

**Jordan University College**

# **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.

*Ecclesia in Africa, 62*

**Vol. 15 / No. 2 / December 2013**

SALVATORIANUM



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Published by: SALVATORIANUM  
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Cover designed by Fr. Stanislaw Golus, SDS  
ISSN 1821-8083

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# Editorial

Dear Readers,

The issue of Africa Tomorrow that we place before your eyes promises to broaden the horizon of the intellectual, cultural and spiritual dimensions to which this journal has always aspired.

Dramas that unsettle nerves in today's world – abuses provoked by nuclear energy, the lack of silence in a society that grows ever more confused with the noise of the self-infatuated voices that claim to have the right to be heard, the pandemic of HIV/AIDS and its lessons for those who now suffer grave uncertainty in the wake of Ebola – these are just some of the many timely topics that this present issue touches.

In a word, we have chosen to present to you an array of articles that penetrate topics linked to a crisis that faces us all. Let me phrase this crisis in the form of two questions: Are we to accept the Future with all its challenges as an essentially hopeful one? Or are the disheartening problems that plague the human race today – pandemics such as HIV/AIDS and Ebola; continuing tribal and national conflicts in many regions of the world; the callous indifference towards those who are physically, mentally or emotionally disabled and may live every day with excruciating pain on account of their great hunger, loneliness and discouragement; the frightfully cold choice to eliminate human beings who lie silently and innocently in their mothers' wombs; the noise, the hustle and the bustle of everyday life that seem to cut off completely the human being from his or her contemplative dimension – are the seemingly overwhelming crises that plunge the soul of the contemporary human being into deeply troubled waters a Final Moment for human existence? Or, may we phrase a third question: Is the brother or the sister who looks forward to the life of the Resurrection the truly realistic human being?

It becomes our ardent desire that some of the convictions and insights expressed in these pages become an efficacious stimulus to a new spirit of solidarity, a solidarity that not only brings forth the communal wisdom of the vast variety of cultures that live on the African continent, but also a solidarity that stimulates

thoughtfulness and compassion that goes beyond Africa's borders into the global community of suffering. The global community of suffering needs to draw upon Africa's wisdom to give birth to a new hope. Thoughtfulness and compassion on the global level is a possibility when we all accept our identity as brothers and sisters within the same Family of God and therefore open our hearts to the love that God wishes to pour forth into our hearts when he gives us the Holy Spirit.

The Resurrection is a possibility for the Family that God has chosen to be his own: all peoples of all times and all places are embraced within that choice. No one is to be excluded from the invitation into the Family of God.

Father Marandu's analysis of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the medical, social, economic and moral requirements that must be met in order to dissipate the tendencies to spread and cause even worse havoc sadly opens our eyes to the relatively new epidemic of Ebola that our brothers and sisters in some regions of West Africa are suffering. Governments may vie for position to make sure that people of preference and privilege do not succumb to the illness, but there are Africans who live among the poorest of the poor who continue to manifest the nobility of the African soul in its pristine dimensions, to vaccinate our imaginations with a realistically thoughtful attitude and to open our eyes to discover new avenues that allow compassionate leaders to accompany his/her brothers and sisters to peace and unity, health and prosperity everywhere in the world today.

A case in point is a new acquaintance of JUCO's third year Degree students in Psychology and Counselling. Her name is Louisa Aminata Sankoh Hughes of Sierra Leone. She knew she was entering uncharted territory in 2004 when, as a young Susu woman just having reached the age of 21, she requested and received permission from her government to be the legal mother of 21 abandoned, starving children from the streets of Freetown – orphaned by the so-called Blood Diamond war, also called in some quarters, Foday Sankoh's war, in other quarters, Charles Taylor's war – and then begged the funds she needed to house them, feed them, clothe them and meet their medical needs.

The daughter of two educators, she herself became not only a mother but an educator for her children. Ten years have passed since she initiated her new family. At the age of 31, she now has legal responsibility for 60 children and so has had to make critical decisions to protect them from Ebola.

Working as tirelessly as ever, she has used all the information that she has carefully accumulated over the past ten years about the neighbourhoods and environments from which these children have come in order to decide prudently the best location to send the children in groups of two or three. She has sent them knowing that she would need to shield them from all possible exposure to those who may be prone to have contact with an Ebola victim. Meanwhile she has kept the 28 youngest children with her in her own home.

She has full information on hand about the hospitals in the children's regions and the medical personnel of those hospitals to make sure that her children have prompt medical care and at the same time avoid the less reliable medical personnel who frantically seek their own safety at the expense of the children who need their attention.

Because the Sierra Leonean government trusts her, officials have approached her to accept those children orphaned by the deaths of their parents from the Ebola plague. With the firm resolve to protect the children she already cares for – children who are orphans of war and survivors of abortion attempts – she nevertheless has expressed openness to her government that, once satisfied that screening procedures are appropriate and comprehensive, she would be ready to accept even children who are exposed to the Ebola of their dying parents: these children, too, need the welcoming embrace of tender, thoughtful, and compassionate human beings.

Louisa Aminata is only one among many examples of a West African woman who chooses to accept God's invitation to live within his Family. She is a woman of the Resurrection: my frequent communications with her convince me that she is a vividly beautiful ray of hope shining through clouds that at times can seem dark and dismal indeed.

A caring, thoughtful mother, educator and leader like Louisa Aminata comes forth from the style of educational discipline and methodology espoused by Brother Polycarp in the article that introduces this issue.

Next in this issue one finds an “outreach” article to a non-African country, that of India. Father Sahaya helps put into perspective core issues that obviously link to decisions made in various African institutions about energy. Insightful illustrations of the dangers of some technologies, especially that of nuclear energy produced by fission, coupled with enlightening summaries of the benefits that can ensue with the use of such natural energies as hydropower (water), solar power and wind power provide the reader with a balanced view of current challenges and fertile possibilities for energy development in Africa.

Father Marandu opens eyes, minds and hearts to the moral requirements that the HIV/AIDS pandemic brings into focus for those who wish to silence the anguished voices of those whose family members, husbands or wives have succumbed to this virus. Father Marcel Mukadi directs our gaze to the Church in silence, the gift proceeding from God that facilitates with extraordinary spiritual depth the communion that God intends to enjoy with each one of us. The Eucharistic God is a silent God: and we come to breathe according to the rhythms of his divine love when we give a privileged place in our liturgies to reverent silence.

Father Eberhard Mwangi provides a wonderfully Catholic context for all the issues raised in this journal: by weaving together certain fundamental biblical texts he shows how the African communal vision of God, her rootedness in God, where all strive to open their souls to receive God’s grace and love so as to live in thoughtful solidarity with each other, is precisely the spiritual entryway to the City of God that awaits us in heaven.

*The Editor*

# **PHILOSOPHY & HUMAN SCIENCE**

## **The Role of Discipline in Education Management and School Administration**

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### **Introduction**

In 2010, J. M. Nyasani published a book entitled *Philosophy of Development*. Within the context of his discussion on human development, he gave noticeable attention to the topic of discipline. What he says on this issue dovetails with basic content that third-year students in Education grapple with for the duration of a university semester in a course entitled Education Management and School Administration. Nyasani's work and certain salient points in the course outline are the two major influences on the present study.

The modest contribution that I would like to make to the issue at hand veers in two directions: (1) I would like to share my convictions concerning the role of discipline in education management and school administration as I cultivated them through my personal experience with various secondary schools where Jordan University College (JUCO) Education students have been conducting their Teaching Practice (TP) in July and August, 2013. (2) I would like to join my perceptions and remarks to the ongoing debates in Tanzania with regard to the decline of the quality of education in our country. This decline became painfully visible in the massive failure of 2011/12 Form Four examinees as reflected by their nationwide results, the results that were issued in February, 2013, by the Minister for Vocational Training and Education in Tanzania, the Honourable Dr. Shukuru Kawambwa.

Indeed, the public received the announcement of the results with mixed feelings. At some points, some sectors of the public – teachers, learners, members of Parliament, parents, guardians, primary schools, secondary schools, teachers’ colleges as well as universities and development partners among others – chose to blame each other. Referring to the Parliamentary session which was going on when the results were announced, one newspaper printed the article that carried the title: *Heated Debate over State of Education*. Under it, the author crafted two sub-headings:

- Mbatia Moves Motion to Form Select Committee to Probe Shortfalls
- Minister Says New Policy Being Formulated to Address Weaknesses

As the discussions continued, one medium reported a case of a lack of discipline and irresponsibility among teachers at a public school in Songea, Ruvuma. It was noted that normally teachers were coming to school in the morning, signing their name into the attendance book and then retiring to their personal businesses entirely ignoring their school duties. Similarly, some JUCO students shared what they observed at some schools where they went for Teaching Practice. There are some public schools, they said, where some students as well as teachers run what is known as Boda-Boda businesses. They go to schools with their motor cycles and then at specific times they leave their classes to go to do business, namely, to take passengers wherever they want to go.

What the Daily Nation Newspaper of 18<sup>th</sup> November printed in an article entitled *Poor ‘A’ Level Results Blamed for Lesser Enrolment in Universities* posed no difference. The writer, Mr. Abdulwakil Saiboko, was presenting what some noted at the 6<sup>th</sup> Graduation of Muslim University of Morogoro (MUM), namely, that currently the universities face a decrease in enrolment following the decline of the number of qualified candidates at lower levels (including that of Form VI). To cushion the effects, MUM launched some Certificate and Diploma Programs to upgrade some students who would later qualify for entrance into a university.

Someone may ask: Is this a true solution to the basic problem of the decline in the quality of education?

According to Mhando (2012), the blame game among sections of the public is real and has become a vicious circle that needs to be broken. For instance:

1. Universities are blaming high schools for no longer producing strong candidates for higher learning.
2. High school veteran teachers are blaming the universities for producing unbaked graduate teachers.
3. Secondary schools are blaming primary schools for producing semi-literate candidates for entry into secondary education.
4. Primary schools are blaming the Teachers' Colleges for producing incompetent teachers.
5. Teachers' colleges are blaming secondary schools for giving them candidates who are so weak in their teaching subjects that as they enter the colleges they have to go over the secondary school content before learning how to teach.
6. Again, the Teachers' colleges blame the universities for bringing forth graduates that are not properly prepared to become teacher-educators.

As some members of the public were exchanging blame and ascribing the disheartening phenomena to a variety of lame excuses, however, schools which performed well were counting their successes and attributing them to all who played a role. Such schools include among others: St. Francis in Mbeya, Marian Boys' and Marian Girls in the Coastal Region; Feza Boys in Dar es Salaam; Rosmin Girls' in Tanga and Precious Blood Secondary School in Arusha. Generally, they were giving gratitude to God and expressing their sincere appreciation for the cooperation exercised by all involved in order to bring about the good results observed. They were also focusing on what may lie ahead and strategizing how to maintain the level of performance.

An example that can be cited is that of the Precious Blood Secondary School in Arusha, supervised and maintained by a Catholic religious congregation, the Precious Blood Sisters. Marc Nkwame, the Guardian Newspaper Reporter, wrote an article with the title: *Precious Blood Shines in NECTA Exams*. At that point in time, the school had 21 teachers (13 female and

8 male). All of them were said to be disciplined and observed punctuality in their classes. In that school, students take turn to monitor their teachers' performance and vice versa. Mrs. Margaret Martin, one of the parents from Arusha, gave voice first to her sadness and regret: "As a parent it pains me to see pupils and students roaming Arusha streets during school hours. There are times I take it upon myself to chase them back to school," she said. But then Mrs. Martin went on to commend the school under the jurisdiction of the Precious Blood Sisters and advised other institutions to emulate it, particularly, in maintaining *discipline* in their learning forums. Indeed, the Prime Minister, Mr. Mizengo Pinda, who visited the school in 2009, awarded it with the Premier Award for *discipline*.

Indeed, Mrs. Margaret Martin touched the subject that constitutes the primary focus for the present. Without ensuring discipline in learning institutions, other efforts employed – for example, teaching a curriculum with the hope that students will be able to preserve what they learn for the future – may not bear fruit. For instance, an institution can employ many teachers, can establish laboratories, and set in place all other infrastructures the way the University of Dodoma (UDOM) has done. But without investing in the strict maintenance of discipline, those efforts may not bring tangible positive effects.

In this regard, let UDOM continue to be a point of reference. Many people appreciate the investment the nation and other development partners have made on behalf of UDOM. Currently, it is the most expansive and equipped University in Tanzania. The question surfaces: What is the quality of education there? Any member of the public paying attention to UDOM updates may comment about it. But let us be a bit more rigorous. It is said: *No research, no right to speak!* UDOM can be a source of insight for us if we do the research needed to test some of the hypotheses proffered by public figures to explain the decline of the quality of education in Tanzania. Hence we shall be in a better position to either refute or confirm the commentaries that are becoming so public.

By the time the 2011/2012 National Form Four Results were announced and the ensuing debates were heatedly under way,

JUCO Education 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Students were participating in a course entitled: *Education Management and School Administration*. The discussions in these classes carried content that can be honestly said to be enriching. Hardly a class would end without referring to the phenomenon under discussion, the decline of the quality of education and the failures so massive on a noteworthy scale. Having taken part in these discussions, I began to consider how I could share this topic with people beyond the classroom setting. That is, the readers of *Africa Tomorrow*. Indeed, from what has been noted so far, one can confidently assert that academic excellence and discipline are very much related. Without discipline there is no quality education. That is a point this discussion aims at expounding.

## The Meaning of Discipline

**What is discipline?** That is a worthwhile question to pose at this point of the discussion. Thungu and others (2008, 146) describes discipline as the practice of training intended to produce a specific character and controlled behaviour that results in moral, physical or mental development in a particular direction. In a class context discipline involves ensuring that *order* and *behaviour* are maintained in the teaching and learning environment. Thus, school/class discipline and routine are parts and parcel of the education and school management.

Thungu and his colleagues (2008, 146) list about 14 symptoms that indicate a lack of discipline in a class, in a school, in a college, or in a university. Here are some:

- Rudeness
- Cheating in examinations
- Failure to complete assignments
- Dressing shabbily
- Damaging school property (e.g., books)
- Neglecting school duties
- Failing to obey school authorities
- Sneaking out of school

Nyasani (2010, 153) describes discipline in the following words:

The kind of virtue that ultimately inspires and spurs the exercise of efficiency and competence cannot develop in the absence of something more fundamental in the life of the human person and his social evolution. This something fundamental, in effect, invariably underscores the actual development of virtue itself. This critical and fundamental presupposition is no other than discipline which to all intents and purposes is effectively a *conditio sine qua non* (a necessary and indispensable condition) for the development of the kind of virtue that comes to be labelled as efficiency or competence.

... Discipline is the relationship to oneself in the domain of mobilization and exercise of all the human faculties geared towards the achievement of an end. Indeed, it is an exercise of strict self-control vis-à-vis willed or foreseeable consequences which may be undertaken or disregarded provided the rule consistency is upheld and sustained.

## **Discipline and Principles of Management**

Henri Fayol, a French mining engineer who is considered by some to be the Father of Modern Management, developed 14 Principles of Management based on his experience and published them in a widely acclaimed 1917 manual. In that list discipline comes third; and so, not surprisingly, he suggests that obedience and respect within an organization are absolutely essential. Good discipline requires managers to exercise their authority by applying sanctions or penalties whenever violations become apparent. In the same 1917 text, Fayol also proposed what are known as *Functional Areas of Management*. Again he slotted discipline in third place.

Members of an organization should honour the organization's objectives. They should also comply with the rules and regulations of the organization. In the context of American learning institutions, scholars highlight what are called *The Functional Areas of Educational Management*. On the topic of discipline, it is noted that most administrators spend a large portion of their time dealing with school discipline and behaviour. While there is no way one can eliminate all the students' behaviour problems, there are steps a school administrator can

take to ensure that the school discipline program is seen as effective and efficient.

## **Discipline and Education Management and Schools Administration**

Similarly, Aldridge and Goldman (2007) highlight discipline as an important aspect of education. They observe that of all issues that concern teachers and school administrators, discipline generally tops the list. That harmonizes with what was reported by several schools as they were offering favourable evaluations of the Teaching Practice (TP) held by the JUCO Education Program. Referring to JUCO's TP, one school administrator said:

Academically, JUCO may not be very much different from other Universities; but in terms of commitment and discipline of the TP students JUCO ranges higher than many other universities which have brought TP students to our school. That is very important in teaching; it is better to have a teacher who is academically average but committed and disciplined.

A teacher who is not committed and lacks discipline is not worthy to be a teacher. Sometimes we tolerate such a teacher because we have no apparent choice (e.g., there may be a mathematics teacher who is poor in discipline, but he is the only mathematician available).

*The Citizen*, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013, printed an article with the heading: *School Audits are Crucial to Performance*. The article was written to brief the public of the Korogwe District, Tanga Region, on the resolutions reached by a meeting involving education stakeholders. In other words, a meeting was convened in response to the deteriorating standards of education in the District. It was noted that discipline should receive emphatic attention if the problem is to be resolved. To quote (Sembony 2013, 24):

The inspection should ensure that discipline is maintained among teachers, between teachers and pupils, among pupils and other school workers. We want to ensure that teachers come to school on time which is the basic principle in implementing any academic program.

A similar observation about maintaining discipline was noted by the superior of certain religious community (name reserved). The community wanted to establish a secondary school. Before activating the project, the religious community tried to talk to local groups established near the site in order to ask their opinions on the project. It also wanted to see whether the local groups would support it by sending their children there. Generally, members of the local community were positive about the project and promised to send their children there, provided the school ensured discipline. Having noticed the stress that the local families put on discipline, the superior reached the obvious conclusion that among the elements which make a school attractive to parents is the code of discipline in that school.

## **Discipline and Dress Code in Schools**

As an element of discipline, schools and all serious institutions require uniforms. Indeed, different offices/careers/professions require a certain kind of dress that corresponds to the nature of their roles. Farming requires a certain type of dress, worship requires another kind of dress, drinking places (like bars) invite particular dress codes that might be different from those typically appropriate for teachers. It is important that we know these differences – especially if we belong to one or more of the aforementioned groups.

In school settings, for example, those of primary or secondary schools, students have uniforms. Military forces have their own special uniforms. Teachers often do not. That does not mean, however, that teachers can dress according to whim and caprice. By virtue of their profession, teachers should dress decently and should groom. Some of the dresses which do not seem proper for teachers are: whatever is tight, short, transparent or dirty. Decent dress is a symbol of discipline. That is the rationale behind all disciplinary militia such as police and soldiers who are mandated to put on nice-looking uniforms.

*The Citizen*, 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013, carried an article entitled: *Residents Want Laws on Dress Code*. The residents referred to are the people of Ilala District, Dar es Salaam. They made their

comments as they were contributing their views about the new Constitution in the country. They noted that today the dressing code among the youth, particularly among females, is not appealing. Female musicians also were spotlighted as very indecent in their dress – dressing half-naked has become a trend for them. That has a lot of negative effects, including imprinting the images of the female artists turned exhibitionists on their minds and memories so as to later serve as distractions when they are trying to concentrate on their work or other tasks. Comments about the dress of the male musicians, on the contrary, were favourable: most of them dress decently.

They attributed the problem to the laxity of the existing Constitution – it is silent about dress codes. To address the issue, therefore, it was suggested that the new Constitution should state clearly on how people should dress and set measures for those violating the code. They also suggested that the new Constitution should issue directives for dress codes to all institutions of learning (Masre 2013, 3). Had Ilala residents known JUCO and the efforts it is making as far as a dress code is concerned, they would have approved vigorously. This institution is already practicing what those people are suggesting should be added to the new Constitution. For instance, the JUCO Students’ by-laws (15) state clearly:

The dress code is applicable to all students and is part of our policy to provide and maintain high professional and ethical standards of integrity and discipline in the campus.

## **Discipline and Material Resource Management in Schools**

Administration of educational institutions are also responsible for the acquisition and allocation of material resources – negligence in this area would mean the eclipse of education. A good teacher should also be a good manager of material resources. Similarly, Mburu (2009), writing about *Cash Flow Management*, describes cash flow as the life blood of all organizations. *Cash Flow* in its simplest form refers to the movement of money in and out of the organization. Cash is the

most liquid of all organizational assets. It is, therefore, the most susceptible to fraud, theft and misappropriation. Cash needs to be monitored, protected, controlled and put to work – that means discipline. Again, the single most important factor leading to institutional failure, no matter how big the institution may be, is cash flow.

The following are some areas of Cash Control, identified by Mburu, that require discipline:

1. Physically, by ensuring that cash is properly under lock and key at all times.
2. In making cash payments, by ensuring that only authorized amounts are paid out and that the amounts are correct; payments should be made only after confirming that what is being paid for has been properly ordered and authorized,.
3. That all the amounts listed as currently in bank accounts are verified as actually having been received by the bank; and that any withdrawals have been authorized and are properly registered by the bank.
4. In receiving cash for purposes of deposit to ensure that the amount indicated as deposited is correctly entered into the books.
5. By ensuring that there be only one person in charge of cash transactions who actually handles cash in the organization, i.e. only one person should be making payments.

Cash flow, in a word, has to be managed; its effects are real and immediate, and if mismanaged it is quite difficult to rectify. But if properly managed it can be both serviceable and rewarding for the institution. That is discipline (Mburu 2009, 5).

On 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013, the TBC broadcasted the incident of about 4,000 Form II students whose academic future was in suspense following the absence of examination fees in Dar es Salaam (Mabibo Secondary School included). It was reported that the examination fees were indeed collected but that the Headmaster had not submitted them. By the time the news was broadcast the Headmaster was nowhere to be found. On 22<sup>nd</sup> January the Deputy Minister for Education and Vocational Training (the Honourable Minister Murugo) promised to track the

case and make sure that the fees would be found so that students could get their results. Indeed, on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, he went to the school where he met some school stakeholders – the Deputy Headmaster, other teachers, parents and students. The Headmaster was still nowhere to be found. The Minister ordered special forces to search for him and to make sure that he paid back the money.

On the same day (22<sup>nd</sup> January) *The Citizen* published an article: *Importance of Hiring Proper Staff Stressed*. The writer was reporting what was said by the Guest of Honour at a gathering in the Kahama District. It was noted that many institutions face the problem of maintaining records especially on financial matters and so they do not want to employ professional and competent accountants. This leads to losing millions of shillings and ultimate collapse (Shija 2013, 7). Similarly, the Daily News of 15<sup>th</sup> November 2013 reported the case where 85 million Tanzanian shillings budgeted for a water project disappeared as a probable act of theft at one of the institutions in the Muleba constituency, Kagera. The one who discovered this was the Area Member of Parliament, the Honourable Professor Tibaijuka as she was conducting an official tour in her constituency.

## **Discipline in the Schools of Tanzania under Mwalimu Nyerere**

A good number of people in Tanzania, teachers, parents, and the public at large, have complained of a decline in the quality of education in Tanzania. They recall the old days, particularly during the first phase of Tanzanian Government, when, generally speaking, discipline seemed to prevail in the country's educational systems. Some people describe the period as a time when people acted responsibly; *sticks and corporal punishments* were common in schools. In other words, laxity among those responsible for the system of education and the consequent lack of discipline together with the banning of sticks figured high in the list of factors for the prevailing decline in the quality of education. The argument concerning the use of the stick was based presumably on the wisdom of the sages: *Spare the rod,*

*spoil the child; or, He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him* (Aldridge and Goldman, 2007, 84).

