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**FORMATION OF HUMAN CONSCIENCE:
A Way of Liberation and Redemption**

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**A Long Essay submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Ecclesiastical Degree of Baccalaureate in Theology**

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DEDICATION

This essay is dedicated to my parents and to those who are concerned with the charism of formation of human conscience, human rights and justice in the society. I remember my parents for their dedication in giving me the support I needed to grow up as a person.

Also, not to forget, brothers and sisters together with friends who have supported me in one way or the other, especially those with whom I have shared life in social dimension, life in the journey of faith. I give gratitude to all who have committed themselves to guide me in the path of growth righteously, those who been a model to me and helped through their own support to transform me and the society at large, for the purpose of justice and peace.

EPIGRAPH

The social development of any society requires integration of norms and cultural values for its growth and order. Ignorance degrades the communal growth in the society and can result in injustice, oppression, due to poor economic, political and social problems. The advanced fruits of ignorance are selfishness, pride, jealousy, shame and destruction. So the perfect society can only be realized through intelligibility, which can only be achieved through formation of human conscience [CCC 1783-1789].

Conscience is not some kind of feeling, but rather a judgment, which stands accountable to reason (GS.16). “In conscience one is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depth; but the voice one hears might often enough be no more than the voice of one’s own prejudices. It may be that by the judgment of his conscience... man perceives and recognizes the prescriptions of the divine law, but it may also be that we only think on what we do” (Michael J. Walsh, *Commentary on the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Geoffrey Chapman, London. 1994).

Conscience is connected with the heart, from where one takes responsibility for him/herself and for others. God wrote a law into human heart through the message of the prophets (Jer 31:29-34; Ez 14:1-3, 36:26).


ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With a sincere heart, I would like first of all to thank God for his kindness and love He has shown me to make me reflect on the topic of my choice and to develop it as a project. Secondly I thank Fr. Stinger who is the head of mission department for his corporation to enable me formulate the structure of my work. This work couldn't have been possible without his methodology and scientific guidance. I thank Fr. Faustin Kamugisha for his critical analysis of the work until its final development, Fr Larry Daniels; my former superior and Brother Richard Opendi for their proof readings. The same gratitude goes to Mr. Jenaro Ileri (The administrator Tangaza College), whose insight gave me the rationale to review this work. Not to forget, I would like to thank all the lecturers for their well elaborate and constructive teaching which acted as a catalyst to make be critical in thinking thus enabled to come up with something positive in a special way.

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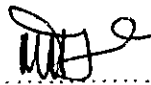
STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Ecclesiastical degree of Baccalaureate in Theology. It has never been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

Signed 

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This long essay has been submitted for examination with my approval as the college supervisor.

Signed 

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AD</i>	<i>Ad domino- after death</i>
<i>Bros</i>	<i>Brothers</i>
<i>Cf.</i>	<i>Confer</i>
<i>Eccl</i>	<i>Ecclesiasticus</i>
<i>Ed</i>	<i>Edition</i>
<i>E.g.</i>	<i>Example</i>
<i>Etc</i>	<i>Et cetra, and other similar things or and the rest</i>
<i>Ez</i>	<i>Ezekiel</i>
<i>Gal</i>	<i>Galatian</i>
<i>GE</i>	<i>Grassimum Educationis</i>
<i>Gen</i>	<i>Genesis</i>
<i>GS</i>	<i>Gaudium et Spes</i>
<i>Heb</i>	<i>Hebrew</i>
<i>Ibid</i>	<i>As above</i>
<i>I.e.</i>	<i>Idest- that is to say</i>
<i>Jer</i>	<i>Jeremiah</i>
<i>Jl</i>	<i>Joel</i>
<i>Jn</i>	<i>John</i>
<i>Lk</i>	<i>Luke</i>
<i>MM</i>	<i>Mater et Magistra</i>
<i>Mt</i>	<i>Mathew</i>
<i>NRSV</i>	<i>New Revised standard Version</i>
<i>NT</i>	<i>New Testament</i>
<i>OT</i>	<i>Old Testament</i>
<i>Prov</i>	<i>Proverb</i>
<i>Ps</i>	<i>Psalms</i>
<i>Pt</i>	<i>Part</i>
<i>PT</i>	<i>Pacemin Terris</i>
<i>RH</i>	<i>Redemptories Homini</i>
<i>Rom</i>	<i>Romans</i>
<i>RSV</i>	<i>Revised Standard Version</i>
<i>Sam</i>	<i>Samuel</i>
<i>SCCs</i>	<i>Small Christtan communities</i>
<i>ST</i>	<i>Summa Theologica</i>
<i>St.</i>	<i>Saint</i>
<i>Vat. II</i>	<i>Second Vatican Council</i>
<i>Vol.</i>	<i>Volume</i>
<i>Wis</i>	<i>Wisdom</i>

General Introduction

This paper deals with the issue of human person and conscience formation from the perspective of Luo tradition and Christian tradition. We shall examine the reason why it is important to review the formation program in the Christian life. Due to the fact that early missionaries didn't put into consideration the idea of inculturation, there have been problems concerning the way a Luo Christian should live his/her Christian life faithfully without being involved in syncretism. Moreover, we shall look into some of the ways in which a Luo attitude can be changed through inculturation. This can be done by inculturating Christianity into the Luo traditional values of the people themselves.

