNCHR 2008:86-96).

The Western region is predominately occupied by the Luhya community, which largely supported ODM. Violence in this region took the form of destruction of property, looting and displacement. The Coast region is situated along the Indian Ocean and largely supported ODM. The region is characterized by land disputes, landlessness and large numbers of squatters and therefore political contests are mobilized around these grievances. The general assumption here is that outsiders have taken up land belonging to the natives of this region. Ethnic hatred against the perceived enemies was propagated using leaflets and spray paint to mark properties to be vandalized. Violence took the shape of arson attacks, looting, gender-based violence, physical attack, murder and displacement (KNCHR 2008:97-108).

The Central region is predominately occupied by the Kikuyu community, which largely supported PNU. The region experienced relative calm, even after the violence broke out. However, tension started to build after the burning of the Assemblies of God Church in Eldoret and the influx of displaced Kikuyus from other regions. The violence took the form of demonstrations which targeted the government for its perceived failure to protect the Kikuyu community and its slowness to evacuate the victims trapped in violence hot spots. The Central province is strategically placed because it borders Nairobi and it has a strong economic capacity and also a host of many non-Kikuyu communities working in tea and coffee plantations, industries and institutions in the region. Violence in this region took the shape of dehumanization, humiliation, forced circumcision, physical attack, gender-based violence, looting and displacement. The tools used to propagate hatred were leaflets, short messaging services, vernacular radio stations and e-mail messages (KNCHR 2008:109:115)

Chapter five (KNCHR 2008:116-125) is an analysis of the national trends and patterns of the violence. To begin with there are indicators of pre-planning and coordination of the violence. Prominent

features that suggest that the 2007-post-election violence was spontaneous are discussed. One of the features is the immediacy with which the violence broke out. Most of the violence broke out immediately after the announcement of the presidential results, meaning there had been some kind of preparation beforehand. Attached to this, is the fact that there were also warning leaflets dispatched in some areas and open threats given before the election. Another feature is the exclusivity and selectivity in which destruction, looting, physical and arson attacks were carried out. This kind of violence carefully targeted specific ethnic communities. Another feature is the agents of the violence. In many places, the violence was carried by well organized and coordinated youth groups. Connected to this are the simultaneous and parallel attacks in other regions that seemed to leave a trace of uniformity in the nature of attacks.

Another trend was demonstrations and the barricading of roads. In most theatres of violence, demonstrations were characterized by roadblocks that were set up, among other reasons, to identify "outsiders" for attack. There was also the trend of killing, looting and destruction of property. In all the places where the violence was widespread, there were killings, extensive looting and wanton destruction of property, especially homes and business premises of outsiders. Related to this is sexual and gender-based violence where women, young girls, boys and men were raped and men from certain ethnic communities circumcised by force. There was also the trend of massive displacement of non-indigenous communities who sought refuge at churches and monasteries, police stations, provincial administration grounds, Red Cross facilitates and public facilities like stadiums.

Under this chapter, there is also an evaluation of the role of various key players in the whole event of the violence. The media is blamed for fanning tension and anxiety by the way they reported the election event and also for painting the picture of an extremely tight "two horse race" for the presidency. Some vernacular radio stations are particularly singled out as vehicles through which hatred was propagated and in some instances attacks planned by using coded language. The FBO's played ambiguous roles in the events of the violence. On the one hand, many religious leaders preached peace in mosques and churches and many displaced people were hosted in church compounds. Religious organizations and institutions provided humanitarian intervention to many desperate, needy, harassed and troubled internally displaced persons. On the other hand, leaders and elders of indigenous faiths presided over ceremonies that involved cleansings and oath administration to the groups of attackers. Some Christian preachers propagated hatred from pulpits, even as the religious organizations were perceived as partisan by openly supporting certain political parties. The security service is accused of

complacency and partisanship. Finally there is the role that the government played, especially its failure to prevent the violence and the violations of human rights.

Chapter six (KNCHR 2008:126-143) is about the findings of responsibility for violations under domestic and international criminal law frameworks. Under the domestic criminal law framework, the offences committed during the violence can be categorized in five ways. First, there are offences that violate the right to life and the security of a person, like murder, manslaughter and grievous bodily harm. Secondly, there are offences that violate right to property, like arson, malicious damage to property and robbery with violence. Thirdly, there is incitement to violence and offences to public order. Particular crimes in this group include hate speech, forceful eviction campaigns, illegal oathing, riots, possession of illegal firearms and abetting the commission of an offence. Fourthly, there is neglect of official duty by security agencies through siding with attackers, inactivity and bias in the administration of law and order. Finally, there is sexual and gender-based violence, crimes that were committed through rape, sexual exploitation, defilement of minors and forceful circumcision.

Under the international criminal law framework, there are basically two types of crimes committed during the violence. Firstly, there is the crime of genocide which was committed through intentional killing and elimination of members of a particular ethnic community. Secondly, there are crimes against humanity which include murder, extermination, forcible transfer of population, torture, sexual offenses and inhumane acts that caused great suffering or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health.

Chapter seven (KNCHR 2008:144-151) deals with the findings on the impact of the violence on Kenya's international and national human rights obligations as well as findings on governance failures. Under the violence the following rights were contravened: the right to life, the right not to be forcibly evicted from one's home, the right to equality and against discrimination, the right to hold opinions without interference, the right to take part in public affairs and to vote in periodic elections, the right to property, the right to education, the prohibition not to engage in incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence and finally the right to freedom of movement. The report points out the failure of the government and its machinery to curb the violence and stop violations of rights as well as initiating governance policies that could have mitigated historical injustices.

Finally, chapter eight (KNCHR 2008:152-159) contains conclusions and recommendations. These recommendations are made in respect of domestic and international culpability where there were recommendations of: a) a comprehensive investigation into the violence across the board; b) the

prosecution of culprits, and c) that those who bear the greatest criminal responsibility in the commission of crimes against humanity should be tried before the International Criminal Court. In respect of human rights violations and governance issues, the commissioners recommended various steps. Firstly, steps that would fast-track investigations and prosecution of sexual crimes, steps that would enhance national healing and coexistence. Secondly, steps to enact legislation that would address hate speech and stop the appointments to public positions of persons found liable for perpetrating gross human rights violations. Thirdly, steps to a more concerted and sustained programme of human rights education by public institutions and FBOs. Fourthly, steps toward a new constitutional dispensation, and fifthly steps to resettle, compensate, rehabilitate and give psychological support to the victims of the violence.

2.4   THE IMPACT OF THE KNCHR REPORT

The main reason for using the KNCHR report is because it was extensively relied upon by CIPEV, whose findings and recommendations were the foundation on which the cases in the ICC were based (Njogu 2009:2). However, the choice of the report does not in any way suggest that it was infallible. There are some criticisms that have been levelled against the report but due to the limited nature of this present study, these criticisms have not been pursued in depth. Some of these criticisms can be mentioned.

First, many factors contributed to the violence and the report does not highlight all of them. An example of this omission of the international dimension of the violence (Wa Mungai & Gona 2010:199, Darehshori 2009:77, Njogu 2009:158). Secondly, some of the people who were adversely mentioned in the report sought legal redress (Machuka 2009) One of the people who did this is William Ruto, one of the suspects indicted by the ICC for crimes committed in the violence, who went to court to have his name expunged from the record and to have the court declare the report null and void. Neither of the requests was granted by the court (Ogemba 2012). Thirdly, there have been allegations that some of the commissioners of KNCHR coached witnesses who are testifying in the ongoing cases at the ICC (Leftie 2010).

2.5   INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF POLITICS, ETHNICITY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND VIOLENCE

There is a close connection between the concept of politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence through a cause-effect relationship. A close scrutiny of the key findings of the report suggests that there are two sets of major themes, which characterize the whole event of the violence. The first theme is the *underlying causes* of the violence which can be summed up under the concepts of politics and ethnicity.

The other set is the *effect* of manipulation of politics and ethnicity, which can be summed up under the concept of human rights and violence. In other words, one traces a deep and causal connection as well as interplay between the four concepts. It seems that it is not possible to talk of one concept without talking of the other. Politics is manipulative and ethnicized, ethnicity is manipulated by politics, and negative ethnicity facilitates dehumanization and undue hatred towards others through negative tags, stereotypes and deception. This dehumanization and hatred leads to violence, which happens through gross violations of human rights and was selectively visited on people, depending on their ethnic affiliation. That subsequently helped to identify with ease their political orientation because of the ethno-political nature of politics in Kenya. Consequently, the violence happened in a political context after a political contest.

2.6   CONCLUSION

This chapter has described the event of the 2007/8 post-election violence from the perspective of the KNCHR report. The contested election's results were just a trigger for the violence, which means there were deep seated issues in Kenya that facilitated the sparking of the violence. These underlying issues can be condensed under the theme of politics and ethnicity and through their manipulation there was violation of human rights and subsequently eruption of violence. This cause-effect relationship informs the inter-connectedness between these four concepts. As a result the four broad categories: politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence in the KNCHR report offer the basis on which the following chapters are developed. Through the discussion of the subsequent chapters, some underlying causes are established through corresponding quotes from the KNCHR[12].

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[12] There is less interaction with other voices that may have academically looked at the report in this chapter. This is because to the best of the knowledge of the author of the current study, there are only a few sources that have engaged the report and they have been mentioned them in section 2:4. These sources have not engaged the report academically because they are judicial and political reactions.

CHAPTER THREE

POLITICS IN KENYA

3.1   INTRODUCTION

It is on the platform of politics that the 2007 post-election violence occurred and as such this chapter focuses on the political dimension of violence as reflected by the KNCHR report. One cannot concretely understand the events of the violence without generally interrogating the nature of politics in Kenya and how this nature contributed to the violence. The approach of this chapter is three-fold: it first describes the nature of politics in Kenya through some corresponding quotes from the KNCHR report, with identification of three political trends that are not mutually exclusive; secondly, it reflects missiologically on politics in the light of this nature; and thirdly, it analyzes the approaches of churches in Kenya in regard to politics.

3.2   POLITICS OF DOMINANCE

> Kenya's political system that allows for an overwhelmingly powerful presidency contributed to the reduction of political competition into an ethnic zero-sum game. Until the post-election constitutional amendment providing for a Prime Minister, in the past, winning the Kenyan presidency has meant taking it all. Moreover, the clientelist nature of politics meant that many Kenyans have come to view the ascendancy of "one of their own" ethnic kin to the presidency as the best assurance of "benefiting" as individuals and as communities (KNCHR 2008:18).

The politics of dominance, which gives way to a "winner take all" approach, has been the foundation of most of the political problems in Kenya (cf. Lonsdale 2009, Sesi 2009:7). The former Constitution of Kenya, which was in operation until 2010, facilitated a centralized form of government and gave executive powers to the president. While by these provisions the Constitution meant good for all Kenyans, successive presidents abused these powers through political patronage and favouritism, exhibited through unequal distribution of resources and public appointments. The three successive governments since independence, between 1963 and 2007, were seen as favouring the ethnic communities to which the president belonged. From independence to 1979, Jomo Kenyatta (a Kikuyu) was the first president and hence the Kikuyu were seen by other communities as beneficiaries of his presidency. Daniel arap Moi (a Kalenjin) took over from Kenyatta in 1979 and ruled until 2002 and he was seen to favour the Kalenjin community. Mwai Kibaki (another Kikuyu) succeeded Moi and ruled until 2013; being a Kikuyu, his government was perceived to be pro-Kikuyu. There was a power sharing deal known as the National Accord and Reconciliation Act 2008 after the violence, which gave way to a coalition government between Kibaki and Raila Odinga, who is from the Luo community. The fifty-fifty

power-sharing deal saw both the principals favour individuals from their ethnic communities and other loyal communities, especially in the distribution of public appointments.

With the promulgation of a new Constitution in 2010 (Article 241:4), the executive powers of the president were curtailed and henceforth any appointment or resource allocation by the president had to be ethnically and regionally representative and approved by parliament. The current constitution also facilitated a change from centralized government to devolved government with the vision of equity and equality. However, this has not helped much because when the government side is the majority in parliament, the president's decisions prevail, their constitutional inadequacies notwithstanding. In recent times, when President Uhuru Kenyatta succeeded Mwai Kibaki in April 2013, he made public appointments which, despite the constitutional provisions mentioned above, were seen to favour the Kikuyu and Kalenjin communities, the ethnic communities of the president and his deputy respectively. The appointments were taken to parliament for vetting and interrogation, to ensure that they met the constitutional thresholds, but with the side of the government dominating parliament, the one-sided list of names was endorsed. This is also a clear indication that it is not enough to have a constitutional framework in place, without the political will and a firm commitment to the rule of law. This means that other mechanisms must be put in place to avoid such a scenario where parliament through numerical strength is used to rubber stamp the decisions of the executive, in spite of their constitutional shortcomings.

In relation to this issue of dominance, in 2011 the National Integration and Cohesion Commission (NCICa 2011), a commission mandated by the Constitution to facilitate and promote equality of opportunity, good relations, harmony and peaceful coexistence between persons of different ethnic and racial backgrounds in Kenya, carried out research on ethnic diversity in the Kenyan civil service. This research revealed that the big five ethnic communities in Kenya — Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Luhya, Kamba and Luo − occupy about 70% of positions in the civil service, while twenty other ethnic communities hold less than one per cent (NCIC 2011b:5). However, the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin, the communities from which all the Presidents of Kenya have come, have the largest number of posts in the civil service, as the research identified:

> The Kikuyu constitute the largest single dominant ethnic group in all ministries and departments, except in the Prisons Department, the Office of the Prime Minister and the Kenya Police. The Kalenjin are the second largest group in the Civil Service. They are also the most dominant group in the Prisons Department, and the Police Force. These two groups alone make up close to 40 per cent of the entire Civil Service. Their numbers in the Civil Service suggest a direct relationship with the tenure of the presidency, in that they have both had a member as President for over 20

years. It is also curious that in the newly constituted ministries, these patterns of ethnic patronage are still evident (NCIC 2011b: 7).

These findings suggest a dangerous precedent set by the successive governments and therefore they remain an explosive threat to national unity and cohesion. This research by NCIC gave credence to the Kenyan commentators who harshly criticized nepotism and favouritism in government, especially during Kibaki's regime (Omar 2011; Dolan 2011; Koigi 2012). This manipulation and dominance has continued to affect the country in negative ways and it has certainly widened the ethnic rift, increased resentment and discontent among the other ethnic communities, thus producing fertile ground for violence.

3.3   ETHNICIZED POLITICS

Underlying the polarization in Kenyan politics are the modes of political organization in Kenya. While it is important to recognize some limited shifts in trends, ethnic-based political organization has bedeviled Kenyan politics since colonial times…When constitutional changes allowed for multiparty politics in the 1990s, the ethnicisation of politics gained an even sharper edge. All the political parties formed after the reintroduction of multiparty politics have drawn their core support from the ethnic kin of their top leadership (KNCHR 2008:18).

The problem of ethnic-based politics started with the "divide and rule" approach of the colonial government, who organized their administrative boundaries on ethnic lines and used approaches meant to cause tension and suspicion among different ethnic groups so that they could not forge a united struggle for independence. The post-independence government did not discontinue this approach and since then all the successive governments have used the approach, though in contextualized and modified forms, to take over power and to maintain it. This has continually entrenched ethnicity in Kenyan politics, perhaps in a way unprecedented when compared to any other country (cf. Percox 2004:138, Okoth 2002:282).

In many democracies political parties are mobilized around ideas and policies, but in Kenya politics has been highly ethnicized, a reality that has brought about two situations whose implications have continued to have far-reaching consequences for the country. First, political parties are formed along ethnic lines and this has brought about the balkanization and polarization of the country, as Stephen Sesi (2009:5) argues: "Kenyan politicians have looked for collective identities and used them for their political expediency." This balkanization means that the leading political parties consist of large ethnic groups, a reality that has subsequently inspired block voting, where different regions vote in unison for particular political parties. Secondly and consequently, there has been political dominance by the large ethnic communities in Kenya over the smaller ethnic groups. While there is nothing inherently

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wrong with the collective will of ethnic groups, in a highly polarized country like Kenya this generates a sense of political marginalization, resentment and discontent among the smaller ethnic groups. This has resulted in serious political delusion.

On the one hand, hyped by nepotism and favouritism in government, this delusion rides on the belief that when a particular ethnic group has one of its own ascend to power, that will translate into growth and development of that community. This is a political delusion because even though a particular ethnic group has in some ways benefited from political favouritism and nepotism, it is actually only the political elites in that community who benefit. This fact is attested by Wa Wamwere (2012a), Dolan (2011) and Sesi (2009:5), who have all argued that Kenyan politics is elite-driven. Wa Wamwere (2012a) argues that "Kikuyu and non-Kikuyu elites exploit Kikuyu and non-Kikuyu lower classes almost equally," a fact also acknowledged by Dolan (2011), who states that "The Kikuyu top jobs are not widely distributed among their community, nor indeed are the Luo jobs well dispersed among the Nyanza population." This was one of the findings made by the Kenya Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC 2013:58) who found that:

> The perception that ethnic representation in government results in direct economic and other benefits to the represented community is pervasive in Kenya. While the Commission acquired evidence that such benefits do not necessarily accrue to those communities who are represented — even in the highest offices of the land — the perception that they do lead to intense competition for such representation, and thus increases the likelihood of violence during elections.

On the other hand, the people are under a political delusion to develop a general hatred towards the ethnic groups that seem to be favoured by the government of the day, without interrogating how those groups benefit as a whole. The result of this is resentment and discontent among some ethnic communities, even as Sesi (2009:6) notes: "Over time negative attitudes developed among some ethnic groups against those who were thought to have usurped power from the rest of the country and sentiments to the effect that only one ethnic group was appointed to leadership position in the government." The remedy for such politics should be approaches, political or otherwise, that can be applied to de-ethnicize politics. The political domination by particular ethnic groups continues to be a breeding ground for animosity and as such continues to be a time bomb for conflict. Ethnic interest and attachment should not supersede national interest and attachment in any way because, when it does, it can develop tendencies of exclusion and hatred leading to violence.

3.4   ECONOMIC MARGINALIZATION AND SOCIAL INJUSTICES

> Allusion to ethnicity in Kenyan politics camouflages the root causes of the country's problems – historical injustices relating to land distribution, impunity, exclusion, economic and social inequality, weak and under-performing public institutions, corruption, political elite wars and an electoral system that sharpens rather than mitigates the destructive effects that negative ethnicity can be mobilised to achieve (KNCHR 2008:24).

> Scholars and commentators on Kenya's politics and post-election violence have pointed to unresolved historical grievances, especially with regard to land allocation, as an important underlying factor in the violence…Where civic rights have opened the doors for acquisition of land, they have often come into collision with the rights granted by ethnic citizenship. This is what frames the discourses of the "foreigner-Indigenous", "outsider-indigenous" in places like the Rift Valley and the Coast Provinces. Even where the "foreigner/outsider" might be allowed to continue holding the land they might have purchased, "indigenous" sentiments have been strongly opposed to any attempts by the "foreigner/outsider" to seek political leadership (KNCHR 2008: 17,18).

The politics of domination and ethnicity have bred economic marginalization, which in turn has given rise to inequity and inequality. According to the Friedrich Stiftung (2012:2), "regional inequalities and imbalances have increasingly become a source of political conflict." Alongside unfair distribution of national resources, wide regional disparities have continued in critical areas like education, health and economic sectors. However, economic marginalization is both deliberate and accidental. It is *deliberate* through intentional political decisions and policies which facilitate unfair distribution of national resources. Successive regimes, due to lack of political will, have done little in policy, strategy or affirmative action to uplift the economic status of these underdeveloped areas. Economic marginalization is *accidental* through natural causes where, on the one hand, regions adversely affected by harsh climatic conditions (like the North-Eastern region of Kenya) remain underdeveloped, while regions with favourable climatic conditions (like the Rift Valley region and central province) tend to develop more quickly. This kind of natural marginalization can only be understood against the fact that agriculture is the backbone of Kenya's economy. The factor of proximity also plays a huge role in development; with regions near main cities tending to develop faster than regions in remote places which are forgotten and abandoned. It is important to note here that even in those regions that are seemingly developed, acute levels of marginalization are present in some specific areas.

Approaches to mitigate the economic marginalization that causes inequity and inequality have been carelessly neglected and it has been associated with political marginalization encompassed in ethnicized politics, which has brought about the political delusion mentioned above. As such, ethno-political marginalization is a creation by politicians for mobilization to power and a great mover of

Kenyan politics. Economic marginalization cannot be mitigated through the politics of ethnicity but only through new government policies and approaches.

However, ethno-political marginalization has been so deeply entrenched in the social and political fabric of Kenya at the expense of the underlying causes of economic marginalization and it has become a recipe for violence. KNCHR found that ethnicity camouflages the underlying factors of the violence, a fact also acknowledged by Wa Wamwere (2012a), who argues that "ethnic conflicts in Kenya are not entirely about ethnicity. They are about scrambling for scarce resources and power." Wa Wamwere traces this problem to capitalism, which gives way to a battle of classes where the rich continue to exploit, oppress and dominate the poor of all communities. He asks: "So, do Kikuyu elites exploit and oppress poor Kenyans including poor Kikuyus? Yes they do, but not alone. Non-Kikuyu elites exploit poor Kenyans, including those of their communities as well" (Wa Wamwere 2012b).

Social injustice in relation to the violence is exhibited in land distribution,[13] which has been an emotive and complex issue in Kenya. Problems revolving around land have their root in political misdoings through dominance, as discussed above. The Commission of Inquiry into the Illegal/Irregular Allocation of Public Land (CIIAPL), a commission constituted in 2003 to investigate the issue of land in Kenya, found that "A combination of legal and political factors … have over the years conspired to facilitate illegal and irregular allocations of public land" (CIIAPL 2004:7). CIIAPL found that many of the presidential land allocations were illegal since they were made for political patronage, given out either as political reward, or in return for political loyalty. The commission also notes that public land has been the subject of outright plunder through speculation, which has resulted in the unjust enrichment of a few people at great expense of the general welfare of the public" (CIIAPL:10, 74).

Similar to the divide and rule approach of the colonial government, the issue of land also has a colonial legacy. According to the Kenya Land Alliance[14] (KLA), colonial governments would dispossess entire local communities from their land but when the post-independence government took over, they did not resettle the dispossessed. Rather, a cautious market-based hybrid system of resettlement was preferred to a wholesale and massive land restitution programme. In addition, the Government adopted

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[13] This is a complex issue and therefore it requires more attention something that is not possible in this study, due to its limited scope.

[14] The Kenya Land Alliance (KLA) is a not-for-profit and non-partisan umbrella network of Civil Society Organizations and Individuals committed to effective advocacy for the reform of policies and laws governing land in Kenya. KLA was founded in 1999 and registered as a Trust in 2001. http://www.kenyalandalliance.or.ke/

certain policies and laws which had been introduced by the colonial government and fundamentally affected the rights of certain communities and many displaced peasants never got back their land, a reality that only heightened the resentment and discontentment of these communities who felt that justice has not been done (KLR 2004:6).

This situation brought about a squatter problem which is a direct consequence of the colonial land policy and law. According to KLA, the dispossession of many Kenyans from their land meant that only massive resettlement could provide a solution to the problem of landlessness. The Kenyatta government opted to resettle the displaced peasants through a settlement scheme programme which was based on the free market principle of "willing buyer, willing seller" which did not favour the majority of poor Kenyans who had lost their land. As such, the middle class took advantage of this principle and acquired massive pieces of land, while the political elite abused the process to accumulate large tracts of land at the expense of the poor and landless, who remain squatters in their own country (KLA 2004:7). This is also the finding of the Land Commission, which found that while the establishment of settlement schemes and their subsequent allocation in the early years of independence generally conformed to the original objectives, there was a general deviation from these objectives in the following years (CIIAPL: 125). Subsequently they note:

> The most glaring finding by the Commission with regard to settlement schemes is that land was allocated to personalities who were entirely undeserving. This was due to the fact that the allottees were neither "landless" nor in possession of any unique skills and facilities to be able to use the land in an agriculturally productive manner for the benefit of the country's economy" (CIIAPL 126).

This finding has persisted in the country to date, especially in the Rift Valley and Coastal regions and has made citizens permanent squatters in their own ancestral land. In the Coast region, for instance, KLR states that the colonial government introduced a land ordinance that affected the people living in the coast, which required them to get the titles of their land under the ordinance. The majority of the local people were disadvantaged because they were ignorant of this procedure; hence they could not claim ownership of land under the ordinance and as a result there arose the problem of elite absentee landlords who took advantage of this ignorance and acquired vast pieces of land and to this day continue to collect rent from the local people. These absentee landlords are basically not natives of the coast region and the local people continue to feel cheated and oppressed (KLR 2004:8). The combinations of these factors relating to land have continually made the Coast region prone to violence.

In conclusion, unfair displacement of people from their native land through discriminatory colonial policies of land alienation and irregular allocation and distribution of land have been the genesis

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of perennial land clashes, particularly in the Rift Valley and the Coast regions. Land issues have given way to insider/outsider, foreigner/indigenous discourses which have continually produced land tensions. Land issues are highly politicized and are used for political ends and this explains why land issues are only revived during election periods, which leads to politically instigated inter-ethnic clashes, whose result is displacement of people who had acquired land – either through resettlement schemes or genuine purchase in regions seen as belonging to a particular ethnic community. This issue brings on board another form of injustice, because the constitution of Kenya recognizes the rights of every citizen to live and own property anywhere in the country. Unless these social injustices are conclusively addressed they shall continue to pose a threat to peace in an already polarized nation because, as Julius Nyerere (1973:110) argued, "Injustice and peace are in the long run incompatible; stability in a changing world must mean ordered change towards justice."