Some note that Nyerere was to be credited with notable achievements in a number of areas in the domestic arena, especially in the provision of health services and education to the point where Tanzania had the highest literacy rate in Africa (over 91 percent). Educational institutions conformed to respectable standards of quality. This success can be attributed to a variety of factors. One of them is that of discipline in education; in the schools and, more generally, in the public sector. All teachers (or most of them) and civil servants had to go for National Service Training: JKT – Jeshi la Kujenga Taifa. JKT was compulsory for those who passed Form VI and those who wanted to enter universities, but for those who did not go beyond Form IV, it was not compulsory. One purpose of the training was to instil discipline, obedience, patriotism, and commitment to the nation. This indeed is what characterizes military forces: they are disciplined, hard-working people, patriotic and ready for any command or directive from higher authority. That is the type of civil servant – and this means also the one who is a teacher – that Nyerere wanted to groom in Tanzania. Unfortunately at present the country seems to lack such people: hence the observed decline.

## **Conclusion**

The discussion has purported to show that the decline of the quality of education on the various levels of schooling is real. Collective as well as individual efforts are needed to reverse the trend. Most importantly, this discussion has invoked the example of past days when discipline in institutions prevailed and people acted responsibly. In other words, there is a need to learn from history and experience. The importance of discipline in education management and school administration can be learnt, for example, from the formation structures of African Traditional Society. In that regard Kirwen (2008, 70) observes that pre-colonial African communities had elaborate educational

structures, with holistic education which prepared learners to live effectively in their cultural contexts. This style of education emphasized moral values, discipline, physical development, and practical applications.

I once visited one of the offices of Education Ministry in Dar es Salaam. I found heaps of letters on the tables; some of them on the floor – Generally, the office was not organized. I got the impression that employees are not efficient (like working on the letters in time and filing them to create orderliness in the Office). As I had also gone there to send a letter, I left the office doubting that my letter may get mixed up in that unorganized working environment.

Moshi town, the leading town in cleanliness and order in Tanzania, is maintained by a high level of discipline – every person caught littering is penalized heavily: he or she pays 50,000 Tanzanian shillings. Maintaining discipline in learning institutions provides grounds for academic excellence. In other words, academic excellence and discipline are very much related. Without discipline there is no academic excellence; without academic excellence there is no successful school/ college/ university. For the program that prepares teachers to be credible, let the words of Aldridge (2007) be given the weight they deserve: discipline is an important aspect of education. Of all issues that concern teachers and administrators, DISCIPLINE should be among the points that top the list.

Surely, many Africans who have got the chance to visit some countries in Europe, the Far East, Canada, or the United States have admired the high level of development reached. That includes: electrified and fast trains, clean and well-kept streets, orderly and efficient administrative systems. We yearn for the day Africa will see such development. But sometimes we forget that such development is the result of a high level of discipline that most of us may not be ready to adopt for ourselves.

We are not advocating restoration of corporal punishment, but rather the need to reinforce and maintain discipline, which is the basic principle in maintaining any academic program. Henri Fayol does not mince words on the importance of discipline. What he said bears repeating: "Most administrators spend a large

portion of their time dealing with school discipline and behaviour. Again, obedience and respect within an organization are absolutely essential. Good discipline requires managers to apply sanctions or penalties whenever violations become apparent. Members of the organization should honour the objectives of the organization. They should also comply with the rules and regulations of the organization.”

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# **Nuclear Energy and Technology: Its Ecological-Sociological Impact in the Indian Context with Special Reference to Koodankulam**

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## **Introduction**

The discovery of nuclear fission, actualized by bombarding uranium atoms, presented the world with an alternative energy source that was hailed with euphoria as a safe and clean option in order to meet energy demands. The fission of a single uranium atom brings forth approximately 10 million times the energy produced by the combustion of a single coal atom. A fundamental consideration when it comes to nuclear energy is that the energy content of 1 gram of Uranium is equivalent to approximately 3 tons of coal.<sup>1</sup>

For this reason, in the 1950s and 1960s nuclear reactors began sprouting up. Today, many countries have felt compelled to use nuclear energy for solving electrical and other energy crises and for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Recent research by the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) shows that there are about “439 nuclear power reactors in operation in the world, operating in 31 countries,”<sup>2</sup> and more than 150 naval vessels using nuclear propulsion have been readied for operation.

A series of nuclear disasters, from Three Mile Island to Fukushima, together with geopolitical concerns that concentrate

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<sup>1</sup> “The Science of Nuclear Power”, <http://nuclearinfo.net/Nuclearpower/TheScienceOfNuclearPower>, [accessed 18 Jul 2013].

<sup>2</sup> S.K. RAJPUT, *Nuclear Energy*. Kindle Ed., New Delhi: Mahaveer 2009, 1009.

on the link between nuclear weapons proliferation and public health issues, on the other hand, have provoked global debates about the future use of nuclear energy.<sup>3</sup> Proponents, such as the World Nuclear Association and IAEA, contend that nuclear power is a sustainable energy source that reduces carbon emissions.<sup>4</sup> Opponents, such as Greenpeace International give voice to the accusation that nuclear power poses many threats to people and the environment. The Fukushima disaster, for example, sent shock waves all over the world: in its wake, many countries including Germany, France, United States and Japan began looking for renewable energy sources that do not rely on nuclear fission.

This research paper adopts a philosophical point of view in order to analyze the prospects of nuclear energy and its ecological-sociological impact for the future especially in the Indian context. We keep in mind the objectives set by the Indian government and its Department of Nuclear Energy; and we formulate our thoughts according to the perspective of Habermas' Theory of Communicative Action and Life-World in the Public Sphere.

## 1. Background of the Study

In the present day situation, demand for energy is exorbitant and nevertheless continues to accelerate. Some believe that the growing demand for energy can be resolved only through the development of nuclear technology accompanied by the construction of a sufficient number of nuclear plants. These days in India, the nuclear reactor at Koodankulam has become a focus for debate between proponents and opponents of nuclear energy.

As part of my research I visited Koodankulam and Kalpakkam to familiarize myself with the exact situation and to acquaint

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<sup>3</sup> F. QIAN, "Effects of Nuclear Power on Public Health: From Three Mile Island to Fukushima," <http://triplehelixblog.com> (2 Aug 2011), <http://triplehelixblog.com/2011/08/effects-of-nuclear-power-on-public-health-from-three-mile-island-to-fukushima/>.

<sup>4</sup> S.K. RAJPUT, *Nuclear Energy*, 1263.

myself with the positions that distinguish those who oppose nuclear reactors from those who support their establishment.

Secondly, because I work as a missionary in Tanzania, the IAEA’s recent proposal to build nuclear reactors in all the African countries has captured my attention. The IAEA has assured these countries full financial support and the required scientific equipment.

The scenario, however, continues to be ambiguous: the Fukushima disaster of 2011 has provoked serious concern and has triggered an earnest desire to reassess the need for nuclear energy. The debate has gathered momentum on both sides: indeed it has sparked division even among scientists, environmentalists, and doctors; and, more generally, among those known to be people of good will. Having contemplated the issue from a variety of angles, I intend to make a philosophical and critical analysis of nuclear energy and technology and their impact on human life and the future of the universe.

## **2. Understanding Nuclear Technology and Energy**

Nuclear energy “is the energy released during the splitting or fusing of atomic nuclei, to extract usable energy from atomic nuclei via controlled nuclear reactions.”<sup>5</sup> The most common method today is through nuclear fission, though other methods include nuclear fusion and radioactive decay. All utility-scale reactors heat water to produce steam, which is then converted into mechanical work for the purpose of generating electricity or propulsion. Nuclear energy traces its development according to the principles of fission, fusion, and radioactive decay. Nuclear fission occurs “when certain types of heavy atoms become unstable and split into two medium mass parts”; nuclear fusion occurs “when light atoms are forced together to make heavier atoms.” Radioactive decay happens when “unstable atoms emit

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<sup>5</sup> S.K. RAJPUT, *Nuclear Energy*, 1002-1005.

energy in order to become more stable.”<sup>6</sup> All the three processes involve interactions among powerful forces and changes of mass into energy.

### 3. The History of Nuclear Energy

The history of nuclear energy is the story of an old dream that became a reality in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The history of nuclear energy commences about 2,400 years ago in ancient Greece, when Democritus first developed the idea that all matter is composed of indivisible particles called atoms.<sup>7</sup> In 1938 Otto Hahn (1879-1968) split the atom but he did not know what he was really doing; later, Lise Meitner (1878-1968) became the first to recognize that bombarding a uranium atom with neutrons actually split the atom.<sup>8</sup> As an aftermath, physicists discovered that the atom contains large quantities of energy; and the British physicist Ernest Rutherford successfully formulated a theory of atomic structure. He wrote: “If it were ever possible to control at will the rate of disintegration of the radioactive elements, an enormous amount of energy could be obtained from a small amount of matter.”<sup>9</sup> As if to prove Rutherford’s conjecture, Enrico Fermi created the first controlled self-sustaining nuclear reaction<sup>10</sup> in 1934 and 1942.

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<sup>6</sup> C.D. FERGUSON, *Nuclear Energy: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Kindle ed., Oxford: OUP 2011, 290.

<sup>7</sup> E.S. STUMPF, *Socrates to Sartre: A History of Philosophy*, San Francisco: McGraw-Hill 1982, 26.

<sup>8</sup> “Otto Hahn, Lise Meitner, and Fritz Strassmann”, <http://www.chemheritage.org/discover/online-resources/chemistry-in-history/themes/atomic-and-nuclear-structure/hahn-meitner-strassman.aspx>, [accessed 16 Aug 2013].

<sup>9</sup> D. KVASNICKA, ed., *The History of Nuclear Energy*. Kindle ed., Nevada: U.S. Department of Energy 2011, 31-33.

<sup>10</sup> Enrico Fermi was an Italian-born American physicist who was one of the chief architects of the nuclear age. He developed the mathematical statistics required to clarify a large class of subatomic phenomena, discovered neutron-induced radioactivity, and directed the first controlled chain reaction involving nuclear fission. He was awarded the 1938 Nobel

Although many people may believe that Albert Einstein discovered nuclear energy, the records show that he did not involve himself directly in the area of nuclear energy research. Einstein’s crucial insight was that “energy and mass are equivalent.”<sup>11</sup> Einstein’s theory of relativity explains that mass is simply another manifestation of energy. The equation he formulated,  $E = MC^2$ , where E is the energy equivalent to a mass M and C is the velocity of light, was recognized by scientists to be a key tool for approaching the riddles of radioactivity, radiation, and atomic disintegration. Atomic disintegration was a particular manifestation of Einstein’s mass-energy equivalence, as evidenced by the release of energy from the uranium mass by means of radiation. This phenomenon provided clues to the understanding of energy.<sup>12</sup>

Electricity was generated from nuclear reactors for the first time on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1951 at the EBR-I experimental station near Arco, Idaho. This initially produced about 100 kilowatts (KW).<sup>13</sup> In 1952, “a report by the Paley Commission submitted to President Harry Truman made a relatively pessimistic assessment of nuclear power, and called for aggressive research in the whole field of sustainable-solar energy.”<sup>14</sup> In 1955, the Arco Reactor was the first to experience partial meltdown.

The Second Nuclear Age is an era that calls for the development of nuclear technology with the expectation of producing energy as an answer to the phenomenon of global warming, which is becoming unambiguously dangerous.<sup>15</sup> The proponents claim that the demand for energy is becoming extreme, especially since economies in developing nations have surged forward at unprecedented rates. It is clear, then, that oil

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Prize for Physics, and the Enrico Fermi Award of the U.S. Department of Energy is given in his honour.

<sup>11</sup> C.D. FERGUSON, *Nuclear Energy*, 473.

<sup>12</sup> A.D. ACZEL, *Uranium Wars: The Scientific Rivalry that Created the Nuclear Age*, Kindle ed., New York: MacMillan 2009, 47.

<sup>13</sup> S.K. RAJPUT, *Nuclear Energy*, 1032-1033.

<sup>14</sup> S.K. RAJPUT, *Nuclear Energy*, 1034-1036.

<sup>15</sup> S.R. WEART, *The Rise of Nuclear Fear*, Kindle ed., Boston: Harvard University Press 2012, 247.

and/or gas cannot meet these demands. The development of solar and wind energy has swiftly accelerated, but these energy sources have been still too costly and too small-scale to meet the demands coming forth from both developing and developed countries.<sup>16</sup>

There seem to remain only two realistic options for generating energy: nuclear and coal.<sup>17</sup> The coal option has met obstacles since scientists had uncovered more and more health hazards occasioned by coal effluents. In the early 2000s, research confirmed the fears of those people who are by nature suspicious: the burning of coal was indeed causing at least 100,000 premature deaths every year around the world.<sup>18</sup>

In 1965 a commission of climate experts published a warning regarding future global warming: due to the greenhouse effect of enormous carbon-dioxide gas emissions that accompany energy production, global warming can only get precariously worse. The scientists declared global warming to be a major threat to international security, to the health of human beings, to the ecosphere, and hence to the existence of the entire universe.<sup>19</sup> By 2010 it was clear that the globe was warming according to exactly the same trajectory that scientists had been predicting for decades.

Environmental activists began to direct their attention to nuclear reactors as a solution for the demands of energy security.<sup>20</sup> The disaster at Japan's Fukushima I nuclear reactor facility, however, raised questions among commentators over the future of this particular form of energy renaissance. Worry, scepticism, and conflicting views about nuclear power have occasioned a retreat from the enthusiasm about the possibilities of nuclear power: the fierce global debate on the future use of nuclear power has created a drift from which has emerged a diversity of views among both the proponents and the opponents of nuclear power.

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<sup>16</sup> S.R. WEART, *The Discovery of Global Warming*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Boston: Harvard University Press 2008, 107.

<sup>17</sup> S.R. WEART, *The Rise of Nuclear Fear*, 244.

<sup>18</sup> National Academy of Sciences, "Hidden Costs of Energy", [http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12794](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12794) [accessed 17 Jul 2013].

<sup>19</sup> S.R. WEART, *The Discovery of Global Warming*, 207.

<sup>20</sup> S.R. WEART, *The Rise of Nuclear Fear*, 244.

#### **4. Genesis of Nuclear Energy Security Plans in India**

In India, the Atomic Energy Commission was set up in 1948 for framing policies concerning the development of atomic energy in the country. The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) was established in 1954 with Dr. Bhabha as Secretary; and Sir J.R.D. Tata, too, played a significant role in shaping the policies related to the development of an atomic energy program in the country. In India, the objectives of nuclear energy development corresponded to peaceful uses of atomic energy in order to improve the quality of life of the Indian people and to achieve self-reliance in meeting energy needs.<sup>21</sup>

The Indian nuclear program was to consist of a unique, sequential three-stage process and the associated technologies required for the process to go into operation. Hence the program essentially set its sights on an optimum utilization of the indigenous nuclear resources, a modest supply of Uranium and an abundance of Thorium. India's energy demand is exorbitantly great because of its vast population; and demand for an energy supply that would be exclusively for the use of multinational companies and factories continues to intensify. But there is scarcely enough fossil fuel available to meet the escalating demands.

At present in India, there are 20 reactors with a capacity of 4,120 Megawatts (MW) in operation, which supply 3 per cent of the country's energy needs and six reactors with a capacity of 3,160 MW that are under construction. Two Light Water Reactors (LWRs) of 1,000 MW each are under construction at Koodankulam in technological cooperation with the Russian Federation. Government officials and scientists claim that the country has developed comprehensive capabilities in all aspects of nuclear power from siting to design, construction, and the operation of nuclear power plants. Comprehensive multidimensional facilities are in place. Capabilities have also

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<sup>21</sup> S.K. JAIN, “Nuclear Power –An Alternative”, <http://www.npcil.nic.in/pdf/nuclear%20power-%20an%20alternative.pdf>.

been developed for the front and back ends of the fuel cycle, from mining to fuel fabrication, storage of spent fuel, reprocessing and waste management. The infrastructure for other inputs, such as those of heavy water and zirconium components together with systems for control and instrumentation have been established. Furthermore, there is an excellent human resource and training infrastructure that is ready to engage capable candidates and cultivate in them the specialized skills needed for nuclear power.<sup>22</sup>

On 11<sup>th</sup> March 2006, Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister of India took part in the parliamentary debate on nuclear energy; during the debate, he insisted that nuclear reactors are a necessity of the times for the future and progress of India. He also noted there is fear and worry among the people and the members of the Parliament. Yet, it is necessary for the Indian economy to grow; and growth translates into India's need for an additional supply of commercial energy. India cannot always depend on the Middle-East and west Asia for import of hydrocarbons to produce energy. He noted that there are plentiful reserves of coal, but it has high content of ash, which could lead to environmental hazards, thus resulting in global warming.<sup>23</sup> Consequently at this point of time, nuclear reactors seem to be the most adequate to meet the challenge of energy security.

Siegfried Hecker, a noted nuclear scientist, affirmed that India is quite advanced with regard to nuclear energy and technology. He agreed that the Indian program for nuclear energy is innovative, ambitious, ready to confront the safety challenge; and the Indian technicians are world-class. Nevertheless he indicated that the Fukushima accident is a wake-up call for the safety of the nuclear industry and gives everyone pause for caution. In a retrospective analysis of Fukushima, it becomes quite evident that Japan's safety measures for nuclear power plants were not adequate. In a way, you might say that he was launching an

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<sup>22</sup> S.K. JAIN, "Nuclear Power"

<sup>23</sup> M. SINGH, "PM's reply in the Lok Sabha to the debate on Civil Nuclear Energy Cooperation with the United States", 11 Mar 2006, [http://www.nti.org/media/pdfs/8\\_india.pdf?\\_id=1316627913](http://www.nti.org/media/pdfs/8_india.pdf?_id=1316627913)

accusation against the Japanese by inferring that after the Three Mile Island disaster, the US learned a great deal, and the Chernobyl disaster made the world understand even more the importance of safety measures, but what the Fukushima event made evident was that the Japanese failed to take heed.<sup>24</sup>

## **5. Nuclear Power Plants and Ecological-Sociological Concerns**

### **5.1 The View of the Proponents of Nuclear Technology**

Proponents of nuclear energy led by the IAEA argue that nuclear power is a sustainable energy source for its output is controlled. Furthermore it increases energy security by decreasing dependence on fossil fuel.<sup>25</sup> Proponents maintain that there are advantages in having nuclear reactors: they are safe, clean, environment-friendly, and the productivity per unit is high. Nuclear reactors do not require a lot of space to provide gigawatts – an important variable to keep in mind given the fact that there is an intense competition for land all around the world. A major variable that occasions support for nuclear reactors is that of the concern for ecology because the production of nuclear energy does not contribute to carbon emissions and greenhouse gases: hence from this perspective, it does not cause environmental pollution and global warming.<sup>26</sup>

Proponents claim that nuclear reactors produce only a small volume of waste that can be stored easily; and the risk factors that might remain can be solved by advanced technology. According to proponents, the over-all operational safety record for nuclear

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<sup>24</sup> S. HECKER, “What India can learn from Fukushima,” interview by P. Bagla, *The Hindu* (30 Jul 2013), <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/interview/what-india-can-learn-from-fukushima/article4967338.ece>.

<sup>25</sup> S.K. RAJPUT, *Nuclear Energy*, 1263-1264.

<sup>26</sup> “Nuclear Power: Advantages and Disadvantage”, [http://www.cyberphysics.co.uk/topics/nuclear/advantages\\_disadvantages\\_nuclear\\_power.htm](http://www.cyberphysics.co.uk/topics/nuclear/advantages_disadvantages_nuclear_power.htm), [accessed 12 Jul 2013].

reactors is good in comparison with the other major kinds of power plants.

Nuclear Technology is useful for medical science. Cesium 137 is an isotope useful in medical and industrial radiology especially in laser operations. Nuclear reactors can be manufactured small enough to power ships and submarines: this eliminates the need to use fuel.<sup>27</sup> The mode of operation for the submarines that use nuclear energy can feasibly be applied to aircraft. If the airplane were designed to operate solely by means of nuclear energy, there would be no need to refill it with fuel. It could keep on moving for 30 years.

## **5.2 The Opponents' View concerning Nuclear Technology**

Wherever one may go around the world, ever since becoming an operational reality, nuclear technology has triggered questions and debates with regard to its safety and reliability. Nuclear reactors require high capital costs for the building of the plants. Their operation involves serious risks; and there is a growing scepticism whether nuclear power is a useful option.

The opponents of nuclear technology that at present give a public voice to the critical issues involved are Greenpeace International and the People Movement against Nuclear, headed by S.P. Udayakumar. Their goal seems to be the criticism of nuclear power as a viable alternative and the advocacy of such renewable energy sources as solar power, wind energy, and hydraulic energy. They stress their opposition to the use of nuclear energy by emphasizing certain facts: (1) nuclear reactors produce radioactive waste; (2) depleted uranium can be used to produce nuclear weapons; and (3) nuclear reactors can be targets of terrorist attack.<sup>28</sup> They hold that what happened at Chernobyl and Fukushima prove that there are risks involved in the use of nuclear power and hence the argument that new technology

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<sup>27</sup> V. RYAN, "Nuclear Power Generation", [www.technologystudent.com/energy1/nuclear1.htm](http://www.technologystudent.com/energy1/nuclear1.htm) [accessed 19 Aug 2013]

<sup>28</sup> R. GAIKWARD, "Nuclear Energy Debate," *National Council of Church Review* 132 (2012) 449-450.

reduces these risks deserves to be suspected. Besides nuclear reactors are neither cheap nor economical, if one were to consider the cost of construction, the expenses involved in their operation and maintenance (including the price of fuel), and the decommissioning, disposal and maintenance of waste... indeed the waste material may perdure for several hundred years.<sup>29</sup> These considerations all obviate the argument that these reactors are economical.

In recent years, opposition against nuclear energy has increased.<sup>30</sup> Analysis of the economics of nuclear power must take into account the risks tied to future uncertainties. To date all operating nuclear reactors have been developed by state-owned or regulated utility monopolies in which accident liability and other factors related to risk are borne by consumers rather than suppliers.<sup>31</sup> The largest inevitable energy cost associated with nuclear reactors is that involved with the processes of mining and milling uranium fuel. According to nuclear scientists it is extremely expensive to mine most of the ores that would need to be mined; and the mining process is very complex. Before uranium can be enriched, it must be converted to uranium hexafluoride gas, because it is in this form that the fissionable uranium 235 can be separated from the non-fissionable uranium 238. However, most of the high-grade uranium ores are of limited supply; the records show that the global high-grade reserves amount to only 3.5 million tons.<sup>32</sup> It even becomes a possibility that if the concentration of uranium becomes very low, the energy that would be expended in order to extract and to refine the uranium would be greater than the amount of electricity eventually generated by the nuclear reactor.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> C.D. FERGUSON, *Nuclear Energy*, 1036-1040.

<sup>30</sup> S. KIDD, “New reactors—more or less?”, *Nuclear Engineering International* (21 Jan 2011), <http://www.neimagazine.com/story.asp?sc=2058653> [accessed 14 Aug 2012].

<sup>31</sup> Cf. M.V. RAMANA, *The Power of Promise, Examining the Nuclear Energy in India*, Kindle ed., New York: Viking 2012, Location, 12.

<sup>32</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power is Not the Answer to Global Warming or Anything Else*. Kindle ed., London: MacMillan, 2011, 8.

<sup>33</sup> S.R. WEART, *The Rise of Nuclear Fear*, 198.

## 6. Nuclear Accidents and Safety

Ever since the introduction of nuclear technology some serious accidents have occurred. There were several minor accidents; and there were more notable nuclear accidents that are commonly known by just about everyone who has access to the international news media: the Three-Mile Island accident (28<sup>th</sup> March 1979), the Chernobyl disaster (26<sup>th</sup> April 1986), and the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster (11<sup>th</sup> March 2011). These accidents have aroused fear over the future use of nuclear energy. Nuclear-powered submarine mishaps like the K-19 reactor accident (1961), the K-27 reactor accident (1968), and the K-431 reactor accident (1985),<sup>34</sup> and the latest Sindhu Rakshak submarine episode of 14<sup>th</sup> August 2013, which overwhelmed and killed nearly 20 people in addition to provoking environmental disasters all help to incite fear. The nuclear accidents have terminated thousands of lives and have left survivors traumatized and handicapped.