So, our attention is focused on the formation of human conscience among the Luo people of western Kenya, as well as the understanding and formation of human conscience in the Scriptural and theological aspects. We further look into ways in which inculturation of Christian formation of human conscience can be made possible from the perspectives of Luo tradition, touching especially on the areas of community, family and pastoral problems and solutions. The main area of concern is "inculturating"¹ Christianity into Luo ways of life as a concern to the traditional values and customs.

¹ Inculturation is the insertion of the Gospel message into a particular culture so as to transform and elevate that culture and enable it to be the medium of expressing the Christian life (Cf. Richard N. Rwiza, *Formation of Christian Conscience*), 108.

Rationale of the Thesis

The reasons behind the choice of this topic are as follows:

- a) Despite the fact that the level of formation has advanced through the various institutions, there are social injustices and immoralities in the society in which we live today.
- b) There is need to review the structures of formation, so that a new approach of inculturation can be applied in integrating the African-Luo traditional customs values and westernized Christian morality.
- c) In the society today the life style has greatly changed: people no longer live in fraternity; there is too much individualism; the way people live today is quite different from the way it used to be; there is a lot of hatred and divisions; people sometimes seem not to live according to Christian virtues, hence there is a need to find a way forward.
- d) People's consciences are not adequately formed from what we see. There is need for a proper formation of human conscience.

The Central Question of Investigation

The point of focus in this essay is the issue concerning the conscience of a human person, what it is and what it does to a person. We shall see by point of investigation as to whether a well formed conscience is more perfect and if so, why society is experiencing some of the unnecessary problems and yet the majority are well informed? The other question that needs an answer is that, while conscience is the core sanctuary of our being in union with God, what causes deformation of a

person's rationality, even though one might have undergone through the process of formation either traditionally or Christian, or both.

Methodology

To develop this thesis, I relied on pastoral circle. This involves insertion, social analysis, theological reflection and pastoral planning. The pastoral circle or see, judge- act method is inductive. The starting point is from particular to general in the concrete human experience especially on my area of apostolate. Social analysis concerns getting in touch with other people in daily life activities, through the process of oral questionnaires, which is both open and close. I have used the tape recorder and mass media as sources of information, theological reflection in the area of mission theology, which is my area of specialization. Not to forget, my own personal life experience has also been a major important issue; from childhood until now I have experience a lot of things taking place, for many things have changed. In this paper, we shall investigate different approaches; that is, traditional, anthropological, theological and conceptual approaches.

The traditional anthropological approach will deal with the Luo formation of human conscience. This will rely on the sources from textbooks, tape recorder and oral interviews. The Scriptural approach will deal with the understanding of conscience in both Old Testament and New Testament using the source from the various texts. The theological approach will deal with the teachings of theology, concerning the understanding of conscience using various texts, articles from magazines, periodicals and Church documents. Finally, the anthropological

approach includes an understanding of conscience from the social scientists, that is humanist, sociologists, and the source of information will be written literature.

Working Definition of Conscience

Etymologically, conscience is composed of two terms; “*con*,” which in Greek means “together” or “whole,” and “*science*,” which is translated as “knowledge.” In this case, conscience is understood in terms of the individual and the community. In terms of an individual, it’s self-awareness or a moral existence knowledge of the human person. Individual conscience experience is manifested in relationship to others and this brings the aspect of community where people have a common knowledge of knowing something together, that is, to have a common knowledge. In this respect we can trace the meaning of conscience as: to know something together, or communal knowledge. Communality can only exist when there is a common horizon of understanding, as the basis of the universality of conscience that is found in “*con*.” So, “*con*” provides a horizon by which we can share or exchange knowledge of our moral acts with one another. “*Science*” on the other hand is a moral or existential knowledge of the human person.

Hypothesis

Through the formation of human conscience, the Luo people of western Kenya can live authentic Christian values.

Thesis Structure

In this thesis there are three chapters. Chapter one deals with human nature where conscience is part of it and plays an important role. This is in focus on the issue of Luo origin, their culture and ways of life in reference to the formation of human conscience. We shall look at the importance of traditional values and customs of the Luo people, which brings unity to a people having a shared life.

Chapter two highlights the Scriptural and theological understanding of conscience. The Scriptural will deal with both the Old and the New Testaments. In the theological perspectives, we see how St. Thomas Aquinas and other theologians treat the issue of conscience. It also considers the origin and understanding of conscience among scholars, especially philosophers, humanists and psychologists. Lastly we will look at the Christian formation of human conscience.

Chapter three deals with inculturation of the Christian formation of human conscience in the Luo traditional values and customs. It discusses how inculturation can help to solve the crisis of living Luo traditions in syncretism, which has caused a lot of problems in our Christian faith. Karl Rahner's communal anthropological approach is useful in the area of the Luo and Christian cultural integration. Through application, a well formed conscience can be in the situation of human responsibility as stewards. Finally, we end with evaluation and general conclusion.

CHAPTER I

The Luo People and Conscience Formation

Introduction

In this chapter, we intend to talk about the origin of Luo people of western Kenya. This is important since the thesis is based on their human formation of human conscience. We present their movement from Uganda and settlement in western Kenya along the source of lake Victoria. The organization includes the community set up, and their system of community life in the human formation. Our focus is on the way Luo people understand conscience, and how the formation of human conscience is done from the perspective of the individual family to the community level. We see how the formation of human conscience has helped the Luo people to have a strong community, stable and identical. It's through their conscience that Luos are able to move from place to place in search for greener pastures.