3.5   MISSIOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON POLITICS IN KENYA

Having discussed the nature of politics in Kenya, there is a need for a missiology that can bring about meaningful transformation in the political arena in Kenya and such a transformation can only happen through faithful commitment to the mission call of the churches in Kenya. This is a proposal for a prophetic missiology, in constant and sincere dialogue and partnership with an African worldview.

3.5.1   A prophetic missiology

The presence of socio-political evils in Kenya mentioned above necessitates a prophetic missiology which boldly confronts these evils. This kind of missiology relies heavily on prophetic hermeneutics, especially through the model of the Old Testament prophets (and their prophetic interaction with the political powers of their time) as well as the prophetic example of Jesus. Some scholars have written about reading the Bible politically. Brueggemann (2012:5), for example, argues that, "All interpretation of the Bible is political and that it is not objective but, either knowingly or unwittingly, explicitly or implicitly, a voice of advocacy." Christopher Rowland (2012:19) argues that "the Bible offers a typology which can be identified with and at the same time be a means by which the present difficulties can be shown to be surmountable in the life of faith and community commitment." Richard Bauckham (2012:33) alerts us to an objection that is based on drawing contemporary political relevance from biblical texts, especially the Old Testament, due to dispensational differences, especially the theocratic nature of Old Testament Israel. Bauckham (2012:33) himself holds that God and his purpose for human

life in both testaments remain the same for human life now – a position that is held in this section because the principles of justice and democracy remain constant even though the contexts in which they are exercised may change.

When the Church is called to be prophetic it can also be said that it is called to be a sacrament, which means it is both a sign and an instrument (cf. De Kock 1996, Bosch 1991), an understanding that evokes different perspectives. For instance, Bosch (1991:376) argues that the church as a sacrament and sign calls for a creative tension of being called out of the world and at the same time sent into the world. Wynand de Kock (1996:142) holds a similar perspective: "Christ is present in the church and the church is present in the world through the empowerment of the Spirit of Christ and the church as sacrament is an instrument which effects what it signifies in and to the world." Bosch (1991:376) also warns us that the understanding of the church as a sacrament can bring the risk of the church being seen as a superior model to be emulated. Instead, "The picture of the church as a sacrament must be expressed transparently so that the spirit of dialogue and coexistence will not be taken away from the true spirit of Christian mission" (Pham 2010:280) This is exactly what Bevans and Schroeder (2011) calls mission as "prophetic dialogue."

A prophetic missiology also embraces both the ordained ministry and the ministry of the laity in social transformation. This is what Bosch (1991:467) has referred to as "mission as ministry by the whole people of God." According to the documents of Vatican II, "All the people of God share the prophetic office of Christ by a life of faith, love and praise of God because all have been anointed with the spirit of prophecy" (LG 12). Also, "Christ the great prophet … fulfils his prophetic voice not only through the hierarchy but also through the lay people" (LG 35). This "prophethood of all believers" approach contradicts the common notion that assumes that the prophetic mandate is a preserve of ordained ministry. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (2012:299) has distinguished between the responsibility of the spiritual office and the responsibility of the Christian in the prophetic role. He holds that it is the responsibility of the spiritual office to devote earnest attention to the proclamation of the reign of Christ as King and that it shall address government directly in order to draw its attention to shortcomings and errors which must otherwise imperil its governmental office. In regard to the political responsibility on the part of individual Christian, Bonhoeffer (2012:300) states,

> Certainly the individual Christian cannot be made responsible for the action of government, and he must not make himself responsible for it; but because of his faith and his charity he is responsible for his own calling and for the sphere of his personal life, however large or however small it may be. If this responsibility is fulfilled in faith, it is effectual for the whole of the polis. There is a responsibility of every individual for preserving the purity of his office and mission of

> the polis. In this way, in the true sense, every individual serves government with his responsibility. No one, not even government itself, can deprive him of this responsibility or forbid him to discharge it, for it is an integral part of his life in sanctification, and it arises from obedience to the Lord of both Church and government.

Bonhoeffer's sentiments are a call to every Christian to uphold gospel values in their own ways in their contexts and this will spread throughout like fire. Ken Wilson and Alex Vines (1995:141) give us a good example of the contribution of lay people in a process of democratization in Mozambique. They argue that the peace that was necessary for the democratization of Mozambique was established not by the United Nations, political parties or church hierarchies but through the work of the local people who locally brokered a ceasefire and conflict resolution procedures. On this Le Bruyns (2012:71f) argues that "responsible citizenship affirms the meaningful and constructive role ordinary people in their personal and professional capacities can fulfil towards the common good." This invites the churches to embark on teaching and empowering their members to actively participate in patriotic values and endeavours, a task discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

A prophetic missiology has two dimensions: a dimension of constructive confrontation and a dimension of promotion. Such confrontation and promotion should almost be simultaneous if it is to fill the gap usually left by the tendency of the Church to just speak against socio-political injustices and do nothing about it. Constructive confrontation is based on the practice of the Old Testament prophets who boldly confronted the political powers of their time. Leonardo Boff (1979:172) argues that the prophetic task deals with annunciation and denunciation in the wake of social injustices, human rights violations, suffering, totalitarian states, absolutist ideologies and so on. The other dimension of a prophetic missiology is that it does not only confront evils but also promotes democratic values.[15] Some scholars have argued that democracy is not strictly a political experience because it has other dimensions, a perspective also held in this section. John Murray (1960:47-48), for instance, holds the view that "democracy is more than a political experiment; it is a spiritual and moral enterprise". Similarly, John Lewis (1976:194) seems to also attest to this when he argues that there are overlapping concerns, both in government and church: the unique value of persons; the concern for justice; peace and orderly life in the body politic; and the ultimate ends and purposes of good governance." Hence,

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[15] The use of the term democratic values should not be confused with democracy as a political system. It is used here to mean values and principle of governance based on justice which are meant for the welfare of all the citizens of country. It is as a result of loopholes in democracy as a political system that the big ethnic communities in Kenya have continually dominated the small communities, even though political power has been legally obtained. Democracy as used in this present study is not meant to mean ''the rule of the majority" but "rule for the common good."

going with Lewis' comparative approach, as the church is called to witness to the values of the kingdom, it is equally called to witness to democratic values.

One of the ways the church can promote democratic values is by the church itself upholding and reflecting democracy from within. On this issue, Daniel Ott (2011:359) says that "the church fosters trust through the internal practice of democratic community wherein persons value community and communities value persons." He further notes that it is through heightening democratic tendencies within the church that there will be renewed trust between the church and the public sphere (Ott 2011:360). Unless the church has light in its internal democracy, it cannot be the light of the world.

Another way that the church can promote democracy is through education for responsible citizenship. This can be done through various ways as it fits particular contexts. Most notably, the Roman Catholic Church has continually used pastoral letters to educate its members to be responsible citizens. An example of this is a pastoral letter sent by the Kenya Episcopal Conference to the Catholic Christians before the elections of 2013. The bishops exhorted the Christians: "As we approach the forthcoming General Elections, we remind our brothers and sisters that the principles of democracy, respect for human life and one another … are vital for the preservation of peace before, during and after the elections" (Daughters of Paul 2012:4,5).

Another way of education is the pulpit ministry. Lewis (1976:196) sees the pulpit as an important platform to form political conscience. He further notes that the sermonic diet should be wide and varied and in dealing with matters of political interest hermeneutically, the word of God becomes a reference point, hence making the prophetic concern the will of God. However, Lewis' opinion poses the risk of "Christianizing the government" which should be avoided by working on the issues that are common to the interest of the whole community. Lewis (1976:196) has further argued that,

> The church is obligated, therefore, to help its members understand the moral issues involved in governmental and political actions. It has unique responsibility to help shape a Christian moral conscience in the discharge of one's citizenship. It fulfils this obligation when it educates its members in the moral issues confronting government in the writing and administration of laws of the land; in the attainment of justice for all its citizens; in directing its members into responsible political involvement; and in working with all other citizens for a "just and peaceful society" .

This shaping of a Christian moral conscience should also have an empowerment dimension. To citizens under the bondage of political manipulation education may not be enough but an empowering education is needed. In other words, political manipulation requires political empowerment to be remedied. Amon Kasambala (2005:271) views empowerment as a missional concept and notes that, "Empowering becomes a process of enabling the other to reach towards their God-given potential, and

allowing them to apply the same in their localized situations." Given the reality of political manipulation and oppression in Kenya, most Kenyans are in a kind of a bondage that makes their patriotic loyalty secondary to ethnic loyalty. This is dangerous because ethnic loyalty is exclusive and dominating but patriotic loyalty is inclusive and serves the national good and interests. As such, there is need of a missiology that empowers citizens first and foremost to have their eyes opened so that they can discover that they are political hostages and secondly to empower them to resist political powers that manipulate and oppress them. De Kock (1996:139) notes that this empowerment is not just for the sake of empowerment but an empowerment that is fuelled by the mission of God in the world. Mission in light of the current discussion should be inspired by Jesus' motive in Luke 4 "to set the captives free" and it is based on a missiology which aims at setting citizens free from political bondage**.**

There are some notable examples of the role of the church in the process of democratization in Africa. Paul Gifford (1995b: 277) discusses the role that the churches in Liberia played during the time of civil war, anarchy and uncertain political times, especially during the time of Samuel Doe and Charles Taylor. Most notable is the brokering of a peace initiative by the joint effort of the Liberian Council of Churches (LCC) and the National Muslim Congress in 1990. During the anarchy in Liberia, the LCC called for peace negotiations through public statements and organized marches, even when it was risky to do so. Emmanuel Katongole (2011:40) highlights the critical role that Archbishop Desmond Tutu played during the transition from apartheid to New South Africa as well as in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which has subsequently influenced processes of Truth and Reconciliation in other countries in Africa. He also commends the role played by Archbishop Odama and the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative that advocated an end to armed conflict in northern Uganda and facilitated the talks that brought together the rebels and the government. These are only a few examples that show how the churches in Africa have prophetically intervened in situations of political uncertainty and transition. However, as it will be seen in the subsequent section, such prophetic intervention in Kenya and Liberia has not been championed by churches as institutions but by individual church ministers under their personal initiatives. This serves as a call to the church as an institution to embrace the prophetic call in contexts of public corruption, political manipulation and oppression as well as socio-economic injustices.

3.5.2   A missiology in dialogue with the African worldview.

Each cultural group in the world has its own unique identity. Joseph Nyasani (1997:56-57) argues that, like Asians and Europeans, Africans are products of unique cultural edifices and streams that arose from

environmental conditioning and long standing cultural traditions. He further argues that within this cultural stream, there are psychological and moral characteristics pertaining to African identity, personality and dignity. It is these cultural edifices and streams that are referred to as the African worldview — and not "worldviews" — in this chapter, because as John Mbiti (1991:6) argues, although each African people have their own cultural heritage which could be different from the others, they add to the variety of an African worldview. Also, it is these cultural edifices and streams that give the Africans their identity beyond the colour of their skin and geographical position. It is important to note that culture and religion are inseparable in the African sense and it is difficult to talk of one without talking of the other (Mbiti 1991:10; Mugambi 1989:128).

There are current discussions in theological and missiological circles that the centre of gravity of Christianity is shifting to the southern hemisphere (cf. Sanneh 2003, Jenkins 2010, Galgalo 2012). This growth is perceived against the so much mentioned decline of Christianity in the West. However, what is clear is that the measuring rod for both the decline and growth in reference is numerical strength, always evaluated through attendance of church services. This is certainly not a sufficient ground for making a holistic judgment of the status of Christianity in the world today. There have been some concerns about the nature of Christianity in Africa which is largely seen as inefficient within the African realities in the socio-political sphere, what Katongole (2009: 84) calls "Christianity without consequence." Galgalo (2012:7) concurs:

> At a deeper level Christianity has failed to inspire, shape or transform African social history and basic identity. A glance through history may unravel why Christianity even though widely accepted and followed in Africa has remained a stranger within the phenomenal world of African religiosity.

Although Christianity has affected some arenas in Africa like democracy, as discussed above, it has not meaningfully on a large scale affected the socio-political realities of Africa. This has led to critical questions such as is asked by Katongole (2011:40): "the major question is why has Christianity despite its overwhelming presence, failed to make a significant dent in the social history of the continent?" One of the responses to this question is what Katongole (2011:43) himself calls the ambiguity of Christianity in its relationship with Africa's social history. As a result, Christianity has never been fully at home within the social, material and political complexities of African life. This is the concern that arose out of the genocide in Rwanda one of the most evangelized country in Africa (Katongole & Hartgrove 2009:93) and also the 2007/8 post-election violence in Kenya, a country with about eighty five percent Christians. As such therefore, these concerns should be discussed alongside the discussions of the rapid growth of

Christianity in Africa. As Laurenti Magesa (1997:16) argues, there is a persistence and continuity of African religion despite its exclusion by Islam and Christianity in Africa. Likewise Uzukwu (1982:45-46) argues that the African worldview is alive and can therefore not be ignored:

> This persistence of the African worldview, in spite of the multiple assaults directed against it, shows that any search for new paradigms today that ignores the African vision of the world is doomed to failure … only those values which are fundamental to the African's perception of the universe should be used and radically interpreted to form the new sub-structure of Africa of tomorrow.

This argument by Uzukwu seems to be similar to the approach of Lewis mentioned above, when they draw the similarity between democratic values and kingdom values. Consequently, Andrea Ng'weshemi (1999:61) raises perhaps the most fundamental question as far as this discussion is concerned:

> How does the African Religion help people to face the challenges connected with the African history of colonialism, poverty, ethnic wars and other problems which the continent has and is still experiencing? Are there any areas or aspects of African Religion that need further examination and elaboration in the present African situation to make it relevant as a way of life and life itself, inseparable from other realities of human life?

Therefore, a missiology that can work towards the transformation of the Kenyan political situation must be in active communion with other players and most particularly with the African worldview. There must be deliberate and strategic attempts to entrench some African values in modern politics. It is such a thinking that leads Segaja and Ojara (1997:61), in their discussion on the role of the Church in East Africa in regard to the transformation and Africanisation of politics, to argue that "Politics in Africa, like Christianity, needs to become African. It is more European and Western than is Christianity." They also note:

> The church …must find ways by which it can inspire the revitalization and injection of African values, such as communality or collectiveness, non-exclusion and pluralism into modern politics in Africa …We also contend that the inculturation of the Gospel in Africa will always remain half done unless sociopolitical environment (thinking and practice) has a strong African character. Moreover more has been written on the need of inculturation in Africa, but little has been done to effect it (Segaja and Ojara 1997:61).

It is through this kind of inculturation of both Christianity and politics in Africa that African values which can enhance proper governance and promote peaceful communities are embraced. Such African values can be said to be encompassed in the African philosophy of community which glued many African societies together because the interest of the whole society exceeded that of the individual or a

particular ethnic community. Such a philosophy leaves little room for forms of exclusive, dominating and oppressive tendencies.

3.6 THE CHURCHES IN KENYA AND POLITICS

This section seeks to analyze the approach of the churches in Kenya to politics. The relationship between churches and politics has been ambiguous in many ways. Many churches were torn between different opinions, while others were focused on their mission in the political world. Whereas this can be done in the light of the 2007/8 post-election violence, it will be more helpful to look at the general understanding of politics by the churches and the nature of practice that emerges from such an understanding. Understanding the progressive nature and dynamism of politics in Kenya will help in understanding the whole picture.

3.6.1 Agency: who were involved?

Among the churches in Kenya, perhaps apart from the Roman Catholic Church and the NCCK who regularly speak as institutions, in the PCEA and ACK there were only particular individuals who spoke in their own personal capacities (Gifford 1995a:1, Lonsdale 2009:65, Throup 1995:156). This is similar to what happened in Liberia during the civil war, where most churches were thoroughly integrated in the system and it was individual clergy who spoke out rather than their churches (Gifford 1995a:278). Some notable names of clergy that can be mentioned in this regard in Kenya are: Archbishop David Gitari, Bishop Alexander Muge and Bishop Henry Okullu – all of the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) – and Reverend Timothy Njoya of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA). These clergy acted from personal conviction because the ecclesial institutions they represented were either for the government or were highly divided in opinion. They were outspoken critics of the Kenyan government on issues of abuse of human rights, socio-injustices and, more prominently, advocating multi-party democracy. In their quest they faced opposition from within and without.

From within, often times the institutions to which they belonged had to give statements disassociating themselves from the sentiments made by these clergy, with Njoya being defrocked and reinstated by PCEA a number of times (Throup 1995:156-161). From without, these clergy – in speaking against the government – were taking dangerous risks that not only threatened them as individuals but also their families. Gitari went through many tribulations, which included attacks by gangs on his house and public embarrassment by politicians (Gitari 2004:220). Okullu too had a share of similar tribulations,

with his life continually threatened by political actors (Gachuhi 2010). Muge was also continually threatened and his resilience led to his death, which is widely thought to have been an assassination. Apart from Muge, who paid the ultimate price, Njoya is arguably the most vocal and as such he has suffered physically more than any other clergy in Kenya. Through his encounters with the authorities he has been detained without trial, and has survived brutal beating by security agents. After Kibaki came to power in 2002, some of the evils in Moi's regime continued and apart from the mentioned clergy there has not emerged bold clergy to confront the political powers in regard to social injustice and governance.

In the 2007 post-election violence, the KNCHR report identifies, in general ways, how the church was involved politically. Whereas there are some instances that are clear on which churches and particular church leaders were involved in matters of politics discussed above, it is difficult in many cases to state which churches and church leaders were involved without doing a thorough empirical research.

3.6.2   Ecclesial Scrutiny

Since the post-independence period in Kenya, there have been some political situations that have demanded the participation and contribution of the churches. Most notably there are four main episodes that can be mentioned. First, is the era of president Moi (from 1978 to 2002) which was characterized by massive corruption, abuse of human rights, social injustices and political assassinations and tyranny (Wa Wamwere 2002:159, Vogl 2012:13, Wa Mungai & Gona 2013:219). The response of Kenyan churches to these issues was ambiguous, with some supporting the status quo, others opting not to interfere with politics, while some criticized it. Secondly, there is the fight against one-party rule, which saw the introduction of multi-party democracy in 2002. Church leaders were instrumental in this process and struggle, especially in the absence of an active and organized opposition because of the risks and threats it entailed. Thirdly, there is the process of constitution writing which saw the promulgation of a new constitution in 2010. However, during the referendum of 2010 that saw the promulgation of the current constitution, the churches in Kenya were divided, with some supporting it and others opposing it. Many churches left the decision to the discretion of their members, while some (especially evangelical) churches unsuccessfully propagated what was referred to as "the no campaign," whose objection to the passing of the constitution was based on Christian concerns. Finally, there is the 2007/8 post-election violence where the churches were involved in different ways. While some

preached peace, others were involved in disturbing it and in many instances the churches were seen to be complacent and partisan. According to the KNCHR,

> Faith organisations were however tainted by what citizens perceived as pre-election partisanship. Leaders of FBOs were often seen to support certain political parties….the comments by John Cardinal Njue indicating his scepticism about the Majimbo system of government illustrate the extent to which religion was implicated or perceived to be fronting partisan agendas ahead of the 2007 elections. The public's perception that FBOs were not neutral further compounded the polarisation that was characteristic of the 2007 elections that had resulted in a situation where no single national institution appeared neutral enough to offer moral leadership when the country descended into chaos" (KNCHR 2008:142).

> This ethnicisation is also reflected by the extent to which other institutions were unable to play a mediating role to curb the violence or to address the injustices it occasioned. Religious leaders too admitted having failed in their duties to preach without political or ethnic partiality" (KNCHR 2008:167).

Generally speaking, from the foregoing discussion, three categories of participation in politics by churches in Kenya can be identified. First, some churches saw the demarcation between politics and religions clearly drawn hence they did not actively engage in politics. On this, Gitari (2004:7-8) argues that, "Church leaders who have adopted the attitude that politics and religion cannot be mixed may have come to the conclusion that there is nothing to be debated as the line of demarcation between church and politics is very clear." However, another reason for the churches' passivity at that time was fear and intimidation posed by the government and many churches were not willing to face the threat.

Secondly, some ecclesial institutions supported the status quo for different reasons. Gifford, for instance, says: "During the one party rule, some churches were seen to be supporting the government either from ethnic or clientelist considerations or out of a theological conviction that political involvement was not the of churches" (Gifford 1995a:41). Thirdly, some church leaders understood that, "The concerns of religion are so broad that politics, like all other aspects of human life, is hardly out of religion's ambit" (Galgalo, 2010) and this was the conviction that inspired the clergy mentioned above.

From the encounters of these clergy, it appears that the prophetic approach is the most prominent means through which the churches in Kenya have engaged politics. As such, the leaders seem to lean so much on the Old Testament prophets from whose approach they borrow. Lonsdale (2009:60) argues that, "In Kenya as elsewhere, the Old Testament is generally regarded as the main biblical archive in which to search for prophetic statements of truth to power, the New as the source-book of personal and societal salvation. Many Kenyan churchmen, those of a more liberal theological persuasion combine the two." Gitari (2004:7) identifies the roots of his theological approach to involvement in the public life of Kenya:

> The doctrine of creation reminds us that God not only creates but also sustains his creation; the doctrine of humanity reminds us that God commanded humans to take part in his creativity; the doctrine of incarnation reminds us that God took residence among us and spoke on the stage of human history; the doctrine of God shows us how Jesus was involved in the social, political, economic and spiritual affairs of the world. These have been the theological roots of my involvement in the public life of Kenya.

This systematic theological approach is an example of the theological conviction of the clergy who confronted the political powers that hosted injustices and aristocracies. An example of this is one of the most notable sermons by Gitari, who used the story of Naboth (1 Kings 21:1-29) to speak against land grabbing that was happening in his diocese (Gathogo 2007:148).

Another theological approach to politics in Kenya has been the "change from within" approach. The proponents of this approach think that by entering government they can change things from within, can lead by example and can reach more people with their service. They also quote texts like Proverbs 29:2: "When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; but when the wicked rule, the people mourn," to justify their quest for political office. This has been the main reason why some clergy have sought elective political offices in recent times[16]. One of the church leaders vying for political office in 2013, Boniface Adoyo, argued that, "I am in politics to serve people, even the church is service to mankind. My little church involvement has limitations in meeting Kenyans' social needs through offerings of the church, but I'm frustrated by mismanagement of public resources" (in Barasa 2013). Adoyo sees his service as bishop as service to humanity, intended to extend this service outside the constituency of the church and being a church leader he has a vantage position to manage public resources. Galgalo (2010) comments: "A prophet and a politician may share similar concerns, but there is no confusion of roles or difficulty in telling the two apart." These different kinds of theological understanding have shaped and formed political involvement by churches, some of which are discussed in the subsequent section.

3.6.3 Discernment for action: What kind of encounters do Kenyan churches have with politics?

Theological understandings of politics have continually shaped the actions of churches in Kenya toward politics. In other words, the understanding of missiology defines the mission of the Church. For those who discern God at work in the political arena, participate in it by using different public actions. First, there is the use of the pulpit. The "prophetic" clergy, who have already been discussed, fearlessly used

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[16] Most of the clergy who went for elective political positions were however unsuccessful. In the current parliament, the only clergy who was successful is Rev. Mutava Musyimi, who is the immediate former Secretary General of NCCK.

the pulpit to advocate justice and political change. These sermons would cause significant discomfort among the political class and as a result they led to the persecution of those clergy. Another action is activism which was exhibited by Njoya through demonstrations and rallies. It is in so doing that he was detained and bodily harmed by security forces. It is through such activism that the Moi government was pushed to amend the constitution to give way to multi-party democracy.

Perhaps the most popular form of action has been statements and press conferences. This approach was used by church leaders whenever they felt they needed to respond to some socio-political issue in Kenya. The effect of such press statements can be said to be inconsequential because nothing was done by the government in response to such statements. Another criticism of this approach is the selective way in which the churches spoke out. The Church has been much more vocal on evangelical and moral issues than it has been on critical political issues. For instance, the absence of the Church's voice in regard to nepotism and favouritism in public appointments, as discussed above, is very disturbing.

Another emerging trend is Church leaders attending political meetings and rallies, thus openly displaying their political affiliation. On this Galgalo (2010) argues: "All-out political campaign rallies by the Church amount to crossing the very thin line between prophecy and party politics, in the raw contextual sense of the word." Also, during the election campaigns of 2013, church leaders were seen offering special prayers for specific political candidates in churches as well as at political rallies, which clearly indicated what political faction these churches belonged to. However, while offering prayers for political leaders is not in itself a bad thing, doing so selectively for particular politicians is questionable since it gives those churches partisan and non-neutral tags.

Another action is the opening of the pulpit to politicians during worship services, who then use the pulpit to propagate party political interests. However, some churches have since reflected on this issue. The Anglican and the Roman Catholic churches, for instance, have banned the use of church pulpits by politicians (Leftie 2012). Dolan (2012) also gives the example of Archbishop Boniface Lele and his eighty priests in the Mombasa Catholic archdiocese who categorically stated that they would neither host prayer rallies nor allow their church facilities to be used for promoting divisive ethnic groupings.

