

**Jordan University College**

THE REFLECTION MEDIUM

# **AFRICA TOMORROW**

Inculturation is a difficult and delicate task, since it raises the question of the Church's fidelity to the Gospel and the Apostolic Tradition amidst the constant evolution of cultures.

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Jordan University College  
P.O. Box 1878  
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Tel.: +255 23 2604854  
E-mail: [info@juco.ac.tz](mailto:info@juco.ac.tz)  
[jordanunivcollege@yahoo.com](mailto:jordanunivcollege@yahoo.com)  
Web: [www.juco.ac.tz](http://www.juco.ac.tz)

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## Editorial

*God of our ancestors, Lord of mercy... your great power is always at your service, and who can withstand the might of your arm? The whole world, for you, can no more than tip a balance, like a drop of morning dew falling on the ground. Yet you are merciful to all, because you are almighty, you overlook people's sins, so that they can repent. Yes, you love everything that exists, and nothing that you have made disgusts you, since, if you had hated something, you would not have made it. And how could a thing subsist, had you not willed it? Or how be preserved, if not called forth by you? No, you spare all, since all is yours, Lord, lover of life! (Wis 9:1; 11:21–12:2).*

Dear Readers,

We present to you issue number 20 of *Africa Tomorrow* at a particularly sad and distressing moment in August, 2019, when the death toll from a serious accident near the Msamvu bus station on the 10<sup>th</sup> of this month continues to increase. Does the scene at the accident not brutally contradict our belief that our almighty God is a merciful Lord and Lover of Life? How can our brothers and sisters writhing in pain from the burns visited upon them by a vigorously raging fire provoked by an entirely unanticipated explosion... how can the unfriendly darkness in the souls of our brothers and sisters who feel trapped in their loneliness as they lie dying... how does an event such as the one that happened in Morogoro sustain our faith in a God who loves us mightily and has already prepared a place for each and every one of us where we can be at home with him who is our Creator and with each other in a milieu full of peace and abiding joy?

Those whose wounds have not allowed them to linger on earth together with those survivors whose injuries have left scars that will not go away are people whom God created in his image and likeness. They are people that God has wished to live and to love with the joyful anticipation of an eternity that would give perpetuity to their life, to their love and to their joy. God's plan has

been to give them an eternal fullness that goes well beyond what any of us can ask, desire or imagine.

For those who are deceased, their entrance into their Creator's merciful embrace has surely been a painful one: because of their wounds, they have been helplessly carried along the current of a stream that has rushed its way into eternity. It has also been an unexpected shock for everyone close to them and for everyone touched by their plight who have chosen to remain compassionately attentive to their need for a companion, for a friend, for a sister, for a brother at the final moment of earthly life.

An event like that of 10<sup>th</sup> August wakes us up to our need to live as compassionate human beings. Who is going to wake us up? There is a young woman from within the JUCo family that alerts us to our need to be attentive to those who live day in and day out swimming helplessly in the loathsome waters of disappointment, discouragement, loneliness and despair. I am referring to a student who has graced us with a book, written in Kiswahili, that is catching the attention of persons from all walks of life here in Tanzania. And who is the author of the book? None other than our own gracious and profoundly sensitive sociology student who is finishing her preparations for her BA: Jacquelin Osmond.

Her brief commentary that one finds on the back cover of her book *Usilie Doreen Tutakusaidia* seems to give a fairly adequate insight into the book's core content. By means of an English translation, thoughtfully composed by another JUCo student, Br. John Charles, OCD, we can let Jacquelin speak:

**“Usilie Doreen Tutakusaidia” [“Don’t Cry, Doreen, We Will Help You”]** is the title of a real life story that unveils joy clouded by the sadness occasioned by a great pain in Doreen's heart. The pain that wells up within her comes from rejection after rejection, disrespect and abandonment by her relatives. Doreen suffers all these like thorns piercing her heart. She despairs to the extent of losing hope completely; but God comes to her assistance through people of good will when they say to her, “Don’t cry, Doreen, we will help you.” She now believes that “when God says yes, there is no one to say no”...

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For those who read the book, there are several poignant passages that bring people into the mystery of God's unusual freedom that allows someone to suffer; yet it is a freedom pregnant with mercy that surprises the person in pain and releases into the wounded heart a new and unexpected joy. In Jacquelin's words, "When the child reaches this stage [of suffering, sadness, disappointment, hatred], she feels loneliness, distress and despair. Then God comes to the aid of the child and manifests his glory. He is God yesterday, today and forever, the God who gives us true happiness and wipes away our tears at his own proper time" (from the Introduction, transl. by Br. J. Charles).

God himself reveals his mercy "at his own proper time". Fr. Leonce Rambau, CSSp, has selected a passage from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans that unveils the depth and breadth of God's mercy. The proper time for revealing his mercy and wiping away our tears has arrived. Here is a selection from the passage, Romans 3:21-26, about which Rambau writes:

But now the **righteousness of God** has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, **the righteousness of God** through faith of Jesus Christ for **ALL** who believe. For there is no distinction; since **ALL** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are **justified** by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, by virtue of his own faith...

The "faith of Jesus": Jesus, our Lord and our God, is faithful precisely at the moment he suffers loneliness, discouragement, abandonment, a thirst to love the unloved and the unwanted, a thirst to pour forth mercy into the hearts, the souls and the lives of those who suffer an unexpected and oh, so bitter, pain.

This is Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, who lives with the eternal disposition of obedience to the Father's will. In this obedience, in this fidelity, Jesus reveals who he is as God. The crowds who disdained Jesus and mocked him by saying, "If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross," were not knowing what they were doing. Jesus manifests his divinity, his oneness with the Father, when he remains on the cross. This is the Father's will, that he give up his life as a gift of the greatest love in order to rescue the humiliated, to open the eyes of those made blind by their

fear of suffering and by their attachment to self-indulgent desires, to redeem the children from their feelings of isolation and their experience of rejection, and to save all those who sadly have become masters of betrayal, deception, treachery and suspicion.

Jesus reveals that the divine thing to do is not to come down from the cross, but rather to accept the vinegar of the disdainers and to die a death by thirst in a heart-to-heart solidarity with the Doreens of this world who live their humanity to the fullest when they place their lives with unmitigated trust in God even and especially at their most bitter moment of agony.

In Jesus God loves with the power and will to redeem. The grace of redemption is what the missionaries intended to bring to Tanzania when they first arrived. Br. Bernardino Ligomeka, OFMCap, provides us with a special insight into the 150 years of evangelization in the country of Tanzania by noting that the solemn words of Jesus about the Last Judgment in Matthew 25:31-46 became a guiding force in the Church life of Tanzania from the beginning. Ligomeka specifies the fact that both missionaries coming from other countries and the African priests, Sisters and Brothers who continue to evangelize do not hesitate to labour zealously – in spite of grave economic and social obstacles to their efforts – to put into action the seven corporal works of mercy and the seven spiritual works of mercy.

These are the works that honour the love that Jesus proclaimed as blessed in his declarations about the Last Judgment that typify the one who evangelizes. First, the Corporal Works of Mercy: (1) to feed the hungry; (2) to give drink to the thirsty; (3) to clothe the naked; (4) to shelter the homeless; (5) to visit the sick; (6) to visit the imprisoned; and (7) to bury the dead. The Spiritual Works of Mercy have their own perceptible impact on the work of evangelization: (1) to counsel the doubtful; (2) to instruct the ignorant; (3) to admonish the sinner; (4) to comfort the sorrowful; (5) to forgive all injuries; (6) to bear wrongs patiently; and (7) to pray for the living and the dead.

One cannot help but notice the affinity between these Works of Mercy and the energies of love that certain individuals of benevolent will channelled towards Doreen in her moments of

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great distress. I am referring to the love that invigorates the despondent soul with a new and lively hope.

Raniya Mohammed and Fr. John Gibson, OCD, bring forth an article about self-image and self-concept that they composed with the help of the responses they received on a detailed questionnaire that was filled out by JUCo's social psychology students – indeed it was the very same group that participated in Richard and Gibson's research on internet involvement (see the most recent issue, no. 19, of *Africa Tomorrow*). Mohammed and Gibson subscribe to Michael Polanyi's suggestion for scientists to refrain from arbitrarily reconfiguring the data to fit their hypotheses. They allow the data to remain in place to guide them to new scientific insights. Perhaps more importantly, Mohammed and Gibson take to heart Polanyi's insistence that not only hypotheses but also convictions should guide the data collection and analyses. The conviction they bring to their research is this:

A person cannot develop a positive self-concept or grow through interpersonal relationships with a positive self-image if they ignore God's Will for their lives. They must recognize the fact that their Creator has a special plan for their lives, a plan that requires an attitude of respect, reverence and obedience.

The more secularist models of social scientific research often neglect this conviction and so try to design parameters for self-concept and self-image that omit the Will of the eternally gracious One who indeed gives us a self.

Father Thomas Marwa Monchena, ALCP/OSS, presents an exposition of Plato's notion of *paideia* that propels society towards the conviction that an educational system suitable for the human person is one that cultivates the freedom that comes to blossom with a curriculum that is integral and holistic, one that focuses on the intellectual, spiritual, ethical, physical and social maturity of the person. Plato's notion of education precludes the rat race for high exam scores, an accumulation of academic and professional credentials, and the increasing ability to manipulate and manoeuvre one's way through the technological market. Plato intends that the person be self-reliant enough that he or she can help others to learn both in theory and practice what self-reliance really is. Self-reliance without a sense of solidarity with one's family, culture,

nation, or world is meaningless. When self-reliance and solidarity join together, persons become human enough to accept each other as brothers and sisters – not competitive rivals.

In Stefan Amsterdamski, Grzegorz Trela offers us an example of an academician who grounded his curriculum in his philosophy of freedom and authenticity. Amsterdamski suffered reprisal after reprisal for his continuing participation in academic programs that allowed especially doctoral students to engender notions and strategies that would give their native country of Poland and their professional faculty of philosophy a moral and intellectual backbone that would give people enduring hope. His decision to stay within a world of conflict when he could have escaped mirrors the heroic willingness of his contemporary, a man of great moral integrity, Cardinal Francis Arinze of the Catholic Church. Cardinal Arinze's noble behaviour during the Biafra conflict of his native Nigeria gave hope and purpose to all the peoples of that vast region.

For his entire life Arinze was a man who exemplified the meaning of intersubjectivity and solidarity to an extraordinary degree. Thomas Joseph frames his notion of intersubjectivity within the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas. Joseph draws for us a sober, realistic picture of what happens in our interpersonal relationships when we refuse to give priority to the Other as someone who deserves our welcome, our respect, our honesty and our trust. When I offer my personal world to the Other, I enter into an asymmetrical relationship with the Other that allows the Other to become a source of life, love, reverence and joy for me. We grow together in trust and in trustworthiness.

This is the trust that Prosper Ngowi emphasizes in Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). When local government authorities and private enterprises that are usually profit-oriented make contractual arrangements that derive from interpersonal dispositions of trust and trustworthiness, the public benefits, the local government authority benefits and the private enterprise benefits. Helping each other becomes ethically prior to using the other for one's own vested self-interest. This gives the nation a heart capable of sustaining the lives of all within God's loving will.

*The Editor*

# PHILOSOPHY & HUMAN SCIENCE

## Plato's Paideia: A Model of Formative Education

Thomas Marwa Monchena, ALCP/OSS

Department of Philosophy  
Jordan University College

### Introduction

This essay is a follow-up to a 2015 philosophy conference constituted largely by lecturers and doctoral students of philosophy from various universities in Rome. The faculty of philosophy of the Lateran Pontifical University organized the conference and entitled it, *La filosofia come formazione dell'uomo* (lit., *Philosophy as a Formation of the Man*). I myself was present as a participant.

In the course of this essay, I intend to offer a brief elaboration of some important elements of Plato's theory of education which came up during the conference. Plato's views on education appear in many of his dialogues; but in this paper, I limit myself to the educational system which Plato designed for the city as discussed in the *Republic*, with an emphasis on the formative and integral nature of the educational system found there. It is to be kept in mind that Plato's system of education makes a commitment to the formation of the whole human being, in all aspects: intellectual, spiritual, social and physical.

In the *Republic*, Plato illustrates his conviction that the nature of the good human life, i.e., true happiness, cannot be determined independently of the place that human beings occupy within society, and that the nature of a just society depends on the education of its citizens. Therefore, he sets forth *paideia* as an educational system that will educate, form, and train individuals

who can serve as a virtuous ruling class. In the *Republic*, Plato sets forth an ideal rather than a description of an existing academic curriculum or even the educational design that could be found operative in his Academy.<sup>1</sup>

I will begin with an examination of Plato's concept of *paideia*. I will focus particularly on Plato's detailed descriptions of *paideia* as a formative education which aims to produce "truly" free individuals who can take the task of ruling the city. Other than the *Republic*, we will rely on the second volume of Werner Jaeger's work *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture*.<sup>2</sup>

In order to achieve the above goal, we need to find out what is, according to Plato, the ultimate goal of educating the city. For Plato, the ultimate goal of education is the cultivation of justice in the state. I discuss this issue in Part II of this essay where the concept of *paideia* is analyzed. In Part III we show that for *paideia*

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<sup>1</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture*, II: *In Search of the Divine Centre*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1947, 199. "He [Plato] does not start with an actual historical nation like Athens or the Spartans. Although he deliberately confines himself to Greece, he is not bound to any particular region or city within it. The physical conditions of his city are never mentioned. They concern him neither geologically nor anthropologically. The training described in the *Republic* has nothing to do with the race which lives in the city—the entire population."

<sup>2</sup> Editor's Note: The educational enterprise involved in the composition of Jaeger's book in English is a good paradigm for researchers and writers. Writing from his academic saloon at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Jaeger engaged in a day-to-day collaborative relationship with his translator, Gilbert Highet, from his very renowned educational seat at Columbia University in New York. As a consequence of this exceptional plunge into the nooks and crannies of Greek culture with his translator, Jaeger happened upon two phrases from the great Greek poet Menander that locate the notion of *paideia* in its rightful position within Greek – and global – society: "The possession which no one can take away from man is *paideia*... *Paideia* is a haven for all mankind" (Menander, *Monost.* 2, 312 cited by Jaeger, ix). Jaeger gave to the academic world an irrefutably precious gem in his erstwhile attempt through two volumes to explain the social structure and function of Greek ideals of culture against their historical background. Jaeger humbly confesses that Plato himself rendered his task easy. Jaeger and Highet collaborated on the third volume of the *Paideia* as well even though it did not concentrate so exclusively on Plato.

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to produce a just society, according to Plato, it must take into account the nature of the human soul, that is, it must be a kind of education which is in accordance with the nature of the soul. According to W. Jaeger, Plato's *paideia* is designed according to the patterns of a variety of spiritual attitudes and types of soul.<sup>3</sup> The methodology of creating a just state is simply this: in order to reform the state, reform the soul. For Plato, it means just as importantly that our incarnate spirit cannot acquire its proper sense if it is not within a more just society.

In Part IV, I will examine what is new in Plato's *paideia*, that is, we shall highlight the difference between Plato's educational system and the "old", traditional Greek education. The role and the quality, moral and intellectual, of the educator are highlighted in Part V of this paper.

Plato believed that through education people can be made "free" or "liberal" individuals. With this particular conviction of Plato in mind, as my conclusion I shall briefly examine and indicate what kind of freedom or liberality *paideia* aims to produce in individuals, and how this liberality forms an individual to become a virtuous citizen and ruler. This will constitute the last part of this paper, which intends to consider whether Plato's *paideia* fits into the concept of Liberal Education.

## 1. The Concept of *Paideia* in Plato

The term *paideia* is a Greek word that means education in the sense of integral, cultural formation. The notion of *paideia*, understood as a system of transmission of knowledge and values, is one of the central concepts through which, ideologically, the socio-cultural panorama of the Greek world was telescoped. The concept captures the gestalt of the cultural formation of the human being according to the truth that is derived from philosophical knowledge. For Plato, philosophical knowledge was seen as the most elevated and most convincing form of knowledge.

According to Werner Jaeger, none of the modern expressions like civilization, culture, tradition, literature, or education really

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<sup>3</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 200.

and sufficiently denote what *paideia* meant for the Greeks.<sup>4</sup> Each of these modern words is confined to one aspect of *paideia*. Hence to understand the notion, we have to combine or employ in an integrated fashion all these modern expressions.

In its original Greek meaning, *paideia* had to do with the formation and shaping of the Greek character. According to Richard Tarnas:

[*Paideia* is] the classical Greek system of education and training, which came to include gymnastics, grammar, rhetoric, poetry, music, mathematics, geography, natural history, astronomy and the physical sciences, history of society and ethics, and philosophy—the complete pedagogical course of study necessary to produce a well-rounded, fully educated citizen.<sup>5</sup>

The kind of formation and education that the concept *paideia* denoted aimed at the creation of a higher type of person. Higher in terms of moral virtue and intellectual wisdom. It meant the whole process of educating the human being into his true form, the real and genuine human nature. Plato and the Greeks before him believed that the laws of human nature are embodied in culture; and literature – i.e., written or oral poems, stories – traditions, religion, sciences, and arts are the depositories of culture. Cultural formation was like a process of “creation” into the spiritual life of a society. Werner Jaeger tells us that:

The ancients were persuaded that education and culture are not formal art or an abstract theory, distinct from the objective historical structure of a society’s spiritual life. They held them to be embodied in literature, which is the real expression of all higher culture.<sup>6</sup>

Plato emphasized the use of literature as a cultural motivating energy for the education of the youth. He also proposed to extend the educational system to include a series of mathematical studies: arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music, and finally logic, or the science of thinking and of final truth. He recognized the practical

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<sup>4</sup> W. JAEGER *Paideia*, v.

<sup>5</sup> R. TARNAS, *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas that have Shaped our World*, New York: Ballantine Books 1993, 29-30.

<sup>6</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, v.

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values of such studies, but his main purpose was to teach the meaning and the method of attaining truth as distinct from unwitting collusion with mere opinion.<sup>7</sup>

## 2. Education and Nature of the Soul

Plato states unambiguously certain principles on which any real educational theory must be based. His first supposition is that in a democracy where all men are capable of ruling themselves, each citizen must be highly and properly educated. He thus introduced to the Athenian world a new thesis, a new principle of education. He introduced a kind of *paideia* that he hoped would be an "art of living"<sup>8</sup> that had to do with the moulding of men's character rather than just training men to be artisans who make things. According to Alexander Nehamas, Plato's *paideia* was education to the art of living, and it involved the whole process that aimed to "produce" oneself as a newly formed person from an original imperfectly formed creature (one may so easily remain in that imperfection), the human being who is fully a human being, whose ideal proportions one can perceive: such is every human being's lifework, the one task worthy of a lifetime's devotion. Werner Jaeger says something similar:

For Plato, *paideia* was not merely a stage in a man's development, where he trained a certain number of his faculties; its meaning extended to connote the perfection of his character, in accordance with his nature.<sup>9</sup>

Technical training for vocational purposes, according to Plato, was not education. Why? Because vocational and technical training, does not lead to the cultivation and the nourishment of the true nature of the whole person. Education was for Plato, the cultural activity that nurtures a human being to be a better person, who knows the good and does the good. For this reason, Plato's

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<sup>7</sup> H.G. GOOD – J.D. TELLER, *A History of Western Education*, London: Macmillan 1969, 32.

<sup>8</sup> On Plato's *paideia* as an art of living, see A. NEHAMAS, *The Art of Living: Socratic Reflections from Plato to Foucault*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press 1998.

<sup>9</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 133.

education theory is in accordance to his understanding of the nature of the soul.

In the *Republic* Plato clearly shows that education aims at political justice; but he also shows that there is parallel relation between the state and the soul, such that he discusses justice in the soul and justice in the state in the same breath. Werner Jaeger indicates the nature of this relationship in the following:

The soul of man is the prototype of Plato's state. The close relation of the state and the soul is hinted at in the remarkable way in which Plato comes to discuss the state. The title of the book makes us think that now at last the state will be announced as the true ultimate aim of the long discussion of justice. And yet Plato treats the state simply as a means to explain the aim, nature, and function of justice in the soul. Since there is justice both in the soul and in the state as a whole, we must be able to spell out its character in the state, that larger although more distant picture, in bigger and clearer letters than in the individual soul.<sup>10</sup>

On the relationship between the soul and the state, Jaeger argues that according to Plato, order and justice in the city are a reflection of order and justice in the souls of the citizens of that city-state. Jaeger points out that Plato's conception of justice transcended all human institutions and went back to the origin of justice, within the soul; for according to Plato, "justice is a soul's virtue and injustice its vice."<sup>11</sup> The ideal state and the soul, according to Plato, are exactly "similar in form". Actually, his description of justice and its function in the ideal state is not derived from the realities of what happens in the political life, but rather, a reflection of his own theory of the parts of the soul, projected in a larger entity, that of the state.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 207; on individual and social justice see PLATO, *Republic*, Book II, 368e, translated from the New Standard Greek Text, with Introduction, by C.D.C. Reeve, Indianapolis-Cambridge: Hackett 2004.

<sup>11</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book I, 353e5-10.

<sup>12</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book II, 369a; see also, R.L. NETTLESHIP, *La teoria dell'educazione nella "Repubblica" di Platone*, Firenze: La Nuova Italia Editrice 1970, 6: "Nella società noi vediamo gli stessi caratteri dell'uomo, ma rappresentati su più vasta scala."

According to Plato, the ideal state was to have three classes of citizens. This social class structure was thought to be parallel to Plato's own idea of three "kinds" of souls: the appetitive, the sensitive, and the rational.<sup>13</sup> The lowest class of citizens consisted of the producers of food, shelter, and clothing; the craftsmen, the traders, the doctors and all those who provided the economic resources for the state.<sup>14</sup> Plato thought that this class of people was mainly motivated by the appetitive soul; and they needed to be ruled and controlled by those wiser than themselves. The middle class would be a class of soldiers (warriors); who were to be motivated by the spirit of honour and courage, that is to say, by the noble emotions that bring equilibrium to human sensitivities.<sup>15</sup> The highest class is the ruling class of guardians (philosophers) who are guided by reason and the search for wisdom.<sup>16</sup>

In this sense, the origin of what Plato calls justice must be based on the most inward nature of the human soul. The connection between Plato's education and the human soul is clearly spelt out by Socrates in the following passage:

Then, aren't these the reasons, Glaucon, that musical training is most important? First, because rhythm and harmony permeate the innermost element of the soul, affect it more powerfully than anything else, and bring it grace, such education makes one graceful if one is properly trained, and the opposite if one is not.<sup>17</sup>

In this view, a just person is one in whom reason rules the body, the sensitivities and the appetites; and a just state is one in which the philosopher—the wisest – rules, and the most courageous and the strongest fight, and the workers labour.

The problem of the *Republic* is the problem of justice or righteousness. Plato's justice, therefore, is a harmony in which all qualities and all individuals are in their proper places performing their proper functions. To repeat it in a more general form, that is a just state or society in which each individual is in the place for

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<sup>13</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book IV, 440b-442a.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. PLATO, *Republic*, Book II, 369d, 373b3-c5.

<sup>15</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book II, 374e, 375b4.

<sup>16</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 263-267.

<sup>17</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book III, 401d5-402a5.

which his nature and capacity fit him, doing those things and only those that he can do best.<sup>18</sup>

For Plato, therefore, *paideia* is conceived as the ideal process and the ideal means to achieve justice, both for the individual and the state.<sup>19</sup> Justice for the individual can be obtained only when each individual develops his or her potentiality to the fullest. In this sense, justice means excellence, and education is necessary to achieve that excellence.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, the ideal of education is conceived not as the perfection of the body but essentially as the perfection of the spiritual part of the human being, the soul. This is why Plato declares that the education of children must begin with the education of their souls. The education of the soul is to be done with “musical” training. In the comprehensive Greek sense, “music” is not simply a matter of sound and rhythm, but also of the spoken word, the expressed thought, the logos.<sup>21</sup> Plato insists again and again, that man has a higher nature, an immortal soul. Therefore, the first object of any education is to subject the lower nature, i.e., the body and its natural appetites, to the higher or spiritual nature. In the discourse between Socrates and his interlocutors in the *Republic*, Socrates makes the following comment:

And surely once our constitution is well started, it will, as it were, go on growing in a circle. For good education and upbringing, if they are kept up, produce good natures; and sound natures, which in turn receive such an education, grow up even better than their predecessors in every respect—but particularly

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<sup>18</sup> H.G. GOOD – J.D. TELLER, *A History of Western Education*, , 33.

<sup>19</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 202.

<sup>20</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 202.

<sup>21</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 211. For the Greeks, “music” meant all of the cultural literature including letters, songs, and poetry. Through letters, musical songs, and poetry, the students were taught all the values of life. That way they cultivated and nourished their mind and soul. The educators talked to the students about the virtue, the bravery, the deeds and the glory of the past heroes, so that the youths tried to imitate them and follow in their footsteps.

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with respect to their offspring, as in the case of all the other animals.<sup>22</sup>

For this reason, Plato says that anything that would disrupt this harmonious subjection of body to soul has no place in any school.<sup>23</sup> This explains why Plato insisted on censorship of literature for students and generally all the young men. For example he says:

Shall we carelessly allow our children to hear any old stories made up by just anyone, then, and to take beliefs into their souls that are, for the most part, the opposite of the ones we think they should hold when they are grown up?<sup>24</sup>

He continues:

So our first task, it seems, is to supervise the storytellers: if they make up a good story, we must accept it; if not, we must reject it. We will persuade nurses and mothers to tell the acceptable ones to their children, and to spend far more time shaping their souls with these stories than they do shaping their bodies by handling them. Many of the stories they tell now, however, must be thrown out.<sup>25</sup>

Plato believed that the human being has a rational soul and that he has a lofty end in life. He realized that the human being's end was not a purely natural one and that to attain this higher end the human being must preserve a proper harmony between the body and the soul. But how does one get to know how to preserve this harmony? According to Plato, the only way a person can know and preserve a balanced relation between body and soul is by learning true values. The young must learn so as not to confuse lead and gold, glass and diamond. Only a vital link between morality and religion, on the one hand, and the educational system, on the other,

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<sup>22</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book IV, 424a5.

<sup>23</sup> The idea and the emphasis of the soul as the higher nature, is important for our times, for many writers in our own day display too vividly the supremacy of the body over the soul. We therefore, must insist that philosophy, or any form of education that works to develop and transform the human being should take seriously the proper position and the harmony between the material and the spiritual aspects of the human being. This means that our educational aim must be more elevated, must be more spiritual.

<sup>24</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book II, 377b5-10.

<sup>25</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book II, 377b9-c5.

will teach and cultivate this in the young. This is well summarized by Jaeger as follows:

Paideia for Plato is the soul's lifelong struggle to free itself from ignorance of the greatest goods which bars its way to its true welfare. These words point backwards, to the conclusion of Protagoras, where this same ignorance, 'false belief and error about things of the highest value', was described as the source of all evil.<sup>26</sup>

From the above, it can be said that there is no confusion in Plato's mind concerning the real aim of *paideia*. Plato's primary directive for philosophy focused on the strenuous development of the intellect, the will, and the body, motivated by a ceaseless desire to regain the lost union with the eternal, for the recollection of the Ideas (Forms) is both the means and the goal of true knowledge. Education, therefore, for Plato is in the service of the soul and the divine. As Jaeger says, the purpose of *paideia*, exercised through the media of athletic and 'musical' training, "is to create right harmony and right rhythm in the soul."<sup>27</sup>

Despite the correlation between the soul and the state, Werner Jaeger warns that there always existed a certain conflict between the spirit of the state and the 'ethos' of the human being which houses his soul in a perfect state even as he struggles to live according to its purity. He may lose himself in the struggle: "Tyranny comes into being in the soul of a young man when he himself becomes the plaything of his own lusts."

### 3. The Reform of the Greek "Old" Paideia

How does Plato's *paideia* differ from the traditional Greek educational system? What is new in his idea of education? The idea here is that in the *Republic* Plato accepted some of the main views about education and its exercise in Athens but rejected or offered criticism about other Athenian viewpoints. Many scholars of Plato's theory of education believe that under Plato, the classical *paideia* assumed a deeper and more metaphysical dimension,

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<sup>26</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 152-153.

<sup>27</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 279.

holding forth the ideal of inner perfection realized through disciplined education.<sup>28</sup>

The kind of education that Plato outlines in books II-III of the *Republic* is in many ways in keeping with traditional Greek educational practices.<sup>29</sup> In this first stage of education, Plato makes use of the traditional content of the *paideia* of the aristocratic Athenian: music and athletics. It also resembles the old Greek education which was primarily concerned with moral formation and character shaping rather than the development of intellect or the acquisition of a wide range of knowledge.

However, Plato showed dissatisfaction concerning what was the aim of traditional education. Should education aim only at making people physically strong and courageous? Plato, therefore felt a need for a "better" education for the class of guardians:

What, then, will the education be? Or is it difficult to find a *better* one than the one that has been discovered over a long period of time—physical training for bodies and musical training for the soul?<sup>30</sup>

Plato's second stage of education set forth in books VI-VII of the *Republic*, contains a different kind of education which introduced profound changes to the traditional educational system in crucial ways. The aim of his new *paideia* was to train pupils to look down on practical and specialized learning, training, and erudition for the extrinsic benefits.

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. R. TARNAS, *The Passion of the Western Mind*, 43.

<sup>29</sup> H.I. MARROU, *Storia dell'educazione nell'antichità*, traduzione di Umberto Massi, Roma: Edizioni Studium 1994, 105:

Che Platone abbia posto così alla base del suo Sistema pedagogico l'educazione greca tradizionale, è un fatto che ha avuto un'importanza considerevole per lo sviluppo della tradizione classica, di cui ha rinforzato la continuità e la omogeneità; da una parte, la cultura filosofica, invece di romperla con l'educazione anteriore, ne apparve come un prolungamento, un arricchimento; dall'altra, quest'educazione di primo grado venne a costituire un denominatore comune tra quella cultura filosofica e la cultura rivale contrapostale da Isocrate; l'una e l'altra si presentano come due varietà della stessa specie, come due rami divergenti usciti da un tronco comune.

<sup>30</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book II, 376e.

The traditional Greek educational system was more a matter of private individuals. Any training that Athenian children received in reading, writing, literature, music, or in another discipline was up to their parents to arrange and pay for. Sophists, for example, were considered as educators who moved from one town to another to teach the children of elite parents. Education was offered for a price: poor families could not manage to pay.<sup>31</sup> This attitude of sophist teachers did not please Plato. He proposed the state to be responsible for education rather than to leave it to the private or semi-private individuals, as had always been the case.

According to Plato, education should be the highest function of the state. The ideal state should be responsible for providing and supervising the educators, and supervise the style and the content of teaching.<sup>32</sup> Plato believed that the root cause of evils in the city of Athens was the inadequate old Athenian manner of educating; and he blamed this state of affairs on the freedom that was left to the parents to direct the education of the children as they wished. Parents failed to inculcate the virtues and true moral/intellectual training. To remedy this inadequacy, Plato proposed a compulsory education for all children. For the public common good, the state should direct and control breeding, nursing and the education and training of children.<sup>33</sup>

Another important reform that Plato introduced to the Greek culture was the ideal of the equal opportunity for education. According to Jaeger, Plato was influenced on this point by the Spartan system of education where both women and men were trained for state functions, especially for the military.<sup>34</sup> Plato made a powerful argument that in the ideal state, men and women must be available to perform the same functions in society. In Plato's view there are no valid reasons why a woman *per se* should be discriminated against in respect of a social role; if men are chosen to rule on the criteria of intelligence and moral integrity, then it is quite illogical to say that a woman ought not to be chosen if she

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 108-110.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. PLATO, *Republic*, Book II, 376.

<sup>33</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 246-251.

<sup>34</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 243.

has the same qualities. Therefore, for optimal performance of their roles and pursuits, women must be educated.

Plato maintained that, if men are educated both physically and intellectually, the same should be done for women. Just like men, women, as well as children must be educated. Everyone in the city—men and women, as Plato insists—is exposed to the same educational system. Students were to be promoted on account of their merits. According to Jaeger:

Plato himself thought that no one could claim a leading position in the state unless he had ability far above the average of mankind. But he did not expect to take an aristocracy of blood and train it for virtue; he wanted to choose those who represented the highest *arête*, and with them to create a new elite.<sup>35</sup>

That means that the better someone does, the higher one rises in the city's hierarchy.<sup>36</sup> Plato believed that women are "capable of making a creative contribution to building up the community."<sup>37</sup> Therefore, the first stage of education, i.e., education at the primary level, was to be for all, without gender discrimination. The secondary level of education for guardians, which aimed at producing philosophers and rulers was only for those males and females who had developed morally, physically, culturally, spiritually, and intellectually; those who had the capability for such education, for the service of the state, and could live a harmonious life, because they knew what was good for the people and for humankind, and could make choices grounded on that knowledge.<sup>38</sup>

This educational system manifests Plato's rejection of the then prevailing view that women are meant by nature only to bear children, bring them up, and look after the household. He believed that women are equal to men. However, he admitted that generally, women are not as strong as men. But he says, being less strong physically is not enough reason to keep women from accepting

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<sup>35</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 248.

<sup>36</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book V, 451c, 451d, 451e5, 452a5.

<sup>37</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 244.

<sup>38</sup> R. TARNAS, *The Passion of the Western Mind*, 42-43.

their share in the guards' duties.<sup>39</sup> Now, if they were to do the same work as men, they should have the same upbringing and education.<sup>40</sup> Therefore the women of the ruling class must be schooled in 'music' and gymnastics just like men, and also trained for war.

Then if we employ women for the same tasks as men, they must also be taught the same things. Now, we give the latter musical and physical training. So, we must also give these two crafts, as well as military training, to the women, and employ them in the same way.<sup>41</sup>

Plato's criticized the "musical" education of his day, and more particularly, poetry. He placed a special emphasis on the use poetry as an educational force. Good poetry, according to Plato, is the one that celebrates noble people who can be imitated by the students.<sup>42</sup> Good poetry prepares students to perform virtue and wisdom in private and public life as adults. Plato was concerned that some models of poetry were being used by poets to excite the multitude and stir up their sensitivities, with no concern whether they make people better or worse.<sup>43</sup>

But Plato's radical criticism of use of poetry in Greek education had another, ulterior, motive: the reformation of the Greek representation of gods. In fact, Werner Jaeger thinks that Plato intended not just the reformation of the representation of the idea of gods but also wanted to outline a reformed theology. Jaeger says:

Plato's pupils believed that when he proclaimed the Good to be the ultimate cause of everything in the universe, he was founding a new religion. This is made quite certain by Aristotle's laudatory poem on the altar of Philia. They thought also that Plato's belief that being good was the same as being happy was made manifestly true at least once in this world, in the person of their master. [...] That revolutionary concept never appears in history before Plato's

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<sup>39</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book V, 451d.

<sup>40</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book V, 455c-d.

<sup>41</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book V, 452a.

<sup>42</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book III, 390a4-5, 394c4-5.

<sup>43</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 144.

Republic, where 'outlines of theology' are sketched out to help in employing the knowledge of God (= the Good) in education.<sup>44</sup>

In order to reform the representation of the gods, Plato suggested that a number of famous poems must be modified, or else, should not be used for education, on account of their misrepresentation of the truth about gods. Some poets, according to Plato, had misrepresented the gods as constantly changing their minds, competing and quarreling among themselves, and as personages who often deceive people and do evil deeds. For Plato:

[Good poems must represent gods as] altogether simple, true in both word and deed. God does not change himself or deceive others by means of images, by words, or by sending signs, whether they are awake or dreaming.<sup>45</sup>

The poems of Homer fall in the category of those that Plato thought must be edited before being used for education.<sup>46</sup>

#### 4. The Competence and the Role of the Educator

In the seminar *La filosofia come formazione dell'oumo* the question about the role of the educator in the process of cultivating *paideia*, that is, in the whole process of formation and transformation of the human being and society was repeatedly raised. Prof. Cambiano indicated that an answer to the issue of the educator-learner relationship was already highlighted in Plato's *paideia*.

According to Plato, the whole activity of *paideia* requires a healthy relationship between the educator and the student. First and foremost, the educator must not only know his subject well, but as a true lover of wisdom (philosopher) must also know the limits of his knowledge. The educator, or the mentor of the youth, is expected to have a deep care for the intellectual, spiritual well-being and the future of those he works with. The role of the educator implies that one must abandon himself to the ministry – the vocation – of educating. This means that the role of the educator should not be understood as a profession or wage-earning activity.

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<sup>44</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 297.

<sup>45</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book II, 382e7-10.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. PLATO, *Republic*, Book III, 390e-392a; 396e.

The educator must be conscious of the teacher-student relationship and must know that he deals with the soul of the student. Indeed character formation results from educating the soul in matters emotional, moral, intellectual, and spiritual.

Contrary to the Sophists, Plato proposed a system of education by which the youth could be taught to think for themselves – to discuss, debate, argue, and criticize – and not just repeat mindlessly the views of their teacher. The allegory of the Cave is presented as an image of *paideia* but it may also serve as a model of the role of an academic mentor, such as Socrates.<sup>47</sup> In the allegory of the cave, Plato likens the importance of the educator to the torchbearer who leads a man who has been lying in the dark cave out of the darkness into the bright light of the outside world.<sup>48</sup> The teacher is thus the constant guide of the students. The teacher must be a person of high integrity and must possess high self-worth.

In the entire dialogue of the *Republic*, Plato portrays Socrates as the model for educators, as one who is able to guide the student to achieve the life of excellence, by living a just life, while constantly striving for wisdom and the appropriation of virtues—temperance, courage, wisdom and justice. “Plato intends ... to make Socrates appear as the image of true frankness, true kindness, and true *paideia*.”<sup>49</sup> As a teacher of *paideia*, Socrates shows himself as a kind of mid-wife of ideas, one who leads potential learners to discover the truth for themselves, by liberating them of false opinions and encouraging them to pursue the truth and the knowledge of the Idea of the Good with the aid of their philosophical mentor. We can compare Socrates to the free, philosophical wise man who re-enters the dark cave – the world of everyday affairs in which people live and move and have their being – in order to attempt to rescue those who live in this shadowy world, while facing the danger of having his life threatened by the violent reaction of the “prisoners” inside the cave who find their world disturbed by a Socratic rescuer.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book VII, 514a.

<sup>48</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book VII, 516a-e.

<sup>49</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 140.

<sup>50</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book VII, 517a.

Lastly, just like Socrates, the educator must expect and be ready for the pedagogical struggle between *paideia* as represented by the sophists—those teachers whose aim is success and mastery over their students – and *paideia* as represented by Socratic philosophers – those who seek to nurture their students through a liberating and transforming philosophical quest for wisdom.<sup>51</sup>

## 5. Plato's Paideia as a Liberal Form of Education

Plato's *paideia* as we have seen, refers to a particular sort of education which is basically concerned with the kind of training that develops the mind, emotions, physique and interpersonal relationships. It is a training in values, in virtues. Plato's concept of *paideia* is distinguished from specialized training and learning for the extrinsic benefits. Plato's *paideia* is contained in the traditional notion of Liberal Education which holds that such an education is the development of the mind through the achievement of worthwhile knowledge and understanding. What is worthwhile is meant to be valuable, morally upright.

In Books Six and Seven of the Republic, Plato sets forth a kind of education that focuses on the development of human excellence, both private and public. For Plato, the kind of education designed for guardians should aim at developing the intellect and bringing freedom to bloom according to the parameters of truth and goodness. Its object is the excellence of the human being as a human being and as a citizen. The kind of education at issue covers not just the content of what is learnt, but the forms by which what is learnt is presented – the kind of music you listen to, the sort of exercise you take, the type of objects that surround you. Education cannot be reduced to the acquisition of information and skills. For Plato, *paideia* covers the whole of human development. The passage 401b-402a indicates the extensive scope of education according to Plato:

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<sup>51</sup> W. JAEGER, *Paideia*, 149: "Therefore if Socrates is to choose between the two methods of treating men—serving the Athenian people by flattery, or fighting them to make them better—he can choose only the second, and that although he knows the mortal danger he is running."