1.1 The Origin and Location of the Luo People in Kenya

The Luos belongs to the Nilotic groups of people found in Western Kenya, and they are referred to as River- Lake Nilots. Their place of home origin is said to

be in the southern Sudan, and they came to Kenya via Uganda following the river Nile in the early centuries.²

Evidently, the Luos of Kenya originated from Uganda and they came in different groups composed of four groups namely;³ “Joka-jok, Omolo, Owiny,” and a mixed group called “Luo-suba.” “Joka-jok” were the first migrants from Uganda. When they arrived in Kenya, they settled around Ramogi Hill, but later scattered along the source of lake Victoria. They are the largest group and claim direct descent from Ramogi the first Luo ancestor in Kenya. In Nyanza Province, they are found in the following places, Nyakach, Seme in Kisumu district, and Chuonyo in South Nyanza district.⁴

The second group is Joka-Owiny, believed to have broken away from the Padhola of Uganda and arrived in Kenya in around 1625AD.⁵ They came and settled at the gulf between lake Victoria and Samia Hills at a place called Alego, later they moved to a place called Yimbo-Kadimo in Siaya district.

The third group, which is Joka-Omolo, is said to trace their origin to northern Uganda. They migrated to Yimbo, where they lived for eight years and later moved to Alego.⁶

The fourth group consists of a mixed group commonly called the Luo-suba. They entered Kenya from the southern part of Lake Victoria in Nyanza province.

² Tape recorder by MZEE BONDO DONGO AGOLA; *Chakruok Luo, Sigand Luo Vol. 1.*

³ Cf. R. W. OCHIENG, *The Third World; Essay on Kenyan History*, 75.

⁴ A. B. OGOT, *History of the Southern Luo*, 144-145.

⁵ R. W. OCHIENG, *Kenya's People*, 6.

⁶ OCHIENG, *The Third World: Essay on Kenyan History*, 8

Currently they live along the shores of lake Victoria.⁷ This group included small branches of Luo people from Uganda, together with some Bantu unit. They arrived in Nyanza through Lake Victoria. Though this group of people called Suba is non-Luo speaking, the Luo speaking in Nyanza absorbed them. It is said that about 1790 AD, the multi-clans comprising the Southern Luo people had occupied the geographical place they currently inhabit, but the process of migration itself is still ongoing.

1.2 The Worldview of the Luo People

The Luo ontology is both hierarchical and anthropocentric, for God “Nyasaye” occupies the top position of this ontology. Evil and bad spirits are considered second after God, human beings, living and dead, animals and inanimate phenomenon, respectively. According to Ocholla Ayayo, the anthropocentricity of the Luo cosmos surfaced in the people’s attempt to define the world from their point of reference. “Nyasaye” God is the creator and sustainer of the entire universe.⁸ God is considered to manifest Himself in all extra-ordinary things, and He is the origin of life, which He continues to dispel through the sun and the rain.⁹ So among the Luo people, God is the creator of order in the universe.

The purpose of the total reality is seen to manifest itself in all regular cycles, such as the alteration of day and night and the return of the seasons. This is

⁷ Ibid. 9.

⁸ Cf. AYAYO, O,C, B, A; *Traditional Ideology and Ethics among the Southern Luo*, 166.

⁹ Cf. F.M. PERRIN, *Basic Community in African Church*, 25.

associated with the idea of an-all-creator God.¹⁰ The order in itself was not merely relegated to the physical realm but also seen on the moral level. The centrality of God in people's lives can be fathomed in the semantic analysis of the name "Nyasaye" derived from the word "sayo," which means to beg.¹¹

In this case "Nyasaye" literary means, "He who is begged," "He to whom people go to on bent knees." The assessment asserts that the word "Nyasaye" means that, "He/God is all-powerful" and so referred to as "Nyakalaga."¹² The Luo conceptual framework envisages life as a transitory starting from God through the ancestors, through the concentric customs. "Nyasaye" is the giver of life, health and wealth to those who are obedient to their customs.¹³

In an oral interview, I learned that the Luo people are spiritual. An element permeating this ontology is the mystic power, which like all other traditions could be tapped for good or bad. Mzee Ogolla says, "We are not allowed to plant or even uproot some trees, because of the mystic powers, which are associated with them."¹⁴ Consequently, people of the community are expected to have some kind of mystical relationship with the whole universe, that is, creatures and this became more pronounced in the totem system.

1.3 The Luo as a Family

The organization of the Luo tradition as a community, present to the mind the idea of unity in diversity. There is existent both at the ontological and functional

¹⁰ Ibid. 27.

¹¹ AYAYO, *Traditional Ideology and Ethics among the Southern Luo*, 167.

¹² MZEE OGOLLA, Oral interview with Mzee Ogallo from Seme in 2006.

¹³ PERRIN, *Basic Community in African Church*,. 26

¹⁴ MZEE OGOLLA, Oral Interview with Mzee Ogallo from Seme, 2006.

level, meaning that a person is identified within the framework of the community set up since he/she is seen in terms of how he/she has been formed by the community. Sustenance and transmission of life is the chief vocation of all the members of the community. It is also the principle behind the organization of the society into many social units.