3.7   CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to deal with the complex issues of politics in Kenya by asking what is wrong with politics in Kenya. The evils of political dominance and marginalization, ethnicized politics and

economic marginalization and social injustices were identified. The chapter also asked what would be a missiological response to such politics and a proposal of prophetic missiology and a missiology in dialogue with the African worldview was proposed. There was also an analysis of the practice of the churches in regard to politics which has showed how the church both as an institution as well as individual church leaders have responded to political events that demanded the church's voice and action. God is concerned with good governance and the holistic well-being of his creation and therefore he is doing something about the socio-political evils in Kenya. The churches in Kenya are called to take sides, not the side of oppressive forces but the side of justice and good governance. This means that the church has a missional role to play in situations of bad politics and situations of social injustices, and unless it fulfils this role, it fails to participate in the mission of God in Kenya.

ETHNICITY IN KENYA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the topic of ethnicity, following mainly Wa Wamwere's[17] understanding of the term. Wa Wamwere (2008:97) argues that there is something wrong with the usage of the word "ethnicity" to refer to both innocent ethnic identity and harmful ethnic hate and – to remove any possible confusion around the term – he prefers the term "ethnicity" to refer to positive ethnic identity and "negative ethnicity" to ethnic hatred, bias and exclusivism. Negative ethnicity played a huge role in the 2007/8 post-election violence and to understand it, this chapter has three sections. First, it addresses the nature of ethnicity in Kenya by using corresponding quotes from the KNCHR report. Two trends are discussed in this regard: Negative ethnicity as an ideology, and culture and distorted identities. Secondly, it reflects missiologically on ethnicity based on the contextual understanding of ethnicity in Kenya. Three dimensions are reflected on: unity in diversity, liberating identity and humanity as first identity. Finally, it analyzes the relationship between the Kenyan churches and ethnicity.

4.2 NEGATIVE ETHNICITY AS AN IDEOLOGY AND CULTURE

> Kenya remains an exceedingly ethnically-polarized country. Ethnic suspicions stoke intrigue within virtually all public institutions and public life generally, in turn making it difficult for public institutions to facilitate effective nation-building. This indeed was the scenario, which Kenya's security forces encountered when they attempted to protect the lives and property of Kenyans during the post-elections violence (KNCHR 2008:168).

Negative ethnicity has continually affected Kenya as a nation in many grave ways, but the most extreme instance was the 2007/8 post-election violence. It has continued to erode national cohesion by widening the rift between different ethnic communities and as such it remains one of the major threats to peace, stability and tranquillity in Kenya. With such devastating effects, negative ethnicity should be abhorred, fought and rejected at all cost. However, instead of banning it, most Kenyans have embraced negative ethnicity as an ideology and consequently as a culture, with its roots penetrating in almost every area of the social fabric in Kenya. Most astonishingly, it has been embraced by most Kenyans, regardless of their social, educational or religious status. This is the reason why Wa Wamwere (2011) has said: "Ultimately,

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[17] Koigi wa Wamwere is perhaps the Kenyan who has written and spoken most incisively on 'negative ethnicity'. He has done this in books and newspaper articles as well as in television interviews. His most outstanding work in this regard is *Towards genocide in Kenya: the curse of negative ethnicity* (Wamwere 2008).

negative ethnicity is Kenya's opiate of the people. Smoked together, it equalizes weak and powerful, rich and poor, kings and subjects, bishops and atheists, professors and illiterates. What really is it?" With such influence among the citizens, negative ethnicity has continually and prominently become the platform on which national matters are played out and the lens through which matters of national interest have been viewed. For the purpose of this chapter, there are basically four areas where this has happened: politics, institutions of higher learning, the media and the churches.

Ethnicity, as already elaborated in the previous chapter, has featured significantly in shaping politics in Kenya and has become the determinant factor in national politics. Hence Wa Wamwere (2012a) states: "Inevitably, we look forward to elections, not as a democratic exercise by citizens to give themselves the best possible leaders, but as a do-or-die contest between communities whose results are the beginning of an endless struggle for resources and power." Another example related to this is the way negative ethnicity has affected the public sense of justice. This becomes visible when some prominent politicians are accused of public offences like corruption, and their respective ethnic communities see it as an attack on their community. It is because of such attitudes that the Eliud Wabukala, the head of ACK, has urged Kenyans "to desist from the tendency of protecting wrong doers on the basis of tribalism and ethnicity" (*Nation* 2010).

Next to the political sphere, negative ethnicity has also penetrated institutions of higher education. Ethnic patterns continue to inform universities' faculties. According to the audit conducted by NCIC in six public universities and nine constituent colleges, the majority of staff either come from the same ethnic group as the Vice-Chancellor or the principal or the locality of the institution (NCIC 2012:10):

> In the public universities and constituent colleges, the five largest communities — the Kikuyu, Luhya, Kalenjin, Luo and Kamba who together make up about 66% of the Kenyan population constitute over 81% of the total workforce. This severs opportunities to enhance the face of Kenya in these institutions thus excluding the other more than 37 ethnic communities. For example, in the six public universities analyzed, the representation of the five big communities is over 86% (NCIC 2012: 7).

This statistics show that like in the political appointments discussed in the previous chapter, the big five ethnic communities continue to dominate institutions of higher learning to the exclusion and marginalization of other ethnic communities, a political oppression that has heightened animosity among ethnic groups.

Perhaps the most influential shaper of negative ethnicity, however, is the media: the electronic and print media, vernacular radio stations and the social media. Jamal Abdi Ismail and James Deane

(2008:320-321) argue that the media have been in the forefront of the struggle for reforms in Kenya, exposing corruption and acting as a vigorous forum for public debate. However, they argue that this reputation is now being challenged because the media have been accused of fanning the flames of ethnic hatred and of marginalizing voices of reason at a time of ethnically polarized politics. Ismail and Deane see this failure also in existence of vernacular radio stations, which serve a particular ethnic group with particular political interests and as a result it becomes difficult to balance different interests.

Social media have also become a fertile ground from which negative ethnicity breeds. The level of hatred propagated through social media in Kenya has reached worrying proportions and more so because it is being propagated by the youth (cf. *Nation*, 2013a; *Nation,* 2013b). With the technological revolution in Kenya, many young people can easily access social media, and with this possibility the ethnic bigotry in it continue to shape their ethnic imaginations, which makes them see Kenya through prejudiced ethnic spectacles, an explosive threat to the future of the country.

The flourishing of negative ethnicity as an ideology in public spheres has been accepted as a norm, with many people getting socialized by it. It has been successfully but worryingly embedded as the nation's ideology of politics, economics, elections, public institutions and general life. Negative ethnicity continues to promote exclusion and marginalization, a trend that should be avoided and eliminated as it does not promote a cohesive society and further to that it poses grave consequences to the peace and stability of the nation.

4.3   DISTORTED ETHNIC IDENTITIES

A key official of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, Eldoret informed the KNCHR that in the period immediately after violence began, many local people were heard saying that all PNU people must go 'kwa nini walipiga kura nje?' (Why did they vote for 'outsiders'?), and 'iko adui', (there is an enemy) referring to the presence of the non-Kalenjin. The level of hostility towards the Kikuyu community was expressed by a Kalenjin Elder Jackson Kibor during an interview with the BBC in which he said: '...We will not sit down and see one ethnic group lead Kenya. This is a war, we will start a war. One ethnic group cannot lead the other ethnic groups' (KNCHR 2008: 71).

Matters of identity are matters of belonging. Culture and kinship never go away and it is very important for people to have a shared language, history, culture, songs, literature and food. Ethnic identity creates a sense of belonging, hence its diversity and this diversity, as Makau Mutua (2012) agues, should be a strength and not a debilitating weakness. Albert De Jong (1999:7) concurs with this when he argues that "Ethnic identity is a basic component of African nature and cannot be done away with," a view also held

by Mary Getui (1999:18): "Being at ethnic variance is an inevitable reality." As such, ethnic diversity should not be demonized. What should be abhorred is a distorted sense of ethnic reality that brings about exclusivism and ethnocentrism. Peter Gichure (1999:23) states: "Ethnicity is a blessing, ethnocentrism is a curse." In Kenya, distorted ethnic identities imply destructive categorization of other ethnic groups, demeaning labelling of some particular ethnic groups and ethnic superiority and/or inferiority complexes. Destructive categorization creates the categories of "them, outsiders" and "we insiders," which may lead to exclusion and violence. According to the report of the Kenya Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC 2013:58):

> Ethnic tension and violence occur when communities assert a superior claim over a territory at the expense of or to the exclusion of others. Such superior claims are based on the assumption that ownership or occupation at some point in the past created an exclusive claim for such ownership or occupation in the present. Such exclusive claims to territory inevitably create classes of 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. This perception of people as outsiders as opposed to fellow citizens often lead to increased tension based on ethnicity which, in turn, created the potential for ethnic violence.

This exclusive insider/outsider dynamics are against the constitution of Kenya, which gives all citizens the freedom of staying anywhere in the country. However, this provision many not be as easy as it sounds because of other factors like historical injustices as have been discussed in chapter three. These distorted identities have a colonial legacy, when many administrative boundaries were formed along ethnic lines because the colonial government confined African political activity to ethnic districts. This form of identity has been reinforced by political manipulation, since ethnic otherness is seen as a point of departure and division and, due to ethnicized politics, the outsider is seen as an enemy for voting against the will of the insiders.

Demeaning labelling of particular ethnic groups has been done through setting up of ethnic stereotypes and perceptions. In this regard, the TJRC (2013:59) found:

> Negative perceptions and stereotypes are a major cause of ethnic tension in the country. Labels have been put on certain communities, portraying them in broad, often negative terms that generalize certain traits and apply them to all individuals belonging to the described community, regardless of how individuals perceive themselves. For example, the Kikuyu are sometimes described as thieves, the Maasai as primitive, the Somali as terrorists, etc.

These stereotypes have also started appearing in ethnic jokes in recent times, though some of these jokes are not meant to go beyond the comedy zone, they too are dangerous as they shape distorted ethnic identities. Richard Jenkins (2008:67) says: "Ethnic jokes are a potent site of passive resistance to domination. They are also equally effective in the categorization of ethnic subordinates. Jokes facilitate

categorization where it may not be socially acceptable or explicitly possible; there's no such thing as *just* a joke, and ethnic jokes are no exception".

Existing ethnic superiority and/or inferiority complexes closely connect to demeaning labelling and have political and cultural reasons. Politically, superiority complexes are a direct product of the political dominance of large communities, as Wa Wamwere (2008:97) argues: "Assumed ethnic superiority leads to negative ethnicity," while inferiority complexes are the direct product of political marginalization, often common among the small tribes who struggle for political survival in Kenya. Culturally, there are some ethnic communities that look down upon some communities due to their cultural practices. This is what Sesi (2009:4) has called cultural supremacy. On this the TJRC (2013:59) found:

> The Commission also received evidence that some stereotypes are drawn from and driven by traditional cultural beliefs and practices. For instance, the Commission heard that men from communities that do not practice male circumcision have always been stigmatized and regarded as lesser or weaker men, and therefore, incapable of or unsuitable to take political leadership of the country.

In 2013, the NCIC conducted a nationwide study on the use of coded language and stereotypes by various communities in Kenya and how they are perceived by the users and target groups. They concluded: "This study was prompted by the realization that individuals sometimes use stereotypes and coded language to invoke feelings of hate towards particular Kenyan ethnic communities which, in turn, raises the possibility of recurrence of ethnic conflicts" (NCIC 2013). Dangerous stereotypes used include: the Kikuyu are thieves; the Luo are uncircumcised' children and not fully developed; the Kamba are wizards; the people from the Coastal region are lazy (Cf. NCIC 2013). Such stereotypes and coded language inspire ethnic animosity and dehumanize people from some ethnic communities and have been and remains a recipe for violence and instability. As a result there must be approaches that seek to combat the threat posed by such distorted identities and there must be deliberate interruptions of the stories that emerge from such stereotyping.

4.4 MISSIOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON ETHNICITY

Having discussed the nature of ethnicity in Kenya, the primary question to ask is: What kind of missiology is required to respond to and mitigate the ethnic realities discussed? Because God does not stand with exclusion and marginalization, there is need for a missiology that can, on the one hand, promote a proper view of ethnicity and, on the other hand, combat distorted ethnic perspectives. It is on this basis that this study discusses the concept of unity in diversity and the concept of humanity as "primary identity."

4.4.1 Unity in Diversity

Otherness has been often mistakenly perceived in negative forms. Denise Ackerman (1998:16) points out that otherness has often been seen as problematic, threatening and alienating. Zizioulas (1998:349) agrees: "It is not true that by definition the other is my enemy." Otherness is diversity, a diversity that should be celebrated and not abhorred, a diversity that need to be embraced and not scattered and a diversity that should be accepted and not rejected. Mwaura (2009:26) has observed: "Ethnic diversity is, what, how and where people are and diversity is a blessing which should be turned into a fruitful and rewarding resource that can be used to enrich the concept of nationhood."

Diversity is always perceived through categories of difference and distance. The more people are aware of their differences the more they tend to keep a distance from each other. To Ackermann (1998:16, 26), difference is a reality we should not bother to wish away, when she argues:

> We must always be alert to the reality of difference. It will not go away, neither should it… If we believe that difference is no accident but rather a reality and a gift which challenges us to just and loving relationships, we will not be alone in our efforts to practice relationship and mutuality.

However, this is only one side of the coin. The other side is that otherness can, when manipulated, cause internal problems such as disrespect of human rights and social injustice and when diversity is used this way it becomes a curse (Tarimo 2008:299). Zizioulas (1998:349-350) likewise argues that difference becomes a threat even when in actual fact it does not pose any threat. This threat is based on some fear of the other that is pathologically inherent in our existence and it is nothing but fear of the different. However, this argument by Zizioulas cannot be taken in its absolute sense. The claim that the fear of otherness is inherent may not be accurate because it presupposes that we are born to fear otherness. The fear of otherness is nurtured rather than inherent. Zizioulas (1998:350) continues:

> When the fear of the other is shown to be the fear of otherness we come to the point of identifying difference with division. This complicates and obscures human thinking and behaviour

to an alarming degree. The moral consequences are in this case very serious. We divide our lives and human beings according to difference. We organize states, clubs, fraternities, even Churches on the basis of difference. The different beings become distant beings: because difference becomes division, distinction becomes distance.

From these views, it can be argued that when otherness becomes a point of departure and a foundation of division it breeds exclusivism and rejection. Diversity should enrich our existence and beautify our world because division and exclusivism creates acute poverty in our existence and makes our world indecent because of hatred, rejection and violence. In an attempt to better understand the concept of diversity, there are some theological perspectives that need to be explored. Ecclesiology offers a good starting point in understanding diversity because the Church as the body of Christ properly demonstrates how we can understand diversity. Ackermann (1998:16) notes: "To speak of the other is to speak of the nature of the church, the one body of many parts, challenged to unity in Jesus Christ." This is affirmed by Frank Macchia (2004:5), who points out: "Unity is one of the marks of the church, and division is scandalous." The proponents of ecclesial unity sometimes mistake unity for uniformity on the one hand and diversity for disunity on the other. Macchia (2004:5) argues:

> Western philosophical systems have stressed uniformity or singularity of meaning... Under the influence of this way of thinking, ecumenists have been tempted to see increased diversification and difference within Christian traditions as signs of failure rather than as a movement of God's Spirit in the world. They labor under an inadequate ecumenical hermeneutic.

Though Macchia's sentiments are not representative of all ecumenical approaches, they provoke us to separate the distinction between legitimate diversity and legitimate unity, on the one hand, from scandalous divisions and idolatrous uniformity, on the other. This argument rightly suggests that not all uniformity or unity is indeed good. Certainly this is more understood against the tower of Babel experience (Genesis 9:1-11). Eunice Kamaara (2010:126) argues that, although Christian values are expected to foster national cohesion and identity, more often than not Christianity has provided a convenient and effective rallying point around which ethnic conflicts are mobilized. She justifies her arguments by referring to research reports that have highlighted the role of churches in genocides, something Katongole (2009) has also documented − particularly in the events of the Rwanda genocide of 1994. Inasmuch this is a truism, it is incorrect to blame Christianity for this, as Kamaara seems to do. While divisive tendencies have emerged under the auspices of Christianity, it is certainly not Christianity that has inspired such actions, but rather the lack of Christian values.

Due to how Christianity was packaged and propagated in Africa, perhaps the dimension of Christianity that can be questioned is its inability to inspire and foster social-political transformation in

many places in Africa, as discussed in chapter three. Mwaura (2009:21) comments on this that although Christianity in Africa has grown tremendously, it has not translated into a transforming spirituality that fosters Christian and national identity; hence negative ethnicity has become a demon that threatens to tear apart not only the nation but also the church. One of the factors to which she attributes this situation, is that Africa inherited a divided Christianity that was also marked by political quarrels. She puts it this way: "The implanting of a divided Christianity by different denominations from different countries with diverse political agendas has left a lasting adverse mark on African Christian identity" (Mwaura 2009:21). However, like Kamaara, she erroneously blames Christianity for the polarity when she argues that "Christianity which could have been a unifying force, drawing inspiration from the traditional African values of family, solidarity and hospitality, emerges and remains at time as a divisive force" (Mwaura 2009:21). Certainly Christianity cannot be a divisive force in the sense in which Mwaura discusses it. It is the precisely the lack of prominent Christian values like love, forgiveness and unity thatr has caused the division.

Another theological perspective that can be used to better understand the concept of unity in diversity is the Eucharist, otherwise also referred to as Holy Communion. Zizioulas (1998:356) argues that it is not by accident that the Church has given to the Eucharist the name of Communion, for in it we find all the dimensions of communion. God communicates himself to us, we enter into communion with Him and with one another:

> The Eucharist does not only affirm and sanctify communion; it also sanctifies otherness…This is the heart of the Church, where communion and otherness are realized par excellence… It is the place where difference ceases to be divisive and becomes good. There is only one kind of exclusion that Eucharist communion permits; it is the exclusion of exclusion, i.e., of those things that involve rejection and division (Zizioulas 1998: 356).

Also looking at this relational aspect of the Eucharist is Ackermann (1998:26), who argues that through the Eucharist our relationship with Christ offers us a relationship with those who partake of Communion together with all who suffer and seek new life. For the Eucharist to have meaning in our lives, she further notes that we need to feel its powerful pull to the radical activity of loving relationships with those who are different because "the One who calls us to the table knows our differences. The one who issues the invitation and asks us to make peace with one another when we come, knows full well just how difficult that can be" (Ackermann 1998:27). In other words, we can say that as in the same way the Lord of the table invites and accepts us to partake of his table, our shortcomings and otherness notwithstanding, he also calls and invites us to accept other people despite their shortcomings and otherness. Also, when we get the invitation to draw near the Lord and his table, we are drawn to his

people of all tribes, nations and languages (Revelation 7:9). However, in ecclesiastical circles the Eucharist has been a point where we depart from the unity in diversity imagined through the use of the concept. The Eucharist can still not be celebrated together by certain churches and also not all members of the Church are officially permitted to partake of the Table. This is a theological gap that requires the Church to reflect on critically.

Another theological perspective that can enhance the understanding of diversity is the Pentecost event. Macchia (2004:5) has highlighted some features of Pentecost that enhance unity in diversity. He notes that at Pentecost, many languages are understood in unison by the hearers, at Pentecost the people are sent forth in unity and clarity of truth and at Pentecost God scatters people abroad to preach the gospel of reconciliation:

> The unity of Pentecost is thus not abstract and absolute but rather concrete and pluralistic. The unity at Pentecost is expressed in a vast diversity of tongues "from every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5). No language, culture, or journey of faith is neglected or devalued. This is a unity that respects and fulfils the scattering and diversification of peoples from Babel. Otherness is not denied but embraced in this differentiated and complex unity of Pentecost (Macchia 2004: 6-7).

This perspective is also shared by Mwaura (2009:21), who argues that because the first Christian community that came into existence at Pentecost consisted of Jews from every nation under heaven, it serves as a call to love across barriers of race, class and gender. Indeed, the Pentecost event can serve the purpose of bringing people together despite their diversities, because − as Macchia has rightly observed − otherness is not denied but embraced and accepted.

The third theological perspective that enhances unity in diversity is the Trinitarian perspective, which like the Eucharist also follows a relational track. Ackermann (1998:16, 20) explains:

> To speak of the Other is to speak about the ambiguity of God, the One who is Wholly Other and Wholly Related … We worship a triune God. There is a dialogue within God; between Father, Son and Spirit. Ours is a Trinity which is in relation. However, the mutual self-giving relationship of the Trinity does not mean that Father, Son and Spirit are collapsed into one undifferentiated divinity. Each member of the Trinity acts as an agent. Each one of the divine persons of the Trinity gives of the self to the other while at the same time each reflects the presence of the other.

Likewise, Zizioulas (1998:352) argues that:

> There is no other model for the proper relation between communion and otherness either for the Church or for the human being than the Trinitarian God. If the Church wants to be faithful to her true self, she must try to mirror the communion and otherness that exists in the Triune God. The same is true of the human being as the "image of God."

Flowing from Ackermann's argument, there are three factors drawn from the Trinitarian approach that can be said to enhance unity in diversity: dialogue, relationship and mutuality. To understand this concept better, Zizioulas (1998:353) highlights four characteristics of otherness drawn from the trinity that can inform our understanding of diversity and otherness. First, otherness is constitutive of unity and not consequent upon it. This is because God is not first one and then three, but simultaneously one and three and his oneness or unity is not safeguarded by the unity of substance. Secondly, otherness is absolute: The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are absolutely different, none of them being subject to confusion with the other. Thirdly, otherness is not moral or psychological but ontological. This means that we cannot tell what each person in the trinity is but we can only say who the person is. Each person in the Holy Trinity is different not by way of difference of qualities but by way of simple affirmation of being who he is. Finally, and as a result, otherness cannot be conceived apart from relationship: Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all names indicating relationship.

In conclusion, from the foregoing discussion, through the perspectives of the Eucharist, the Pentecost event and the Trinity, diversity is a gift from God and as such it is not to be seen as a problem or a curse but as a blessing that can enhance unity. Whenever God calls us he calls inclusively and in unity. This unity is facilitated by love which covers the sins of exclusion and marginalization. Turning to God means turning to each other, for we cannot turn away from each other and draw near to God.

4.4.2   Humanity as primary identity

Identity defines who a person is and how they understand themselves. There are debates whether a person has a single identity which is multi-faceted or multiple identities. The position preferred in this study is that a person has multiple identities, like religion, gender, ethnicity and nationality, which define who that person is. This view is also shared by scholars like Laurie McCubbin (2009), Amartya Sen (2006), Fiona Lee & Jeffery Sanchez-Burks (2009). Lee and Sanchez-Burks (2009:343), for instance, argue that "Having multiple identities is not necessarily problematic… However, when one's multiple identities have conflicting values and norms, challenges may arise."

An example of such a challenge is exhibited by the tension between the Christian identity and African cultural identity. Some African scholars, like Bujo (1994) and Galgalo (2012), have argued that the Christian in Africa faces an identity conflict. This conflict is demonstrated in the debate on the term "African Christians" versus "Christian Africans." According to Galgalo (2012:6-7), the distinction between the two seem to carry different connotations, interpretation and understandings together with the

subsequent implications and emphases that arise from such distinction. Perhaps many African Christians would prefer the prominence of the Christian identity but considering the ways in which Christianity is abandoned for example in favour of ethnicity, there are connotations based on the premise "the blood of ethnicity is thicker than the waters of baptism"[18] (Katongole & Hartgrove 2009:22).

Based on this understanding of multiplicity of identities, there should be a sense of what is one's primary identity. Lee and Sanchez-Burks (2009:343) note that "our relational and social contexts are deeply related to how multiple identities are managed in our everyday lives." Snodgrass (2011b:272), who seems to speak from the single identity theory, argues that "we all have multiple determiners of identity some of which are important while some are not, hence they do not have a primary defining force." These views suggest that multiple identities vary in importance and therefore there is need for them to be managed. Flowing from this premise there is a proposal that "humanity" should function as primary identity. There are three reasons for this choice: First, it is on the basis of humanity that all identities are formed and organized; secondly, the identity of humanity does not change but the other kinds of identities are dynamic because, as McCubbin (2009:107) argues, they grow and change over time.

Ackermann[19] (1998:16, 27) shares the same underlying view that the call to full humanity is a call which takes place within the reality and the challenge of difference and otherness and it is nothing less than the call to grapple daily with the challenges, implications, and surprises of seeking to be in relationship with each other in all our difference and otherness, in the fullness of our humanity:

> My humanity is found, shaped and nurtured in and through the humanity of others. I can only exercise my humanity by being in relationship with others and there is no growth, happiness or fulfillment for me apart from other human being… Authentic existence is living as a fully human part of a whole in mutual relationship, participating not possessing, needing one another, knowing that we belong to one another (Ackermann 1998:18, 22).

Likewise, Snodgrass (2011a:132) rightly observes: "The identity that one should be pursuing is the exact opposite of self-glorification, for one's true identity is not found merely in one's self. A person's identity

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[18] This is phrase is credited to Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, who visited Rwanda on behalf of the Pope at the height of the genocide. Perplexed by the extent to which Christians participated in the genocide, he asked in a meeting with church leaders: "Are you saying that the blood of tribalism is deeper than the waters of baptism?" It was quoted from Hebblethwaite (1994). See also Joseph Galgalo's commentary under this title in the light of the Kenyan situation available at: http://www.nation.co.ke/oped/Opinion/Blood-of-ethnicity-is-thicker-than-the-water-of-baptism-/-/440808/923774/-/eses5cz/-/index.html

[19] Ackermann does not discuss the concept of humanity in the same understanding of primary identity, as used in this dissertation.

is not merely about him or her; it is about that person in relation with and for people and with and for God." This perspective that our humanity is to be found in the humanity of others seems to flow well with the African concept of *ubuntu* as explained by Tutu and Mbiti. Tutu (1999:34-35) writes:

> *Ubuntu* is very difficult to render into a Western language. It speaks to the very essence of being human….It also means that my humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in theirs. We belong in a bundle of life. We say, 'a person is a person through other people' … I am human because I belong, I participate, I share. A person with *ubuntu* is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good; for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes with knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are.