Is it only poets we have to supervise, then, compelling them either to embody the image of a good character in their poems or else not to practice their craft among us? Or mustn't we also supervise all the other craftsmen, and forbid them to represent a character that is bad, intemperate, illiberal, and graceless, in their images of living beings, in their buildings, or in any of the other products of their craft? And mustn't the one who finds this impossible be prevented from practicing in our city, so that our guardians will not be brought up on images of evil as in a meadow of bad grass, where they crop and graze every day from all that surrounds them until, little by little, they unwittingly accumulate a large amount of evil in their souls? Instead, mustn't we look for craftsmen who are naturally capable of pursuing what is fine and graceful in their work, so that our young people will live in a healthy place and be benefited on all sides as the influence exerted by those fine works affects their eyes and ears like a healthy breeze from wholesome regions, and imperceptibly guides them from earliest childhood into being similar to, friendly toward, and concordant with the beauty of reason?<sup>52</sup>

The scope of the educational system designed by Plato is well covered in the modern concept of liberal education. Liberal education is a kind of education that seeks, not to produce professional technicians and scientists, but to develop free human beings who know how to use their minds and are able to think freely for themselves. For Plato, the kind of education that is capable of producing citizens who can exercise their liberty as cultivated persons must be compatible with that quality in a soul that is always reaching out to grasp all things as a whole, whether divine or human.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book III, 401b-d.

<sup>53</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book VI, 486a-b10. The editor notes that the type of liberal education that the author has in mind is one that has been compromised in those cultures that have either wittingly or unwittingly followed the masters of suspicion. The schools of suspicion explained by Paul Ricoeur and revisited by Pope St. John Paul II in his exposition on the challenges to purity of heart posed by today's consumer cultures embed students within educational systems that exalt the mentalities driven by the drive for profit (Marx), the impulse to psycho-social and sexual gratification (Freud), and the unbridled desire for power and influence (Nietzsche) at the expense of the

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In Plato’s conception of education as a training of character and development of human faculties, there is a total absence of any reference to academic achievement, exams or grading; the students were assessed for their strength of character:

Well then, as I was just saying, we must discover which of them are best at safeguarding within themselves the conviction that they must always do what they believe to be best for the city. We must watch them right from childhood, and set them tasks in which a person would be most likely to forget such a conviction or be deceived out of it. And we must select the ones who remember and are difficult to deceive, and reject the others.<sup>54</sup>

According to this viewpoint, the criterion of successful education is a morally mature and enlightened outlook on the world.

## Conclusion

In Kenya, where I come from, and in Tanzania, where I live and work, there has been an effort to reform the educational systems, and redefine the educational processes and structures. That in itself indicates that we have an educational crisis – but I believe the educational crisis is global in the sense that everywhere in the world the human being has never ceased to question the appropriateness and the purpose of their national systems of education and their methods for implementing them. Our educational systems are deeply immersed in training people for office employment and for the technological market. Ours is more of a system that prepares students to pass exams and to achieve academic qualifications leading to formal professions.

A critical study of Plato’s *paideia* can be an eye-opener to our reflections on the nature and the aim of education. We need to be challenged to re-think the aim of our education. We could borrow from Plato the idea of an integral personal and community education. We need a kind of educational system which promotes the person, particularly amid the challenges of our technological

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heart’s true freedom according to the parameters of truth and goodness. See the Editorial in *Africa Tomorrow*, 17/2, 2015.

<sup>54</sup> PLATO, *Republic*, Book III, 413c-d.

and fast-changing society. True cultural education should be able to transmit the cultural wealth from one generation to the next, because culture is the medium to develop a relationship between the present and the values and virtues of the past.

I think the other aspect of the crisis facing our systems of education is that in some way we are taught and prepared to know what is useful for us. Less and less, students are prepared to know and to love what is good, what is true, what is beautiful, what is natural. I believe that education should teach us how to be “in love” and what we should fall in love with. The questions of what and how “to be” are metaphysical and moral questions, respectively. To know the nature of what is there, to know the good, to know the true, the beautiful and the natural, would require some training in philosophy. My recommendation would be to our education systems to create some space for philosophical courses at the primary and intermediary levels of education. These would be courses that are appropriate for forming and developing critical thinkers.

In a forthright philosophy of education we find many theories put forward to explicate the purpose or goal of education. For example, Julius K. Nyerere and Ralph Waldo Emerson, both in different settings, propagated the idea according to which the primary purpose of education is to promote self-reliance. I think they are right in this, that any system of education that does not seek to liberate people in the society in all aspects of their lives is defective. However, though self-reliance is truly one of the goals, it cannot be the primary goal of education. In my view, the capacity for people’s self-reliance is dependent on the maturity of their character and personality. Therefore, our educational systems and practices should be geared toward forming young people to recognize and adopt a life that incorporate values, ideas, virtues and practices they need to become decent, “educated” and fulfilled. Only to this extent will they be truly human persons.

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# **Premises in Psychological Research: Obedience to Allah as a Determinant of Self-Concept and Self-Image**

**Raniya Mohammed**

Graduate of Psychology and Counselling  
Jordan University College

**John Gibson, OCD**

Interdisciplinary Lecturer  
Jordan University College

## **Abstract**

The aim of the research was to focus on the degree to which a social psychology student's self-concept is either positive or negative. A distinction was made between the self-affirmations that a person might tend to make about himself or herself independently of his/her relationships with other people – we conformed to the literature and called this a self-concept – and the self-affirmations that a person might make about himself or herself by means of social comparisons – for these self-affirmations we used the term self-image. In the spirit of Michael Polanyi, the researcher and her co-author approached the research with a professional commitment to let their religious beliefs set parameters for their approach to the data and hence maintained their conviction that any person who defies or ignores the Will of Allah cannot truthfully develop a positive self-concept or a positive self-image.

Out of 40 social psychology students, the responses of all 40 matched a positive self-concept without any direct social comparison; 38 of the 40 students reflected a positive self-image when comparing oneself with others. Only two of the 40 students betrayed a negative self-image; this was indeed in the realm of

social comparisons. Even these two students manifest a positive self-concept when not directly comparing oneself with others.

Given the content of the research questionnaire, the results of the present study reveal that a person's concept of the self may modify his or her beliefs and attitudes towards others and towards God, and may even be determinative in the person's manner of choice-making and consequent effort to act. The great propensity for persons to develop a positive self-concept is consistent with studies that have been conducted throughout the world. This study likewise explained the factors that influence social comparison and the formation of a self-image and ways to change both the self-concept and the self-image. In the final analysis, this essay anchored itself in the premise that neither self-concept nor self-image can stabilize self-confidence in the vicissitudes of the present moment or buttress the hopes for a desirable eternal destiny if the Will of Allah is not instrumental in the formation of both the self-concept and the self-image.<sup>1</sup>

## **Introduction**

### **What Is a Self-Concept? What Is a Self-Image?**

Can a human being simultaneously spurn the Will of Allah and develop a sense of self-esteem and a positive self-concept? If I am constructing for myself a self-concept that does not in any way correspond to Allah's concept of me, am I not engaged in a process that is futile, doomed to meet with frustration, disappointment, discouragement, disillusionment and despair? May I develop a concept of myself that does not correlate to the truth of who I am? Who is to decide? Who is my criterion of truth, the truth about myself, the truth about Allah and the truth about my identity within the milieu of eternity?

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this article, Allah and God are used interchangeably since Allah is the Arabic word for God. We place a certain emphasis on fidelity to the will of the just and merciful Allah with the recognition that many would express their religious conviction as fidelity to the will of the just and merciful God. In all cases, we stress a continuing habit of obedience, after the manner of Abraham, to the requirements of the divine Truth as a *sine qua non* for the formation of a positive self-concept and a positive self-image. See John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis [On Social Concern]*, n. 47.

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May I compare myself favourably with other people and so develop a positive self-image if my attitudes and behaviour would seem to be displeasing to the Almighty, All-Knowing God, who is the Lord of Truth? Is it possible for me to compare myself unfavourably with the people who rub shoulders with me in my social milieu and in fact be very pleasing to the All-Gracious Allah who is everlastingly Merciful and Sustains all by his mercy?

## 1. Definitions

### 1.1 Self-Concept and Self-Schema

A person's answers to the question, "Who am I?" define our *self-concept* (Myers, 2010, 39). My self-concept is the personal sense of who I am. One's self-concept (also called self-construction, self-identity, self-perspective, or self-structure) is a collection of beliefs about one's self (Leflot et al., 2010). This does not mean, however, that I grow in my sense of self independently of other people.

We are; therefore, I am. This is to say that we evaluate ourselves at least partly by our group memberships. Having a sense of "we-ness" strengthens our self-concepts. We seek not only respect for ourselves, but also we take pride in our groups (Smith & Tyler, 1997). This feeling of pride may begin with our families, extend to our religion, and then expand even further in a wholehearted embrace of the nation. My self-concept may bring me to the crucial juncture in my life where I say, "I am ready to sacrifice myself for my family, for my nation and for my religion."

When two people love each other in a true love of friendship, their personal self-concepts intertwine in a self-other integration (Slotter & Gardner, 2009). I love not only you but I love those whom you love.

My co-author and I share the conviction that human persons cannot harbor true beliefs about the self if they do not pay attention or accept wholeheartedly the Will of Allah – the Will of God – in their lives.<sup>2</sup> Allah is the Truth. We can only have an internal, true

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<sup>2</sup> Miss Raniya Mohammed, the primary author, and Father John Gibson, the co-author, collaborated in the production of the present article by integrating Miss Mohammed's research objectives and presuppositions,

understanding of ourselves when we abide in the Will of Allah. We recognize the fact that people may develop a self-concept that on the surface seems very positive even though they are not paying attention to the Will of Allah. Actors, actresses and musicians are by and large notorious for refining both their self-concept and their self-image without recourse to Allah. Our interest, however, is not primarily how positive a self-concept is but rather how thoroughly it harmonizes with the truth of the person's declared relationship with Allah.

The elements of our self-concept, that is to say, the beliefs by which we define ourselves, are our "self-schemas" (Markus & Wurf, 1987). Schemas are mental templates by which we organize our worlds. Our self-schemas powerfully influence how we perceive, remember, and evaluate other people and ourselves.

If psychology is central to my self-schema, for example, I may focus my attention on how other people express their feelings, how they show peculiarities in their gestures and body language, how their personal idiosyncrasies cast them into a unique self-image, how they habitually ignore others by phubbing, or – in contrast – how they involve themselves with others by empathizing with them, assisting them thoughtfully in their problems or laughing with them in moments of joy and relief.<sup>3</sup>

If money is central to my self-schema, I may absorb myself in job applications, set up meetings with people who seem to have good business connections and are making good money in the

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literature review and research findings from her study on self-concept and self-image with Father Gibson's own research on the confusion engendered about the notions of self-concept and self-image when a secularist attitude governs the approach of the social scientists who are doing the research. Miss Mohammed's convictions dovetail marvellously with Father Gibson's convictions on this issue. They both realize that those who ignore or defy the Will of Allah cannot cultivate a self-concept or a self-image that coheres with Goodness and Truth. Both the principal author and her co-author give glory to God as the One who gives a positive self-concept and a positive self-image to the human person. Whether one calls it personal self or personal identity – it is a gift from God.

<sup>3</sup> For a definition of "phubbing" see, R. Richard – J. Gibson, "Internet Involvement: Poison for the Heart?", *Africa Tomorrow*, 19/1-2, 37-38.

market place or as a woman sharpen my sensitivities to determine who is a trustworthy, industrious man with a healthy bank account.

If my love for you as a true friend is central to my self-schema, then I manifest a special reverence, respect and affection for you and for those whom you love. When I organize my daily life patterns, you are an axis of consideration for the choices that I am making about what to do each day. Your self-schemas begin to intertwine with mine so that your manner of being a friend, your manner of organizing your world and your manner of perceiving, remembering and evaluating others become integral not only to your self-concept but also to mine. I see not only with my eyes, but with your eyes; I think according to my thinking patterns and according to yours; I love according to my manner of loving and according to your manner of loving.

If Allah is central to my self-schema, I may search for every opportunity to pray and to read with reverence the Holy Qur’an. I will recite the Moslem creed with reverence. I will abide by the fast during Ramadan, look for the opportunity – if it is possible – to make the pilgrimage to the Holy City, and always be mindful of the needs of the poor. I may strive with sincerity and diligence to learn Arabic. I will persevere in my fidelity to the Will of Allah in all my choices about the present and the future. I will look forward to the Last Judgment with trust in Allah’s all-merciful and all-sustaining sovereignty. I will pay special attention to how other people express their faith in Allah or in God and seek solidarity with those who manifest themselves to be pure of heart, steadfast in their convictions about divine truth, and faithful in their religious practices.

## 1.2 Self-Image

Up to this point we have been concentrating on self-concept. When we cultivate a notion of ourselves by comparing ourselves with others, we are beginning to form a *self-image*. Sociologist Charles H. Cooley (1902) spoke of self-image as the “looking-glass self” because we use how we think others are perceiving us as a mirror – a looking-glass – for perceiving ourselves. His colleague, sociologist George Herbert Mead (1934) refined Cooley’s terminology by explaining that what matters for our self-

image is not how others actually see us but the way we *imagine* that they see us.

Social psychologists have demonstrated that when we human beings process self-relevant information, we give ourselves a good reputation (Myers, 2010, 63). We believe that others admire us for our successes and good deeds and that they excuse us for our failures and deeds that are ill-advised. In other words, we place ourselves in favourable positions within social comparisons by cherishing our successes and giving ourselves credit for them – “I earned an A on the test because I am competent” – and by blaming our failures on external factors for which we are not responsible – “I received a C on the test because the lecturer did not explain the material very well.”

Schmitt & Allik (2005) conducted a study involving 53 countries and 16,998 participants and used as their research instrument the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, which they translated into 28 languages. The design of the scale did indeed achieve cross-cultural success in its factor structure since it was largely invariant across nations. This means, for example, that RSES scores correlated with neuroticism, extraversion, and romantic attachment styles within nearly all nations. Even though this cross-cultural attempt was not completely successful because the negatively worded statements on the Scale were interpreted differently by various cultures, the results did show with clarity that the average self-esteem score was above the midpoint in every single country. This means that people typically do not register a negative self-image regardless of their culture or their country. Psychologists call this tendency to boost one’s self-esteem when one is forming an image of himself or herself, a “self-serving bias” (Myers, 2010, 63). As we have already indicated, actors, actresses and musicians are notorious for doing this. By way of simple observation, we may add politicians.

The word image points to the fact that others may form a picture of us – an image – and we may form a picture of them by means of social comparisons. We bolster our self-confidence by attributing success to our ability and effort while attributing failure to external factors such as the incompetence of other people, an unfriendly environment, or unanticipated obstacles. This manner of fortifying

our self-esteem places us in a favourable light when we compare ourselves with others. Myers (2010, 63) informs us that in 1977 *Toronto News* reported that drivers who have to explain their car accidents to the police and to insurance companies wrote the following: "An invisible car came out of nowhere, struck my car, and vanished"; "As I reached an intersection, a hedge [i.e., a bush] sprang up, obscuring my vision, and I did not see the other car"; "A pedestrian hit me and went under my car." *No one* said: "I suffered a car accident because I made a mistake while I was driving."

Besides our way of attributing responsibility for our successes and failures, we enhance our self-image by overestimating how many people agree with us in our opinions. This is called the "false consensus effect" (Krueger & Clement, 1994; Marks & Miller, 1987; Mullen & Goethals, 1990). Krueger and Clement indicated that their experiments were showing that the bias was almost universally present but that it could be a simple process of inductive reasoning: "I am manifesting an example of what other people are probably manifesting, too. Because I am this way, others must also be this way..."

Others show the same effect and give themselves a more positive self-image by exaggerating how many people make the same mistakes and commit the same sins that they do. In a study that Sagarin, Rhoads, and Cialdini conducted in 1998, respondents that told a lie to a partner were then asked to evaluate the honesty of the partner who received the lie. It was observed that those who told lies consistently perceived their partners to be dishonest as well even though they had no evidence for it. This was true even if the partner did not know that he or she had been lied to. In other words, the attitude of the persons who told the lies was: "Yes, I lied... but doesn't everyone?" The researchers explored the underlying dynamism of this false consensus effect and observed that the effect was operating as a self-protecting, self-justifying mechanism.

Keeping in mind the researcher and her co-author's fundamental conviction that a truly positive self-concept and a truly positive self-image develop only in harmony with the Will of Allah who grants the gift of a self, of an identity to each and

every person, but also remaining aware of the deviant patterns that researchers have discovered in the formation of self-concept and self-image, the authors of the present study used a cross-sectional comparison to survey the development of university students' self-concept and self-image at Jordan University College.

## 2. Background of the Study

If one were to scan the history of the recent centuries to thread together the important moments in the development of science, one would find an emphatic focus on the merits of the process of induction and an equally emphatic reluctance to allow extra-scientific authorities to dictate conclusions that are not easily derivable from inductive methods. Sadly, among these authorities that scientists seemed to have declined to accept is God Himself.

It is our privilege to refresh the memory of the reader about the expertise and prestige of the Hungarian scientist Michael Polanyi. Polanyi accepts God's authority as the source of the wisdom and grace that guides scientific research. When the scientist accepts God's authority, she understands that she does not have the prerogative to fabricate conclusions about the meaning and the significance of the data. The one who has the final say about what the data mean is Allah. The scientist understands that when she approaches her data from within the milieu of her lifelong relationship to Allah as *His servant*, then she is a "discoverer", not an "inventor". Allah is the Truth. The one who evades Allah, evades the truth. The one who serves Allah, serves the Truth.

As a scientist, I have a positive self-concept when I understand that the truth is my firm ground to stand on. The truth inherent in my data reveals to me what is insightful, innovative, and – to put it simply – helpful for the human family. It is a truth that coincides beautifully with God's manner of willing and acting (Polanyi, 1962, as cited in Richard & Gibson, 2017, 44, 46-47).

The freedom of the subjective person to do as he pleases is overruled by the freedom of the responsible person to act as he must.

... Within its commitments the mind is warranted to exercise much ampler powers than those by which it is supposed to operate under objectivism; but by the very fact of assuming this new

freedom it submits to a higher power to which it had hitherto refused recognition. Objectivism seeks to relieve us from all responsibility for the holding of our beliefs. That is why it can be logically expanded to systems of thought in which the responsibility of the human person is eliminated from the life and society of man.... We cast off the limitations of objectivism in order to fulfil our calling, which bids us to make up our minds about the whole range of matters with which man is properly concerned.

... Those who are satisfied by hoping that their intellectual commitments fulfil their calling, will not find their hopes discouraged when realizing on reflection that they are indeed truly hopes. ... Commitment offers to those who accept it legitimate grounds for the affirmation of personal convictions with universal intent... Our subjective condition may be taken to include the historical setting in which we have grown up. We accept these as the assignment of our particular problem. Our personhood is assured by our simultaneous contact with universal aspirations which place us in a transcendent perspective.

... [The human being] stands rooted in his calling under a firmament of truth and greatness. Its teachings are the idiom of his thought: the voice by which he commands himself to satisfy his intellectual standards. Its commands harness his powers to the exercise of his responsibilities. It binds him to abiding purposes, and grants him power and freedom to defend them.

When I accept wholeheartedly my calling as a scientist and act according to the responsibilities intrinsic to that calling, I enter into the joy of discovering God's will for my life. When I say, "Yes,," to God's will, my science becomes a service to my Creator.

It is no doubt clear to *Africa Tomorrow* readers, that my co-author and I share the same convictions about the scientific enterprise that Richard and Gibson (2017) articulated in the most recent issue of that journal. They were putting into practice what Michael Polanyi explained to be the soul of the scientist who works with conviction and commitment.

Just as Richard & Gibson noted in their article (2017), Polanyi was nominated three times to receive the Nobel Prize, twice for Chemistry and once for Physics. Even more noteworthy is the fact

that his own son, John, actually won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1986 for his discoveries concerning the dynamics of chemical elementary processes. Two of Michael Polanyi's students, Melvin Calvin and Eugene Wigner were also Nobel Prize winners. Calvin received the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1961 for his discoveries about the carbon dioxide assimilation in plants, and Wigner was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1963 for his elucidations concerning the theory of the atomic nucleus and the elementary particles particularly through the discovery and application of fundamental symmetry principles.

The kind of scientific attitude for which Polanyi argued, namely, an attitude of moral and religious commitment to each concrete scientific endeavour gave my co-author and myself the insight that researchers cannot learn from the data if they labour within a routine of cold objectivity that focuses exclusively on the ability of the data to verify, nullify or attach a certain degree of probability or improbability to a carefully worded hypothesis. Scientists make discoveries by harvesting meaningful insights into data that they have collected and organized in response to an interior call, a call that comes from God (Polanyi, 1962). In other words, they are approaching data with specific moral and religious convictions that give the data a vitality and a meaning that would not be easily discernible to the person who focuses only on logical processes and correlations that may tie data together.

My co-author agreed with me that we should commit ourselves to our data about self-concept and self-image by anchoring ourselves in the core conviction that what corresponds to the Will of Allah gives positivity to the person's self-awareness while that which defies the Will of Allah or poses a contrast to his Will gives negativity to the person's self-awareness. This is not a hypothesis but a conviction. It is a fundamental principal of our research. This conviction guided the formation of our hypotheses.

A collage of issues impinge upon our present study concerning self-concept and self-image if we position our research within our convictions about Allah's investment in a person's development of self-consciousness. If we accept as data Allah's revelation of who He is and Allah's revelation of who we are, then we may suffer accusations from our colleagues who will note our lack of

objectivity because we have already pre-determined what a positive self-concept and a positive self-image should be according to our religious convictions.

## **2.1 The Vacuity of Self-Concept and Self-Image if Allah Is Ignored**

A film that has caught the attention of many is entitled *The Count of Monte Cristo* (Reynolds [director], 2002). A very talented and respected actor named Jim Caviezel plays the lead role of a sailor who goes by the name of Edmond. Edmond carries a very positive self-concept: he knows that he can convince his enemies not to harm him and to allow him to find help for his dying Captain. He feels the same extraordinary degree of self-confidence in his dialogues with Napoleon Bonaparte who has already made himself notorious as a world conqueror. At the peak moment in his life when he receives a promotion precisely because he did his level best to save his Captain, unjust and ill-founded accusations – all based on jealousy – bring him to a prison cell in one of the worst prisons of Europe. In spite of the unjust imprisonment, Edmond is able to say to the prison warden, who is about to strip him of his clothing and give him a severe scourging, that God will certainly bring him justice. The warden, who is a non-believer, scoffs at his new prisoner and says, “Let’s see if God shows up.”

Over a period of years, Edmond, who lives in complete isolation in the dark prison cell loses his faith in God. His self-concept deteriorates to the point that he tries to hang himself. There is no meaning for him in his life. He has no significant place in the lives of other people – he is abandoned and in actuality is simply awaiting his death. His self-concept is that of someone who has been betrayed, forgotten and left to die a needless death.

By God’s miraculous intervention, an elderly gentleman who has also suffered unjust imprisonment enters Edmond’s cell by crawling up through the floor from the underground. His name is Abbé Faria, and he is a man of God. The truth is that the elderly Faria has been trying to escape, but he was digging a tunnel in the wrong direction. Edmond is happy now to have a companion; indeed his new friend is willing to teach Edmond how to read and write and to begin his research in economics and science. Edmond

has a special request to make of him: he wants Faria to teach him how to use a sword. Faria had fought in Napoleon's army so he knows very well how to manoeuvre with a sword, but he hesitates because he does not really want to take part in Edmond's plan to exact vengeance on those responsible for his imprisonment. After some hesitation, however, Faria accedes to his request.

The elderly Faria suffers a lethal accident while he and Edmond are continuing to dig their way through the underground to the outside world. Before he dies, knowing that Edmond is obsessed with the idea of revenge, Faria says, "Do not commit the crime for which you are already serving the punishment – vengeance is mine, says the Lord God." Edmond responds: "I no longer have any belief in God." The dying man in his turn responds back to Edmond: "Maybe you don't believe in God, but God believes in you."

The Holy Qur'an and the Christian Bible both carry an important message about Allah, the All-Merciful, the Sustainer, the one who creates because he wills to create. The message is that Allah only creates what he loves. Each of us have the potential to live always with a positive self-image because Allah is the one who created us: we exist because Allah is Good, Allah is Loving, and Allah is Powerful. Allah believes in us. By the way we pray and by the way we submit ourselves to Allah's gracious will, we become positive signs in this world of Allah's goodness in eternity.

My co-author John Gibson and I carry the same conviction that a person arrives to have a positive self-image if the person is doing God's will and hence showing visible signs through his or her conduct, speech and attitudes that Allah is infinitely Good, Merciful, Loving, and Peace-Giving. The person who does not choose to submit to Allah's ever-gracious will, on the other hand, is not presenting a positive self-image to those whom Allah has given him or her to be brothers and sisters in humanity.

## **2.2 Self-Concepts and Self-Images that Ignore God: Secularism**

One form of psychological mindset that seems to prevail in many corners of the developed and developing world is that of *secularism*. The secularist may be so intent on separating religion from the ordinary business of everyday life that she or he habitually

neglects to ponder what God may want in the specific situations within which she or he must make a decision.

My co-author examined the writings of two intellectuals who speak of the dangers of secularism in today's milieu because he, too, is convinced of the necessity of obedience to the divine Will in order to develop a positive self-concept and a positive self-image. The two intellectuals that Father Gibson chose to investigate speak critically of secularism as a life-style motivated by an attitude that militates against a positive self-concept precisely because it represents a resistance to the all-gracious will of Allah.

### **2.2.1 An Islamic Critique of Secularism**

One of the critics of secularism is a prominent member of the Islamic Brotherhood, Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, who enjoys the honour of having founded and directed the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization and has served for many years in the capacity of a university professor of Islamic Thought and Civilization at the International Islamic University of Malaysia.

Father Gibson notes Al-Attas' discouragement at seeing contemporary Muslim specialists who rely exclusively on human reason at the expense of a humble search and submission to the will of Allah and so show a manifest tendency of what is called "levelling". "Levelling" means to see all human beings as equal in every way including in their ability to think wisely and in their ability to exercise authority with sagacity and integrity. This particular mindset ultimately refrains from taking the position that a person's station in life depends on God's plan and purpose for the person. This mindset rather focuses on the person's ability to carve out a niche for himself or herself as if God intended the person to be entirely autonomous.

Al-Attas put it this way (1993, 116):

All are prone to levelling everyone to the same level of equality, notwithstanding the fact that even in God's Sight we are not all the same and equal. Indeed, we are all the same in point of being creatures of God, in point of being human beings, cast in flesh and blood. But our spirits, our souls, though derived from that One Spirit, and though *essentially* the same are, in point of *power* and

*magnitude*, not the same, not equal. We are like so many candles of varying lengths and shapes and hues and sizes; the tallow they are made from is essentially the same and the light they burn is essentially the same, but the greatness of the flame, the light each sheds is not the same in power and magnitude. And we judge the value of the candle by the light it sheds just as we judge a man by those qualities by which he is not the *same*, but *excels* another such as by intelligence, virtue, and spiritual discernment. So it is neither correct nor true to regard such a man as merely a man of flesh and blood *like any other*, for he is not like any other in that his intelligence, virtue, and spiritual discernment transcend the limitations of his flesh and blood, and his greatness of spirit manifests his excellence over others. *Adab* is the recognition and acknowledgement of such lights in man; and acknowledgement entails an attitude expressing true reverence, love, respect, humility – it entails knowing one’s proper place in relation to him who sheds such light.

What secularists destroy, therefore, is the person’s ability to receive and give the light of wisdom according to the place Allah has given him or her within the human fabric. Secularists wish everyone to see themselves as having the same abilities as everyone else and so rely on themselves in order to develop and excel. *The notion that one is a servant of Allah evaporates*. Such independence from the will of Allah is precarious indeed: when an unforeseen event disturbs the spiritual life of this person, his or her desire for spiritual discernment may dissolve since he or she never really had either the experience or the spiritual backbone necessary to perceive the mysterious workings of Divine Providence in everyday situations, both good and bad.

Al-Attas gives me the insight that I may cultivate a positive self-concept and carry within my soul a positive self-image of who I am as a woman in my family, as a believer in the Islamic community, and as a psychologist by my profession if I learn humbly from those who are wiser than I am, that is to say, from those who are able to communicate to me convincingly the Truth about Allah, about the human person, and about the human family. Concurrently, I may fortify my positive self-concept and my positive self-image if I humbly accept from Allah the ability to express myself wisely to others, that is to say, to communicate with integrity and convincing

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clarity to other humble learners the Truth I have come to understand and revere about Allah and the human person.

### **2.2.2 A Christian Critique of Secularism**

My co-author also explored the beliefs and convictions of another intelligent critic of secularism, a bishop from Malawi who goes by the name of George Tambala. Tambala's convictions and those of Al-Attas seem to dovetail quite handsomely.

Similar to Al-Attas, Tambala perceives the perversion of the social fabric and the exaltation of a false sense of equality to lie in an exclusive dependence on human reason. When the human being recognizes God as the Absolute Allah who gives the human being the capacity to be wise, to adhere to the truth, and to will what is good, the human being recognizes at the very same time the Unlimited Freedom of Allah to choose how he is going to give his gifts, to whom he is going to give his gifts, when he is going to give his gifts, and for what purpose he is going to give his gifts. This is the position of Al-Attas; it is also the position of Tambala.

Indeed, my co-author, John Gibson, wrote an appendix to Tambala's article that appeared in *Africa Tomorrow*, the June, 2014, issue, and cited a man who is revered for his wisdom in Christian circles. His name is Robert Bellarmine. Apparently Bellarmine inspired Thomas Jefferson in his writing of the American *Declaration of Independence*. In his famous declarative statement, "All men are created equal; they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights," Jefferson was looking at a memorable script that came from the heart of Bellarmine: "All men are equal, not in wisdom or grace, but in the essence and nature of mankind."<sup>4</sup> Can a person fail to see the resemblance between Bellarmine's conviction and that of Al-Attas?

It is true that instead of using the words "Wisdom" and "Grace", Al-Attas emphasizes the terms "Power" and "Magnitude". When

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<sup>4</sup> The citations from Jefferson and Bellarmine are to be found in G. Tambala, "Will Africa Survive Secularism?", *Africa Tomorrow*, 16/1 (June 2014), Appendix, p. 58. For the full-length article that explains Jefferson's reliance on Bellarmine and other Catholic sources, see J.C. Rager, "Catholic Sources and the Declaration of Independence", *The Catholic Mind*, 28/13 (8 July 1930).

one contemplates his analogy with the variations in the candle lamps that are giving out light, on the other hand, it becomes clear that, according to Al-Attas, the person with power and magnitude is the one who is wise and is able to disseminate her or his wisdom in a manner that is graceful. Bellarmine's use of the word "grace" puts the accent on the fact that the wisdom is a gift. Al-Attas certainly would not disagree with that since he believes that the power invested in the workings of wisdom is indubitably a gift from God.

But there are those who are unwise – their fire is a beacon that points people in the wrong direction. These are the secularists who shun the Will of Allah and exalt their own personal will with the contention that they are extraordinarily reasonable people. If on the surface they seem to have a positive self-concept, one can be sure it is of their own fabrication. If on the surface they seem to exude a positive self-image, one can be sure that it is a depiction of their own imagination.

The secularists who ignore the fact that God gives the person her or his identity are the ones who ignore the notion that God has a plan for each and every human being and that the human person ought to entrust himself or herself to God's wisdom, ought to submit graciously and humbly to the divine Will, and accept from God his or her own rightful place in society even if it does not coincide with what is glamorous, influential, popular, attractive, powerful, luxurious or admirable.

Tambala affirms the position of Al-Attas that lack of respect for the supremacy of Allah's wisdom and his divine governance of the universe leads human beings to think that they can manipulate technological enterprises in order to satisfy their own wills. In the same *Africa Tomorrow* article to which we have already alluded, Tambala expresses his own convictions and makes reference to other upright critics of secularism to reinforce a fundamental notion that for us is a premise for the research we have conducted, namely, that those who cut the religious roots that are in their hearts, those who forget God, those who deem the Will of Allah as inconsequential, those who may retain God as a theoretical idea but do not worship Him or pray in His Presence, those who blatantly reject Him and begin to adore various idols – the human body,

money, sexual pleasure, delicious food, jewels, political power, academic achievement – are the same people who are tempted to divorce their wives or husbands, suffer from suicidal ideation, live with an obviously oblivious attitude to what happens after death, and hence leave themselves with a self-concept and a self-image that are constantly waxing or waning according to the phases of their emotions, capricious interests, and shifting social relationships. Death for them is not a final act of humble and trustful submission to Allah, an act that looks forward to eternal peace and blessing; rather for them death is a horror show or a lapse into a depression that does not seem to go away.

### **2.2.3 Personal Understandings of Self-Concept and Self-Image**

When we are told to describe ourselves, words or phrases that describe the most important features of who you are, some of the items on your list may involve social roles: student, son, daughter, employee, and so on. Or you could define yourself through physical characteristics: fat, skinny, tall, short, beautiful, or ugly. You may focus on intellectual characteristics: smart, stupid, curious, inquisitive. Or perhaps you may describe yourself in terms of moods, feelings or attitudes: optimistic, pessimistic, critical, and energetic. Or you could consider your social characteristics: outgoing, shy, defensive. You may see yourself in terms of a belief system; Muslim, libertarian, Christian. Finally, you could focus on professional skills, a sports identity, particular skills or lack of them: swimmer, artistic, carpenter, football player.

One way to understand self-concept is to imagine a special mirror that not only reflects physical features, but also allows you to view other aspects of yourself like your emotional state, dislikes, talents, values, roles and so forth. The reflection in that mirror would be your self-concept. Even though how the self-concept develops may be a matter of dispute, researchers generally agree that the self-concept does not exist at birth (Fitts, 1971).

Early social psychological research concerning level of aspiration and reference groups contributed to Leon Festinger's social comparison theory, proposed in 1954. He argued that humans have a tendency to evaluate their own opinions and

abilities in an objective manner that requires a degree of self-detachment. It also requires a criterion for self-evaluation. Festinger mentioned that if objective standards are not available, then they compare themselves with other people. According to Festinger's hypothesis, people prefer to compare themselves with others who are similar to themselves. He also noted that people have a drive to improve themselves, which often results in upward comparisons, comparisons with others who are superior to themselves or more advantaged in some way.

A number of philosophical and psychological theories suggest the true self is an important contributor to well-being. We are accentuating the fact that for a self to be true, the human person must submit herself or himself to the wisdom and grace of Allah. The present research examined whether the cognitive accessibility of the true self-concept would predict the experience of meaning and a sense of well-being in life. What is it that really sustains the true self-concept and self-image?

### **3 Objectives of the Study**

This study was guided by the following objectives:

#### **3.1 General Objective**

The general objective of the study was to examine whether social psychology students at Jordan University College enjoyed a positive self-concept or entertained a negative self-concept and then to ascertain in a rudimentary way the possibility of a correlation between their self-concepts and the outcome of their comparison of themselves with others.

#### **3.2 Specific Objectives**

Specifically the study has sought:

1. To examine whether students think of themselves in a positive light or a negative light at this stage of their identity formation.
2. To find out whether students think of themselves favourably or unfavourably when they compare themselves to others.

3. To find out the challenges students face in the course of finding themselves especially to accept the truth about themselves.

### **3.3 Research Questions**

The researcher of this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Are students thinking about themselves in a positive or in a negative manner in the course of finding their true identity?
2. Is their disposition positive or negative when they compare themselves with others?
3. What are the challenges that the students face in the course of finding their true selves?

### **3.4 Research Presuppositions and Hypothesis**

1. It is presupposed that most social psychology students have a tendency to maintain a positive self-evaluation by distancing themselves from their negative self and paying more attention to their positive one.
2. It is further presupposed that social psychology students may maintain a self-concept and a self-image that are at the same time positive and truthful if they make the effort to cohere their attitudes and conduct with the Will of Allah.
3. The general hypothesis of the researchers is that social psychology students interpret themselves in a favourable light both independently of social comparisons (self-concept) and within the matrices of social comparisons (self-image).

### **3.5 Significance of the Study**

The study is expected to encourage each social psychology student to have a positive attitude towards himself/herself, and see other people in a new, more positive, more loving light. Our research, however, can also carry broader implications for human beings in general since we all carry traces within us of the almighty, all-merciful, all-sustaining Allah who created us. We have

approached our data collection and analysis with the moral conviction that the value of our personal self-concept and self-image is inalienably linked to the reverence, respect and adoration that we render to Allah and his Will. We are approaching our research with the moral and religious attitude that Richard & Gibson (2017) discussed in the article they published in the most recent issue of *Africa Tomorrow*. Gibson, of course, is the same social scientist who is my co-author.

Self-concept is a very important aspect of the self; it affects a person's choices, mood, social relationships and psychological well-being. It is valuable in that it provides a structural analysis of the self; it correlates with self-esteem – and both influence similar outcomes. To recognise self as multidimensional helps one to organise one's self-evaluation and self-beliefs.

If psychology is to strive for a complete understanding of the self in relationship to others, it must place a greater emphasis on a number of equally important properties of the self: self-awareness, self-complexity, self-reflection and self-regulation. The present study concentrates on self-concept clarification. Self-concept clarification can be defined as the degree to which an individual feels that the content of his or her self-concept is well-defined, comprehensible, consistent and perennially stable (Myers, 2010, 39-76).

An infant in the crib has no notion of self: consider what it would be like to have no idea of your characteristics moods, physical appearance, social traits, talents, intellectual capacity, beliefs or important roles. If you can imagine this “blankness” in your experience, you can start to understand how the world appears to someone with no sense of self, with no idea of who he or she is.

Soon after birth the infant begins to differentiate among the things in the environment such as familiar faces and unfamiliar faces, the noises that frighten and the voices that soothe: the infant is making a multitude of distinctions within her or his milieu that probably precede a recognition of self. At about six months, the child begins to recognise “self” as distinct from surroundings. When you watch this child, you would notice that she is looking at herself with great fascination as a foot, a hand or other body part

floats into view, as if they were strange objects belonging to someone else.

As the child experiences mental and emotional states, however, she or he grows to be aware of the self. The joys and hopes, grief and anxieties she feels belong to her, not to anyone else. The clarity of mind about others and about the self as well as the questions of existence belong to her. When she prays, she knows that she is the one who is praying, no one else. When she does the holy and gracious will of Allah, she knows that she is the one who is Allah's servant.

The woman or the man grows to be aware of the self through the questions she or he raises and the truth that he or she seeks. The student asks, what is a human person? What is this sense of sorrow, of evil, of death, which continues to exist despite so much progress and development? What can I as a human person contribute to my family and to my society; what can I expect from my family and my society? What will life be like after death? These questions involve the self. I also come to understand that Allah does not will that I be isolated, a solitary, a person without a family. Allah has created each and every one of us for the formation of social unity.

Perhaps the most fundamental question is: If I act in harmony with Allah's plan and his most gracious will, will I completely harmonize with the genuine good of everybody, of the whole human race... and in doing so, will I fulfil my self-identity? Will my self-concept correspond to Allah's concept of me?

These questions motivate the present study.

#### **4. A Literature Review of the Notions of Self-Concept and Self-Image**

Not surprisingly, in our effort to define self-concept and self-image, several references to the literature have already occupied our attention for the principal reason that these definitions themselves can be elusive in a global social milieu where there is a persistent pressure to conform one's self-concept and self-image to the constantly shifting norms of a public forum dominated by wealth, pleasure, power, and influence. What follows here is simply an augmentation of the literature survey that we began in the first chapter.