The traditional Luo social space is divided into three main social units of homestead or family: "Pacho/Dala", sub-location "Gweng or Piny" and wider territory "Ruodhdom." The family is the smallest important social unit and is made up of a man and his wife or wives as well as his children. If the children are married this unit will include the grand children.¹⁵

The extended family does not end here because the extension of the familial encompasses even the ancestors, which technically do not refer merely to the deceased relatives, but only those who led a good moral life. Also the unborn are considered to be part of the family. In this way, the expectant mothers are given respect. Within the family, communal life is given a prominent place.

An individual can only say, "I am what I am, because the community has made me so." This belief stems from the fact that the community molds an individual. Communal life is stressed to the extent that a child is brought up according to the norms of the society and community and has to conform to the community's expectation. All his education is directed towards traditional customs and values of the society: responsibility and respect for his parents, his family and

¹⁵ OCHIENG, *Kenya's People*, 10.

the community as a whole and so the entire community is concerned about its youth.¹⁶

In the Luo community, people live in fraternity and in this respect one would call men/boys related or not related to him/her but of the same age group as “omera” (which means biological or extended brother), and for women/girls “nyamera” including all sisters close or distant to him or her.

1.4 The Role of the Individual in the Luo Community

According to Bujo, an individual in the African context is looked at from the perspective of community. “Although he/she is embedded in the community, he/she is unique and inexchangeable being, who has an irreplaceable responsibility to perform to his/her people in the community. An individual can act in solidarity with lineage, while retaining his or her identity as well as showing the responsibility entrusted to him/her.”¹⁷

Among the Luo traditions, an individual position is expressed within the social gamut by means of responsibilities, that is, the role played by individuals. There is a kind of duo-dimensional function. The community has to see that it performs its formative function of molding the personality of an individual. Secondly, the personality of an individual is expressed through each activity presupposed in personality. There is a kind of division of labor depending on sex or

¹⁶H.O. AYOT, *A history of the Luo-Abasuba of Western Kenya from A.D. 1760- 1940*, 180.

¹⁷ B. BUJO, *The Ethical Dimension of Community*, 147.

age of the person. The father is the head of homestead and ruler of the family, and his role is to make sure that his family lives in peace, both in the homestead and with those in the neighborhood. He has to make sure that his children are brought up with the knowledge and respect of the laws and customs of the Luo community.¹⁸

Women have a role model to play. They are given respect in the homestead, and each wife within the homestead is known as “min/wuon Ot” (owner of the house).¹⁹ A woman is considered to be the leader of domestic and economic activities in her household. Under her leadership are the children who are supposed to grow up with the idea of “our house,” “odwa” and this promotes a healthy competition among the households though it could lead to a detrimental rivalry and quarrelsomeness at times. For the children, their prime duty is to respect their parents, community members and by extension to everybody. The mature boys are suppose to emulate their father, and could take care of animals in the field as well as protecting the community against foreign aggressors.²⁰

On the other hand, girls are to imitate their mothers, helping them on domestic works such as fetching firewood and water, preparing food and taking care of young children.²¹ As for the elderly people in the community, they had an important role to play in terms of formative responsibilities. The children are to gather around them especially at night before they could go to sleep. They would

¹⁸ OCHIENG, *Kenya's People*, 12.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 13.

²⁰ AYOT, *A History of the Luo- Abasuba of Western Kenya from A.D. 1760- 1940*, 181.

²¹ *Ibid.* 82.

gather at their grandmother's house where they will receive moral instructions through story telling, riddles, folk songs, myths and proverbs.²²

Lastly, in the line of formation, even the ancestors were considered as playing important role especially to the family. In an interview with Mzee Ogallo, ancestors are seen to be the protector of people against evil and can give warning about certain dangers in the form of dreams or visions and some natural signs in forms of calamities.

1.5 Expression of Conscience in the Luo Tradition

Like any other African communities, the Luos have their own way of life. So formation of conscience in the tradition of the Luo community of western Kenya can be traced effectively from their social, cultural and religious traditional way of life.

Traditional African Luos, have a conscience based on the teachings of their tradition and culture; they have a law, not written, but behavioural. This can be judged from their way of life in the prospect of doing the right things and avoiding wrongdoings. In terms of communication, the use of language tells it all, for example a Luo would say, "tikod riekoni" or use your wisdom or "tikod pachi" use your mind. They say one has to do what his/her heart is telling him/her, "tim kaka chunyi dwaro." If one does a wrong thing he/she will be told, why are you shaming us "Ikuodo wiwa nango." In this case, we can see that Luos have the meaning for conscience in their language in reference to the use of such terms as; "*pachi, chunyi, riekoni and wiyi*" in their expressions. These terms are coordinated by heart.

²² Ibid. 83.

This is evident that Luo people have expressions, which are applied to conscience in a practical sense as we shall see from the examples given, that is, if one seems to be thinking a lot people would say, “chunyi kwayo” that one’s heart is wondering, or they will say, “pachi ni mabor,” your mind is far. And when one says, “chunyi yalo” he/she will mean your heart is judging. In this sense, the Luo characteristic of the word for conscience denotes acts. Because of this, the Luo characteristic of conscience corresponds to the application for knowledge for something, that consists in acts.²³ After the understanding of conscience, we shall now see how the Luo formation of human conscience is done.