The Three-Mile Island disaster was a combination of equipment malfunction, design-related problems and worker errors, all of which led to partial meltdown and very small off-site releases of radioactivity.<sup>35</sup> In response to this kind of nuclear accident, experts began using the International Nuclear Event Scale (INES) to measure the severity of nuclear mishaps on a scale of 0 to 7.<sup>36</sup> The Chernobyl disaster received an INES score of 7 on the scale. The UN report *Chernobyl: The True Scale of the Accident*, published in 2005, states, “Approximately 1,000 onsite reactor staff members and emergency workers were heavily exposed to high-level radiation on the first day of the accident; among the more than 200,000 emergency and recovery operation workers exposed during the period from 1986 to 1987, [there were] an estimated 2,200 radiation-caused deaths ... [There are]

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<sup>34</sup> “Timeline of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Disaster”. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear\\_power](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_power) [accessed 14 Aug 2013].

<sup>35</sup> United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, “Backgrounder on the Three Mile Island”, <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fact-sheets/3mile-isle.html> [accessed 25 Jun 2013].

<sup>36</sup> S.K. RAJPUT, *Nuclear Energy*, 1305-1306.

an estimated 5 million people currently live in areas of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine that are contaminated with radio nuclides due to the accident ... about 4,000 cases of thyroid cancer.”<sup>37</sup> Thus the disaster continues to have a very adverse effect on the people and environment.

The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident of 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011 was rated 7 on the International Nuclear Events Scale (INES) due to the major release of radioactive material and widespread environmental effects.<sup>38</sup>

## 7. Nuclear Health Threats

Nuclear power has raised many concerns regarding health, even when nuclear reactors are operating normally. Miners, workers, and residents in the neighbourhood where the mining and milling take place, and workers involved in the enrichment processes required to create nuclear fuel are at risk for exposure to radiation and suffer an increased incidence of cancer and related diseases.<sup>39</sup> Routine and accidental radioactive releases of nuclear reactors contaminate water and food chains causing deficiencies for human beings and environments. Radioactive materials that enter the soil and reach the roots of plants may be adulterating whatever they touch thus contaminating the environment and exposing the human being to radioactive risk.<sup>40</sup>

Although the radioactive particles are used in the medical field today, radiation can harm the reproductive systems of human beings. Practically all radiation-induced mutations are dangerous, and their deleterious effects persist in successive generations.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> United Nations, “Chernobyl: The True scale of Accident,” (6 Sep 2005) <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2005/dev2539.doc.htm> [accessed 17 July 2013].

<sup>38</sup> Nuclear Energy Agency, “Timeline for Fukushima Daiichi power plant Accident,” <http://www.oecd-nea.org/press/press-kits/fukushima.html> [accessed 6 Aug 2013].

<sup>39</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power*, 36.

<sup>40</sup> A. SALVITI, *Nuclear Power: What Do You Know?* Kindle ed., Oxford: OUP 2012, 42-49.

<sup>41</sup> W.A. REDMOND, “Radioactive Fallout”, *Microsoft Student 2009 [DVD]*.

Dr. Mukesh Gupta, a quality assurance officer at Koodankulam, attested to the fact that “Radiation doses of about 200 milli-rem cause radiation sickness, but only if this large amount of radiation is received all at once.”<sup>42</sup> Dr. Muller (a Nobel Prize winner) affirmed that what makes the difference is the cumulative amount of radiation received by the reproductive organs, whether it be a single large dose or many smaller doses.<sup>43</sup> Each dose of radiation received adds to the risk of developing cancer or mutating genes in the reproductive cells.<sup>44</sup> Radiation induces mutations that exercise a determinative influence on some genetic characteristics triggering diabetes, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, and certain forms of mental retardation. These are recessive diseases.<sup>45</sup> It is evident that uranium ore emits gamma radiation; thus uranium miners can suffer similar risks.<sup>46</sup>

## 8. Radioactive Waste and Waste Management

The biggest concern of S.P. Udayakumar and the People Movement Against Nuclear Energy is the disposal of nuclear waste.<sup>47</sup> There is only scattered agreement about the effective method for storage and the parameters for choosing an appropriate place for storage of the long-life radioactive residue.<sup>48</sup> As the facts stand, each regular 1,000 megawatt nuclear power plant generates 30 tons of extremely potent radioactive waste annually.<sup>49</sup> Though nuclear power has been in operation for

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<sup>42</sup> M. GUPTA – S. BABU, “An Overview on Power Scenario and the Need of Nuclear Power in India”, Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project Report, 14. [http://npcil.nic.in/pdf/news\\_24apr2012\\_01.pdf](http://npcil.nic.in/pdf/news_24apr2012_01.pdf) [accessed 24 Apr 2012].

<sup>43</sup> “Hermann Joseph Muller”, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermann\\_Joseph\\_Muller](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermann_Joseph_Muller) [accessed 14 Aug 2013].

<sup>44</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power*, 44.

<sup>45</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power*, 43.

<sup>46</sup> K. SCHNEIDER, “A Valley of Death for Navajo Uranium Miners”, *New York Times* (3 May 1993) 12.

<sup>47</sup> S.P. UDAYAKUMAR, *Puyalukku Pinne Poonthentral*. Nagercoil: Kaalachuvadu Pathipagam, 2012, 9-31.

<sup>48</sup> M. DENEKAMP, *Global Warming Carbon Taxes and Nuclear Fusion as the Answer*, Kindle ed., Boston: MIT 2012, 582.

<sup>49</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power*, 60.

almost fifty years, the nuclear industry has yet to determine how to dispose safely of these deadly nuclear residues, which remain radioactive for thousands of years. Most nuclear waste is confined to huge cooling pools – appropriately called swimming pools – that are located at reactor sites, or in dry storage casks beside the reactor.<sup>50</sup>

Nuclear wastes emit plutonium, which is a typical alpha emitter named after Pluto, the Greek god of hell. Plutonium is a radiological poison because of its high rate of alpha emission and its specific absorption within bone marrow. According to Glen Seaborg, plutonium is said to be the most dangerous substance on earth; it is so toxic and carcinogenic that less than one-millionth of a gram, if inhaled will cause lung cancer.<sup>51</sup>

The radioactive Iodine 131, which nuclear reactors usually emit as a gas either as a pre-calculated procedure or as an accidental side-effect, is a very volatile isotope. “It is both a beta and a high-energy gamma emitter, and as such it is very carcinogenic.”<sup>52</sup> At a high level of concentration, Iodine 131 is poisonous and may cause serious damage to skin and tissues. Nevertheless, according to the Fukushima disaster report, the Iodine 131 isotope contaminated drinking water for a brief period of time.<sup>53</sup>

Strontium 90 is a beta and gamma emitter: it is “an isotope released from reactors in small amounts on a daily basis, mostly in the waste water but sometimes in air”<sup>54</sup> and affects the health and environment. Generally speaking, nuclear waste is extremely hazardous and the disposal thereof is one of the greatest global concerns; but even the highly developed countries have failed to treat the issue properly.

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<sup>50</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power*, 60.

<sup>51</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power*, 61.

<sup>52</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power*, 62-63.

<sup>53</sup> M. IRVINE, *Nuclear Power: A Very Short Introduction*, Kindle ed., Oxford: OUP 2011, 1262-1265.

<sup>54</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power*, 63.

## 9. Environmental Issues

Nuclear power, on the other hand, does not produce greenhouse gas emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>) directly; rather, the nuclear fuel cycle produces them only in a roundabout way.<sup>55</sup> Nuclear power is not directly responsible for producing sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, mercury or other pollutants associated with the combustion of fossil fuels but it still has to be a matter of concern that disposal of nuclear waste could lead to radioactive effects. A nuclear reactor is said to discharge significant amounts of radioactivity into the environment even when operating normally.<sup>56</sup> Empirical evidence points to seriously adverse health effects of these routine releases.<sup>57</sup>

Uranium mining is also responsible for dumping radioactive wastes into the environment: the dust and groundwater that are contaminated by this kind of radioactive decay pose risks for vast areas.<sup>58</sup> Reprocessing plants, too, are extremely polluting: all gaseous radionuclides from spent fuel are released into the air.<sup>59</sup>

Nuclear power belies compatibility with a solution to the climate change crisis. The nuclear industry has exploited concerns about global warming and climate change in order to promote atomic energy by dubbing it “clean”, “carbon-free” and “environment-friendly.” A number of studies, however, have revealed that nuclear power is not a solution to climate change; rather, it creates more dangerous problems and aggravates them for the coming generations.

## 10. Plant Decommissioning

The price for energy inputs and the environmental costs occasioned by every nuclear reactor continue long after the

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<sup>55</sup> S.K. RAJPUT, *Nuclear Energy*, 1288-1289.

<sup>56</sup> M. THOMAS, “Nuclear power: Myth about low cost, safety and emission”, DiaNuke.org (21 Nov 2011), <http://www.dianuke.org/nuclear-power-myths-about-low-cost-safety-and-emission/>.

<sup>57</sup> “Nuclear Waste: The Perfect Plague”, DiaNuke.org (22 Jul 2011), <http://www.dianuke.org/nuclear-waste-the-perfect-plague/>.

<sup>58</sup> M. THOMAS, “Nuclear power”, DiaNuke.org.

<sup>59</sup> “Nuclear Waste”, DiaNuke.org.

facility has finished generating its last useful electricity. Both nuclear reactors and uranium enrichment facilities must be decommissioned after 50-60 years. Decommissioning returns the facility and its parts to a safe enough level to be trusted. Reactors must be dismantled. The process is very expensive and time-consuming, hazardous to the natural environment and dangerous for human beings who are engaged in this task.<sup>60</sup>

The total energy required for decommissioning can be as much as 50% more than the energy needed for the original construction. In most cases as far as nuclear reactors are concerned, the decommissioning process costs between US \$300 million to US\$5.6 billion.<sup>61</sup> Decommissioning at nuclear sites which have experienced a serious accident are the most expensive and time-consuming, after the earthquake and tsunami in 2011 wrecked the Fukushima Dai-Ichi plant on Japan’s coast, Japanese taxpayers were saddled with an estimated \$ 75 billion clean-up bill.<sup>62</sup>

## 11. Situation of Koodankulam

In Delhi on 20<sup>th</sup> November 1988 – barely two years after the nightmarish Chernobyl accident of 26<sup>th</sup> April, 1986 – the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and the then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi signed an accord for the development of the Koodankulam nuclear reactor. Widespread opposition from the local people who joined hands with other anti-nuke organizations provoked the indefinite postponement of a ceremony that was scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> December 1988 in order to inaugurate the foundation. The situation intensified when on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1989, there was a Coastal March to “Protect Waters, Protect Life” held at

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. “Timeline of the Fukushima”, wikipedia.org.

<sup>61</sup> J. GOULDING, “Nuclear Power – Description, accidents and waste”, (2 Mar 2013) <http://fleurcom.org/blog/nuclear-power-description-accidents-and-waste/>.

<sup>62</sup> D. MCNEILL, “With Fukushima nuclear plant still leaking, Japan clean-up bill soars to \$50bn”, *The Independent* (24 Jul 2013) <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/with-fukushima-nuclear-plant-still-leaking-japan-cleanup-bill-soars-to-50bn-8730832.html>.

Kanyakumari. There police firing caused the severe injuries of six fishermen. In spite of all these signs of opposition, the government remained firm in its wish to execute the project.

Since 1<sup>st</sup> November 2001, there were various protests organized by environmentalists and socialists; and the People Movement against Nuclear instituted a more formal means of demonstrating opposition. When the Soviet Union collapsed and Rajiv Gandhi was killed, the project finally collapsed. The issue was not, however, moot because on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1997, the Indian Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda and the Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed an agreement, a supplement to the 1988 agreement. According to this deal Russia would deliver two Russian designed standard pressure VVER-1000 water-cooled and water-moderated reactors that would produce 1,000 MW power per unit. Subsequently, Russia would extend a \$ 2.6 billion (Rs. 6,000 Crore) credit to India at 4% annual interest to be paid back over 12 years after the projected commissioning of the first reactor. At present the initial estimate has become nearly \$7 billion (Rs. 17,000 Crore).<sup>63</sup>

As for now, the government has planned a ‘Nuclear Park’ at Koodankulam. Demographically, the place has a higher population (approximately 50,000, excluding the reactor workers) than what is stipulated by the regulations published by the Atomic Energy Regulation Board. The Board had stated that the population in the vicinity of the reactor should be less than 20,000 people. And within the 30 KM radius the population should not exceed 100,000<sup>64</sup>. In reality, however, there are more than 400,000 people inhabiting more than 100 villages that constitute two districts (Trinelveli, and Kanyakumari).

Corruption in the nuclear industry and the Zio-Podolsk scandal has raised serious concerns about the safety of the nuclear reactor

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<sup>63</sup> S.P. UDAYAKUMAR, ed., *The Kudankulam Handbook*. Nagercoil: Transcend South Asia 2004, 24-43.

<sup>64</sup> Government of India, Department of Atomic Energy, “AERB guidelines on the Population around the Nuclear Plants,” (1 Dec 2011), [http://dae.nic.in/writereaddata/rsus1094\\_011211.pdf](http://dae.nic.in/writereaddata/rsus1094_011211.pdf).

at Koodankulam.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, Dr. A. Gopalakrishnan, notable of India’s nuclear establishment and former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), affirmed that there are flaws in the Koodankulam facility because of the sub-standard materials and laxity of quality in its operations.<sup>66</sup> Admiral Ramdas, who served as the chief officer of the Indian Navy confirmed that there is a huge scam in the whole process that undergirds the construction of the Koodankulam nuclear reactor. What seems necessary, therefore, is to set up an independent enquiry on the whole issue.<sup>67</sup>

After hearing the diverse points of view concerning the issues that emerged from the manner that the Koodankulam reactor was established, and after questioning the people who were working in the nuclear reactors for more than 25 years at Kalpakkam and elsewhere, government commission members commented that in a normal situation, the generating process of nuclear energy is safe – it is “green” – and does not cause radioactive waves. They admitted that the Russian safety standards are as a rule poor; but by contrast the Indian government is seriously concerned with safety measures. They affirmed that in the final analysis the running of the nuclear reactor in Koodankulam would be for the progress and development of the country, and for the enhancement of the life-world of the people in India.

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<sup>65</sup> “The Zio-Podolsk Scandal and Koodankulam: Urgent and Must-Read Articles”, DiaNuke.org (14 Apr 2014), <http://www.dianuke.org/the-zio-podolsk-scandal-and-koodankulam-urgent-and-must-read-articles/>.

<sup>66</sup> A. GOPALAKRISHNAN, “Serious Flaws in Koodankulam plant”, DiaNuke.org (19 Jun 2013), <http://www.dianuke.org/serious-flaws-in-koodankulam-plant-dr-a-gopalakrishnan/>.

<sup>67</sup> L. RAMDAS, “Det Up Enquiry into Koodankulam Scam: Letter to the PM from Admiral Ramdas”, DiaNuke.org (23 Apr 2013), <http://www.dianuke.org/set-up-enquiry-into-koodankulam-scam-letter-to-the-pm-from-admiral-ramdas/>.

## 12. Renewable Energy as the Answer to the Energy Crisis

Renewable energy is usable energy derived from sources that replenish such as the sun (solar energy), wind (wind power), rivers (hydroelectric power), hot springs (geothermal energy), and tides (tidal power).<sup>68</sup> Renewable energy provides 19% of the electricity generated worldwide.<sup>69</sup> India needs neither nuclear power, which is the most dangerous, nor coal/bio-fuel, which could lead to the greenhouse effect and exacerbate global warming. India's energy security indeed could be satisfied with energy from wind, water and solar power.

According to the World Nuclear Industry Status Report of July 6, 2012, renewable energy development has continued rapidly. In 2011, global investment in renewable energy totaled US\$260 billion: this is almost five times higher than the 2004 amount.<sup>70</sup> Meanwhile installed worldwide nuclear capacity decreased again in 2011, but the annual installed wind power capacity increased by 41 GW in 2011 alone. Within the European Union nuclear capacity decreased by 14 GW since the year 2000, while 142 GW of renewable energy generating capacity was installed, 18 percent more than that of natural gas with 116 GW.<sup>71</sup> Renewable energy technology is quick to assemble, abundant, and cheap to harvest; and it is safe, flexible, secure, and friendly to the climate/ecosphere. Investing in renewable energy, then, provides cheaper, cleaner, greener options that would ultimately serve consumers and the environment remarkably better.<sup>72</sup> Projections vary, but scientists have advanced a plan that could feasibly power 100% of the world's energy with wind, hydroelectric, and solar power by the year 2030.

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<sup>68</sup> "Renewable Energy," *Encyclopedia Britannica 2012; Ultimate Reference Suite*, 2012.

<sup>69</sup> "World Nuclear Industry Status Report 2012", DiaNuke.org (6 Jul 2012), <http://www.dianuke.org/world-nuclear-industry-status-report-2012/>.

<sup>70</sup> "World Nuclear Industry Status Report 2012", DiaNuke.org

<sup>71</sup> "World Nuclear Industry Status Report 2012", DiaNuke.org

<sup>72</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power*, 161-165.

Table: The Global Growth of Renewable Energy from 2008-2011

<b>The Global Growth of Renewable Energy</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
Annual investment in new renewable capacity (in terms of billions of USD)	130	160	211	257
Renewables’ power capacity (currently) (GW)	1,140	1,230	1,320	1,360
Hydropower capacity (currently) (GW)	885	915	945	970
Wind power capacity (currently) (GW)	121	159	198	238
Solar PV capacity (grid-connected) (GW)	16	23	40	70
Solar hot water capacity (currently) (GW)	130	160	185	232
Countries with policy targets for renewable energy use	79	89	98	118

Wind energy is a form of energy in which turbines convert the kinetic energy of wind into mechanical or electrical energy, that is to say, into the kind of energy that generates power. Wind resources are calculated based on the average wind speed and the distribution of wind speed values that typically occur within a particular area.<sup>73</sup> In spite of the challenges to the large-scale implementation of wind energy – challenges that include siting requirements such as wind availability, land availability and environmental protection standards – wind energy is cheap, fast to produce and potentially pragmatic. Wind power is very attractive because it is benign; its development has short lead times; its mass production is economically very efficient; its technological development is rapid; and it is easy to site windmills on available land.

Solar energy is the energy derived from the sun through solar radiation. Solar-powered electrical generation relies on photovoltaic and heat engines. The sunlight that reaches the ground consists of nearly 50 percent visible light, 45 percent infrared radiation, and smaller amounts of ultraviolet and other

<sup>73</sup> “Wind Power”, *Encyclopedia Britannica 2009 Ultimate Reference Suite*, 2009.

forms of electromagnetic radiation.<sup>74</sup> This radiation can be converted either into thermal energy (heat) or – what is more difficult to accomplish – into electrical energy. Two main types of devices are used to capture solar energy and convert it into thermal energy: flat-plate collectors and concentrating collectors. Solar cells (photovoltaic cells) may convert solar radiation directly into electricity. The power generated by a single photovoltaic cell is typically only about two watts but by connecting large numbers of individual cells together, as in solar-panel arrays, hundreds or even thousands of kilowatts of electric power can be generated in a single solar electric plant.<sup>75</sup>

Hypothetically, 10 trillion to 20 trillion watts of solar power provided by photovoltaic cells could take the place of all conventional energy sources currently in use. Consequently, it has been estimated that a rather inefficient photovoltaic array covering half a sunny area measuring 100 square miles could meet *all* of India's yearly electricity needs.<sup>76</sup> India could benefit greatly from solar power because she has almost 9 months of full sun to supply the requisite amount of solar energy. At this point of time, however, India requires additional equipped technology and facilities to harness this energy.

### **13. Philosophical Implications of the Issues that Involve Nuclear Technology and Energy**

Habermas is a contemporary philosopher and social theorist. One of his best known ideas is *Communicative Action*, which denotes a situation in which the actors in society seek to reach a common understanding and hence seek to coordinate actions that are flowing forth as communal choices made by reasoned arguments, a modality of consensus, and ongoing cooperation. Hence this concept belies the kind of strategic action that is intent

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<sup>74</sup>“Solar Energy” *Encyclopedia Britannica 2009 Ultimate Reference Suite*, 2009.

<sup>75</sup>“Solar Energy” *Encyclopedia Britannica 2012 Ultimate Reference Suite*, 2012.

<sup>76</sup> H. CALDICOTT, *Nuclear Power*, 171.

solely on the attainment of individual goals or those of factions.<sup>77</sup> Habermas provided a theoretical basis for a planning strategy that emphasizes widespread public participation, sharing of information with the public, and moving towards consensus through public dialogue rather than an unbridled insistence on the exercise of power. Hence his notions seek to avoid the unnecessary custom of devising privileges to dish out to experts and bureaucrats. He affirmed that the legitimacy of democracy depends not only on constitutional processes for enacting laws but also on "the discursive quality inherent in the full processes of deliberation leading up to such a result."<sup>78</sup> According to Habermas, ideal institutions ought to exclude "authority based on anything other than a good argument."<sup>79</sup>

Communicative action is individual action designed to promote common understanding in a group and to enhance cooperation, as opposed to the type of strategic action that is designed simply to achieve one's personal goals.<sup>80</sup> Habermas distinguished four kinds of action by which individuals interface with society,<sup>81</sup> such as *teleological* action, *normative* regulated action, *dramaturgical* action and *communicative* action. The *teleological* specifies coordination as the interlacing of egocentric calculations of utility, and so the relative importance of conflict and cooperation depends on self-interest. The *normative* specifies coordination as a socially integrating agreement about values and norms instilled through cultural tradition and socialization. The *dramaturgical* specifies coordination as consensus between players and their publics; and in *communicative* action the consequent accomplishments of mutual understanding upon

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<sup>77</sup> J. HABERMAS, *The Theory of Communicative Action, I: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, Boston: Beacon 1984, 86.

<sup>78</sup> S.K. WHITE, "Reason, Modernity, and Democracy", in S.K. White, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*, New York: CUP 1995, 12.

<sup>79</sup> J. Dryzek, "Critical Theory As a Research Program", S.K. White, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*, New York: CUP 1995, 108-110.

<sup>80</sup> J. HABERMAS, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 85-101.

<sup>81</sup> J. HABERMAS, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 85-86.

which cooperative processes of interpretation are based represent the dynamism for coordinating action.<sup>82</sup>

In any action, according to Habermas, there are two orientations, orientation to success and orientation to reaching understanding.<sup>83</sup> Instrumental action is teleological action oriented to success; strategic action is the special case where the actor tries to influence the decisions of an opponent whose position is rationally contrary to his/ her own. In contrast, “a communicatively achieved agreement has a rational basis; it cannot be imposed by either party. Hence it rests on common convictions.”<sup>84</sup> Habermas states: “I am of the opinion that social pathologies can be understood as manifestations of systematically distorted communication.”<sup>85</sup> The persistence of problems in Kudankulam is due to distorted communication between the people and the government.

Maeve Cooke noted that “Habermas’ picture of every communicative action thus has important implications for critical social theory. In presenting social order as a network of cooperation involving commitment and responsibility, it opposes models of social order that take interactions between strategically acting subjects as fundamental.”<sup>86</sup> Habermas argued that in the first three models language is one-sided. In teleological action, it is aimed at “getting someone” to do something. In the normative mode, it is a medium to transmit cultural values and a consensus; that is to say, its intent is simply to actualize an already existing normative agreement. In the dramaturgical model, language is the medium of self-representation to an audience. By contrast to such one-sidedness, communicative action “is a medium of uninhibited communication.”<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> J. HABERMAS, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 101.

<sup>83</sup> It is to be noted that these orientations correspond to the typical parameters by which most social psychologists evaluate the functional and dysfunctional components of organizational behaviour. (Ed.)