## 4.1 The Phenomenon of Self-Concept

Many people research the self. In 2009, for example, the word “self” appeared in 6,935 summaries of articles and books in the online archives of psychological research (Myers, 2010, 38).

Self-concept, broadly defined, is the cluster of a person’s perceptions of himself or herself. The habitual perceptions that a person may have of herself may cluster according to more secularist tendencies. When this happens what motivates the person is not God’s will but rather self-interest and self-concern. A person may be excessively concerned, for example, about being the center of attention particularly when she makes a mistake while other people are present, for example, spilling her tea. In fact, others are not really paying attention to her. This is called the *spotlight effect* (Myers, 2010, 38). Similar to the spotlight effect is the illusion of transparency. A person may experience this when she thinks that the physical symptoms of her fear, anxiety, anger, guilt or sadness are visible to everyone around her when in fact only she is aware of what her body may be going through because of these painful emotions.

Other attitudes towards the self that may grow in dominance if the person as adopted a secularist attitude towards life are the following (Myers, 2010, 38):

- *One allows social surroundings to affect self-awareness.* If one notices that she is one of the few women on a bus almost full with men, she may feel self-conscious. This is only one example.
- *One allows self-interest to colour her judgment of social situations.* If a person is suffering misunderstanding with her friends, she may blame her friends for the misunderstanding even when she is the one who provoked it. If she is happy with her friends, she may attribute the happiness to her own pleasant, outgoing personality.
- *What motivates a person’s social behaviour is self-concern.* We worry about our physical appearance because we are not sure whether others will be pleased with us. In our conversations we may pay careful attention to what other people like to hear, and then choose our words according to their expectations.

- *We allow our social relationships to help define ourselves – we fail to give Allah the prerogative of defining us even though He created us with a special purpose for our lives.* Consequently we may be one self with a parent, another self with a husband, another self with an employer... we act according to a self-definition that is going to link us in a favourable and gratifying manner to the person with whom we are interacting at the moment.

It is not difficult to comprehend that the phenomena that I have been describing about self-concern, self-interest and self-definition are a form of humanism. Within the context of our exposition of secularism, one may conjecture that because Allah is not at the center of the programme, human beings replace him – the persons in one's social environment and the person herself/himself are the ones who are the fulcrum upon which one's concept of the self is balanced.

It is the premise of the non-secularists such as Al-Attas and Tambala that a person becomes aware of what is really important in life through an experience of a prayer relationship with Allah, an experience that is not solitary but flows forth from attentiveness to the Word of God and unity of mind and heart with others, especially within the family, about topics that concern the truth about God, about the person, and about everyone's eternal destiny. When a person is growing in self-awareness within this kind of environment, the development of the self-concept and the self-image do not easily fluctuate with momentary preoccupations and passing surges of feeling.

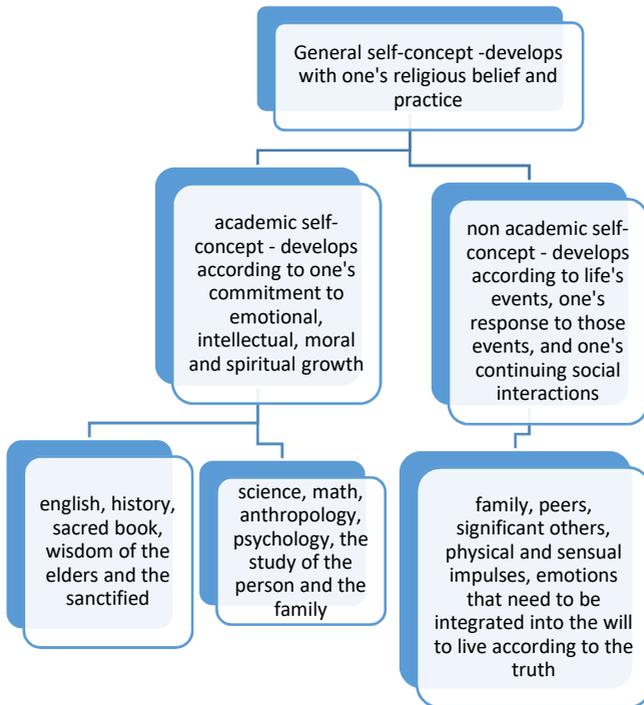
Having perceived oneself within the mystery of Allah's perception – i.e., within the mystery of the God who is Truth and wills Goodness, Mercy and Sustenance – one comes to distinguish what is true about the self and what is false, what is good about the self and what is not good. As these perceptions develop, the person forms an interactive relationship with her environment: at times she experiences events as something happening to her which draw forth her reaction; at times she experiences herself as a person who is acting efficaciously upon the environment by doing something that will change the way things are at the moment. She will not, however, feel compelled to keep redefining herself.

If she remains faithful to her prayer and praises God daily throughout her life not only with her lips but with her actions that bring forth the good in a good manner, and if she remains faithful to her religious beliefs in the vicissitudes of life that test her fidelity to the good – if she remains faithful, she will feel Allah’s reinforcing presence. She will also feel the reinforcing presence of true believers. She will know who are the significant others whose evaluation she can trust, and she will grow in a concept of self and in an image of self that resonate vibrantly with the truth. This is the religious and moral conviction that motivates this present research.

The construct that we are calling self-concept can be further defined by seven critical features (cf. Shavelson et al.,1976: see fig.1).

- 1) It is organised or structured in such a way that people categorise the vast information they have about themselves and relate these categories to one another.
- 2) It is multifaceted; and the particular facets reflect the category system adopted by a particular individual or shared by a group.
- 3) It is hierarchical with perception of behaviour at the base moving to inferences about the self in subareas (e.g., academic—English, math, history) and non-academic areas and then to general self-concept.
- 4) The general self-concept is stable; but, as one descends the hierarchy, self-concept becomes increasingly situation-specific and as a consequence less stable.
- 5) Self-concept becomes increasingly multi-faceted as the individual develops from infancy to adulthood.
- 6) It has both a descriptive and evaluative dimension such that individuals may describe themselves (e.g., I am anxious; I am happy) and evaluate themselves (e.g., I do well in school; I am faithful to prayer).
- 7) It can be differentiated from other constructs such as academic achievement.

Figure 1 synthesizes the research reviews on substantive topics related to self-concept (e.g., Wylie, 1979) and on methodological issues in self-concept research (e.g., Shavelson et al., 1976; Shavelson, Burstein & Keesling, 1977). One notices from Figure 1 that the researcher has added essential elements that connect the phenomenon of the self-concept to one’s relationship with Allah. This addition seems appropriate since researchers customarily have worked within paradigms that are secularist whereas the personal self-concept of the present authors is non-secularist, i.e., linked inextricably to their prayerful praise and gratitude to Allah and a daily behaviour that links their actions to the Will of Allah.



**Figure 1: Critical Features of Self-Concept**

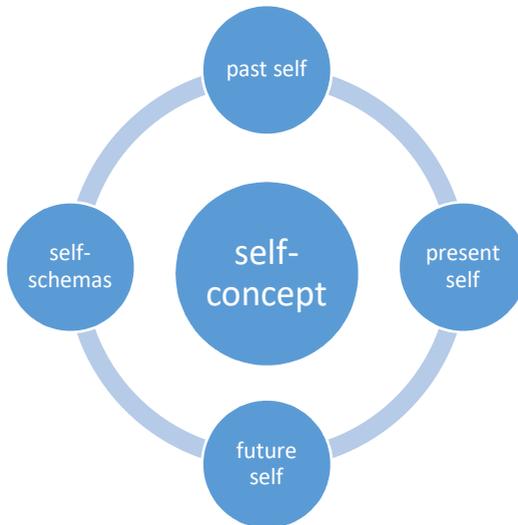
Self-concept, then, is directly related to what one does and achieves, and at the same time to what happens to the person – both the physical and social events that take place in the environment and the internal happenings of physical and sensual impulses and

emotions. The person's self-concept develops according to the progress the person makes in integrating his or her activity and "happenings" into his or her will to determine the self in harmony with the norms of divine truth and goodness (John Paul II, 1979, 189-260).

Self-concept is made up of one's self-schemas, and interacts with self-esteem, self-knowledge, and the social self to form the self as whole. It includes the past, present and the future selves. Future selves represent individuals' ideas of what they might become, or what they are afraid of becoming. Future selves may function as incentives for certain behaviours (Myers, 2010, 51).

The perception people have about their past or future self is related to the perception of their current self.

**Figure 2: Perception of the Past or Future Selves Affects the Perception of the Current Self**



The temporal self-appraisal theory (Wilson & Ross, April 2001) argues that people have a tendency to maintain a positive self-evaluation by distancing themselves from their negative self and paying more attention to their positive one. In addition, people have a tendency to perceive the past self, less favourably (e.g. "I am

better than I used to be”) and the future self, more positively, (e.g. “I will be better than I am now” [Wilson et al, 2012]).

### 4.2 Characteristics of the self-concept

Now that we have a better idea of how one’s self-concept has developed, below is the table that shows some of its characteristics.

**Table 1: Differentiating between the positive and the negative self-concept**

#	Persons with positive self-concept	Persons with negative self-concept
1.	Are likely to have an active prayer relationship with Allah and a close bond as believers to their families	Are likely to have an inadequate prayer life and a complicated relationship as believers to their families
2.	Are likely to strive to harmonize their decisions and activities with the gracious will of Allah	Are likely to struggle with their decisions and activities with a habitual negligence to seek the will of Allah
3.	Are likely to think well of others.	Are likely to disapprove of others.
4.	Expect to be accepted by others.	Expect to be rejected by others.
5.	Evaluate their own performance more favourably.	Evaluate their performance less favourably.
6.	Are inclined to feel comfortable with others they view as superior in some way.	Feel threatened by people they view as superior in some way.
7.	Are able to defend themselves against negative comments of others	Have difficulty defending themselves against others’ negative comments, are more easily influenced.
8.	Work harder for people who demand high standards of performance	Work harder for undemanding, less critical people
9.	Perform well when being watched, are not afraid of others reactions.	Perform poorly when being watched, are more sensitive to possible negative reactions.

### 4.3 Social Comparison Concept: Self-Image

The self-concept is an internal image that we hold of ourselves that may not be dependent on what others may think of us. When we allow others to shape our self-concept by their verbal and nonverbal messages, we are engaged in a process of social comparison, i.e., a process of evaluating ourselves according to what others seem to be thinking about us. This process is what we have been referring to as *self-imaging*.

Two types of social comparison need highlighting. (1) In the first, we decide whether we are superior or inferior by comparing ourselves to others. Are we attractive or ugly? A success or failure? Intelligent or stupid? It depends on whom we measure ourselves against. You might feel just ordinary or inferior in terms of talents, friendships, or attractiveness if you compare yourself with an inappropriate reference group. There are things that we tell ourselves that we can never be, for example, as beautiful as a certain celebrity, or as wealthy as a millionaire or as fit as a professional athlete. When you consider the matter logically, these facts do not mean you are worthless. Nonetheless many people judge themselves against unreasonable standards and suffer accordingly.

(2) In addition to the feelings of superiority and inferiority, social comparison provides a way to decide if we are the same or different from others. Research by psychologists William McGuire and Alice Padawer-Singer (1976) revealed that children were more likely to focus on characteristics like birthplace, ethnic background, height, weight, or other physical features when those traits were different from the majority of their classmates. This distinctiveness illustrates the power of social comparison to shape identity. The person who shapes his or her identity entirely by social comparison depends on family and friends and people who surround them to give them messages, verbal or nonverbal, that are liable to clear interpretation. It is easy to recognize that the reference groups against which we compare ourselves play an important role in shaping our view of ourselves. Using the reference groups to determine whether we are different from others can get tricky because those others do not always reveal how they really think and feel.

Thus it is important to remember that people do not always act the way they feel and that you may not be as different as you think.

The literature offers evidence that individuals occupy themselves with self-images according to two other forms of self-awareness activities: (1) self-presentation and (2) self-monitoring.

*Self-presentation* usually refers to our effort to present a desirable image to an external audience, i.e., other people, and to an internal audience, i.e., ourselves. This effort to "manage" our self-image is often an offshoot of our desire to boost our self-esteem. Some people not only use others to act as a "looking-glass"; rather they use an actual mirror to create a self-image. Eye shadow, face powder, lip stick, eye liner, hair styling, choice of earrings, necklaces and bracelets all combine to form a physical self-presentation. Men can do the same thing with the way they style their beards or hair.

In some of the more secularist countries, surgical nurses in the operating theatres have complained about prepping clients for surgery, giving the directive not to wear any metal since operating instruments may not function properly with metal accessories, and then finding rings in the most unusual places of the bodies of the patients during the actual performance of the surgery. One would wonder for whom they are presenting their self-image.<sup>5</sup>

In explaining that we work at managing the impressions we create, Schlenker & Weigold (1992) observed that we excuse, justify or apologize as necessary to buttress our self-esteem and confirm our self-images. We are careful not to brag too much about ourselves because others may not accept bragging as a favourable personality trait (Anderson et al., 2006).

Self-presentation does not have to be a conscious process: we do it automatically in order to "blend in" in many social situations. If we are in a social situation where we are with important people that we do not know too well or if we are in a more private situation with someone with whom we may wish to share our life in the future, for example, through marriage, our effort at self-

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<sup>5</sup> Conversation with John Gibson, 1 November 2018. This was the experience of my co-author during his two-year sojourn, 1997-1999, at New York University Medical Center on the East Side of Manhattan in the USA.

presentation may, on the contrary, be a very conscious enterprise. In these situations we may try to appear better than we really are (Leary et al., 1994; Tice et al., 1995).

The literature provides mixed evidence about working to present one's self-image in a way that is quite preoccupying. Such labour can deplete energy and make it more difficult to control one's emotional expressions (Vohs et al., 2005). There is strong evidence, on the other hand, that self-presentation can improve mood especially if the person or persons that one is trying to impress react favourably to the self-image that the presenter is manifesting to them (Dunn et al., 2008).

Some who involve themselves with Facebook and other social networking sites may occupy themselves laboriously with presenting a good self-image. They are careful in their decision-making about the pictures, activities and interests to highlight in their profiles. Some have come to realize that the friends they link with on the social networks affect their own self-image: those with more attractive friends are perceived as more attractive themselves (Walther et al., 2008).

Finally it has to be noted that there are people in societies in every part of the world who determine their self-concept entirely by the self-image they are trying to present: "I am what other people expect me to be." These people are said to be *self-monitoring*. They always adjust their behaviour to the external situation (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000; Snyder, 1987). Because they have measured their behaviour to the situation, they are more likely to espouse attitudes they don't really hold (Zanna & Olson, 1982). Those who belong to the group of those who measure and attune their attitudes and behaviours to the people with whom they associate are often less committed to their relationships and more likely to be dissatisfied in their marriages (Leone & Hawkins, 2006).

At first glance, social comparison theory seems rather deterministic. Besides being influenced by how others see us, we are also shaped by how we measure up to others. The deterministic position collapses at the moment the person chooses not to make decisions according to the norms set by others. When I integrate what happens into my life into my will to act efficaciously and

creatively according to the norm of truth in love – in other words, in a non-secularist manner – I freely determine who I am by the action that I am choosing independently of what others are thinking, feeling, or doing (John Paul II, 1979). In the process of making free decisions, I may make social comparisons, but only in order to choose those upright people who are exemplifying for me what it is like to live according to the truth in love. Hence to some degree I am in control of who is available for comparison, and I am in control of how I intend to perceive myself.

It is possible that we befriend those with whom we compare favourably: this technique may bring to mind a search for a community of idiots in which you could appear as a genius. There are, however, healthier ways of changing your standards for comparison. For instance, you might decide that it is foolish to constantly compare your looks with a famous celebrity, your intelligence with the most intelligent people in class. Once you place yourself alongside a truly representative sample of good people, and recognize your propensity to belong to that group of people, in constructive, loving interaction, **your self-concept and your self-image may improve.**

In other words, you can use social comparisons to fool yourself or to help yourself. For instance, suppose you wanted to think of yourself as the best communicator, you could only achieve your goal by choosing a best friend who was tongue tied. You could hang out with extremely shy or ignorant people, and thereby assure yourself of seeming to be a natural leader. Another way of using comparison to boost self-esteem unrealistically would be saying that those who don't approve of you have worthless opinions, whereas others that agree with you in most matters have excellent judgment.

You could, on the other hand, use social comparison to place yourself next to those who know how to forgive their enemies, serve the poorest of the poor, love the unloved: with the help of Allah, you can realize that you can do the same and so cultivate a very positive self-concept. We refer to a saying of Mother Teresa of Kolkata: "Give yourself fully to God. He will use you to accomplish great things on the condition that you believe much

more in His LOVE than in your weakness” (cited in Richard & Gibson, 2017).

#### **4.4 Changing Self-Concept – Exhortative Principles**

You’ve probably begun to realise that it is possible to change an unsatisfying self-concept. In this final section of our literature review, we will discuss some methods for accomplishing such a change that find their rationale in the principles of logotherapy discussed in *Man’s Search for Meaning* (V. Frankl, 1992). The attentive reader will notice that we present these principles in an exhortative style. In every principle that we articulate, we keep in mind that all formations of self-concept and self-image take place within the authoritative wisdom of Allah who is the source and summit of all Truth.

##### **4.4.1 Let your expectations correspond to the truth of who you are**

Victor Frankl’s principles suggest that some of your dissatisfaction might come from expecting too much of yourself. If you demand that you handle every act of communication perfectly, you are bound to be disappointed. Nobody is able to handle every conflict by means of resolutions that eliminate all aspects of the problem. Sometimes it’s easy to be hard on yourself because everyone around you seems to be handling themselves so much better than you.

In Frankl’s insistence on finding meaning by accepting the truth about oneself, it becomes important to realise that much of what seems like confidence and skills in others is a front to hide uncertainty. Other people are not always avenues for finding the truth. They may be suffering from the same self-imposed demands for perfection that you place on yourself. Even when others seem more competent than you, it is important to judge yourself in terms of your own growth and what God seems to expect of you, and not against the behaviour of others. There is the more fundamental fact that the true judge of who you are is Allah. Rather than feeling miserable because you are not talented as an expert, realise that you are probably a better, wiser, or more skillful person than you used to be and that this growth is a legitimate source of satisfaction.

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Above all, realize that Allah created you for a purpose that conforms to his gracious will: Allah does not bring forth trash.

#### **4.4.2 Have the will to change**

Often we say we want to change, but are not willing to do the necessary work. Frankl emphasizes accepting responsibility for one's values and the life project that blossoms forth from those values. The values ought to cohere with the truth and the goodness that abide in Allah. In such cases the responsibility for growing rests on our shoulders. Responsibility is precisely response-ability: the ability to respond to the gracious will of Allah. Often we maintain an unrealistic self-concept by claiming that we cannot be the person we would like to be, when in fact we are simply not willing to do what is required.

#### **4.4.3 Have a realistic perception of yourself**

From everything that has been said so far, it becomes logical to conclude that one source of a poor self-concept is a perception of the self that does not correspond to the truth. As you may have already noticed, unrealistic pictures about who you are sometimes come from being overly generous to yourself by giving yourself credit for accomplishments that may have involved the gracious assistance that others gave you so that in fact you cannot attribute your success entirely to yourself. It can so happen, on the other hand, that you are excessively harsh on yourself, believing that you are worse than the facts indicate. Of course it would be foolish to deny that you could be a better person than you are, but it is also important to recognise your strengths.

An unrealistically glamorous self-concept or an unrealistically pitiable self-concept can also come from the inaccurate feedback of others. If you are in a milieu that transmits to you day after day messages about how wonderful you are, you may begin to believe that you do not need anyone except yourself. In other words, you may feel immune from disappointment, discouragement or disillusionment. Perhaps you are in an environment where you receive an excessive number of negative messages, many of which are undeserved; and no one is there to encourage you. If you fall into this category, it is important to put into perspective the unrealistic evaluations you receive, and then to seek out more

supportive people who will acknowledge your assets as well as point out your short comings. Doing so is often a quick and sure boost to the self-concept.

#### **4.4.4 Have the skills to change**

Trying is often not enough; there are times when you would change if you knew how to do so.

Victor Frankl reminds us that the will for meaning opens our minds and hearts to insights about our life purpose that pull us forward into a future that has hope for its horizon. We have conducted this present research under the canopy of the conviction that the one who gives us this purpose and hope is Allah. Hence prayer is paramount. Begging God to give you true insights and then devoting yourself to reading the word of God is one manner of praying that keeps you connected to eternal goodness and mercy and consequent hope for the future.

You can seek advice from the books written by those acknowledged to be sincere and intelligent seekers of the truth, instructors, counsellors, and other experts, as well as from friends. Of course, not all advice you receive will be useful, but if you read widely and talk to enough people, you have a good chance of learning the things you want to know.

Another method of learning how to change is to observe people around you, how they handle themselves and situations. Watch what people you admire do and say, not so that you can copy them, but so you can adapt their behaviour to fit your own personal style. If you are praying in the way we just described, then it becomes easier to discern which voices in the environment deserve your attention and which ones should be ignored.

At this point you might be overwhelmed by the difficulty of changing the way you think about yourself and the way you act. Allah is not overwhelmed. Even though changes may seem difficult, change is possible if you are prayerful, devoted to helpful forms of self-denial, and generous in your works of charity. You do not need to be perfect, but you can improve your self-concept and as a result, your self-confidence in your self-presentation.

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## **5. Brief Résumé of the Methodology for the Present Research**

Our literature review has shown that many of the studies conducted in my research area were using questionnaires in order to obtain their data. The questions asked were based on the notions of self-concept and self-image. We have done the same.

### **5.1 Research Design**

In this research the researcher used a design that places respondents within a controlled setting, i.e., a lecture hall. They all filled out the questionnaires under the same environmental conditions at the same time of day. The instrument for research, i.e., the questionnaire, was composed in such a way that students could indicate their opinions and judgments about themselves in a number of life situations. Possible responses were framed in a Likert-type scale. The researcher deemed *forty questions* as adequate for getting a rough idea of how positive or negative the respondents' self-concept was at the time of the questionnaire. Some questions were deliberately formulated to assess self-concept in contrast to self-image. This means that the self-concept questions were worded in such a way that the student-respondent could indicate how positive or negative her/his notion of the self might be independently of any social comparison. Other questions, on the other hand, were deliberately formulated to evaluate self-image and so were phrased in such a way that comparisons with others were necessary to respond to the question.

### **5.2 Description of the Population under Study**

This study was conducted at Jordan University College in Morogoro Municipal. Jordan University College is a constituent college of Saint Augustine University in Tanzania. The college was once known as the Salvatorian Institute of Philosophy and Theology but in 2010 was transformed into a university as a constituent of Saint Augustine.

The targeted population for this study was that of Jordan University College social psychology students. These students are familiar with the notions of self-concept and self-image from their

normal study routine; hence they seemed ideal for doing this kind of pilot study that intended to seek information about how positively or negatively students are feeling or thinking about themselves.

This study was open to all of the social psychology students in the first semester of the 2017-2018 academic year. Fifty students attend this class and so fifty students were given the questionnaire. In other words, instead of choosing a sample group that represents a larger population, the researcher chose to invite all the members of a small target population to participate in the study.

All respondents answered questions on the questionnaire provided to them for the purpose of meeting the objectives of the study. In some of the received forms, however, there were irregularities: questions were left unanswered. Hence only 40 questionnaires were accepted as valid.

### **5.3 Data Collection**

A *primary source* of data consisted principally of the first-hand information obtained by means of the questionnaire. Because the data obtained through this research instrument lay at the heart of the research, questions were carefully formulated to cover as many dimensions as possible of a person's concept of himself or herself, and the person's recourse to social comparison to form a self-image. Each respondent was free to reply to the questions without interference. Another primary source of data collecting was that of observation: the researcher and her supervisor took careful note during the research period to make sure that students were giving authentic responses and not just treating the questionnaire as insignificant or as a nuisance.

A *secondary source* of data were the pertinent studies that had already been conducted in the researcher's area of interest. Hence she utilized the second-hand information that she was able to obtain from already written materials like books, magazines, articles and websites. Besides familiarizing herself with the conclusions that others had reached about self-concept and social comparisons, the researcher made valuable use of secondary sources by ensuring that the questions on her questionnaire were appropriate for

accomplishing her research objectives. The supervisor assured her of the validity of this approach for a pilot study because there was no instrument on hand that has been standardized in Tanzania to study her particular research topic.

## 6. Data Analysis

In order to assess the degree of self-esteem that the respondents were feeling at the time the experiment was conducted, four scores were obtained for each respondent. The researcher labelled them as follows: (a) positive self-concept; (b) negative self-concept; (c) positive self-image in comparison with others; (d) negative self-image in comparison with others. Each received points from 1 to 4: the points allotted always corresponded to the degree that the respondent was showing a positive self-concept in the way he or she answered the question. The methodology was as follows:

### (A) Positive self-concept – three examples:

1. I feel I'm a person of worth, a person of value, at least on an equal plane with others. Strongly Agree = 4 points, Agree = 3 points, Disagree = 2 points, Strongly Disagree = 1 point.
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. Strongly Agree = 4 points, Agree = 3 points, Disagree = 2 points, Strongly Disagree = 1 point.
3. I'm able to do things as well as most other people. Strongly Agree = 4 points, Agree = 3 points, Disagree = 2 points, Strongly Disagree = 1 point.

### (B) Negative self-concept – three examples:

1. All in all, I feel like I'm always a failure. Strongly Agree = 1 point, Agree = 2 points, Disagree = 3 points, Strongly Disagree = 4 points.
2. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. Strongly Agree = 1 point, Agree = 2 points, Disagree = 3 points, Strongly Disagree = 4 points.
3. I wish others would show me more respect. Strongly Agree = 1 point, Agree = 2 points, Disagree = 3 points, Strongly Disagree = 4 points.

(C) Positive self-image in comparison with others – three examples:

1. I feel better about myself when I'm with other people. Strongly Agree = 4 points, Agree = 3 points, Disagree = 2 points, Strongly Disagree = 1 point.
2. I feel good about myself when I'm with older people. Strongly Agree = 4 points, Agree = 3 points, Disagree = 2 points, Strongly Disagree = 1 point.
3. I feel better about myself when I'm with people younger than me. Strongly Agree = 4 points, Agree = 3 points, Disagree = 2 points, Strongly Disagree = 1 point.

(D) Negative self-image in comparison with others – three examples:

1. I feel inferior when I'm with other nationalities. Strongly Agree = 1 point, Agree = 2 points, Disagree = 3 points, Strongly Disagree = 4 points.
2. I feel inferior to others because of my skin tone. Strongly Agree = 1 point, Agree = 2 points, Disagree = 3 points, Strongly Disagree = 4 points.
3. I feel morally less good with people from my religion. Strongly Agree = 1 point, Agree = 2 points, Disagree = 3 points, Strongly Disagree = 4 points.

It is to be noted that some of the self-concept questions may seem to be self-image questions in disguise. Questions A1 and A3, for example, seem to be requesting the respondent to compare herself with people-at-large. Closer analysis, however, indicates that the wording of the self-concept questions may include a reference to other people merely to give the respondents a norm for articulating accurately their self-concept. These questions are not asking for a social comparison.

If a person scored over 50% on all categories, he or she would have a positive self-concept and at the same time a positive self-image when comparing oneself with others. If a person scored less than 50% on all categories, he or she would have a negative self-concept and at the same time a negative self-image when comparing oneself with others.

If a person scored over 50% on the two self-concept scales but under 50% on the two self-image in comparison with others scale, the person would be considered to have a positive self-concept but a negative self-image. Similarly, if a person scored under 50% on the two self-concept scales but over 50% on the self-image scales, the person would be considered to have a negative self-concept but a positive self-image (this would be quite rare indeed).

The results are tabulated as follows:

**Table 2: Positive self-concept and positive social comparison**

Scores	Frequency	Percent
Very high positive self-concept/ Very high positive social comparison	7	17.5
Very high positive self-concept/ High positive social comparison	2	5.0
High positive self-concept/ Very high positive social comparison	5	12.5
High positive self-concept/ High positive social comparison	24	60.0
High positive self-concept/ Low positive social comparison	2	5.0
Low positive self-concept/ High positive social comparison	0	0.0
Low positive self-concept/ Low positive social comparison	0	0.0
Totals	40	100.0

Source: Class Exercise, April, 2018

The data from Table 2 clearly indicate that social psychology students enjoy a positive self-concept: all 40 scored over 50% on the positive self-concept scale. Thirty-eight of the 40 students scored over 50% on the positive self-image scale which entailed comparison with others. For comparison purposes, any student who scored 80% or higher on any scale was considered "very high" on that scale. The table makes it clear that seven students scored very high both on the self-concept scale and the self-image when

comparing oneself with others scale. This result is very encouraging since 7 students actually make up more than 15% of the class.

**Table 3: Questions that received a near-consensus in responses**

Question posed	Frequency	Percent
Q3: I feel like I'm always a failure.	No: 38	95.0
Q6: I take a positive attitude towards myself.	Yes: 39	97.5
Q8: I wish others would show me more respect.	Yes: 38	95.0
Q16: Others can decide – I do not trust my opinions	No: 37	92.5
Q22: People treat me badly because of my behaviour	No: 37	92.5
Q23: People treat me badly – I'm less attractive	No: 38	95.0
Q27: I feel inferior because of my skin tone	No: 37	92.5
Q32: I feel morally less good with co-believers	No: 36	90.0

Source: Class Exercise, April, 2018

Out of the 40 questions posed, the eight referred to in Table 3 seem worthy for discussion: Q3, Q6, Q8, Q16, Q22, Q23, Q27, Q32. These particular questions usually drew forth the same responses from everyone with notable exceptions. To be specific:

- Question Eight: **I wish others would show me more respect.** The researcher expected that those showing a very positive self-concept in their overall scores on the questionnaire would disagree with this statement. The opposite happened. Everyone except two agreed that they were not getting enough respect from people.
- Question three: **All in all, I feel like I'm always a failure.** Out of the forty respondents, only two, both females, agreed with this statement. Since 95% disagreed, one may conclude that even if a person has a weak positive self-concept he or she would disagree that he or she is always a failure. When one examines more closely the two who agreed with the statement, one notices that one of these two female respondents not only felt like a failure but also felt inferior to others because of her skin tone and felt that she did not deserve more respect from others.

- Question six: **I take a positive attitude towards myself.** Everyone except one person, 97.5%, agreed, i.e., almost everyone perceived themselves as having an unequivocally positive self-concept.
- Question sixteen: **I prefer to let people decide for me in everything I do, because I do not trust my own opinions.** Because 92.5% disagreed with this, we find that even those that struggle with a positive self-concept still feel positive about their ability to trust their own opinions.
- Question twenty-two: **People treat me badly because of my bad behaviour.** Ninety-two point five percent disagreed with this which seems to indicate that student respondents ordinarily do not feel shame about their behaviour. They may tend to perceive themselves as morally upright.
- Question twenty-three: **People treat me badly because I am less attractive.** Ninety-five percent disagreed with this statement which seems to indicate that individuals do not feel shame about their physical appearance or their ability to attract.
- Question twenty-seven: **I feel inferior to others because of my skin tone.** The 92.5% who disagreed with this statement seem to parallel in their response those who disagreed that they are mistreated because they are less attractive. The three people who agreed with it would seem to be tending towards a negative self-concept.
- Question thirty-two: **I feel morally less good with people from my religion.** There were four people, 10%, who agreed with this statement. Because the vast majority, 90%, seem to disagree with it, we can reinforce the conviction that a positive self-image includes freedom from shame about one's moral character. It is worth pointing out that one person who agreed with this statement also expressed the opinion that others treated her badly because she is less attractive.

Even before entering a discussion of insights that may be gleaned from these results, a thorough scan of the data offers

a logical backbone to our premise that a positive self-concept and a positive self-image may only develop in coherence with a faithful regard for the gracious will of Allah. This is why those who scored high on the positive self-image and positive self-concept also showed signs that they are free from shame when they compare themselves with others from their religion. Indeed the fact that people who otherwise scored positively both on self-concept and self-image believed they deserved more respect is yet another indicator that they were in earnest about corresponding their choices, attitudes and behaviour to God's will. Those who tend markedly to disregard God's will cannot easily conclude that they deserve respect. At least this may be a psychological implication of our presentations in Figure 1 and Table 1.

## **7. Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation**

### **7.1 Summary**

The self-concept is a relatively stable set of perceptions that individuals have of themselves. The self-concept consists of three dimensions, the perceived, the desired, and the presenting selves. In some cases these three dimensions are closely integrated, while in others they are quite different.

Each person's self-concept is shaped early in life and is modified later by the reflected appraisal of others, as well as by social comparisons with reference groups. These social comparisons help form a self-image.

The present study attempted to harvest rough approximations about the extent to which a social psychology student's self-concept and self-image may be either positive or negative. The researcher utilized a Likert-type scale to evaluate the extent to which the respondents' self-concept and self-image were either positive or negative. All respondents presented themselves with a positive self-concept, and 95% presented themselves with a positive self-image. Three statistics link to our research presupposition about the development of a positive self-concept and a positive self-image within fidelity to God's Will:

- 1) Ninety-five percent believe they deserve more respect than they receive. This indicates a conviction about their own moral uprightness.
- 2) Only ten percent believe they are morally less good than their co-believers.
- 3) Seven and one-half percent believe that others treat them badly because of their bad behaviour. These statistics indicate a moral earnestness that fits within our research presuppositions.

Our results, therefore, are consistent with the research presuppositions and hypothesis. The research is also consistent with the theoretical underpinnings provided by:

- *Shavelson and his colleagues (1976)*: their stress on the fact that a person actively constructs a positive self-concept meshes neatly with our results that indicate that social psychology students typically fashioned for themselves a positive self-concept.
- *Wilson & Ross (2001)*: their suggestion that a person works to maintain a positive self-concept by putting a distance between themselves and negative events meshes with our results that show that social psychology students are not allowing negative events to dominate their perceptions of themselves.
- *Schlenker & Weigold (1992)*: their observation about self-justification as a means of confirming a positive self-image explains the possibility that the social psychology students in our research were making an effort to make their own self-image look positive.
- *Leary and his colleagues (1994); Tice and his colleagues (1995)*: their observation that a person may consciously labor to present a positive self-image – for example, with a potential spouse – may bring forth the effect that the person appears better than she really is meshes with the possibility that our respondents presented a self-image on the questionnaire that is better than their true self. This kind of

insight falls into the category that has been known traditionally as the Hawthorne effect.

Both my co-author and myself have noticed that what social psychologists have called the *Hawthorne* effect can be very possible in the kind of self-concept, self-image study that we have conducted. The attribution of the term goes back to the fact that at the Hawthorne Works in Cicero, Illinois, very close to Chicago, studies were conducted between 1924 and 1932 to decipher whether workers worked more productively with lower levels or higher levels of lighting. Other experiments unrelated to lighting were conducted at the same facility to determine other variables that may affect productivity. Lighting and the other variables studied, however, did not seem to be the only distinguishing variables for productivity. Landsberger (1958) surmised that an important motivator for working more productively seemed to be the fact that researchers were taking an interest in them. He argued that when the research reached its conclusion and the researchers departed, the workers seemed to produce less, primarily because they were no longer a focus of interest.

This kind of optimal self-presentation in order to impress an important person such as a researcher, an employer, or a possible future spouse hinges on the interest that the important person is investing in the self-presenter. Controversies surround Landsberger's observations about the Hawthorne effect because, if the truth be known, it is difficult to determine which variables were really operative in the effects that the Hawthorne Works studies reported. Just one example: the effect may not have been due to researcher interest in the respondents but rather to the fact that respondents were getting feedback about their rate of productivity in a manner that was much more informative than before the research began. These controversies, however, are beyond the scope of our present study.

When the focus shifts to our present research, my co-author and I believe that perhaps the students exaggerated the positivity of their self-concept and self-image in their attempt to present themselves with grace and elegance to us, the researchers. These are our observations from the contact we have had with these social

psychology students immediately after they completed the questionnaires.

- *Gangestad & Snyder (2000); Snyder (1987); Zanna & Olson, (1982)*: the observation that these researchers made that there are many individuals who determine their self-concept entirely by the self-image they intend to present – “I am what other people expect me to be” – supports the possibility that among our student respondents there were individuals who were trying to guess what we, the researchers, may expect them to be and answered the questions accordingly.

The dynamic of which we are speaking corresponds to a remark made by none other than the original Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1850: “No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself and another to the multitude without finally getting bewildered as to which may be true” (as cited in Myers, 2010, 132). A person who gives priority to what others are thinking of her may eventually become so fragile in her attempt to retain her original self-concept that she may simply accept her true self-concept to be nothing other than the image that others have of her. This is what Nathaniel Hawthorne is suggesting.

It is our conviction that one’s self-concept is much less fragile if one forms it in harmony with one’s continuing fidelity to the Will of Allah. When one is faithful to Allah’s Will both in conviction and in practice, one does not depend on what others are thinking in order to cultivate a positive self-concept or self-image. The person, of course, may depend on what she thinks Allah is thinking of her, but in this case her norm for self-perception is originating with the One who gave her a self. Allah is the Creator of the human person.

## **7.2 Conclusion**

While establishing the heuristics for the present research, my co-author and I introduced a premise that is not usually found in research about the self. On the basis of Allah’s revelation of himself as one who creates a person to be submissive to his all-gracious, all-merciful and all-sustaining will, we posited as our conviction the premise that the positivity of a person’s self-concept

and self-image correlates with the fidelity of the person in attitude and in religious practice to the will of Allah. This would be true of all human beings regardless of their religion. Of fundamental importance is the prayer relationship that one has been developing with Allah, particularly in the family context. The person's self-concept develops in a wonderfully patterned fabric if the person, even as a child, is learning to pay attention to the gracious will of Allah.

The fact that just about every respondent in our research responded positively to those questions that have moral connotations indicated that they were not feeling the shame or the guilt that usually accompanies interior confusion about one's fidelity to the Will of Allah. Six questions that we posed to our respondents linked to a self-concept or a self-image to notions that could have a moral dimension:

1. I feel I'm a person of worth, a person of value, at least on an equal plane with others.
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
8. I wish others would show me more respect.
22. People treat me badly because of my bad behaviour.
31. I feel morally better with people from my religion than from another religion.
32. I feel morally less good with people from my religion.

The self-concept has several important characteristics. The beliefs we have of ourselves may be strong, but they may be distorted either positively or negatively. Although the self-concept is resistant to change, a healthy self usually evolves over time, which is to say, that in many respects we are not the same people we used to be. The self-concept reflects this evolution. Finally the self-concept is shaped in part by the society in which we have been raised. Even the notion of selfhood and individuality vary from culture to culture.

Changing one's self-concept is not easy, but it is possible. Some important considerations begin with a realistic perception of oneself instead of being overly critical, having a realistic

expectation about how much change is possible, being determined to invest the necessary effort in changing, and learning the skills necessary to change. The bottom line is Allah can do anything He wishes – and He wishes you to become the best person you can be.

What you see in people may be deceptive; it may be something they want you to see, something beautiful about their lives, as if everything is perfectly okay. It may be a matter of relationships, appearance, knowledge, skills or abilities. It may be a matter of spiritual bearing, of happiness with life and full trust in the will of Allah. But sadly this can all be a façade. It affects everything when we compare ourselves with others – without the truth and goodness that emanate from Allah as our reference point. When we over-depend on ourselves or on others, our trust in Allah dissipates. With Allah, we are a beautiful and sublime mystery to ourselves; we have a positive and stable self-concept. Without Allah, we are confusion and chaos.