Mbiti (1969:109) encompasses the perspective in this way:

> Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: 'I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am.' This is a cardinal point in the understanding of the African view of man.

This means that, according to the concept of *ubuntu,* one is not apart from the humanity of others. If this is the case, chances of exclusion and marginalization are significantly minimized. According to Ackermann (1998:24), one of the ways to appreciate the humanity of others is by sharing our stories. She holds that telling our stories and hearing the stories of others allows our stories to intersect; even though they sometimes conflict, accuse and diverge greatly, they also attract, connect and confirm. As a result our stories touch one another and change so that subsequently we too are changed. This call by Ackermann is certainly a call to a dialogue in which people can listen to each other in respect and humility.

Ken Davis (2003:93) attributes this identity of humanity to the biblical creation story. He argues that as the human race is one, all diverse people on earth belong to one family created by God. He calls this "creational unity." He further argues that God enjoys diversity and that different ethnic groups are but an expression of this divine joy. He concludes it this way, "Because he is the God of creation we affirm the unity of the human race. Because he is the God of variety we affirm the diversity of ethnic cultures" (Davis 2003:106). This means that we cannot and will not discover our identity in isolation; hence we need to reverse the retreat into cocoons of exclusiveness and marginalization*.*

It is important to note that the concept of humanity as primary identity is not in any way supposed to negate Christian identity. Christian identity has a significant role in helping us to accept the humanity of others. The doctrine of *imago Dei,* for instance, should be an influence and a platform from

which the acknowledgement of the humanity of all springs forth. This also informs the concept of humanity as primary identity because we are all firstly human beings created in the image of God before sharing in any of the other kinds of identities – social, gender, religious, cultural and political. Furthermore, the humanity of each person in not fragmented, as in other kinds of identities. The humanity of all is identical and nothing else can be used to qualify it, for all share in the same humanity.

Another dimension of Christianity that can influence the "humanity as primary identity" model is Christian unity and ecumenism. Kamaara (2008:137) is correct when she argues: "If the Church is to lead to national unity, it must cultivate unity within itself so that historical, ecclesiastical, and doctrinal differences are not allowed to breed disunity among Christians." However, this unity should not become an end in itself. There could be a temptation to understand Christian unity in exclusive forms. Kamaara (2008:137) rightly captures this when she says:

> Beyond Church unity, unlike nationalism, Christian national identity must not be confused with an identity of Christians for Christians alone. Indeed, the mission of the Church is not limited to serving Christians only. True Christianity is inclusive in recognition of the equality and dignity of all humans as beings created in the image of God. Indeed, like Christ who came not to be served but to serve (Mt 20: 28), the Church has the mission of facilitating full humanity to all whether they are Christians or not.

Kamaara's views seem to suggest that any kind of unity that is exclusive is not appropriate and is scandalous. This means that ecumenism should not stop with religious unity but should also address all manner of divisiveness that affects the society of which the churches are members. This kind of approach can inspire a holistic approach to divisiveness and hence ecumenism can be a good base of inspiring national unity. Christian unity should inspire inclusive tendencies and relationships and also motivate us to appreciate and accept each other with all our complexities, differences and otherness, as envisioned by the concept of "primary identity."

4.5   ECCLESIAL SCRUTINY: CHURCHES AND ETHNICITY IN KENYA

In Kenya, to use Ayward Shorter's (1999:28) words, the churches are both victims and accomplices of negative ethnicity. The churches have been *victims* by being targets of violence because most of them are associated with particular ethnic groups. This perhaps explains why there were numerous arson attacks on church buildings during the post-election violence. An example of this is perhaps the most tragic incident of the violence, namely the torching of Kiambaa Assemblies of God Church with scores of Kikuyu people inside. The church was not only a hiding place for the Kikuyu but it was also closely identified with them (KNCHR 2008:66).

The churches have been *accomplices* of negative ethnicity through aiding and abetting ethnocentrism. One specific area is the colonial legacy of ethnization of churches, where churches are seen as ethnic identities or promoters of ethnic interests. The history of Christianity in Kenya cannot be told without telling the story of colonization, because the missionaries worked very closely with the colonial government. According to Bolaji Idowu (1973:429), "It was an error of judgment for the Mission to identify herself closely with the ruling colonial powers on the continent of Africa." One of those errors was the missionaries working with the administrative boundaries set by the colonial government, which were inspired by the divide and rule approach. Alongside this, the missionary scramble for Kenya led to the demarcation of operational territories of different missionary agencies on ethnic lines, which created mono-ethnic denominations. Kamaara (2010:136) notes:

> Christian denominations in Kenya continue to be almost synonymous with the map of ethnicity. The Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) is especially notorious as an entirely Agikuyu church, the Seventh Day Adventist as largely Abagusii and Akamba, the African Inland Church as largely Kalenjin, and the Quakers (Friends) as largely Luhyia.

The establishment of mono-ethnic denominations may not have had serious implications at the beginning, but eventually it has posed serious threats. With the introduction of ethno-politics in Kenya and the inability of churches to be neutral in the face of ethno-politics, the churches were robbed of the ability to promote and mediate reconciliation in the country. Tarimo (2010:305) observes: "The tendency of manipulating ethnic identities prevails also in Christian churches… Ethnocentrism exists in churches as it does in the political sphere." According to KNCHR (2008:142), "The public's perception that FBOs were not neutral further compounded the polarization that was characteristic of the 2007 elections that had resulted in a situation where no single national institution appeared neutral enough to offer moral leadership when the country descended into chaos."

These quotes show the large extent to which the churches in Kenya have become ethnicised. To understand better the ethnization of churches there are tendencies that have made churches accomplices of negative ethnicity, both in the mono-ethnic and seemingly heterogeneous denominations. Ethnic exclusivity in the mono-ethnic denominations is inevitable especially through membership, liturgy and administration. In the light of ethno-politics, these denominations are politically predictable.

To seemingly heterogeneous denominations like the Catholic and ACK churches, negative ethnicity is portrayed through administrative faces. David Waruta (1992:127) comments on these churches that "those that happen to be multiethnic with a national outlook are plagued with internal

inter-ethnic conflicts." Shorter (1999:29) points at the creation of encapsulated dioceses, aligning with ethnically oriented governments. Building on Shorter's argument, most of the bishops of the Catholic and ACK churches serve in their respective ethnic regions.[20] While this by itself is not a bad thing and it has a list of benefits like familiarity with cultural, social, economical, political and religious dynamics of the region, in an ethnically polarized society like Kenya it does little to help the churches to witness and participate in the mission of reconciliation in the country. One of the consequences of such an approach is the rejection by congregations of clergy who are seen as ethnic outsiders, as Shorter (1999:29) notes. This is a demonstration of the extent to which negative ethnicity informs ecclesiology. A good example of this is the current rejection of a Catholic bishop in Nigeria on the basis of his ethnicity (cf. Onyejiuwa 2013).

Based on the foregoing discussion, the churches in Kenya have ethnic and political tags which continue to jeopardize their ministry of reconciliation in Kenya. According to KNCHR (2008:130), it is because of this kind of setting that some local church ministers and pastors found it easy to promote ethnic hatred right from the pulpit.

> Religious leaders in areas such as Limuru and Nyeri used the pulpit to convey messages mounting to hate speech against non-Kikuyu communities and generally rallying the Kikuyu to protect 'our community'. These leaders uttered phrases such as *Ciaigana ni Ciaigana* (enough is enough), suggesting that the Kikuyu community should no longer simply stand by while attacks against them continued. In Kirathimo IDP camp in Limuru, which hosted Kikuyu returnees from other provinces, one religious leader urged the people that "The Kikuyu should be armed the way I am armed with a Bible.

The existence of negative ethnicity in churches in Kenya compromises their mission in the country. Joseph Healey (2010:56) observes that "one would have hoped that the deeper Gospel values could overcome these ethnic divisions, but this has not been always the case." Likewise, Tarimo (2010:305) notes that Christian teaching calls it followers to promote a multi-ethnic community of an inclusive family of God built on faith, love, and hope." There is need of empirical research to establish how homogeneous denominations have continued to exist and grow for over a century while maintaining the mono-ethnic tag. The churches in Kenya have so far not seen negative ethnicity as a problem of and within the churches. The churches, through their public statements, have strictly placed the blame on politicians for hyping ethnic hatred. It is only when there is a paradigm shift in churches' discourses on

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[20] See http://www.ackenya.org/ack/bishops.html and http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/country/bke2.html

ethnicity – where negative ethnicity is not seen just as a political problem but also a Church problem – that the churches will be able to participate with authority and credibility in the mission of reconciliation in Kenya.

It has been argued in this section that ecumenism is capable of inspiring national unity. Thinking along this line, the churches in Kenya imagine ecumenism in the classical sense of Christian unity and cooperation, although inter-faith cooperation has also been seen as part of ecumenism (cf. AFCAST 2005; NCCK 2013a). Based on this understanding, the churches in Kenya have fostered ecumenism through discourses of Christian commonness. Ecumenism in Kenya may have succeeded in promoting denominational and Christian unity but it has not succeeded in addressing ethnic disharmony among Kenyans, the majority of whom are Christians. This reality calls for a further reflection on the role of ecumenism in dealing with ethnic tensions and division among Christians. If this is not done, any ecumenical effort will be superficial and technical. Ecumenism in Kenya should simultaneously name and interrogate divisive trends among Christians, both in denominational circles and nationally. Though ecumenism claims unity in Christ (John 17:20-21), ethno-politics claim division in ethnicity. Though Christ brings Christians together in unity, ethno- politics separate people in ethnic divisiveness and it seems that the voice of ethno-politics is louder than the voice of ecumenism in Kenya. Ethnic division certainly affects Christian unity and therefore the churches must address the issue of negative ethnicity with utmost urgency, care and commitment. When this is done faithfully, it will open the eyes of the churches to see areas in which they are guilty of negative ethnicity.

4.6   CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the issue of negative ethnicity as it is perceived and practised in Kenya. Negative ethnicity has become an ideology and has been accepted as a culture by most Kenyans across the board. There are distorted ethnic identities that bring about ethnic superiority and/or inferiority. Against this ethnic reality in Kenya, a missiological reflection has been done with a proposal of promotion of unity in diversity and humanity as primary identity. Finally, there has been an overview of the churches in Kenya in regard to ethnicity. God is the creator of all from every nation, tribe, people and language (Revelation 7:9), he is a God of diversity and as such diversity should not be used as a ground for division, domination, marginalization or oppression. Rather, ethnic diversity should be seen as a cultural mosaic to be celebrated and embraced.

The foregoing discussion challenges the churches in Kenya to reflect on approaches that can help them to be agents of reconciliation in multi-ethnic Kenya. It calls them to critically reflect on ways

to turn away from the darkness of negative ethnicity through actions of light that seek first and foremost to de-ethnicise the churches and to develop a new commitment to an ecumenical understanding that promotes unity in diversity in a multi-ethnic context. This kind of ecumenism does not only bring different denominations and Christians together but also different ethnic communities.

CHAPTER FIVE

HUMAN RIGHTS IN KENYA

5.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the topic of human rights through the events of the 2007/8 post-election violence. Though the term "human rights" is a political term, it has been widely accepted and used in theological circles. The term "rights" is used in this study to connote mandatory necessity. Following Thomas Fleiner's (1999:1-3) approach, human rights are understood from the perspective of inherent human dignity. The dignity of a person is to be found in the sanctity of life, hence life and all that supports it are to be respected and protected: "Human beings … are also unique and need to be respected in their uniqueness. Human dignity demands that a person's uniqueness, his individuality, is respected and that he is not rejected" (Fleiner 1999:2). A person's dignity is not to be seen in isolation from other people or society but it is to be understood in a relational perspective. Hence, human rights are rights that protect and promote the dignity of humanity as encompassed in every individual in relation to other people and the society. Human rights violations are therefore those things that attack and rob the humanity of a person. However, from this understanding one may fall into the temptation of thinking that human rights and human dignity are synonymous. However, it is human dignity that is the basis of human rights, and not vice-versa.

There is a deep interconnectedness between politics, ethnicity, violence and human rights. As such there is a need of an integrated approach in an attempt to address this inter-relatedness. Human rights violations are about power relationships and structures. It is about the dominant oppressing the weak and powerless. Domination leads to oppression and injustice, which take place as human rights violations. Human rights are also about identity. The categories defined under power; that is categories of the dominant, powerful, powerless and weak are categories of identity. Besides, the identity and dignity of humanity are at the core of human rights discourses. When the humanity of others is rejected and denied, their rights are rejected and denied. In Kenya, ethnicity as an identity was critically shaped and formed by the patterns of the violence and, as it was argued in chapter four, violence largely grew from negative ethnicity. Generally speaking, violence is all about human rights violations; hence, if there were no violations then ethnic violence could not have occurred.

This chapter has three sections: Firstly, there is contextual understanding of human rights violations in Kenya, with arguments that human rights violation in Kenya has been a developing culture entrenched through impunity. It is also argued that humanity is at the heart of human rights hence

dehumanization is the framework through which many human rights violations happened. Secondly, there is a missiological reflection on human rights. This represents a hermeneutical approach to human rights, and also discussion about cultivating a culture of respect for human rights based on the argument that a "culture" (or anti-culture) of human rights violations can only be combated by a culture of respect for human rights. Thirdly, there is an overview of how the churches in Kenya relate to the issue of human rights.

5.2   CULTURE OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN KENYA

> Kenya presently exhibits characteristics which are prerequisites for the commission of the crime of genocide … Another characteristic present in Kenya is the impunity subsequent to which past acts of violence in 1992, 1997 and 2005 have gone unpunished. Consequently, unless the state and Kenyans take remedial measures, the probability of genocide happening in Kenya at some future point in time is real (KNCHR 2008:5).

Human rights violations in Kenya are not unique to the post-2007 election period. There has been a trend of large scale violations of human rights from the colonial period to successive post-independent governments. During the colonial period, the colonial masters used violent power to dominate and govern Kenyans. The usurping of this power happened in the framework of domination and injustice, which resulted in grave human rights violations through torture, extrajudicial killing and land injustices. Fabian Klose (2013:93-94) terms colonial rule as a "terror regime": "From the perspective of the colonial rulers, the position of strength enjoyed by white people and the prestige derived from it had to be maintained at all costs, meaning that every anticolonial provocation was to be answered with retaliation." Specifically, this retaliation was a response to the *Mau Mau*[21] revolt which was challenging colonial rule in Kenya.

After the 2007/8 post-election violence, the TRJC (2013) was established by an act of parliament to investigate gross violations of human rights in Kenya between 12 December 1963 and 28 February

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[21] *Mau Mau* was a resistance group, drawn mainly from the Kikuyu ethnic community, who engaged in a military revolt against the colonial government between 1952 and 1960. For a detailed account of the Mau Mau uprising see, Maloba (1993). In recent developments, the *Mau Mau* have sued the British government for human rights violations during the colonial period. The case has been determined and some prayers granted. See: Britain to compensate Kenya Mau Mau for colonial–era abuse. *Nation* [Online]. Available at: http://www.nation.co.ke/news/world/Britain-to-compensate-Kenya-Mau-Mau-/-/1068/1874116/-/nb3ntr/-/index.html. (Accessed on 10 November 2013).

2008. The commission found that there were gross violations of human rights orchestrated by the state, especially by the first two post-independence governments of Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel Moi, who used the repressive laws, policies and practices initially employed by the colonial government (TJRC 2013: 10). The specific violations include massacres, political assassinations, unlawful detention accompanied by torture and ill-treatment, economic marginalization, violations of economic rights, land injustices, extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances (:1-70).

Arguably, it is during the rule of Moi that the violations of human rights reached worrying levels. (Wekesa 2013:14). According to TJRC, the creation of a *de jure* one party state by President Moi's government resulted in "severe repression of political dissent and intimidation and control of the media. Repression of political speech and the media allowed many violations to occur with little public scrutiny, much less accountability" (TJRC 2013:10). The Commission also found that political assassination was one of the tactics used by the state and the political elite to repress dissent or eliminate political competition and when investigations into specific assassinations were undertaken, they were usually deliberately shut down before conclusion and in instances where they had been concluded, their reports of findings and recommendations were never publicized (TJRC 2013:23).

There have been also violations of human rights through cycles of political violence during election years since the advent of multi-party democracy: 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2007. It is however the post-2007 violence that reached unprecedented levels. In recent years, the most common violation of human rights is extra-judicial execution by the police, which was characterized by state-sanctioned killings and disappearances, use of excessive and disproportionate force to summarily execute individuals who were suspected of being criminals or members of proscribed criminal gangs. An example of this is the execution of about five hundred members of *Mungiki,* an outlawed ethnic group, during the rule of Mwai Kibaki. (TJRC 2013:131-132, KNCHR 2008: 45,75,103).

The major reason for the recurring gross human rights violations in Kenya is the culture of impunity which is deepseated in the country and which has been complicated by the fact that the state itself has been guilty of violating human rights through commission and omission. For instance, according to KNCHR (2013:4), "the Government's response to the post-election violence was slow and ineffectual. The rule of law nearly collapsed in large swathes of the countryside and informal settlements in urban areas. Where the Government acted, its responses tended to be unwieldy and disjointed". The TJRC states that:

> The Commission finds that in most cases, the state has covered up or downplayed violations committed against its own citizens, especially those committed by state

security agencies. During the entire mandate period (1963-2008), the state demonstrated no genuine commitment to investigate and punish atrocities and violations committed by its agents against innocent citizens (TJRC 2013:10).

The failure of the state to investigate and punish gross violations of human rights in Kenya has created a culture of impunity not only among the political class but also among the masses, as it was exhibited during the post-election violence. According to TJRC (2013:148), during the violence, the perpetrators took advantage of the breakdown of social order, the increased armed conflict, and general lawlessness to commit offences with impunity. The Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) carried out research in 2011 on the faces of impunity in Kenya and, among other conclusions, they found that

> Corruption and human rights violations are endemic and the major governance concerns for Kenya. They are the most egregious indicators of impunity and are deeply rooted in society ... It can be deduced that the culture of impunity is so entrenched into Kenyan society that human rights violations and grand official corruption committed by state and non-state actors remain unresolved (KHRC 2011:2, 4)..

As noted above, there have been investigations into human rights violations carried out by Commissions of inquiry established by sitting presidents and acts of parliament. In 2008, Africa's Centre for Open Governance (AfriCOG) carried out a research to investigate the efficacy of these commissions and found that, "Kenya's experience with commissions of inquiry reveals that they are a very expensive postponement of the moment of truth and justice" (AfriCOG 2008:7). It is as result of the abovementioned violations and the failure of the state to prosecute the violators that a trend of impunity and consequently a trend of human rights violations has become deeply entrenched in Kenya. For this culture to die there must be concerted systemic ways of dealing with those responsible for the human rights violations, with subsequent prosecution and punishment. When the government upholds the rule of law the social order is maintained thus creating an unfavourable environment for further violations of human rights.

5.3   DEHUMANIZATION

> There were several incidents of discrimination, dehumanization, humiliation, intolerance and prejudice. There were forced circumcisions of people, reference to non-Kikuyu people as 'nduriri' (an often demeaning term referring to non-Kikuyu people), reference of Luo people as sub-human and denial of services to non-Kikuyu people. In Juja, for example, a water vendor refused to sell water to non-Kikuyu people. Other victims told of calls for businesses not to sell to non-Kikuyu people. The former MP for Limuru, George Nyanja, said that the Kikuyu cannot be led by a

'Kihii' (uncircumcised man in the Kikuyu language), in reference to Raila Odinga (KNCHR 2008:128)[22].

Kenya presently exhibits characteristics which are prerequisites for the commission of the crime of genocide. One such feature is the dehumanization of a community using negative labels or idioms that distinguish the target group from the rest of society. Communities such as the Kikuyu and Kisii resident in the Rift Valley were referred to by some Kalenjin politicians as "madoadoa" (stains) before and during the post-election violence (KNCHR 2008:5).

In the North Rift Region, an estimated 35 people were burnt to death in the Kiambaa Church burning alone. These killings were particularly brutal and considered emblematic of the violence in the North Rift Region and the country as a whole. In the Matunda area of the North Rift Region 14 young men were lynched to death by armed youths. Three children were burnt alive in Gituamba in Saboti Constituency 550 in Saboti Constituency, Trans Nzoia District in late February, 2008. The attackers guarded the entrance to ensure that no one escaped from the house. This is clear demonstration of intent to kill or cause grievous bodily harm (KNCHR 2008:145).

As already noted, humanity is at the core of human rights hence dehumanization is at the heart of human rights violations. Dehumanization in the context of the 2007/8 post-election violence happened within the framework of negative ethnicity, hence the relationship between human rights violations and negative ethnicity is indisputable. Ethnic prejudice and cultural supremacy led to dehumanization of particular ethnic groups which was the main ground for violations because, as Wa Wamwere (2008:118) argues, "negative ethnicity must first dehumanize so that it can destroy." Dehumanization was mainly done through humiliating ethnic labels, stereotypes and derogatory ethnic terminologies because "language is a potent weapon in reducing the humanity of others" (Wa Wamwere 2008:118). Different communities use derogatory language to dehumanize other communities. For example, the Kikuyu use the term *nduriri* − which literally means "other nations" (*goyim*) as used in the Old Testament − to refer to other ethnic communities. The worst use of dehumanizing language is when people are referred to as animals or non-living things. The Kikuyu, for instance, use terms such as *nyamu cia ruguru,* which literally means "animals from the West" (Wa Wamwere 2008:118), which has the connotation of "not full human beings." The Kikuyu were referred to as *madoadoa* (stains) (KNCHR 2008:5), a term that suggest the need of ethnic cleansing. Wa Wamwere (2008:119-20) adds:

The most explosive term of ethnic dehumanization, however is *nyoka*, snake. In the idiom of negative ethnicity, to be a snake is to deserve destruction. A snake need not bite, or even look about to strike, to deserve its fate. It is dangerous. It must die. And what about its eggs? A little snake or the egg of a snake is also a snake…Kill the young one before it grows, smash the egg before it hatches.

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[22] The choice of dehumanization as the topic of discussion of this chapter, was not done in exclusion of the list indicated in this quote.

The image of a snake perhaps explains the brutal killing of children and expectant mothers during the violence and also in other contexts of ethnic and racial conflict in the world. Added to this dehumanizing language there are other stereotypes which are used daily in households. These include: "The Kikuyu are thieves, the Kalenjin are greedy, the Luo are proud and haughty, the Kamba are cowards." Such humiliating ethnic labels, stereotypes and derogatory ethnic language continue to be accepted and embedded in the thought frames of different communities in Kenya and have been faithfully passed on through the generations.

In turn, this kind of language gradually produces hatred and exclusion, which continually erodes the dignity encompassed in humanity in two ways. Firstly, in the eyes of the violator, the humanity of the hated person is diminished; hence any harm can be visited on the hated. Secondly, the humanity of the violator is also diminished and as a result they have no conscience of humanity that could stop them from violating the rights of the hated. Consequently, rejecting the humanity of others is actually rejecting humanity in totality, for all human beings were created equally by God. If considerations of humanity were upheld during the violence, most of the violations of human rights could not have happened. It is not by accident that the crimes committed in the violence were labelled as "crimes against humanity." Unless the hate and exclusion produced and carried by humiliating ethnic labels, stereotypes and derogatory ethnic language is interrupted, the culture of inter-ethnic animosity and conflict will continue to pose grave threats to the country.

5.4   MISSIOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Justice, equality and freedom – which can be said to be the main pillars of human rights – are also some of the cardinal teachings of the Bible and as such human rights are also a matter of faith. The theological understanding of justice, equality and freedom may differ slightly from the understanding of these terms from a political science perspective but the spirit of the terms remains the same. For instance, biblical justice may differ somewhat from criminal justice. God is equally concerned with the justice, equality and freedom of all humanity hence human rights are of great concern to him, as it was stated by the 5th WCC Assembly in Nairobi in 1975:

> Our concern for human rights is based on our conviction that God wills a society in which all can exercise full human rights. All human beings are created in the image of God, equal and infinitely precious in God's sight and ours. Jesus Christ has bound us to one another by his life, death and resurrection, so that what concerns one concerns us all (WCC 1999).

This section discusses how theology/missiology can help in both understanding human rights and in the mitigation of human rights violations in Kenya with a proposal of a missiology that is established on

what John Witte (2010:13) calls a "human rights hermeneutic" and that can help in cultivating a culture of respect for human rights.

5.4.1 A Hermeneutic of Human Rights

Since this is a missiological study, the preferred approach to human rights of the present study is based on biblical scholarship, with the argument that the Bible gives an appropriate and practical basis on which human rights can be understood and from which a culture of respect for human rights can be developed. There are three reasons for this choice. Firstly, and flowing from 5.2, the human rights values of justice, equality and freedom are also values promoted by gospel teaching Some scholars, like Christopher Marshall (1999:28) and Dinesh D'Souza (2007:67,75), argue that secular human rights tradition has borrowed much from the foundation of Christian theological assumptions and ethical values.