1.6 The Luo Formation of Human Conscience

The formation of human conscience among the Luo people is geared towards integral aspects of the totality of the human person and his co-existence. This has to put into consideration the physical and mental aspect of the beingness of an individual, that is, the wholeness of a person in relation to creation and creator. The goal of human formation among the Luos is to help the community lay a solid foundation for the young and adult who need to adopt and live the life of their own people. For the Luo people, community life is very important in human formation, since a person is a being in the making. One needs to grow by relating to others through inner authentic love. Love is revealed through encounters with others who help one to make it his/her own through intimate participation and remains a being,

²³ T. AQUINA, *Summa Theologica*; Q, 79 (art. 13 c. Pt. 1).

which is incomprehensible.²⁴ “Young people need to be shown love, exemplified in the life of every member of the community, who lives the traditional values and dictates of a well formed conscience, distinguished by the gifts of the community Spirituality.”²⁵

The human beings are unique creatures,²⁶ endowed with certain characteristics that make them distinct from other creatures. There are weaknesses that need to be rectified in order to assume that perfect uniqueness.²⁷ The way to handle human formation is to follow the family cultural ways of life, to integrate one into the values of life of his/her family, and this involves the parents, relative and clan members who should help to bring up the child in following the norms. Human formation should include behavior and responsibility.

So, in terms of human formation, what is involved is the instruction in the practice of consciousness whereby, one is informed to take precaution by practicing the virtues of self-discipline and common sense in relation to his/her surroundings. In this way a human person is seen as a responsible being who judges between alternatives of wisdom and righteousness.²⁸

²⁴ REDEMPTOR HOMINI, 10.

²⁵ V. ZINKURATIVE, *African Christian Studies*, Vol. 15, 4.

²⁶ One is considered as thinking- intelligent being that has reason and reflection. This is made possible because of consciousness which is inseparable from thinking, Cf. G. VESEY, -P. FOUKES, *Dictionary of Philosophy*, 67.

²⁷ Formation of human conscience is necessary since man is not born perfect with virtue. As one Philosopher, Socrates said, man from birth is a prisoner of ignorance, but he doesn't know it because ignorance is most of the time disguised as “pseudo- knowledge.” Man can only be at liberty and a truly committed human if he is involved a serious and committed examination of his/her life. True virtue that is identified with knowledge, is what makes a soul excellent, and without which no good life is possible, Cf. L. MATEL, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 54.

²⁸ A. MAGNANTE, *Why suffering? The Mystery of Suffering in the Bible*, 17.

1.6.1 Integration of Human Formation in Luo Cultural Values and Norms

Culture in its and enumerable aspects involves customs, characterizing groups and individual behaviours and habits, as well as the products of both, comprising the content of culture. Culture is based on the life of a group or society and through the process of human formation, one is able to learn and to adopt it. In this case during formation among the Luos people are taught in groups of age mates and the teaching is based on the aspects of cultures and norms, those elements that bind people together.

Roles and symbolism are stressed especially in languages. Thus the culture has an historical depth during formation. This includes the total social heredity of mankind, particularly strains of social heredity (history or social heritage or tradition) of the community. It's also based on a design for living or whole way of life, which is determined by the social entities. "The cultural aspects of the superior organic universe consist of meanings, values, norms, their actions and relationship, their integrated and un-integrated group as they are objectified through overt actions and other vehicles in the empirical and social cultural universe."²⁹

1.6.2 The Luo Cultural Values and Conscience

In his text, "African Culture and Personality," Sofala views and emphasizes African cultural values as wholesome human relations among people;

²⁹ B.L. MARTHALER, *New Catholic Encyclopedia, 2nd Edition.*, 420.

“respect for elders and community fellow- feeling.”³⁰ In his case the cultural values should include respect for others, hospitality, kindness and fraternity, which are some of the Luo traditional values.

Other factors includes: sense of belonging to community where one finds himself to belong, a sense of good human relationship in terms of socializing with people of various levels, a sense of sacredness of life that we are creatures of God, a sense of hospitality in order to welcome people of different backgrounds, to share the feelings of others. However a sense of sacredness in religious practice is very important to remind us that we are creatures of God.³¹

In the area of formation among the Luo people, the aspect of traditional cultural values plays a crucial role in the human formation of conscience for the young people. They are supposed to be integrated into the society, to adopt the life style of their people in terms of personal identity and the responsibilities, which needs to be handed down to the future generations.

1.6.3 Human Formation of Conscience and Initiation among the Luo People

In the Luo traditional society, there are different stages of initiation ranging from childhood to adulthood. The society is designed in such a way that people have got their own ways of life, and so the call for human formation plays an important role.

³⁰ O.O. ONWUBIKO, *African thought, Religion and Culture*, 80.

³¹ *Ibid.* 81.

As I had mentioned earlier, the young people are taught by their grand parents, as they gather within the house-stead, seated. They are to listen and pay attention to the various issues they are told e.g. to honour God in the first place and then to respect their parents, elders, neighbours and to love each other. They are also taught to know about themselves in terms of gender issues and to take care of their bodies. They are also expected to be responsible persons, to live with others and respect them and to know how to relate with creatures and the environment in terms of taking care for themselves.

Human conscience has to be formed in order to adapt to the new situations of call to mission and stewardship in the society where one belongs. To my view experience is the best teacher, since the human knowledge and understanding develops through sense perception in coordination with the innate. However, the methodology followed may be good, there can be certain barriers or obstacles that make human formation not viable due to certain situations, as we will find out later.