<sup>84</sup> J. HABERMAS, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 287.

<sup>85</sup> J. HABERMAS, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 226.

<sup>86</sup> M. Cooke, Maeve. “Introduction”, in J. Habermas, *On the Pragmatics of Communication*, ed. by M. Cooke, Cambridge: MIT 1988, 5.

<sup>87</sup> J. HABERMAS, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 95

In Koodankulam, the government's actions suggest that it was following the first three models rather than that of communicative action. The major claim of the People Movement Against Nuclear is that government officials did not do anything concrete to remove the fear and that there was no proper dialogue between the parties involved. The government tried to convince the people that its choices promoted development by giving pride of place to normative action. The government took advantage of the powerful media available in order to propagate its wishes rather than the truth. The government's goal was to promote the development of nuclear reactors in India, a goal that the government imposed upon the people, saying that it would be for the overall development of the country. In the context of the option for nuclear energy and its associated technology, Habermas' stipulations for communicative action are violated. A grave consequence that ensues is that multinational companies and industries surge forward at the expense of the poor, whose life-world lies entirely outside of consideration.

## **Conclusion**

It is impossible to return to a naive simplicity. Nuclear technology is with us and cannot be wished away completely for it has distinguished itself as "indispensable." Meeting the energy demand and stabilizing the requirements for security are the quest of all. But the nuclear option is neither desirable nor viable. The renewables make clear that other options exist; and it is up to governments and citizens to implement them, and to do so with urgency. The urgent need to take note of the global warming situation, to comprehend the extraordinary dangers of nuclear power, and to develop an attitude that is fundamentally motivated by altruism requires each person's willingness to accept responsibility for protecting the universe for future generations. The crisis of nuclear war threatens the existence of our planet. Global resources are finite and the misapplication of science and industry has seriously damaged the ecosystems of this unique planet, threatening the ongoing existence of millions of species, including that of human beings.

R.K. Gupta, former Scientific Engineer in the Nuclear Fuel Processing Division, grieves, saying: “Over 35 years I worked in a plutonium plant of the Nuclear Fuel Processing division of BARC Trombay. I became permanently physically handicapped, incapacitated during my service prior to retirement due to the ‘work environment’, ‘improper safety procedures’, ‘medical negligence’, exposure to nuclear radiation’, and ‘nuclear contamination’, and so forth.”<sup>88</sup> He confirmed that nuclear energy is not safe: it is dangerous both for humanity and for the environment. Eco-friendly and people-friendly energy resources and technologies are available and are capable of further improvement. Hence the actual objectives of the nuclear energy infrastructure in India have been disregarded; and the life-world of the ordinary citizens has suffered neglect within an ideological frame of reference that on the surface heralds development and progress.

The issue, on the other hand, could be solved in a way that respects all Indian men, women and children: these solutions that preserve interpersonal respect give the place of preference to dialogical communicative action. Dialogical communicative action is an action principle that considers the enhancement – not the denigration – of the life-world of ordinary people. This thoughtful regard for the enhancement of the life-world of the ordinary person is not just a passing glance when initial steps are taken; it is not just a final afterthought when conclusions achieve determinate formulations; but rather it is a thoughtful involvement of the ordinary person’s life world at every moment of every stage during the development process. Is this not praiseworthy?

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<sup>88</sup> R.K. GUPTA, “Nuclear engineer comes out against DAE, calls for abandoning nuclear energy”, DiaNuke.org (14 Aug 2013), <http://www.dianuke.org/nuclear-engineer-comes-out-against-dae-calls-for-abandoning-nuclear-energy/>.

# THEOLOGY & CULTURE

## The HIV/AIDS Pandemic: A Moral Perspective

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### The Virus

HIV/AIDS is among the enigmas which have baffled medical researchers in the last 30-40 years. Medical Ethics has kept pace with the development of this research.

HIV stands for Human-Immunodeficiency Virus. It is the virus that causes AIDS – Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. AIDS, in fact, refers to a sum of health complications which result from a persistent dwindling of normal body immunity. The Swahili word for AIDS is UKIMWI – *Ukosefu wa Kinga Mwilini*, i.e., lack of immunity in the body. It is rather an imprecise translation. It misses the phenomenon of acquisition which is important in Medical Ethics. AIDS is not hereditary. It is contracted in human interactions. HIV/AIDS, therefore, brings into focus the whole issue of the way human subjects ought to relate to each other in a morally healthy manner.

As a parasite rather than as an autonomous entity, HIV cannot exist outside the human body. It must attack in order to survive. It has neither ribosomes for the production of proteins, nor mitochondria for the manufacture of energy. It procures these vital supplies from the human body. For replication it needs the human T-lymphocyte. By means of its glycoprotein 120, it gets attached to its receptor and to at least one of its co-receptors, either CCR5 or CXCR4. From the ensuing tussle, its glycoprotein 41 ‘melts’ the two interfacing membranes making entrance into the cytoplasm possible. It is here that the viral enzyme, reverse transcriptase, using materials from the cytoplasm, transforms the

viral RNA into DNA which consequently gets holed up into the T-lymphocyte's DNA within the nucleus. Known as a provirus at this stage, it can stay in this position for years, upheld by another of its enzymes, integrase.

An infected T-lymphocyte acts as an HIV factory: At the mitosis of the T-lymphocyte, the pro-virus uses the human enzyme, the DNA polymerase, to manufacture viral genome stuff and mRNA filaments which in turn produce viral elongated protein cords. The remaining replicative process is short. It consists in the assembly of the virion. The viral enzyme, the protease, reduces the elongated protein cords into smaller bits. On encounter with viral RNA, new virions are compiled. Subsequently, they bud out of the T-lymphocyte cytoplasm taking part of its membrane as their cover. At this phase, the new virions are basically ready for the next attack. The constant mutation of the virus which complicates therapy and action from antibodies comes from the imprecision of reverse transcriptase as a DNA synthesizing enzyme.

## **Modes of Transmission**

The modes of HIV transmission are common knowledge for most educated people in East Africa. Even the average citizen is aware that heterosexual contacts are a major infection channel. Homosexual practices, whether they involve males or females, are, for the most part, limited to urban and semi-urban areas. This means that fellatio, cunnilingus and anal coitus as transmission channels cannot be ruled out.

Non-sterilized sharp objects such as syringes are another source of infection. In fact, there are thousands of infected children in Sub-Saharan Africa whose parents show no sign of the virus. This reflects the unhygienic state of many health facilities, their poor equipment and the incompetence of some of their staff. Contaminated instruments traditionally used in circumcision and *chanjo* may also act as sources for the infection. Organ transplants, artificial insemination and, above all, the transfusion of blood or its derivatives constitute other sources of infection.

Blood donation is common and, idealistically speaking, is a good service to society. Poor scanning, however, leads to health hazards. The transmission from the mother to the embryo or foetus is another source. Mother-child infection can also happen during birth or breast feeding. Anti-Retro-Virals (ARVs) to contain the virus and *Cotrimoxazole* to ward off opportunistic diseases are limited in their availability to the infected population. Furthermore, this commendable strategy does not work in all cases.

Malnourishment and other mostly curable but chronic diseases compound the problem. Pregnancy complications make treatment even more difficult, thus, necessitating advanced forms of therapy which are unavailable to the majority of the people. Perhaps the most delicate cases are those that involve infected individuals, married and unmarried, who do not show visible signs of any symptoms of the disease. If diagnosed, anti-HIV antibodies will be detected in their serum; but we do not suspect that an ordinary married person or one involved in a pre-marital or extra-marital moral irregularity is going to anticipate infection in these cases.

Other possibilities exist, too. A health worker, for example, who has contact with HIV/AIDS patients, can get infected accidentally in the course of his or her service.

In a word, all the circumstances in which blood, semen, cervix or vagina secretions from an infected person comes in contact with the body of another, there is a chance for infection.

## **Women as Primary Victims**

Almost everywhere the number of infected women is slightly higher than that of men. Increased female infections mean more female deaths and greater anguish among those for whom the women were caretakers, especially among children and the elderly. Several reasons account for this. Generally, women tend to look for sex partners who are slightly older than themselves; and, inversely, older men look for younger women. Often the older associate is already infected.

Those who are socio-economically dependent are more vulnerable: these are usually women. Because the number of women who attain a degree in higher education is quite small,

a tendency present similarly at the secondary level although to a lesser extent, the women are more liable to be taken advantage of by the males who, on account of their superior education, are more capable of manipulating.

Economic conditions, too, play a role in exposing women to infection. The girls and young women who are engaged in domestic employment, usually in urban areas, are underpaid and totally dependent on their employers. They may try to make ends meet by some form of sexual activity.

Those women, mostly young adults and teenagers, who employ themselves in the informal sector do not fare much better: they mostly operate 'petty' businesses, such as the preparation and selling of simple food products, especially *chapati*, chips, maize, cassava, eggs and other small items like fruit, soft drinks, bread, drinking water, vegetables, and fish. Some of these women and girls endeavour to make a bit of money selling baskets and mats in open air market places and busy street corners.

Whether they are making a living by the food they prepare or by the products of loom and needle, what they earn hardly suffices for basic personal and family needs. Efforts to raise some extra money by some form of sexual activity expose them to the infection.

Hence, the heading chosen by Majani, F., *Wasichana wadogo waongoza kuambukizwa VVU nchini*, in *Mwananchi*, Alhamisi, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2003, p. 6, is realistic. It reflects a setting in which girls become more and more vulnerable to men who carry the infection as they struggle to eke out a living in a market in which economic patterns fluctuate in radically haphazard fashion. The exodus of rural peasants to urban and semi-urban centres; the sporadic manner by which weekly and in some localities, daily contributions reach local town authorities for the little spaces that these newcomers occupy for their businesses; and the continuing loss in value of the national currency all add up to instability and consequent poverty: 36% of Tanzanians live below the poverty line.

Majani's point is, in fact, noteworthy. One does not neglect to add that it represents official understanding. In the presence of Dr. Jakaya Kikwete, the President of the Republic of Tanzania,

Majani cited Dr. Fatuma Mrisho, chairperson of the Tanzania Commission for AIDS (TACAIDS), who inaugurated a report on the situation of the infection in the financial year 2012-2013. Making continuing references to this report, Majani made even more public the fact that 6.6% of young women in the country aged between 23-24 years have been infected in comparison with 2.8% of young men of the same age group.<sup>1</sup>

This is a dire situation for women. The modern erotic culture in which many individuals enter into active sexual life earlier than before raises even higher the chances of infection, above all, for women. Girls studying away from home, especially at secondary schools and colleges in urban areas, are often an occasion for worry on the part of their parents. Pregnancies among these girls are common; and some end up in abortion.

Men-women histological configurations have also come under scrutiny. In the case of a woman's heterosexual contact with an infected male associate, for example, the male deposits the virus in the woman's vagina with his semen. The possibility of avoiding infection in these cases is almost non-existent. The *strata* of the vagina walls, namely, the *tunica mucosa*, with its two layers, the *epithelium*, in turn divided into the *basal*, *parabasal*, *intermediary* and *superficial* layers, and the *lamina propria*; the *tunica muscularis* and the *tunica adventitia* are all candidates for the deposit of the virus. The *endocervical canal* sides, with just the *stratified squamous epithelium* and the *stroma* are even more vulnerable.

Theoretically, current technology has developed anti-HIV vagina gels containing microbicides. In theory, they could be useful to sero-discordant couples. They open relationships, however, to extra-marital and pre-marital abuse.<sup>2</sup> Their efficacy in containing the rate of the infection is still to be demonstrated. It

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<sup>1</sup> F. MAJANI, "Waongoza kuambukizwa VVU nchini", *Mwananchi* (29 Machi 2013) 3.

<sup>2</sup> The grave immorality involved in the types of sexual activity that may lead to the infection overshadows, too, the type of scientific inquiry and experimentation that would be necessary to support the claims that products such as these tend to make. Editor's Note.

has not been proven that they are able to destroy all the viruses contained in an ejaculate. Even if this were to be achieved, still pre- and post-male and female orgasm-infected secretions would need to be investigated.

Some have pointed to male circumcision. If fewer men are infected, then, hopefully, fewer women will be infected. There is no doubt that in a sexual act the foreskin retains infected mucus: this increases the chances of infection. One focuses, however, on dendritic cells in the inner foreskin to which the virus binds easily. Our concern is that there are ordinary people, both male and female, who may come to believe that once a male partner is circumcised the risk of infection is over.

All in all, it is undeniable that emphasis on women empowerment in the whole process of socio-economic development is a key factor in the fight against HIV/AIDS. All ought to participate in this struggle, especially in the area of education. It goes without saying that education cannot neglect to cultivate convictions about what is morally healthy sex – that which is proper to the marital union – and what constitutes sustainable income.

## **Socio-Moral Co-Existence**

### **Conflicts of Rights**

#### **Sufferers vis-à-vis the Non-Infected**

The Kenyan law on HIV/AIDS – *The HIV and AIDS Prevention and Control Act, 2006* – provides us with a good case study. It is keen on inclusiveness and is therefore unambiguously against all forms of stigmatization and discrimination. Article 13 states the following:

N° 2: “... No person shall compel another to undergo an HIV test as a precondition to, or for the continued enjoyment of (a) employment, (b) marriage, (c) admission into any educational institution, (d) entry into or travel out of the country, or (e) the provision of healthcare, insurance cover or any other service”.

Dwelling on treatment, Article 19 continues:

N° 1: "Every health institution, whether public or private, and every health management organization or medical insurance provider shall facilitate access to healthcare services to persons with HIV without discrimination on the basis of HIV status".

N° 2: "The Government shall, to the maximum of its available resources, take the steps necessary to ensure the access to essential healthcare services, including the access to essential medicines at affordable prices by persons with HIV or AIDS and those exposed to the risk of HIV infection".

The law handles the issue of transmission in Article 24:

N° 1: "A person who is and is aware of being infected with HIV or is carrying and is aware of carrying the HIV virus shall: (a) take all reasonable measures and precautions to prevent the transmission of HIV to others, and (b) inform, in advance, of any sexual contact or person with whom needles are shared of that fact".

N° 2: "A person who is and is aware of being infected with HIV or who is carrying and is aware of carrying HIV shall not, knowingly and recklessly, place another person at risk of being infected with HIV unless that other person knew that fact and voluntarily accepted the risk of being infected".

Considering the Kenyan cultural mind-set and other factors such as laws that sanction custom, the application of this law calls for particular attention to *epikeia* so as to ensure justice. Even with explicit moral and legal directives that may be at variance with social habits and customs, the rhythm of cultural change takes time. In their interactions, most common people act in tandem with socio-cultural and individual temperamental patterns rather than with written law.

The 2006 law is a standard law that represents official policy everywhere. It is clear about what constitutes the rights of the infected, and it sufficiently underlines their obligations. It is also an ideal law which, rather than reflect the current material context fully, shows the direction towards which the state hopes to orient its health policy as resources increase.

Kenya has the most advanced economy among the three major East African nations which constitute the East African Community: Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. The other two, Rwanda and Burundi, are small, thus easier to develop. Rwanda is one of the fastest developing economies in Africa; but Burundi is

still prone to sporadic internal armed conflicts and so is not expected to challenge the other three substantially in economic terms in the near future.

Kenya is not an original Anti-Retro-Virus (ARV) innovator and producer. Its resources are poorly distributed. Corruption and malnutrition are rampant and occasional deaths by famine are not uncommon in the arid areas, most of all, during the dry season. Its HIV/AIDS prevalence is 6.2% with some 1.6 million people infected. Its figures do not differ much from the Tanzania's 5.7% with some 1.6 million people infected. Uganda's HIV prevalence is 7.3% with some 1.4 million people infected.

Prevalence refers to the percentage of people aged 15-49 who are infected. When one thinks in terms of economic productivity and investment in human resources for the future, this is a crucial age group.

In actual fact, it is impossible to see how and at whose expense the Kenyan government is going to be able to generate the substantial funds needed to provide the subsidies it has promised by virtue of law in Art. No. 19 (2). Only an erratic token service in the politically vocal areas seems possible. The economy does not offer much space for manoeuvring.

The major socio-moral issue we face in the HIV/AIDS dilemma as in other dangerous cases of epidemic is the conflict between the rights of the sufferers and those of the rest of society. No wonder, therefore, that the Kenyan law is rather ambiguous on the practical safeguard of the rights of the non-infected. HIV is intricate to handle. It is more dangerous than Ebola by the fact that it operates slowly within the organism. Carriers not showing the symptoms can go on for decades spreading it; and, at times, they do not even know they are doing it. Meanwhile it has evolved a capacity to survive longer outside its natural environment and to reproduce faster – thus, increasing immensely the chances of infection.

In this uncertain milieu, the expected solidarity and precautionary interaction between the infected and the healthy, especially among the common people and others who hold no special social role becomes impractical. Stigmatization and

discrimination tend to become common and progressively hurtful as deaths caused by complications from the virus mount.

### **Impractical Solutions that Politics Offer**

*Aid with conditions attached.* All is political and nothing is apolitical in the present world. HIV/AIDS is, in fact, a crucial political issue. What Tanzania, East Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa ought to know is that loans and grants, including those aimed at sustaining the combat against HIV/AIDS are politically tainted. Many governments in the so-called developed world treat HIV/AIDS like any other foreign policy issue. Aid fatigue and the changing international economic equation that involves as variables China, India, Russia, South Africa and Brazil emerging as new superpowers in the near future, thus, challenging Japan, South Korea, and the United States, among others, seems to correlate with the choice of the tired economies to support only certain projects or segments of projects that harmonize with their financing policies.

The rest of the problem attracts little or no attention. Non-governmental organizations are governmental. They receive money directly or indirectly from their governments or from wealthy private individuals that in turn exert an influence on their governments. They cannot act contrary to their policies. The current crisis in the Euro zone, with member states such as Greece, Spain, Portugal and Ireland feeling compelled to subscribe to austerity measures, not to mention the more recent demise of the tiny island of Cyprus, has drained the flow of aid.

Unemployment in the United States, which at present stands at around 8% cannot be ignored. Countries in Europe and North America have been the traditional aid source for Sub-Saharan Africa, the most infected region of the world. The emergence of China as an economic celebrity is special. With a population of around 1.36 billion and stiff legal and illegal emigration procedures that concern economic opportunities abroad, Africa seems to be offering a preferential destination. This calls for political precaution.

Millions of Chinese, individually and collectively as companies, remit money in hard currency to China throughout the

financial year. This is happening within a resourceful cluster of competitors: this will certainly be a cause for economic concern to Africans. For the time being, China is focusing on Africa's primary commodities thus provoking stiffer competition with Japan, South Korea, Europe and North America rather than devoting their energies to the HIV/AIDS issue or to those other stagnant or deteriorating socio-economic situations that need rejuvenation.

### **International Socio-Economic Scene**

The social-economic life of the globalized world with its intricately interwoven economic network coupled with a network of social interactions at all levels raises other crucial questions. National borders have lost importance; international political pressure and technology have reduced legal and natural barriers to a minimum.

Meanwhile, just as at other eras of history, quarantines are common all over the world in cases of dangerous epidemics. Whether on the national or international level, governments may, at least in theory, contemplate measures that are more or less restrictive especially with a sudden infusion of refugees that tax the available resources. Governments ordinarily restrict the refugees to some designated areas rather than allowing them to roam freely in foreign territories or across national borders.

As far as HIV/AIDS is concerned, there is a key question whether certain circumstances call for the imposition of tests, for example, among inhabitants of highly infected zones or among social classes that are at high risk in order to gather sufficient data for an eventual assessment of the appropriate measures to take. One possible strategy could be to require an indication in the sufferers' identity cards and travelling documents that they are sero-positive. This would increase awareness of the problem, curb the spread of the disease and help people and institutions to take precautionary measures.

If governments were to follow this strategy, many would suffer the violation of their rights; but it would be for a greater good. While we honestly admit that discrimination of this kind, if adopted as a matter of policy, would not be the most appropriate

way for dealing with the matter, we wish to challenge policy makers, social scientists and society as a whole to come up with a better practical solution. Areas where, on the surface, the infection appears to be diminishing or at least stabilized are, in fact, regions that present statistics that are fluctuating in a manner that is simply unpredictable. One does not overlook the fact that on the whole the spread of the infection seems to accelerate.

### **Sub-Saharan Arica – the Pandemic from a Position of Weakness**

Governments need proper planning, a frequent review of policies and ways to follow-up projects. ARVs are an essential component in handling the pandemic; but if one were to be realistic, the hoped-for results from drugs are slow in coming. Poverty, illiteracy and semi-literacy, other diseases, both incurable and curable, that are chronic in nature, poor nutrition and corruption neutralize the effort.

Even when drugs are available, often they don't come as complete sets; and when they are available as complete sets, many people do not take them regularly and according to prescription. When the rainy season begins, for example, many peasants, including the HIV positive, go to work in their farms, away from their homes, carrying just the drugs they happen to have with them or completely neglecting to bring any drug to their work. They may make a new effort to procure other medicines when they return to their homes, at times after weeks without them. Shepherds and all who are taking care of animals migrate, often hundreds of kilometres, in search of pasture. They do not always stick to a drug regime. Other people keep wavering between the drugs and the African traditional treatment; others simply get tired of using them, and as a result just abandon them; others discard them due to their feeling of shame that they have the disease and the fear of stigmatization and discrimination. Others opt for the exorbitantly expensive apparent miracles in the Christian groups known for their proselytizing, and others abandon them due to negative effects from their use.

The Kenyan paper *Daily Nation*, in its article, *AIDS scourge turns on a new ugly face*, Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2005, pp. III-

IV, elucidates the resultant hazards. An erroneous combination and irregular or unmonitored prolonged use tend to build resistant strains and cause lethal effects such as *lactic acidosis* which gradually damages inner vital organs, including, the liver, the kidneys, the pancreas, and the heart. Efforts to substantially reduce toxicity without compromising effectiveness are still a long way off. Some of the unexpected deaths of patients under treatment are certainly provoked by heart complications from the treatment, especially when *Abacavir* is part of the combination. These are just some of the many possible treatment hazards. Drug imports therefore, have many health limitations.

Macro-allocation of resources brings another challenge. Limited funding from within the national budget and from donors means that only limited personnel can be prepared properly. To make matters worse, a very high percentage of these personnel migrate for better pay to other regions or even abroad. Brain drainage remains critical in Sub-Saharan Africa. Its negative impact on the fight against HIV/AIDS cannot be ignored.

Long-term costs constitute yet another challenge. Provisional subsidies from within or from abroad, or both, do not guarantee low prices for the millions of people who need treatment for the rest of their lives and for the accelerating number of new cases anticipated in national social projections. The drastic reduction or cessation of aid from abroad may lead to social strife as those infected demand accessibility to the drugs and the corresponding health care.

Often governments find themselves at a crossroad between the dread they feel at incurring more international debt, on the one hand, and on the other, the increasing number of deaths among members of the poor class, especially peasants and those bringing animals to pasture.

Many adults, including a good number from the middle class, invest more and more in the acquisition of ARVs and related care instead of educating their children. This cultivates backwardness.

Whichever way one chooses to address the issue, governments have a duty to limit both short and long-term dependency on foreign loans and grants that come with conditions attached. Governments achieve this principally by curbing domestic

demand. Limited resources and lack of know-how mean over-reliance on the cheaper but less effective generic drugs and inability to cope with innovations in therapeutic approaches. Drugs lose effectiveness with time as the virus mutates, occasioning new resistant strains. In an article *HIV change blocks treatment plan* that appeared in *Daily Nation*, Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2011, p. 11, G. Gathura indicated the following as ARVs under study for resistance: *Zidovudine, Tenofovir, Stavudine, Abacavir, Lamivudine, Emtricitabine* and *Nevirapine*.

New medicines and new treatment techniques come with new prices. Poor nations seek to cope with mounting difficulties. Economics puts a lid on the poor as those of higher status, often with grants from the state, go abroad unhindered to benefit from innovations in treatment.