The second reason for this stand is borrowed from Marjory Maclean (2012:46), who argues that the code of conduct is higher within the Church and that, as such, the Church should be a nobler example than the secular world. Maclean's argument means that the Christian call to respect human rights goes beyond legalistic duty and becomes part of our redemption story: "Human rights belong to our redemption, not just to our creation" (Nelson 1982:12). Finally, the biblical approach is not self-centred or individualistic, hence it does not glorify individualism as echoed in texts that can be considered as human rights texts, such as "Do to others as you would have them do to you" (Luke 6:31) and "In humility value others above yourselves" (Philippians 2:3). Rowan Williams (2012) argues that "Christian convictions are about human *dignity* and human *relatedness*, how we belong together... I believe this reconnection can be done by trying to understand rights against a background not of individual claims but of the question of what is involved in mutual *recognition* between human beings." An alternative approach to the biblical scholarship approach to human rights could have been the United Nations declaration on human rights (UNDHR) but this was not preferred, for two reasons. The first reason is based on one of the criticisms given to UNDHR by scholars that it is individualistic (Buchanan 2004:156, Taringa 2007:250, Cotesta 2012:158, Williams 2012) as opposed to the biblical approach. According to the biblical approach the attention is taken away from the individual and as such the well-being of the individual has a communal dimension. This communal approach is also shared in the African sense of community as expressed in the philosophy of *ubuntu* (discussed in chapter three). However, the rights and interests of the individual are submerged in the rights and interests of the community. Whereas this is not the case all the time, there are instances, especially in Africa, where the

rights of children and women are swallowed by the cultural interest of the community. A good example of this is female genital mutilation and forced early marriages in some African communities, all done without necessarily the consent of the individuals.

Secondly, there are human rights which are not secured by UNDHR policies, which is the human rights framework used by constitutions and legislations (Cf. Nelson 1982:9, Greidanus 1984:19, Williams 2012). For example, the right to work, shelter and food is dependent on the economic capacity of a particular government. The biblical approach, for instance, lays great emphasis on giving bread to the hungry and giving shelter to the homeless as a Christian obligation (other examples include Isaiah 58:10. Mathew 25:31-46, James 2:14-18). By favouring a biblical approach to human rights, the present study does not claim superiority for this approach. It does not undermine the UNDHR nor does it advocate an exclusivist human rights approach. Williams (2012) rightly cautions: "It is important for the language of rights not to lose its anchorage in a universalist ethic." This current study also acknowledges that "the World Council of Churches, through its Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, participated in the drafting of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, and contributed the text in Article 18 on freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. The WCC has since been active in promoting the declaration's implementation" (WCC 2008b).

Having discussed the approach of this section, there are three factors that fuelled human rights violations. First, there is hatred, which stirs up dissension, conflict and contention (Proverbs 10:12). Hatred blinds a person from seeing the humanity of other people and leads to disrespect for the sanctity of life and human rights. This is the hatred that was exhibited by Cain when he killed his brother Abel (Genesis 4:1-16); it is the hatred that has facilitated genocides, ethnic cleansings and prejudices all over the world. Secondly, there is discrimination, which facilitates a demeaning attitude and excluding tendency. Thirdly, there is domination, where the strong dominate the weak and the rich dominate the poor. These three things, which are not mutually exclusive, are addressed in the whole Bible – from creation to the law to the prophets to the ministry of Jesus and to the teaching of the apostles. Some scholars like Marshall (1999:29), Nelson (1982:1) and Alf Tergel (1997:313) remind us that there is a diversity of theological approaches to human rights adopted by different ecclesiastical traditions. However, the position held in this present study is that even in this diversity the values of human rights – equality, justice and freedom – remain constant.

In the biblical creation narratives, the equality and worth of every person is acknowledged through the creation of humanity in God's image, which has evoked different understandings among

different people. To D'Souza (2007:68), created in God's image means equality and he argues that although many have rejected the proposition that all human beings are created equal, the equality that is drawn from the Christian idea means that God places infinite value on each human life and loves every person equally. D'Souza's idea of equality certainly raises concerns, especially when looked through the socio-economic lens and therefore the Christian stand against inequality, inequity and unfairness should be emphasized. To Martin Schindehutte (2012:20), the concept of *imago Dei* implies a common special dignity among all human beings:

> The Christian idea of humanity that draws its specific dignity from the Imago Dei has proved to be valuable. It enables us to serve the well being of all fellow humans by facing God's image. What this image means becomes obvious in Jesus Christ, in whom God himself as a human being suffered under enmity and violence, standing in love and solidarity with all in this world who suffer and are oppressed.

This view on dignity is also held by Sidney Greidanus (1984:15), who argues that "because all human beings are created in the image of God, it follows that all human beings are of exceptional worth. Because God created man as a creature of exceptional worth, he bestowed certain rights on man which he did not bestow on animals." Another view on the *imago Dei* is expressed by Julius Nyerere (1973:111):

> For the present conditions of men must be unacceptable to all who think of an individual person as a unique creation of a living God. I refuse to imagine a God who is poor, ignorant, superstitious, fearful, oppressed, wretched – which is the lot of the majority of those He created in His image. Men are creators of themselves and their conditions, but under the present conditions we are creatures, not of God, but of our fellow men.

Nyerere seems to say that the image of God is continually distorted by human actions. Following Nyerere's line of thought, regrettably it is within the framework of political, religious, social and economic structures that the worth of a person is defined and it is through evils like inequalities and injustices emerging from these structures that the image of God in a person is continually destroyed. The value of a person is in their being, and the understandings of *imago Dei* discussed above attempt to bring the human worth of every person to the fore and as such this is an appropriate foundation on which to base a hermeneutic of human rights.

In the Decalogue, more than half of the laws are about the rights of other people – their authority, life, relationships, integrity and property. The ministry of the Old Testament prophets was basically a denunciation of violations of other people's rights especially through dominance. Examples include the prophetic intervention in the Ahab and Naboth incident (1 Kings 21) and the David and Uriah

episode (2 Samuel 11). One of the central foundations of human rights is the sacredness of human life and Greidanus (1984:15-16) rightly argues that God is not only concerned with life itself but also the quality of that life. To protect life, God has established laws that protect human life based on the "You shall not kill" commandment (Exodus 20:13). God has also established laws that protect the quality of life and that include rights to rest (Exodus 20:9-10), rights to freedom (Exodus 21:6, Deuteronomy 15:12-18), rights to food (Deuteronomy 23:24-25, 24;19-22, Leviticus 19:9-10), rights to fair wages (Leviticus 19:13, Deuteronomy 24:15, Jeremiah 22:13), rights to social security (Deuteronomy 23:19, Leviticus 25:10) and rights to justice (Deuteronomy 19:15, 27:19). It is the rights to justice that can be said to be prominent in the Old Testament. Greidanus (1984:11) argues that "One of the ways in which Israel was to disclose the reality of the kingdom of God was to show the justice and shalom of God's kingdom. God demands justice in his kingdom." Gerhard von Rad (1962:370) has also pointed to the centrality of justice in the Old Testament: "There is absolutely no concept in the Old Testament with so central a significance for all the relationships of human life as that of *tsedaqah.* It is the standard not only for man's relationship to God, but also for his relationships to his fellows." In the light of human rights, justice has to do with just social relationships, which is a central principle in human rights.

The ministry of Jesus was basically centred on justice, freedom and equality. This is demonstrated by his association with the socially marginalized, hated and despised as well as his love for the poor. Charles Taber (2002:99) argues that the approach of Jesus was radical because

> Jesus alone among all religious founders and leaders rejected all forms of discrimination and insisted that all human beings ought to be treated in exactly the same way. His own dealings with women, with children, with lepers and other ritually polluted people, and with foreigners radically undermined all the distinctions that human societies of his day unanimously institutionalized. He extended the category "neighbor" to all humankind and insisted that the two Great Commandments applied to all; and he taught his disciples to love even their enemies.

Alongside Jesus' agenda for the marginalized, his restorative agenda is spelled out in his manifesto of Luke 4:16-21, where there is good news of hope to the poor, there is restoration of sight to the blind and freedom to the oppressed and prisoners. It is on the basis of this manifesto and the gospel teachings of Jesus that the apostles built their social theology. The Pauline teachings, for instance, lay an emphasis of equal worth of the Jew, the Gentile, the slave, the free, the male and female on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:28).

5.4.2   Cultivating a culture of respect for human rights

A trend of human rights violations can only be combated by a culture of respect for human rights. The task of cultivating a culture of human rights involves imagining and building a vision of a society based on respect for human dignity. The Church as a significant opinion shaper should create a vision and a possibility of a society that respects human dignity and therefore honours human rights. It is through painting such a reality in the minds of Christians that a culture of human rights is cultivated and sustained. One of the ways to do this is through human rights education based on a hermeneutic of human rights. This is an emphasis laid by Sam Kobia, the then Secretary General of the WCC, who in 2008 with other nine leaders from different world religions signed a statement entitled Faith in Human Rights. In his statement he exhorted his fellow religious leaders, "As religious leaders, our role is to study carefully our respective holy scriptures and teachings so as to find grounds for a theological rationale in defence of human rights" (WCC 2008b). Perhaps the most efficient way to do this is through the pulpit because through the ministry of the word of God and the frequency with which the pulpit is used, a human rights conscience can be created among the people and the Christians are equipped and empowered to fulfil their human rights responsibility in society.

Another way of building a culture of human rights is through upholding human right values within the practice of the Church. Down ecclesiastical history, the Church has exhibited discrimination and prejudice tendencies through doctrines and practice. Tutu (2010:7) argues that religion should produce peace, reconciliation, tolerance and respect for human rights, but that it has often promoted the opposite. Tutu invokes the support of anti-Semitism by Christians, the propagation of apartheid by devout Christians in South Africa, the blazing cross symbol of the notorious Ku Klux Klan and the use of Christianity to justify racism. To add to Tutu's list, the biblical justification of slavery cannot go unmentioned. Even so, it should not escape our attention that many Christians played a critical role under very difficult circumstances in calling for constitutional reforms, opposing marginalizing and discriminating public policies and fight against oppressive structures that promote prejudice. Most notably, the roles of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in the fight against Nazism in Germany, Martin Luther King Jr. in the struggle against racial discrimination in the United States and Desmond Tutu in the fight against apartheid in South Africa remain prominent. In ecumenical circles the work of WCC and the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) are important to mention because of their role in developing a theological basis for the churches' role in promoting and defending human rights. The WCC has been committed to human rights since its involvement with UNDHR to its own resolutions through its General

Assemblies. For instance, the Nairobi Assembly of 1975 was very important, as it was called to draw up the WCC's human rights agenda (Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum 2013). As a result, the work of the WCC in oral and theological intervention in situations of violations of human rights in places like Congo and Arab territories (See WCC 2001; WCC 2005; WCC 2010b), remain outstanding. Following suit is the AACC, which through its General Assemblies have come up with resolutions that affirm their role in advocating human rights in Africa. Most notably, is its constant prophetic intervention in Zimbabwe with an example of a pastoral appeal they sent to President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, urging him to put the welfare of the country first (Africa Focus 2003).

Another way of building a culture of human rights is through the struggle for human rights. Nico Koopman (2007:106-107) and Witte (2010:13) remind us there are legal and constitutional frameworks needed for enforcement of human rights and in some contexts such frameworks or procedural rights to fight for human rights are absent. In such contexts the Church has a prophetic role to play in calling for constitutional reforms, opposing marginalizing and discriminating public policies and fight against oppressive structures that promote prejudice. The examples of Bonhoeffer, King and Tutu mentioned above and the Church leaders in Kenya mentioned in chapter three come to mind. In order for the prophetic role to be efficient in such contexts there is a need of partnership with other players as it was the declaration of the Nairobi assembly:

> That gospel leads us to become ever more active in identifying and rectifying violations of human rights in our own societies, and to enter into new forms of ecumenical solidarity with Christians elsewhere who are similarly engaged. It leads us into the struggle of the poor and the oppressed both within and outside the church as they seek to achieve their full human rights, and free us to work together with people of other faiths or ideologies who share with us a common concern for human dignity (WCC 2005: 32)

As such the gospel becomes both the light that points at the darkness of human rights violations and also the platform on which ecumenical partnership and bonds are made in the fight against abuse of human rights. In conclusion, it is through having a hermeneutic of human rights that the Church is aware of the work and ways in which God is involved in the world as far as human rights are concerned and it is through growing and building a culture of human rights that it can participate in this work of God.

5.5   ECCELESIAL SCRUTINY: CHURCHES AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN KENYA

According to the articulated discourses on human rights in their documents, the churches in Kenya approach the issue of human rights from a human dignity perspective based on a hermeneutic rooted in the doctrine of *imago Dei*. The dignity of every human, which is given by God in creation, is to respected and protected. Hence the theological understanding that emerges here is creation-centred, in which a

common humanity is to be found. The Catholic Church's understanding of human rights is shaped by Catholic Social teaching (CST):

> The fundamental message of Sacred Scripture proclaims that the human person is a creature of God (cf. Ps 139:14-18), and sees in his being in the image of God the element that characterizes and distinguishes him…Therefore, being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone (Article 108, also Kenya Episcopal Conference 2012:16).

The ACK (ACK, *Justice and Peace*, 2009) theological understanding of human rights is based on the premise of human dignity affirmed in creation. Hence, restoration of human rights is also based on restoration of human dignity robbed by social injustice. The NCCK (2013f) stated:

> The Bible teaches us in Genesis 1:26 that man was created in the image of God. Therefore all people have an inherent and inalienable dignity resident in them. However, we Kenyans have dehumanized ourselves and our neighbors. We call on each Kenyan to love his neighbor as they love themselves. The NCCK commits to continue promoting human dignity and to facilitate gender equity through provision of opportunities for women, youth and persons with disabilities to participate in church and social leadership.

According to the Practice and Procedure of the PCEA, "This Church recognizes that God has created all human beings equal and free in their rights: to life, liberty, dignity and security" (PCEA 1998:146). This kind of theological understanding by the churches means that the dignity of a person is to be found in the sanctity of life, hence life and everything that supports it are to be respected and protected, through creation of awareness and rebuking the violators. As such, from this theological approach, the churches saw the violence as a threat to the sanctity of life and disregard to the dignity of the victims.

However, even with this kind of theological articulation it is only the NCCK and the Catholic Church who directly and explicitly address issues of human rights. For instance, the Catholic Church has continually used pastoral letters and its institutions to promote human rights awareness among its members. The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC) facilitates programmes that seek to empower communities to actively promote, protect and respect human rights. This is commonly done through awareness and training in all the dioceses of the church in Kenya (CJPC, 2013b; see also Pirouet 1995:255). Perhaps it is through this education that KNCHR mentions the role that a Catholic congregation played during the post-2007 violence. According to KNCHR (2008:109), "St. Teresa's Catholic Church in Kibuye was useful in gathering information on the number of persons whose rights had been violated and providing a forum for the KNCHR and other actors to meet with affected individuals during interviews".

Through the Kenya Young Christian Students (KYCS), the Church also trains students in secondary schools, colleges and universities on human rights and civic education as well as creating public awareness for these, both within the students' world as well as in the society (KYCS, 2012). For the NCCK, alongside the human rights awareness programs, the institution has a project aimed at advocating and enhancing the protection of the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, a project whose staff are properly trained in the legal, ethical and human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS (Cf. Kenya Legal and Ethical Issues Network on HIV and AIDS, 2011).

Generally speaking, in addition to the explicit human right actions of both the Catholic Church and NCCK, the churches in Kenya have approached issues of human rights through injustices propagated and fanned by unjust political structures. In other words, the churches read the signs of the times in regard to human rights through the framework of political injustice, which was seen as the genesis of all other injustices. This meant that fighting oppressive political systems amounted to promotion of human rights. This led the Catholic Church to establish the CJPC in 1988 as the executive arm of the Kenya Episcopal Conference to deal with matters of peace and justice by promoting justice and challenging oppressive structures in society (CJPC, 2013a). Working closely with the Catholic Church, the NCCK in 1991 created a Department of Justice and Peace (DJP) "with which it was determined to continue fighting State injustices through a programme of educating people about their political rights and democracy. The creation of this department enabled the NCCK to define more clearly their advocacy activities" (Gibbs & Ajulu 1999:49). Following closely the move by NCCK to form DJP, the ACK established Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) in 1991 which

> Generally seeks to advocate for the removal of the many social injustices and structural obstacles within the dominant value of propagating for the establishment of a truly free, open, flourishing and democratic society, in which all human freedoms are entrenched for the full realization of the Kingdom of God in Kenya. It also seeks to nurture, build and sustain harmony, tolerance and social responsibility amongst Kenyans. It struggles for restoration of human rights, human dignity, integrity of creation, peace and reconciliation in support of the on-going democratization process (ACK, *Justice and Peace*, 2009).

Later on in 1998, the PCEA established the Justice, Peace and Reconciliation Committee (JPRC), whose mission is to promote justice, peace and reconciliation (PCEA, *JPRC,* No date). The most outstanding work of CJPC, DPJ, JPC and JPRC is civic education among their members and also their grassroots presence. For instance, there is literally a JPRC in almost every congregation of the PCEA.

There are however, no traces of churches' direct actions in the 2007/8 post-election violence in regard to human rights, in the KNCHR report or in other documents. All attention was given to internally

displaced persons and this attention was only through relief, as will be discussed in chapter six. Other victims of violations were neglected and therefore there is a need to have their stories heard and a process of healing initiated for them.

5.6   CONCLUSION

Gross violations of human rights in Kenya have taken place not only during the post-election violence but throughout the political history of the country. Most of these violations happened through social injustices facilitated by unjust political structures and policies as well as the culture of impunity in Kenya; hence it became the main approach of addressing violations of human rights. As human dignity is at the heart of respect for human rights, dehumanization is the root cause of violation of human rights. The churches in Kenya, with the exception of the Catholic Church and NCCK, have not directly – through their theological discourses and practice – addressed the issues of human rights. There is therefore an urgent need for a serious rethinking of the theology of human rights in Kenyan churches and the disconnection that exists between articulated discourses on human rights and the practice of those churches.

CHAPTER SIX

VIOLENCE IN KENYA

6.1   INTRODUCTION

Though the present study is about the whole event of the 2007/8 post-election violence, this chapter focuses on the agency dimension of the violence and a missiological reflection on violence. The 2007/8 post-election violence, as the name suggests, can be referred to as political violence. While there are other factors that contributed, as discussed in chapter three, it is in the framework of politics that this particular violence erupted. Gamini Samaranayake (2008:46) notes that "there is no general agreement on the definition of political violence" but for the sake of this study the working definition of political violence is taken from Harold Nieburg (1969:13), who defines political violence as "acts of disruption, destruction (and) injury whose purpose, choice of targets or victims, surrounding circumstances, implementation, and/or effects have political significance, that tend to modify the behaviors of others in a bargaining situation that has consequences for the social system."

This chapter has three sections. The first section reflects on the agency involved in the violence, with special attention given to three main actors: politicians, youth and churches. The second section is a missiological reflection on violence, which is done in dialogue with biblical scholarship. The third section is a scrutiny of the churches in Kenya, with attention given to how the churches understood their role in the 2013 general elections.[23]

6.2   AGENCY

Having discussed the nature and dynamics of the 2007/8 post-election violence in chapters two and three, it will be helpful in this chapter to address the issue of agency. There are many actors who were involved in different ways in the violence. The KNCHR report identifies politicians, business people, youth, faith based organizations, state agents and the media as the main actors. For sake of space and magnitude of their participation, this chapter discusses politicians, youth and churches as the main actors in the violence. However, the agency of churches is discussed separately in the spirit of the logic of style of the previous chapters.

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[23] The 2013 general elections are important to note because they give us a perspective on whether the churches in Kenya have learned any lessons from the 2007/8 post-election violence.

6.2.1 Politicians and violence

> The violence was largely instigated by politicians throughout the campaign period and during the violence itself via the use of incitement to hatred (KNCHR 2008:3).

> Further, the magnitude of the destruction that the attackers caused in the Rift Valley in particular and the swiftness with which they moved pointed to a high level of organisation, financing and provision of transport. It is alleged that local politicians and business people financed the violence (KNCHR 2008:135).

There has been a close relationship between violence and power, where politicians in Kenya have been using violence to attain and sustain power. This is a colonial legacy inherited from the colonial masters who gained and maintained power through violent conquest, which included the divide and rule approach discussed in chapter three and also the violent combating of the *Mau Mau* movement that was fighting colonial rule. Due to the nature of politics in Kenya, with politics of ethnic balkanization and politics of money, politicians are given undue prominence and enjoy an uncritical following from the masses. Politics in Kenya is highly competitive, especially because of the outrageous remuneration of political offices. Kenyan legislators are among the best paid legislators in the world (Kaara & Atsianga 2008:159, National Assembly 2010:32); in fact, empirical research has shown that they are the second highly paid legislators in the world (*The Economist* 2013; Herbing 2013). The correlation between money and power (politics) has been regularly drawn (cf. Mandel 1992; Bretton 1980), especially by observers using neo-Marxist approaches. For this economic reason, many politicians use all means possible – including violence – to gain and maintain power, which makes politics dangerously competitive.

The KNCHR report has repeatedly stated that politicians instigated the violence (KNCHR 2008:3, 13, 19, 88, 132), hence they carry the greatest criminal responsibility for their participation and involvement, mainly in two ways. Firstly, the politicians continually incited the masses and aroused their feelings of hatred through taking advantage of the fanatical following they enjoyed from the masses. Their political campaigns were punctuated with rhetoric of hate and divisiveness, which were channelled through stereotypes and negative perceptions against particular ethnic groups. Hate speech was pegged on highly emotive issues like land, where idioms were used to suggest the presence of unwanted people in particular regions. A good example is the use of the *Swahili* word *madoadoa* (stains) and snakes, mentioned in 5.3, to achieve this purpose. This idiom was specifically understood to imply a necessity to evict people considered to be non-indigenous (Cf. KNCHR 2008:5, 52, 58, 103, 134). Another emotive area that was hyped by politicians was the alleged political dominance of some ethnic communities, where hate speech was used to protest against the alleged dominance (Cf. KNCHR 2008:24, 214). Incitement was exhibited by direct calls for defence, where politicians charged the masses to pick up

arms in defence of "their people." Most of the retaliation and counter-attacks were as a result of such incitement (cf. KNCHR 2008:3, 36, 54, 81, 129).

Secondly, politicians not only incited the people but also mobilized, financed and offered logistical support for attacks and counter-attacks. Politicians, in collaboration with influential business people and community leaders, used young people, especially organized gangs, to facilitate attacks (KNCHR 2008:96, 105, 130, 135, 144, 157). Politicians took advantage of the youth adversely affected by the harsh economic realities in Kenya who were ready to be used by the politicians at a fee. As a result, a nexus was created between violence, youth and unemployment, which is the discussion of the next section.

6.2.2   Youth and Violence

The attackers moved in groups that would comprise an average of 100 young men in any given episode… The attacking youths would come in big groups of hundreds and would divide themselves moving silently before attacking, hence we were caught unawares (KNHRC 2008:58).

Unemployed youths within Central Province took advantage of the unrest to engage in theft and other unlawful practices (KNCHR 2008:126).

Though the youth are the majority in Kenya, the political dynamics in Kenya have reduced them to political spectators and instruments of violence. The youth are politically marginalized and as a result their participation in elective politics is very minimal. For instance, in the current elective political offices: Parliament (92 members), Senate (47 members) and Governor (47 members), there are less than ten youth aged below the age of 35. This is largely so because of the money-politics factor in Kenya (cf. Obonyo 2010; CMDK 2011a). It is because of this marginalization that the Constitution of Kenya (2010) requires that political parties nominate 12 members to represent special interests (including the youth) in parliament and two members (one man and one woman) in the senate (Articles 97 & 98). The Center for Multiparty Democracy - Kenya (CMDK) is one of the non-governmental institutions that seek to empower young people to active political participation:

In a bid to assist the young aspirants overcome the Achilles hill that is political endorsements of their more moneyed and well connected opponents. CMD-Kenya's County debates are affording them an appropriate platform to discuss their political agenda, challenge their opponents, and showcase their capacity, track record and abilities to the electorate and the media (CMDK 2011b).

The youth are instruments of violence because politicians in Kenya have continually misused them in causing violence and as such the youth, specifically of the male gender, were the main perpetrators of the violence (Njogu 2009:170; UNICEF 2012:10). While it is generally assumed that the youth involved in the violence were aged 15 years and above, research carried out by Kimani Njogu (2009:165, 296, 34. 170) indicates that even youth aged between 12-15 were actively involved in the attacks. Investigations have also proved that most of these young people come from low income backgrounds (KNCHR 2008:126, 146; IMF 2010:76-77) which is specifically evidenced by organized youth gangs that carried out attacks, as discussed below. The conclusion that can be drawn from these facts is that there is a close relationship between youth violence and economic factors; it is consequently difficult to address the issue of violence without addressing the economic issues related to the youth.

The statistical data on youth, provided in chapter one, indicate that Kenya is a youthful country and therefore most of the problems in the country related to education and employment are largely a youth challenge. The majority of the youth are unemployed, which is one of the main reasons why they participated in the post-election violence. The rate of unemployment in Kenya has escalated in alarming rates down the years and as a result many young people turn to crime and violence. Generally, research tends to draw a nexus between crime, violence and antisocial behaviour among the youth living in adverse economic realities, with the conclusion that youth from poor economic backgrounds are more prone to crime and violence (Cf Taylor 1995:175-176; Baumer, Rosenfeld & Wolff 2013:55; Connor 2002:147). Though a close relationship has been drawn between youth unemployment and violence, it is important to note that it is not every unemployed youth that is involved in the violence.