1.6.4 Challenges to Human Formation among the Youth

The issue of youth formation has been faced with so many challenges in the modern society. These challenges have been caused by modernity, generated by the high technological development and the effects of globalization, which has contributed to different life styles. The problem of unity in diversity also holds in terms of ethnicity since various communities have different cultural practices. As a

result, tension and misunderstanding arises e.g. the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, which came as a result of ethnic tension among the Tutsi and Hutus tribes.

The other factor includes mass media through pornographic pictures, which are a threat to moral formation of the youths. Unguided relationship is another issue and, which could lead to immoral behaviour among the youths. It is mostly as a result of media advertisement on lifestyles especially on courtships, and the other thing is the idea concerning the use of contraceptives.

The modern culture has changed the lifestyle of people. This has been a challenge to the traditional Luo culture. The problem of poverty has resulted in child labour in some areas, and this is a threat to youth formation, and in such a situation child education has been affected. Unemployment among the youth or young adults is another area of concern. It happens that, after finishing school, young people will go to the urban centers to search for jobs or greener pastures and most of them end up failing to get jobs. This could result into unpleasant circumstances, which may include, drug abuse, prostitutions and robbery. In such a situation, what happens is that, the person can become confused and may end up forgetting what he learned about morality.

1.6.5 The First Missionary Activities in Luoland

Education is something important in the life of every person. Sometimes when something is new it has a lot of excitements. Formal education must have been

so when it first came to Luo land. When the foreign missionaries arrived great social changes influenced the traditional life. Initially, the British colonizers opened the railway stations as soon as the railway reached Kisumu port. Following these events, “there was a great social change in life as soon as the people began to work, interact and receive gifts from the missionaries.”³² Hence, the life style of the Luo people has since changed greatly because most of the traditional values have been put aside.

Initially, when the missionaries first arrived at Kisumu in 1903, they found little opportunity to evangelize in the isolated town, but in 1906, they moved to Ojolla, the heartland of the Luo. Here they had a clear defined method of evangelization, though generally speaking it was the school method, which seems to have been forced upon them by the competing Anglicans. Soon their strong individuals characters had their own method e.g. Fr. Bouma visited Luo elders in my home village of Aluor on his mule and his staff crowned with a cross.

After a chat ending with a few words about Jesus, the people were told, if they wanted to know more about the good news, they should give him one of their boys’ who would be instructed to deliver the whole message. Fr. Bouma was able to build a boys center around his station for their training in catechism and scripture. After three years of instruction boys would return to their homes as catechists.³³

So, through this way of approach, the church was able to influence the local people to be introduced into the Christian formation of human conscience to enable

³²ADIMONYE, *My Conscience; My Guiding Light*, 189.

³³J. BAUR, *2000 years of Christianity in Africa; An African Church History*. 259.

the evangelization process in Luoland continue. But the first missionaries met with resistance from the traditionalists, who were attached to their way of life.

1.6.6 The Effect of the Missionary Activities in Luo Tradition

In the first instance, the Europeans interpretation saw that their ideas were necessary for Africans' happiness. This kind of idea relegated the culture of the indigenous people to a position of lesser importance, for these cultures were considered barbaric, retrogressive, paganistic and devilish. Theologically, it was held that wherever Christ's Church had not been established, there Satan reigned, and the people were on the way to hell.³⁴

The missionaries were thus convinced that there was no worthwhile local culture. Their approach then was to persuade the local people to repudiate their culture and adopt Christianity, which was vested in Western civilization. When I interviewed Mzee Ogolla, he told me that people could be summoned if they practiced certain cultural norms, that even using the traditional medicine could make one to be isolated and stopped from receiving some sacraments.

This method reduced people to mere recipients of Christianity. Despite all these negative attitudes, Europeans did a lot of things to Africans to uplift their standard of life. With the cultural sweep method, many of the Luo people were converted to Christianity. The missionaries themselves were superficial and this gave them a negative impact, and so even those who were converted as missionaries remained superficial too. The one funny thing was that, the majority of new

³⁴ H. BURGMAN, *The Way the Catholic Church Started in Western Kenya*. 55.

Christians continued to live according to their customs and many found themselves being refused sacraments, later some of them gave up attending services. The people continued to practice their customs which were counter Christianity e.g. wife inheritance, polygamy etc.

Conclusion

In this chapter we tried to look at the origin and location of the Luo people of western Kenya. Their migration and settlement at one particular place is a sign that they lived fraternally sharing life together in communal way, and in this way young people are formed how to live a good life. Their movement and settlement, indicate that they were using their conscience to locate the places suitable for their economic activities, which includes fishing and pastoralism.

We also saw how missionaries were able to evangelize the Luo-Africans by imposing their traditions and excluding those of the Africans. Such an approach was not long lasting since it was not easy for the people to abandon all cultural practices.

In the next chapter we shall see the understanding of conscience from the scriptural tradition, that is, from both the New Testament and Old Testaments. Then we shall see how theologians have developed different ideas to come to the reality of conscience in connection to people's life.