By way of conclusion, therefore, we highlight the following:

- Self-concept plays a crucial role in encouraging students to perform better and to understand themselves better by loving and valuing themselves. The most important thing they can do is admire the beauty in others without questioning their own.
- Everybody is different. Some people are naturally positive and optimistic and maintain equilibrium when faced with relentless difficulties while others grow fearful, wither in discouragement and disappointment, and sink into loneliness and self-pity even when life is not so challenging.
- Some people are good at appearing to be positive and optimistic on the outside while they struggle with low self-esteem and feelings of self-doubt on the inside.
- A common symptom of low self-esteem is the feeling that one cannot sustain interpersonal relationships with people who differ greatly from each other in personality and temperament. Gaining confidence to function in relationships with ease depends largely on previous personal experience and one’s foothold in the goodness of Allah. If

one lives each moment by the conviction that “with Allah everything is possible”, then every moment becomes an opportunity, not a threat; an invitation, not a refusal; an entrustment of self to God, not a lapse into loneliness.

### **7.3 Recommendations**

Based on our findings, we offer the following recommendations for future implementation:

- ❖ The present research was obviously limited in its generalizability. At the same time it gave a picture of how social psychology students conceive of themselves and how they compare themselves with each other. By and large this particular group of students exhibited a highly positive self-concept and a highly positive self-image when comparing themselves to others. This study ought to be replicated throughout the universities of Tanzania and abroad.
- ❖ The wisest researchers among us remind us constantly that identifying trends and verbalizing generalities are not the precious jewels that make psychology a valuable social science. The one or two people who show some extraordinary or unusual signs of deviation from the mean... these are the ones who deserve the attention of psychologists. More to the point: in our research there were individuals who felt mistreated because they perceived themselves as behavioural misfits. There were individuals who perceived themselves as mistreated because they did not believe they are attractive. Further study should be done to identify what is eating at the heart of these people that would give them this negative conviction about themselves so that such individuals may find a way to recover and develop their self-concept.
- ❖ Those who were revealing themselves to be very positive in their concept of themselves and in their self-image when they compared themselves with others still believed that others should show them more respect. Further studies could investigate what motivates people to believe that they are not receiving the respect they ought to get.

- ❖ The researcher integrated her own convictions and experiences from her Islamic beliefs into her own understanding of self-concept and self-image. Her co-author performed this same cognitive process of integration according to his own Christian beliefs. The conviction of both authors about the correspondence of self-concept and self-image to the Creator's plan for the person seemed to indicate that there was no contradiction in the researchers' approach to this issue in spite of a difference in religion. There is no study available, however, that integrates the notions of self-concept and self-image with fidelity in conviction and practice to the gracious Will of Allah. Those who compose questionnaires and other research instruments should exercise the courage and effort necessary to pose direct questions about one's religious convictions and practices. Further study needs to uncover the hidden value that prayer and fidelity to Allah's Will gives to the development of a positive self-concept and positive self-image when comparing oneself to others. Allah is the beginning and end of our existence. To Allah be praise, glory and adoration forever and ever!

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# **Relevance of Levinas' Notion of Inter-Subjectivity to the Ethical Dimension of Common Social Behaviours in Contemporary Africa**

**Thomas Joseph**

Department of Philosophy  
Jordan University College

## **Introduction**

The aim of this paper is to determine the relevance of Levinas' notion of ethical intersubjectivity to certain patterns of ethical behaviour currently in vogue in Africa. In particular, the paper examines behaviours that one could classify as: stony silence when a greeting seems in place, the reluctance to converse with others, the failure to be honest, the tendency to be inhospitable, the unwillingness to share, the unbridled drive to possess, the refusal to be available to others, the habitual misuse of language, and inattentiveness to the needs of others... these are unseemly behaviours that are unsettling.

To attain the main objective of this paper, it will be necessary to carry out three major tasks. The first will be to arrive at a basic understanding of Levinas' idea of ethical intersubjectivity. This task is important because it sets the context and introduces the issues that the paper will address. The second major task will be to identify some unethical behaviours that are currently quite attention-getting in Africa today. This task is important because it constitutes the social matrix in Africa that stands in need of a solution. It is within this matrix that Levinas' ethical intersubjectivity is studied. The last major task will be to determine the relevance of Levinas' ideas to unethical behaviours prevailing on the continent. This task is crucial because it constitutes the core of this study. Throughout the course of this study, I shall be garnering

data from the works of Levinas, mainly from his *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (trans. by A. Lingis), from the group of scholars such as R. Burggraeve, S. Critchley, and A. Peperzak who have commented on his work, and from scholars such as A. Palmer, T.R. Tyler, and L.K. Trevino who have explored the ethical behaviours mentioned.

The paper argues that Levinas' ethical insight into intersubjectivity provides some answers to some of the ethical problems emerging on the continent because his insight brings to light the nobility of imminent humanism. Imminent humanism is a philosophy of ethical intersubjectivity and human social responsiveness. Levinas posits a kind of ethics that opens up a new avenue for transcendence that involves an extensive investigation into the face-to-face relationships between people. For Levinas, one's encounter with the face of the other "is an appeal or an imperative given to your responsibility: to encounter a face is straightaway to hear a demand and an order."<sup>1</sup>

It is now necessary for the sake of clarity to establish Levinas' location within history and to introduce into the discussion the definitions of the key terms that are essential to understanding the pivotal issues in the present essay.

## **1. Establishing the Conceptual Context**

### **1.1 Who Is Emmanuel Levinas?**

Emmanuel Levinas was born on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January, 1906, at Kovno in the Russian Empire (present-day Kaunas, Lithuania) into a traditional Jewish family. He was the eldest child of a middle-class family and had two brothers named Boris and Aminadab.<sup>2</sup>

Levinas is considered as a man of three cultures, Jewish, Russian and French. This is evident from his life background: he was born into a Jewish family, lived his childhood in the Russian empire and later on assumed French citizenship. Despite being a Jew by birth, he is famously known as a French philosopher, belonging to the existentialist school of philosophy.

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<sup>1</sup> D. PERPICH, *The Ethics of Emmanuel Levinas*, 50.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. S. CRITCHLEY – R. BERNASCONI, *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*, xv.

## 1.2 Ethical Intersubjectivity

The term intersubjectivity can be generally viewed as a scheme of recurrence whereby two or more individuals share meanings, insights, viewpoints, feelings, motives, purposes, intentions, experiences or actions. Intersubjectivity is in motion when one invites the other into his or her personal sphere of freedom, self-determination, self-governance and self-possession. So, it consists of an interaction or sharing of subjective experiences. Ethical intersubjectivity implies the intimate or close relationship that the two parties share in common – a relationship that accords with the norms of goodness and truth.<sup>3</sup> In such a kind of interaction or relationship, the two parties respect and value the dignity of each other as human persons. According to Levinas, a healthy ethical intersubjective relationship obtains only when both parties recognize the uniqueness (the irreplaceability, irreducibility and the unrepeatability) of each other. It is achieved when there is no hidden agenda between the *I* and the *Other*. For Levinas such a state is realized in an asymmetrical encounter as we are going to establish presently.

## 1.3 Ethical Behaviour

By ethical behaviour the study refers to actions which are consistent with what a society and the individual typically think are proper and of good values.<sup>4</sup> The propriety and the goodness of the values become more firmly embedded in the truth if they accord with the data of divine revelation. It means those actions which demonstrate respect to the key ethical principles that include: honesty, fairness, equality, diversity, purity of heart and body, the

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<sup>3</sup> "Parties" here mean two human individuals who share a common issue as the basis of their relationship.

<sup>4</sup> Those actions should not be based on one's inclinations or sentiments, but rather should be construed as good by any rational person. The editor notes that the deciding voice for what is rational belongs to the one who created the human capacity to reason. Rational persons call the Creator of reason, God (Allah).

right to life and dignity from the moment of conception and all other individual rights.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.4 Contemporary Africa

By contemporary Africa the paper refers to the period of African history that extends from the 1990s to the present.

## 2. Levinas' Ideas on Ethical Intersubjectivity

Having explained in cursory fashion the key concepts in this paper, the study will now in this section examine Levinas' ideas on ethical intersubjectivity.

### 2.1 The Exigency of the Same and the Other

In developing his notion of an ethical human relationship, Levinas introduces the terms the *Same* and the *Other*.<sup>6</sup> At times Levinas identifies them as interlocutors. In fact, according to Levinas, without the interlocutors there is no ethics, no humanity as such. By the *Same* Levinas refers to the *self*, the *I*, or an individual existent who defines his own existence. On the contrary, by the *Other* Levinas implies the other human being whom the *I* or the *Same* encounters. According to Levinas, without the intervention of the other individual, the *I* can never obtain salvation, that is, the ethical mode of living what is an authentic human life. Salvation, Levinas insists, can never come from within, but from elsewhere, from outside, from the other person.<sup>7</sup>

For Levinas then, the other human being is different from me; as he puts it, the *Other* "is far from me and other than myself, a stranger, and I cannot be sure of what this strangeness may conceal [...]. Even if he comes with no ill will, he remains a stranger inhabiting an alien world of his own."<sup>8</sup> It is because of

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/ethical-behavior.html>, accessed on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> In this Essay, the terms: *Same* and *Other* are used with their first letter capitalized because of the special connotation they hold for Levinas – they refer to human persons.

<sup>7</sup> E. LEVINAS, *From Existence to Existent*, 93, 159.

<sup>8</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, 13.

being separated, different from me, that the *Other* becomes able to challenge my mode of existence.

In his work, *From Existence to Existent*, Levinas seems to liken the *Other* with the future. Here is his existential attitude towards the future:

The real future is what is to come of itself, and that it escapes our grasp even while being sensed is essential to it. The future is what can surprise us. It is then not what we apprehend already, but that of which we are apprehensive, that which threatens and promises.<sup>9</sup>

Levinas admits that, an individual may exercise some power over his neighbour. However, that is only possible in an attempt to reduce the *Other* to the *Same*. This attempt is inauthentic. In order to establish a genuine human encounter there must be a real response of the *I* to his interlocutor. This seems to be what Levinas means when he writes: "I must be ready to put my world into words, and to offer it to the other. There can be no free interchange without something to give."<sup>10</sup>

In Section Three of *Totality and Infinity* entitled "Face and Exteriority", Levinas describes how the *Other*, in his or her concrete emergence as another person who faces me and speaks to me, reveals to me the injustice of my self-enclosure. In Levinas' line of thought, both the *Same* and the *Other* appear exterior to and independent from each other and thus form a "constellation that is neither a totality nor a pure dispersion without connections".<sup>11</sup> Levinas describes this constellation as a non-relational relation, an ethical conversion, a pure intersubjective encounter. Levinas emphatically insists that, at the ethical conversion initiated by the emergence of the *Other*, my first concern is no longer losing my own life but depriving another of his own - the self's fear of its own death is replaced by a fear that one is going to "murder" the *Other*.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Existence and Existent*, 6.

<sup>10</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, 14.

<sup>11</sup> A. PEPPERZAK, *To the Other*, 1993, 121.

<sup>12</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, 144.

Levinas emphasizes that, “It is only in approaching the *Other* that I attend to myself.”<sup>13</sup> That is to say, by attending to the call of my neighbour I also attend to myself, I pass from phenomenon to being, I acquire meaning for my existence. The encounter between the *I* and the interlocutor is a concrete and actual one, and so, it is essentially an existential act apart from being a metaphysical move towards transcendence.<sup>14</sup>

In other words, we could say that the *I* needs the transcendent *Other* to reveal his autonomous ego-state as insufficient, to make him realize that, his existence as an ego is not as perfect as he first thought it to be. In Levinas’ conviction, without the intervention of the other person, the *Same* would never come to the realization of its own ego-centeredness; it would never attain salvation. Without the *Other’s* mediation, the *I* is doomed to remain self-centred.<sup>15</sup> Thus, an upsetting encounter with the interlocutor makes the *self* come to the realization of its genuine human relationship and so makes social relations (ethics according to the parameters of goodness and truth) possible.

Over the past century perhaps up to the present time, Levinas’ ethical explication has earned a well-deserved reputation. However, a challenge I find in his work is how to address the question of the tragedy of human finiteness. Levinas himself admits the limiting character of thermatization:<sup>16</sup> “In relating to a being in the opening of being, comprehension locates a signification on the basis of being. In this sense, it does not invoke a being, but only names it, thus accomplishing violence and a negation; a partial negation which is violence.”<sup>17</sup> Levinas believes that the one I meet is in fact beyond the body that I am

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<sup>13</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, 178.

<sup>14</sup> It is not difficult to discern here a degree of similarity between Levinas’ notions and those of Martin Buber in his understanding of the I-Thou relationship. (Editor’s note)

<sup>15</sup> R.J.S. MANNING, “Thinking the Other without Violence”, Available at [https://www.jstor.org/stable/25669991?seq=2#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/25669991?seq=2#page_scan_tab_contents), Accessed on 25 Jan 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Thermatization implies an act of viewing a thing as a phenomenon.

<sup>17</sup> E. LEVINAS, *The Levinas Reader*, 127.

capable of seeing, touching, defining or naming.<sup>18</sup> But, as far as human nature is concerned, thermatization can hardly be avoided for there is no way I can meet someone with no body.

Nevertheless Levinas' exposition is crucial in understanding and safeguarding one's encounter with the other. It in fact offers the best option, I think, for addressing the growing complexity in ethical behaviour in the milieu of contemporary Africa. For instance, one considers the lack of conversation: our contemporary Africa has been preoccupied with the electronic gadgets to the extent that, some rarely pay attention to the concrete person of encounter. Phubbing is all too common.

## **2.2 Asymmetrical Relationship: An Essential for Levinasian Ethical Inter-subjectivity**

The Levinasian phenomenological description of intersubjective relationship is built upon an analysis of concrete living in the world. He tells us that, at the moment of encounter, the *I* is not expected to hold any presupposition regarding the meeting. We could say, it should be a fresh and original encounter in all its aspects. There should not be any expectation in anticipation of the encounter. Such relation Levinas calls asymmetrical.<sup>19</sup>

To put it differently, the relationship between the interlocutors is asymmetrical given that the *I* as the subject of the encounter takes no advantage of the *Other*. Within the social matrix of contemporary Africa, most often the relationship has declined into one of give and take. Such an encounter presupposes expectation: when one performs his/her duty for the other, he/she expects the same or at least a reward of some kind from him/her. That is why we say that our relationship in contemporary Africa is far from giving for the sake of duty. It is a symmetrical encounter and not asymmetrical as Levinas intends.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Alterity and Transcendence*, 86.

<sup>19</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Time and the Other*, 108.

<sup>20</sup> The editor notes that *Africa Tomorrow* readers may recognize the symmetrical encounter described here as an attachment to the materialist school of suspicion. An analysis of the psychosocial and prestige/power schools of suspicion could very well reveal the same kind of symmetrical

Apparently, *I* can constitute the other person cognitively, on the basis of vision, as an *alter ego*. I can see that another human being is like me, acts like me, and appears to be the master of his or her conscious life. As S. Critchley observes, this seems to have been Edmund Husserl's basic phenomenological approach of constituting other people within a shared social universe. Critchley writes: "In Husserlian terms, the domain of the same includes not only the intentional acts of consciousness, or noeses, but also the intentional objects which gives meaning to those acts, or noemata."<sup>21</sup> But according to Levinas, Husserl's constitution lacks the core element of intersubjective life.<sup>22</sup> For Levinas, the stranger does not even have to utter words in order for the *I* to feel the summons implicit in his approach. He is not another *I*. In the moment of encountering him or her, it is as if *I* were responsible for his or her mortality, and guilty for surviving as Levinas writes, "Each of us is guilty before everyone for everyone, and I more than the Others."<sup>23</sup> It is for that reason that the subject, instead, falls into infinite debt in a situation of utterly asymmetrical obligations. The subjective *I* infinitely owes him or her everything, while he/she owes me nothing. Levinas maintains, in other words, that intersubjectivity is formed in and through the *I*'s subjection to the *Other* in a concrete and immediate mode of encounter.<sup>24</sup>

### 2.3 The Face: Beginning of Discourse

It is a self-evident fact that, in ordinary understanding, the face is the front part of the person's head from the chin to the forehead. It is an important part of the human being for it is an information centre, the location for expressions and emotions that are capable

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encounters: one is committing one's heart to drives for gratification, power and prestige that come as paybacks for one's "successful" encounters with an Other.

<sup>21</sup> S. CRITCHLEY – R. BERNASCONI, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*, 15.

<sup>22</sup> This is not true, however, of Husserl's disciples. In her *Problem of Empathy*, Edith Stein (St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross) makes it clear that her phenomenology does not lack the core element of intersubjective life. (Editor's Note)

<sup>23</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, 146.

<sup>24</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, 117.

of indicating the character of a person.<sup>25</sup> It is by means of the face one can be described as happy, sad, sick and the like. In fact, the eye of the *Other* may very well be the door through which one can enter or break through the mask or the form. However, in his ethics Levinas does not limit his understanding of the face to the phenomenon of experience as a physical, ethnic or aesthetic object. He at times uses the word *visage* to refer to the *face*, which signifies the first, usual, unreflective encounter with the *Other*, the face as a living presence: the face itself speaks.<sup>26</sup>

A discourse, as Levinas understands it, is the system of interaction whereby meaning is derived from the face of the *Other*, "the coinciding of the revealer and the revealed in the face, which is accomplished in being situated in height with respect to us."<sup>27</sup> The epiphany of the interlocutor draws my attention, his face demands response. By responding or speaking to him or her I enter into a relationship. Levinas expresses that, for a discourse to be realistic, it should not be planned *a priori*. That is to say, a conversation needs no prearranged agendum. Everything unfolds as the one presents or reveals himself or herself. So, I am never sure of what the Other will say. However, my autonomy remains intact even during the encounter with the interlocutor.

Hence, for Levinas, a discourse is not a simple fabrication of thought, but "an original relation with exterior being."<sup>28</sup> It is not a mere assemblage of wordings but an expression of the *Other* through eye contact as he reveals himself through verbal and nonverbal signals. That actually signifies the person's very novelty – letting one express oneself. But signification does not arise merely from the need or desire of the self for exteriority, or from the self's perception that he or she is lacking something; rather is derived from the signs revealed by the interlocutor in speaking about the world. For Levinas the face is not only what I 'see' by

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<sup>25</sup> B. YOUNG, *Emmanuel Levinas and "the face of the Other"* Available at <http://english.byu.edu/faculty/youngb/levinas/face.pdf> [accessed 14 Jan 2018].

<sup>26</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, 66.

<sup>27</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, 67.

<sup>28</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, 66.

my naked eyes at the moment of encounter; the face may also escape my sight.

Having offered some insights into the nature of ethical intersubjectivity in the thought of Levinas, in the next section I will present some unethical behaviours that exist in Africa today. This essay claims that if these aspects (such as lack of hospitality, lack of conversation, and dishonesty) are not recognized as challenges to intersubjectivity, there can be a high risk of losing not only our dignity as human beings, but also our cultural values as Africans.

### **3. Some Unethical Behaviours in Africa Today**

#### **3.1 Lack of the Effort to Give Greetings**

In Africa, the greeting was one of the most important things that a person could do. A quick saying “hello” followed with a handshake is a proper way to make a sufficient positive impression with anyone. However, such a value is gradually decreasing in our contemporary time. Nowadays, it is slowly becoming a common habit for people to pass each other by without giving a greeting. Sometimes one will greet you only when he/she knows you, or at least if you have (or will have) some impact on his/her life. No wonder these days, when you greet someone, you will simply be looked at, and the one moves or continues with his business. Sometimes people say, “Why should I greet him/her?... Of what help is that to me?” By the way the answer is always the same (“I am okay” or “I am good”) and that’s all! Certainly, the challenge in giving greetings in our time is the wonderment a person can feel when he or she greets someone and the other does not respond. Consequently, the value of greetings is slowly deteriorating in our contemporary Africa.

#### **3.2 Lack of Conversation and Behaviour that Isolates**

Our contemporary Africa faces the consequences brought about by technological advances. Often people are so preoccupied with electronic devices that they are completely oblivious to their immediate neighbour be it at home, during leisure moments outside the house, or even in work places. We tend to value much more the digitalized person or the anonymous audience than the concrete

person on one's side. People rarely share live experiences through personal encounters.<sup>29</sup>

### **3.3 Attenuation of Honesty**

Honesty and trust should not be confused for they are not the same thing. While honesty signifies the act of expressing the truth or exercising loyalty to the truth, trust denotes a belief that you have in another person. Trust can be measured as a degree of reliance on another person's habitual readiness to express the truth and fulfil promises. So, someone who is honest and keeps promises makes himself/herself trustworthy. In our contemporary Africa we experience such values of honesty and trustworthiness as being undermined or not lived at all. The problem prevails even among the very closest relatives or friends; it has become common to find someone saying he/she does not trust so and so. This is because such person has never been honest in word or deed, so that one makes himself/herself not to be trusted. Hence honesty has become an issue in our time.

### **3.4 Growing Attitude of Material Possession**

The spirit of accumulation of wealth is another sickness in our contemporary world. The gap between *have* and *have not* is gradually increasing. Most of us are so preoccupied with property that the dignity of the other person succumbs to our desire for wealth. Wealth becomes more important than the life of a human being. You find someone rich (at least someone who has all the essentials such as food, shelter, and clothing) but his/her immediate neighbour sleeps with an empty stomach and lives in the slums. If this problem is not addressed as soon as possible, we will lose our sense of being human, being there for others. In fact, the spirit of possession or the love of material things to the detriment of our fellow human beings results in a manifold of other unethical behaviours including the unwillingness to love, the failure to care, and the refusal to respect others. Hence, we lose our value as human persons.

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<sup>29</sup> For a discussion on phubbing, see R. RICHARD, J. & GIBSON, "Internet Involvement: Heart Poison for the University Student?"

Having made some brief comments about emerging ethical problems in our contemporary Africa, we shift our discussion to Levinas' thought on ethical inter-subjectivity and how his thought can help us cultivate ethical inclinations and habits that motivate us to behave with love, care and respect towards our fellow human beings.

#### **4. Levinas' Ethical Intersubjectivity: It's Relevance for Some Unethical Habits Emerging in Africa Today**

##### **4.1 On the Value of Greetings**

We have seen in the previous section that in our Africa of today many do not consider greetings as paramount during the time of encounter. Hence, greetings lose their value. When he probes the implications of the asymmetrical relationship, on the other hand, Levinas urges us not to anticipate consequences. We should always play our part with a personal openness to the Other who is playing his/her part. For Levinas, ethics begins at the moment of concrete encounter; and usually the greeting is the gateway to every conversation, be it formal or informal. If there is no proper greeting, obviously we do not expect healthy conversation. Thus, as Africans, we need to revitalize the value of greetings and so concretize our respect for Levinas' caution for a better Africa.

##### **4.2 On the Failure to Converse and Cocooning Behaviour**

One of the stiffest challenges posed by progress in technology is the absence of genuine conversation and the increasing tendency to self-isolation. Conversation in the strict sense of the term is a face-to-face dialogue, where the interlocutors face each other and are able not only to hear each other's voice but also to detect the tone of the words. Without such immediacy to the face of the other, one can hardly expect any genuine conversation to take place between individuals. You can never know when someone is being sarcastic, funny, not funny, serious or joking. At times it is difficult to tell what someone may mean by the particular words he or she is using. Levinas emphasizes: "The said in absorbing the saying

does not become its master [...], the trace of infinity in the subject is precisely a response to another, another that is witnessed but not thematized."<sup>30</sup>

As evident in our epoch, technology has become an electric addiction for some - taking them out of the concrete world as they cling to the features the electronic/digital world offers. Technological addiction has, in fact, obsessed even students enrolled at the learning institutions: some of them keep themselves busy not with studies but with their mobiles. One can imagine how distracting internet and smartphone technology is to students' intellectual enterprises.

Definitely, conversations through social media have taken the place of traditional interactions and discussions. As a result of technology a person does not even need to leave the house to communicate and meet with others. Hence, she actually separates herself from the concrete person before her and gets 'buried' in a computerized person in her handset. For boys and girls, for men and for women, such "cocooning" is already trapping a person into a form of isolation that becomes more and more all-encompassing. The person finds himself or herself alone in a crowded environment.

Self-obsessed behaviour (for example in Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and all forms of pornography) can be likened to certain behaviours that characterize the person who suffers a narcissistic personality disorder. This means that the person may be showing such symptoms as an extreme feeling of self-importance, a sense of entitlement, a need to be admired, a feeling of envy towards others, the expectation that others should be envious of him, a lack of empathy, readiness to exploit others to achieve his aims, and an uncontrollable propensity to get angry and vengeful if he feels obstructed or ridiculed.

Family members who wish to spend more time with their dear ones cannot do so because their dear ones are involved in the excessive use of gadgets. The family atmosphere becomes one of depression and loneliness. Sadly this is the situation of today's

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<sup>30</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, 148.

generation: though family members are living under the same roof, they are a thousand miles apart.<sup>31</sup>

Unless you see the person, you have no idea of the context surrounding the written words. In fact, personal and concrete encounters can obviate or reduce to a minimum misunderstandings, miscommunications, and assumptions that otherwise might have an adverse impact on how we view others. As we can witness in our contemporary time, many of us are preoccupied by the modern gargets, so we have limited concern even for our very immediate neighbours. Very often today everyone in the family is busy with his or her gargets – phones, personal computers, and the like – so that they do not really experience the personal encounters that become the focus of concentration for Levinas.

### 4.3 On Honesty

According to Levinas, honesty is an important element in the encounter with the Other. The human other, as Levinas presents, is always destitute and weak. It is because of the deprived face of the stranger that I need to be honest in my words and deeds towards her. In fact, honesty promotes peace and health of mind not only for the self but also for the interlocutor. It creates a situation of trust between the interlocutors, and thus eliminates deceptions, corruption and fear.

If there is honesty, there is no need for anxiety and reservation in my relationship with the other person. Surely, conversation built on lies and anxiety is less intimate and less pleasant than truthful exchanges. Deceptions create internal mental conflicts between what one knows to be true and what one says. But honesty promotes feelings of tranquillity and a sense of love; hence, honesty brings forth relationships that are more fulfilling and meaningful between the interlocutors.

If one is not honest, obviously, there is no meaningful encounter and hence no authenticity. For that reason, in my relationship with other people I need to be faithful to the truth to cherish

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<sup>31</sup> G. VEGA, “Isolation and Technology”: the Human Disconnect”, in *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 13/5 (2000) 468-481.

Also Available at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/243459547\\_Isolation\\_and\\_technology\\_The\\_human\\_disconnect](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/243459547_Isolation_and_technology_The_human_disconnect) [accessed 20 Nov 2018].

a relationship that grows according to the parameters of truth and goodness. Similarly, as an individual, I need to accept the responsibility that the others require of me; in undertaking my responsibility I should not expect any reward from them.

Shockingly, based on our day-to-day ordinary experiences we might say that in our contemporary Africa the value of honesty is almost gone. In the primitive African society, people had confidence in their fellow; there was little fear of the other. Nowadays, you can hardly leave your door open because of the fear that another may intrude into your house in your absence. We are living in a world where everyone is a suspect, whether he or she is from one's own family or is simply someone else who lives in the same social milieu. In our time, it has become normal for people to fear each other rather than to fear wild animals.

The human person has become a very dangerous animal, not to be trusted even in very minor things. In towns, for instance, the situation is rather bad: moving around in an environment crowded with people, one will always be on guard to make sure her belongings are safe. You can hardly leave your bags even for a minute without the fear that something may be stolen. That is the situation in most places in Africa from rural to urban centres. It is about such circumstances that Levinas' ethics challenges our dispositions as human beings, since we seem to be acting not like human beings but more like wild beasts.

#### **4.4 On the Increasing Preoccupation with Material Possessions**

A craving for material possessions that goes beyond what are basic needs is another unethical attitude that seems to be mushrooming in Africa today. In the traditional setup, most Africans used to share things with each other; hence the gap between the haves and the have-nots may have existed but was not as glaring as it is today. In our time, the discrepancy is rapidly increasing. Many of us now concentrate on our personal issues and exercise very little or no concern for the other. We tend to amass wealth more and more, yet our neighbour is suffering.

This is in fact contrary to Levinas' conviction of how we ought to behave in order to live authentic lives as human beings. In order

for us Africans to attain collective and progressive development, embracing Levinas' ethics becomes important for us in our desire to anchor ourselves in God's plans for Africa. So, in the struggle for one's progress, one should always leave room for one's neighbour. We should realize that human instinct is never content if it is given the opportunity to govern one's reason and will.

Your neighbour is dying of hunger while you are throwing away food. Does that make sense? For the betterment of the present and future Africa, Levinas' ethics should help us challenge the unethical attitude stimulates the desire for possession and the contraceptive culture that has reduced the neighbour to an object of momentary sexual interest and pleasure and has dominated our epoch.

#### **4.5 On Hospitality and Sharing**

Levinas emphasizes that individuals affirm their authenticity through welcoming their neighbours into their homes, under their protection. In welcoming the neighbour, the person should completely open himself or herself wholeheartedly without holding back. Thus, hospitality demands a sacrifice of going beyond one's egocentric borders and embracing the unique stranger in his or her alterity. That is to say, in order to lead an authentic human life I am obliged to offer an unconditional response to the stranger in her otherness. If I try to question or condition my openness to the stranger who needs my attention and service, then I would have entered a process of reducing her and totalizing her and her appeal into my horizon.

According to Levinas, hospitality knows no limits, no category of whom to help; hospitality is for anyone and everyone. In other words, I am commanded to welcome all mankind – beyond the borders of nationality, race, culture or ethnicity. However, perhaps Levinas' position can be questioned: how would I welcome the rapists, sexual abusers, thieves, drug dealers, the assassins, or other people known to sin gravely and lead others into grave sin? Levinas seems to be optimistic on this matter. Indeed, in African societies, there was always the share, for instance, a morsel of food, for the unknown guest.

In order to give emphasis to the African sense of sharing, in my tribe 'Iraq'w' there is a saying "mangu tsui ti alen", literally translated as "let's share what we have no matter how little it is". This imperative marks a true criterion of humanness as the basis of one's hospitality. To close the door of my home against my neighbour, to refuse the face who faces me is already thermatization.

In most cases we tend to be selective, we welcome only those known to us, or at least will have some impact on our life, and sideline the 'less important one'. At times, some can even change the time of dinner because of the unexpected advent of a guest. As we have articulated earlier, for Levinas, no one is exempted from such an exercise of one's humanity. No one is exempted from love, care, and respect.

For Levinas, a simple act of greeting is a manifestation of hospitality that I can offer to the Other. For that reason, by hospitality we do not limit ourselves only to the material services. Our good intentions for the other person also signify our attitude of generosity towards him. Hence, owing to its significance in upholding authentic relationships, hospitality is another notion to be appreciated from Levinas' ethical philosophy. As Africans, we need to go back to our roots, and invigorate our thinking and attitudes towards the other.

#### **4.6 On the Use of Language**

As it is semantically understood, language is a means of conveying my thoughts, sentiments, convictions, intentions and objectives to my interlocutor. But for Levinas, language understood in that sense equates to thermatization "the *Said*". His reason is that, language, understood as the communication of my ideas, feelings, convictions, purposes and objectives draws all meaning from within the speaker, and assigns them, imposes them, or offers them to the other person, the listener. As such, language is not lived but *said*, it becomes a means of categorizing *this* as *that*. In the *said*, the stranger is not involved, he is just passively 'there' as an object to receive meanings and orders from the speaker.

If language is reduced to the “Said”, therefore, language eliminates or reduces the *Other*’s place during the discussion, the moment of encounter. In fact, there is no conversation effected in the *said*.<sup>32</sup> If language exists for the sake or the need of the speaker only, then the other individual is reduced to the level of an object simply to satisfy the speaker’s intention. So, language as the *Said*, thematizes. Levinas’ assertion about language does not rule out the deaf and the dumb, because for him language begins as a sheer encounter, it begins even before anything/any word is said. Levinas affirms, “face and discourse are tied together. The face speaks: it is in this that it renders possible and begins all discourse.”<sup>33</sup> Hence, Levinas’ position includes the language of signs.

However, for Levinas, language has an ethical character; it cannot be reduced to the level of a mere instrument for transmitting information. Language should not be understood as the means of informing others about what I have in mind, or what I need to express to them, with the supposition that once I have expressed what is on my mind, the encounter is over. Language should not be understood as the simple exercise of addressing a message like the fabricated object one puts in a mailbox. Rather, language should go beyond the *Said*, it should give room for conversation as I interact with others.

Levinas opines, “The essence of language is the relation with the *Other*.”<sup>34</sup> This mode of understanding language Levinas describes as the *Saying*. Ethically speaking, language is not for the sake of the *self* but originates with a vector towards the stranger and at the service of this *Other*. In fact, without the other, there would be need of language. Adrian Peperzak observes: “Language is the exposure through which the centre is transferred from me to the *Other*. The speaking subject is no longer by and for himself; he is for the *Other*.”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> A.E. WILDE, *Levinas: Subjectivity, Affectivity and Desire*, Available at <https://hydra.hull.ac.uk/assets/hull:8617a/content> [accessed 25 Feb 2018], 182-183.

<sup>33</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Ethics and Infinity*, 87.

<sup>34</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Totality and Infinity*, 207, 227.

<sup>35</sup> A. PEPERZAK, *Elements of Ethics*, 221.

Nevertheless, this is not always the case. Taking into consideration our Africa of today, our language tends to dominate and undermine the presence of the other. Levinas cautions us that in a discourse an individual should take a passive position, as he awaits to hear and discover the summons from the *Other*. So, the *Other* becomes his master, his lord. That is what Levinas means by an asymmetrical encounter.

We may ask ourselves, how do we exercise language in our daily existence? Perhaps on many occasions when we meet others, we struggle to convince them, make them spectators and listeners to our words; hence, we hold them in our world. If I realize that they cannot be contained or conquered then, then I avoid them, because of my struggle to exult myself before the *Other*. Thus, language as *Said* consolidates the self into his horizon of being, a totalizing sovereignty. But language perceived as *Saying* upholds the individuality of the interlocutors. It does not break their proximity but strengthens it. Through discourse the *I* bears witness to the *Other*. A. Lingis attests that "communication does not abolish the distance. In a word of greeting, with which another addresses me and draws me near, she or he sets before me his or her otherness."<sup>36</sup> Again, Michele Saracino observes that, in Levinas,

The dialogue that ensues between subject and *Other* transcends the privacy of their worlds and becomes a public declaration of their difference, even in the midst of their relation. This public declaration constructs a relationship that is not based on sameness, but rooted in difference. Language, Levinas suggests, highlights or bears witness to that difference. And it is the obligation of the subject to bear witness to the *Other* through languages.<sup>37</sup>

That implies, in a face-to-face with the *Other*, that discourse alerts me to my egocentric orientation so much that *I* move beyond it to respect the *Other* as a unique being who is different from me. I allow or let him express, reveal his being, his world to me. Language as *saying* maintains our distance as distinct and separate

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<sup>36</sup> A. LINGIS, *Sensation: Intelligibility in Sensibility*, 67.

<sup>37</sup> M. SARACINO, *On Being Human*, 108.

free individuals. Language as “saying” recognizes and maintains the alterity of other people.

We may ask ourselves, how is our orientation regarding language towards others? Is my language a *said*, or a *saying*? In other words, am I trying to minimize my fellow human being by not allowing her to express herself during the moment of encounter? To put it differently, do I allow my colleague, my interlocutor to participate in discourse whenever I come across her? Thus, if we consider Levinas’ notion of language as *saying*, it will be of great help in strengthening our relationships with other people in the Africa of today.

#### **4.7 Non-Reciprocity and Care: Love**

In an ordinary social matrix, the giving of rewards to another in return for a gain for oneself is a defining feature of our conventional social exchanges. Commonly, most of us expect a gain or service in return for what we have given to our neighbour or for what we have done as a service to our neighbour. In other words, we seem to belong to the materialist school of suspicion whereby a person’s overriding motive for action is to gain something. In tandem with our adherence to the materialist school of suspicion, we normally tend to give only the excess or the superfluous or what we do not like or need any more.

However, Levinas challenges this trend of behaviour. For Levinas, giving only what is left over or the undesirable is in no way a genuine response. Giving is to be understood in accord with responsibility: an individual has to sacrifice himself, to deny himself of something that is very essential for himself and his existence. Hence, it is then and only then that I am capable of giving to the other person without any expectation of return the bread out of my own mouth, the coat off my own shoulder. Only when I am making this kind of sacrifice am I truly responsible for the other person in a strict sense.

In other words, in Levinasian belief, giving is not only offering something – what I like or possess – and it is not only choosing to give to the person I love, but rather it is a sacrificing of what I must have for my own existence, to whomever is in need. It is precisely

by this particular mindset of giving that my existence attains a new dimension, an authentic meaning.<sup>38</sup>

Levinas' assertion against giving in view of return is based on the fact that, reciprocity would tend to reduce the *Other* to my own experience of him, of recognizing the other as co-present and equal. So, reciprocity not only corrupts the possibility of communication and revelation, but also corrodes the structure of one's responsibilities towards the *Other*. According to Levinas, our responsibility does not arise from our decisions or choices because, contemplation always arrives too late. Yet the subject is accused of things it did not do. Levinas insists that, the *Other* is irreducible to my experience of him and so never presents or co-presents with me; he is always one step beyond, one moment in the future:

Alterity appears as a nonreciprocal relationship, that is, as contrasting strongly with contemporaneousness. The *Other* as *Other* is not only an alter ego: the *Other* is what I myself am not ... It can be said that intersubjective space is not symmetrical. The exteriority of the other is not simply due to the space that separates what remains identical through the concept, nor is it due to any difference the concept would manifest through spatial exteriority. The relationship with alterity is neither spatial nor conceptual.<sup>39</sup>

Therefore, in giving *I* do not give someone in need in order to merit from the act of giving.<sup>40</sup> The other individual moves or affects me to the point of giving my *self* to him, to the point of being selfless. Giving understood as a total self-denial, is a product of the appeal from the *Other*. When giving is understood as responsibility for the stranger it becomes a sacrifice and never a show-off, a merit or a recognition. For that reason, a genuine sacrifice entails life itself; the giving up of one's own life for the sake of the other person. In fact, dying for the love of the other manifests our very intimacy and care for him. It is for that reason we recommend Levinas' understanding of endless service of the

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<sup>38</sup> The editor notes that this was the disposition of St. Maximilian Kolbe when he chose to die from hunger at the hands of his Nazi captors in order to save the life of a man whom he did not know.

<sup>39</sup> E. LEVINAS, *Time and the Other*, 84.

<sup>40</sup> This is the accusation that Karl Marx and the materialist masters of suspicion hurl at the human heart. (Ed.)

other individual without reward as the basis of our affiliations and for the betterment of healthy human relationships among Africans.

#### **4.8 Presence: Proximity and Availability**

Proximity and availability are essential to Levinas' ontology of intersubjectivity. Proximity is the closeness that one feels in the presence of the *Other*. It is a relationship with a sense of immediacy, without the mediation of any principle or preconceived notion. Proximity is the concrete foundation of moral responsibility. It is one's actual and concrete presence before the stranger. Levinas intends to teach us about the importance of being near and ready to extend our helping hand towards the destitute.

For Levinas, I can vindicate myself as one who is just to my fellow human being by establishing proximity with him or her. However, there are such instances whereby one can be near to one another but not available. If I come across the *Other* but fail to face him, I have not in actual fact encountered him. We could say such is an empty meeting. Thus, proximity is only meaningful when it is accompanied by availability. Hence, in our daily interactions, concrete presence (proximity) should go hand in hand with our availability to help others for that is the only way we can attain authenticity.

#### **4.9 Respect for Others**

Alterity, as Levinas presents it, is the very singularity that each one of us enjoys and establishes us as irreplaceable, irreducible, and unrepeatable. It is that which defines us and differentiates us from each other. It is our very essence as persons.