In Kenya as well, the relationship between violence and youth unemployment has been closely linked with the history of violence (Cf. Human Rights Watch 2002:147; Mwangola 2007:148; KNCHR 2008:126; IMF 2010:76-77) which has manifested itself mainly in two ways. Firstly, it is through opportunism, where idle and unemployed youth took advantage of the broken social order to engage in looting and other crimes (Oloo 2007:76; KNCHR 2008:37, 100, 126). Secondly, it is through manipulation by politicians who take advantage of the idle youth, a tendency enhanced by the culture of disbursing money to eligible voters during political campaigns. This money culture has encouraged the emergence of militia-like gangs, also referred to as vigilante groups, which are ethnically organized (cf. Mwangola 2007:148; Anderson 2002:542; KNCHR 2008:36, 42). Mshai Mwangola (2007:148), for instance, notes that "each gang is associated with a politician. While some specifically started as political 'support' groups for particular politicians, others either took advantage of the political context to offer their

services to particular factions or emerged in response to insecurity, poverty or other needs." David Anderson notes that the idle youth "too easily become a political instrument in the hands of those with money to pay, playing key roles in electoral and post-elections violence so as to ensure a particular electoral outcome" (Anderson 2002:542). Among these militia gangs, the *Mungiki* (which is associated with the Kikuyu) is perhaps the best organized (KNCHR 2008:44) and most feared criminal group, especially for its extortion network and heinous murders. The gang features numerous times in the KNCHR report (KNCHR 2008:20, 29, 36)[24].

6.4   MISSIOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON VIOLENCE

Conflict and violence remain major threats to peace in the world today and by the virtue of the Church being in the world, they remain a major concern for the Church. The threats of terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, inter-ethnic, inter-country and inter-religious conflicts are perhaps more prevalent today than at any other time in history. This section deals with how the biblical understanding of violence can shape the Church's mission in a world full of conflict and violence.

6.4.1   Violence in the Bible

The Bible is full of texts that refer to violence, since it was a reality in the life of Israel, the life of Jesus and the life of the early church. It contains texts that are certainly difficult to understand, hence in this section such texts will be referred to as "difficult texts." These texts are also problematic, as Kjetil Freithem (2004:21) argues: "The most basic theological problem with the Bible's violence is that it is often associated with the activity of God; with remarkable frequency. God is the subject of violent verbs." It is not possible to talk about violence from a theological perspective without invoking these texts and it is through this attention that we can arrive at an acceptable biblical theology of violence. In the Old Testament, for instance, there are many episodes of violence initiated by God himself as well as by his people Israel. God is presented as "mighty in battle" (Psalm 24) and he initiates violence of the kind that would be called genocide today. Most notably are Noah's flood (Genesis 6-7), the Passover killing of Egyptian children (Exodus 12) and the Sodom and Gomorrah violence (Genesis 19). There are also conquest narratives in the Pentateuch and Prophets where God's people engage in mass killings as

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[24]For further discussion on *mungiki* phenomenon see Kagwanja (2005) and Knighton (2009).

a result of divine instruction (cf Genesis 32, 34; Exodus 17; 2 Kings 1:10-12). The apocalyptic writings are also full of the language of violence and the eschaton has some violent characteristics.

Difficult texts certainly raise very pertinent and difficult questions which, as Dianne Bergant (1994:46) states, should not be avoided. The quest to understand these texts is quite a struggle and it is such struggle and tensions that led to the error of Marcion, who introduced a sharp division between the Testaments because he was appalled by the notion that the God portrayed in the Old Testament was violent and brutal (Cf. Boersma 2004:41; Bartlett 2001:54). Many Bible readers today are understandably trapped in Marcionite thinking and as Anthony Bartlett (2001:54) rightly argues, though Marcion's attempt at coherence through separation failed, his sensitivity was not misplaced.

There are many hermeneutical approaches to the interpretation of such texts. There are teleological approaches whose focus is the goals achieved through violence. Walter Brueggemann (1997:244) observes that the violence assigned to Yahweh is to be understood as counter-violence, whose goal is a nonviolent end, which according to Freithem (2004:18) is meant to accomplish loving purposes. To Bergant (1994:51), God was not preoccupied with violence but he waged war in order to restrain chaos and establish peace and order. Freithem (2004:23), for instance, argues that God uses violence in two ways: judgment and salvation – with some events having both results. In judgment, divine violence always seems to be related to human sin and, generally speaking, "if there were no human violence, there would be no divine violence" (Freithem 2004:21). For salvation, Freithem (2004:24) notes that violence becomes the means by which God's people are delivered from violence, with an example of the exodus event – where violence is used to deliver Israel from the violence of Egypt (Exodus 15:1-3). However, the difficulty with the exodus event is the slaying of innocent children of Egypt, keeping in mind the fact that it is God himself who had hardened the heart of Pharaoh. Richard Bowman and Richard Swanson (1997:61) point to the use of divine violence to establish and legitimize Hebrew authority, to regenerate and renew the vitality of the nation, especially during the era of the Judges. The approach that "the end justifies the means," which is advocated by these scholars, certainly raises some difficulty because it is hard to reconcile with texts that do not have love as their end. For instance, the texts in which God ordered massacres of nations which decided not to worship him and the killing of innocent people for the sins of individual persons. Bowman and Swanson (1997:61) have also raised a concern against this approach when they point at the violent activities portrayed in the Samson story, which do not end with an integrated and peaceful society but with a brutal act of revenge with the help of God's hand.

Another way of handling difficult texts is through biblical criticism. Bergant (1994: 51) states that YHWH was perceived as sovereign, which meant that in any battle he therefore had to emerge as conqueror. His people Israel believed that he was personally present in their lives as their patron, hence he was willing to defend them against other nations that threatened them. These nations were regarded as opponents of YHWH as well and their transgression of Israel's sacred boundaries was considered as pollution. The problem that arises from this hermeneutical approach is God's favouritism of Israel, to the exclusion of other nations who did not worship YHWH. If God created humanity with free volition, why does he not respect the choice made by human beings out of this freedom, even when it is against him?

There are scholars who find a literal reading of violent texts in the Bible morally repugnant and unacceptable (Stark 2011:33). Origen, for instance, insisted that it is impossible to interpret the meaning of the conquest narratives literally, hence "unless those carnal wars were a symbol of spiritual wars, I do not think that the Jewish historical books would ever have been passed down by the apostles to be read by Christ's followers in their churches" (in Stark 2011:34). This kind of approach has been questioned by other scholars (Cf. Boersma 2004:47-48; Bergant 1994:47). Hans Boersma (2004:47-48) argues that it is not helpful to interpret God's wrath as a metaphor that does not truly speak of reality. Why do we use an argument of "the restrictions of human language" exclusively for those characteristics of God in the biblical narratives that we find less appealing? Bergant (1994:50) rightly asks: "If the descriptions are more metaphorical than factual, why were such violent metaphors preferred?"

6.4.2   Reading difficult texts

There is a tendency to ignore difficult texts, especially when one encounters struggle in understanding them. Bowman & Swanson (1997:60) warn that a hermeneutic of avoidance is an ethically irresponsible and irresponsive way of reading; hence there is a need for what Bartlett (2001:54) calls a radical hermeneutic or what Eric Seibert (2012:64-65) calls "reading the Bible actively." This entails ethically critiquing – rather than uncritically approving – violent texts and also reading the Bible faithfully, which means reading it conversantly, which will lead to asking questions about certain texts. Some of these hermeneutical questions include: "Might there be more than one way of understanding biblical statements that not only sanction but actually encourage war?" (Bergant 1994:46). "How does an interpreter responsively and responsibly read violent sacred narratives in a violent secular world?" (Bowman & Swanson 1997:59). How do you reconcile the violent texts with texts of *shalom*? This section is not an attempt to answer these questions, because even with hermeneutical explanations given above, the tensions in these difficult texts still persist. However, this struggle should be seen as

part of the journey towards understanding faith and not necessarily as points of confusion and contradiction. The purpose of this section is to propose a guideline to understanding violence from a liberating perspective, even in the midst of difficult texts.

The approach that is preferred in response to difficult texts is the one proposed by Seibert (2012:73, 80) who suggests that we should read the Bible non-violently. This means using dissonant (nonviolent) voices to undermine dominant (violent) ones. He gives an example of passages describing nonviolent resolution of conflict, such as Joseph's forgiveness of his brothers (Genesis 45-50) and Abigail's swift intervention that prevented a massacre (1 Samuel 25), examples which can be brought into conversation with texts that resolve conflict through lethal force. Flowing from Seibert's thesis, difficult texts should be read in the light of texts that abhor violence and promote peace. Margot Kässmann (1998:26) states that there is much evidence in the Bible describing God as the giver of *shalom*. Freithem (2004:20) argues that God sharply rejects violent people – for example "the Lord…hates the lover of violence" (Psalm 11:5) – and such a resolute divine opposition to human violence is important to remember in reflecting upon divine violence (Freithem 2004:21). The ultimate opposition to violence in the Bible is certainly demonstrated in the Jesus event, especially through his incarnation and ministry as well as his death on the cross. The Jesus event should at least help in answering some of the questions arising from the difficult texts, as Boersma (2004:41) argues: "All traditional interpretations of the cross must in some way give an account of the relationship between divine violence and the atonement."

6.4.3 The Incarnation and Ministry of Jesus

The incarnation is important in understanding violence because Jesus, God incarnate, comes face to face with violence through his birth, ministry and consequently his death. He is born in a violent environment where male children are massacred by Herod because of him (Matthew 2:16-18). Throughout his earthly ministry, Jesus teaches against violence, with the best example being the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7). He represents a new order where evil and violence are to be overcome with what is good:

> You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you (Matthew 5:38-48).

Jesus also encounters instances of violence, to which he responds with a nonviolent attitude. For example, he sternly rebuked those calling for destructive fire from heaven (Luke 9:54) and he responds

to Peter's violent attack with healing and an appeal to put down the weapon of violence (Matthew 26:52). Building on Jesus' model, many scholars (cf. Kässmann 1998; Hoeft 2006) have called for a nonviolent response to violence. The WCC and the Roman Catholic Church have continually supported a nonviolent approach to violence. The WCC initiated a Decade to Overcome Violence (DOV) in the period 2001-2010, in its relentless efforts to mitigate violence in nonviolent ways in a broken world (WCC 2004). According to the WCC, "Peace-building in non-violent ways is a Christian core virtue and an imperative of the gospel message itself" (WCC 2006). Consequently, the WCC proposes dialogue and political negotiations as means through which violent conflict can be overcome (cf. WCC 2008a; WCC 2010a). Like the WCC, the Roman Catholic Church supports dialogue and negotiation. In recent times this approach has been used by Pope Francis to appeal to the world's 20 largest economies to abandon a looming military solution to the Syrian Conflict and embrace a peaceful solution through dialogue and negotiation (Vatican 2013a). A nonviolent approach is what Lisa Cahill (1994:2) refers to as Christian pacifism, which is "essentially a commitment to embody communally and historically the kingdom of God so fully that mercy, forgiveness and compassion preclude the very contemplation of causing physical harm to another person."

This nonviolent response is by no means an escapist approach or what Walter Wink (2003:3) calls "pervasive inversion," where the lessons from the Sermon on the Mount are interpreted to mean an inactive and uncritical response to oppressive systems. Kässmann (1998:27) argues that the call in the Sermon on the Mount is to nonviolence, not to non-resistance; a view supported by Jeanne Hoeft (2006:49), who notes that "resistance arises out of the context of violence, from within the same culture that perpetuates violence." Wink (2003:175) argues that turning the other cheek is an act of humiliating the aggressor, and giving the undergarment is an act of unmasking cruelty and going a second mile is a way of protest. However, looking at Wink's hypothesis today, it may raise some problems. Turning the other cheek may not humiliate the aggressor but it can actually accelerate aggression. Giving the undergarment may not unmask cruelty but expose the victim to further humiliation. Going a second mile may not be a protest but an extra burden on the shoulders of the victims.

Whereas this proposal of resistance can work in some situations of violence, the question arises: What kind of resistance should be used in the face of brutal attacks? Should the victims helplessly resign their fate to the hands of their violators? A further question is whether there is a necessary or justifiable violence that can be used as protest and resistance. For instance, what is the place of self defence in brutal violence? These questions lead to the Augustinian "just war" ethic which, as Cahill (1994:1) notes,

allows violence under certain conditions but attempts to limit it, both by constricting the valid causes for going to war (for example, defence of the common good, proportionality, last resort, declaration by a legitimate authority, hope of success) and by restraining the actions of war. Darrell Cole (2002:74), building on the Augustinian approach to war, argues: "God restrains evil out of love for his creation. Just wars acts are God-like insofar as they restrain evil and are done out of love for the neighbor – both the neighbor we protect and the unjust neighbor who is the subject of our acts of violence" (Cole 2002:74).

Like with the other difficult texts, Cole's argument is also difficult, especially through classifying love and violence in the same category. However, his thesis is convincing when looking at the violent death of Jesus on the cross. Cahill (1994:1) highlights a tension (my emphasis) between just war thinking and Christian pacifism:

> While Church statements have sometimes had a significant impact on the public discussion of war, however, no clear and consistent theological resolution of the issues between the just war and pacifists interpretations of Christian teaching has been achieved. Many Christians and their leaders seem caught on the horns of both/and approach, in which some credence is given both to resort to war and to renunciation of violence.

A good example of this tension raised by Cahill is the position of the Roman Catholic Church on self-defence and war. According to the Catholic Catechism, "Love toward oneself remains a fundamental principle of morality. Therefore it is legitimate to insist on respect for one's own right to life. Someone who defends his life is not guilty of murder even if he is forced to deal his aggressor a lethal blow" (Vaticana 1994:545). Also:

> Legitimate defense can be not only a right but a grave duty for one who is responsible for the lives of others. The defense of the common good requires that an unjust aggressor be rendered unable to cause harm. For this reason, those who legitimately hold authority also have the right to use arms to repel aggressors against the civil community entrusted to their responsibility (Vaticana 1994:545).

The contrary aspect of both the non-violent approach to violence and the self-defence teachings of the Roman Catholic Church should not be seen as a contradiction but as a tension that should be maintained in a creative balance. While the Church stands for dialogue, negotiation and reconciliation as means through which violence should be mitigated, it should also define the kind of response that is required in the event that these means are not bearing the intended results or when there is large scale violence that requires meaningful force to be interrupted.

6.4.4   The Cross Event

The cross event is the ultimate example of how Jesus dealt with violence. God incarnate comes face to face with violence. Though the cross event was seen as justice by the aggressors, it is an epitome of

nonviolent resistance to evil. Kässmann (1998:27) explains: "Jesus himself walked the path of nonviolent resistance to the very end. He remained a provocation to the powers even when he was dying on the cross. By his death it became obvious that he was not defeated but continued to be a scandal to the forces of violence." Through his death on the cross, Jesus – though sovereign – submits to violence and this has become a perfect example of what our attitude towards violence should be. Pope Francis, in one of his messages on peace, noted that:

> My Christian faith urges me to look to the Cross. How I wish that all men and women of good will would look to the Cross if only for a moment! There, we can see God's reply: violence is not answered with violence; death is not answered with the language of death. In the silence of the Cross, the uproar of weapons ceases and the language of reconciliation, forgiveness, dialogue, and peace is spoken (Vatican 2013b).

Flowing from Pope Francis' sentiments, the call of the cross is a call to reconciliation: reconciliation with God and reconciliation with each other. Kässmann (1998:5) says: "violence is not going to disappear from human life once and for all, but Christians can set signs of the reality of God's kingdom in our world. Struggle to overcome violence in the knowledge that violence exists is an attitude of hope." The mission of the Church in conflict situations is to mitigate and mediate through the language of love, forgiveness and reconciliation – a triad that characterizes the Jesus event.

This section has focused on a missiological reflection on violence. Though there are violent texts in the Bible, they are not supposed to be read as an inspiration or justification of violence but should be read against texts of *shalom* with the Jesus event giving us an ideal model on which a missiology/theology in response to violence can be built.

6.5   ECCLESIAL SCRUTINY: CHURCHES AND VIOLENCE

Christianity in Kenya has an ambiguous history. On the one hand it was established through relief and development with establishment of mission schools and hospitals, and on the other hand it was established in the context of violence, a context of colonialism and oppression (Mwaura 2005: 163-164; Galgalo 2012:7). In colonial times, the Church was identified with the oppressor and as an oppressor through violence; the distinction between the missionary and the colonial master did not exist. Most resentment against the churches was with how they had forcibly and illegitimately acquired land, sentiments best captured by words attributed to Jomo Kenyatta: "When the missionaries came we had the land and they had the Bible in their hands. They told us to pray, closing our eyes. When we looked up again we had the Bible and they had our land" (in Baur 1994:477). The churches in Kenya have since been entangled with land controversies and are seen as part of the land problem in Kenya. The

ambiguity of the churches has continued through the history of the church in Kenya with the post-election violence of 2007/8 being no exception. The response of the churches to the violence was ambivalent: On the one hand the churches stood with the victims and on the other they encouraged or allowed the perpetrators to do violence.

6.5.1   Churches standing with the victims

During the violence, the first response of the churches was humanitarian assistance, which was seen by the churches themselves as their immediate and appropriate mandate. One the one hand, the victims took refuge in churches because they saw them as havens of peace and the churches had no option but to accord relief assistance to them. However, the attackers often saw such churches as either "the host of our enemies" or as "the church of the enemy." This perhaps explains why many churches were targets of arson attacks, and the number of churches that were attacked is an indicator that the Church as a sanctuary had lost its sacredness as well as its non-partisan or neutral tag (cf. KNCHR 2008:23, 30, 31, 35, 38, 39). This offence against the churches should be a critical reflection point for the churches in Kenya as they, through repentance and reform, seek to restore the lost credibility and glory of the Church.

Humanitarian assistance was appealed for through pastoral exhortation. However, even this humanitarian assistance was given along ethnic lines. For instance, in the Limuru area in Central Kenya predominantly inhabited by the Kikuyu, there were three large IDP camps, with the first two camps hosting Kikuyu victims. The one was run by the Kenya Red Cross and the other by Limuru Pastors Fellowship, who mobilized and called upon Christians around the vicinity of Limuru to give humanitarian aid to the victims. The other camp, which was in the Tigoni Police Station, hosted non-Kikuyu victims who were working in Limuru and its environs. The Tigoni camp, which had about seven thousand people (KNCHR 2008:127), was neglected and all the relief was given to the two Kikuyu camps. It is in Limuru that the KNCHR report (2008:130) states that Church leaders conveyed messages that amounted to hate speech.

Humanitarian response was the default and reflex action of the churches but it is was not enough by itself. It was only the displaced victims that received so much attention from churches, with little done for other kind of victims like those who experienced sexual abuse, were physically assaulted or psychologically tormented and whose dignity also needed restoration and affirmation. Nyerere (1973:113) argued that "human dignity cannot be given to a man by the kindness of others. Indeed it can be destroyed by kindness which emanates from an action of charity. For human dignity involves

equality and freedom and relations of mutual respect among men." Building on Nyerere's thoughts, the victims of the violence needed to recover the dignity that had been taken away from them through acts of violence and if the churches had understood that, they would have vigorously worked beyond merely offering relief to displaced persons.

6.5.2   Churches against victims

The actions of the churches in Kenya during the violence can lead us to characterize them either as "churches of oppressors" or "churches for the oppressors." They can be seen as churches *of* oppressors because they were part of the problem, through participation and involvement in the violence. Some Church leaders aided and abetted violence through incitement to hatred, using their pulpits to preach hatred and division against particular ethnic communities, in total disregard to the sanctity of the pulpit and biblical teachings:

> Kenyans had previously counted on the Church as one institution that stood for the rights of Kenyans particularly during the Moi era where the likes of the late Bishop Muge, the late Bishop Okullu and Bishop Gitari together with other leaders gallantly led Kenyans to require accountability from the political leadership. It was therefore shocking and disillusioning to Kenyans that instead of expected unity of voice some churches and church leaders preached hatred against other communities in total disregard to biblical teaching (KNCHR 2008: 31).

Some pastors were accused of being key organizers of violence (cf. KNCHR 2008:117), while most of the Church leaders provided incitement through divisive messages (cf. KNCHR 2008:31, 130, 196). For instance, one of the pastors in Limuru urged: "The Kikuyu should be armed the way I am armed with a Bible" (KNCHR 2008:130).

The churches can be seen as the church *for* the oppressors through their partisan and non-neutral involvement with divisive politics, a reality that robbed the churches of their authority to offer leadership and mediation in the violence (Cf.KNCHR 2008:23, 31, 95). Churches were clearly identified with particular ethnic political divisions, hence: "It became increasingly predictable which church/church leader would support which political stand depending on which politician was advancing it and invariably the underlying reason was ethnic loyalty" (KNCHR 2008:31).

The churches can also be seen as the church *for* the oppressors through their identification with the key suspects of the violence indicted by the ICC. Two of the suspects, the current president and his deputy, organized countrywide prayers cum political rallies, with spiritual leaders offering special prayers for them. These prayer meetings raised concerns and the conduct of the Church leaders was

questioned, especially because they had never organized any prayers for the victims of the violence. For instance, a cabinet minister asked: "I see preachers in rallies praying for the accused, but who will speak for the voiceless? Don't the victims deserve prayers, too? We must not forget the victims of the post-election violence" (Gekara 2012). There is biblical evidence that God stands with the poor and the oppressed, which is the central affirmation of liberation theologies. Darrin Belousek (2013:465) notes: "The poor receive God's help, not because they deserve it, but because they need it. Indeed God's acts preferentially in favour of the poor and needy." The mission of the Church is to participate in the mission of God in the world, which means the Church should stand where God stands[25] and because he stands with the poor and the oppressed, standing with the poor and the oppressed should be a critical and urgent mission of the Church. When the Church identifies with the oppressor and the strong at the expense of the oppressed and the weak, it ceases to participate in God's mission among the oppressed and the weak.

6.5   DISCERNMENT FOR ACTION: CHURCHES' ACTIONS IN VIOLENCE

To help in naming the practical actions of the churches in Kenya in regard to the violence, three convictions can be identified as the motivations from which they acted. Firstly, there was pastoral conviction which was the most urgent response by the churches because it addressed the most urgent needs. The immediate humanitarian response through rescue, relief and sheltering of victims at the height and in the aftermath of the post-election violence was the churches' most noticeable constructive contribution and participation in the whole event of the violence (Cf. KNCHR 2008:96, 110, 117, 122, 141). Many churches hosted internally displaced persons and regularly contributed relief assistance to such people who were hosted in churches, police stations and social halls. Most churches have social responsibility committees through which relief was given. The Catholic Church and NCCK as institutions have CJPC and DJP respectively, as the arms through which humanitarian help is given. The ACK as an institution has a Development Department which is involved in the physical, intellectual, environmental, social and economic life of the poor, the marginalized and all other vulnerable members of society (ACK, *Provincial Departments*, 2009). The PCEA as an institution has its Board for Social Responsibility "to promote and develop the project of the whole Church development of the Church

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[25] This expression comes from Article 4 of the Belhar Confession of the Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (cf. Cloete and Smit 1984).

oriented organizations, as well as catering for all problems of social nature that affect human beings, both inside as well as outside the Church" (PCEA, Board for Social Responsibility Department, C)

Secondly, there is the conviction of peacemaking, which was the logical thing to do after the initial humanitarian response. For instance, there were peace meetings organized by NCCK, which held a total of thirty eight interdenominational peace meetings around the country, aimed at reducing tension and diffusing the violence (NCCK 2011). NCCK also established local community networks in areas most affected by the violence, whose role was to bring about social transformation and to establish approaches geared at the promotion of peaceful co-existence at community level. Some of those approaches included building the capacities of church personnel in the selected areas through training, which was meant to contribute towards a common understanding of conflict management and peace building (NCCK 2013b). NCCK has also a peace project called South-Rift Reconciliation Programme which aims to help conflicting communities dialogue with one another towards peaceful coexistence (NCCK 2011). The Catholic Church also took a similar peacemaking and reconciliation approach. Most notably is the project of the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret, arguably the area most affected by the violence. The programme involved rescue and protection of victims, relief support through provision of basic needs and inter-ethnic peace and reconciliation meetings (Korir 2009:1-6).

Thirdly, there is co-operation and partnership, where the NCCK and the Catholic Church joined with other religious players in the framework of the Inter-Religious Forum (IRF) in order to have a joint ecumenical commitment which would form a formidable and concerted force to counteract he ineffectual statements by religious leaders in the country, perhaps because the religious leaders had lost their credibility and moral authority to carry out such a task. The IRF also carried out a research project into the violence which produced the report mentioned in chapter one.

6.6 REFLEXIVITY: DO THE CHURCHES LEARN FROM THEIR EXPERIENCES?

The churches in Kenya have often been criticized for taking partisan positions. At the height of the violence, for the reason of partisanship and involvement, it was not possible for the Church to either interrupt the violence or help bring together the antagonizing parties. Perhaps the initial intervention attempts by Tutu from South Africa can attest to this fact. However, after the post-election violence of 2007/8, the churches openly admitted failure and complacency in the face of the violence. The NCCK organized a national pastors' conference to take stock of the event. Many pastors gave testimonies about their activities during the crisis, including blessing warriors to engage in violence, while others

admitted having invited politicians to their churches where they used the pulpit to disseminate hate messages that incited people against members of other communities (Macharia 2008). In a paid up national newspaper statement the NCCK said:

> We own up to taking partisan positions on national issues, elevating our ethnic identities above our Christian identity, direct involvement in party politics and participating in post-election violence which were made more ominous by the deteriorating national values, sinful political strategies and failure to faithfully stand for biblical values and principles..We ask God to forgive us and to renew and empower our witness to His grace (Macharia 2008).