HIV/AIDS gives rise to another adverse tendency. It gives some unscrupulous highly placed tycoons and state officials who act with impunity many occasions for a massive and rapid accumulation of wealth without the sweat of labour. The recent sub-standard ARVs batch produced by the Tanzania Pharmaceutical Industry (TPI) under a shoddy contract from the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare is just one of many examples. In this case, it was foreseen that poor people would sell something from their meagre farm produce, a sack of beans or a cow, for instance, only to end up buying drugs which do not contain the substance their bodies need. As the disease took its toll, they repeated the process, making their families poorer and poorer as their health dwindled.

The fact that 9,570 out of 12,000 bottles are said to have been recalled may not mean much. We do not have any report on the remaining 2,430 bottles or on former products by the same or other producers and, of course, the dumping from abroad continues unabated.

The Kenyan Pharmacy and Poisons Board of the Ministry of Medical Services, for example, published a public alert in the *Daily Nation*, Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2011, p. 58, to warn the public of what it defined as "falsified *Zidolam-N (Lamivudine, Zidovudine & Nevirapine)* tablets – used as anti-retroviral medicine found in Kenya". Considering the porous Kenya-

Tanzania border, we do not know if some of these drugs or consignments of similar ones from elsewhere reached the Tanzanian market. On encountering challenges in one market, suppliers tend to look for alternatives, at times, just in the neighbourhood.

The big business does not end here. Huge sums of money are spent on conferences, workshops and seminars in luxurious hotels, fully or partly owned by moguls and politicians; air, land and sea transport, allowances of different categories paid to officials and other personnel, and so on. At the end, one may as well question what percentage of the funds that were allocated specifically to tackle the epidemic really reached the people they were intended to benefit.

Sub-Saharan Africa faces yet another hurdle: the growing number of orphans from the pandemic, some of whom are HIV positive. This is because in Africa HIV is, to a very great extent, a family epidemic, spread heterosexually. Housing, raising and educating some 14.8 million orphans is a herculean task for the region. What further complicates the situation is the fact that millions of other children who lose one or both parents due to other diseases or other causes like wars have to be added to this figure.

The high cost of living and changing life styles has eroded the traditional practice of integrating orphans among relatives. Governments often ignore this challenge, leaving it to religious and non-governmental organizations.

## **Public Education**

### **The Approach**

Public education is a key component in all efforts to contain HIV/AIDS. It must make sense to the common man and woman according to their milieu and challenge them to be sexually upright. After all, they constitute the most infected and affected class. A purely empirical approach with its manipulative insensitivity to culture and its readiness to resort to moral subjectivism are counterproductive. This means that the current

radical liberalistic dilemma between sexual consumerism on the one hand, and on the other, full truth must be overcome.

Since most infections come from sexual permissiveness, the way out must be a change of lifestyle and prospects for matrimonial chastity within marriage. People must get out of the situations from which the problem originates. We must, therefore, stress the crucial importance of a morally healthy sex education against the current erotic culture as it is manifested in many cases of sex-sensitive advertisements, music, films, internet programmes, magazines, journals and tourism.

Drug addicts need to rehabilitate and so become free of their addictions. The idea of clean syringes does not seem to override the compelling, ritual-like influence of syringe sharing among persons suffering a reduced sense of judgement. We simply need to be critical of our current culture and its consequent lifestyle and act accordingly. We have to go beyond mere esthetical and emotional tastes for greater moral insight.

### **The Male Condom as Prophylactic Device**

A good part of the contents of public education on the prevention of HIV/AIDS has been restricted to the use of condoms or condoms lubricated with spermicides or antiseptics. This is too manipulative and superficial; and by its very nature the use of condoms engenders a pandemic of sexual immorality. A deadly virus which one contracts once and for all for the rest of one's life calls for a more serious answer, one that respects moral integrity.

The theory that one can engage in sexual activity at will and with whoever agrees to collaborate free from all possible HIV infection provided a condom is used is certainly misleading.<sup>3</sup> Sooner or later one will get infected and may develop the disease unless one happens to be among very rare individuals whose

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<sup>3</sup> Whether the act of sexual intercourse is marital or extramarital the use of the condom deliberately blocks the procreative potential of sexual intercourse and so reduces the act of intercourse to an act of heterosexual promiscuity. This perversion of the act of sexual relations in itself is gravely immoral whether there is an AIDS sufferer involved or not. Editor's Note.

systems seem capable of eliminating the virus on their own. And even these rare individuals are still prey to the moral corruption.

If someone has made the unwise choice of using the condom he should know that the deadly virus will be inside the condom if it is the male partner who is infected, outside, if it is the female, and both sides if both are infected. The secretions of mucus from the cervix, the vagina and the *Bartholin glands* start with arousal and continue after the sexual act, with or without a condom. On the male part, the mucous secretion from the *bulbourethral gland* which lubricates, removes urine residues and forms a gelatinous coat in the urethra prior to the passage of spermatozoa; the alkaline fluid from the *prostate gland* which contributes further in the elimination of urine residues and reinforces the lubrication of the vagina and the thick liquid promiscuity from the *seminal vesicles* which transports spermatozoa from their storage in the *epididymis* behave like the fluids from the female partner. They start with arousal and continue for some time after the act. Either partner, if sero-positive, can infect the other through these emissions. Mixing the virus, in case both are infected, is not advisable. One may have a dormant version and then ends up getting an active type which may attack.

The theory that the human skin is virus proof must be taken with caution. On the surface of the *epidermis* there are the pores of the *follicles* from which hair shafts stand. These are possible routes for the virus to travel to the body. On the same surface there are also *sweat pores*, connected to the *sudoriferous ducts* which lead to the *sudoriferous glands* in the *dermis*. These are other open passages for the virus. Arteries bring oxygen-rich blood all the way from the heart to the upper part of the dermis. From there oxygen-poor blood is collected by veins and led back to the heart. Viruses which come this far, therefore, have an easy access to the rest of the body through the blood system.

Even theoretically excluding these open passages which after all are not far apart, and the possibility of some wound somewhere, it is still incorrect to rule out altogether the possibility of the virus passing directly through the skin *strata: corneum, lucidum, granulosum, spinosum* and *basale* (which respectively constitute the epidermis) to the dermis underneath, to

the hypodermis further below and beyond, especially if infected mucus or blood stays on it for a period of time. All in all, it is evident that the human skin is not 100% virus proof. Infected secretions exiting through the vagina or the urethra meatus of the penis can infect a healthy person on contact with his or her skin.

Attention has focused on condom users, above all sufferers who contracted the infection using them. Many infections happen in awkward circumstances where users are under the influence of addictions, compulsions or seductions – including those related to alcohol – and so are without full use of their reason. Often prostitutes and drug pushers operate in drinking and other substandard places where respect for personal freedom does not count. Whether it is the intoxicating effect of liquor or the seductive effect of a sexual encounter with no personal responsibility or commitment attached, the condom is yet another intoxicant. People tend to lose their ability to abstain from such substances in such contexts.

Attention to one's own and others' health does not prevail in such circumstances. Influence from activism and advertising brings forth victims, too. Some opt for irresponsibility by changing from a posture of abstention to that of the use of condoms without critical consideration of the immorality involved nor of the physical hazards that the condom entails. In so doing, they get infected.

Needless to say, the victims are abandoning themselves to their own devices. No producer or distributor assumes responsibility for the harm that comes during the use of his or her products.

Perhaps the most delicate aspect comes from the youth to youth philosophy often used in activism and advertising. The idea is that in targeting the youth one must exploit the youth. Young people are, therefore, the major actors in advertising and activism. Completely oblivious to the moral implications of what they are doing, they insist on the use of condoms resorting not only to juvenile explanations but also to music and drama. They dwell chiefly on imagination rather than a critical mind or the voice of conscience. The objective is to motivate and persuade rather than clarify things. Many young people fall victim to this.

The quality of condoms has been a matter of discussion from the very inception of the pandemic. Sub-standard condoms have been rampant.<sup>4</sup>

Standards differ depending, inter alia, on the technological and professional competence of the manufacturer and the raw materials used. This issue became quite contentious in the Tanzanian media recently. It is enough to refer to sources like: Moses, B., *Shehena ya kondomu mbovu yanaswa*, in *Mwananchi*, Jumamosi, 22 Desemba 2012, p. 2; Butahe, F., *Kondomu bandia zauzwa nchini*, in *Mwananchi*, Jumatatu, 25 Februari 2013, p. 1,4; and, *Kondomu feki zazua balaa*, in *Mwananchi*, Jumamosi, 2 Machi 2013, p. 3. Moses speaks of a container of an unspecified size containing a consignment of male condoms with pores and easily breakable. It is common knowledge that latex rubber, on being cast into the thinness of the sides of a condom leaves pores as wide as 4-10 microns. The HIV virus is as tinier as 0.1 microns. It can, therefore pass through the pores easily especially when both sides are wet. The pore hazards under discussion consist of the fact that they were wider than the above measurements which are expected under normal circumstances.

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<sup>4</sup> The editor notes: (1) The discussion about the quality of condoms exemplifies the social psychological phenomenon of “choose your weapon but know that it will always be a weapon.” This means that just as the man who puts a gun to his enemy’s heart to shoot him will, by pulling the trigger, kill his enemy whether the gun happens to be a high-quality automatic rifle or a low-quality revolver, so the one who has chosen to violate and rupture the dynamic of love inherent in the act of sexual intercourse by deliberately intending the love of this act to be sterile will still send the sexual act into the direction of sexual promiscuity no matter what the quality of the condom is. This is true even if one is suffering from AIDS. (2) When the business under consideration is one that breeds immorality, for example, that of human trafficking and of prostitution rings, projects, plans, purposes, and procedures will not find a foothold in such moral virtues as prudence and justice. The sale and distribution of condoms is no different: It is no surprise that criminologists find correlations in high-crime regions of human trafficking and prostitution directly to the liberal use of condoms. The condom invites sexual promiscuity. Moral integrity is a necessary ingredient of every human choice even when the choice to be made is a very painful one because of the nature of the illness that one may be suffering.

They increased the breakability of the condoms. The container had been impounded at the port of Dar es Salaam. Later on, condoms of the same kind and standard were found being sold in some chemists in the city. Sorry to say, the Assistant Director of the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS), Mr. Leandri Kinabo, and his officials inspected just a few chemists, disregarding the rest of the city and the country as a whole. They were satisfied that the impounded container was still intact at the port.

Butahe brings up a similar issue but in a different setting. He speaks of sub-standard condoms which had been banned in Britain in 2012. Nobody was able to specify how they found their way to chemists in Dar es Salaam! Gaudensia Simwanza, spokesperson for the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA), confirmed the existence of such condoms and clarified that investigations were underway to establish their precise standard. No statement followed later as to the results of the investigation. The Assistant Director of TBS, Mr. Kinabo, stated that he needed more time to establish the veracity of the matter. Contacted latter, he said a commitment to an important meeting was not allowing time for him to discover the truth!

The third article is a follow-up of the article of Butahe in which Mr. Kinabo said his organization was collaborating with TFDA to establish the exact quality of the condoms. It seems that five days after the publication of Butahe's article the Government Chemist had not been able to make any statement on the matter (whether he had ever been contacted remains an open question). TACAIDS and, in particular, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare did not come up with any well-defined measures to sue the offenders and put things right.

Everything melted in diplomacy. *Wananchi* in Dar es Salaam and the country as a whole were again left to sort out a health hazard of which they were not specialized as campaigns and advertisements that recommended condoms as "protection" against HIV/AIDS continued unabated.

Economic deregulation and the integration of markets worldwide imply that poor nations are marginal in strategic decisions taken abroad on market exchange or technological grounds. In the cases just cited, however, the Tanzanian

government should have taken legal action against both the producer and the importer because the goods circulated on its territory were even more unfit for human use than if they had been of acceptable condom quality. This did not happen.

Sex is for sale: not surprisingly, expired condoms are not uncommon. They remain on sale, particularly in ordinary retail shops, bars, lodgings, kiosks, *magenge*, open air markets and others are taken around by *wamachinga*. At times they are put in new boxes or old ones are re-labelled to hide expiry dates. The poor man finds it difficult to throw away or destroy goods just because of the passing of an expiry date. They still look so good before his bare eyes. The temptation to immoral sexual activity is no less tantalizing. There are oil-based lubricants such as Vaseline often used in sex. They wear off latex rubber. All these facts have to be taken jointly rather than in isolation. The government shows neither political will nor capacity nor the moral integrity to rid the market of this mess. The rest of Sub-Saharan Africa is not better off. Years of imports and poor or non-existent monitoring have kept in circulation billions if not trillions of sub-standard condoms. The quality ones are already hygienically and morally precarious. The sub-standard ones worsen even more an already perilous situation.<sup>5</sup>

Our final consideration touches the cosmopolitan, and therefore, pluralistic ethics in the society within which we live today. Democracy implies many visions and options within the limits of law which at times falls short of the demands of individual conscience. So far no clear-cut explanation has been given to show how condoms may confine HIV at all the moments and circumstances that one uses them. The moral abuse of marital intercourse that the condom engenders is clear-cut. Condoms cannot be the final solution to the pandemic. We are therefore interested in honest and critical discussion. One-sidedness and half-truths do not constitute any scientific approach. All aspects of the issue must come under scrutiny.

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<sup>5</sup> The author's point is clear: don't use the condom. For those who intend not only in theory but in practice to respect the sacredness of marital intercourse, condoms do not suggest themselves as a viable option (Ed.).

People who have been infected using condoms and close relatives and friends of those who are dead cannot be left out. Serious and inclusive critical debate is what makes the difference. With more than 34 million people infected globally, two-thirds of them in Sub-Saharan Africa, we must avoid half-measures and aim at clear moral guidance.

## Medico-Moral Prospect

HIV/AIDS is incurable. This fact must be clarified in all discourses on the pandemic. Most infected Tanzanians and Sub-Saharan Africans must also accept the fact that even if a cure were to be discovered today, it would not mean much to them. Direct and indirect costs of treatment would render truly effective treatment quite inaccessible to them. Thousands of Tanzanians die every year with curable diseases like malaria. It will be the same with AIDS-related complications. Hence the protection of health and life according to moral and medical parameters must be paramount.

The compulsive influence of habits vis-à-vis sex with the condom has to be taken seriously, just as the addictive character of extra-marital sex without the condom. While good habits are commendable, bad ones can be very destructive. They are the consequence of frequent abuse in which dangerous acts become routine on account of the momentary gratification that the individual derives from them. Such external acts deepen the internal disposition and vice versa. If this exterior-interior co-determination continues unchecked, it sinks deeper into an addiction in which one develops a compulsive tendency to increase the episodes and to take risks, at times great ones, in order to gratify self. It also interferes with one's daily activity and, above all, one's sleep.

The report given by S. Butondo, *Ataka wanawake kubeba kondomu*, in *Mwananchi*, 9 Machi 2013, p. 13, recounts a point made by the Regional Commissioner of Shinyanga, Mr. Ally Rufunga, that some women under ARVs treatment had complained of having been approached by men for sex, and even

after revealing their HIV status, the men still kept insisting on having sex.<sup>6</sup>

Under pressure from addiction, and despite full knowledge, sex addicts, like alcohol or drug addicts, do not necessarily abstain from foreseen hazards. What the article does not state is the fact that both men and women can become sex addicts. Most sufferers, however, are men. Women become the victims of their sexual exploitation. The idea that on knowing one is HIV positive, one would not put other peoples' lives in danger works only in those cases in which one does not have a strong habit, or an addiction.

In fact, Article 24(2) of the Kenyan law is problematic. On affirming that no one, aware of being infected, should put others' lives in danger, the article concludes by saying: "unless that other person knew the fact and voluntarily accepted the risk of being infected". Sex addicts and sufferers of sex-oriented neurotic disorders such as nymphomaniacs and satyromaniacs are not likely to restrain from being infected or from infecting others. More sophisticated forms of treatment which are not specifically stated in Article 19(2) and – and, in some cases, the possibility of containment – ought to have been subjects for consideration and rightfully designated.

Hence, the activists' motto, *Abstain, be faithful, use a condom* is misleading. The condom obviates the abstention and the fidelity. The fidelity is exposed to the infidelities and other forms of moral havoc caused by condoms. Fidelity should be clearly and creatively focused on marriage and the precariousness of condoms explained.

Attention on matrimonial chastity for an actual or potential marriage and on the fundamental value of human life has to come out vividly in every discussion on the pandemic. HIV/AIDS is to

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<sup>6</sup> Women who do not/ cannot respond fearlessly to this kind of sexual harassment are candidates for trauma and the consequent PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). For the empowerment that is necessary for the psychological health of the women exposed to this harassment, see J. HERMAN, *Trauma and Recovery*, New York: Basic Books 1997, 133-213 (Ed.).

a great extent a family pandemic in Sub-Saharan Africa. One gets infected once and for all independently of how the infection occurs. The youth, in particular, must know that it ruins hopes for a future happy marriage.

The fact that there is the possibility for marriage and having uninfected children from it despite the infection does not mean much for the majority of Tanzanians and Sub-Saharan Africans. Good will is not enough. Poverty neutralizes prospects. Moreover, there are times when women become pregnant in the midst of many health complications. Rural women, who often deliver their children in countryside dispensaries, usually without doctors or adapted equipment, together with women who deliver their babies in their own huts in the hands of traditional, often illiterate or semi-literate midwives, cannot be expected to meet the direct and indirect costs needed to handle a pregnancy which occasions the HIV infection of the baby.

To speak of something like the safeguarding of pre- or extra-marital sexual rights through the use of quality condoms is morally untenable. The possibility of human weakness is undeniable. This does not stop us from pointing out the norm and challenging people to uphold it. Human life is the fundamental right. From it, all other rights and values spring. It ought not to be deliberately exposed to precarious circumstances in which a dangerous virus like HIV is likely to infect it.

## **Conclusion**

Sexuality is not marginal to the essence of what is human. It springs from our very chromosomes. It is therefore genetic. The biological distinction between XX chromosomes for women and XY for men underlines this fact. Human beings have 46 chromosomes. Among them 44 are autosomes, i.e., structurally identical. They are located in diploid cells. The remaining two are allosomes. They are structurally different in the two sexes. They appear in haploid cells. It is this duo which accounts for distinctive male and female sexual characteristics.

Sexuality, therefore, touches one's whole existence and being. It is a special responsibility which calls for a clear option for the

moral order that is creatively observed in freedom. As male and female endocrine systems become active at puberty, the maturing conscience, that faculty which governs our whole moral life, consolidates the regulation of the sexual realm. A well-formed and substantially knowledgeable conscience is therefore indispensable in handling the pandemic in a constructive manner.

People must grasp the intrinsic reasons behind the whole issue of change of lifestyle and be convinced that they have to give their own moral insight to it. HIV/AIDS is a medico-moral issue. It calls for a re-discovery of the manner in which medicine and morality interface in co-determination. So far medicine, underestimating wholesome sexual morality, has not proven capable of handling it. Individual and internalized collective moral disorders have rendered the medical investigative and clinical process counterproductive, fueling the spread of the infection further and multiplying occasions for mutation.

A clear NO to pre- and extra-marital sexual relations, then, must be seen not just as an abstention to be tolerated but as a positive personal contribution in containing a dangerous epidemic which has killed millions of people and left millions of others infected and developing AIDS without any hope for ARVs, let alone a possible cure. The good of humanity as a whole obliges all, individually and collectively, to contribute with their constructive lifestyle. Moral integrity is at the heart of the matter.

# **The City of God from a Biblical Perspective: *The City of God as Viewed in the African Context***

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## **Introduction**

We want to explore the City of God as a symbol for viewing JUCO within a context of Biblical citations. The citations chosen will give us various names for identifying the City of God – names such as “Jerusalem,” “the mountain of God,” “the holy city,” “the eternal city,” “Zion,” and “New Jerusalem.”

Considerations about the City of God serve as a good opportunity for relating African values to the religious sphere, specifically, to the City of God. Why should we do that? The reason is very simple: we are related to the spiritual realm; and, on the other hand, in a way that is principal and fundamental, we are related to and connected to African traditions and customs. No one is surprised to hear that one is hurrying home to participate in the family or clan sacrifice. There is a libation, a drinking together and an eating together on the occasion of a grand family feast, a feast by means of which the family or the clan gives sacrifice to God through the ancestors.

We shall see by means of a brief presentation how integrating the City of God with its precious traits as contemplated by those who read the Bible and the good, positive African values which bring us closer together in a spirit of solidarity can help us become active participants in bringing to realization the vision of Jordan University College.

The conclusion will bring to light some important suggestions for JUCO in order to bring her into focus as a worthy manifestation of “the City of God.”

## 1. What do Biblical Quotations about the “City of God” Want to Tell Us?

**Etymologically**, the word city – in Greek, *polis*, *poleōs* – means town, city, or capital. The earthly city is contemplated within the dimensions of the heavenly Jerusalem. The term city, *polis*, occurs 161 times. When one locates the term in the phrase “the City of God,” one is underlining a reference to the heavenly Jerusalem. The heavenly Jerusalem is imbued with meaning in a relational mode. Just as God rules the heavens, so He rules what belongs to the earth – the towns and the cities where many people are occupying the area. From the city we can talk in broader dimensions about the state or the Kingdom and so forth.

In this presentation we want to emphasize the city, or town, or state where God the Creator is ruling “His People” with the Christian connotation that the best city is this Christian city where God’s power and influence hold unimpeded sway.

The different names signifying the City of God:

a) *Zion signifies the dwelling place of Yahweh.*

At various periods from Biblical times to the modern period, Zion means the people of God in a metaphorical sense (cf. W.L. Petersen’s article in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 6, p. 1096).

b) *The city of God means the city of Jerusalem and the area around Jerusalem.*

In several cases it represents the inhabitants of Jerusalem or the people of the whole country of Judah or of the entire state of Israel.

After ruling 7½ years from Hebron, King David entered Jerusalem and overwhelmed the Jebusites, who were indigenous to Jerusalem: see 2 Sam 5:6 and 1 Chr 11:4ff.

The Jebusite fortress was at the same time the centre of the Jebusite religion, a pagan religion which King David united to the twelve tribes of Israel in order to form one country. David belonged to the tribe of Judah. The unity of Israel assumed a breadth and a tone of stability, of an establishment with a legitimate royal apparatus, ideology and justification for her existence as a State. From twelve tribes to one tribe, uniting together to create one community with one name, whether one

calls it a Kingdom or a State: there were many members included in a single community.

The Bible depicts very well how King David transferred the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem (2 Sam 6:1-23; cf. 1 Chr 13:1-16:43).

King David then made Jerusalem the religious centre of the Mosaic faith. He made it not according to an old outlook that at times seemed to incline to temptations of idolatry, but in harmony with a new outlook with one God, sovereign and supreme. The famous saying went forth, "The Lord is God," and he was the Ruler of the entire people.

The Ark remained in the house of Obed-Edom who was certainly blessed and found favour before Yahweh. Indeed the ark was the symbol of religious unity for the North and the South and hence was a blessing for the entire nation.

- c) *Psalm 46. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved.*

The river and its streams signify God's blessings to His People and the land. God is protecting his People. The river and its streams portray important images. The source of blessings is within God Himself. It is his presence that irrigates and makes fertile the city of God. When God the Most High protects his city, who can disturb the people who trust Him?

This psalm expresses a song of confidence in the supreme God (Ps 46:1-11). The Israelites are safe when God is in their midst. He governs his people from Mount Zion.

Psalm 46 is an expression of total confidence in God's protection against hostile powers. In the NT, we come to realize that God is with us in the Person of Jesus Christ (Matt 1:23; John 1:18). God will remain with us until the end of time: Matt 28:20.

God is present among us as one who protects His city and His People.