Levinas' ethics underlines the centrality of respect for the *Other* since the other person is never my equal. Although in a face-to-face encounter, I enter into actual and immediate relationship with the *Other*, that intimacy and concrete encounter do not eliminate the distance or the difference that exists between us as subjects of a relationship. By maintaining the essential difference between the interlocutors, Levinas' ethics challenges what he believes to be the traditional metaphysics that, from his point of view, makes an attempt to reduce the *Other* into the Same and so endangers one's alterity.

For Levinas, such a philosophy of totalization does not respect the uniqueness of people. Again, in his declaration of the compassionate gesture towards the individual's alterity, Levinas concretizes and proclaims the culture of love and care between persons. Looking at the contemporary African situation, there are many scenarios that indicate loss of respect not only for the elders (as they were in the traditional culture) but even for each other. Our respect has become too hypothetical; I respect the other who has made some contribution to my life... but am I respecting the other for her own sake, for his own sake? Today it is very common for a child to get seated while the old one is standing simply because the child has paid the same bus fare. I think the Levinasian line of thought offers us a creative insight to help us counteract a deteriorating sense of respect for others.

#### **4.10 Authenticity**

Generally, Levinas' ethics is geared towards establishing realistic human living. His ultimate purpose is to help us lead an authentic human life where we accept and respect each other as persons with an interior spiritual life, i.e., an Alterity. To be authentic is to be genuine in one's thoughts and actions. It is to live one's originality to the fullest. This is actually what Levinas advocates and expects of us in order to live as human beings. Thus, authenticity should define one's being; it should be my *raison d'être* during the course of all my struggles, and in the entire gamut of my relationships with others. Otherwise, no matter how much I excel, all my efforts and determinations will be meaningless. If my thoughts and actions are not directed towards leading an authentic human life which is accomplished in recognizing my fellow human being in her or his uniqueness, my life will be worthless.

#### **Conclusion**

This paper has intended to examine the relevance of Emmanuel Levinas to some aspects of unethical behaviour in the Africa of today. We initiated our study from our contemporary African context where we experience a variety of unethical behaviours now more than ever. We have briefly explicated Emmanuel Levinas'

understanding of authentic human existence, by honing in on what he perceives to be the most important factors that contribute to ethically upright intersubjectivity and by articulating inferences that can be drawn from those factors. We confined our investigation to his understanding of what constitutes an ethical intersubjective relationship. We have seen that to authentically exist as a human being, one needs to establish relationships without imposing any sort of condition. We have affirmed that authentic human behaviour demands a denial of self-interest for the sake of the other person. That is the gist of Levinas' ontology of ethical intersubjectivity, which in fact challenges our style of behaviour in Africa today. It is my expectation that this essay will help us to wake up and change our attitudes towards others for the betterment of the poor, the needy and the destitute, for the spirit of togetherness in our families, for the increase of honesty and trust in social groups and for the ethical improvement of the entire social matrix in our Africa of today.

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# Education as the Way to Freedom – the Example of Stefan Amsterdamski

Grzegorz Trela

Department of Philosophy  
Jordan University College

*Everything is endlessly repeated and everything happens only once (Samuel Beckett).*

These words of the Irish Nobel Laureate Samuel Beckett reflect the nature of human history in a nutshell. From the macrocosmic social or species-specific perspective, it is the permanent transmission of the **ever-repeating** struggles, passions, ambitions, conventions, intentions, failures and successes, intrusions of evil and flashes of holiness from the past to the future. At the same time they are unique and **unrepeatable** from the microcosmic perspective of individual experience. In the dialectic entanglement of what is repeatable and of what is new, the wisdom of the ancient maxim becomes visible which reads: *Historia magistra vitae est* (history is the teacher of life).

In each period history releases new intellectual challenges, socio-political escapades, economic capers and moral dilemmas; consider, on the other hand, how often they are simply the old and well-known vicissitudes of life with perhaps a new shape or a new face. The twentieth century, for example, brought new challenges that societies were compelled to confront, challenges that were occasioned by murders, felonies and repressions on a massive scale... but were they really new?

By enabling the specific “hatred industries”, it had become possible through the scientific and technological revolution to plan and execute killings of genocidal proportions and to instigate massive violations of human dignity. In this way, the scientists who used to carry out their research works far from social or political interests in the silence of their nineteenth century laboratories or the tranquillity of their nineteenth century private chambers, now

had to immerse themselves in the unfriendly social realities of the twentieth century.

The confrontation of social and political forces that were vying with each other needed some individual heroes who could inspire others by their wisdom, courage and moral attitude. The twentieth century had its heroes in this respect on a global scale (e.g., Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Pope John Paul II), but also some locally celebrated personalities (e.g., Mwalimu Julius Nyerere in East Africa and Francis Arinze of Nigeria). In our paper we would like to present the figure of Professor Stefan Amsterdamski. He is a lesser known person but not less inspiring from the perspective of moral integrity, especially in our contemporary context that is so fraught with the crises that continue to be generated by the constantly evolving scientific and technological revolution in the milieu of those who wittingly or unwittingly, treacherously or timidly, pervert the tide of progress.

Each epoch and each generation requires those who innovate the patterns, i.e., the masters equipped to teach us our life attitudes. The testimony of an individual life is a priceless pattern not only because it constitutes the evidence of some meaningfully determined attitudes but also because it makes us aware that we are not lonely in our doubts or crises: other people have had to face them, too.

The twentieth century is not really the distant past, e.g., most of the readers of this text were already born before this century came to an end. Yet the twentieth century already belongs to historical time because it is no longer part of the present; and that is not only in the literal sense.

From today's perspective, the historical past of the twentieth century discloses the general fact that the lives of societies of that century were marked by two experiences, namely, totalitarianism and technology. The first one took the shape of enslavement of not only millions of individuals but also of whole societies and nations; the latter fundamentally changed not only the manner of perceiving the visual world, but also the manner of understanding human predicaments, both those that are individual and those that are social-national. In our current circumstances human predicaments on all levels seem to be perceived and understood less from a local

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perspective and more from a global perspective. The stranglehold that totalitarianism has maintained almost forces everyone, from the isolated individual to the entire world, to think globally. The individual who encounters the all-embracing intrusion of totalitarianism into his or her life seems to be deprived of any chances – that is why the enslavement systems of the twentieth century are called totalitarian: they intervene in nearly all the spheres of human life.

The present author comes from a distant country, which apart from all the obvious culture-related differences, nevertheless shows some similarities to Tanzania such as the erstwhile attempt to establish its identity, on the one hand, within the matrix of totalitarian challenges and, on the other hand, the matrix of global changes occasioned by technology. The motto, *Education for Freedom and Utility* inspires our association with a master and hero of Poland, Professor Stefan Amsterdamski. His path of life seems to be an instructive and transformative pattern not only for young people in Europe but also worldwide, that is to say, everywhere where courage, wisdom and humanity are needed.

The twentieth century was an epoch of science. This was especially the case in its second half when societies became aware of the importance of scientists' intellectual underpinnings. Consequently their authority increased, and an ideology specific to science developed. The growing prestige of science and its irrefutable role in all the spheres of human life are beyond debate. No wonder that the philosophy of science was one of the most intensively developed areas of theoretical consideration of the last century.

What may be called philosophy of science was initiated by Vienna logical positivism, the mainstream that dominated up to the end of the nineteen fifties. The situation changed significantly in the sixties, however, after *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*<sup>1</sup> had been published by Thomas S. Kuhn. Certainly, he was not the only author responsible for the theoretical breakthrough that had been initiated by that time; Stefan Amsterdamski, a man of heroic

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<sup>1</sup> T.S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1962.

stature upon whom we now intend to concentrate our attention is one of the important figures of that stream.

The first two parts of a trilogy planned by Stefan Amsterdamski<sup>2</sup> have seen the light of appreciation. Stefan Amsterdamski is the only philosopher whose vision of science has experienced a smooth transformation from a theoretical status to a practical one. He accomplished this in the form of a strategy aimed at a structural transformation of scientific institutions from socialism to a market-oriented economy.

His works have been translated into a number of foreign languages<sup>2</sup> and reviewed and discussed in the literature that pertains to his intellectual concerns. Stefan Amsterdamski's achievements become still more impressive if they are placed in a wider social-historical and cultural context. He has developed translation activities on a large scale. He translated some works by Polish authors into Russian and French. He translated monographs in the fields of philosophy, sociology, history of art (science and art), and economics written by B. Anderson, D. Bell, J. Bronowski, M. Bunge, H. Butterfield, R. Dall, R. Jacobsen, L. Fuller, J. Hallowel, W. Heisenberg, J. Kemeny, T.S. Kuhn, K.R. Popper, E. Panofsky, A. Rowse, B. Russell, E. Schrödinger, and others.

## **Who is Stefan Amsterdamski?**

Stefan Amsterdamski was born in Warsaw in 1929. After the outbreak of the Second World War, he and his brother, mother and grandfather were deported to Siberia while his father remained in Warsaw which was under German occupation. He died in the Warsaw Ghetto.

After the war Amsterdamski returned to Poland and completed his studies in chemistry. It was at that point that he developed his interest in philosophical problems, especially in the field of materialistic natural history inspired by the mature works of Engels.

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<sup>2</sup> Some works by Stefan Amsterdamski have been translated into English, French, German, Italian, Hungarian, Russian, and Serbo-Croatian. He personally published his most important monographs in English, Italian, French, and Russian.

In 1966 when he had reached the age of 37 and had qualified for both doctoral and postdoctoral status, he became the dean at Lodz University (UL), an institution with an extraordinarily noble stature in academic circles. At this time in his life he had achieved a name for himself on account of his brilliant academic career and excellent organizing ability. In a word, he was exuding the **ethos of scholar**. This ethos characterized him during his whole life.

He did not waver in his choice to interrupt his brilliant professional career, unprecedented as it was in the Polish humanities, in order to take responsibility for the professional shape of the institution whose co-founder he was. In March, 1968, despite the objections raised by the university staff, under the pretence of mendacious and fabricated allegations, he was dismissed from the dean's position in consequence of an anti-Semitic campaign against the ruling law. This was followed by further persecutions: he was deprived of the possibility of employment by any other academic centre, and suffered complete censorship of his works. Not only was it forbidden for him to publish anything; it was also forbidden for other authors to cite his works.

In the same month of March, in a mass emigration from Poland of all citizens of Jewish origin, Amsterdamski was under almost intolerable pressure to leave Poland. At the same time his first wife emigrated together with their daughters and his closest friends, B. Baczko, H. Eilstein, G. Kerszman, Z. Kochański, L. Kołakowski, and many others. Then, a heroic element of his personality came to the fore: he decided to stay.<sup>3</sup> He stressed that *his ties with those*

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<sup>3</sup> Amsterdamski's decision may remind our readers of Francis Cardinal Arinze's heroic decision *at this very same time in history* to remain with his people who were suffering as refugees, displaced persons, sick and hungry during the Nigerian Civil War in Biafra. Even though he was a refugee, he kept his wits about him and organized relief for his compatriots whose only option seemed to be death. In recognition of Arinze's heroism as a refugee in the service of refugees, it was said of his labours: "It was one of the most effective and efficient distributions of relief materials in history." Later because of his obvious ties of trust and friendship with Moslems, Pope St. John Paul appointed him President of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, a position he held for 18 years. While still holding this position, on 24 October 1999, Arinze received a special reward of recognition from the

*who could not emigrate and had to stay was more important than any individual inconveniences* he had to suffer in consequence of his decision to stay<sup>4</sup>. The situation partially<sup>5</sup> changed in 1970 when the party mitigated its policy towards Polish society.

Though the work he initiated at Lodz University was efficiently manipulated by the authorities, a large part of the staff of the future Institute of Philosophy continued his program of professionalization aimed at securing the freedom of research works from ideological pressure. It is necessary to stress the attitude of responsibility taken by Stefan Amsterdamski after he had been dismissed from this university. With no employment and no possibility to take any, he still organized seminars for doctoral students and lecturers in his own flat. He stressed the need of protecting young people from the influence of Marxist ideologues and providing free access to contemporary advances in knowledge. Feeling responsible for the talented students, he served as a consultant for doctors' dissertations. Amsterdamski carried out a responsible work without any profits, while Władysław Krajewski acted as a figurehead in respect of those dissertations whose opinions were sometimes contrary to Amsterdamski's personal beliefs.

After Amsterdamski was dismissed from the university, state authorities destroyed his large *Introduction to Philosophy* in its entirety, even though it was ready for publication at that time.

In the seventies he was a co-author of the important open letters of intellectualists to the authorities<sup>6</sup>, and developed his

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International Council of Christians and Jews for his outstanding achievements in inter-faith relations with the Jewish people. See F. Arinze (2005) *God's Invisible Hand: the Life and Work of Francis Cardinal Arinze (An Interview with Gerard O'Connell)*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press (editor's note).

<sup>4</sup> In private conversations he used to say: *I will not give them (the communists) that pleasure.*

<sup>5</sup> In fact, Stefan Amsterdamski found a job at the Polish Academy of Sciences but he was refused the possibility of teaching and contacting the youth involved in academics.

<sup>6</sup> Amsterdamski was involved in the campaign opposing the amendments to the constitution of Poland (the so-called Letter of 59) and worked out "the letter of 14" where the Polish leading scientists protested against drastic persecution of those who participated in the workers' protests of 1976. These

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conspiratorial and oppositional activities. He was one of the co-founders of the Scientific Course Society (TKN). The lectures of the secret university were often interrupted by violent intrusions.

Without the consent of the Communist authorities, Amsterdamski engaged in the illegal activity of editing issues of the TKN magazine, which were published and distributed unofficially. By the end of the seventies, the Secret Service arrested Stefan Amsterdamski following a denunciation; his flat was searched and his car was seized. In the period 1980-1981 he was one of the attorneys of the *Solidarność* trade union<sup>7</sup> and so shared the responsibility for hammering out the law that concerned higher education. When martial law was introduced in Poland on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1981, Stefan Amsterdamski was detained the night of 12/13<sup>th</sup> December and was imprisoned for about one year. Shortly after his release in autumn, 1982, Amsterdamski became a member of the *Social Committee of Science* which dealt with supporting the persecuted students.

By the end of the nineteen-eighties at the time when Solidarity was reactivated, there was a renewal of the hope that Poland, although still Communist, could experience radical change. This was at a juncture in history when Pope St. John Paul II, accompanied by such invigorating personalities as Cardinal Francis Arinze of Nigeria, was fuelling the world with a new hope by his relentless insistence on moral integrity, respect for human dignity and protection of inalienable rights.<sup>8</sup>

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letters were acts of an uncompromising civic posture and so were identified as acts of courage that changed the history of Poland.

<sup>7</sup> An independent trade union that opposed Communist authorities and had about 10 million members. The trade union leader, Lech Wałęsa, became a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate in 1983 and then became the first non-Communist President of Poland.

<sup>8</sup> At this point in history, therefore, Amsterdamski's vision was not unlike that of Pope St. John Paul II, who undoubtedly was the central figure in the rejuvenation of hope for Poland. But the hope was not confined to Poland. The editor notes that it was during the late nineteen eighties that John Paul's close collaboration with the already-mentioned Nigerian Francis Cardinal Arinze was giving a new vitality to the religious dialogue with the Islamic Brotherhood that would have repercussions in many countries. This dialogue helped to reinforce the conviction of people in Africa, in Asia, in South and

Amsterdamski was a member of Solidarity's delegation during the debate of the *Round Table*<sup>9</sup>, which focused on science education and technological progress. When *Solidarność* took over power, Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki appointed Amsterdamski to serve in the capacity of minister and so to take up the mission of a system-related transformation of science in Poland. It is with satisfaction that one observes how his reform of science in Poland became the pattern for similar transformations in other European countries after the overthrow of communism.

Amsterdamski avoided being involved in any strictly administrative activities. Nevertheless, he invested ardour into his efforts and so helped to materialize what seemed to be impossible and unrealisable. Another of his spectacular projects was that of the *Graduate School for Social Research* (GSSR), which he opened in 1992 at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. This was an institution where candidates could engage in doctoral studies on an eminent level of prestige since excellence was a hallmark of the institution.

The world had only rarely seen such an institution before its inauguration: in the reality of the market economy, oriented to the free interdisciplinary search for the truth by the most talented youth from all academic centres of Poland, other countries did not hesitate to send their most resourceful students as well.<sup>10</sup> The studies were carried out in a research partnership with the most eminent specialists from Poland, United Kingdom, and the USA, to mention some. The school remained an institution where

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North America, in Europe, in Australia and in the islands that if those responsible for political changes do not pay attention to God's involvement in the world, political institutions will soon lose their sense of morality. Religious and moral integrity was John Paul's persistent theme for all shifts towards political and religious freedom. Cardinal Arinze's priorities brilliantly mirrored those of Pope John Paul. Consequently after Pope John Paul's death, the Cardinal became a member of that select group called *papabile*, that is to say, a viable candidate for the papacy.

<sup>9</sup> Negotiations between the communist authorities and representatives of the trade union aimed at the power to be peacefully transmitted by the communists.

<sup>10</sup> In the course of the development of the GSSR, representatives from nearly twenty countries came to study there.

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intensive seminars and lectures were conducted by several dozens of professors specializing in all the fields of social science and the humanities. Regulations of the school enabled its students to weave together interdisciplinary interests with a thorough professionalization and specialization in a given discipline and at the same time labour with an individual propensity for creativity. Consequent to its enterprising manner of doing academics, meaningful research programs came to flower that involved large numbers of students and publishable material abounded.

The GSSR remained a self-financing institution and received no grants from public sources; it also motivated students by providing handsome grants. As early as 1995, the GSSR won the prestigious Hannah Arendt award<sup>11</sup> issued by the Vienna Institute of Anthropology to the well-deserving and promising civic institutions of a Europe that was in the process of uniting. Let us add that GSSR is the only institution that won this prize twice (again in 1999) in the thirty-year history of this award.

The GSSR has remained an important research institution, a fecund source for professionals in the scientific and cultural milieu of Poland at the turn of the millennium. Stefan Amsterdamski, who had always been available for students and observed the highest academic standards in his directives to students, discreetly protected the whole undertaking.

Here is the recollection of Doctor W. Hanuszkiewicz, a participant in Professor Amsterdamski's last seminar:

The classes were fascinating for me because of a nearly chatty freedom in his manner of speaking about difficult problems – yet preserving precision in his notions. I cannot remember the topic precisely, but it was something about rationality in science: he referred to Popper, Kuhn, Lakatos, but also Monod and Kołakowski. I especially recollect the last classes. Amsterdamski knew it was the last seminar in his life – he declared this quite openly. We all knew that we had a dying man before us and still he conducted the lecture as if nothing was happening. There was something tragically beautiful in it; no trace of sentimentalism.

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<sup>11</sup> Let us also add, that the prize was not only prestigious but also quite lucrative: one million US dollars.

Even now Amsterdamski appears to me in the guise of a Greek sage who manifests his mastery of philosophy at its most difficult – and probably most important – point, i.e., as an “exercise in dying”.<sup>12</sup>

## The Principles of His Meta-Philosophy

Specifying the highlights of Amsterdamski’s academic career – highlights which are indeed inspiring – lie beyond the scope of this brief and succinct essay. His activities and their fruitful results would be enough to fill several significant volumes of a scientific biography. In the kind of essay I have chosen to offer *Africa Tomorrow* readers, however, there is one dimension to Stefan Amsterdamski that I ought to mention, namely his concept of the mechanisms of the development of science or, more broadly speaking, his meta-philosophy. In order to complement the image of Amsterdamski presented in this essay, I shall articulate some principles of this meta-philosophy.

From the very beginning of his literary activities, in his meta-philosophical considerations, Amsterdamski was seeking a personal path that would leave to the margins extreme and radical positions. Hence, he transformed the Latin formulation of the logical law of the excluded middle, *tertium non datur*, to read as a question, *tertium non datur?* In English this reads: “no third [possibility] is given”.<sup>13</sup> Amsterdamski’s formulation replaces the

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<sup>12</sup> Quotation from the authors’ private correspondence with Dr. W. Hanuszkiewicz.

<sup>13</sup> The editor notes that ordinarily the law of the excluded middle means that  $a$  cannot be *not a* at the same time. One cannot say, “At the present moment Aristotle is dead,” and “At the present moment Aristotle is not dead” at the same time. But Amsterdamski added a question mark, as if to say, “Is this law always true?” Mathematics offers a simple example to explain that one cannot be too rash in one’s acceptance of the universality of the law of the excluded middle: Suppose that  $a$  is irrational; and that  $b$  is irrational. Neither variable in itself, therefore, is ever rational. There is no “third” possibility. But does there exist a relationship between these two irrational variables that can actually in itself be rational? In other words, is there a third possibility? The editor offers the following example: Consider  $a^b$  where  $a$  is irrational and  $b$  is irrational. Is there a possibility that  $a^b$  is rational? Let us see what happens if we actually

declarative statement with an interrogatory one: "no third [possibility] is given?" This question became a barometer for measuring his notions and syntheses and a means for him to identify the principal trends of his thought. Such an attitude can be most simply presented in the following way: determine aptly and precisely the opposite extreme positions and then search for a synthetic middle way, not an eclectic or critical one, which would be uncompromising in respect to the acknowledged ideal of science.

Amsterdamski's style of authorship remains a seemingly unattainable ideal of notional subtlety and ideal logical culture.

His attitude towards what constitutes the ethos of a scholar or, more broadly, towards what constitutes the world of values, has been summarized with precision by the editors of a commemoration book dedicated to Him:

... His was a public service. Contrary to his theoretical activities, he did not acknowledge any compromises or any search of a third way in his own decisions, assessments or activities in the social sphere. His duties were clear at this point and their implementation was driven by the categorical injunction: "*Tertium non datur*" and "*tertium datur*" – which are two versions of the same maxim which, in Amsterdamski's opinion, means intransigence in respect to values, on the one hand, and the search for an epistemologically valuable theoretical compromise, on the other. He is the master of both these spheres.<sup>14</sup>

There are several meta-philosophical beliefs espoused by Amsterdamski, which allow us to fully understand his social attitude. His *first* conviction:

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examine the relationship by using an irrational number to replace each variable:  $a^b = \sqrt{2}^{\sqrt{2}}$  is irrational when  $a =$  the irrational number  $\sqrt{2}$  and  $b =$  the irrational number  $\sqrt{2}$ . But now let  $a =$  the irrational number  $\sqrt{2}^{\sqrt{2}}$  and let  $b =$  the irrational number  $\sqrt{2}$ . This means that  $a^b = (\sqrt{2}^{\sqrt{2}})^{\sqrt{2}}$ . But if one performs this simple mathematical operation correctly,  $(\sqrt{2}^{\sqrt{2}})^{\sqrt{2}} = (\sqrt{2})^{(\sqrt{2} \cdot \sqrt{2})} = (\sqrt{2})^2 = 2$ , which is a rational number. Hence a third possibility is born.

<sup>14</sup> E. Chmielecka, J. Jedlicki, A. Rychard, eds., *Ideals of Science and Conflicts of Value*, Warsaw: IFiS PAN 2004, 11.

... Philosophy is possible only as a conflict-rich plurality of various philosophies. [In my opinion] it is analogous to the case of culture where conflicting values feed one another and their conflicts liven up the culture which would be dead without them. Philosophy is alive through the conflict between different philosophies.<sup>15</sup>

His *second* conviction:

... Where any philosophy, no matter which one, takes hold, which does not mean attempts to take hold as each philosophy attempts to take hold, i.e. where philosophy appropriates the whole area of philosophical life which is usually filled with the above-mentioned conflict-rich plurality, any philosophy ends and a dictatorship begins. It is like that because the conflicts of values that particular philosophies attempt to solve are never definitely soluble but are articulated again in reflections on social life. Thus, all that area may be appropriated by any philosophy only by extra-intellectual means. Such an appropriation results in the glorification of a single system of values, which consequently leads to the erosion of all of them, including those which gain the Pyrrhic victory by force. This is what happens no matter what the glorified value may be, equality, freedom, spiritual salvation, national unity or the primacy of the state.<sup>16</sup>

## The Tribute He Received and Deserved

When Stefan Amsterdamski celebrated fifty years of his life as an academician and seventy-five years of his life as a human being he received an extraordinary gift from his grateful doctoral students at the GSSR. It was a graphic representation of a replica of the Nicolas Copernicus monument that is situated at the entrance to the PAN building in Warsaw, but Stefan Amsterdamski is seated instead of Copernicus holding a symbolic building of the GSSR in

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<sup>15</sup> S. Amsterdamski, *March in Philosophy and Philosophy of March*, Warsaw: NOWA 1981, 5.

<sup>16</sup> S. Amsterdamski, *March*. 6. The editor notes that Amsterdamski is referring to values that originate with human philosophers. Those values that originate with the one who ultimately gives meaning to every authentic value, namely, God, have an eternal foothold in God's truth and goodness. They never erode. See K. Wojtyła (Pope St. John Paul II), *The Acting Person*, trans. by Andrzej Potocki, Boston: D. Reidel, 1979.

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his hand instead of a globe. The apex of the whole work – *toutes proportions gardées* (with everything kept in its proper perspective) – with the inscription, *To Stefan Amsterdamski – from Compatriots*.

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Professor Stefan Amsterdamski is a man of stellar achievement in the field of higher education, a man who joins the august company of such contemporaries as Pope St. John Paul II, Umwalimu Julius Nyerere, Francis Cardinal Arinze, and St. Teresa of Kolkata. He is a man who joins all those individuals whose ardour has penetrated the intellectual and spiritual fabric of the world during the twentieth century. We hope our brief account will turn out to be inspiring for those who know that education is a way to freedom and to a humanity replete with intellectual, religious and moral integrity.



# Applications of the Public Private Partnership Business Model: Selected Cases from Local Government Authorities in Tanzania

Honest Prosper Ngowi

Faculty of Economics  
Mzumbe University

## Abstract

*Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) are among the emerging business models of delivering non-core public goods and services. The key issue in a PPP business model involves the use of a purely profit-motivated private sector to deliver public goods and services. This is the case for governments of national scope as well as for local government authorities (LGAs) across the world. Indeed it is the case, too, for Tanzania. Given the nature of PPPs and the conditions of both the public and the private sector, the public private partnership paradigm can be a very valuable business model for delivering public goods and services both core and non-core. In this paper the author presents practical applications of the PPP business model in Tanzania. Drawing from his research for the Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania (ALAT) on public private partnerships<sup>1</sup> in local government authorities and in a 2018 experience with a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) PPP business model for a United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) assignment in the Same District Council (SDC), the author provides some practical application of the PPP business model to selected local government authorities in Tanzania.*

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<sup>1</sup> Ngowi (2016) “Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in Tanzania”.

## 1. Introduction and Background

According to Ngowi and Jens (2013) the PPP concept describes a partnership in which the private sector delivers public goods and/or services.<sup>2</sup> The concept refers to a government service or private business venture which is funded and operated through a partnership of the government and one or more private sector companies. A PPP usually involves a long-term contract for a private sector entity that is providing a government service other than procurement. A PPP is characterized by a contractual arrangement between a public sector authority, such as a local government authority, and a private party. The private party provides a public service and assumes some financial, technical and operational risks for providing the service. Among other things, a PPP is a means to balance government budgets because it has the potential to bridge the gap between the public needs and the governments' existing financial and human resources.

According to URT (2009)<sup>3</sup>, the concept of PPP entails an arrangement between public sector and private sector entities whereby the private entities renovate, construct, operate, maintain, and/or manage a facility, in whole or in part, in accordance with output specifications. The private entity assumes the associated risks for a significant period of time and, in return, receives benefits/financial remunerations according to the agreed terms. These can be in the form of tariffs or user charges.<sup>4</sup> Based on URT (2011),<sup>5</sup> partnership in the PPP context is an arrangement where the private party:

- performs an institutional function on behalf of the (public) institution;
- acquires the use of public property for its commercial purposes;

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<sup>2</sup> Assessment of Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) In Tanzania: A report for Uongozi Institute, Tanzania

<sup>3</sup> The 2009 National PPP Policy in Tanzania

<sup>4</sup> This definition is rather narrow and does not capture most PPP practices on the ground.

<sup>5</sup> PPP Regulations of Tanzania (2011)

- assumes substantial financial, technical and operational risks in connection with the performance of the institutional function or the use of state property; and
- receives a benefit for performing the institutional function or from utilizing the public property.

The principal act governing PPPs in Tanzania is the Public Private Partnership Act No. 18 of 2010. Also applicable are the Public Private Partnership Regulations passed in 2011.

### **Reasons for a PPP**

There are various reasons for the existence and implementation of PPPs. According to Ngowi and Claussen (2013), the following are among the reasons for undertaking PPPs:

- ❖ To increase *efficiency* and use available resources more *effectively*;
- ❖ To *reform sectors* through a reallocation of roles, incentives, and accountability; and
- ❖ To *attract private capital investment* in order to supplement public resources or release them for other public needs.

According to the PPP Policy (2009), a PPP arrangement is beneficial to a country and justifiable in view of the potential benefits that accrue to all parties. The potential benefits include:

- Facilitating creative and innovative approaches for stimulating the private sector to engage in specific PPPs – to achieve this end the government may allow bidders to compete on the basis of their ability to develop unique and creative approaches to the delivery of the required output;
- Enhancing government’s capacity to develop integrated solutions that effectively address public needs;
- Reduced costs of implementation and realization of quality products and services – cost reduction would be attributable to economies of scale and operating efficiency;
- Accessing technical and managerial expertise, financial resources and technology from the private sector;

- Facilitating large scale capital injections while reducing public debt and dependency on aid;
- Better responsiveness to consumer needs and satisfaction of those needs;
- Fostering economic growth by developing new investment opportunities and increasing provision of public goods and services; and
- Ensuring fulfilment of the best interests of the public and private sectors through the appropriate allocation of risks and returns.

## **2. Salient Features of the PPP Business Model**

The salient features of the PPP business model include but are not limited to various forms of PPP contractual arrangements. Contract formulations may proceed according to their purpose. To specify some:

### **2.1 Service Contract**

In this form of PPP, the government remains the owner and provider of the infrastructure service. It contracts out portions of the operation of the infrastructure to the private sector partner. The infrastructure can be, for example, a bus terminal, a port, a market, an airport, or a bridge.

### **2.2 Management Contracts**

A management contract PPP is an expanded version of a service contract PPP. It includes some or all of the management and operational functions of the public service (e.g., a hospital, a port authority, or utilities such as water and power). Although the ultimate obligation for service provision remains in the public sector, the daily management, control and exercise of authority are assigned to the private partner or contractor operating the business in question.

### **2.3 Lease Contracts**

In this form of PPP, the private partner is responsible for the entire service. It undertakes obligations relating to quality and

service standards. Except for new and replacement investments, which remain the responsibility of the public authority, the private partner operating the business provides the service at its own expense and risk. Examples of such risks are political consequences, the variability of the exchange rate, financial risks, and the risks to the reputation of the personnel or entities who have engaged themselves with the contract.

## **2.4 Concessions**

Under the concessions form of the PPP, the private sector operator is responsible for the full delivery of services in a specified area, including operation, maintenance, collection, management, and the construction and rehabilitation of the facility. The private sector operator is responsible for all capital investment and for providing the assets.

## **2.5 Build–Operate–Transfer Type Arrangements**

Build–Operate–Transfer (BOT) and similar PPP arrangements are specialized concessions in which a private firm or consortium finances and develops a new facility or a major component in an existing facility with performance standards set by the government.

## **2.6 Joint Venture**

Joint venture is an alternative contractual arrangement for PPPs. In this case the ownership of the facilities and the managerial and operational responsibility is shared by the public sector and private partners. The public and private sector partners either form a new company or assume joint ownership of an existing company through a sale of shares to one or several private investors.

## **3. Application of the PPP Business Model to Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in Tanzania**

In order to correctly contextualize this work, it is worth noting and acknowledging that various local government authorities (LGAs) have implemented various types of PPP projects even

before the PPP Policy (2009) was in place. Below is a summary of some PPP projects in selected LGAs.<sup>6</sup>

### **3.1 Arusha Municipal Council (AMC)**

The application of PPPs in Arusha is in the form of a private sector delivery of revenue collection and cleaning services. In 2005, the municipality invited private individuals, companies, cooperatives, institutions and groups who were legally registered to offer revenue collection in such markets as Soko Kuu, Kilombero Wholesale Market, Sanawari, Mjinga, Mapunda, Kijenge and Mbauda. It also invited private sector services in revenue collection in such bus stands as the one for big and small buses, for taxi and pick-up parking areas as well as other car parks. The municipality took steps to invite the private sector to provide solid waste collection and disposal in such wards as Sombetini, Sokini, Daraja Mbili, Unga Limited, Kati, Them, Kaloleni, Engutoto, Olorien, Lemara and Ngarenaro. It also invited the private sector to operate some public pay toilets at the Main Market, Jogoo House, the main bus stand, the Kaskazini and Kusini toilets, the Kilombero Market and the Kijenge round-about.

### **3.2 Morogoro Municipal Council (MMC)**

The Morogoro Municipal Council (MMC) has practised PPPs in a number of areas and in a variety of forms. In 2005 it invited private sector participation in municipal service deliveries in certain areas. These now include revenue collection in auctions; abattoirs; the town bus stand; Sabasaba, the Mji Mpya Market and the Main Market. It also invited the private sector to invest in and operate a municipal asset at the Rock Garden recreational area.

### **3.3 Bariadi District Council (BDC)**

The council involved the private sector in various forms of public service including collecting revenue in auctions, in markets, from hides and skin as well as from traditional healers.

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<sup>6</sup> Summarized from Ngowi (2006) "Public-Private Partnership (PPPs) in the Management of Municipalities in Tanzania."

### **3.4 Kigoma District Council (KDC)**

In 2005, the Kigoma District Council (KDC) called for private sector participation in the provision of various goods and services. These include revenue collection in sixty-six (66) council markets including Simbo, Nyamoli, Kasuku, Msimba, Mgaraganza, Kagango, Kigalye, Mkabogo, Kizenga, Nyamhoza, Nkungwe, and Nguruka.

### **3.5 Others**

Other similar cases of PPPs that involved local government authorities in the financial year 2005/06 are documented in Ngowi (2006). These include PPPs in the Njombe District Council (NDC); the Kisarawe District Council (KDC) and Dodoma Municipal Council (DMC). All the cases above are based on a study that was conducted in 2006 (about 10 years before the research informing this work was conducted). This shows *inter alia* that PPPs in local government authorities started even before the PPP Policy (2009) was in place.

## **4. Application of the PPP Business Model in Local Government Authorities by 2016**

Our attention shifts to some specifics about the application of PPP business models in five selected local government authorities by the year 2016 are presented and discussed. These local government authorities are Dodoma, Morogoro, Bagamoyo, Mtwara Mikindani and Tandahimba.

A number of issues have been delineated in explicating the application of the PPP business model to the selected local government authorities. Some of the key issues for each LGA are sketched in what follows.

### **4.1 The Case of Dodoma Municipal Council (DMC)**

As far as the Dodoma Municipal Council is concerned, traditional services delivered under PPPs have included revenue collection of various kinds from a number of sources. The revenues include service levies, auctions such as the Kizota auction, abattoir fees, restaurant fees, parking fees, market fees such as those collected at the Main Majengo, Sabasaba, Chang’ombe,

Chamwino and Maili Mbili markets; hotel levies; toilets such as the main bus stand toilet, Jamatini, the Old Stand (SIDO) and the Bonanza toilets. Another area where PPP has been used in the Dodoma Municipal Council include waste collection in Dodoma town and property leases such as the lease of the Kizota butcher.

#### **4.2 The Case of Bagamoyo Town Authority (BTA)**

It was found in the study informing this work that the practices of PPP in the Bagamoyo Town Authority include revenue collection. In this case the revenue sharing formula is 60% for the private sector and 40% for the public sector. Revenue collection has been partly privatized to the ADOSTA Company which is the main revenue collector for the Bagamoyo Town Authority. The outsourced means for revenue include forestry products such as logs, charcoal, and firewood at Kibindu Forestry and Saadani; salt mining at Saadani; and minerals including aggregates and stones at the Msata area. These means for revenue have not been lucrative from 2014/15. From 2015/16 the Bagamoyo Town Authority started collecting revenue from this source itself through village governments instead of through a PPP. Another revenue source that is privatized is the bus stand whose collection is 3,800,000 Tshs per month.

Before engaging in a partnership with the private sector, the Town Authority makes an assessment of the existing potential for revenues. It then draws up a contract with the private sector to hammer out collection proposals that can anticipate a win – win situation.

There are PPP practices in land management in which the private sector does the demarcating and calculates the involved costs before the plots are sold in partnership with the Bagamoyo Town Authority. In the case of land, the Bagamoyo Town Authority was supposed to do the planning and demarcate the land. However, it did not have the adequate funds for that. Therefore, the private sector comes in to do the work using its own finances. The companies that have been involved in a land PPP in the Bagamoyo Town Authority since 2013 include Land Space, Wellington and Land Consult. These are private land developers. They incur the cost for the acquisition of land, and use the Bagamoyo Town

Authority for the processing of title deeds before they put the plots for sale. The private sector also prepares roads, does surveys and all other necessary preparations to increase the value of the land. The Bagamoyo Town Authority may be the one to advertise the land sales on behalf of or in collaboration with the private sector. The Bagamoyo Town Authority takes between 9.5% and 10% of the net profit from the sale of the land.

When it comes to the land transactions, the PPP has given the Bagamoyo Town Authority a number of reasons to be happy. These include better town planning and more revenue arising from the plot purchase application fee of 20,000 Tsh. The department dealing with land has been able to buy a new vehicle because of the incoming revenues. Land owners pay 30% of the statutory fees to the Bagamoyo Town Authority as retention from the Ministry of Land. The government receives fees such as legal fees for transfers, notification fees, and capital gain taxes in the case of transfers. Due to the better land planning because of the collaboration with a PPP, there are increased potentials for Bagamoyo to move from the town authority to the council and therefore get property tax and other related benefits. The fact that a PPP is involved with the land saves the Bagamoyo Town Council from paying the cost of land compensation. This is because the private sector buys land from individuals. The town council, therefore, is not involved in compensating them.

### *Future Possibilities for PPP Projects in Bagamoyo*

Possible future PPP projects in Bagamoyo include a modern, multipurpose complex bus terminal construction to accommodate the new Msata road linking Dar Es Salaam with the northern regions of Tanga, Kilimanjaro and Arusha. Another potential project is the construction of an ultramodern market for various goods including grains and fruits. This has to be huge with a multipurpose complex similar to supermarkets. Other potential PPP projects in Bagamoyo include rental houses/real estate, recreation and tourist facilities such as hotels, beach development, a planned port and an industrial park at the Export Processing Zone.

### **4.3 The Case of Mtwara Mikindani District Council (MMDC)**

Among the PPP practices in the Mtwara Mikindani District Council include a PPP in land demarcation in collaboration with the Unity Trust of Tanzania (UTT). The plan was to demarcate 1,000 plots. This project had not taken off when field research for this work was done in early January 2016. It was waiting for ministerial approval as per PPP regulations. The Mtwara Mikindani District Council engaged in this PPP project because it had no capital to cover the costs involved. Unity Trust of Tanzania was to give capital to pay for the compensation that the district council could not afford. The district council made the proposal for the PPP: Unity Trust of Tanzania was interested. However, the PMO-RALG stopped the project because the council did not seek them to get advice. After the council followed the needed procedure, the former Prime Minister (Hon. Pinda) agreed to the plan, but his term expired before signing. It is hoped that the present administration will sign the plan.

Another potential PPP project is a bus terminal construction at Chipukuta area. The Mtwara Mikindani District Council requested funds from the national government and engaged a company to do drawings. These were completed in September 2015. It has expected a private sector to do the construction. At the time of the present study, the plan was for the council to call for expressions of interest so that the private sector could do the construction through a PPP.