CHAPTER II

CONSCIENCE IN BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ASPECT

Introduction

In this chapter we shall discuss the scriptural view in the understanding of conscience. This will involve the Old Testament expressions of conscience. In fact, there is no term for conscience in the OT. In its place, the Semites used other words to express the meaning of conscience such as “heart,” “mind” and “spirit.” In the New Testament, we shall discuss conscience from three perspectives: the meaning of *synderesis* (conscience), the nature of conscience, putting into consideration its frequent negative usage. Finally, we shall see how Saint Paul understands conscience, its role in his ministry in both moral and theological values.

2.1 Conscience in the Old Testament

From the study analysis, it shows that there is no term for “conscience” in the Old Testament, except in (Wis 17:11).³⁵ But, there are some terms that are applied to represent the phenomenon of conscience. These include *leb* or *lebab* (heart) and *ruah* (spirit).³⁶

³⁵ Cf. “For wickedness is a cowardly thing, condemned by its own testimony; distressed by conscience, it has always exaggerated the difficulties” (NRSV).

³⁶ Cf. 1 Sam 24:5. “Afterward David was stricken to the heart because he had cut off a corner of Saul’s cloak.” [“And afterward David’s heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul’s skirt” (RSV)]. Job 27:6. “I hold fast my righteousness, and will not left it go; my heart does not reproach me for any of my days.” Here the Septuagint translates Hebrew “heart (*leb*)” with Greek “conscience (*syneidesis*)” Jer 17:1. “The sin of Judah is written with an iron pen; with a diamond point it is engraved on the tablet of their hearts...” Cf. 2 Sam 24:10; 1 Chr. 28:9; Ps 26:2; 51:10; 95:7-8; Prov 21:2; 2:1-2; 3:1; 4:21; 7:3; Eccl 2:22; Jer 11:20; 17:10; 20:9.

The term “heart” is common in the Old Testament stories about sin. At times it correlates to the remorse or the pangs of conscience (Gen 3:7-10; 4:12; Ps 26: 1-7; Job 27:6). Also, “heart” is used positively in several stories, stressing the praiseworthiness of a good conscience. For the Semites, “heart” is the center of all human acts and not just the origin of human feelings and affections. They see “heart” as the seat of thoughts, desires and emotions, and also of moral judgment, taking over the functions we ascribe to the conscience, for which there is no specific word in the gospels.³⁷

The first appearance of “heart” in the Old Testament came as a result of personal relationship between God and the human person. God wrote his law into the person’s heart, his innermost being, through the great message of the prophets (Jer 31:29-34; 14:1-3 and 36:26).³⁸ Being exposed to God, one takes responsibility not only for oneself but also for others before God. And this is a key to gaining the understanding of heart, which represents conscience.

2.2 Conscience in the New Testament

“Conscience” is a translation of the Greek noun *syneidesis*, and this is virtually absent from the Septuagint. The background of the term “conscience” in the New Testament derives from non-philosophical, popular Greek thought, rather than philosophical literature. Some scholars says that “the term came into NT as a result of the troubles at Corinth, in which appeals to ‘conscience’ were being made

³⁷ R. SCHNACKENBURG, *Moral Teaching of the New Testament*, 69-70.

³⁸ Cf. B. HARING, *Free and Faithful in Christ: Moral Theology for Clergy and Laity*, 226.

in order to justify controversial actions, notably the eating of food offered to idols.”³⁹

Among the Stoics, the use of *syneidesis*, was close to the Hebrew idea. It was understood that until the time of Paul, the Stoic ethics used the concept *syneidesis* exclusively for the consciousness of the evil that followed the decision, a cry of the innermost being for wholeness and for existential knowledge of oneself confronted with good and evil.⁴⁰ Apart from *syneidesis*, the other term that appears in the New Testament is *synoida*.⁴¹ It is the root word to which *syneidesis* belongs. It occurs rarely in the New Testament and it means ‘I know in common with’ and sometimes could be referred to as self-knowledge.⁴²

The term *syn-eidesis* literally denotes “knowing with” and it originates in Greek philosophy’s identification of the experience of self-awareness in the forming of moral judgments.⁴³ All in all, the chief meaning of *syneidesis* in the New Testament is an extension of this idea [*synoida*], and implies more than simply consciousness, since it includes moral judgment on the quality (right or wrong) of a conscious act.⁴⁴

2.3 Theological Understanding of Conscience

Here, we examine St. Thomas Aquinas’ contribution in the distinction between “conscience” and “synderesis.” From the overview of ethics, St. Thomas

³⁹ H. MARSHALL- al., *New Bible Dictionary 3rd Ed.*, 221-222.

⁴⁰ HARING, *Free and Faithful in Christ: Moral Theology for Clergy and Laity*, 227-228.

⁴¹ O. TAKEUCHI, *Conscience and Personality*, 6

⁴² *Ibid.* 7.

⁴³ J. MAHONEY, *The Making of Moral Theology: A study of the Roman Catholic Tradition*. 185.

⁴⁴ TAKEUCHI, *Conscience and Personality*, 7.