- d) *Psalm 48:1-14. This is a hymn in praise of the holy city as invincible dwelling place of God.*

The author of this psalm identifies Mount Zion as the divine dwelling place. There is a total transformation from that of

a dwelling place for the pagan gods (e.g., the Canaan Baal, the (“strong god”) to that of a dwelling place for the God of the Israelites. Jerusalem is praised not because of her beauty but because she is the city of God, the great King of the entire people. His protecting power, His presence, resides in the Temple of Jerusalem. God saves and protects his people from all kinds of danger from within His City.

e) *The symbol for the protective power of God for his city is the Gate Way.*

Why does God wish to protect this city in a special way? It is on account of His steadfast love. His name is great; His glory reaches to the ends of the earth. The Israelites, therefore, continue to cherish the City of God because they are entrusted to the “Gate Way”, meaning to the protective power and presence of God.

f) *Psalm 76:1-2. The City of God is His place of powerful activities in Judah and in Israel.*

God fights against the enemies of His People in order to protect his holy city meaning his people.

g) *Psalm 9:14. God helps those who are ready to accept Him and join their voices and their hearts to all those who praise Him.*

The gates of the daughter Zion means the entrance to the City of God. The meeting places at the entrance to the holy city were known for the precious deeds and works of mercy for the marginalized that God accomplished for and through his Chosen People.

h) *Psalm 84:5. Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose hearts are the high ways to Zion.*

Happy are those who enter the sanctuary or those who are on the way to the sanctuary. Do you still remember how many difficulties you have passed to join higher learning institutes? Who was your way?

i) *Psalm 87. There is a great joy in living in the City of God. It is a song in praise of the City of God.*

We are singing of God’s beloved city. “Holy mount, hills of holiness”: the plural, “hills,” indicates that God dwells also in other towns and cities of Israel.

- j) *Hebrew 11:8-10. Abraham was looking forward to the Holy City, that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.*

The city with divine foundations is traditionally Jerusalem. Interpretations and corollary lines of thought about this view centre upon a new earth and concomitantly a New Jerusalem. Abraham was to receive an inheritance, i.e. the new and holy city, heaven.

- k) *Revelation 21, especially verse 2. The idea that underlies this chapter concerns the New Heaven and the New Earth.*

The theme of the New Jerusalem was commonplace in late Judaism and early Christianity: see Gal 4:26; Phil 3:20; Heb 11:10, 14-16. The author sees the city of God in the same vision within which appears to him the heavenly Jerusalem. When one passes through a dream, one passes from the ordinary city to which he has been accustomed to the new City of God which is the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is greater, holier, more pure: in a word, very close to the Creator. In this vision, the Beloved is uplifted from this world to the new heaven which is revealed only to the elect, who are few in number.

**Q. Is God present in our struggle? *God is with everyone who depends on the divine.***

## **2. Presences of God among Bantu (African) Shrines: African Perspectives**

### **2.1 Our Ancestors and Our Faith in a Milieu of a Diversity of Peoples**

Recent researchers, whether foreign or indigenous to Africa, have investigated Bantu traditions and customs and have written that our ancestors had many gods. These gods apparently included: ancestors themselves, spirits and figures supposedly terrible by nature. These academicians tell us that our ancestors went through decipherable stages until they themselves developed into gods. These investigators say repeatedly that Africans never worshipped one supreme God.

These researchers want to affirm that if there is an idea of One God, this idea must have come only after the arrival of Islam and

Christianity.<sup>1</sup> Is it true that the idea of monotheism, the conviction that there is one supreme God, has been introduced by white missionaries from Europe? How can we discuss the “City of God” in the African context? This is a big challenge.

There were, on the other hand, early missionaries and early researchers who had already written that the idea of One God was very much spread among Bantu tribes.

Here we shall mention some examples which manifest the face of God in various spheres of the African Bantu’s lived experience.

### **2.1.1 The Presence of One Name of God among Bantu Peoples**

The name is not of an animal or a snake, or a devil; it is the name of a unique and supreme God among the peoples of Africa. Most of the people in the region of Njombe call this supreme Being Nguruvi; the Ngoni call Him Chapanga. The Chagga – though they are divided into many well-defined tribes and can differ in languages, in traditions and in customs – have but one name of the supreme God, who is called Rua. The Sukuma of Shinyanga call Him Mwanamalundi, Others call Him Sefa,

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<sup>1</sup> The editor notes that the first Christian to come to Africa was a political refugee, Jesus Christ himself, who came not to evangelize but to accept African hospitality. In other words, the child Jesus arrived on African soil as the target of a malicious and thoroughly planned plot to kill him before he could learn to walk and talk as a child. Subsequent to Jesus’ Ascension into heaven – and several centuries before Mohammed’s birth – the most ardent Christian evangelizer-missionaries were not Europeans. They were North Africans. Several North Africans are Fathers of the Church; and several are martyrs. One Church Doctor who gave backbone to the Christian’s faith in her Founder, Jesus, was a North African, St. Athanasius of Alexandria, Egypt. Not only did Athanasius given the entire world cause for hope and trust in God by his thoughtful, erudite explanations of how God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ; but he proved himself to be thoroughly African in his identity and lived experience: some historians, for example, say, with good supporting evidence, that Athanasius knew the topography and society of his own country, Egypt, more than any other African of his era.

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No human being is given the name of God among these various peoples with their traditions.

### **2.1.2 The “City of God” and the Shrine**

The idea of God was closely connected with shrines. Always there were some special places called shrines. These shrines could be established at the hill of God, at the house of God, at extraordinarily beautiful waterfalls, in especially majestic forests. God was acknowledged to be dwelling in a special place dedicated only to divine purposes. Human projects and activities unrelated to God would not be allowed there. Only those activities manifestly oriented to God could properly take place in shrines. The Waterfalls just mentioned carried a uniquely marvelous significance: God dwells there: The purity of water, the special nuances that echo in water that falls from high altitudes – all of this signified that God was making his blessings abundantly available to the people.

Though the Chagga are divided into several tribes as I have said above, they are united in traditions and customs. They have one name for God which is Rua. He stays at Kilimanjaro. The name in fact is Kilima nja Rua, but it is now called Kilimanjaro because foreigners who did not speak well the native language could not pronounce properly Kilima nja Rua. Rua dwells in the blue firmament of heaven, beyond the clouds. When the weather is nice one can see the clouds and on top of the clouds one sees the mountain of God. That is to say that God dwells above the clouds at Kilima nja Rua. This is the shrine and the true dwelling place of God.

The people around Kilima nja Rua are not interested in visiting or climbing up the mountain of God. But whenever they do an act which is very important they do it while directing their eyes and minds towards Kilima nja Rua (Kilimanjaro).

There are some people who have their shrines under some big trees, like Mibuyu for some groups of the Sukuma. Such places are the sacred places like the Mamre in the Book of Genesis. The Sukuma people call their God Mwanamalundi who is the only

supreme God who helps, who is kind and acts divinely from within the human activities of the people.

The Bena have their shrines within or close to a natural forest. These forests draw forth great respect from the people. This is not true of every forest; but there are some forests which are left for religious purposes. They accept these forests as dwelling places of the Supreme God. No one will take firewood from them; nor will they cut some trees down for making charcoal. The people have been told that if you cut a tree from such forest, you will never come out of the forest alive. You will die there.

The Bena, according to their different clans, were observed to have annual processions and celebrations around their respective shrines. They would process along the periphery of their forests to ask for the blessings of God. They poured forth in sacrifice such acceptable materials as mail, local beer and other designated substances in order to give their God due honour and worship.

## **2.2 The Position of God within the City of God: African Perspectives**

In the area of the Ruvuma region, Njombe, Iringa, Mbeya and in nearby districts, towns and villages, there is an accepted view that God lives far away but sometimes He seems to live very near. There are several explanations as to why God should be very far when His people are struggling to pass through the narrow door. Professor John Mbiti has written much on this idea. The Bantu, for example, believe that God relates to His people through ancestors. Not everyone who dies joins the group of ancestors. Only those people who lived well with their people join the community of ancestors. The ancestors were kind people, generous, men and women of the people. Remember the African shrines are high places of the Most High. They are the dwelling places par Excellence. People can come to God through mediators.

We should also take note of some exceptions to some laws. According to researchers it has been accepted that in some records of the African traditions and customs there were people who could present gifts and sacrifices directly to God without passing through ancestors.

### **3. The Integration between the Biblical City of God and the City of God in the African Context**

The Biblical quotations with their images and the shrines that elucidate the African perspectives have shown us that God is dwelling in the midst of His People. The shrines, too, merit to be called the City of God because the *raison d'être* for every action of the one who gives sacrifice in the Temple or at the shrine is the Almighty God, the God who is supreme. The city of God is not an abstract idea, which comes to fulfillment simply through theoretical manipulations. Rather it has developed and continues to develop within the exigencies of history; it is experienced in history; and its historical manifestations call forth reflection from Philosophy and Theology.

King David established the “City of God at Jerusalem after defeating the inhabitants of the Jebus (i.e., of Jerusalem). He brought the Ark of the Covenant from Baale-Judah to Jerusalem: 2 Sam 6:1-11. Jerusalem became the centre of MOSAIC RELIGION AND MOSAIC FAITH. The centre of the Canaanite religion was changed, transformed. The man who took care of the Ark of the Covenant was Obed-Edom – 2 Sam 5:1 – until the Ark was put into the Tent. In a word, the city of David was changed to the City of God. In the City of God dwelt the Ark of the Covenant which signified the presence of God in the midst of His People.

In the African context, the people have learned that the values that please God ought to be put into action, and that once put into action they draw forth grace and blessing from God. This realization reinforces their conviction that God indeed dwells within the midst of the People.

The citations from the Bible presented in this paper have shown us that when the inhabitants of the City of God live according to the will of God, the protector of the City extends his divine benefits to all in the manner of blessings, protections, and all kinds of gifts (Ps 46:4, for example, speaks about a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitations of the Most High. The river here is a symbol of God's blessings. All people benefit abundantly from these great blessings.

Nothing will hinder these blessings intended for His people because God Himself is in the midst of the people. His intention is to dwell among his people forever.

The values that shine forth from the people of God who are living in the city of God are not culture-specific: they apply to all people directed to all the various shrines. People are minding the dignity of their brothers and sisters in humanity; they are practicing generosity and helping each other in the spirit of solidarity.

If we interiorize the African way of understanding the presence of the One Supreme God, and the naming of the one God, we can establish new lives, anchored in the divine Will, in our City of God.

The sacrifices the Africans offer are sacrifices offered to God, not to ancestors, not to spirits of the dead.

#### **4. What Can We Learn from Symbols of the Bible and from the African Values**

**1) The vision of JUCO.** The totality of JUCO's vision intends to be a self-sustaining centre of excellence in higher education devoted to the advancement, refinement, dissemination and application of knowledge and values in order to understand and transform our world from within and from where we are.

**JUCO** wants to facilitate formation of highly competent, accountable, inspiring, and God-fearing scholars and professionals who will be: creative and highly intellectual....

*I would like to emphasize the centre of excellence and the application of values.* What are the values in our visions here?

*We all want to arrive at the goal of our actions and efforts.* There should be no cheating, tricks, egoism and other such things. But we must remember that God is governing His City, His people who accept the attributes of the divine. The people who accept the presence of God wherever they are – they are people of God. They are always connected to God.

In order to transform this world from that of being spectators to that of being committed, accountable and God-fearing scholars, we need to cultivate the growth of the City of God by fidelity to the ethical values that anchor themselves directly in the divine Will.

2) In the City of God, people with great capacity, invested with human values in various fields continue to have disposition in creativity, daring and the will to commit self to the service of others.

3) We take note of the fact that in many African cultures and traditions, a leader was chosen not only by the fact that he came from the ruling chiefdom, but also that he manifested in word and conduct many human attributes such as generosity, open-mindedness, readiness to serve and willingness to be a man of the people.

Among the NGONI: Those endowed with responsibility were supposed to be FATHER and caretaker of all People and especially to the marginalized.

When they were seeking to elect a Chief in the Bantu tribes, they took three virtues seriously into consideration: *justice, generosity and love for the marginalized ones.*

To be the First-Born was not enough to meet the absolute criterion in order to be elected a successor to the Chief. Nduna was observed to be an integral person. Utu bora.

4) Psalm 9:14-15. The gates of the daughter Zion. You alone can raise me from the gates of death. The successor to the Chief had to show in word and conduct that he could follow in the footsteps of the Supreme God as a gate that opened forth to the City of God.

Among Romans and Greeks the gates of the Holy City were the meeting places like the Agora and the Forum. These were meeting places for matters of academics. These were different from useless youth meetings, called kijiwani. In our struggle to translate and localize these places, the Agora and the Forum can become schools of thought where people can learn and be informed on great issues.

My meeting with the young people from Pemba opened my eyes to the fact that they become good listeners and well-informed youth when they refrain from complaining about existing relationships between Christianity and Islam. Do all who complain about many things really know the facts?

5) In the African way of offering sacrifices to God, in our traditions and in several of our customs, there are some thoughts and attitudes which are confused with good values. We are to do

the necessary research that ensures that new generations are cultivating correct ideas, true ways of establishing our shrines as the centres where we direct our praise, and raise our offerings to the Supreme God – not to the created beings or spirits.

6) Augustine speaks of two worlds: the dualistic world where some people are already doomed for a destiny of eternal estrangement from God; and the second world where God dwells. God is the Good Icon.

JUCO has both worlds. There are some who are working day and night for the vision of JUCO. There are some who are working only for money: they are pursuing the dualistic world. When we look directly with fixed eyes on them we see that the money blinds them. In the City of God, we have to change completely; otherwise we shall not arrive at our goal and mission.

## Conclusion

*Let us establish the City of God within us and be true to ourselves.* When something is not right, let us say it is not right. If the right thing is not said, nothing at all should be said.

We contemplate the thought of a visitor to our country who considers: Did I come to see animals or men? It is said that there are Americans who have wanted to visit Tanzania because they were told that in Africa there is nothing so interesting as seeing Nature, animals, the Savannah. But one visitor, a woman, said: I came to visit Tanzania to see the face of God. She convinced the whole group to visit Tanzania for the purpose of seeing and speaking with human beings, to find out what the Tanzanian people are doing.

They in fact did visit Tanzania. They met people, they talked with people, they experienced friendship, hospitality, love and laughter, trust; and they decided to visit Tanzania several times, with the purpose of seeing and speaking with human beings.

*In seeing these human beings, they get a glimpse of the face of God, the Creator of us all: they became more realistic and more concrete than ever. Let us build JUCO, the “City of God,” with boldness.*

# Rediscovering Reverent Silence in the African Liturgy According to the Vision of SC 30

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## Introduction

The people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalms, antiphons, hymns as well as by actions, gestures and bodily attitudes. And at the proper time a **reverent silence** should be observed.

Last year, on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2013, we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy ordinarily called *Sacrosanctum Concilium (SC)*.<sup>1</sup> This constitution is one of the first two documents approved by the Second Vatican Council. It was passed on 4<sup>th</sup> December 1963, at the final meeting of the second session of the Council by a vote of 2,162 in favour of the schema, with only forty-six negative votes. The other document approved on the same day was the Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication, *De instrumentis communicationis socialis (Inter Mirifica)*. Actually, it was not by accident that the first work of Vatican Council II to be completed was this Constitution, for, as Pope Paul had said, “The liturgy was the first subject to be examined and the first too, in a sense, in intrinsic worth and in importance for the life of the Church”.

We read in the document itself: “For it is through the liturgy, especially the divine Eucharistic Sacrifice, that the work of our redemption is exercised. The liturgy is thus the outstanding means

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<sup>1</sup> Vatican Council II, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy “Sacrosanctum Concilium”* (4 Dec 1963).

by which the faithful can express in their lives, and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church” (SC 2). It is thus the wish of the Church that all the faithful be led to take full, conscious, and active part in liturgical services” (SC 14), by means of acclamations, responses, psalms, antiphons, hymns, as well as by actions, gestures and bodily attitudes” (SC 30). That is active participation in the liturgy.

However, the same paragraph continues: “And at the proper time all should observe a reverent silence” (SC 30). When we look attentively at this paragraph, it seems as if two contradictory activities are being demanded of the faithful: on the one hand, they are exhorted to be active; and, on the other hand, they are called to silence. It is just at this point that many of our Christians get confused and do not know actually what to do. How is it possible to be active and at the same time silent? “How can the Church ask of us two apparently opposed realities?” This tension is real in the life of the Christian community.

In Africa, for instance, for many active participation has to do with lively songs which may invite the faithful to dance during the celebration. Any celebration without lively songs invites the atmosphere of a Funeral Mass. Indeed, the Latin Mass of a former era is generally considered by a good number of faithful to be like a Requiem Mass – a consideration that does not ring true for those who understand the spiritual dynamics of the Latin Mass. Nonetheless, the reality is that silence during the Eucharistic celebration poses a challenge.

At what moment can we really pray personally since the whole Eucharistic celebration seems to be full either of spoken words or sung songs? Frankly speaking, our liturgy has become too noisy. We have no more reverent silence. We have lost this precious moment of personal encounter with the Lord because of the so called “active participation” in our celebrations. Actually, we need to glean the rationale for silence within our own time and context as we shall notice later on.

Our world of today is too noisy. People are afraid of silence. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI: “In our time this point is particularly difficult for us. In fact, ours is an era that does not encourage recollection; indeed, one sometimes gets the

impression that people are frightened of being cut off, even for an instant, from the torrent of words and images that mark and fill the day".<sup>2</sup> However, there is no contradiction at all between active participation and reverent silence. These are two faces of the same coin: two facets of the same dynamic of prayer.

In this article, our concern is to make people aware of the necessity of a reverent silence in our liturgy as a medium for submitting their lives totally to God. The experience of the prophet Elijah should be for us a guiding star towards the rediscovery of the values of inner silence in our personal encounter with God who is present in the "sound of sheer silence" during the liturgy (cf. 1 Kgs 19:11-13). For this reason, if one is to properly comprehend reverent silence, one has to penetrate this silence within the depths of the Eucharist.

## 1. Active Participation during the Liturgy

Before the Vatican II reform, the Eucharistic celebration was in Latin. A probable reason for this was to preserve the universality of the Church. Unity or universality of the Church was seen at that time as uniformity.<sup>3</sup> Christians were just

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<sup>2</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *General Audience "Silence of Jesus"* (7 Mar 2012).

<sup>3</sup> The editor notes that from apostolic times uniformity meant the universal acceptance of a common creed, common sacraments and the liturgy within which they were embedded, and a common moral doctrine. When one focuses on language and its role in the universal assembly of the Church, in the age preceding the advent of electronics, airplanes and information technology, cross-cultural communication was at a minimum. Foreign language learning, therefore, was not yet a frequent possibility. (Only recently could majorities read and write their own language much less the language of others.) Hence the risk of inadequate translations into vernaculars was almost universal. One notes, on the other hand, that the Catholic Church showed what one could call a revolutionary initiative in the use of vernaculars in her mission activity in the Far East. In the Philippines, for example, the Church chose to print the first catechism not in Latin, not in Spanish, not even in the indigenous language of the majority, Tagalog. Instead the Church chose to publish the first Filipino catechism in this very populous country in the language of the small, the weak, and the powerless whom everyone despised as inferior, namely, the Chinese immigrants. This was hundreds of years before the Second Vatican Council took place. It was

attending the Holy Mass as naïve spectators without understanding much about what was going on except for what they were learning in homilies, Sunday School, and parochial education. I remember my own dad who knew all the Latin Mass and its formulae by heart without understanding them. According to the pre-Vatican II rite, the priest prayed the Holy Mass with his back to the faithful so that he could physically express his mediating role before the Triune God. Some priests, it is true, could be tempted to just be there reading his prayers without minding much whether the Christians understood properly what was going on or not.

In fact, one needs to understand what he/she is attending to in order to participate fully in that. Otherwise, the participation becomes just superficial.

Hence, the liturgical reform was really timely because nothing is more evidently at the core of the Christian life than our public worship which, in fact, is precisely what the liturgy is. While many of the issues discussed in the Council had only an indirect bearing on the everyday life of the faithful, the liturgy touches everyone immediately and vitally. As we read: “The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fountain from which all her power flows (...). It inspires the faithful to become ‘of one heart in love’ when they have tasted to their full of the paschal mysteries” (SC 10). Furthermore, in order that the sacred liturgy may produce its full effect, it is necessary that the faithful come to it with proper dispositions, that their convictions match their words, and that they cooperate with divine grace lest they receive it in vain (SC 11). Liturgy, in other words, has to be seen as something more profound rather than merely external.

Hence, “the Church earnestly desires that Christ’s faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators. On the contrary, through a proper appreciation of the rites and prayers they should participate knowingly, devoutly, and actively” (SC 48). In the meantime, “by

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a major manifestation of what the Church has called “inculturation”. It was, in a word, solidarity with the marginalized few.

way of promoting active participation, the people should be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs, as well as by actions, gestures, and bodily attitudes” (SC 30). Therefore pastors of souls must realize that, when the liturgy is celebrated, if they intend to truly observe the laws governing valid and licit celebration, they must accept as their duty the necessary education of the faithful so that all may take part knowingly, actively, and fruitfully (SC 11). At this point, we may say that the explanation of the Church as the People of God, given in the Constitution, anticipated the fuller development to be given in the great Constitution on the Church. That means this Constitution is the germ of the Constitution on the Church, promulgated on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1964.

The question, now, is: Must the Church be European, Latin, and Oriental ... or must She be African? None of these! The Catholic Church is One. We find a concise answer in the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* which says: “The Catholic Church in the world “has but one faith, one sacramental life, one apostolic succession, one common hope, and one and the same charity”<sup>4</sup> It is a beautiful definition, clear, says Pope Francis. It orients us well. Unity in faith, hope and charity, unity in the sacraments, in moral doctrine, in the ministry: these are like the pillars that have always held up and kept together the one great edifice of the Church. Wherever we go, even to the smallest parish in the most remote corner of this earth, there is the one Church. No one needs a visa to enter the Holy Mass in Hong Kong, Sydney, Kigali, Kinshasa, or New York. The Catholic is always in her own house.

We are at home, we are in the family, and we are among brothers and sisters. And this is a great gift of God! The Church is one for us all. There is not one Church for Europeans, one for Africans, one for Americans, one for Asians, one for those who live in Oceania. No, she is one and the same everywhere. It is like being in a family: some of its members may be far away,

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<sup>4</sup> *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 161.

scattered across the world, but the deep bonds that unite all the members of a family stay solid however great the distance”.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, the expression of the one faith, the one sacramental life, the one common hope, and the same charity may differ from one region to another. That is what underlies Pope Francis’ stress on unity in variety: “Let us accept others, let us accept that there is a fitting variety, that this person is different, that this person thinks about things in this way or that — that within one and the same faith we can think about things differently — or do we tend to make everything uniform? But uniformity kills life. The life of the Church is variety, and when we want to impose this uniformity on everyone we kill the gifts of the Holy Spirit”.<sup>6</sup> Expressing this same idea about the Church, he uses another beautiful image which tells us the “Church [is] like a great orchestra in which there is great variety. We are not all the same and we do not all have to be the same. We are all different, varied, each of us with our own special qualities. And this is the beauty of the Church: everyone brings his own gift, which God has given him, for the sake of enriching others. And between the various components there is diversity; however, it is a diversity that does not enter into conflict and opposition. It is a variety that allows the Holy Spirit to blend it into harmony. He is the true “Maestro”.<sup>7</sup> It is within this understanding of the Church that we may talk of African Christianity.<sup>8</sup>

## 2. African Christianity

The Church in Africa will never forget the very first pastoral visit of a Pope in Africa. It was the visit of Pope Paul VI in Uganda in July 1969, only a few years after the Second Council Vatican. For Africans, this papal pastoral visit was historic and

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<sup>5</sup> FRANCIS, *General Audience “The Church is One”* (25 Sep 2013).