The Mtwara Mikindani District Council has entered into a PPP to do some revenue collection. Maxcom/Max Malipo has accepted the task of collecting revenues from a few specified sources while Ward Executive Officers (WEOs) do other revenue collections. According to respondents at the council, Max Malipo provides electronic devices to collect revenue on a commission basis. Future PPP projects are planned at Vigaeni area for ultramodern real estate development including shopping malls and a business complex. Drawings will be made and expressions of interest will be invited.

#### **4.4 The Case of Tandahimba District Council (TDC)**

As with the other local government authorities, the Tandahimba District Council TDC has established a collaborative relationship with the private sector by means of a PPP in various areas. This collaboration extends to revenue collection at the Tandahimba market and bus stand. Before privatization, the Tandahimba District Council collected revenue to know the potential then privatized. Cashew nut crops surplus (5% of farm gate price) is collected by the Council through the District Treasurer (DT) office at the present time. But earlier on, it was collected by Tandahimba Newala Cooperative Union (TANECU) through a contractual relationship with a PPP. This avenue proved to be ineffectual because there was a long process of waiting for the District Council to get its cheque.

##### *Possible Future PPP Projects for Tandahimba*

There is a huge PPP potential in the Tandahimba District Council. The council is the leading producer of cashews in Tanzania. Construction of go-downs by means of a PPP is a huge opportunity in the Tandahimba District Council.<sup>7</sup> In 2015 Tandahimba produced a total of 57640 tonnes of cashew nuts. The cost of storage in go-downs is 14 Tshs per kg. In the course of 2015, the District Council was able to acquire over 700,000,000 Tshs in revenue from storing cashew nuts in its go-downs.

That is not all: there is a potential for construction of a cashew processing plant that would be available for leasing. The price for cashews can rise from 1800 to 5000 Tshs per kg when they are processed. The District Council would be able to construct a processing plant by means of a PPP and rent it out to the private sector. According to the input I have received, a majority of factories in the Tandahimba District Council are now warehouses. Sizable processors such as Olam have moved processing plants to Mozambique, and the River Valley factory has been closed. At Mtama there was an expansive factory, but now it is merely a warehouse. There is a further fact to keep in mind that the Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) facility is no longer

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<sup>7</sup> A go-down is a place of storage, a warehouse.

processing cashews. If one were to speak frankly, one would have to admit that there is a need to study why all these declined before investing in processing plants through a PPP.

#### **4.5 The Case of Morogoro Municipal Council (MMC)**

PPP projects in the Morogoro Municipal Council include the Msamvu Bus Terminal (i.e., the Msamvu Complex), revenue collection from various sources such as parking slots and abattoirs; cleaning; operation of toilets at the sites of the Municipal Council properties at Rock Garden, at the Golf Course in Gymkana, the Kikundi Snake bar and Kambarage. The Morogoro Municipal Council is also engaged in a PPP in land development in collaboration with the Tanzania Investment Bank (TIB). The Council does the survey and maps while the bank funds the compensation. This is somehow similar to the Bagamoyo Town Council's manner of operating and the project associated with the planned land by means of a PPP in Mtwara Mikindani. Another PPP operation in the Morogoro Municipal Council is at the Mango Park established by the private sector on the council's land. The private sector operates the facility, will cover its costs and then will make the transfer to the Council by means of a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) PPP model.

#### *Potential Future PPP Projects in the Morogoro Municipal Council*

The potential for more PPPs include the construction and operation of hotels in Morogoro, tourist attractions in the mountains surrounding the council and the establishment of real estate. Other possibilities for a PPP arrangement include the District Development Community Centre (DDC) which has construction drawings in place and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) that has been arranged for planned shops, parking sites, recreation areas, and so forth. According to those who expressed their opinions at the council, what has been

hindering this plan from taking off is how to market it in a harmonious collaboration with the private sector.<sup>8</sup>

The current abattoir in the Morogoro Municipal Council is very small and at the city centre: one can conjecture realistically that the construction of a modern abattoir is in order. An area has been identified at Mkundi for this purpose. The issue that hinders the project from taking off is to compensate the five (5) people in the 500 acre area at the just price of 800 million Tshs. Other PPP projects that are in the pipeline include construction of the main market at the town centre as a modern, complex and multipurpose facility. The Council would borrow funds (about 9 trillion Tshs) and build the market. The private sector would operate the market. Critically thinking, it would have been better for the Council to let the private sector build and operate the market through a PPP rather than taking upon itself the responsibility of borrowing and construction. The private sector is better suited to do borrowing, construction and operating than the public sector.

#### *In-Depth Study of the Msamvu Bus Terminal PPP at the Morogoro Municipal Council*

This is a modern complex bus terminal project undertaken through a PPP from 2007. The objective has been to develop the existing terminal in order to increase the Council's revenue, provide better services to users and create more jobs. The Municipal Council wrote a proposal and submitted it to the Local Authorities Provident Fund (LAPF) and National Social Security Fund (NSSF). The proposal was accepted by the LAPF, who has funded the project by means of a PPP that links with Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV). The two partners are represented equally on the steering committee, each constituting 50% of the membership. The Municipal Council contribution is to provide land valued at five (5) billion Tshs. Shares are 60% for LAPF and 40% for the Municipal Council.

The project is under the management of Msamvu Properties Company, Ltd. This is the SPV that collects all the revenues. When

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<sup>8</sup> The author advised them to make announcements in various media and call for expressions of interest or proposals from the private sector to invest by means of a PPP.

it has collected a total of 100 trillion Tshs, the sum is deposited in a special fixed account. There is a board for the company composed of six members, with three from the Local Authorities Provident Fund and three from the Morogoro Municipal Council. The PPP is for a 15- to 20-year contract in possession of the asset by the SPV company after which it will transfer the asset to the Municipal Council. By the end of 2015, when the field study for this work was completed, phase one of the project was under way. The complex is intended to have multiple uses including a modern bus terminal, hotel, petrol station, conference halls, business stalls, banking halls, and shopping malls. According to the council members who contributed their input, all the PPP procedures have been followed.

The council respondents have some worries about the Msamvu PPP project. They are afraid that Land Authorities Provident Fund may take over the station since it is investing more than the Municipal Council. The situation seems provoked to the lack of financial muscle on the part of the Council. The Council members are of the view that LAPF will be taking a substantial share of generated profits and then transfer the project to a Municipal Council obsolete facility because of the wear and tear and need for maintenance after the end of the PPP contract. To partly avoid such an unfortunate turn of events in the future, it is advised that true financial experts who know the structures and personnel of the organizations involved and who recognize what is at stake for the future should play a vital role at PPP meetings. According to the Municipal Council members, it is the LAPF experts that are on the board of the SPV company that operates the project. The Municipal Council members who are on the board are politicians by experience and expertise: they are not technical people. Those who voiced their opinion are of the view that at least the council economist should have been part of the board. This is because PPPs are highly technical and not political matters. Those giving the researcher their input informed him that even when the council experts are invited to attend board meetings, they are not free to speak.

#### **4.6 The Case of the Same District Council (SDC) by March 2018**

Similar to the Msamvu PPP that hinged on the collaborative link with Special Purpose Vehicles, the Same District Council planned for Special Purpose Vehicle in the name of the Kalamawe Dam Investment Company<sup>9</sup>. The company was registered as SPV PPP and was owned by various stakeholders. These included the District Council, six villages, Pangani Basin Water Authority, a private sector and various community groups including livestock keepers, farmers and fishermen. The company followed the paradigm of the PPP business model with the aim of having equitable ownership of resources among stakeholders including villages which are the land owners according to the Land Act of 1999.

#### **5. Advantages of the PPP Business Model with Local Government Authorities**

There are a number of benefits for local government authorities to use the PPP business model. Some of these advantages include increases in collected revenue whenever the PPP projects are implemented successfully. Also there have been investments in various infrastructures – for example, bus terminals and markets – that the local government authorities could not afford to build using their own sources of revenue. Furthermore, PPPs help in doing away with some undue interference from political figures or other unnecessary personnel, for example, in revenue collection. The fact that the private sector is more aggressive, faster, quicker and more innovative as well as less bureaucratic than the public sector is a fact not to be scoffed at. The PPP business model, therefore, delivers quicker and more efficient benefits than a pure public sector operation.

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<sup>9</sup> This is a relatively large dam that has been around since 1957. It has potential for fishing and irrigation.

## **6. Main Challenges in the Application of the PPP Business Model to a Rapport with Local Government Authorities**

There are a number of obstacles, challenges and constraints when one applies the PPP business model to contractual arrangements with local government authorities in a successful way. These include but are not limited to politics in which ‘big’ political names are related to the private sector businesses including some politicians who use their own companies and personnel to do some clever manoeuvring for local government authorities PPP projects. This disrupts what should be an equal playing ground, and so it engenders unfair competition. It may lead to inefficient, non-competitive and costly service delivery. Other challenges include overestimation of revenues to be collected so that those who belong to the private sector can garner financial benefits that in truth are not theirs.

Another problem that needs to be addressed is that of bidders who are unable to pay the local government authorities the agreed amount. There are occasions, too, when some private sector operators sabotage processes such as revenue collection to show that the amounts agreed upon cannot be achieved. Corruption by some local government authority staff members who may collude with the private sector on the pricing and tendering process is sometimes a possibility. Ignorance on the part of some, especially the local government authorities, and on the part of some politicians who are involved in the process provokes unnecessary misunderstanding and a dishonest distribution of revenues. Dishonesty and a lack of loyalty on the part of some businessmen who cheat on actual revenues cast shadows on the whole process.

Quite detrimental to the process are the lack of balance between what local government authorities know – or, more to the point, do not know – and what the private sector knows. The local government authorities’ lack of information is hurtful to the entire process. What debilitates the objectives of the process, too, is the fact when the private sector provides the services, the expense to the consumer is greater than when the local government authorities provide the services. When it was the public authority who rendered the public goods and services, everything seemed more

affordable; and the public were receiving more for the money they were spending than in the scenario where the private sector via the PPP business model were providing goods and services.

Those giving input to the present researcher expressed their observations that there are bureaucratic delays, dishonesty, distrust, lack of transparency and politically motivated interference by some government officials in some PPP projects. It is my perception as the researcher that generally both the representatives of the private sector and the government officials were sharing the same views.

There is a question about the sustainability of PPP projects. This is due to inadequate maintenance, gross overstaffing and poor operational practices. It was indicated that PPPs still draw complaints from some quarters due to the poor dissemination of necessary information as well as poor services. It has been noted that there is an intense aggressiveness and a proliferation of advanced skills in the private sector compared to the public sector, particularly in comparison with local government authorities. This makes PPP business models unequal partnerships. It is more or less obvious that this stands to give the local government authorities a hard time in negotiations and the implementation of contracts. On an even more basic level, there is a low knowledge and understanding of PPPs; information asymmetry between partners; a limited knowledge of contracts and a lack of experience in implementing them; and the uneasy presence of politicians on the SPV PPP boards of directors (for example, Msamvu Properties Limited) instead of local government authority experts. A glaring weakness in the PPP arrangement is that in some local government authorities (for example, in the Morogoro Municipal Council), staff have no power to give input in important PPP projects.

For a number of local government authorities, including the Mtwara Mikindani District Council, there is a lack of capital to accomplish preparatory PPP business model procedures (for example, preparing necessary drawings for huge construction facilities) before instituting the PPP projects. Given relatively low income levels and flows, it takes a long time for the local government authorities to collect adequate revenues that match the needs of the private sector.

When all is said and done, the main asset that local government authorities have to contribute in the PPP business model is land. When this researcher ponders thoughtfully all the input he received in the course of his fieldwork he notes that the private sector seems very much to be at an advantage. Besides having more exposure, the private sector is more competent, smarter, more experienced, more research-based, more updated on issues, more legally professional and more focused. In comparison with the lawyers designated by the local government authorities, for example, the private sector uses very competent investment lawyers. Another advantage accrues to the private sector when representatives of the sector take it upon themselves to draft the PPP contracts instead of making the effort to collaborate on a draft that is drawn up jointly by the two partners. The fact that there is no by-law for the PPP in local government authorities places them at a further disadvantage. Local government authorities have to obtain a no-objection decision from relevant authorities at the President's Office Regional Administration and at the local government office on their intended PPP projects; this requirement delays the process. Delays become even more inconvenient when requirements involve going to the Attorney General (AG) before the eventual PO-RALG's no-objection decision. The Unity Trust (UTT) land PPP project in the Mtwara Mikindani District Council, for example, took over three years to prepare and a deal was yet to be reached when this present study neared completion. A scenario such as this one scares away private sector investors who have options for investing in many other projects.

Critical examinations and inquiries are in the hands of higher authorities (AG) in the central government not in the local government authorities. It was stated in the field study that vetting by higher authorities is for transactions valued from 50,000,000 Tshs! This is a relatively very small amount and implies that almost all transactions have to be vetted by higher authorities implying congestion and bureaucracy. All vetting has to be done in the offices of the higher authorities in Dar Es Salaam although there are also zones of higher authorities in the regions.

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### *Challenges in Revenue Collection by Means of a PPP: The Case of Max Malipo*

The private sector’s views on participation in PPPs with local government authorities are very similar to the ones outlined above. In what follows, challenges in revenue collection that take place by way of PPPs with local government authorities are highlighted with a particular reference to Maxcom/Max Malipo as a case study.

Maxcom/Max Malipo is a private company with a focus on revenue solutions through the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT). In its bidding for revenue collection by specified arrangement with local government authorities, it has to deal with individual councils. There are about 168 councils in total. The company has physically visited 60 councils (35.7% of the total) but has a contract with only 8 (7.8% of the total). It also has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania to market its revenues collection solution. It has to deal with individual local government authorities because procurement is not centralized and there is no uniformity.

The company claimed that some local government authority officials have their own companies for revenue collection. This brings about conflicts of interest and unfair competition vis-à-vis the private sector. What can complicate the situation greatly is that most local government authorities do not know their revenue sources and revenue payers. This makes it almost impossible to estimate potential revenues before outsourcing revenue seedbeds. Max Malipo offered a means – a smart tool – to resolve this difficulty by using a questionnaire that would collect the information on available businesses, identify properties and mark all businesses. If local government authorities do not know their sources of revenues, the private sector collector has to identify them. In this scenario, the private sector can apply pressure to the local government authorities. Due to lack of revenue data, baselines cannot be established and therefore growth cannot be scientifically established in absence of adequate and reliable baselines. Max Malipo published the information that it has spent over 150,000,000 Tshs to collect the data on tax payers only in Kinondoni. local government authorities are not ready to pay for such investment costs.

Maxcom/Max Malipo's new ICT system is not accepted everywhere because it brings transparency and makes revenue evasion difficult. A particular drawback is that there is no centralized revenue procurement system for local government authorities; therefore Max Malipo has to visit each local government authority physically. According to the company, there is nepotism/corruption in some local government authorities leading to a situation in which unqualified revenue collectors get contracts that may be withdrawn in the future. Max Malipo indicated that Morogoro Municipality had to drop a revenue collector earlier due to inadequate capabilities.

Local government authorities are faced with poor human resource capabilities on PPP issues in general and PPP involvement with revenue collection in particular. There is inadequate innovation on the part of some local government authorities; an unwieldy bureaucracy in the whole procurement process; and late payment after services have been delivered. Local government authorities simply seem not to be thinking in a private sector/business minded way. They are not integrating into their organizational fabric the whole Max Malipo system: they are operating in piecemeal fashion with Max Malipo's technology. It is not an exaggeration to say that some local government authority officials are not dynamic.

## **7. Innovative PPP Ideas: The Case of Tandahimba**

Investigation has disclosed that in Tandahimba there emerged a PPP idea to construct a parking place for lorries that visit the Council to buy cashew nuts. It was estimated that there are over 300 lorries in the Tandahimba District Council between September and January each year for buying cashew nuts. This is a very good source of revenue if they can be made to park in designated and specially constructed areas and then proceed to pay the parking fee. The law allows the Tandahimba District Council to charge parking fees, but it has no specific parking areas.

Other ideas include the construction of modern markets at Tandahimba township, Luhagale, Kiatama, Mahuta and Mchichira. Mahuta and Tandahimba are town authorities. Therefore they have

a lot of business potential. Markets will boost the council’s revenue.

Another very innovative idea is to make investments in income-generating enterprises outside Tandahimba. There has been an idea to buy land in Mtwara town and invest massively in real estate that could give rise to an ultramodern hotel, shopping malls and other hospitable, income-generating facilities. The facilities in question cannot be constructed in Tandahimba because of the remoteness of the Council in relation to the envisaged market/customers for these facilities. The investments would substantially fortify and stabilize the council’s income – an income which currently could evaporate if there were no cashew nuts.

The Tandahimba District Council has thought about constructing real estate (e.g., a hotel) which a private sector would be able to rent and operate at a fee that would go to the Council. The idea was to buy a plot in Mtwara town for a four-star hotel, build a structure or invite a private sector to build according to a PPP model. As noted in the case of Mtwara Mikindani, Mtwara is rapidly expanding because of a number of factors such as the oil and gas economy, the Dangote cement factory, and so forth.

## **8. Utilization of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV)**

Among the main reasons for the success of PPP projects has been the creation of a separate commercial venture in the form of a Special Purpose Vehicle enterprise. The SPV provides a good framework for raising funds, linking participants with each other according to a legal format and assuring supply, production and marketing. It brings together various parties like financial institutions, public sector suppliers and the private sector.<sup>10</sup> The SPV venture assists to a remarkable degree the transparent operation of PPPs at the local level. A case study of an SPV-assisted PPP was done at the Msamvu bus terminal construction site in Morogoro. Here is a brief presentation of the case:

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<sup>10</sup> See <https://ideas.repec.org/a/umk/journal/v2y2010i1p64-88.html> for details.

### *SPV: The Case of the Msamvu Properties Company in Morogoro*<sup>11</sup>

As partly outlined in the Morogoro Municipal Council PPP projects, the purpose of this SPV was to bring to fruition the Msamvu ultramodern bus terminal. The purpose of the company has been to build the stand and operate it for the foreseeable future as a legal entity. It is a joint venture company between the Morogoro Municipal Council and the LAPF (40:60% shares). The company was established in 2009; operations began in 2010. The Morogoro Municipal Council contributed the capital: 4.5 acres of land that formerly was the bus stand. It is valued at 5 billion Tshs. The total capital of the company is 40 billion Tsh. LAPF is the developer of the property: there are two phases to the property development.

The company has a board of six directors, three from the Morogoro Municipal Council and three from LAPF. The Director General of LAPF is the board director and his deputy is the municipal director. The board meets at least four times annually and has a company secretary. Management is part of the secretariat. The manager oversees the daily activities of the company. He is independent of the Morogoro Municipal Council and the LAPF. Nevertheless, the manager was a former employee of LAPF.

#### ***Benefits***

The advantages for having the SPV include the following:

- ❖ The Morogoro Municipal Council did not have the capital necessary to invest in the property (35 billion Tshs). The PPP made it possible to raise the capital, while the Council contributed in kind 4.5 acres of land.
- ❖ It is now able to avoid interference from politics.
- ❖ LAPF gets funds from investments. The principal business that LAPF conducts concerns pensions, i.e., meeting long-term liabilities.

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<sup>11</sup> The presentation of the Msamvu Properties Company in Morogoro is entirely based on an in-depth interview with the Company's manager in December 2015.

- ❖ The Morogoro Municipal Council now gets more revenues than before the company started to manage the terminal. Before the PPP the stand used to give the Council only 300,000 Tshs per day, but now under the PPP, the collection is 1,500,000 Tshs daily.
- ❖ There are direct and indirect forms of employment by means of which people at the Morogoro Municipal Council are given work at the construction site; there are a total of eight (8) revenue collectors that the company has employed.
- ❖ The company pays tax to the government (over 20,000,000 Tshs per year). When the Council was doing the collecting, the company was not paying tax.
- ❖ The company pays advertisement fees to the Morogoro Municipal Council (8000 Tshs per square metre per month),
- ❖ The company pays allowances to the Council health officer involved in cleaning the terminal.
- ❖ The company pays the Council a garbage collection fee for cleaning the stand at 15,000 Tshs per trip in for a total of at least six trips per week.
- ❖ The Council gets dividends from the SPV. It has about 500,000,000 Tshs in a fixed deposit as an investment to be divided between the SPV and shareholders.

### *Challenge: Understanding the Notion of an SPV*

Among the challenges facing the SPV is that some politicians and other people do not understand the SPV concept and therefore demand reports from the company as if it were a public (local government authority) company.

## **9. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **9.1 Conclusions**

Based on the study that informs this essay, a number of conclusions may be drawn.

- ❖ PPPs in local government authorities in Tanzania have existed even before the 2009 Policy.

- ❖ PPPs are potentially very beneficial for the local government authorities.
- ❖ There are a number of challenges that local government authorities face when undertaking PPP projects.

## 9.2 Recommendations

Based on the study that informs this essay, a number of recommendations may be offered:

- There is a need to address all the challenges that local governments face in the context of PPPs including shortening the time frame for the PPP processes on the part of the central government when local government authorities have designed projects already in place.
- There is a need for capacity building /training on key PPP issues related to local government authorities for all stakeholders (politicians, local government authority staff, and others).
- There is a need to review the laws that give councillors too much power in their rapport with experts within the local government authority milieu.
- The local government authority's procedure for entering a PPP follows a very long channel which can be time-consuming, unnecessarily bureaucratic, and somewhat discouraging. This should be shortened.
- There is a need to open the door for private sector participation in the council decision-making meetings on PPP matters. Currently the private sector seems to have no voice in the PPP decision-making process.

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# **THEOLOGY & CULTURE**

## **Romans 3:21-26: The Meaning of the Gospel as the Revelation of God's Righteousness**

**Leonce F. Rambau, CSSp**

Department of Theology and Religious Studies  
Jordan University College

### **Introduction**

According to his Letters and to the Acts of the Apostles, prior to his encounter with the Risen Lord, Paul was a very zealous Jewish person who observed the Torah with fervour. Out of his zeal, he persecuted the members of the fledgling Christian community, even to the point of trying to destroy it (cf. Gal 1:13; 1 Cor 15:9; Phil 3:6). Paul probably participated in the persecution of early Christians in the area of Jerusalem (cf. Acts 8:3; 9:1-2; 22:3-5, 19; 29:9-11). The First Letter to the Thessalonians 2:14 attests to Christian persecutions in Jerusalem. However, Paul's life changed completely after he had an experience of a theophany at or near Damascus. This incident is recounted in both Paul's Letters and Acts. In Galatians 1:13-17 and Acts 9:1-9, we read that the Risen Lord appeared to Paul (see also 1 Cor 9:1; 15:8). This incident consisted of a theophany, a visible manifestation of the Divine by means of a great light and a voice from heaven.

Paul characterized this encounter as an appearance of the Risen Lord, a continuation of a whole series of Resurrection appearances (cf. 1 Cor 15:8; Gal 1:15-16). Through this encounter, Paul came to believe in Jesus as the Christ and as the Risen Lord. As Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI states, in this incident, "the Risen Christ appears as a brilliant light and speaks to Saul, transforms his

thinking and his entire life.”<sup>1</sup> Through this encounter, Paul received his mission in life, namely, a call to be an apostle to the Gentiles. Paul will ground his Christian faith, his mission and his message in this encounter.

According to Pope Benedict XVI, “Saint Paul was transformed not by a thought, but by an event, by the irresistible presence of the Risen One whom subsequently he would never be able to doubt, so powerful had been the evidence of the event, of this encounter. It radically changed Paul’s life in a fundamental way; in this sense one can and must speak of a conversion.”<sup>2</sup>

In this encounter, Paul received, by means of revelation, the Gospel he was to preach. Paul insists on several occasions that he received the Gospel he was to preach through a revelation, and not from human beings: “For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal 1:11-12).

Regarding the content of that Gospel, Paul describes it as follows: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, ‘The one who is righteous will live by faith’” (Rom 1:16-17). Thus, Paul characterized the Gospel that he preached as a revelation of God’s righteousness through the passion and death of Christ. This is the Gospel that Paul expounds in his Letter to the Romans.

One key text that summarizes this Gospel is Romans 3:21-26.

The present essay critically discusses the text of Romans 3:21-26, which is the core of Paul’s teaching of the Gospel as the Revelation of God’s Righteousness.

In the first part, this essay shall offer the background to the text. Accordingly, it shall situate the text within its broader and immediate contexts of Paul’s Letter to the Romans, as an attempt

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<sup>1</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Saint Paul: General Audiences July 2, 2008–February 4, 2009*, San Francisco: Ignatius 2009, 22.

<sup>2</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Saint Paul*, 22.

to show that the text under study is at the centre of Paul's thought throughout the letter. By means of a literary analysis, the essay shall present the critical text, its stylistic characteristics, its form and its structure. Then the article shall attempt an exercise in redaction criticism to show that Paul incorporated a pre-existent formula into this text.

In the second part, this work shall offer an exegesis of the text of Romans 3:21-26 in an attempt to establish the meaning of the revelation of God's righteousness, a righteousness that carries with it the implication of salvation for all.

In the third part, the work shall synthesize our findings, presenting Paul's teaching about the triune God, about the incarnate divine person Jesus, and about human beings.

## **1. Background to Romans 3:21-26**

Paul had been intending to visit Rome in order to get the support of the Roman Christians for his mission plans of reaching Spain (Rom 15:24). Jerome Neyrey suggests that since he had an unfavorable reputation and therefore anticipated opposition in Rome, he wrote the Letter to the Romans in order to recommend himself to the Church there.<sup>3</sup> In the letter, he systematically presented his "Gospel of God" in order clear all the accusations which had been circulating against him, and hence to convince the Christians in Rome of the orthodoxy and legitimacy of the Gospel he was preaching.<sup>4</sup> Romans 3:21-26 is the core of this message.

### **1.1 Remote/Broader Context of Romans 3:21-26**

The text under study expounds Paul's thesis in the Letter to the Romans, that is, that God's righteousness has been revealed through the expiatory death of Jesus Christ. His righteousness is now accessible to all who have faith in Jesus. Paul introduces this theme in 1:16-17, i.e., at the beginning of the doctrinal section of

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. J. NEYREY, *Render to God: New Testament Understandings of the Divine*, Minneapolis: Fortress 2004, 107-108.

<sup>4</sup> K.P. DONFRIED, ed., *The Romans Debate*, Peabody: Hendrickson 1991, 333.

the letter 1:16–11:36, as a *propositio*:<sup>5</sup> “For I am not ashamed of the gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, ‘He who through faith is righteous shall live.’” Then he develops his theme both negatively and positively as follows:

- In a negative way, Paul explains what happens to humanity without the Gospel (1:18–3:20). Without the Gospel, all humanity, both the Jewish people and the Gentiles, are under the influence of sin; God is just in punishing. Here is what Byrne has to say: “What will be required at the eschatological judgment is righteousness. ... 1:18–3:20 has shown the complete lack of righteousness on the human side, even for those [the Jews] who possess the law. The entire world (Jewish as well as Gentiles) stands unrighteous before God, a situation which ‘establishes’ rather than derogates from God’s own righteousness.”<sup>6</sup>
- In contrast, in 3:21–11:36, Paul explains positively how in the Gospel, God’s righteousness has been manifested through Christ, a righteousness which is accessible to all, for it is no longer based on the law but on faith. Paul presents the ‘Gospel of God’, which – according to Fitzmyer – is “salvation for all human beings by grace through faith in

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<sup>5</sup> Paul organizes Romans in a logical manner, with the beginning, middle and the end. Scholars have discovered that, rhetorically, it can be divided as follows: 1. Romans 1:1-12 is *exordium* (the author establishes relationship with his audience). 2. Romans 1:13-15 is *narratio* (background to the argument). 3. Romans 1:16-17 is *propositio* (short statement of the thesis). 4. Romans 1:18–11:36 (or 15:13) is *probatio* (the main section of the letter; the body, where the author argues his thesis, presenting proof for the thesis. This is where our text falls). 5. Romans 15:14–16:23 is *peroratio* (conclusion, which appeals to the audience to accept the viewpoint of the author). 6. Romans 16:25-27 is the final doxology. Cf. R. JEWETT, *Romans*. HCHCB, Minneapolis: Fortress 2007, 29.

<sup>6</sup> B. BYRNE, *Romans*. Sacra Pagina 6, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1996, 122.

Christ Jesus and what he has achieved for humanity.”<sup>7</sup> Thus, the passage under study is “the key to the structure and thought of the letter.”<sup>8</sup> It not only repeats the theme stated at 1:16-17 in v. 21 but also expands it. It summarizes the whole of 1:18–3:20 in vv. 22d-23; and the rest of the letter grows from it.

According to Neyrey, both the negative and positive expositions of the theme are based on the understanding of the two attributes of God in the Letter to the Romans: God as the Just One who punishes sinners and God as the One who is Merciful.<sup>9</sup> Neyrey says:

‘But’ says Paul, ‘the righteousness of God has been manifested’ (3:21). What follows stands in opposition to what preceded it: since ‘all sin and fall short of the glory of God,’ the only exit from this impasse can be a display of the attribute of mercy. In my view the argument in Romans from 3:21 through 8:39 proclaims and explains the character of this attribute of mercy, and thus tells us about the nature of God.<sup>10</sup>

Thus, in the first part (1:18–3:20) the emphasis is on God’s just judgment; and in the second part (3:21–8:39) the emphasis is on God’s mercy, i.e., God’s action in Jesus Christ to justify all who believe. Reumann proposes that the text under study “is related to the theme at 1:16-17; it is contrasted to the long section on the sinfulness of all humanity (1:18–3:20); and it is a section out of which the rest of the epistle grows (cc 4–11) or on which it depends (12:1f).”<sup>11</sup>

The theme of justification by faith apart from the law, is Paul’s concern in Galatians. In a polemical way, Paul states there that God justifies human beings through faith in Jesus, and not through the

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<sup>7</sup> J. FITZMYER, *Romans, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 33, New York: Doubleday 1993, 341.

<sup>8</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 342. ‘Faith in Jesus’ or ‘faith of Jesus.’ We shall treat the problem in the second part of this work.

<sup>9</sup> NEYREY, *Render to God*, 113.

<sup>10</sup> NEYREY, *Render to God*, 120.

<sup>11</sup> J. REUMANN, “The Gospel of the Righteousness of God: Pauline Reinterpretation in Romans 3:21–28”, *Interpretation* 20 (1980) 432.

works of the law (Gal 2:16-20, 3:1–4:7).<sup>12</sup> Thus in Galatians, Paul has a more negative understanding of the law. In Romans, however, where Paul systematically develops the theme of justification through faith in Jesus, he ends up taking a more positive approach to the law.

## 1.2 Immediate Context of Romans 3:21-26

In the passages that precede 3:21-26, that is to say, 3:1-8 and 3:9-20, Paul contrasts human sinfulness with God's justice. God relates to the sinners as a judge. In Byrne's words, "Human sinfulness served only to enhance the righteousness and fidelity of God (3:3-6)."<sup>13</sup> The implication is that, by virtue of God's justice, all humanity deserves punishment; God's judgment is an act of a righteous judge upon sinful humanity.

Byrne notes, however, that in 3:21-26, "God is displaying righteousness in a way that saves rather than condemns, and He does so without any injury to the principle that righteousness on the part of human beings is required for the establishment and salvation of the eschatological people of God."<sup>14</sup>

Verse 21 marks this shift from the focus on human sinfulness to the focus on God's action on behalf of sinful humanity. According to J. Dunn, the shift in the argument is decisive: the point of concentration is now "the eschatological state of affairs brought about by Christ."<sup>15</sup> The reference to the law in both vv. 20 and 21 not only connects the two parts, but also brings out this contrast

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<sup>12</sup> R. HAYS, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1–4*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 2002, 157.

<sup>13</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 123.

<sup>14</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 123. The editor notes that Paul never used the expression "eschatological people of God". Later in this article the author will offer the very important observation that for Paul the "righteousness on the part of human beings" is a graced righteousness. This is to say that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit renders the People of God to be a universal sacrament of salvation (cf. Rom 5:15-19; LG 48). In her identity as a universal sacrament of salvation the People of God, i.e., the Church, lives not according to the flesh but in the grace of the Holy Spirit and so may be conceived as eschatological by nature in her pilgrim path on earth unto eternity (cf. also LG 9).

<sup>15</sup> J. D. DUNN, *Romans 1–8*. WBC 38A, Dallas: Word Books 1988, 161.

with clarity. 'No one will be justified ... *by works of the law*' (v. 20) is a declarative statement that concentrates on the futility of the law for those who seek justification by works of the law. The clause 'God's righteousness is revealed ... *apart from the law*' (v. 21), on the other hand, alludes to the fact that the law does not have the final word about the revelation of God's righteousness.

Dunn suggests that in vv. 21-26, Paul is conveying the doctrine that "Jesus' sacrificial death provides a different criterion for the understanding of God's righteousness; the one God must by definition be concerned for Gentiles as well as Jews."<sup>16</sup> In relation to the subsequent passage (3:27-31), Paul continues to expound the thesis by repeating its basic ideas but in a diatribe style and in a polemical way.

In 3:21-26, Paul explains that, while the justification in Christ is not based on the law, the law bears witness to it (v. 23). Paul will take up the notion of the scriptural witness to righteousness by faith and develop it in chapter 4, where he will show that the law and the prophets all give witness that Abraham received the promise containing salvation for all on the basis of righteousness through faith rather than through obedience to the law.<sup>17</sup> Hays points out that Paul is thinking in terms of a chronology of events: "Abraham received circumcision after faith was reckoned to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6), not before, in order that he might be the symbolic father figure both of Gentile believers and of circumcised believers (Rom 4:9-12)."<sup>18</sup>

From this survey of scholarly opinions on the part of those who have examined the text, we see that the text under study stands at the centre of Paul's thought and articulated convictions. Given this fact, we expect Paul to formulate the text in a manner that cultivates and fortifies the convictions of his audience(s). This we shall examine in the next section.

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<sup>16</sup> DUNN, *Romans 1-8*, 161.

<sup>17</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 124.

<sup>18</sup> R. HAYS, "Pistis (Faith) and Pauline Christology", in E. Johnson – *al.*, eds., *Pauline Theology IV*, Minneapolis: Fortress 1997, 48.

## 1.3 Literary Analysis, Form and Structure of Romans 3:21-26

### 1.3.1 Literary Analysis

<sup>3:21</sup> But now the **righteousness of God** has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, <sup>22</sup> **the righteousness of God** through faith of Jesus Christ for **ALL** who believe. For there is no distinction; <sup>23</sup> since **ALL** have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> they are **justified** by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, by virtue of his own faith. This was to show **God's righteousness**, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; <sup>26</sup> it was a manifestation at the present time that **he himself is righteous** and that he **justifies** him who has the faith of Jesus.<sup>19</sup>

Since Romans is a work of Christian rhetoric, a work that aims to persuade, this text uses many rhetorical techniques. There is a frequent occurrence of the term ‘righteousness of God’ (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ) or its variants, (6 times)<sup>20</sup> and ‘faith in (faithfulness of) Jesus Christ’ (3 times). These concepts will be the major focus of Paul’s argument. Repetition of words not only gives emphasis, but also implicitly contains a commentary and augments the shades of meaning. Besides that, Paul expresses himself antithetically (righteousness of God vs. law), and plays on various meanings of the word ‘law’ (v. 21).<sup>21</sup>

This text has a unique literary style. According to Jewett, it “departs from the immediate style of the preceding sections of Romans and moves into the grand or elegant style with ‘extended periodic syntax’ that fuses the entire pericope into a single sentence.”<sup>22</sup> Byrne points out that the only genuine declarative statement is in verse 21: “But now the righteousness of God has

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<sup>19</sup> Our critical text is adapted from RSV, FITZMYER (*Romans*, 341) and NEYREY (unpublished materials).

<sup>20</sup> This rhetoric feature called *paronomasia*, means recurrence of the same word/word stem in close proximity. JEWETT, *Romans*, 269.

<sup>21</sup> In the first instance ‘law’ means the deeds prescribed by the law, while in the second he refers to the Pentateuch/Torah.

<sup>22</sup> JEWETT, *Romans*, 296. Most of this style is lost in English translation.

been manifested apart from law.” Apart from vv. 22d-23 (which sum up 1:18–3:20), everything else is appended to it either as participles or infinitive clauses.<sup>23</sup> This unique style catches the attention of the reader; it is a proper style for the vivid exposition of an elevated subject matter.

Paul appeals to traditional faith by quoting a Christological formula in vv. 24-26. In a book edited by Donfried, one reads that it is a kerygmatic style, through which “Paul expounds the meaning of the Christ–event as he understands it in the light of earlier Christian traditions.”<sup>24</sup> By appealing to the traditional faith confession, Paul means to convince the Romans of the orthodoxy of ‘his Gospel,’ which he elaborates in this text.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, all these stylistic rhetorical features in one passage highlight the significance of what Paul is saying.

### 1.3.2 Structure and Form of the Text

Paul uses a chiasmic structure in 3:21-26. B. Byrne discerns this distinct structural pattern in the text: “Double assertions of the ‘revelation (vv. 21-22c) or ‘demonstration (vv. 25b-26) of God’s righteousness ‘frame’ a central proclamation of God’s justification of the believer in virtue of the death of Jesus Christ, operative as a ‘means of expiation (vv. 24-25a)’”<sup>26</sup> This forms a chiasmic pattern as follows:

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<sup>23</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 122-123.

<sup>24</sup> DONFRIED, *The Romans Debate*, 253. The editor notes that some students of Scripture use the term “Christ-event” in their books and articles, but it is technically not a biblical term, and Paul certainly would never have used it. Paul experienced and preached Jesus Christ crucified – and risen – as a person, not as an event.

<sup>25</sup> According to Jewett (*Romans*, 24), the citation of creedal formulations is one of the rhetorical devices found in Romans: “These citations reveal the rhetorical effort to find common ground with various groups of believers in Rome, and to avoid the impression that Paul’s theology is eccentric in comparison with the faith held in common by other believers”. Similarly, Paul appeals to the Scriptures in v. 21.

<sup>26</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 123.

- A 21-22c      *revelation of God's righteousness*  
                   [22d-23]      summary of 1:18–3:20 (all are sinful)  
 B 24-25a      **God justifying** through expiatory death of Christ  
 A<sup>1</sup> 25b-26      *demonstration of God's righteousness*

From this structure, God's initiative on behalf of the sinful humanity (God's righteousness) stands out as the central argument of the text. This is the essence of Paul's 'Gospel of God's righteousness.'

As to the form of the text, it is part of the *probatio*, a part of the middle section/body of the letter. In it, Paul expounds his theme and provides the evidence for the case he is discussing.

#### 1.4 Source/Redaction Analysis

Most scholars agree that in Romans 3:21-26 Paul incorporates an earlier Christian tradition.<sup>27</sup> However, there is a dispute as to whether this formula starts from vv. 24-26, or from vv. 25-26.<sup>28</sup> It is Paul's method throughout his letters to quote a traditional formula known to his readers, and then reinterpret it or formulate the expression of his personal convictions upon it (see 1 Cor 15:3-5, 1 Thess 4:13f; 4:14). This is what Paul does here. We take the view that the pre-Pauline formula is found in vv. 24-26, because there are many features indicating so, as follows:

Verse 24 does not continue from verse 23; it starts abruptly with a participle (*δικαιούμενοι*) without any conjunction at all, instead of a coordinated indicative, as if from another context.<sup>29</sup> The passage contains many terms which are found only here in Pauline letters (Pauline *hapax legomena*).<sup>30</sup> Other indications for pre-Pauline composition are repetition of phrases that are redundant

<sup>27</sup> Some scholars, on stylistic grounds, think that the text is more of Pauline composition, while some others argue for a wholly Pauline composition, which uses traditional language. But so far, the commonly held view is that of a pre-Pauline formula. FITZMYER, *Romans*, 343.

<sup>28</sup> DUNN, *Romans 1-8*, 164.