The NCCK also resolved that churches should always play a pro-active and non-partisan role and said it was in the process of rebuilding its image and restoring confidence amongst the faithful as the country embarked on the road to national healing and reconciliation (Macharia 2008). Like the NCCK, the Catholic Church stated: "This time round the entire leadership of the catholic church shall remain non-partisan in the forthcoming general elections because as a church we are interested in the unity of all Kenyans. We shall hold the Kenya's fabric together by our advisory role" (*All Africa* 2013). However, the NCCK has been adamant on some issues. Just before the elections of 2013, some Church leaders participated in some ethnically based gatherings dubbed GEMA and KAMATUSA[26] meetings, which were perceived as propagating exclusive ethnic politics. In the light of the political agenda of these groupings, there was a public outcry against those Church leaders. The NCCK came out justifying the participation of the Church leaders: "We consider their presence there as an opportunity to ensure that what is discussed in these forums reflect the tenets of peace, love for each other and unity of our nation" (Leftie 2012). The NCCK's position differed sharply from the stand taken by the Anglican and Catholic churches, which condemned the revival of GEMA and KAMATUSA groupings (Leftie 2012).

Perhaps due to the backlash the churches received after the 2007/8 post-election violence, they were keen and vigilant regarding their role before the elections of 2013, by engaging in different peace initiatives. The NCCK, for instance, held football tournaments because they saw them as "an appropriate moment to share peace messages and sign peace petitions in the lead up to the General Elections in March 2013" (NCCK 2013c). The NCCK also had a peace caravan designed to reach the public with peace messages before the elections (NCCK 2013d). NCCK also embarked on a series of intra- and inter-ethnic

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[26] GEMA is an acronym of Gikuyu, Embu and Meru Association, which brings together three ethnic communities, Gikuyu, Embu and Meru that are closely connected. KAMATUSA is an acronym for Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu Association, a group that brings together four other ethnic communities The GEMA meeting endorsed the then deputy Prime Minister Uhuru Kenyatta's presidential bid. KAMATUSA endorsed the then Eldoret North Member of Parliament William Ruto's presidential bid and resolved to mobilize the Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu communities towards this. Kenyatta and Ruto were later elected as president and deputy president respectively.

community dialogue forums because they believed that, "by creating a series of interactions between conflicting communities, barriers will be broken, hostilities neutralized, past grievances resolved, trust fostered, resilience enhanced, and social bridges built" (NCCK 2013e). The Catholic Church used Lenten Campaigns to sensitize Christians on issues of peace and reconciliation and how they relate to the social teachings of the church (CJPC 2013:5-8). The PCEA and ACK warned politicians to stop inciting people and to preach peace (cf. Gakio 2012; *Nation* 2012b). Churches also joined together to help Kenyans to elect good leaders. This was done through civic education and also through organizing forums with presidential aspirants to secure their commitment to conduct peaceful campaigns and also prevail upon their supporters to uphold civility during the elections. This initiative ended with a Church-organized presidential debate aired on national television (*Nation* 2013d). However, most of these actions of the churches around this period can be said to be public relations initiatives and image redeeming actions hence there is a need for empirical research to determine whether these initiatives had any meaningful peacemaking and reconciling impact during that period.

Perhaps the most outstanding peace and reconciliation effort was embodied by the efforts of the Christian community (henceforth referred to as the Kiambaa community) in the neighbourhood of the Assemblies of God Church that was razed with scores of people inside it during the 2007-8 violence. The initiative started with reconstructing the Church structure, where area residents drawn from the antagonizing communities worked in shifts to build the church. After the reconstruction, the church was renamed Kiambaa Unity and Reconciliation Church. The Kiambaa community also established annual forums that see members of the Church visit their neighbours to share peace messages (Nation, 2012c). These actions by the Kiambaa community have enhanced community cohesiveness and unity and it serves as an ideal example of a genuine commitment to peacemaking and reconciliation.

6.7   Conclusion

The complex nature of the history of political violence in Kenya calls for an integrated approach which seeks long lasting solutions that will build social cohesiveness and reconciliation in Kenya. The politicians have played prominent roles in instigating violence and as such there should be mechanisms to interrupt the factors that give them the space to play that negative role. The buck should certainly not stop with politicians and the people should be empowered to critically interrogate demagogic rhetoric and appeals made by politicians. There should also be an interruption of the outrageous wage bill which has adversely shaped politics in Kenya, which is totally inconsistent with the economic strength of the

country. The youth have been continually used as instruments of violence, a reality that is closely connected with economic factors affecting the youth. As a result, there should be concerted efforts and programmes whose focus and goal are to help the youth to be instruments of peacemaking and reconciliation. The youth also need to be empowered not to play into the hands of politicians; substitute approaches should be established to engage the youth to creatively handle idleness and unemployment. The churches should also embark on meaningful programmes of peacemaking and reconciliation, not as public relations initiatives or image redeeming actions but as actions based on a genuine commitment to the mission of God in Kenya. The following chapter discusses models of reconciliation based on the discussion of the foregoing chapters.

MODELS OF RECONCILIATION IN KENYA

7.1   INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this present study is to develop models of reconciliation for the churches in Kenya in response to the 2007/8 post-election violence. God is actively concerned and working in Kenya and he is calling the churches in Kenya to rediscover their missional mandate in the socio-political arena. This chapter focuses on reconciliation as the missional mandate of churches in Kenya and on how this reconciliation can be imagined. Reconciliation as a theoretical framework is discussed, followed by reflections on models of reconciliation that are compatible with the issues raised throughout this study. This reflection is conscious of the cause-effect relationship between the interconnectedness of politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence. Consequently a cause-effect result is imagined through these models.

7.2   RECONCILIATION AS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Reconciliation is the ultimate goal of any peace process in contexts of conflict and violence. Schreiter (2005:75) observes that due to important developments in societies around the world, a new paradigm of mission has been emerging that has its organizing principle in the understanding of mission as a model of and for reconciliation and healing. Bevans and Schroeder (2011:348, 389) whose understanding of reconciliation is largely shaped by Schreiter, sees mission as prophetic dialogue, with reconciliation understood as an integral part of this dialogue.

Reconciliation mainly means transformation and restoration of lost and hurting relationships. Appleby (2008:8) argues that Jesus doesn't merely renew the original relationship but transforms it. He particularly points at the vitality of the prefix "re" in reconciliation which denotes that this is not an exceptional relationship; there was a relationship before but it has been ruptured. Kirsteen Kim (2005:xvii, xviii, xix) observes that in the New Testament reconciliation is propagated as a relationship we have with God as a result of Jesus Christ and that opens the door for the church to participate in God's mission in the world in the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-20), hence making the Church a reconciled and reconciling community. Bevans and Schroeder comment on this: "The possibility of reconciliation is one way, if not the most compelling way, of expressing the meaning of the gospel today. In the midst of unspeakable violence, unbearable pain and indelible scars on people's

memory, the Church as God's minister of reconciliation proclaims that in Christ and in his community, healing is possible" (Bevans and Schroeder 2011:390-391).

Schreiter (2005:79-80) understands reconciliation from the relational dimension of *missio Dei*. He notes that much of the previous theological discourses have been addressed through the classical vertical understanding of reconciliation between God and sinful humanity and he points to a horizontal dimension of reconciliation between human beings as individuals and societies and between human beings and the earth. However, he notes that the horizontal understanding of reconciliation is grounded in the vertical understanding of God's saving work and hence the mission of reconciliation is based in the *missio Dei*. Based on Schreiter's arguments, inter-personal and societal reconciliation is realized on the basis of restored relationship between God and humanity through Jesus Christ. For Bosch (1991:514), reconciliation is connected to the cross:

> The cross also stands for reconciliation between estranged individuals and groups, between the oppressor and the oppressed. Reconciliation does not, of course, mean a mere sentimental harmonizing of conflicting groups. It demands sacrifice, in very different but also in very real ways, from both oppressor and oppressed. It demands the end to oppression and injustice and commitment to a new life of mutuality, justice and peace.

Following from the above arguments, the reconciliation we receive from God is not in the words of Bonhoeffer (1959:43) "cheap grace." It is sacrificial and cannot be realized without us acknowledging and repenting from our alienation on account of our sins. In the same way, we cannot be reconciled with each other unless the conditions of truth and justice are upheld. Other churches in Africa, as reconciling communities, have − within such a framework of reconciliation − played critical roles in their respective countries. Most notably is the role the churches played in South Africa through the TRC and also the role played by churches in Rwanda after the genocide through the *gacaca* courts: a praxis of peace, justice and reconciliation informed by African religion and culture.[27]

The churches in Kenya need to be missiologically conscious of God's call to them to be actively involved in the ministry of reconciliation according to their God-given authority and mandate. The subsequent sections discuss a reconciliation imagined in this study as model of reflexivity, healing, prophetic interruption and empowerment.

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[27] For more information about *gacaca* courts, see Morgan (2004) and Nsanzimana (2012).

7.3   MODEL OF REFLEXIVITY

A model of reflexivity is based on the rationale of self evaluation and criticism. It is inspired by Matthew 7:5: "First take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." It is a call to the churches in Kenya to first deal with issues that hinder their effective participation in the mission of God. It is on such conviction that Martin Luther King Jr. exhorted the black protestors not to engage in the same things they were fighting against: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that" (in Mieder 2010:71). It is also the consciousness that informed Desmond Tutu (2007:48) when he exhorted those fighting apartheid: "We must not allow ourselves to become like the system we oppose. We cannot afford to use methods of which we will be ashamed…"

A model of reflexivity also calls the churches to critical evaluation and regular stock taking on the efficacy of their approaches and practice. Reflexivity should be understood as a kind of spirituality that should be at the heart of the mission of the churches. Based on this rationale, this section reflects on particular areas of reflexivity that the churches in Kenya must focus on in order to witness to the kingdom of God and be agents of reconciliation in Kenya. Two areas are thus discussed: Influence of Christianity in the socio-political sphere and de-ethnization of churches.

7.3.1   Influence of Christianity in the socio-political sphere

Christianity has indeed grown in Kenya, with statistics indicating that about 85% of Kenyans are Christians (KNBS 2009), most of whom regularly attend church services. However, this kind of Christianity, in Emmanuel Katongole's words, is a "Christianity without consequence" (Katongole & Hartgrove 2009:49), especially when looked at through the event of the 2007/8 post-election violence, where the gospel's values of peace, love and unity were recklessly abandoned. Critical questions emerge from this reality, which churches in Kenya must ask if Christianity is to make a significant contribution in the socio-political arena. How can a country with such a huge number of Christians, who are supposed to be agents of God's love, peace and justice be a host of social injustice, inequality and violence? How is it that Christianity has not significantly affected the socio-political complexities and realities of Kenya?

In an attempt to answer these questions, some scholars have approached the issue using African theological discourses where Christianity is discussed vis-à-vis African religion (cf Uzukwu 1982; Magesa 1997; Galgalo 2012). Others, like Julius Nyerere (1973:111), approach the issue from a neo-Marxist angle: "Until men are in a position to make effective choices, they will become Christians in anything but name. Their membership of the church will be simply another method by which they seek to escape

from a consciousness of their misery. If you like religion becomes a kind of opium of the people." It requires empirical research to establish why Christianity does not influence the consciousness and actions of many Christians in Kenya in relation to socio-political complexities and realities.

The influence of Christianity in the socio-political sphere should be one of the primary areas of reflexivity for the churches in Kenya, which is also a primary step towards reconciliation because it will give the churches an opportunity to listen to God more and subsequently discern the ways in which he is calling them to participate in his mission in Kenya. The churches in Kenya require urgent and critical reflection on what should be their relationship to party politics. The churches have been seen by many Kenyans as partisan and as instruments of particular political divides.

However, the question that emerges is whether the church can avoid being partisan. One of the ways to answer this question is by drawing a distinction between the church as an institution and the church as an organism. The Church as an institution (see Costas 1974:35, Gudel 1985: 66, Hanson 2000:164) is also referred to as an organization by some scholars (See Hegstand 2013: 127, Dusing 1994: 546, Richard & Hoeldtke 1980: 30). According to Richard Scott (2008:49), institutions are "multifaceted, durable social structures, made up of social elements, social activities, and material resources."As such, the diversities represented by the church leaves no room for partisanship and bias. The role of the Church as an institution in the context of politics is better captured by the words of Jim Harris,

> The church's role in politics is to be there visibly in the context of political policy formulation. The church has to be prophetic, speaking for God. The church has to herald the ethical values that enrich a nation. The church has to be bold and forthright, constructive and innovative. The church has to be "salt and light" in what is so often a corrupt environment, to bring light and health (Harris 1999:12).

As such, when the Church rightfully plays its prophetic role it does stand on the side of God and it cannot be identified with any partisan political position. The Church as an organism connotes life, interdependence and contribution of each member of the Church (See Whitesel 2011:26, Burdette 2006:346). As individuals are nurtured in the church, they tend to affirm beliefs and values that are reflected in their views and activities related to political, economic and cultural issues" (Hanson 2000: 164). In conclusion, this means that Individual members of the Church can be actively involved in politics but the Church as an institution cannot.

There are various ways in which the churches have related with politicians that require interruption because they continually affect the churches' prophetic witness in Kenya. As indicated in earlier chapters, the churches have continually showed preferential treatment to certain politicians, with churches offering special prayers for some of them. Politicians are also occasionally given the pulpit

to propagate their political interests, a trend that is now very common (*Nation* 2012a). Some churches have also been inviting politicians to preside over official Church events. For instance, it is now a common trend in the PCEA to invite sitting presidents to officially open the church's General Assembly. While this is not a problem in itself, it does rob the church of the freedom and authority to prophetically engage the government. The government also appoints some church leaders to tasks for which they are remunerated. For example, the current archbishop of ACK is the chairman of the National Anti-Corruption Campaign Steering Committee (Mureithi 2011). While there is nothing basically wrong with the churches engaging politics in the mentioned ways, the problem is the effect that this has on the mandate of the churches in the country. The churches are seen as partisan and it therefore becomes difficult for them to fulfil their prophetic and reconciliation mandates in the country. This engagement shows some submissiveness on the side of the churches, which is seen as respect which consequently leads to subordination of Church to politics. The Church has only one Lord to whom it should submit itself – the Lord Jesus – and should not serve the selfish interests of politicians at the expense of the masses.

Politicians should attend Church services like all other Church members and they should not be given any preferential treatment. The sanctity of the pulpit should be respected and restored with only Church leaders addressing matters of political nature prophetically and with liberational and empowerment intent. Church leaders should reject government positions that can easily mute their prophetic voice. This does not mean that the churches should not work in partnership with the government for the common good, but churches should do this with careful attention to their freedom and at a safe distance. The churches should also evaluate the efficacy of their means of engagement with politicians. The churches are used to numerous press statements, which have become the default means through which they make appeals and calls to the government and politicians. A general assessment of the effectiveness of this approach seems to suggest that it does not have a meaningful influence in the political space. However, to make a proper assessment of the impact of this approach there is need for careful empirical research. The churches should go beyond press conferences and engage in meaningful activism and protest that can push the government to action. An example of doing this is through legal redress to push for political action. By implementing such approaches, the churches will regain their prophetic voice that got lost through complacency and partisanship. They will also regain the moral authority to question political decisions and policies that compromise the common good.

7.3.2 The de-ethnization of Kenyan Churches

Another area of reflexivity is the relationship between ethnicity and churches. In order to be agents of reconciliation in Kenya, the churches must deliberately and critically look into areas where they have promoted negative ethnicity and other modes of discrimination. It is such a reflexive approach that led the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM 2000) to state:

> We on our part, recognize the need to do more to make our local Churches the best example of justice leading to peace. Traces of ethnocentricity sometimes are found at all levels of the Church's administration including Episcopal Conferences. This destroys our credibility….We are determined to avoid and combat discrimination and favouritism in the Church. We shall do our best to bear witness to justice and peace in the Churches' structures…

The churches in Kenya must come to such recognition and to point at areas where negative ethnicity and other forms of discrimination are exhibited. Of primary concern is the de-ethnicization of churches in Kenya. Based on the discussion of ethnicized churches in chapter four, there is an urgent need for deliberate and strategic ways of de-ethnicizing the churches in Kenya, which calls for total transformation so that the churches can be a model of the kingdom of God in Kenya. The starting point is when these churches sincerely reflect for themselves on the areas where negative ethnicity is evident in their lives and seek ways through which they can transform and redeem their image. However, there are some general recommendations that can be made to help churches on the journey of de-ethnization.

The churches should display a national outlook in their liturgy, staff and administration. The churches need to have clergy that represent ethnic diversity in Kenya and there should be realignment in postings, so that clergy are deployed to areas beyond their ethnic regions; by doing this the churches will enhance integration and they will become signs of unity in diversity. While there is nothing wrong with mono-ethnic churches, it is difficult for these churches to participate in the mission of reconciliation as such until the political tag on these churches is removed. This is because, as it is now in Kenya, the mono-ethnic tag of a church implies a particular political tag, hence the churches should work to remove any political tag that directly implies partisanship by redefining their relationship with politics, an issue discussed in the following sub-section.

Churches should also engage in deliberate actions and approaches that are geared towards diminishing ethnic overtones in their liturgy and other practices. The liturgical experience should be inclusive which can only be enhanced through language and participation. Many churches in

cosmopolitan contexts have a series of services each Sunday which include vernacular services[28] which by themselves are not a bad thing. It is unfortunate that in multi-cultural settings, there are denominations which use vernacular languages to worship, which by itself technically exclude members of other ethnic communities. These services do not compliment efforts towards diversity hence there is a need to include different languages in worship. Homogeneous denominations should have deliberate programmes whose main goal is to remove the mono-ethnic tag. Such programmes include outreaches to members of other ethnic communities, which entail having clergy from these communities and establishing churches in the midst of these communities. The churches should also reform their administrative procedures, so that ethnic considerations in appointments and elections do not take precedence over merit and suitability

The establishment of such approaches calls for boldness to reflect upon and interrupt the status quo through radical ecclesiastical reforms. The churches should declare their intention to de-ethnicize their congregations and administration. This will give the Kenyan public a ground to trust the churches and will also make audible the churches' prophetic voice against ethnic divisiveness. Certainly, there are challenges and tensions that are bound to emerge from such approaches but it is through creatively handling them that the churches can begin to participate in the mission of reconciliation. Consequently, ethnic barriers and exclusive tendencies are interrogated and confronted so that integration is enhanced; then the churches can become a sign pointing to the kingdom of God and instruments of reconciliation in the country.

7.4   MODEL OF HEALING

The model of healing is based on the rationale of bringing people and communities back to good health and stability. The 2007/8 post-election violence left wounds both in the minds of the victims and in the collective memory of Kenyans that need to be healed so that reconciliation can be fostered. The reconciliation imagined through this model of healing is the one proposed by Robert Schreiter (2005:80), which makes both victim and wrongdoer a new creation because healing in reconciliation is not a return to status quo, but something that takes all parties involved to a new place, often a place that they could not have imagined. Flowing from Schreiter's opinion, it is the work of the churches in Kenya to help in imagining this new place through the ministry of reconciliation as envisioned through a three pillar

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[28] Vernacular services are services conducted using local dialects or what can be referred to as "mother tongue services".

model of healing composed of truth, justice and forgiveness[29], elements that are prerequisites for reconciliation.

7.4.1 Truth

The understanding of truth discussed in this section, is the truth encompassed in the findings of legitimate commissions of inquiry like KNCHR and TJRC, who through empirical research and public hearings have gathered facts surrounding injustices and violence in Kenya[30]. In this sub-section, preference is however given to TJRC because of its comprehensive scope in investigating past injustices and violence.

After conflicting parties sit to reason together, it is truth that should inspire and guide this reasoning. Perhaps this is the reason why the slogan of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa was, "Truth, the road to reconciliation" (De Gruchy 2002:154). It is on the platform of truthfulness that conflicting parties begin to ask genuine and honest questions that seek to bring into the fore the underlying causes of the conflict. Using soteriological terms, it is only when sinners acknowledge their sinfulness that atonement becomes possible. In situations of conflict, the offender comes to terms with his offences and acknowledges his guilt. Schreiter (2005:82) states that the "concepts of truth-telling and the pursuit of justice are reorganized not just to address wrongdoing and justice in general, but as ways of allowing truth and justice to heal the memories of the past and work toward a different kind of future". It is on the platform of truthfulness that efforts towards justice are guided and consequently reconciliation is realized. For example, the nationwide hearings commissioned by the "Truth, Justice and Reconciliation" commissions in South Africa after apartheid, in Rwanda after the genocide, and in Kenya after the 2007/8 post-election violence were all based on the truth of what exactly happened in these countries.

However, there are people who have pointed to the relativity of truth as a challenge in the process of reconciliation, especially when that truth is contested. James Gibson (2004:135), focusing on the truth presented by the TRC in South Africa, argues that truth can also lead to "irreconciliation." He cites the example that the reawakening of dominant memories and animosities can make everyone find something to hate in the findings. Such fears as raised by Gibson make the process of truth telling and

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[29] Truth, justice and forgiveness were essential components of reconciliation in South Africa (TRC) and Rwanda after the 1994 genocide.

[30] In defining the understanding of truth as discussed in this study I have closely followed Gibson's approach in his definitions of truth in his article, Overcoming apartheid: Can truth reconcile a divided nation? (Gibson 2006).

subsequently the process of reconciliation delicate and sensitive. While Gibson's sentiments are to an extent correct, especially when truth finding is seen as a witch-hunting process, there cannot be healing without unearthing the painful memories through the platform of truth. However, this kind of truth finding should be liberating as well as healing and not a mere task of exposing wounds of animosity.

Such a liberating and healing process have also been imagined by Wilhelm Verwoerd *and Schreiter*. Verwoerd *(*in *Wüstenberg* 2009:97-99)[31] calls the search for the truth "truth based criticism" that has the task of exposing and healing. In exposing, he notes that facts are uncovered through statements of the perpetrators and investigation agencies so that victims can come to terms with their past and be reconciled with their own fate. In healing, the victims stop fleeing from their memories and the healing process begins so that they can rediscover their own dignity. In Schreiter's words,

> When those memories are of traumatic events, we find ourselves frozen in the past as it were, that is, those memories keep us in an eternal present of those terrible events, and can therefore stop any movement forward toward a pattern of different relationships in the future. The healing of memories is the coming free of that being held hostage to those memories, so that new relationships can become possible. This does not mean forgetting or denying genuine pain has occurred. It typically means, rather, acknowledging the truth of what has happened, seeking justice to redress the wrongdoing that has occurred, and creating the social space for a different relationship both to the events, and to the actors in that past (Schreiter 2005:81).

Building on Scheiter's proposals, the churches in Kenya should work towards helping victims of violence break from the tragic memories of their past and also work for a space of justice that compliments the release from past memories. Traumatizing memories of the violence have been narrated through the TJRC, which went throughout the country to collect statements from victims of historical injustices and violence through public hearings, and their findings were submitted to the president for implementation. The TJRC has gained credibility and acceptance among many Kenyans, hence the numerous calls from different quarters for the implementation of its findings. Fears have been already raised among many Kenyans that this report will not be acted upon, based on the treatment of previous reports of inquiry. Based on the findings of the already mentioned research carried out by AfriCOG and putting into mind that some powerful politicians in the current government are adversely mentioned in the report, there is a high possibility that the TJRC report may not be fully implemented. Unlike in South Africa, the TJRC in Kenya was not spearheaded by religious leaders, but the churches in Kenya have a

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[31] This is taken from unpublished paper presented by Verwoerd at the Fifth International Conference on Ethics and Development in Madras 1997 titled: "Justice after apartheid? Reflections on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission."

moral and theological mandate to appeal to the government, including the use of legal mechanisms, to implement the recommendations made in the report for meaningful healing to take place in Kenya. However, this task may be beyond the capacity of churches alone and therefore they should work with other non-political players whose goal is to see the implementation of the findings of TJRC[32]. The goal of all this is that the culture of impunity will be checked so that justice can be seen to be done, in order to hasten the healing process and give hope for a secure future.

7.4.2   Justice

Truth should lead to justice and justice should be based on this truth. There is a close connection between justice and peace, as Nyerere (1973:110) submits: "Injustice and peace are in the long run incompatible; stability in a changing world must mean ordered change towards justice." According to Schreiter (2005:80), reconciliation is God restoring the humanity of the victim that was taken away by oppression, poverty, disease and wrongdoing and therefore social reconciliation is to be understood as reconstruction in justice of a broken society, so that wrongdoing will not take place again.

The churches in Kenya can work for justice in two ways: Firstly, they should work for justice in regard to the 2007/8 post-election violence. The most distinctive feature of justice imagined in this model is restorative justice, which — as Appleby (2008:10) argues — is not only concerned with the unjust but the just as well. In Wüstenberg's words, "the victim rediscovers their dignity and the offender re-enters into society" (Wüstenberg 2008:114). The nature of justice envisioned here is the one proposed by Wüstenberg (2008:184), which has two categories. The first category is reparation with regard to acknowledgement of suffering for victims and punishment for the offender. The second category is re-establishment of justice for both the offender and the victim. Flowing from Wüstenberg's approach, justice is when the offenders takes full responsibility for their offences and face the legal consequences thereof. Justice also involves restitution, where the offenders give back what they took from the victims, where applicable. There is already a criminal proceeding going on in the ICC against three Kenyans which is marred with doubt and uncertainty, especially among Kenyans, hence it may not be seen to be serve justice for the victims. The churches in Kenya should have a campaign meant to condemn impunity and call for the persecution of the perpetrators of the 2007/8 violence, especially the main actors, organizers and financiers.