<sup>6</sup> FRANCIS, *The Church is One*.

<sup>7</sup> FRANCIS, *General Audience “The Church is Catholic”* (9 Oct 2013).

<sup>8</sup> J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa*, Nairobi: Paulines 1994, 464. The comparison of the Church with a great orchestra finds its roots in Hans Urs von Balthasar’s well-known thesis that *Truth is Symphonic* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press 1987).

unique. Historic because of the fact that it was the first time that a Pope left his home for Africa. It had never happened before. Unique because Africans had already had their own expectations for that visit. They were waiting for answers from the Pope on fundamental questions about the way African Christians express their faith. Can we truly be Christians and still remain authentic Africans?<sup>9</sup> Can we truly be Africans and still Christians?<sup>10</sup> Can Africans have their own theology, their own liturgy? As we can see all these questions converge to one issue: “How can Africans worship the unique God as Africans without being alienated?”

There has been a serious need to take into account the African reality with her cultural milieus in the search for the most reverent ways to worship God. Fortunately, Paul VI heard the voice of African children. He met their expectations. For this reason, he was a kind of “messiah” for Africans “since there was a time – 256 AD – when St. Cyprian of Carthage may have been puzzled by a response he received on questions related to African ecclesial issues. The question was about innovations that could have been necessary for inculturation. The response he received from Rome is a well-known one: ‘Nothing should be innovated except what has been handed down’ (*Nihil innovetur nisi quod traditum est*).

During his stay in Africa from 31<sup>st</sup> July to 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1969, Paul VI pointed out two important dimensions which could help the Church in Africa to be part of the universal Church and still enjoy her particularity, her uniqueness in her way of expressing

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity*, 517.

<sup>10</sup> The editor notes that an African Bishop, St. Cyprian of Carthage, had a vital role in formulating the tradition that was handed down from Rome on the very topic of Church unity. See, for example, St. Cyprian, *De Orat. Dom.* 23, in CSEL 3,1,285; CCL 3 A, 105; PL 4, 553: “The Church, then, is God’s only flock; ... for it serves all mankind through the Gospel of peace as it makes its pilgrim way in hope toward the goal of the fatherland above. This is the sacred mystery of the unity of the Church, in Christ and through Christ, the Holy Spirit energizing its various functions. It is a mystery that finds its highest exemplar and source in the unity of the Persons of the Trinity: the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit, one God.” See also the oft-quoted phrase that flows forth from Cyprian’s heart: “No one can have God as his Father who does not have the Church as his Mother” (Cyprian, *De Catholicae Ecclesiae Unitate*, 6, PL 4, 502).

her faith, as Church, in Christ. The Pope's exhortation: "The African Church has to be Catholic. That means it must be entirely founded upon the identical, essential, constitutional patrimony of the self-same teaching of Christ, as professed by the authentic and authoritative tradition of the one true Church". Then he proceeded to declare the essential importance of inculturation and the recognition of a plurality of ways of expressing one's worship. He declared:

The expression, that is, the language and mode of manifesting this one Faith, may be manifold; hence, it may be original, suited to the tongue, the style, the character, the genius, and the culture of the one who professes this one Faith. From this point of view, a certain pluralism is not only legitimate, but desirable. An adaptation of the Christian life in the fields of pastoral, ritual, didactic and spiritual activities is not only possible, it is even favored by the Church. The liturgical renewal is a living example of this.

He concluded with a most eloquent appeal: *In this sense, said the Holy Father, you may, and must, have an African Christianity.*

*From now on, you Africans are missionaries to yourselves.*<sup>11</sup> These words of Pope Paul means: "You may, and must have an African Theology, an African Liturgy, an African Christology, and in the end an African Christianity".<sup>12</sup>

Human beings understand reality within the framework of their language, their situation in their society, and the context of their culture. This reality expands as they come into empathic contact with other cultures. The principle that Thomas Aquinas lays down relative to personal appropriation of knowledge can be rephrased in social terms: whatever is learned or known is appreciated according to the social historical form of the community who learns it.

Pope Paul VI opened wide the doors to Africans to feel at home in the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. As Pope Francis has said, the Church is "the house for all and not a small chapel that can hold only a small group of elected people. We must not reduce the bosom of the Universal Church to a nest

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<sup>11</sup> J. BAUR, *2000 Year of Christianity*, 452.

<sup>12</sup> J. BAUR, *2000 Year of Christianity*, 444-452.

protecting our mediocrity”.<sup>13</sup> The call of Paul VI to have an African Christianity was actually a kind of revolutionary declaration from a Pope. And it had immediate effects on the entire Church in Africa.

The unity of the Church does not demand a forced conformity, as we learn from the experience of integrating Eastern and Western Catholics into the same Church. The principle of diversity at work in the brotherhood and sisterhood of East and West applies now in immanent fashion to diversity within the faithful of the Roman rite (SC 37). We may truly say that the Pope’s declaration corresponded to the African wish to adapt the liturgy to the life style and cultural patterns of Africans (SC 37).

It was after Pope Paul’s declaration that the Church in the Congo, after receiving approval for her rite of the Mass (rite Zaïrois), started to worship God using the vernacular languages in the liturgy; to clap hands, to dance during celebrations to the accompaniment of drums, guitars, and many other local African musical instruments.<sup>14</sup> It is worth emphasizing that whatever the African rite may happen to be, there are always songs adapted to life’s particular circumstances – births, funerals, the birth of twins, the opening and closing moments of initiation, circumcision – the songs matched these rituals. This is the reason why some people used to say, “Africans sing in time and out of time”. We are born with rhythm in our blood.<sup>15</sup> Music is in our

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<sup>13</sup> Author’s Note: This interview with Pope Francis took place over the course of three meetings during August 2013 in Rome. The interview was conducted in person by Antonio Spadaro, S.J., editor in chief of *La Civiltà Cattolica*, the Italian Jesuit journal. Father Spadaro conducted the interview on behalf of *La Civiltà Cattolica*, *America* and several other major Jesuit journals around the world. The editorial teams at each of the journals prepared questions and sent them to Father Spadaro, who then consolidated and organized them. The interview was conducted in Italian. After the Italian text was officially approved, *America* commissioned a team of five independent experts to translate it into English. *America* is solely responsible for the accuracy of this translation.

<sup>14</sup> J. BAUR, *2000 Years of Christianity*, 448.

<sup>15</sup> F. KABASELE LUMBALA, *Liturgies africaines, l’enjeu culturel, ecclésial et théologique*, Kinshasa: FCK 1996, 26-27.

blood.<sup>16</sup> Musical instruments such as drums give heart to the liturgy (SC 116.119). In the words of Bernard Lonergan: "... the world mediated by meaning is not only a world known by the sense experience of an individual but the external experience and internal experience of a cultural community, and by the continuously checked and rechecked judgments of the community."<sup>17</sup> Eucharistic celebrations are moments of communal joy.<sup>18</sup>

Africans can worship their God according to their milieu, their language, their personal and social space, their body, their mind. I recall a strong formula of the late Joseph Cardinal Malula, the first Congolese Cardinal: *A few decades ago, missionaries came to Christianize Africa; the time has come for Africans to Africanize Christianity.*<sup>19</sup> In other words, it is the duty of African Christians to articulate their own experience of Jesus as the Risen and Living One. That is just what Edward Schillebeeckx reminds us when he says that the origins of Christianity are to be situated in an ordinary experience rendered extraordinary by the grace flowing forth from a God who is a loving Father. Within the light of the Father's grace, the first Christians experienced the encounter with Jesus<sup>20</sup>:

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<sup>16</sup> F. KABASELE LUMBALA, *Liturgies africaines*, 26-28. « En Afrique noire, le rythme est souverain. Il est partout et en tout. L'expérience commune est que le monde tourne dans un rythme : les saisons se succèdent, l'homme naît, grandit et meurt ». « Aussi danse-t-on de joie, comme on danse d peine. On danse l'amour comme on danse la colère et la haine. On danse le repos comme on danse le travail. Car partout, il s'agit du rythme et de l'harmonie à rétablir ou à maintenir par ce thème ». Dance goes together with singing. In this there are a number of notable cultural similarities with that of South Korea.

<sup>17</sup> B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, New York: Seabury 1979, 237-244.

<sup>18</sup> F. KABASELE LUMBALA, *Liturgies africaines*, 16. Célébrer l'eucharistie en Afrique: Celebrating Eucharist in Africa.

<sup>19</sup> F. LUYEYE LUBOLOKO, *Le Cardinal J.A. Malula un pasteur prophétique*, Kinshasa: Editions "Jean XXIII", 4.

<sup>20</sup> The editor notes that the professions of faith in Matthew 14:33 and John 6:69 follow upon an extraordinarily graced experience – that of Jesus

A particular experience stands at the beginning of Christianity. It began with an encounter. Some people, Jews, came into contact with Jesus of Nazareth. They were fascinated by him and stayed with him. This encounter and what took place in Jesus' life and in connection with his death [and resurrection] gave their own lives new meaning and significance. They felt that they were reborn, understood and cared for.

Their new identity was expressed in a new enthusiasm for the kingdom of God and therefore in a special compassion for others, for their fellow human beings, in a way that Jesus had already showed them. This change in the direction of their lives was the result of their real encounter with the [risen] Jesus... (cf., 1 Cor. 15:17); this was not something over which they had taken the initiative, it had happened to them.<sup>21</sup>

African Christians, after making the personal experience with Jesus, should say like the Samaritans to that Samaritan woman whom Jesus met at Jacob's well: "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world" (John 4:39-42).

### **3. Moments of Reverent Silence during the Eucharistic Celebration**

From the very beginning, it is necessary to clear up the understanding of "active participation" during the liturgy. Here, active participation is not reduced to an increased "busy" role-playing in the liturgy, or turning the Mass into a "drama" with a cast of thousands or into a pub club. Rather, it is a call for a deeper and more unified engagement of mind, heart and body. We are encouraged to speak and to sing the Mass parts, engage our bodies in the various liturgical postures and gestures (standing, sitting, kneeling and dancing), and maintain "bodily attitudes" – which one might interpret to mean that our bodies are in sync with our interior dispositions. However, the final word admonishes us to observe reverent silence at key points of the

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walking on the water. Jesus declares to Peter that it is not flesh and blood but the heavenly Father that has revealed to Peter Jesus' true identity.

<sup>21</sup> E. SCHILLEBEECKX, *Interim Report on the Books, 'Jesus' and 'Christ'*, New York: Crossroad 1982, 10.

Mass. In our non-dualistic, incarnational Catholic view, internal and external dispositions are to be in harmony, thus bringing about a unified focus of one's being on the mysteries of the Word and altar. *Actuosa participatio* means above all a willing and conscious participation in these mysteries. "In liturgical celebrations, whether as a minister or as one of the faithful, each person should perform his role by doing solely and totally what the nature of things and liturgical norms require of him" (*DV* 28).

Nevertheless, by way of promoting active participation, the Constitution *Dei Verbum* (*DV*) emphasized the absolute necessity of keeping silence in our liturgy. "At the proper times all should observe a reverent silence" (*DV* 28). The people's role, while always active, will take different forms, including a social silence in various parts of the liturgical worship. In the words of the *GIRM*: "Sacred silence also, as part of the celebration, is to be observed at the designated times".<sup>22</sup> The *GIRM* goes on by giving us the nature and the requisite moments of the sacred silence: "Its nature, however, depends on the moment when it occurs in the different parts of the celebration. For in the Penitential Act and again after the invitation to pray, individuals recollect themselves; whereas after a reading or after the Homily, all meditate briefly on what they have heard; then after Communion, they praise God in their hearts and pray to Him. Even before the celebration itself, it is a praiseworthy practice for silence to be observed in the Church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred celebration in a devout and fitting manner" (*GIRM* 54).

One may ask him/herself: Are these sacred moments of silence still being respected in our liturgies? From my point of view, it is really a pity that these sacred moments of silence are no longer as precious as they were before. Our liturgy does not give enough space for silence. It is as if, in our liturgy, silence does not belong to it. Silence seems to be annoying. Silence has become synonymous with emptiness. And emptiness frightens. Thus, silence frightens, too. A gnawing question surfaces: Is the contemporary human being afraid of silence?

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<sup>22</sup> *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* (*GIRM*) 45.

In the present world, to remain silent can mean that one has forgotten to do something which was supposed to be done at a precise time. In other words, silence may mean that you do not know what to do at this precise moment and that is why you keep quiet. Silence can also be interpreted as a sign of laziness. In order to avoid it, it has to be necessarily filled with something else be it a word, be it a dance, be it a song or be it a gesture. Why is it so? Why do such precious moments seem to have lost all importance in our liturgy? Are human beings unable to be silent? More specifically, are Africans incapable of silence? Yet without silence, we are missing the truly precious moments of personal encounter with God who enters our lives as a sound of sheer silence.

#### **4. Overview of the Lack of Silence in Our Society**

We may think that in order to explain the lack of silence in our liturgy, we are supposed to look for the underlying reasons in our daily social life. The social context can exert a remarkable influence on the dynamics of noise and silence. Our society has become too noisy. It is a matter of looking around us to see how people have become slaves of the new means of communication. People have no time for themselves. Everybody seems to be busy.

A concrete example is the use of cell phones in our University College. It is rare to see a student outside the class not manipulating a cell phone. Everybody is busy with his/her cell phone: talking, listening to music, chatting with a friend, watching a movie, consulting his mails, and so on. Sometimes, we may see even professors leaving the classroom and going out to respond to a call. On the way, you may come across two people walking together and one is busy talking on his/her cell phone without paying attention to the presence of the other. How many times during a meeting or an assembly do we hear phones ringing and people running outside to answer them? How often during Mass do we hear phones?

These virtual means of communication become more important than any other form of relationship. We do not truly meet each other anymore. Everyone seems to be busy and does

not take notice of the other's presence. People living in the same house or the same community do not have time to meet each other, to sit together, to see each other; instead they communicate through email and SMS. Let us listen to this blood-chilling story: "I remember a true story of a sick friend of mine, who once went for a check-up to a physician. Instead of dealing with the sick person, the physician was busy responding to different calls from his friends who were talking about their last weekend; at other moments he was using the phone to prescribe tablets or other medicines for his patients. Whenever he took the time to come back to my sick friend lying on the consultation bed, it was just to say, "Sorry sir, you know nowadays we are so busy."

He completely forgot the sick person before him. At the end, my friend just decided to leave the place with these words: "Sorry, Doctor, I think with you it is better to make a check-up through the cell phone. For now, let me leave; and I will phone you once I am at home for my check-up."

Other disheartening examples concern consecrated persons. Once we went to visit a certain community of ours. During the community meal, we realized that eight out of ten were outside talking on the phone. Another vivid example is about a religious man who was travelling from Morogoro to Dar es Salaam. When he reached Chalinze, he realized that he had forgotten his two cell phones. He decided to drive back home after ninety kilometres in order to find his phones. He said to us that he could not live without the cell phone. On our way back, a confrere asked him: "Do you have your breviary?" He answered, "No." He continued: "He could not drive back to Morogoro for a breviary." Unbelievable! His prayer relationship with God was taking second place to cell phones.

Moreover, in our religious houses, it is sometimes even worse. There are some consecrated persons who are using their cell phones the whole night through without caring about the others. In the convents where it may be forbidden to possess the cell phone, nights offer members the opportunity to do the communicating that they were unable to do during the day. In these houses, the superiors are the only ones who seem to believe

that members do not possess cell phones while in fact everyone may have one even two cell phones.

You will unfortunately see some religious men and women leave the chapel in order to answer a call outside, sometimes with a loud voice disturbing those inside. The question is: Is it proper nowadays to forbid cell phones to religious persons? Does it matter whether they are in initial formation or in ongoing formation? For us, such questions may seem meaningless and outdated. We think it is inappropriate to build any kind of spirituality or formation on the basis of "the refusal to allow the cell phone."

Instead, let us find means to form a religious sense of responsibility. The question is no longer whether religious members should have the right to possess a cell phone, but rather to determine the best means to form them to honesty, to truth and maturity, because only the truth will make them free (John 8:32).

Let us listen to the voice of one of the greatest theologians of our time, Pope Benedict XVI, who is actually enlightening people about the means of communication. He says: "The new technologies are not only changing the way we communicate, but communication itself, so much that it could be said that we are living through a period of vast cultural transformation. This means spreading information and knowledge is giving birth to a new way of learning and thinking, with unprecedented opportunities for establishing relationships and building fellowship. In the digital world, transmitting information increasingly means making it known within a social network where knowledge is shared in the context of personal exchanges. The new technologies allow people to meet each other beyond the confines of space and of their own culture, creating in this way an entire new world of potential friendships. This is a great opportunity." Meanwhile, we need to be careful, emphasizes Benedict XVI. He goes on to say: "It also requires greater attention to and awareness of possible risks. Who is my 'neighbour' in this new world? It is important always to remember that virtual contact cannot and must not take the place of direct human contact with people at every level of our lives".

People need real face-to-face contact through means of communication that are not simply technologically mediated.

## **5. Silence: An Integral Part of Communication according to Benedict XVI<sup>23</sup>**

As far as we are concerned, Pope Benedict XVI is a great theologian for our time. More a propos to our theme, we admire him as a “theologian of silence”.

Word and silence are two faces of the same coin, two facets of the same dimension of reality. The great speaker is the one who knows how to keep silence. From within silence, one learns how to speak. The weightiness of the word springs up from the depths of the silence. Instead of excluding each other, word and silence need to complement each other in order to make communication more efficacious. “When word and silence become mutually exclusive, communication breaks down, either because it gives rise to confusion or because, on the contrary, it creates an atmosphere of coldness; when they complement one another, however, communication acquires value and meaning”.<sup>24</sup> Thus, there is a serious need for establishing true balance between silence and word. The two types of communication are called to integrate with one another so that authentic dialogue can be established: one is able to speak only when he/she knows the weightiness of silence; and at the same time a person who is capable of deep silence is also capable of making himself understood at the moment of speech or discourse. In the words of Benedict: “Word and silence: learning to communicate is learning to listen and contemplate as well as speak.”<sup>25</sup>

Pope Benedict is convinced of the necessity of silence when someone is confronted with the deep meaning of his/her life:

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<sup>23</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Message of His Holiness Pope Benedict for the 46<sup>th</sup> World Communications Day “Silence and Word: Path of Evangelization”*, 20 May 2012. J. RATZINGER, *L’esprit de la liturgie*, Genève: Ad Solem 2000, 163-170; A. JOIN-LAMBERT, *Guide pour comprendre LA MESSE*, Quercy: Mame 2002, 214-215.

<sup>24</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Silence and Word*.

<sup>25</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Silence and Word*.

"Amid the complexity and diversity of the world of communications, however, many people find themselves confronted with the ultimate questions of human existence: Who am I? What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope? It is important to affirm those who ask these questions, and to open up the possibility of a profound dialogue, by means of words and interchange, but also through the call to silent reflection, something that is often more eloquent than a hasty answer and permits seekers to reach into the depths of their being and open themselves to the path towards knowledge that God has inscribed in human hearts".<sup>26</sup> That is why "if we are to recognize and focus upon the truly important questions, then silence is a precious commodity that enables us to exercise proper discernment in the face of the surcharge of stimuli and data that we receive."<sup>27</sup>

In order to be able to communicate properly, therefore, silence is a must: "Silence is an integral element of communication; in its absence, words rich in content cannot exist. In silence, we are better able to listen to and understand ourselves; ideas come to birth and acquire depth; we understand with greater clarity what it is we want to say and what we expect from others; and we choose how to express ourselves. By remaining silent we allow the other person to speak, to express him or herself; and we avoid being tied simply to our own words and ideas without them being adequately tested. In this way, space is created for mutual listening, and deeper human relationships become possible".<sup>28</sup> Silence makes possible the spirit of togetherness and mutual respect. Thus, dialogue becomes possible and incites interest.

The other in front of me deserves respect. The other is not another me but he/she is completely different from me. Our differences are no longer the source of war and conflict; rather they are the sources of richness and complementarity. Silence makes room for the other as a worthy interlocutor who has something to say to me. The other becomes, so to say, a sacramental of the invitation to brotherhood and to togetherness.

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<sup>26</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Silence and Word*.

<sup>27</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Silence and Word*.

<sup>28</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Silence and Word*.

It rebuilds the broken bridges between people. The Holy Father explains: “It is often in silence, for example, that we observe the most authentic communication taking place between people who are in love: gestures, facial expressions and body language are signs by which they reveal themselves to each other. Joy, anxiety, and suffering can all be communicated in silence – indeed it provides them with a particularly powerful mode of expression<sup>29</sup> .

The Pope cites the consequence: “Silence, then, gives rise to even more active communication, requiring sensitivity and a capacity to listen that often makes manifest the true measure and nature of the relationships involved.”<sup>30</sup> “No human being is an island”. We know what an island is; it is a piece of land surrounded by water on all sides. In other words, it is not linked to the mainland; it stands on its own. We people are not like this; we do not stand on our own. We are linked to many others. Communication is meant to help us “make one with”<sup>31</sup> – to create and fortify solidarity – by means of the logic of silence and word.

Silence emerges from our innermost depths. Truly speaking, “Silence is an integral element of communication; in its absence, words rich in content cannot exist.” Let us recall this famous passage from St. Augustine's *Confessions* in which Saint Augustine states, *You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.*<sup>32</sup> That means our heart will only find its interior peace in God's silent heart. Therefore, if God speaks to us even in silence, we in turn discover in silence the possibility of speaking with God and about God. “We need that silence which becomes contemplation, which introduces us into God's silence and brings us to the point where the Word, the redeeming Word, is born.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Silence and Word*.

<sup>30</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Silence and Word*.

<sup>31</sup> M. MCGRATH – N. GRÉGOIRE, *Africa: Our way to be God's Messengers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London: Geoffrey Chapman 1990, 119.

<sup>32</sup> *Confessions* I, 1.

<sup>33</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Homily during the Eucharist Celebration with Members of the International Theological Commission* (6 Oct 2006).

## **6. Is Such a Reverent Silence Possible in African Liturgy?**

Pope Francis observes that "it is hardly surprising that different religious traditions consider solitude and silence as privileged states which help people to rediscover themselves and that Truth which gives meaning to all things."<sup>34</sup> Generally speaking, "silence" in spirituality is often a metaphor for inner stillness. A silent mind, freed from the onslaught of sporadic thoughts and thought clusters, is both a goal and an important step in spiritual development. Such "inner silence" is not about the absence of sound; instead, it is understood as an entrance into contact with the divine, with the ultimate reality, or one's own true self, one's nature as a creature related to God.

Many religious traditions indicate the importance of remaining quiet and still in mind and spirit so that transformative and integral spiritual growth may occur. For instance, Buddhist scriptures characterize silence and the mental need to immerse oneself in silence as indispensable to spiritual enlightenment. In Hinduism, teachers insist on the importance of silence, *Mauna*, for inner growth.

## **7. Rhythm is in African Blood: Praise his name in dance, make music with tambourine**

For us Africans, there are a lot of things to be said about the lack of silence. For instance, the severity of life can force someone to silence, not of the reverent kind but rather of a troubled sort. We have to agree that not every silence is an inner stillness or a meaningful engagement with interiority. Silence may be either imposed or chosen. Amidst a variety of reasons which expose Africans to a grave lack of silence, let me just mention two draw my attention more than anything else.

First, there is a sovereignty of rhythm in African tradition which seems not to leave any room for reverent silence. The sovereignty of rhythm is very striking in the African way of

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<sup>34</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Silence and Word*.

celebrating liturgy. Rhythm of course is always the substratum for song and dance. At the risk of repeating myself, in black Africa, rhythm governs what is happening at any given moment, in any given place. One experiences the world as one that rotates, according to a rhythmic pattern. Creation itself follows a certain rhythm. The different seasons come and go. The human being is born, grows up and dies. He/she is carried by the rhythm. So, this is the only thing we can do: to turn with the world; to go with it, not in counterpoint, but in harmony with it.