<sup>29</sup> REUMANN, "The Gospel of the Righteousness of God," 435.

<sup>30</sup> These words are; *προτίθεμαι* (found also 5:13 but with a different sense), *ἰλαστήριον*, *ἔνδειξις*, (found also in 2 Cor 8:24) *πάρεσις*, *προγίνομαι*, and *ἀμάρτημα*, all in v. 25, and *ἀνοχη*, in v 26. DUNN, *Romans 1-8*, 164.

like ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ in vv. 25 and 26, and in v. 24 we have δωρεάν (free gift) and τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι (by his grace), both of which carry the same meaning.

Thus, apparently Paul took a formula which reflected the early Christian claim that “Christ’s death, a sacrifice for sins provided by God in accordance with the Law, is God’s means of extending his righteousness to all who believe (including those outside the Law).”<sup>31</sup> Paul then, modified this formula by “insertion of the phrases ‘through faith’ in v. 25b and ‘in order to demonstrate his righteousness’ in v. 25c.”<sup>32</sup> This is what makes the text such difficult reading, as we shall see in the exegesis, which follows.

## 2. Exegesis of Romans 3:21-26

### 2.1 Revelation of the Righteousness of God (Rom 3:21-22c)

V. 21–22c Νυνὶ δὲ χωρὶς νόμου δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ πεφανέρωται μαρτυρουμένη ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν <sup>22</sup>δικαιοσύνη δὲ θεοῦ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς πάντα τοὺς πιστεύοντας. (But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, <sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith [in] Jesus Christ for all who believe).

‘But now’: In Paul (cf. 7:17, 1 Cor 12:18), this phrase marks a logical contrast, with a temporal reference. It marks a significant textual transition point, for it contrasts what is to be said with what has been said in 1:18–3:20. It marks also a new stage in salvation history, a new aeon of divine righteousness which replaces the old aeon characterized by the law and the promises, divine wrath and humanity under the reign of sin. It is a boundary marker of ‘God’s map of times.’<sup>33</sup>

<sup>31</sup> DUNN, *Romans 1–8*, 164.

<sup>32</sup> JEWETT, *Romans*, 271.

<sup>33</sup> According to Neyrey, in Romans, time is divided as follows: the time of the First Adam (creation until the Fall, in which Adam enjoyed immortality and friendship with God), the time of the Second Adam (from the Fall until the coming of Christ, in which humanity was characterized by sinfulness and death) and the time of the New Adam, (the coming of Christ, humanity

χωρὶς νόμου is variously translated as ‘independently from the law’ or apart from the law.<sup>34</sup> It is synonymous with χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου – apart from deeds of the law (3:20, 28; Gal 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10), thus ‘without any recourse to the deeds prescribed by the law.’ Paul speaks of the law in so far as it acts as “a boundary marker (those within the law), where ‘works of the law’ is the distinctive pattern of religion and lifestyle demanded of those marked out by the law.”<sup>35</sup> Paul affirms that ‘now’ God has revealed his righteousness outside these boundaries.

δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ πεφανέρωται, i.e., God’s righteousness (in contrast with the wrath of God in 1:18) has been revealed – made public, made known – in the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It has “become visible historically in the Christ event.”<sup>36</sup>

The meaning of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is much debated. The phrase is a *crux interpretum*. The genitive θεοῦ can be translated as subjective, i.e., a possessive that may refer to God’s own righteousness, a quality of his being, or of his activity. It can also be an objective genitive, referring to a status given by God, the righteous status of human beings that God grants them, a status given by God to human beings as a grace, or righteousness as a state of validity before God.<sup>37</sup> Grammatically, each of the meanings is possible. However, which one did Paul intend here? Various authors opine that in Romans 3:5, Paul intends a subjective sense; and they render the opinion that he probably intends the same sense in 3:21, 22, 25, 26, and indeed, the rest of the Letter to

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restored to righteousness). For parallels in Galatians, see NEYREY, *Render to God*, 103.

<sup>34</sup> Law has many meanings, and Paul moves from one meaning to another quite often. It can mean the Pentateuch (3:21), the whole Scripture (3:31), or even the book Genesis (4:1-25), ‘works of the law,’ that is, the system of the 613 laws. It can refer to the principle, rationale for how the world works (3:27, 7:23), among others (Neyrey, unpublished materials), among others.

<sup>35</sup> DUNN, *Romans 1–8*, 165.

<sup>36</sup> JEWETT, *Romans*, 273.

<sup>37</sup> D. MOO, *The Epistle to the Romans*. NICNT, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1996, 71, FITZMYER, *Romans*, 105-107, 257-264, esp. 105.

the Romans.<sup>38</sup> A common opinion is that elsewhere (e.g., 2 Cor 5: 21f; Phil 3:9) Paul intends the objective sense.

If we agree that Paul intends the subjective sense in Romans, particularly in 3:21-26, then one can feasibly place the phrase within the literary milieu of the OT. In the pre-exilic OT, God is considered *saddiq* (upright, just as in Deut 33:2): "*Sedeq or sadaqah* express the quality whereby the Lord, involved in a lawsuit (*rib*) with the rebellious Israel, judges it and displays his 'uprightness' in doing so (cf. Isa 3:13; Jer 12:1; Hos 4:1-2; 12:3; Mic 6:2)."<sup>39</sup> It is a quality of God manifested in judicial activity: God judges with uprightness i.e., justly. However, in post-exilic times, *sedeq* is portrayed as a divine quality whereby God acquits his people, manifesting towards them a gracious, salvific power by means of a just judgment that finds its *raison d'être* in his divine mercy (cf. Isa 16:13; 51:5, 6, 8; Ps 40:9-10).

It is suggested, therefore, that Paul adopts this post-exilic understanding in Romans—δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ. Taken subjectively, it denotes an attribute, a quality, a property of God. It brings to light an attribute of God's power:<sup>40</sup> God is a just judge, who exercises his judgment in acquitting, not punishing. "God manifests it towards humanity when through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ he brings about the vindication and acquittal of sinful human beings. It is a manifestation of God's saving and acquitting power."<sup>41</sup> This is mercy. Thus, forensically speaking, the term has strong legal and judicial connotations that unavoidably lie

<sup>38</sup> For example, Byrne, Dunn, and Fitzmyer espouse this opinion.

<sup>39</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 106

<sup>40</sup> NEYREY, *Render to God*, 115-120

<sup>41</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 106-107. The editor notes that when the scholar turns his or her attention to the authoritative interpreter of Scripture one finds the following brief commentary on the judgment that vindicates and acquits through Jesus' death and resurrection: "The divine justice revealed in the cross of Christ is "to God's measure," because it springs from love and is accomplished in love, producing fruits of salvation. The divine dimension of redemption is put into effect not only by bringing justice to bear upon sin, but also by restoring to love that creative power in man thanks also to which he once more has access to the fullness of life and holiness that come from God. In this way, redemption involves the revelation of mercy in its fullness" (John Paul II, *Dives in Misericordia*, 7).

embedded in divine mercy.<sup>42</sup> We take this as the meaning of the phrase throughout 3:21-26.

μαρτυρουμένη ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν. By ‘law and prophets,’ Paul refers to the OT, that is to say, to the Scripture as a whole.<sup>43</sup> The OT is the witness, as it prepared for the new disclosure of God’s righteousness (cf. Gal 3:23-25). The OT inclined prophetically towards the announcement that God would fulfill his salvific promises; and it looked forward to the day when they will become a reality. Here Paul rhetorically plays on different meanings of ‘law.’ Accordingly, Byrne suggests that “in referring ‘law’ now to a portion of Scripture (the Pentateuch) whereas earlier in the sentence it clearly designated a way of life or prescribed code of behavior, Paul is exploiting the ambiguity of the term *nomos* (see 3:27; 7:21-23).”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Historically, this phrase has been a bone of contention, both in translation and interpretation. In the Vulgate it is translated as *iustitia Dei*, and the English translations which follow the Vulgate render it as ‘justice of God.’ According to FITZMYER, (*Romans*, 257-264), some have understood this to mean God’s distributive or retributive justice, especially his punitive or vindictive justice. Augustine spoke of both a subjective and objective sense: “*Iustitia Dei*, not only that justice by which he himself is just, but also that which he gives to a human being, when he justifies the impious” (*ibid.*, 259). The understanding of this term was at the centre of arguments between the Protestants and Catholics during the Reformation. Luther understood it in objective sense, that is to say, the righteousness of God as the righteousness that a human being enjoys as a gift from God, while the Council of Trent took up the Augustinian view, embracing both the subjective and objective meaning. These understandings have persisted up to the modern times.

<sup>43</sup> Paul affirms that the Scriptures bear witness to the truth of what he is saying – a rhetorical device by which a proclaimer incorporates into his affirmations an authoritative source as a witness. Earlier on, Paul had quoted Habakkuk 2:4 (in 1:17) in connection to the revelation of God’s righteousness. But he will show clearly how the Law and the prophets witnessed to God’s righteousness apart from the Law in chapter 4. DUNN, *Romans 1–8*, 165. Some modern authors (MOO, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 74) still hold that Paul intends both senses in Romans; thus, ‘righteousness of God’ brings together the aspects of God’s activity and a status in human beings.

<sup>44</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 130.

διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ literally 'through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.' This is another *crux interpretum*. There is a dispute as to the sense of the genitive (Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). It can be translated subjectively as 'faithfulness of Jesus Christ' or objectively as 'faith in Jesus Christ.'<sup>45</sup> Most commentators take the objective interpretation of the phrase (also in vv. 25 and 26). J. Fitzmyer represents this position and he argues as follows:

Paul does not draw attention to Christ's faithfulness elsewhere in the extended exposition of Romans, even where it would have been highly appropriate, especially in chap. 4, where Abraham's *pistis* is the model for the believer. Paul is not thinking of Christ's fidelity to the Father; nor does he propose it as a pattern for Christian conduct. Rather, Christ himself is a concrete manifestation of God's uprightness, and human beings appropriate to themselves the effects of that manifested uprightness through faith in him. Indeed, that divine uprightness is apprehended only by those who have the eyes of faith.<sup>46</sup>

Other scholars, however, understand the genitive as subjective for the following reasons. Constructions which have πίστις and a genitive of person always refer to the faithfulness of the individual, and not faith in the individual.<sup>47</sup> For example, in 3:3 πίστις τοῦ θεοῦ means 'faithfulness of God' and not 'faith in God', and in 4:12, πίστεως τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ means 'faithfulness of our father Abraham' and not 'faith in ...' This should also apply to 3:22, 26 and its variant in v. 25. Therefore, a subjective reading [of πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ] is deemed appropriate in vv. 22, 26.<sup>48</sup>

Another reason is that, in 3:21-26 and elsewhere, an "objective interpretation is superfluous in a number of verses (3:22; Gal 2:16; Phil 3:9)."<sup>49</sup> If the phrase were to be translated objectively in v. 22, we would have a redundancy: Why should Paul add 'to all those

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<sup>45</sup> English Bible translations (RSV, NRSV, NAB, JB, NJB etc) render the phrase as 'faith in Jesus,' just as many scholars have. The majority of the scholars we have consulted take this stand. But the subjective reading has gained a strong following recently, as we shall explain below.

<sup>46</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 345.

<sup>47</sup> T.R. SCHREINER, *Romans*, BECNT 6, Grand Rapids: Backer 1998, 181.

<sup>48</sup> SCHREINER, *Romans*, 181.

<sup>49</sup> SCHREINER, *Romans*, 181.

who believe' (εἰς πάντα τοὺς πιστεύοντας) if he has just said 'through faith in Jesus?' On the other hand, a subjective reading would make these two phrases distinct, "with the righteousness of God being revealed through the faithfulness of Jesus, the emphasis of God's gift is maintained."<sup>50</sup> R. Hays argues that, in 3:22, Paul states that God's righteousness is manifested διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. So "it is very difficult to see what possible sense this could make if the phrase is translated as 'through believing in Jesus Christ.' On the other hand, it makes very good sense to say that the righteousness of God is manifested through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ."<sup>51</sup>

Moreover, in v. 25, διὰ τῆς πίστεως is better explained by Christ's faithfulness. Its placement between ἰλαστήριον and ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι, though it makes an extremely difficult reading, favors 'Christ's faithfulness. According to T. R. Schreiner,

The words cannot refer to the faith of Christians because they are bounded on both sides by references to Christ's propitiatory work and his blood. Since both of these describe what Christ has done, it would be awkward to insert a reference the faith of Christians in the middle. The whole unit must refer to what Christ has accomplished on our behalf. Moreover, the objective interpretation faces the daunting task of explaining how the righteousness of God (vv. 21-22) has been manifested through human faith.<sup>52</sup>

Therefore, we hold that most probably Paul meant 'faithfulness of Jesus Christ' in the three instances in 3:21-26. Paul implies that the righteousness of God has been manifested through the faithfulness of Jesus Christ, his fidelity and obedience to the Father, as J. Hays says:

God has solved the problem of human unrighteousness and Israel's unfaithfulness by putting forward as [expiation] the one perfectly faithful human being [who is also the divine Son of God], Jesus, though others rebelled and refused to give glory to God, he

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<sup>50</sup> L.T. JOHNSON, "Romans 3:21-26 and *Pistis Christou*", *CBQ* 44 (1982) 78.

<sup>51</sup> HAYS, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, 158.

<sup>52</sup> SCHREINER, *Romans*, 182.

remained faithful. His death is an act of πίστις—the counterweight to Israel’s ἄπιστία (unfaithfulness)—because it is an act of perfect obedience through which many will be made righteous (5:19), and divine πίστις because it affirms God’s unbreakable love.<sup>53</sup>

Therefore, the faithfulness of Jesus means that Jesus showed fidelity to the Father by “trusting absolutely Him ‘who gives life to the dead and calls into being what does not exist’ (Rom 4:17).”<sup>54</sup>

εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας (for all who believe). The human response to the Gospel is faith. This is the new way of partaking of God’s righteousness, which is open to all; it is no longer confined to the boundaries of the Law. There is no distinction but there is equal opportunity for all human beings. This manifests God’s inclusivity. While in the old aeon, God’s impartiality was manifested in his wrath (1:16), in the new aeon, God’s righteousness is accessible to all who are faithful as Jesus was. To have faith is to be faithful in the same way as Jesus, i.e., by obedience even unto death.

## 2.2 Summary of 1:18–3:20: All Are Sinful (Rom. 3:22d-23)

V. 22c–23 οὐ γάρ ἐστιν διαστολή,<sup>23</sup> πάντες γὰρ ἥμαρτον καὶ ὑστεροῦνται τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ (For there is no distinction;<sup>23</sup> since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God)

This sentence paraphrases all that Paul has explained in 1:18–3:32: the reality of the universality of sin and God’s impartiality in judging sinful humanity. By repeating it here, Paul intends to heighten the contrast between God’s wrath and what is to follow: God’s righteousness. Human beings are all sinners, rebels against God; and their condition can only be cured by God. Dunn contends that Paul’s object was “to destroy the Jewish presumption of special prerogative and defense even before the faithful covenant of God (v. 23). If that special claim on God is not allowed, the way is open for Paul to expound faith as the only means and everywhere, to receive God’s righteousness.”<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup> HAYS, “Pistis (Faith) and Pauline Christology”, 45.

<sup>54</sup> S.K. WILLIAMS, “Again *Pistis Christou*”, *CBQ* 49 (1987) 439.

<sup>55</sup> DUNN, *Romans 1–8*, 167.

ὕστεροῦνται τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ – Fall short; i.e. arrive too late, fail to reach, lack, go without, fail to obtain a goal. Because of sins, human beings have failed to attain the goal that God intended for them—glory (δόξα). In the OT, glory (*kabod*) referred to the beauty, truth and goodness of the Lord’s self–manifestation and the radiant splendor of his presence. Fitzmeyer suggests that in relation to human beings, it is “the enhancing quality of a creature of God as well as the eschatological condition destined for human beings. It is thought of as being communicated to them as they draw close to God (5:2; 8:18, 21, etc.). Estranged from the intimate presence of God by sin, they have been deprived of that enhancing quality which they should have in this life as well as that for which they are destined eschatologically in the presence of God.”<sup>56</sup> This is the characteristic of humanity after the Fall, which has been reversed ‘now,’ with the coming of Christ.<sup>57</sup>

### 2.3 God Justifying Action through the Expiatory Death of Christ (Rom 3:24-25a)

Vv. 24-25a <sup>24</sup>δικαιούμενοι δωρεάν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.<sup>25</sup> ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι (<sup>24</sup> they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, by [virtue of his own] faithfulness)

δικαιούμενοι: Paul presents the central theme of the text under study, indeed of the whole letter here, as he expounds the nature of God’s initiative to remedy the sinful condition of humanity. Justification is the first specifying term that Paul uses to describe the transformative effect of Jesus’ expiation on humanity. God declares an acquittal—humanity is both declared and made righteous (cf. 5:19).<sup>58</sup> Humanity is ascribed the status of

<sup>56</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 347.

<sup>57</sup> In other words, human beings may now enter into the beatifying power of God’s glory (ed.)

<sup>58</sup> Does God’s acquittal mean that God ‘covers’ our sins, so that we remain ‘just and sinners at the same time,’ or does it involve ‘inner transformation’ and new life? This question was at the heart of the reformation debate, marking a sharp difference between the Reformers and the Catholic Church.

righteousness before God's tribunal. This is not the status human beings can achieve by their own power or their merit. God himself takes the initiative; it is an unmerited dispensation on the part of God (δωρεάν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι). It is free, *gratis*, given for nothing. It excludes the possibility of meriting it by one's own efforts (like observing the 'works of the law').<sup>59</sup> It is God's benefaction to humanity, his altruistic generosity.

διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρόσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. Redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις) is the second term that Paul uses here to specify the transformative effect of Jesus' crucifixion on humanity. It literally means deliverance, liberation. In secular Greek and extra biblical literature, it referred to ransoming from slavery of the captives of war and prisoners of war.<sup>60</sup> In the NT, it refers to the release from the bondage and captivity created by sin. Thus, by his death on the cross, Jesus Christ has delivered/liberated/emancipated humanity from its sins. This is the early Christian traditional confession which Paul has adopted here.

Contrary to its secular use, in the NT use, suggests Byrne, there is no evidence of 'paying a price.'<sup>61</sup> "No connotation of the payment of a price in exchange of release is present in the NT

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But Paul was using words to specify the transformative effects of Christ's expiatory sacrifice; transformation from a life of sin to a life in the Spirit.

<sup>59</sup> Grace is God's outreach in dynamic power, the unconditional gift of God's creative, saving and sanctifying action. Judaism also saw the covenantal relationship with God as given by grace, an emphasis which Paul does not dispute (11:5). Paul's emphasis here is to correct the overemphasis on law and works of the law, which had obscured this. By setting grace against the law, Paul develops a different understanding of God's covenantal choice and righteousness. DUNN, *Romans 1-8*, 169-169.

<sup>60</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 131. In the OT it occurs in LXX (Dan 4:34 only) and NT in Luke 21:28, 21:28, and Ephesians 1:14, 4:30. But in the OT, it is closely related to λυτῶσις (ransoming), which refers to God as the redeemer of his people from Egyptian slavery (Deut 7:8; 9:26; Ps 25:22, 26; Isa 41:14; 44:22-24). FITZMYER, *Romans* 348.

<sup>61</sup> Against the 'satisfaction theory' that Jesus had to pay a price to God for our sins by his death, to satisfy the wrath of God. Some scholars, e.g., MOO, (*The Epistle to the Romans*, 229) hold this view: "Paul [presents] Christ's death as a 'ransom,' a 'payment' that takes the place of that penalty for sins 'owed' by all people to God."

usage, where the stress upon the divine initiative is so clear. ‘Redemption’ can, however, be presented as ‘costly’ in the sense of involving suffering for its ‘central instrument’ Jesus Christ (1 Cor 6:20, 7:23).<sup>62</sup>

ὄν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἰλαστήριον διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι As we saw earlier on, Paul modified the traditional formula by inserting διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως. Thus, ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι μοδιφισ ἰλαστήριον. According to Johnson then, the sentence could be paraphrased to read: “Through his blood, by virtue of his own faith, God has presented him as ἰλαστήριον”. It would mean that both the faithfulness of Jesus [his obedience] and the pouring out of his blood (his death), together form the act of expiation (διὰ and ἐν are taken as both instrumental).<sup>63</sup>

Προτίθεμαι literally means set forth, present, put forward publicly. It has both aspects of revelation (v. 21) and display. Christ’s death conformed to God’s intent and purpose.

The meaning of ἰλαστήριον is problematic. It is a Pauline *hapax*, (cf. Heb 9:5), part of the early Christian tradition. It is related to ἰλασκεσθαι which means to appease, to propitiate, and which, according to Fitzmyer, was “used of appeasing angry gods in classical and Hellenistic Greek literature.”<sup>64</sup> Thus, for a long time the meaning of the term was understood in this sense: “God has set for Christ as ‘appeasing or as a ‘means of appeasing his own anger or wrath.’”<sup>65</sup> This understanding is no longer held by many scholars, for it is not supported by the LXX OT, where it occurs (Exod 25; Lev 16; Amos 9:1; Ezek 43).

In the OT, it referred to the lid of the Ark of the Covenant, “the mercy seat” or the place of expiation.<sup>66</sup> Thus, Paul uses it here in connection to the ritual of the Day of Atonement (*Yom*

<sup>62</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 131–132.

<sup>63</sup> JOHNSON, “Romans 3:21–26 and *Pistis Christou*,” 80.

<sup>64</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 349.

<sup>65</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 349. This is a classical ‘satisfaction theory.’ Some scholars still hold this theory: “God set [Jesus] forth as a propitiation to satisfy his wrath ...” SCHREINER, *Romans*, 195.

<sup>66</sup> The mercy seat was the gold cover (*kapporet*) which was placed over the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies (Exod 25:17–22).

*hakkippurim*).<sup>67</sup> Accordingly, Fitzmyer suggests that it depicts “Christ as a new ‘mercy seat,’ presented or displayed by the Father as a means of expiating or wiping away the sins of humanity, indeed, as the place of the presence of God, of his revelation, and of his expiating power.”<sup>68</sup> Thus, expiation is the third term Paul uses here to describe the dynamism actuated by Jesus’ crucifixion: through Jesus’ death, God wipes away our sins; we are purified, cleansed by his blood.

διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ ἁματι, i.e., Jesus’ faithfulness, his obedience in accepting death on the cross, his inner disposition as he was dying. L. Johnson understands that this was the disposition of obedience to the Father (cf. Phil 2:6-11),<sup>69</sup> his complete trust that according to the Father’s intention, just as he had the power to lay down his life so he would have the power to raise it up again (cf. John 10:18).<sup>70</sup>

## 2.4 Demonstration of God’s Righteousness (Rom 3:25b-26)

Vv 25b-26 <sup>25</sup>εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ διὰ τὴν πάρεσιν τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων <sup>26</sup>ἐν τῇ ἀνοχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ, πρὸς τὴν ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον καὶ δικαιῶντα τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ. (<sup>25</sup>This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; <sup>26</sup>it was

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<sup>67</sup> This was the day when the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies once per year to offer blood sacrifice for his own sins and the sins of all the Israel (Exod 28; Lev 16:3-10; Num 29:7-11). In this ritual, the High Priest sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice on the mercy seat, for the forgiveness and reconciliation with God. This ritual “came to be seen as the focus of the cleansing and renewing presence of God, on the occasion when God ‘wiped away’ the stain of all the accumulated sins of the previous year, inaugurating a fresh epoch of covenant between Israel and her God (Lev 16:2-16).” BYRNE, *Romans*, 127.

<sup>68</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 349.

<sup>69</sup> JOHNSON, “Romans 3:21–26 and *Pistis Christou*”, 87–90.

<sup>70</sup> NEYREY, *Render to God*, 121.

a manifestation at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus.)<sup>71</sup>

ἔνδειξις here means manifestation, and not proof. The death of Jesus Christ was to reveal, to make known in a new way God's righteousness, the meaning of which we have seen earlier on. Fitzmyer makes the comment that Christ's expiatory death reveals "the Father's bountiful acquittal, and human uprightness flows from the uprightness of God himself."<sup>72</sup>

πάρεσιν (he passed over the sins previously committed). This is another *hapax legomenon* (only here in the NT and nowhere in the LXX). In extra-biblical literature it refers to remission of debts or punishments. Taken in this way, it would mean that Christ's death would have demonstrated the divine righteousness in the fact that God has forgiven the past sins which waited for the great Day of Judgment. But, etymologically, the term is related to παράημι, which means let go, pass over (cf. Luke 11:42; Heb 12:12; Sir 23:2).<sup>73</sup> Thus, the phrase would read "for the sake of the passing over of the bygone sins." Taken in this way, Christ's death *now* demonstrates God's righteousness in *wiping away* sins, in contrast to the *forbearance* which he showed over human sins in the past.<sup>74</sup>

ἐν τῇ ἀνοχῇ τοῦ θεοῦ (divine forbearance, i.e., in the clemency of God, in the merciful delay of God); the fact that God did not punish previous sins was an act of restraint. Up to the coming of Jesus, humanity was under God's wrath, because of its sinfulness, but God did not always exercise his judgment in punishment. Fitzmyer: "God's tolerance was ultimately based on his plan of salvation, according to which he knew that these sins would be expiated through the death of Christ in due time."<sup>75</sup> With the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the time of God's restraint is ended.

<sup>71</sup> Vulgate for verse 26: *in sustentatione Dei, ad ostensionem iustitiae eius in hoc tempore, ut sit ipse iustus et iustificans eum, qui ex fide est Iesu.* (Ed.)

<sup>72</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 351.

<sup>73</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 351

<sup>74</sup> Those who hold the Satisfaction Theory interpret this verse to mean that God had to show righteousness (punitive justice) in the Passion of Christ because neglect of the previously unpunished sins "would seem to indicate divine casualness with respect to human sins." BYRNE, *Romans*, 133.

<sup>75</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 352.

ἐν τῷ νῦν καιρῷ: ‘At the present [right] time’ refers us back to v. 21, (also v. 25). καιρὸς refers to significant moment of time, right time, appointed time, time of opportunity, whose decisions and actions will determine the future. Byrne suggests that the whole phrase “denotes the present time in the sense distinctive of Paul’s eschatology: the time between the resurrection of Christ and the final consummation (cf. 1 Cor 15:23-28).”<sup>76</sup>

Jesus Christ’s death manifested, revealed that God is righteous (εἶς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν δίκαιον). Fitzmyer suggests that through the manifestation of his divine Son Jesus on the Cross, the Father “has vindicated his claim to be the acquitter and saviour of his people (Isa 59:15-20). Thereby he brought humanity into a status of rectitude, innocence, and acquittal ...”<sup>77</sup> This process comes from what God is in himself—righteous, faithful. It is a revelation of the attribute of God as merciful.

δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ literally “and justifying him from/by/through/by virtue of faith in Jesus.” Elsewhere we have seen that ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ refers to ‘faithfulness of Jesus.’ God enables sinful humanity to share in His righteousness which has been manifested by Jesus Christ through his death and resurrection, through remaining faithful as Jesus has. Faith on our part is participation, sharing in the obedient, faithful response of Jesus Christ himself. Williams likes to put it this way: “By standing where Christ stood—before God in total trust and obedience – and by assuming [Jesus’] mode of personal existence, Christians are justified by that faith which derives its very character from his self-giving obedience, that faith which was first his and has now become theirs.”<sup>78</sup> This is the new criterion for righteousness, which is opened for all, whether Jewish people or the Gentiles.

<sup>76</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 134.

<sup>77</sup> FITZMYER, *Romans*, 353.

<sup>78</sup> WILLIAMS, “Again *Pistis Christou*,” 444. The editor notes a variant on the interpretation of faith that connects faith to the truth revealed in Jesus and so enriches the vocabulary of Sam Williams and his professors at Harvard Divinity School: “Faith is said first to be an obedient response to God. This implies that God be acknowledged in his divinity, transcendence and supreme freedom. By the authority of his absolute transcendence, God who makes himself known is the source of the credibility of what he reveals. By faith,

### 3. Interpretation of Romans 1:21-26

In Romans 1:18–3:20, Paul depicts the universal unfaithfulness or sinfulness of humanity. All, without exception, the Jewish people and the Gentiles alike, have sinned and have failed to give honor to God. This is in stark contrast with God’s righteousness; therefore, Hays makes the comment that “the whole world stands under the wrath of God, subject to God’s righteous judgment.”<sup>79</sup> By judging humanity, God is not acting unjustly (3:1-8), but He is acting according to his nature as a just Judge. Neyrey: “God’s judgment is just in rewarding the good and requiting the wicked; but it is also impartial in that God does not favour the Jewish people over the Gentiles. The scenario Paul envisions is that of the great judgment ‘when God will render to every man according to his or her works’ (2:6)–just, impartial judgment.”<sup>80</sup>

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men and women give their *assent* to this divine testimony. This means that they acknowledge fully and integrally the truth of what is revealed because it is God himself who is the guarantor of that truth. They can make no claim upon this truth which comes to them as a gift and which, set within the context of interpersonal communication, urges reason to be open to it and to embrace its profound meaning. This is why the Church has always considered the act of entrusting oneself to God to be a moment of fundamental decision which engages the whole person. In that act, the intellect and the will display their spiritual nature, enabling the subject to act in a way which realizes personal freedom to the full. It is not just that freedom is a part of the act of faith: it is absolutely required. Indeed, it is faith that allows individuals to give consummate expression to their own freedom... **Men and women can accomplish no more important act in their lives than the act of faith; it is here that freedom reaches the certainty of truth and chooses to live in that truth.... The truth of Christian Revelation, found in Jesus of Nazareth, enables all men and women to embrace the ‘mystery’ of their own life...** To those wishing to know the truth, if they can look beyond themselves and their own concerns, there is given the possibility of taking full and harmonious possession of their lives, precisely by following the path of truth” (JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et Ratio*, 13-14). Jesus, then, is faithful because in revealing the truth of who he is, the God crucified out of the greatest love for us, he obeys the Father. We are faithful, therefore, when we love as Jesus loved (cf. 1 John 3:16) and so live fully within the freedom of God’s sons and daughters. (The bold print is that of the editor.)

<sup>79</sup> HAYS, “Pistis (Faith) and Pauline Christology”, 44.

<sup>80</sup> NEYREY, *Render to God*, 138.

Thus, as we come to Romans 3:20, questions linger: will God exercise His prerogative as a just Judge and punish human beings as they deserve? What will happen to the promises that God made to Abraham and his descendants? It is here that Paul announces triumphantly his Gospel of God’s power: “but now ...” (v. 21). The coming of Jesus Christ is an advent of a new aeon, it is a boundary marker between the time of the First Adam (marked by sin and death) and the time of the New Adam. In this new aeon, “balancing the attribute of God’s impartial judgment is the attribute of impartial mercy, which is the thrust of 3:21–8:39.”<sup>81</sup> Having found humanity guilty, instead of pronouncing the sentence, God declares an acquittal, God declares humans righteous.

Neyrey imagines that the way God deals with the problem of human infidelity shows God to be a Patron who bestows gifts on His clients (humans).<sup>82</sup> God reveals his righteousness, his salvific power, through the death and resurrection of Christ. This is a revelation of God’s mercy: “in Paul’s gospel of God, mercy can be pinpointed in the death of Jesus (3:21-26). Despite their sinfulness, for which all humankind deserves judgment, all are ‘justified by his grace as a gift’ (3:24), by mercy. This happened when ‘God put forward Jesus Christ as expiation’ (3:25), that is, when God took the initiative...”<sup>83</sup> God’s attribute of mercy, in other words, revealed a new dimension to his attribute of judgment ...” Paul uses various terms, replete with meaning, to describe the gifts of God to humanity through Jesus’ death on the cross as follows:

### **3.1 Justification (3:24, 26)**

From our analysis, God grants humanity the divine gift of justification: by grace, he transforms human beings to make them

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<sup>81</sup> NEYREY, *Render to God*, 138.

<sup>82</sup> The patron–client image is a social relationship in antiquity (Greek and Rome), for example, a king and his subjects, lords and their vassals. Some scholars have affixed this image to their explanation of the God – human relationship in the NT. Cf. J.H. NEYREY, “God, Benefactor and Patron: The Major Cultural Model for Interpreting the Deity in Greco–Roman Antiquity”, *JSNT* 27 (2005) 465-492.

<sup>83</sup> NEYREY, *Render to God*, 120.

righteous and declares them to be so. God ascribes to human beings, therefore, a new status and honour that correspond to their new state of being. The honour so ascribed is not something human beings can achieve by themselves. The observance of the law cannot make human beings righteous. God does the transformation and ascribes this status and honour freely, gratuitously. It is purely God's initiative, out of his mercy: because 'mercy' in all its fullness is God's benefaction, it must be accepted with gratitude as God's free gift and favour. It can only be received as benefaction, not earned or merited. To consider it otherwise is to shame the Justifier and diminish God's goodness.<sup>84</sup>

### **3.2 Redemption (3:24)**

Through the death of Jesus, humanity is freed from the slavery of sin. "God's redemptive act in Christ represents a snatching of human beings away from the captivity to sin and from the prospect of wrathful condemnation at the judgment (cf. 5:9) to which that captivity has exposed them."<sup>85</sup> Through God's initiative, we are free from sin and death, but this freedom does not imply lawlessness. This is freedom for a goal. Justified human beings are now slaves of righteousness, slaves of God, who are totally submitted to God in the status, honour and freedom of God's children (cf. 6:15-16; 8:14-17).

### **3.3 Expiation (3:25)**

Through his death (his blood), Jesus is a new 'mercy seat', the new meeting point between sinful humanity and the merciful God. In this meeting, through the blood of Jesus, God wipes away the sins of the humanity, He cleanses and consecrates human beings, makes them holy, separated, set apart. This is God's benefaction: "benefaction of mercy consists of a cornucopia of blessings ... but certainly 'forgiveness of sins' ... stands out as the most significant one."<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Cf. NEYREY, *Render to God*, 143.

<sup>85</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 126.

<sup>86</sup> NEYREY, *Render to God*, 143.

### 3.4 Universality of God’s Initiative

God grants these benefactions to *all*. All humanity is included. This has been possible because God has acted outside the boundaries of the law (and in acting so He has remained faithful to his promises and his covenant). The criterion for partaking of God’s benefits is faith (in contrast with the deeds of the law in the time of the First Adam). Thus, God’s attribute of inclusivity is shown: “All Israelites and Greeks impartially receive the attribute of mercy ... Paul makes it clear: ‘no one who believes in him will be put to shame [Rom 10:11].’ For there is no distinction between Judean and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him. For ‘everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved’ (Rom 10:11-13).”<sup>87</sup>

### 3.5 Faith

Finally, the way through which all partake in God’s benefactions is faith: “what is crucial about faith as the vehicle of human access to righteousness is that, unlike righteousness tied to the ... Law, it opens up the possibility of righteousness on the universal scale ...”<sup>88</sup> Paul has shown us in 3:21-26 and elsewhere that, *first of all*, faithfulness (fidelity) is primarily predicated of God—God is faithful, righteous. God remains true to his own nature, to his own promises. *Secondly*, Jesus Christ, true to his own nature as God, is faithful. He showed fidelity to the Father through obedience. Divinely faithful to his identity as the Wisdom and Truth of the Father, He remained faithful in his human nature. He obeyed and trusted the Father completely, maintained full communion with the Father, even at the most difficult moment, as he was dying on the cross, by trusting that just as he, Jesus, had the power to lay down his life, so he had the power to take it up again. By the power of the Holy Spirit and the unalterable will of the Father, he would rise again. His death then became an act of faithfulness, an act of obedience and fidelity. Through this act Jesus gave honor to the Father.

<sup>87</sup> NEYREY, *Render to God*, 139.

<sup>88</sup> BYRNE, *Romans*, 125.

In this regard, Jesus functions as our mediator, the carrier of God's benefactions to humanity: He is the unique and necessary mediator, because he is on good terms with both sides (the Benefactor and the Beneficiaries): "Jesus bridges the heavenly and earthly worlds. God, the heavenly Benefactor, has bestowed on us all benefaction *through Jesus* (e.g. Eph 1:1-10) ... Jesus mediates the heavenly patronage of God to us, even as he functions to mediate earthly petition and praise to the heavenly patron."<sup>89</sup>

*Thirdly*, we have faith as long as we locate ourselves within Jesus' fidelity. We have faith as long as we have the same will to obey the Father as Jesus had, as J. Hays says: "Jesus' faithful endurance and obedience even to undeserved death on the cross (cf. Phil 2:8) has saving significance for all humanity; this is the righteous 'act' of obedience ... by which 'the many' are considered righteous, i.e., set in right relationship with God (Rom 5:15-19). The unfaithfulness of fallen humanity is counteracted and overcome by the representative faithfulness of Christ."<sup>90</sup>

The grace of God and the free gift in the grace of Jesus Christ has abounded for many. Those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness are the ones who share in Jesus' fidelity and reign in life through Jesus Christ.

To live in the free gift of this grace is 'to be crucified with Christ' (Gal 2:20), so that it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God. And in this way, I live in the grace of communion with Jesus Christ and partake in God's righteousness.

This new status and honour, this grace that is freely bestowed on us by the Father through faith in Jesus Christ, has its implications, for it comes with new responsibilities. Christians must live in a certain way so as to honour their heavenly Father. This is the basis of Paul's ethics in Romans, which he treats in subsequent chapters of Romans. Faith as obedience, an inner attitude of fidelity to God's will, is a right behaviour, and it is a grace that saves. It is part of this ethic (cf. 4:23-25). Another element of this ethic is hope – steadfastness, perseverance and

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<sup>89</sup> NEYREY, "God, Benefactor and Patron, 476.

<sup>90</sup> HAYS, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 160.

endurance (cf. 5:3-5) – a hope anchored in the cardinal fact that God’s love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

Required is to ‘walk with the Lord’, that is, to do right things, right actions (cf. 6:12ff.). All these are rooted in Paul’s understanding of God’s righteousness which has been manifested to us through Jesus Christ’s faithful, expiatory death.

## Conclusion

Romans 3:21-26 marks an important shift in the tone and thought of Paul, as he develops his theme. Paul shifts from the treatment of the Justice of God to the treatment of God’s Mercy. In it, Paul demonstrates how the gospel he is preaching “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith” (1:16). In order to present a strong argument, Paul incorporates into this text a Christological formula, well known to his audience; and he employs a complex style. Unfortunately, this has made it a notoriously difficult and ambiguous text in the Letter (and probably in the whole NT). Because of its difficulties, this text has been the centre of controversy, especially during the Reformation. Fortunately, in our modern times scholars have managed to recover what they suggest is its original sense.

In our work we have appreciated the intention of a man who walked not according to the flesh but according to the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 8:4). His name is St. Paul. Consequently, aided by the same Spirit who helps us in our weakness (cf. Rom 8:26), we are able to learn from the text the basic Pauline understanding of our Lord God Jesus Christ, of God our heavenly Father, and the human beings that they have created, redeemed and justified in the Holy Spirit.

## Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
HCHCB	Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary

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<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
LG	<i>Lumen Gentium</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NT	New Testament
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OT	Old Testament
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

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# **The Mustard Seed: the 150-Year Milestone of Evangelization in Tanzania (1868 – 2018)**

**Bernardino M. Ligomeka, OFMCap**

Graduate of Theology  
Jordan University College

## **Preamble**

Jesus Christ is the source, fountain, and summit of all missions (LG 3). If one were to view history through the prism of the past 150 years of evangelization in Tanzania, one would have to admit that the events that transpired during this time frame resonate admirably with Jesus' declaration that the Kingdom of God is like the grain of a mustard seed. Without doubt, it is truly "the smallest of all the seeds, but once it falls into the ground, it grows into a big tree to such an extent that the birds of the air find shelter in it" (Matt 13:31-32; Mark 4:31-32; Luke 13:19).