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[32] The recommendations given by TJRC can be seen at:
http://www.tjrckenya.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=573&Itemid=238

The other dimension of justice involves the many social injustices in Kenya that have continued to condemn many people to imposed poverty and indignity. Consequently, the gap between the poor and rich is widening through oppressive structures and exploitation, while levels of inequality and inequity are on the increase. Many people are treated without dignity and this is the reason why politicians use the youth as instruments of violence; the masses are manipulated to unquestionably follow politicians, hence robbing them of the dignity of freedom to political decisions. The churches have a mandate of leading the people in constructive nonviolent protest against these oppressive structures, as imagined by Nyerere (1973:115):

> At a given and decisive point in history men decide to act against those conditions which restrict their freedom as men. I am suggesting 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 …Everything which prevents a man from living in dignity and decency must therefore come under attack from the church and its workers. For there is nothing saintly in imposed poverty, and although saints may be found in slums, we cannot preserve slums in order to make them breeding grounds for saints.

Nyerere (1973:114) further notes that the churches must express God's love for humanity by involvement and leadership in this constructive protest and must become a force for social justice, working with other forces of social justice. The churches in Kenya should play a leading role in this protest, which should not be selective or convenient but should be done in season and out of season. It requires consistency, faithfulness and boldness and it is through the participation and involvement of the churches in this protest that the churches will identify with the problems and the challenges of Kenyans and thereby regain their moral authority and prophetic voice.

7.4.3   Forgiveness

There is a close nexus between healing, justice and forgiveness. There can be no healing without forgiveness and there cannot be forgiveness without justice. As there is no reparation that can compensate for death, physical and sexual offences. Justice helps the victims of these atrocities to overcome pain and anguish through the healing of their memories, facilitated by forgiveness. John De Gruchy (2002:50) argues that without forgiveness there is no real way to move into a new future, for it liberates the guilty and enables them to start again, for it is forgiveness that makes reconciliation possible, words captured better in the title of Tutu's book, *No future without forgiveness* (Tutu 1999).

Forgiveness only happens when the victim starts to heal, which is a process and according to Schreiter (2005:80) it is started by God, because he looks out for the victims and the marginalized and this process does not exonerate the wrongdoer but rather recognizes that sometimes wrongdoers do

not repent and as such a social space has to be opened up in order for repentance to happen and it is sometimes the action of the victim that creates that space. Hence, Schreiter (1998:66, 67, 102) rightly argues that the forgiveness he proposes is not the one of "forgive and forget", which trivializes the painful events of the victim by urging them to forget their victimization, but the one that remembers in a healing way. De Gruchy (2002:172) also argues that forgiveness should not rule out anger or punishment because if the perpetrators are not punished, the rule of law is undermined.

Building on Schreiter's argument, the churches in Kenya, due to their vantage point, should work for the kind of forgiveness that brings about healing, that uncovers the wounds caused by conflict; not to cause more pain but to heal the wounds, however painful that may be. General calls have been made for the victims of the violence to accept what happened, forgive their offenders and move on. But how can they forgive offenders who are not remorseful and how can they move on when the perpetrators have not been apprehended? The consciousness that the offenders have gotten off scot free and that proper attention has not been given to the victims, is by itself a hurting wound which can only be healed when there are meaningful efforts towards apprehension of sponsors and perpetrators of the violence, who have been named in various reports like the TJRC and KNCHR reports; and when appropriate attention has been given to the victims. This is a campaign for justice and the churches in Kenya must faithfully understand it as part of their mission in Kenya and urgently participate in it. The churches should also truthfully and boldly name the areas that need forgiveness and also work for a conducive environment where forgiveness can take place, not just through convenient apologies but through restitution, punishment of offenders and efforts that work for the restoration of lost dignity of victims. Societal healing will only be fostered if meaningful structural adjustments and reforms are carried out because the best way to forgive structural offences is through structural reforms.

In conclusion, the churches should identify and clearly name national wounds that need to be healed. Wounds caused by oppression and injustices must be healed with actions of freedom and justice. Wounds caused by hatred and rejection must be healed with actions of love and acceptance. The churches, being signs of the kingdom of God in Kenya, must work for healing without which their ministry of reconciliation is jeopardized. Churches in Kenya should understand that it is their mission to witness to truth, justice and forgiveness which are important in their ministry of reconciliation.

7.5   MODEL OF PROPHETIC INTERRUPTION

The Model of prophetic interruption is a concept borrowed from Katongole (2009:117). The rationale of this model is a deliberate and bold disruption of the status quo and the norms that threaten the

common good, hence it is prophetic. Though Katongole uses the story of Mary who interrupted a dinner so that she could anoint Jesus (Matthew 26:13), the story of Phinehas (Numbers 25, Psalm 106:30-31) fits better for this model. When the Israelites were facing a plague because of their waywardness, a young Israelite brought a Midianite woman into the camp and Phinehas boldly confronted the two, which saw the end of the plague. Phinehas' interruption is an example of prophetic interruption that stops destruction and saves the whole nation.

There are various areas that the churches in Kenya need to prophetically interrupt for the sake of the country which include interruption of negative stories, interruption of ethnic dominance and interruption of the political wage bill. These interruptions require boldness, strategy and partnership. The churches cannot accomplish the interruption task without working with other players whose work is geared towards the common good in Kenya.

7.5.1   Interruption of stories of negative ethnicity

There are stories that are told and continually passed on from generation to generation, which continue to shape and form Kenyans in different ways. One of the areas that is shaped by these stories is identity. Katongole (2011:2) argues that,

> Who we are, and what we are capable of becoming depends very much on the stories we tell, the stories we listen to, and the stories we live. Stories not only shape our values, aims, and goals; they define the range of what is desirable and what is possible…stories are part of our ecology. They are embedded in us and form the very heart of our cultural, economic, religious, and political worlds.

The 2007/8 post-election violence was so much about stories which informed opinions and actions of the offenders. The stories are full of hate and resentment and are punctuated with stereotypes, lies and demeaning language, as mentioned in chapter four. More so, the stories continue to advance the rift between different ethnic communities. Most notably, the stories of ethnicity and their relation with politics continue to dominate the communal imagination of Kenyans and as such they have been perceived as normal and acceptable. The problem lies not only in the stories themselves but also in the tellers of these stories. Parents as opinion shapers tell these stories to their children, who grow up with a distorted imagination of other people. There are also politicians who, because of the over-prominence given to them by Kenyans, tell stories that shape ethnic and political imagination in negative ways.

It seems, with evidence of the nature of ethnicized politics in Kenya, that most Kenyans uncritically read stories from ethnic and political scripts developed by politicians which leads to a kind of

intellectual and political bondage, where there is no room for independent political and ethnic thinking. For example, a political enemy of a leading politician from a particular ethnic community becomes – together with his or her community – the enemy of that community. These stories are very powerful, and have significantly shaped the imagination of Kenyans.

Kenya is in need of storytellers who are able "to offer people better stories than the ones they live by" (Katongole 2011:61) and the churches have this capacity. The churches, because of their biblical mandate and authority, can interrupt these stories because they have a better story to tell – the story of love, forgiveness, unity and reconciliation embodied in the gospel story. Katongole (2011:62) notes that "All the realities of the Christian tradition – the scriptures, prayer, doctrine, worship, Baptism, the Eucharist, the sacraments – point to and enact a compelling story that should claim the whole of our lives." Stories of hatred, divisiveness, resentment and prejudice can only be substituted with stories of love, unity, forgiveness and reconciliation. Starting with the family ministry of the churches, parents should be helped to re-imagine their world and consequently to pass it on to their children.

The churches in Kenya should retell stories through new experiences which involve exploring new frontiers of multi-cultural experiences. The churches can establish cultural exchange programmes where people are exposed to the cultures of other communities and hear the stories of each other. Though the stories could be different from each other, there are common meeting points which each community can identify with. This multi-cultural exposure wears out tensions and misinformation received through negative stories. Another area of missional exploration is establishment of language centres where people are encouraged to learn vernacular languages of other communities which is an appropriate approach towards embracing diversity. The churches should also encourage inter-marriage between people of different ethnic communities. However, this has been going on but with escalation of ethnic tensions some Church leaders, parents and politicians have continued to discourage such marriages. The churches should also embark on a nationwide mission to preach and tell the story of love, unity, forgiveness and reconciliation which will eventually overcome stories that promote hatred, divisiveness, resentment and prejudice. The stories of disunity and separation have been told and churches should tell the stories that inspire unity among the people. Kenyans have a capacity to put aside their ethnic differences and unite for a common cause. For instance, sport has become a unifying factor, where the triumph of athletes and other sportsmen and women brings Kenyans together. It is interesting to note how tragedies have also in various ways brought Kenyans together; for instance when there was a famine in the Northern part of Kenya in 2011, corporate leaders and the Red Cross

initiated a nation-wide camping dubbed "Kenyans for Kenyans" through which enough money was raised to initiate a feeding program as well as long term programmes meant to mitigate hunger.[33] Most recently in 2013 when terrorists attacked the country, oneness was exhibited through resilience, solidarity and support with all conversations on this issue punctuated with the phrase "We are one." As a result, a great number of Kenyans donated blood for the victims and people raised about one hundred million shillings to support them. However, the challenge is that such stories of resilience and solidarity are often short-lived and eventually silenced by the stories of division that are still entrenched in Kenyan national culture. This reality calls for the churches to regularly tell better stories that resonate with the ambition of Kenyans to overcome things that divide them. It is the stories generated by the ministry of reconciliation that will gradually and eventually silence the stories of hatred and division that lead to conflict and violence.

7.5.2   Interruption of ethnic dominance

Ethnic dominance through politics was one of the major causes of the 2007/8 post-election violence and it continues to be the main cause of resentment and hatred among different ethnic communities in Kenya. The numerically strong communities continue to have undue advantage over the relatively small and underdeveloped communities, who closely link their developmental fate to this reality. Politicians continue to rely on the numerical strength of ethnic groups to forge political alliances based on the premise that one prominent politician carries with himself almost the whole of his community. This manipulation by politicians needs urgent interruption so that there can be a fair and level political playground for all. The politicians have continued to strengthen this manipulation because it is the only means through which they can obtain and sustain power and the churches should not help them in this venture by standing with them. The churches should disassociate themselves from such political approaches and their condemnation of this dominance should be loudly echoed.

The ethnic dominance of particular communities is similar to the dominance of single party rule orchestrated by president Moi, which unduly facilitated his long stay in office. The churches as discussed in chapter three were in the forefront of interrupting one party rule, through the successful but risky struggle for constitutional reforms. The churches in Kenya can again lead the struggle against ethnic dominance through creative and strategic activism among the citizens and through legal frameworks which can help in levelling the political playing field. Such a venture can only be successful if it is done in

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[33] For more information about this initiative see
https://www.kenyaredcross.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=379&Itemid=12

partnership with non-political players. The churches as a formidable social force should work to erase from the minds of the people the brainwashing that continually makes them prisoners of political manipulation and help them imagine a country where anyone on merit can ascend to political leadership.

7.5.3 Interruption of Political Wage Bill

Politics in Kenya has become predominantly a money issue, in two senses. Firstly, the outrageous remuneration of political officers in Kenya is one of the factors that make politics to be highly emotive and competitive, with politicians using all means at hand – like manipulation of ethnicity, voter buying and violence – to ascend to power because of the monetary reward it carries. Secondly and consequently, huge amounts of money are needed to support the means of accession to power indicated above, a reality that has technically locked out otherwise capable leaders who are not endowed with such resources. As a result, politics in Kenya has become an affair of the rich and that, in itself, is an act of oppressing the poor. The paradox is that the same poor people are used by these politicians to ascend to power through the vote and through violence, probably because of the blindness caused by political manipulation. It is not proper to blame victims for their victimization, hence there is a need for a voice that speaks for the victims and a hand that empowers them to realize that they are being manipulated by politicians – and to free themselves from that bondage. The churches in Kenya can be a source of light such as is needed to overcome the blindness mentioned above and a source of strength the victims need to free themselves.

The churches in Kenya should first and foremost consistently unmask the outrageous wage bill of politicians as immoral and inconsistent with the economic realities of the country. They should also speak against it as an injustice that oppresses the majority of poor Kenyans. Secondly, the churches should follow constitutional provisions to interrupt the present system, so that it can reflect the economic reality of the country. When this is done, it will significantly change the course of politics in Kenya and as such minimize the possibilities of conflict and division.

7.6 MODEL OF EMPOWERMENT
The model of empowerment is based on the rationale of inspiration and motivation, equipping and training, mobilization and engagement inspired by the objectives of Church Empowerment

Incorporation.[34] Though the churches in Kenya have failed in many ways, they still enjoy the trust of their members and a large section of the general public, which is one of the reasons why they still exist. The churches should effectively use this loyalty and trust to inspire and capture the aspirations of the members in regard to their imagination of a better country. The churches are also important centres for equipping and training as well as formation of a peacemaking and reconciling conscience. The pulpit ministry should be enhanced and contextualized so that, through the ministry of the Word, the members can be equipped to participate in the mission of God in their world. The pulpit is also an appropriate and effective place where new imaginations and new stories can be told. In addition to preaching, however, there is also a need for projects of youth and reconciliation, family education and human rights awareness, as approaches that can make the ministry of reconciliation in Kenya real and effective.

7.6.1   Youth and Reconciliation

In the foregoing chapters, I have identified a close relationship between youth, violence and unemployment in Kenya. From this correlation calls have been made for churches in Kenya to enhance their efforts among the youth, not only in their churches but also outside. The youth have been used as instruments and perpetrators of violence, so they can also be used as instruments of peacemaking and reconciliation. This should be done by first addressing the things that make them vulnerable to be manipulated into perpetrating crime and violence.

Education is critical in the fight against poverty and vice (Cf. World Bank 1997: 14; Bhorat *et al* 2001:174), hence it is a very important component of youth ministry. The fight against unemployment and poverty among the youth must therefore be launched on the platform of education for it to be successful. According to Bhorat *et al* (2001:174), "The role of education in reducing poverty is of paramount importance, because of its contribution to improving the earning potential of the poor, both in competition for jobs and earnings in a static labor market, and as a source of growth and employment in itself" (Bhorat *et al* 2001:174). As a result, "Apart from its hoped-for economic and political returns, education came to be internationally recognized as a basic human right, like food, shelter, and health" (Kwame & Gate 2010:393). However, as discussed in chapter 5, some human rights cannot be implemented through legislation as they depend on the financial capacity of a particular country.

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[34] For more information about Church Empowerment Incorporation see
http://www.churchempower.com/index.php/component/content/article/1-church-empowerment-vision.html
(Accessed 26th September 2013).

Formal education is expensive in many African countries, hence many disadvantaged children miss out on it. In its social responsibility and through its resource base, the Church in Africa can sponsor learning institutions targeting children and youth from poor backgrounds where they can get primary and secondary education as well as vocational training institutions where young people are equipped with technical skills at subsidized costs. This kind of educational base approach will help young people to be self-reliant by gaining skills that can prepare them for the job market as well as entrepreneurship. However, in Kenya for instance, many churches have such institutions but they are considered as income generating projects for the churches and therefore the quest for profit leaves little room for the Church to accomplish its ministry of empowering the disadvantaged.

Alongside unemployment, many youth in Africa are faced with other predicaments prevalent among young people − like drugs and alcohol abuse. Although these predicaments are common among all the youth, they have a connectedness with violence and crime. Drugs and alcohol consumption habits are expensive to sustain and, as a result, many young people engage in criminal and violent activities. In response to such challenges, the Church through creation of awareness and support programmes like rehabilitation centres can be helpful to the affected youth and the result will have far reaching effects in the society. This goal can be accomplished through partnership with government and non-governmental organizations that also fight against these predicaments. When the Church views the youth who are in bondage to these predicaments in the first place as sinners in need of redemption − which is a common approach of many churches in Africa − the said youth only become targets of evangelism and remain victims of marginalization. The Church should instead reach out to such youth not only with the message of conversion but also through loving, embracing and caring approaches that seek to bring them freedom from their bondage.

The church should develop approaches that attempt to fill the void of idleness among young people, which often makes them vulnerable to crime and violence. For instance, the Church can develop recreational programmes like sports and games that can help in building what Hubert Bucher (1976:361) calls a community of young people. It is in and through such youth communities that young people are developed and moulded and youth networks are established. Sport is one of the most efficient ways of forming communities through which young people are brought together and through them values like discipline, teamwork, trust and self-responsibility are developed.

7.6.2　Family Support Programmes

Another way through which the Church can empower communities is by supporting family institutions through which family and patriotic values are inculcated. The centrality of family in its contribution to the well-being of the society cannot be undermined because it is families that make up a society. The Church being a centre in which families gather regularly has the mandate of supporting these families and one of the ways of doing this is through family-based education. To the parents, the Church should have education geared towards responsible parenting so that parents are empowered "to educate their children for peace because the Christian family is the domestic Church and the first school of peace and reconciliation" (SECAM 2000).

The Church should also develop support systems that address family challenges like single parenting, a phenomenon that is becoming more and more common in Africa and which according to Sara McLanahan (1994:8) is controversial. There have been escalating numbers of single-parent families, especially through natural causes like death, through choice and through absentee parents. This leaves these families with special challenges which require much support. Research has proved (cf. McLanahan 1994:2-3; Biblarz & Gottainer 2000:533; Sullivan 2008:157) that children brought up by single parents face varying challenges that children with both parents would not otherwise face. They are more exposed to risks like failure, school indiscipline and drop out, delinquency and other forms of anti-social behaviour. However, as McLanahan (1994:2) warns, single motherhood or absent fathers is not the root cause of such behaviour; it only increases the risk of these negative outcomes and as such it is one among many factors that lead to such behaviour. Single parents, especially single mothers, are also faced with many challenges, like condemnation, suspicion, stigmatization and difficulties of parenting (cf McLanahan 1994:8; Dowd 1997:XIV; Biblarz & Gottainer 2000:533). Based on these facts, there is a need to have support programmes for both single parents and their children.

For the young people there should be programmes that seek to instil values through the family framework. In other words, the Church is a place where the parents are moulded to bring up their children in the right way by teaching them and inculcating in them family, social and patriotic values as well as being good examples to their children. The Church is also a place where children are moulded to respect and honour their parents (Exodus 20:12, Ephesians 6:2) who also together with the Church mould them to grow in the right way (cf. Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4). Adam Chepkwony (1996:38) argues that:

> The success of molding the youth depends on the cooperation of parents, the youth themselves and the Church. Parents, as the family and the foundation on which a child's life is based, play a

paramount role in shaping the lives of their offspring… However, due to the rapid changes in the cultures, modernity and the breakdown of traditional family roles, the parents too need counseling.

Chepkwony's sentiments seem to suggest that youth ministry is a concerted and relational effort with the church at the centre. The Church should therefore be conscious of the needs of both the parents and their children. The Church has a mandate also to reach families outside it, which means the Church should have strategic and deliberate programmes meant to reach such families. An example of doing this is through establishing a network of single-mothers where they can share their experiences, learn from each other and support each other. The youth based approaches mentioned above are also a good example of building families. Such support approaches that seek to go outside the Church must be inclusivist and should not be focused exclusively on evangelism Dion Forster (2013) reminds us that "mission is not just 'religious' in nature. The parent, school teacher, economist, and even politician, can be part of God's model of healing and transformation."

7.6.3   Human rights education

Human rights education through the churches in Kenya can be said to be lacking. The churches in Kenya have approached the issue of human rights through dimensions of justice, but only implicitly. Discourses on human rights have not informed the discussions and teachings of churches and for this reason there must be deliberate measures by churches in Kenya to embark on human rights awareness initiatives. The churches' commitment to human rights education should start within their own ranks before starting public programmes. The churches should incorporate human rights education in their teaching modules in churches and also in schools run and sponsored by churches. Human rights education should also appear in the curricula of theological schools and should be treated as a critical aspect of pastoral formation.

John Murray (2012:102) states that "the Church's witness to human rights must be not only pastoral and charitable but also prophetic… Churches are often well placed to play an advocacy role, to act as a voice for the voiceless…" Based on Murray's assertion, the churches in Kenya can play an advocacy role through advocating and negotiating with necessary government organs which deal with education so that human rights education can be included in school curricula as well. Human rights advocacy can also be done through standing with victims of human rights abuses and giving them the professional and spiritual support they need to regain their dignity robbed by human rights violations. The churches cannot succeed in its human rights approaches if they do not work with players whose

interest is human rights promotion. Such partnership and cooperation produces concerted efforts that will bear more fruit and enhance the churches' mission of reconciliation.

The Church should see empowerment as a missional strategy towards reconciliation. A model of empowerment based on inspiration, motivation, equipping, training, mobilization and engagement through the above discussed approaches as well as other contextual models that the churches can discover, is vital in modelling a human rights way of life to Church members and also people in the reach of the churches so that they may become not only faithful Christians but also responsible citizens.

7.7   Conclusion

The understanding that churches have of mission determines the missional approaches and actions they adopt. When the churches in Kenya understand reconciliation, in Schreiter's words, as a model of and for mission they will seek ways in which they can participate in reconciling Kenyans. Reconciliation is needed in Kenya to address the post-election-violence as well as other ways in which inter-personal, inter-ethnic and intra-society relationships have been destroyed. The models of mission discussed in this chapter can help churches in Kenya in their mission of reconciliation, but these models are by no means the only ways to serve reconciliation, neither are they exhaustive of the options available. The churches in Kenya should continually seek to discern the ways God is working in Kenya and how they can faithfully participate in that work. The churches should carry out ongoing research to find specific and strategic ways in which they can participate contextually in the mission of reconciliation.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

This research was prompted by my own personal battles arising from the events of the 2007/8 post-election violence. Kenya has been experiencing perennial political violence after the advent of multiparty democracy. However, the 2007/8 post-election violence was unprecedented, mainly in two ways. Firstly, the violence was widespread, with many parts all over the country affected, and secondly the aftermath was more serious than at any other upsurge of violence, with numerous and heinous crimes against humanity committed.

The churches in Kenya have played ambiguous roles in the public sphere and in areas that touch the violence in one way or the other. The churches have, on the one hand, actively participated in efforts of struggle, advocacy and reconciliation in Kenya that have significantly helped the country in various ways. On the other hand, the churches have been part of the problem, since Church leaders have participated in partisan politics and abetting violence through incitement and divisive engagements.

The events of the violence have been documented by various individuals and institutions. To avoid straying in these resources, the report by KNCHR was chosen and through it the events of the violence were looked at. The concepts of politics, ethnicity, human rights and violence were chosen as key terms for missiological reflection for this study and through an integrated approach to their interconnectedness, a more adequate framework to identify and analyze the causes of violence was created. Each of the four terms was reflected on missiologically, giving attention to ways in which churches can give concrete expression to a lifestyle of participating in God's mission.

It has been noted that politics of dominance, ethnicised politics and economic marginalization, as well as social injustices are the three main political problems that contributed to the violence. Also, negative ethnicity has been embraced as an ideology and way of life in Kenya, which has given rise to distorted identities. As possible missiological responses to these ethnic challenges, a unity in diversity and promotion of humanity as first (and basic) identity were suggested. Closely connected to these political and ethnic factors there has been an anti-culture of human rights violations and dehumanization which require a hermeneutic of human rights and a cultivation of a culture of respect for human rights to be mitigated. These human rights violations are acts of violence with the politicians identified as the instigators and sponsors of the violence and youth as the instruments of the violence.

Through consulting some a biblical scholarship on violence, it was concluded that though there are violent texts in the Bible, they should not be read as an inspiration to or a justification of violence, but interpreted in the light of biblical texts that promote peace and reconciliation.

The study concludes by offering a theoretical framework of reconciliation and proposes four models, which the churches in Kenya can apply so that they can actively and effectively participate in the mission of reconciliation. Firstly, the churches in Kenya need to develop a model of reflexivity, to re-evaluate the influence of Christianity in the public sphere and to reflect on ways to de-ethnicise the churches. Secondly, there is model of healing, which can only be facilitated through truth, justice and forgiveness. Thirdly, there is model of prophetic interruption, which means they should interrupt stories of negative ethnicity, the outrageous wage bill in Kenya and the ethnic dominance of certain communities. Fourthly, there is model of empowerment, where through inspiration, motivation, equipping, training, mobilization and engagement the churches can establish programmes geared towards youth, family support and human rights education.

This study has uncovered areas that require further research. Most notably there is a need for empirical research to identify why Christian values do not influence the decisions of the majority Christians in Kenya in a more decisive way when it comes to issues of ethnicity and politics. There is also a need for empirical research to establish how homogeneous denominations have continued to exist and grow for over a century while maintaining a mono-ethnic tag. Another possible research topic is to explore how the churches in Kenya can partner and cooperate with other forces for justice in society because the churches cannot walk and work alone in this cause.

The proposals made in this study do not claim to present the only alternative for the churches in Kenya to follow. It is one contribution to a field that urgently needs further research on the best ways the churches in Kenya can discern to participate in God's mission of reconciliation. The proposals are not presented as alternatives or better options but as complementary approaches to the realization of the kingdom of God in Kenya. The churches' contribution should be a distinctive Christian resource to supplement and support "secular" efforts meant to rebuild human lives and societies. This study is not exhaustive but it hopes to serve as a Christian model for reconciliation in Kenya.

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