Hence, that is the main role of the dance.<sup>35</sup> The great Congolese liturgist, Kabasele Lumbala says: "Africans dance for every event be it for joy, for burial, for harvest, for hatred, for anger, for work, for love and the like. In fact, there is rhythm everywhere and harmony to be re-established or to be maintained by this rhythm. In short, we are born with rhythm, with dance and with songs in our blood".<sup>36</sup> Moreover says Kabasele, by the fact that we express our entire life through dance, it is obvious that Africans express the same enthusiasm in their worship of Jesus Christ, the source of life. They have to dance "life" for Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, this kind of celebration is not specifically African because ritual dance has always existed. We find dances in the pre-Christian oriental cults. Various Psalms reveal that Judaism knew ritual dances: "Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the faithful. Let the people praise his name in dance, make music with tambourine and lyre. Cry out for joy on their couches with a two-edged sword in their hands" (Ps 149). King David danced before the ark of Yahweh when it entered Jerusalem: "Then David came dancing before the Lord with abandon, girt with a lamen ephod. David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouts of joy and the sound of horn" (2 Kgs 6:14). For us, since this way of celebrating God's presence corresponds to the African soul, one

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<sup>35</sup> The editor notes that it can be a mutually enlightening enterprise for African dance masters and Korean/Japanese dance artists to integrate together their cultural appreciation for the sovereignty of rhythm.

<sup>36</sup> F. KABASELE LUMBALA, *Liturgies Africaines*, 26-27.

does not naturally look for an alternative way of worshipping God.

For centuries, Africans were strangers or silent spectators during the liturgy. And now they have the opportunity of participating more actively: song and dance express a kind of liberation from a heavy burden. There is the possibility, then, that whoever seems intent on cultivating silence within these celebrations can be confused with a colonizer.

What I am saying is: Silence has been considered as something strange to the African tradition. Some have experienced it as a kind of dominion over people. So, it can be easier to understand why the last sentence of paragraph 30 of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* seems to have had no impact at all on African celebrations.

Celebration, in Africa, flows with the rhythmic undertow of the psalms. Whenever Africans talk about liturgical celebrations, they mean to "shout with joy to the Lord, all the earth, break into song, sing praise. Sing praise to the Lord with the Lyre, with the lyre and melodious song. With trumpets and the sound of the horn, shout with joy to the King the Lord" (Ps 98:4-6). In order to expand the meaning of celebration in Africa, there arises the serious need to reintroduce a new catechesis on a sense of reverent silence in African liturgical services.

In former eras, silence carried the cruel nuance of submission. Silence has to regain its true, liturgical meaning. The books written by African theologians before and after the Second Vatican Council have pushed into a rightful place of priority the inculturation of the liturgy; it is time for reverent silence to claim, too, its proper place.

## **8. Shoulders Cannot Go above the Head**

In order to bring to light silence in all its reverence and mystery we shift direction and focus on the vital heart of African Society: the African child. Generally, Africans see children as a sign of blessing from God. According to one hailed as a father of both African Philosophy and African Theology, the illustrious Placidus Tempels, life for Africans is Force. To have many

children is a sign of increasing life (*AM* 69-79).<sup>37</sup> To have many children is a great wealth. A person who does not have any child is cursed. There is no greater curse than that of not having children.

Africans are supposed to get many children. Having children is a sign of increasingly vigorous life whereas not having them saps one of his or her life and vigour. In their old age, parents enjoy the care of their children. If one has no children, his/her future becomes uncertain. Africans are known too for their intimate bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood. We can think, therefore, in terms of African Solidarity.

While admiring the deep bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood among Africans, we deplore at the same time the way women and children can be mistreated. Women and children often have no rights, but only duties. In many instances, they are insidiously perceived to be weak creatures who need only obey their parents and their bridegrooms in all things (*AM* 65-67). Africa is full of proverbs that alert one to the plight engendered by these practices in her society. We often hear, for example, old people who admonish the youth by declaring that ‘the shoulders cannot go above the head’; in this way they emphasize that children and young people have no voice at all amidst their elders.<sup>38</sup> They have to keep quiet and obey as if they were in the army. The subaltern has no voice before his/her superior or chief; similarly the African children are to obey the given orders without question or commentary.

On many occasions, the children will never do their own will because they have no right to think by themselves and so they don’t know what they need. Seeing all this, we may emphasize again as we did above in our discussion of African celebration, that silence is imposed on the youth in order to exert power and dominion over them.

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<sup>37</sup> BENEDICT XVI, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation “Africae Munus”* (19 Nov 2011).

<sup>38</sup> John Paul II, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation “Ecclesia in Africa”* (14 Sep 1995), 80.

Having been forced to grow up in such a milieu, once grown up enough, young Africans may give in to the strong psychological impulse to rebel against the traditions that enslave them. In this ambience, an invitation to be silent provokes suspicion and the foreboding sense that yet another form of slavery is about to overtake them. The only thing to do is to seek means to fight against the new slavery. They fight for freedom: freedom from silence which from their point of view diminishes their growth towards freedom and towards the ability to express their ideas and convictions. Unfortunately, their manner of conducting the fight for freedom is more often than not noisy. In such a context, silence has a very pejorative meaning for the young. In order to rid themselves of it, the youth would like to do just the opposite of what silence really means. Because they want to make their presence felt by going against the pre-established norms of the place, they do just the opposite of what a reverently silent person would do.

To be free is to be able to cope and to live in a noisy world. This "freedom from silence" is really harmful to our world and to our African society. We often hear young people reacting: "Please, do not ask me to keep quiet. I am free to do whatever I like. Do not impose anything on me! I am free to listen to my music; I am free to answer my phone... Nobody has right to prohibit a young person for expressing his/her feelings in the way he/she thinks to be the best even if it is in a manner designed to make noise. Considering these unseemly values, one question comes to mind: "If these counter-values of the African society enter the ecclesial assembly, are they liable to affect adversely the Church and her concern for reverent silence?"

Obviously! The conduct of the Catholic faithful can bend under social pressure, even though she enjoys divine guidance. As Bernard Sesboué says: *l'Eglise est toujours de son temps et de la culture des milieux où elle vit.*<sup>39</sup> The Church can suffer from the

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<sup>39</sup>B. SESBOUE, *N'ayez pas peur! Regards sur l'Eglise et les ministères aujourd'hui*, Paris: Desclée 1996, 14. Personal translation: "The Church always carries the traits of the time and the culture within the ambience in which she lives." *Ecclesia in Africa* 85.

same moral sickness that the human society around her suffers. Africa, however, should listen to the voice of Saint Benedict, who said in his Rule: “It is often to a younger brother that the Lord reveals the best course”.<sup>40</sup> The path to health, therefore, would incline us to make every effort to involve young people directly in the life of the society and of the Church, so that they do not fall prey to feelings of frustration and rejection in the face of their inability to shape their own future, especially in those situations where young people are more socially vulnerable due to lack of education, unemployment, political exploitation and various kinds of addiction (*AM 62*).

These observations about lack of silence in our world have to make us more aware of our mission as teachers, educators, and celebrants of the liturgy. We are called to form our youth to the depth of interior silence which can help them to listen to their heart and to the voice of God who speaks in the silence of the heart.

What happens when we are interiorly silent? One concrete example that I would want to share with the youth: We are happy to see that there are a variety of birds in our surroundings. Actually, we can enjoy their presence, but in order to enjoy their presence, to hear their whistling or their crying, the first thing to do is to keep quiet. It is only by doing so, that one can hear the birds. Another example concerns other animals: At night-time, when other noises die out, we can often hear animals calling one another, through sounds or cries – barking, mewling, and bleating or whatever their special way of communicating. On our side, silence is required in the jungle in order to hear the animals who dwell there.

Therefore, as educators, professors, lecturers or celebrants of liturgy, we have not only the mission to communicate information and lead prayer but also to form the conscience and character of youth in whatever we say, do and write. We have the task of forming the conscience of the youth, because conscience must be educated. Nothing is lost!

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<sup>40</sup> Rule III, 3; John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter “Novo Millennio Ineunte”* (6 Jan 2001), 45; *AAS* 93 (2001), 298-299; *AM 62*.

To repeat the words of Pope Paul VI during his pilgrimage to the Holy Land. “The home of Nazareth is the school where we begin to understand the life of Jesus – the school of the Gospel. Here, in this school, one learns why it is necessary to have a spiritual rule of life, if one wishes to follow the teaching of the Gospel and become a disciple of Christ”.<sup>41</sup> In his profound meditation on the mystery of Nazareth, Pope Paul VI invites us to learn a threefold lesson of silence, of family life and of work. Regarding our concern, the local Church and the domestic church – that is to say, the family – should become the school of silence.

## 9. Through Reverent Silence, Christ’s Power Acts

Africans should come to discover in silence a real value and not simply write it off as a burden. In silence, we grow up. Silence, especially when it is reverent, is a part of our liturgy. We meet with the divine; and so it is an occasion for God to speak to us. There is no incompatibility between active participation and reverent silence. They may synchronize exceedingly well together without either losing its own intrinsic value because each activity has its own moment for invigorating the atmosphere with its own special power. It is just a matter of following the rubrics which help us to celebrate worthily our liturgy without confusing the various dimensions.

Priests are supposed to know that they are people of silence. In order to be effective in words, they have to cultivate the value of silence. Silence is a school; and thus the Church offers some spiritual exercises to cultivate silence in the soul of the priest, sister, brother – indeed of any person – such as *Lectio divina*, meditation, contemplation, adoration in the presence of the Holy Eucharist, and retreats of varying duration. All should have their eyes fixed on Christ in order to have ears to listen to him. Once they have recourse to that inner silence, they can remain interiorly silent everywhere, even in the midst of the greatest hustle and

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<sup>41</sup> PAUL VI, *Homily* at the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth (5 Jan 1964); *AAS* 56 (1964) 167. *EA* 81.

bustle.<sup>42</sup> This silence is required for the priests before they start the celebration of the Eucharist in the sacristy.

Unfortunately, many priests are not informed about the meaning of the sacristy. The sacristy is a small chapel and not a reception room or a recreation room. It is not a place for talking and sharing; rather it provides the setting for celebrants and concelebrants to cradle themselves within a silent intimacy with God. What the priest is going to celebrate is a mystery to be touched and penetrated, but never fully understood. Hence it requires particular spiritual preparation.

“Show me the way you behave in the sacristy; I will tell you what the Eucharistic celebration will look like.” The rubrics facilitate the task and guide us properly in our celebration: indeed the rubrics serve that same spirit of unity that encouraged St. Cyprian to delight in what God does through the Church, whether she be in Africa or whether she be in Rome. Why do we want to talk loudly when the rubrics indicate that a certain prayer be uttered quietly or inaudibly? Actually, the question is: “Do priests still remember those moments of reverent silence? Their meaning? The meaning is one and unique: “To be in God’s presence.”

When priests are faithful to silence, they are profoundly aware that they are acting in God’s name. They are acting in *persona Christi*. That is why they need time to let themselves be connected to the Creator, by whose Providence all of us move forward; and to the Saviour. It is in, with, and through the Saviour that the priest acts: even though he himself is not the Christ, Christ nevertheless has chosen him to be the channel of grace through whom he, Jesus Christ, draws all to sacramental communion with himself. When the priest realizes who he is, he will never neglect the moments of silence. During the Liturgy, the

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<sup>42</sup> It is certainly a propos to the topic of reverent silence to invoke the example of the Missionaries of Charity in Hong Kong. Their community is located right smack in the middle of the noisiest market in the world. It is a market that is open all day and all night, every day of the year. When asked how they can sleep, the Missionaries make reference to their daily hour of silent adoration in the presence of the Eucharist. Silence is possible even when the noise is most deafening (editor).

priest is acting in *persona Christi* – he is the sacramental gate through which each woman, man and child can enter into the eternity of their God.

In everything, the priest needs God's grace without which he cannot stand at the altar of the Lord.

Let us look at some words which the priest is supposed to say in the silence of his heart. Before he goes to read the Gospel, the priest says inaudibly, bowing before the altar: "Cleanse my heart and my lips, almighty God, that I may worthily proclaim your holy Gospel"; if it is the deacon who is to proclaim the Gospel he asks the blessing from the priest in a low voice. After reading the Gospel, the priest (or the deacon) kisses the book, saying quietly: "Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away." During the Offertory, when he pours a little water into the chalice, the priest says: "By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled to share in our humanity." After offering his supplication to God, begging that God may accept the wine that during the Eucharistic Prayer will become Jesus' Blood, the priest bows profoundly and says quietly: "With humble spirit and contrite heart may we be accepted by you, O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your sight this day be pleasing to you, Lord God."

The silence of this prayer reflects its humility: the priest is talking to the Lord who is now the one who is truly acting through the priest. The priest is disappearing and gives place to the Master of Ceremony who is Christ Himself: it is Jesus who is offering himself as the Eucharistic Sacrifice. As one who is conducting himself in *persona Christi*, the priest bows humbly and profoundly. He stands at the side of the altar and expresses this profound humility by washing his hands and saying quietly: "Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin."

What it is about to occur is holy: in order to be one with Jesus in the Eucharistic prayer, the priest has to be clean of heart, a cleanliness given visible expression by the cleaning of the hands. The psalm expresses it clearly: "Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? The one who has clean hands and a pure heart" (24:3-4).

The full meaning of these rituals reaches a summit when the same priest invites the assembly as the Family of God to join him in prayer that God may accept the Eucharistic Sacrifice that they are offering. Standing at the middle of the altar, facing the people, the priest ushers forth the invitation to prayer by saying: "Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father". The people rise and reply: "May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church". Whatever we are offering at this point is above all for the "praise and the glory of his name" (the Lord's name). For this reason, we direct our prayer as a petition to God to accept our sacrifice which is actually his Son's Sacrifice.

Finally, there are inaudible prayers for the priest during the communion rite. While placing a small piece of the Eucharistic Body in the chalice, the priest says quietly: "May this mingling of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it." As you may see, it is still the Lord who is at work through the priest.

Before the priest receives the Holy Communion, the rubrics indicate this: the priest prepares himself for communion by a prayer, said quietly. The faithful do the same, praying silently. There are two formulae: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who by the will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit, through your Death gave life to the world; free me by this, your most holy Body and Blood, from all my sins and from every evil; keep me always faithful to your commandments, and never let me be parted from you"; or "May the receiving of your Body and Blood, Lord Jesus Christ, not bring me to judgment and condemnation, but through your loving mercy be for me protection in mind and body, and a healing remedy." After communion, during the purifying of the vessels, he says quietly: "What has passed our lips as food, o Lord, may we possess in purity of heart, that what has been given to us in time may be our healing for eternity."

It is wonderful to see that whenever silence or quiet prayers are recommended, it is the Lord who is at the centre of the rite and truly at work. When silence occurs, the Lord acts. Those are

truly times of personal encounter with the Lord. Let us totally submit to him in a very reverent silence. All these reverent moments are a kind of divine school for priests.

The priest, then, must know that his task in the Eucharistic celebration is more than presiding over the Family of God. On the way which leads to the encounter with the living God, the priests have, indeed, the leading role within the assembly, but the centre of gravity is neither the assembly nor the priest; rather, it is the Lord, with whom and towards whom we walk as human beings. The silent prayers of the priest prepare him precisely to enter personally into the inner heart of his vocation and thus offer himself totally to the Lord who accompanies him on the way.

The quiet prayers of the priest are, then, a particular way for the priest to cultivate a true personal friendship with his Lord, Jesus the Christ. In fact, we have to thank God that these moments still exist in our liturgy; and that these moments consistently impel the priest to recognize the One in whose name he is celebrating the Sacrifice. The Spirit of the Lord is at work. Saint Paul says it: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words." (Rom 8:26). As John the Baptist has to diminish so that Christ may grow; so must the priest immerse his being, hidden, within the living water of Christ.<sup>43</sup>

Another crucial moment of silence occurs when the priest invites the assembly for prayer.<sup>44</sup> When he says audibly, "Let us pray," all pray in silence with the Priest for a precious moment. Then the priest, with hands extended, says the Collect prayer. At the end of this prayer, the people acclaim: "Amen." Many priests

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<sup>43</sup> J. RATZINGER, *L'Esprit de la liturgie*, Genève: Ad Solem 2001, 163-170.

<sup>44</sup> Some priests may even tend to cut short the silence that he should be offering the faithful so that they may examine their conscience and acknowledge their sins at the beginning of the Penitential Rite. Having exhorted the people with the words, "Let us acknowledge our sins so as to prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries," he then proceeds without pause to the "I confess to Almighty God..." or to an alternative penitential prayer (Ed.)

seem no longer aware of the silence that should be preserved at this moment at the start of the Collect prayer. They begin the required prayer without pause after giving the invitation to pray.

Why is the opening prayer called the “Collect” prayer? It is because the priest is to collect the prayers of the faithful and offer them to God. How can you fail to pause after the invitation to pray and so deprive the people of the opportunity to recollect their minds and hearts in order to formulate at least one short prayer according to their intentions? A most eloquent appeal came from Pope Francis who, during one of his general audiences, asked the faithful to keep a moment of silence and pray for a sick little girl. He said: “And now let me ask you for an act of charity: relax, it is not a collection! Before coming into the Square I went to see a little girl, a year and a half old, who is gravely ill. Her father and mother are praying, and asking the Lord to heal this beautiful little girl. Her name is Noemi. The poor little one was smiling! Let us perform an act of love. We do not know her, but she is a baptized child, she is one of us, she is a Christian. Let us perform an act of love for her and in silence ask the Lord for his help in this moment and that He grant her health. Let us take a moment of silence and then we will pray the ‘Hail Mary’.

“And now all together let us pray to Our Lady for the health of Noemi. ‘Hail Mary....’ Thank you for this act of charity.”<sup>45</sup> Let us take a moment of silence! At the precise moment, silence became a bridge of unity and communion. Silence brings force, strength and new energy. The whole Square became one Family of God together with the Pope united in prayer for one member of the family who was sick. For sure, it was as if the experience of Elijah was repeated: “God came in the sound of a sheer silence.” It is only after making such an experience of the personal encounter with God that the whole Family of God could join their voices to that of the Holy Father in order to pray for the good health of Noemi. As we may see, silence has power to change the world, to unify people from different colours, races, continents,

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<sup>45</sup> FRANCIS, *General Audience “The Church as Communion of Saints (2)”* (6 Nov 2013).

religious confessions, and even languages and to make them one family.

One of St. Augustine's observations is still valid in today's world: *Verbo crescente, verba deficient*, "when the word of God increases, the words of men fail".<sup>46</sup> The Gospels often present Jesus, especially at times of crucial decisions, withdrawing to lonely places, away from the crowds and even from the disciples in order to pray in silence and to live his filial relationship with God in solitude. Silence can carve out an inner space in our very depths to enable God to dwell there, so that his word will remain within us and so that love for him can take root in our minds and hearts and inspire our lives. Hence what takes priority: relearning silence, opening oneself to listening, opening oneself to the other, to the Word of God.<sup>47</sup> "Silence of the heart requires listening to God's silent music. Prayer originates from silence and returns to it" (Maurice Zundel).<sup>48</sup> For this reason, Pope Benedict says: "In silent contemplation, then, the eternal Word, through whom the world was created, becomes ever more powerfully present and we become aware of the plan of salvation that God is accomplishing throughout our history by word and deed."<sup>49</sup>

## Conclusion

Truly, Pope Benedict's words are challenging: they challenge the world of today, and they challenge the way we celebrate liturgy. His words remind us that silence is an essential part of our liturgy. This does not obviate response: To the God who speaks to us, we respond either by singing, by praying, or by dancing. The great mystery beyond all speech, however, calls us to silence. We need full silence, not merely a vacuum caused by the absence of speech and action. What we expect of the liturgy is that it offers us this substantial silence, entirely positive, where we can find ourselves. A silence that is not just a break wherein strange ideas

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<sup>46</sup> *Sermo* 288, 5: pl 38, 1307; *Sermo* 120, 2: pl 38, 677

<sup>47</sup> *BENEDICT XVI, General Audience "Silence of Jesus"* (7 Mar 2012).

<sup>48</sup> M. ZUNDEL, *L'humble présence*, Mercuès: Editions du Jubilé 2008, 441-446.

<sup>49</sup> *BENEDICT XVI, Silence and Word*.

and desires assail us to create interior havoc, but quite to the contrary a reverent silence that brings inner peace and lets us breathe and rediscover the essential of essentials: Christ.

“Rediscovering the centrality of God’s word in the life of the Church also means rediscovering a sense of recollection and inner repose. The great patristic tradition teaches us that the mysteries of Christ all involve silence. Only in silence can the Word of God finds a home in us, as it did in Mary, woman of the word and, inseparably, woman of silence”.<sup>50</sup> This principle — that without silence one does not hear, does not listen, does not receive a word — applies to personal prayer as well as to our communal liturgy: to facilitate authentic listening, these privileged times must also be rich in moments of silence and of non-verbal reception.

The Second Council Vatican stresses silence as part of the liturgy. As we know, the language of the sixteen documents of this Council may not be easy for the common faithful. Besides these precious documents, there is the Catechism of the Catholic Church which renders the language more comprehensible so that even ordinary Christians may come to a profound understanding of their faith.

The Synod Fathers (1985) expressed the same concern that Pope John Paul II verbalized in a letter he wrote in 1992: “Very many have expressed the desire that a catechism or compendium of all Catholic doctrine regarding both faith and morals be composed, that it might be, as it were, a point of reference for the catechisms of compendiums that are prepared in various regions. The presentation of doctrine must be biblical and liturgical. It must be sound doctrine suited to the present life of Christians.” (CCC 22) He goes on to say: “I declare it to be a sure norm for teaching the faith and thus a valid and legitimate instrument for ecclesial communion. May it serve the renewal to which the Holy Spirit ceaselessly calls the Church of God, the Body of Christ, on her pilgrimage to the undiminished light of the Kingdom.” (CCC 24) “It is offered to all the faithful who wish to deepen their knowledge of the unfathomable riches of salvation. It is also

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<sup>50</sup> *Verbum Domini* 66; Benoît XVI, *A l'école de la prière à la suite du Christ*, Langres: Parole et Silence 2013, 179-185.

offered to every individual who asks us to give an account of the hope that is in us and who wants to know what the Catholic Church believes” (CCC 25).

It is a pity that when this precious document talks about liturgy, it does not seem to give the same emphasis to silence as Vatican II did. It is surprising to see that the word “silence” does not even appear. The document talks about signs and symbols in the liturgy (1145-1152); words and actions (1153-1155); singing and music (1156-1158); and holy images (1159-1162). Nothing appears about silence as part of liturgy. One would expect to see “silence” springing up after “singing and music” but unfortunately there is nothing. The Catechism seems to suffer this serious lack in the liturgical section; but the section on the law of prayer seems to compensate for the seeming deficiency. Note the language of the Catechism in paragraph 2717: “In this silence, unbearable to the “outer” man, the Father speaks to us his incarnate Word, who suffered, died and rose; in this silence the Spirit of adoption enables us to share in the prayer of Jesus.” *Lex orandi; lex celebrandi* (the law of prayer is the law of celebration). We have the full conviction necessary to place these words about the law of silent prayer within the context of the liturgy we celebrate. It is precisely this conviction that we find wonderfully expressed by this jewel of a prayer from Patrice de la Tour du Pin (20<sup>th</sup> Century):<sup>51</sup>

***My silence knows that it exceeds my song.  
My silence itself raises its voice to You.***

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<sup>51</sup> A. JOIN-LAMBERT, *Guide pour comprendre La Messe*, 215. « Mon silence sait bien qu’il dépasse mon chant. Mon silence lui-même élèvera la voix vers Vous ».

## AFRICA TOMORROW

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