Can we say that this is true of the work of evangelization in Tanzania throughout this period of one and a half centuries? Right from the year 1868 when the pioneering missionaries – Antoin Horner, Edward Baur, Celestine Consol, Felician Gruncien and others – arrived from Zanzibar and set their feet upon the land of Tanganyika the seed has survived all kinds of weather both day and night.<sup>1</sup> Today, that seed has grown rapidly and is still continuing to bear abundant fruit, a hundredfold's worth (cf. Mark 4:20). On the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1863, those who were to become the first Christians on the island of Zanzibar and subsequently on the mainland of Tanganyika,<sup>2</sup> would have exclaimed in unison with the Prophet Isaiah: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good news,

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<sup>1</sup> J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: An African History 62 – 1992*, Nairobi: Paulines Publications 1994, 226.

<sup>2</sup> C.E. SAHLBERG, *Historia ya Kanisa Tanzania 1600 – 1985*, Nairobi: Scripture Mission 1987, 15.

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who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" (Isa 52:7).

Several prominent authors have dedicated themselves zealously to writing the history of the Church and the mission of evangelization in Tanzania, and they have laboured tirelessly at this task. Consequently there is sufficient literature at anyone's disposal who wishes to venture into the minute details of the beginning, growth, and development of the work of evangelization in this land. My concern in this article is not centred on reproducing a systematic presentation of the history of evangelization, but rather, to give a critical theological assessment and evaluation of the evangelization mission. I will be looking into the past so as to draw lessons from there that would equip us in surveying the present as we strive to shape the future of the evangelization mission.

The terms "Church" and "evangelization" in this article are consistently linked together, in which the term 'evangelization' means the process of proclaiming and spreading the faith and the term 'Church' implies the agent/institution for evangelization.

## 1. We Shall Go to Them

One of the greatest concerns of Christianity is self-propagation and evangelization.<sup>3</sup> Evangelization *ad gentes* is directed to all peoples of all places of all times and proceeds ultimately from Christ's command in the *Great Commission*: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations, baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you, and know that I am with you up to the end of time" (Matt 28:19-20). It is the choice to be truly and sincerely obedient to this great commission that enables us to speak of an inner driving force that motivates Christian men and women to cultivate the zeal and courage necessary to undertake missionary work at any one point of time in history.

In the times of old, having heard of the concern of the Lord God, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?", the Prophet Isaiah

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<sup>3</sup> L. MALISHI, *A History of the Catholic Church in Tanzania*, Peramiho: Benedictine Publications Ndanda 1990, 10.

courageously responded positively to take up the mission: “Here am I! Send me” (Isa 6:8). Franz Pfanner’s motto: “We shall go to them” becomes relevant and significant when we attempt to interpret and analyze the boldness that motivated the pioneering missionaries.<sup>4</sup> They dared to reach out into unknown lands so as to touch and transform the lives of the people they were to encounter. Unlike their colonial and trading countrymen who had preceded them, the missionaries’ zeal was springing from the love of Christ whose command to make him known near and far was a directive they had freely accepted and were eager to articulate.

## **2. Where are the “They” to whom we shall go? – The Missionaries’ Strategic Positioning**

### **2.1 The Holy Ghost Fathers**

It is worth highlighting the fact that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Zanzibar had the busiest slave market in the world. It accounted for an annual turn-over of 60,000 slaves;<sup>5</sup> and Sahlberg records that between 1862 and 1867, the total number of slaves from East Africa that were sold to be transported overseas was 97,203.<sup>6</sup> This shocking and pathetic situation gives us a clue as to why the work of evangelization had to begin with a Christian community of ransomed slaves. However, due to the lack of land for the expansion of the facilities and the high cost of living in the city, Fr. Horner made long journeys of exploration in the Sultan’s boat and eventually decided on settling at Bagamoyo.

Bagamoyo was the coastal port where the slaves from the interior were loaded on dhows and shipped to Zanzibar for sale. Baur notes that the name ‘Bagamoyo’ aptly expressed what the poor captives were feeling at this moment of their journey: ‘the place to leave one’s heart behind.’ The missionary settlement was to give at least some of them new hope.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the mission’s strategic positioning was not by mere chance but, rather, carried

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<sup>4</sup> The founder of the congregation named the Missionaries of Marianhill in 1909 at KwaZulu Natal in South Africa.

<sup>5</sup> J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, 226.

<sup>6</sup> C.E. SAHLBERG, *Historia ya Kanisa Tanzania*, 5.

<sup>7</sup> J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, 226-227.

a theological significance for the goal of the mission of evangelization: the goal was to set captives free and give them new hope by proclaiming to them the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19).

## 2.2 The Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers)

The Missionaries of Africa were a missionary society founded in 1868 by Cardinal Lavigerie, Archbishop of Carthage and Algiers and Primate of Africa. Keen as his interest was in the social issues of his time, Lavigerie urged the Pope and his native France to rise to the occasion and play their part in suppressing the slave trade and all forms of slavery in East and Central Africa. He then conceived a plan for the Catholic Church to form an organization that would end the slave trade and serve the evangelization of Africa.

By early June of 1878, the missionaries were in Bagamoyo from where the long journey to the interior started. Hence the mission to the Great Lakes had begun. They reached Tabora on 1 October, 1878, and made camp at Kwihara.<sup>8</sup> The strategic positioning of the mission enabled these missionaries to spread themselves out and evangelize the surrounding areas including the neighbouring Buganda Kingdom (present Uganda).<sup>9</sup> Therefore, on account of the work of these missionaries, Tanzania can today feel the pride to have been the hub of evangelization for Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, and even Zambia-Malawi.

## 2.3 The Benedictines

Invigorated by the spirit of St. Benedict, Father Andreas Amrhein lived by his conviction that monastic life should combine an active and pastoral life. With the approval of the *Sacred Congregatio de Propaganda Fidei* (13<sup>th</sup> November 1877) and the Imperial Government of Germany, he sent 15 missionaries to Tanzania, who arrived in Dar es Salaam on 28 January 1888.<sup>10</sup> They were entrusted with the Apostolic Prefecture of Southern

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<sup>8</sup> L. MALISHI, *A History of the Catholic Church in Tanzania*, 16-17.

<sup>9</sup> J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, 233.

<sup>10</sup> L. MALISHI, *A History of the Catholic Church in Tanzania*, 20.

Zanzibar, i.e., the area that covers the southern part of modern Tanzania up to Lake Nyasa. Pugu, which was to be destroyed later as we shall see, situated 10 miles from Dar es Salaam, became their first mission. As reported by Abbot Lambert Doerr, OSB, the principal intention of the Benedictines was not to establish mission stations per se, but to establish monasteries. The goal was that by providing a living example of their spirit and convictions, their prayer, their manual work, and their modern means of farming, the monks would spread Christianity to the people surrounding their monasteries.<sup>11</sup> Through their strategy we could see that those Christian communities surrounding the monasteries were to gradually develop; and the monasteries were to become centres for people's holistic growth, i.e., spiritual and physical.

Analysing the approaches of all these pioneering missionaries, we note the employment of three distinct evangelizing strategies. The Holy Ghost Fathers employed the establishment of 'Christian communities' from which the faith was taught and transmitted. From these Christian communities, the indigenous were sent out into other settlement areas that would be subsequently evangelized. The Missionaries of Africa adopted the strategy of establishing a mission centre from where they could move and go to evangelize the people within their particular localities. The Benedictines, for their part, positioned their monasteries within the society, so much so that the monastery resembled the leaven in the Gospels (Matt 13:33; Luke 13:21), and thus could proceed to transform the entire society from within.

The assessment of all these strategies, distinct as they were from each other, brings to our understanding the concept of evangelization as a dynamism but with only a single overriding goal: to gather all peoples together so that there should be only one flock, under one shepherd (John 10:16).

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<sup>11</sup> L. DOERR, "Historia Fupi: Wamisionari WaBenediktini Kusini mwa Tanzania hadi Vita Kuu ya Kwanza ya Dunia" in P.G. RUPPER, ed., *Pugu Hadi Peramiho: Miaka 100 ya Wamisionari WaBenediktini katika Tanzania – Historia na Masimulizi*, Peramiho: Benedictine Publications Ndanda 1988, 9.

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### 3. What shall we do Among “Them”? The Hundredfold Fruit of the 150 – Year Tree of Evangelization

#### 3.1 Christianize Them

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...” (Matt 28:19) was the focus and purpose of the pioneering missionaries. Prior to 1868, it could be said that there were people in Tanzania who lived upright lives according to their conscience but, through no fault of their own, had not yet received the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ (*LG* 16). Because their lives gave witness to the fact that they would strive to continue to live with moral integrity, and that if they knew about the Catholic Church, they would desire her sacraments and communion with Jesus Christ through his Church, one could say that they enjoyed the disposition of catechumens – or what some might prefer to call “anonymous Christians” – who were to be evangelized and brought into the faith through Baptism.

This evangelizing mission was taken seriously to such an extent that, as Carl-Erik Sahlberg’s 1914 statistics indicate, the numbers of the baptized grew much faster than expected of an infant Church. He records the total number to be at around 61,000 baptized Catholics in comparison with the total number of 23,000 baptized of all the Protestants calculated together.<sup>12</sup> These statistics present a vivid picture of how the pioneering missionaries were so zealously committed to the *Great Commission*.

Today, the Tanzanian Catholic Church enjoys a continuous growth in numbers: each year we witness an ever-growing record of neophytes being added to the existing numbers. This is a cause for great joy for the Tanzanian Church as we clock 150 years of evangelization. At the same time, however, the concrete situation on the ground is a signal that calls us to reflect more deeply and make a critical analysis of the effectiveness of our commitment as Christians and contemporary agents of evangelization. The tragic day-by-day increasing ratio of ‘nominal Catholics’ in contrast to

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<sup>12</sup> C.E. SAHLBERG, *Historia ya Kanisa Tanzania*, 40.

‘practicing Catholics’ demands an immediate assessment that may require a change of approach in our manner of evangelizing.

I recall one of the old missionaries who once jokingly said: “In our times we had few priests and many lay catechists, but we had many committed Christians. Today, we have many priests and few lay catechists, but few dedicated Christians, too.” Though jokingly uttered, this statement reflects the prevailing sad situation within which the priests, while faithfully committed to their role as leaders, have tended to monopolize the mission of evangelization. Consequently, this phenomenon has tended to sideline the crucial role of the laity in the evangelization mission.

Even though there are a considerable number of exceptions, the immediate effect is that in most parts of the country, many of the laity have taken a passive role that has entirely left the work of evangelization to the priests and the religious. Therefore, this jubilee is an opportune occasion for all the faithful, clergy and laity, to wake up and realize our fundamental call to cooperate fully, each according to his/her own capacity and state, in the establishing of God’s kingdom.

### **3.2 The Mission of Ransoming**

As previously mentioned, by the time the pioneering missionaries, the CSSp, arrived, Zanzibar had already become an internationally notorious commercial town because of its famous “black gold”, i.e., the buying and selling of human beings.<sup>13</sup>

Considering this situation, the Holy Ghost Fathers and Brothers ventured into the labour of ransoming as many slaves as they could afford. Once ransomed, the ex-slaves were resettled in a Christian village away from the social mainstream.<sup>14</sup> It is from among these

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<sup>13</sup> Black gold usually refers to the kind of oil that vehicle and machine producers crave because of all the money it can earn for the one selling it. The author’s point, however, is clear. Rather than respecting Africans as human beings, traders reduced them to a commodity that can be bought and sold at a high price. (Editor’s note)

<sup>14</sup> These were villages set up by missionaries in the initial stages of evangelization with an intention to protect the neophytes from a hostile environment and to train them to a more convinced Christian life. Baur reports that this approach was spearheaded by the Jesuits among the Indios of

ex-slaves that the nucleus of a Christian community came into being.<sup>15</sup> Carl Erik Sahlberg records that at the end of three years of evangelizing, the Holy Ghost Fathers in Zanzibar were taking care of 110 orphans. These children, all of whom converted to Christianity, were from among the slaves. By the time the Fathers extended their evangelizing mission to Bagamoyo in 1868, nearly 324 ex-slaves accompanied them.<sup>16</sup>

In 1890, Pope Leo XIII followed the example of Popes Eugene IV (1435), Paul III (1537), Gregory XIV (1591), Urban VIII (1639), Benedict XIV (1741), and Gregory XVI (1839), published an encyclical *Catholicae Ecclesiae* which repeated with clarity and insistence the condemnation of the slave system. The fact that Popes had been condemning the system for more than 455 years – even before the Europeans knew that there were continents in the New World – would have instilled more zeal in these missionaries to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to this mission of ransoming. Apart from repeating the condemnation of the slave system, the encyclical walked in the same path travelled by the previous Popes by encouraging Catholics to undertake the work of evangelization and conversion of the Africans.

This evangelizing mission amongst the *anawim of Yahweh* would not have been an easy mission. However, everyone could agree that it was a noble mission for a just cause. By rendering Jesus present in virtue of the Eucharistic celebration, it was an evangelizing mission through which the 'Word' became flesh and chose his dwelling place within the existential situation of the people. The effort to ransom was essentially making visible the true contours of the mission of the Church: the Church was to help those who were desperately in need because the desperately needy resemble the poor and suffering Founder of the Church, Jesus himself.

The act of ransoming from physical slavery bears witness to the act of Jesus Christ when by pouring out his blood he ransoms us from the slavery of sin. In 1 Corinthians 6:20, the Apostle Paul

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Paraguay, during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, 230).

<sup>15</sup> L. MALISHI, *A History of the Catholic Church in Tanzania*, 14-15.

<sup>16</sup> C.E. SAHLBERG, *Historia ya Kanisa Tanzania*, 15.

reminds us: “You were bought with a price.” Just as these ex-slaves experienced and witnessed what it meant to be under slavery and what it meant to be freed by means of a paid ransom, Christ’s action of ransoming invigorates the person with the breath of that freedom from the chains and scourges of oppression, the freedom that by the breath of the Holy Spirit laces together the bonds of brotherhood with Jesus.

No wonder that it was possible to settle together as a community of Christian villages where freedom did not imply laxity, but, rather, a commitment to a noble cause. They learned the art of reading and writing, building, tailoring, carpentry, farming, together with other legitimate arts and trades. It is noteworthy to mention that as a vivid symbol of their transformation and orientation towards productivity, these ex-slave Christians in Bagamoyo cultivated the first coffee plantation in East Africa. Thus, their Christianity, which can easily stand forth as a model for our contemporary Church, corresponded handsomely to St. Paul’s exhortation that calls for productive work in order to inculcate a desire for interpersonal responsibility in a spirit of solidarity, for self-reliance within one’s realm of responsibility and a communal interdependence, that is to say, a desire for the mutual sharing that typifies the brotherhood and sisterhood characteristic of a world that has been transformed into the Family of God (cf. 2 Thes 3:7-12).

#### **4. Concretizing the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy**

Drawing from Jesus’ depiction of the Last Judgment in Matthew 25:31-46, the Church’s tradition has developed and recognized the works of mercy as binding for each and every Christian. Before proceeding on how the pioneering missionaries as well as the present Church of Tanzania has concretized them, it is essential just to remind ourselves of these works of mercy, which are as follows:

<b>The Corporal Works of Mercy</b>	<b>The Spiritual Works of Mercy</b>
to feed the hungry	to counsel the doubtful
to give drink to the thirsty	to instruct the ignorant

to clothe the naked	to admonish the sinner
to shelter the homeless	to comfort the sorrowful
to visit the sick	to forgive all injuries
to visit the imprisoned	to bear wrongs patiently
to bury the dead	to pray for the living and the dead

Right from her beginnings in Tanzania, the Catholic Church has considered it to be her holy and moral obligation to practice the works of mercy and to give her unflagging energy to exhort others to put these works of mercy into action.

In an article *My Experience with the Swiss Missionaries*, the late Msgr. Callistus Mdoi of Mahenge Diocese indicated how the missionaries have been the main resource for the indigenous people. The people came to the mission not only for spiritual matters but also for education, health services, work, food (in times of scarcity), to mail letters, to open savings accounts, and so forth. They provided all these services as a resolute commitment to work for the salvation and uplift of the whole person: spiritually, physically and socially.<sup>17</sup> Today, the Tanzanian Church can feel grateful that she has perpetuated and brought into concrete realization the works of mercy established by Jesus Christ, introduced to this land by the missionaries. We are witnesses of the transformative power of these works and how they have exerted an impact on our contemporary society.

## **5. Evangelize Africa with Africans:<sup>18</sup> The Establishment and Recruitment of Co-Workers**

Truly, the Holy Spirit blows wherever He wills; and He works in ways known to himself alone. St. Peter was a witness to the

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<sup>17</sup> C. MDAL, “My Experience with the Swiss Missionaries”, in M. HALLER-DIRR, ed., *75...: 75 Years Baldegg Sisters, Capuchin Brothers in Tanzania*, Lucerne: Swiss Capuchin Province 1997, 32.

<sup>18</sup> This is the most popular motto used by St. Daniel Comboni (10<sup>th</sup> March 1831 – 10<sup>th</sup> October 1881), an Italian Roman Catholic bishop who served in the missions in Africa (mainly Sudan). He founded the Religious Congregation of the Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus (*Missionarii Comboniani Cordis Iesu*, MCCJ) in Central Africa (1867), commonly referred to as Comboni Missionaries. He saw that for the evangelization mission to be successful in Africa, the indigenous were to be fully involved. The editor

mysterious ways of the Holy Spirit as he recounted before the Jerusalem Council the events that had taken place during his evangelization amongst the Gentiles (cf. Acts 10:44-48; 11:1-18). Through the Spirit-filled word of the Gospel, Jesus had the capacity to transform the lives of the ‘pagans’ so that they became instruments of the Gospel. This is the same Spirit by whom Jesus touched and inspired the early missionaries to inaugurate the mission in the land of what I would prefer to term as that of the ‘Neo-Gentiles,’ i.e., those who had not yet received the message of the good news (Gospel) of our Lord Jesus Christ. Just as St. Paul did, the early missionaries brought and planted the seed of the Word in this land. Then the next concern was: Who was to be the ‘Apollos’ to water and tend that seed for its perpetuation? (cf. 1 Cor 3:6). That concern pointed to the fact that there was a crucial need for co-workers to labour in the vineyard.

A situation similar to the one that prevailed in the Primitive Church resurfaced. Just as the elders of the Primitive Church had to be on their guard against presuming that they held a monopoly on the Holy Spirit, the early missionaries had to be alert to any tendency towards the same short-sighted manner of viewing the evangelical reality. The indispensable need for co-workers, on the one hand, and the disturbing tendency to doubt the working and promptings of the Holy Spirit, on the other hand, were provoking tension and conflict. However, the decision that seemed risky to some of incorporating the indigenous had to be made forthrightly and put into action without compromise. During his homily on the occasion of the Eucharistic celebration in honour of the national centenary of the priesthood in Tanzania, Bishop Method Kilaini expressed his gratitude to Bishop John Joseph Hirth for promoting the idea of Africans becoming priests in spite of the opposition that he met from his fellow missionaries.<sup>19</sup>

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notes that this conviction coheres quite splendidly with that of St. Francis Xavier in India who lived always with the motto, “Evangelize India with Indians.” St. Francis Xavier is the patron saint of missionaries.

<sup>19</sup> S. PELAJI, *Church Celebrates 100 Years of Tanzanian Catholic Priests*, Vatican Radio: (20 Aug 2017), [http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/08/20/church\\_celebrates\\_100\\_years\\_of\\_tanzanian\\_catholic\\_priests/1331824](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/08/20/church_celebrates_100_years_of_tanzanian_catholic_priests/1331824) [accessed 15 Feb 2018].

The incorporation of the laity as co-workers in the evangelization mission seemed not to have been as rough a road as compared to the incorporation of the local people into the clerical state. As early as 1875, there were already lay people serving as catechists and teachers. They were the ones who assisted in the planting and nurturing of God's Word amongst their fellows.

One name to be mentioned is that of Philip Mzouako, who hailed from Morogoro and received instruction from the Holy Ghost Fathers. He became the first African Brother on the mainland.<sup>20</sup> On the female side, the Sisters who were part of the pioneering personnel belonged to the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary. Their mission was to enable girls of 'humble origin' – former slaves – to join religious life and become missionaries to the homeland of their ancestors.<sup>21</sup> If today we were to assess the success of evangelization in terms of numbers, we would all have to take notice that Catholic Sisters far outnumber Catholic Fathers and Brothers in all corners of the country.

As far as the clergy are concerned, we may apply Nathanael's quizzical attitude about Nazareth in John 1:46, "Can something good come out of Nazareth?" to the same kind of attitude towards our country, "Can anything good come from Tanganyika?" This assessment seemed to have prevailed for nearly half a century. To reach the level at which an indigenous Tanzanian could gain and win the trust of the missionaries and assure them that God was calling them to be clerics was never an easy task, let alone the subsequent labours to form and ordain those first indigenous priests.

In his article entitled *Our Hope is Rooted in What God has Done and Will Do*, one of the first indigenous Capuchin priests in Tanzania, the Rev. Prof. William Ngowi, OFMCap, dedicated a section to the discussion of "Doubt Regarding the Holy Spirit". Reflecting within the Capuchin context of the 1960's, he suggests that in the situation of the time, the missionaries were considered to have undergone a "kenosis," i.e. a self-emptying; a humble, poor self-abasement by their decision to come to an unknown continent,

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<sup>20</sup> C.E. SAHLBERG, *Historia ya Kanisa Tanzania*, 17.

<sup>21</sup> J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, 226.

i.e., Africa. On the contrary, the African Religious Brother was rightly considered as being “promoted and exalted,” becoming richer, better educated, and more influential among his peers by joining the Capuchin Order.

Ngowi suggests that this is why there were some doubts in those days as to whether the poor Africans could effectively and peacefully live as Capuchins at all. This sad episode, as he notes, was actually rooted in the socio-historical situation of the time, a backlash, so to speak, against the Holy Spirit, who eventually always wins.<sup>22</sup> This contextual analysis of the Capuchins regarding the early stages of recruitment could not be much different from that of the milieu of other early missionaries.

A critical assessment of this scenario leads us to conclude that the source of this tendency to doubt the Holy Spirit was dualistic in nature. The first fear could be traced to the short-sighted attitude of the missionaries themselves who harboured reservations about approving an indigenous Tanzanian to undergo a process of “kenosis” and transformation so as to become a priest. On the other hand, the indigenous people themselves had a mere skin-deep understanding of the clerical state as a special privilege of a secular or social nature, not necessarily as a vocation of a religious character. The one becoming a priest was considered to be joining the company of the white missionaries who were on a par with the colonialists and enjoyed the same rights and privileges as the colonialists. Therefore, malicious rumours spread concerning those who were applying for the priesthood at that time. This has happened even in our contemporary society where one can find this socio-secular conception of priesthood still persisting.

Today, the meaning of 150 years of evangelization as well as the 101 years of priesthood of the indigenous in Tanzania, has not yet completely crystallized in the minds of some: there are still some who seem to doubt the Holy Spirit. It is a sad phenomenon that still exists: several individuals view priesthood as an institution that solely enables one to acquire social prestige alongside

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<sup>22</sup> W. NGOWI, “Our Hope is Rooted in What God has Done and Will Do”, in M. HALLER-DIRR, ed., *75...: 75 Years Baldegg Sisters, Capuchin Brothers in Tanzania*, Lucerne: Swiss Capuchin Province 1997, 113.

economic security. This secular-materialistic approach often overrules the underlying spirit of priesthood which is service to the point of giving up one’s life: “not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matt 20:28).

The failure to grasp this essential element of service that flows from the *kenosis* has negative repercussions because it hinders the mission of evangelization in our contemporary society. The spirit of self-emptying (*kenosis*), very crucial for the priest, seems to have been overtaken and replaced by the desire for self-satisfaction and self-fulfilment. As a consequence, the required priest’s dedication to dare and take up the evangelization mission in the outskirts and rural areas (commonly referred in a joking manner as *porini* meaning ‘in the bush’) is compromised and never received with joy. This might be one of the reasons behind the usual Swahili saying *Mapadre walikuwa zamani* – “Priests were those in the olden times”.

However, this situation does not lead us to despair or to the thought that the work of evangelization is heading towards a disaster that sooner or later will lead to its cessation. Not at all! We confidently thank God who, as the Lord of the harvest, has continuously sent “labourers into his harvest” for the past 101 years (Matt 9:38; Luke 10:2); he “never ceases to gather a people to himself.”<sup>23</sup> It was a humble beginning on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, 1917, when only the first four indigenous priests were ordained: Fathers Celestine Kipanda, Angelo Mwirabure, Oscar Kyakaraba, and Willibard Mupapi. The Tanzanian Catholic Church today can gratefully boast of having a great number of priests. According to the statistics of August 2017, the Church enjoys the gift of more than 3,316 priests serving in various regions of the country.<sup>24</sup> Most of these work in difficult and challenging conditions.

Presently, there are still places where the basic social services like good roads, running water, electricity, and viable health facilities, not to mention other essential social services are still

<sup>23</sup> The Epiiclesis of the Eucharistic Prayer III.

<sup>24</sup> S. PELAJI, *Church Celebrates 100 Years of Tanzanian Catholic Priests*, Vatican Radio: (20 Aug 2017), [http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/08/20/church\\_celebrates\\_100\\_years\\_of\\_tanzanian\\_catholic\\_priests/1331824](http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/08/20/church_celebrates_100_years_of_tanzanian_catholic_priests/1331824) [accessed 15 Feb 2018].

a dream in the minds of the inhabitants. Those are the places where the Church has dared to reach and touch the lives of the people. The late Msgr. Callistus M dai quoted one of the country's top-ranking leaders who, having visited Taweta, one of the peripheral parishes in the diocese of Mahenge, showed great appreciation. He exclaimed: "So you [missionaries] are the only ones who have come all the way out here to be with the people!"<sup>25</sup>

This is truly the situation in many parts of our country. The mission of evangelization has brought the Catholic Church to places where government services are not yet in place. Suffice it to mention Gunyoda Parish in Mbulu, Ndongosi Parish in Songea, Sali Parish in Mahenge, Singisa Parish in Morogoro, Kiseriani Parish in Arusha, and Chipongolo Parish in Dodoma as a few concrete examples. This shows how the involvement of indigenous co-workers has and is still contributing to the mission of evangelizing. These challenging, difficult, and unfriendly conditions in the mission field gives us pause so that we may reflect thoughtfully on the situation of the Church throughout the ages.

## **6. The Blood of the Missionary Martyrs, the Seed of Christianity in Tanzania**

St. Luke, the author of the Acts of the Apostles, narrates the aftermath of the stoning of Stephen and the ensuing persecution of the Church with the arrests that Saul was sent to make. Luke concludes his narrative with the words: "Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). The hostile environment that surrounded the early Church, i.e., the persecutions that were intended to suppress and completely wipe out Christianity, were, on the contrary, opportunities for the growth, the spread, and the expansion of the Church. Living at the time of the Church Fathers, the North African Tertullian summed up his reflections on martyrdom with the maxim: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christianity."

The Tanzanian Church, too, has not been denied such a privilege. The hostile conditions that weighed upon the missionaries as well as the personal suffering visited upon them to

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<sup>25</sup> C. MDAI, "My Experience with the Swiss Missionaries", 32.

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the point of shedding their blood led to the spread of the mission of evangelization into the interior parts of mainland Tanzania.

### **6.1 The German Occupation and the Subsequent Arab Resistance**

The arrival of the Benedictines in Tanzania was a consequence of the conflicting situation that prevailed between the Germans and the French. The Germans were suspicious of the relationship between the Holy Ghost Fathers and the White Fathers with France, which was the missionaries' home of origin. The German's decision to evict these two French missionary congregations from their territory paved a way for the third missionary congregation in the country, the Benedictines.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the hostile situation against the French was an occasion for the Lord to send more labourers into the field (cf. Matt 9:38; Luke 10:2).

In the last months of 1888, there was a protest against the German colonial rule which started at Pangani in the Tanga region. This protest spread to the south wreaking havoc on the German establishments and commercial outposts. On January 13, 1889, the Arab insurgents and their supporters descended upon Pugu, invaded the monastery and brutally murdered three missionaries. The survivors went back to Germany only to return in November of the same year with a new strategy and a surge of zeal for missionary work and expansion.<sup>27</sup> Lukas Malishi records that after the Benedictines returned, they opted for Dar es Salaam instead of Pugu.

Within a short period of time, they opened many missions in the south: Lindi, Lukuledi, Nyangao, Peramiho, Kigonsera, and Tosamanga to mention only a few. This panorama of events reveals how the incident of the attacks and killings at Pugu was a blessing in disguise. Because the innocents shed their blood, the Benedictines extended their mission of evangelizing to the south and hence occasioned the coming of new Catholic missionaries: the Capuchin Friars who were to restore and rebuild Pugu in 1923.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, 227.

<sup>27</sup> L. DOERR, "Historia Fupi", 10-11.

<sup>28</sup> L. MALISHI, *A History of the Catholic Church in Tanzania*, 20.

## 6.2 The Majimaji Resistance/Rising

The Majimaji resistance, directed against German colonialists, was another blow to the Christian mission, especially that of the Benedictines.<sup>29</sup> The Benedictines were targeted because they seemed to be affiliated to the German colonialists. This tragedy saw the ransacking and burning of several missions. The brutal killings of Bishop Cassian Spiss, two brothers, two sisters in Mikukuyumbu in Umitumbi, Fr. Leuthner of Kigonsera, Sr. Walburga at Nyangao, and a few African catechists, was a shocking atrocity for these agents of evangelization.<sup>30</sup> However, instead of bringing the mission of evangelization to its extinction, this tragedy brought an extraordinary revival to the work of evangelization. The missions were rebuilt; and many schools, dispensaries, and clinics were opened. To facilitate operations, the southern sector was created as a separate unit from the vicariate of Dar es Salaam on November 12, 1913 under Fr. Willibrord Lay as Prefect Apostolic. Lindi became its headquarters.<sup>31</sup>

Therefore, when we bring into consideration the constellation of all these events and their aftermaths, we might concur with Tertullian in affirming that the “blood of the martyrs [the pioneering Christians] has been the seed of Christianity” in Tanzania. All the hostile attacks that were directed towards the extinction of the work of evangelization, on the contrary, brought an irrefutably positive impact instead of the kind of adverse impact that those with malicious motives may have anticipated. History has proven time and time again that when persecutions seem to be relentless, the holy Church of Christ grows and spreads. Truly, the prophecy and the promise of Christ on behalf of his Church has brought to light his fidelity to his word. The powers of hell have

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<sup>29</sup> The resistance, though political, also had a religious influence. According to John Baur, the so-called prophet Kinjikitile proclaimed a messianic message, announcing the golden age. According to him, after the expulsion of the foreigners the ancestors would return, wild animals would be tamed and prosperity would rule everywhere. The drinking of the miraculous medicine, *Maji maji* (super-water), would render the fighters immune to European bullets (J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, 253).

<sup>30</sup> L. DOERR, “Historia Fupi”, 14.

<sup>31</sup> L. MALISHI, *A History of the Catholic Church in Tanzania*, 21.

repeatedly failed to prevail against the mission of evangelization (Matt 16:18). The Holy Spirit continues his mission of guiding and protecting (John 14:26; Acts 1:8).

## **7. Evangelization in the Transformation of Political Structures**

One feature of any mission of evangelization is that it cannot divorce itself from politics because evangelization takes place within a society that by definition has a political dimension. From the Church’s beginnings, evangelization has usually influenced the political system just as politics has also affected evangelization. In the third chapter of his book *The Constitutional Road to Independence in Tanzania*, Albert de Jong explains in detail how the mission of evangelizing has influenced the political system, and has assisted in forming the political leadership of Tanzania up to the attainment of independence.<sup>32</sup> Even in post-independence, the Church has always played a crucial role of being the conscience of society in order to ensure fair political governance. The third chapter of the recent Lenten message issued by the Episcopal Conference entitled, *Mimi ni Mlinzi wa Ndugu Yangu?* (“Am I my brother’s keeper?”) is tangible evidence of the Church’s role in forming consciences in the field of politics.<sup>33</sup>

## **8. The Evangelization Mission in the Face of Inculturation**

The fact that the Church is dynamic, “always in need of renewal” (LG 15), reminds us that the work of evangelization has not reached its completion. The continual changes in our societies present various new challenges for the Church to face and address. This means that the work of evangelization must allow itself to be invigorated anew by the Holy Spirit to meet such challenges.

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<sup>32</sup> A. De JONG, *Mission and Politics in Eastern Africa: Dutch Missionaries and African Nationalism in Kenya, Tanzania and Malawi 1945–1965*, Nairobi: Paulines Publications 2000, 115-203.

<sup>33</sup> TANZANIA EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE, *Ujumbe wa Kwaresma 2018: Basi Enendeni, Mkawafanye Mataifa Yote Kuwa Wanafunzi Wangu*, Dar es Salaam: TEC 2018, 11-13.

In an article *Kanisa la Wamisionari kuwa Kanisa la Mahalia*, Walbert Buhlmann, OFMCap, a missiologist who worked in Tanzania between 1950 and 1953, presents how the Church in Tanzania has drastically grown and expanded in terms of the increased number of Christians, indigenous clergy (priests, bishops, and one cardinal) and religious, as well as the various physical structures required for Church life. This is a great source of pride. However, he observed that economic self-reliance and self-sustenance have proceeded at a snail's pace resulting in a continuing dependence on foreign resources. Even the aspect of inculturation (*utamaduni na utamadunisho*) leaves much to be desired.<sup>34</sup> There is a need for renewed effort so that we should not only have the "Church in Tanzania" but actually have a true "Tanzanian Church".

As much as we appreciate the unflagging evangelizing efforts of the early missionaries in establishing the Church that was to become self-sufficient in the future, for their part, they were limited in their attempts to reconcile the cultural gaps. Due to their inability to detach themselves from the cultural habits and mindsets of their homes of origin, the mission lands tended to become extensions of what was happening in the countries they came from. Consequently, the Church in Tanzania was deemed as a foreign religion, a religion of the white man, not in touch with the existential situation of the indigenous. In that context, syncretism seemed to become the order of the day; a person could be a Christian as well as a practitioner of the traditional religions. In many cases, Christianity became shallow, only skin-deep. This is the reason why for the past half a century, inculturation/adaptation has been one of the most prominent notions for the various churches in Africa in the effort of building a Church that is truly African.<sup>35</sup>

However, this notion of inculturation has proven to be problematic when it comes to its application in concrete situations.

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<sup>34</sup> W. BUHLMANN, "Kanisa la Wamisionari kuwa Kanisa la Mahalia", in M. HALLER-DIRR, ed., *75...: 75 Years Baldegg Sisters, Capuchin Brothers in Tanzania*, Lucerne: Swiss Capuchin Province 1997, 153.

<sup>35</sup> E. MONTEIRO, *Church and Culture: Communion in Pluralism*, Delhi: ISPCK 2004, 148-149.

The basic misapprehension lies in the desire to shift almost the entire body of elements of the local traditional practices into the Christian worship.<sup>36</sup> It is true that the general principle for inculturation is to have a mutual dialogue between the Gospel and the indigenous culture, but the fact remains that it is the Gospel has to penetrate and transform the culture, not the other way around (SC 37-38).

Indeed, the *theandric*, that is to say, the Divine-human nature of the liturgy entails the need to awaken in people's consciousness the entry of Christ into human history. He is the incarnate God who comes to transform history and endow it with a salvific influx of grace (cf. SC 5). Inculturation implies allowing Christ to enter into and illumine our specific cultures, to transform them so that we may find in them the essential truths of salvation (cf. LG 16). Hence, if we really appreciate Vatican II's resolution to open the door for Christianity to interact with local cultures, we will perceive the need for a prudent critique as to which elements are to enter into the Christian liturgy. There are some practices that are culturally significant but liturgically and theologically meaningless. Therefore, an intelligent assessment on the part of Tanzanian theologians (cf. SC 19) to lead and direct the entire people of God into selecting and adapting the right means and methods is obligatory.

## **9. The Prevalent Challenges of Evangelization in Today's Tanzania**

The Tanzanian Church today is faced with several challenges that are theological, social, economic, moral, and/or spiritual in nature. Theologically, one of the persistent challenges has been syncretism, i.e., the mixture of Christian belief with the traditional indigenous beliefs. The end result is that we end up having individuals who are Christians in daylight and 'pagans' during the night. Alongside syncretism, religious exploitation, which is the consequence of shallowness in faith and the product of the "gospel of prosperity," is another challenge. There are so many fluctuating

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<sup>36</sup> D.N. POWER, *Worship: Culture and Theology*, Washington, D.C.: The Pastoral Press 1990, 68-70.

Christians who are easily “led astray by all sorts of strange doctrines” (Heb 13:9). These are the Christians who usually strive to remain in their comfort zones and are never ready to associate themselves with the Crucified Lord.

Secularism is another great challenge which seems to be contaminating the consciences of most Tanzanians. This is a tendency by which religion is deemed to be an outdated phenomenon. In his presentation during the diocesan celebrations of the World Day for the Consecrated in Morogoro Diocese under the theme, *Umisionari: Toka Awali Hadi Sasa na Changamoto Zake* [“Missionary Work: From the Beginning up to the Present and its Challenges”], Fr. Pius Onyango, CSSp, concentrated much on the challenge of secularism. He pointed out that due to technology, the world has become a “village,” having a ‘global culture’ (*utamaduni mmoja wa ulimwengu nzima*). In this culture, religion becomes a distant second in the life of the people and there exists an aggressive desire for the promotion of secular affairs that eclipses the interest in matters concerning religion. Consequently, it is a ‘village’ in which most people have lost hope. The new evangelization calls us to address these challenges: how can we bring Christ to the culture of this ‘global village’ which is hostile to religion and inclined towards discouragement, disillusionment, disappointment and despair?<sup>37</sup>

## Summary

As we look behind us and appreciate the great work and sacrifices that typify the missionaries up to the present, we have good reason to celebrate the achievements of the mission of evangelization. Amidst all the challenges that have accompanied her throughout the decades, the Tanzanian Church has made tremendous steps forward. However, in the midst of all these foreseen and unforeseen challenges, our Lord Jesus now seems to be inviting the Tanzanian Church to learn from the past, and to find new ways of making known to our contemporaries his message, the salvific message of the Gospel. The diverse social groups of our

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<sup>37</sup> P. ONYANGO, “Watawa na Utume Siku Hizi”, Presentation to the Religious, St. Ann Sec. School, Morogoro, 3 Feb 2018.

contemporary society need special forms of evangelization that can carry Jesus' message to them as he, Jesus, wishes.

New forms of evangelization have to touch the young and the poor of our society. The new evangelization has to attend to special groups of people who are often marginalized: the handicapped, the blind, the street children, the unemployed, vulnerable women, prisoners, HIV/AIDS victims, prostitutes, the drug addicts and all the other groups that find themselves on the margins. To such groups of people, the new evangelization has to bring the message of Jesus Christ in a way that will reawaken their hope. As the celebrations of the 150 years of evangelization in Tanzania reach a climax, it becomes an occasion for us like it did for Isaiah, who heard the concern of the Triune God and responded "Here I am! Send me" (Isa 6:8).

We are celebrating joyfully the faith that has been handed down to us through all these years. Now a question arises that demands a thoughtful reflection on our part: "When the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:8). In other words, will the coming generations be proud of us for handing down the faith to them? Will they themselves be living that faith with vigour? St Francis of Assisi's call for a continual renewal in the approach of evangelization befits our situation, when he says: "Brothers, up to now we have done so little. Let us begin afresh!" May this jubilee enkindle in us that same zeal to say: "Brothers and Sisters, up to now we have not gone far enough. Let us rise up and go with vigour until we meet them and commune with them where they live!"

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