Aquinas, says, the human person is created in the image and likeness of God. Second in order to be truly human person, virtues are indispensable for one's formation. Thirdly, Thomas's ethics has characteristics of both teleology and deontology.⁴⁵

2.3.1 Ethics and Conscience in St. Thomas Aquinas' Theology

The basic subject of Thomas' ethics is the human person, who strives to be good, based on the fact that human person is made in the image of God and that God is goodness in itself. So, one is naturally oriented towards God. For Thomas, a human person is a unitary being endowed with both body and soul, and for him, one's reason accounts for the distinctiveness of the human person.⁴⁶

2.3.2 Virtue and Human Formation of Conscience

For Thomas, virtues are indispensable for the formation of the human person. Virtues for him, is considered in reference to the goodness of the person. On the other hand, Thomas' ethics, which he refers to as aretology, is composed of virtue or *arête*. He uses *logos* as a reference for the study of virtue.⁴⁷ He says that the ultimate end of the human person is beatitude, union with God, and from this, every moral act proceeds. Further, human acts are located in the objective sphere of ethics and are

⁴⁵ Ibid. 15.

⁴⁶ What ethics concerns is not an order, which is made by human reason, but rather what reason affects through its consideration in the will.

⁴⁷ Virtue is a habit, which is always referred to as good, Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, 5 Vols. (New York, Benziger Bros., 1948).

ordered to *telos* or the end of the human person.⁴⁸ So, virtue plays an important role in this process.

Saint Thomas presents virtue in three categories; theological (faith, hope, charity), intellectual (wisdom, science, understanding), and moral (e.g. cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance).⁴⁹ The theological virtues are those whereby man's mind is united to God; the intellectual virtues are those whereby reason itself is perfected; and the moral virtues are those which perfect the powers of appetite in obedience to the reason. Prudence holds a particularly significant place, that it is essential both for intellectual and ethical virtues. It is not given by nature but acquired through habit and reflection. Operative habits, which are acquired, entail the control and direction of reason, as such prudence should be considered as in relation to reason since it's one of the qualities of reasoning.

Natural law is indispensable for the virtue of prudence, and through it a person is able to attain self-realization. Without an objective morality, prudence has no object of its own. Prudence functions in three areas: to counsel, to judge and to command. So, prudence is the right reason of things to be done and it resides in practical reason. It is more excellent than the moral virtues, but on the other hand, *synderesis* moves prudence.

⁴⁸ According to Thomas, the object of ethics "is a human person who is the principle of his actions, as having free-will and control of his actions" (S.T., I-II, prologue).

⁴⁹ Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (S.T., II-II, 47), 6. In terms of the relationship between practical reason and moral virtues Thomas says, the ends of moral virtue must of necessity pre-exist in the reason.

2.3.3 Thomas' Teleology and Deontology

Seemingly, teleology and deontology are two perspectives in Thomas ethics. Every person's act has its own *telos* or end. The end of the reason is the truth that of the will is good and so the ethical value of each human act is prescribed by its end. Ethics on the other hand has a deontological element in that, human acts are oriented to the final end that is God, the good itself and this is where one has to aim. Becoming good or being good is the duty that each person must execute and the first principle of practical reason demands this of one *apriori*, and this principle is referred to as the natural rectitude of reason, since it pre-exists in reason. Hence to act morally is a duty of human beings.

Practical reason plays a significant role in the pursuit of goodness. The first principle of practical reason is presented as a precept: doing good and avoiding evil. In its first principle, there are aspects of both practical reason and human acts. The first principle of natural law for all rational agents is *synderesis*, which is oriented towards the good, or the ultimate end. The understanding of natural law in relation to practical reason is that, goodness is that which all things seek after, hence the first principle, good is to be done and pursued, and evil to be avoided.

2.3.4 Conscience as an Act

Conscience is a radical and holistic act of one's personality. It is regarded to be one's personal response from the depth of his being. It is inborn and enable one to be aware of oneself, and that this self-awareness is oriented towards the ultimate end

i.e. God. Therefore, conscience is considered as an act, which embodies the eternal law of God through a general ethical regulation, divine and human positive and natural laws. It obliges one to act according to one's knowledge of natural law.

For Thomas, conscience is the foundation of every ethical human act. But, final decisions are reached through free will. Since conscience is a practical judgment, it remains in the sphere of knowledge. Conscience is not the direct voice of God, but is the human way of responding to God. In other words, Thomas sees conscience as the voice of God in so far as it is an act by which one would judge whether or not to do something in a concrete act.

His argument clarifies the binding force of conscience. The voice of conscience has three distinct aspects. In the first aspect, ethical nature of concrete acts should be discerned by the first principle of "*synderesis*":- doing good and avoiding evil. Secondly, the strong impulse and the tendency, which expresses the ordering of one's self, is formed by the good and moves towards God. It takes place in the bottom of one's mind based on the tendency of *synderesis* to approach the good and God. The third knowledge is applied to something concretely, is *posterior* conscience; by which one can judge whether an action was well done or ill done. In this process, conscience sometimes approves and praises, while at times it blames, accuses and torments.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ TAKEUCHI, *Conscience and Personality*, 16-22.

2.4 Origin and Understanding of Conscience among Scholars

Most cultures recognize that conscience exists, as philosophers, theologians and psychologists have expressions that affirm its existence and words that replace its context. Even though many psychologists do not deny its existence, yet some gave up the religious aspects of it. It was C.G. Jung and J.A. Caruso and H. Pescke who gave conscience an authentic place in depth psychology.⁵¹ “That it’s an invisible central authority, as God within us. That in the self man experiences a unity of his whole nature, and senses himself as part of an unknown and superior self. It is the conscience of being a child of God.”⁵²

Psychologists say conscience is a genuine sense of self-esteem and appropriate striving. It’s a normal development within every human being, and its an indicator, something like a fever thermometer that tells us that some activity on our part is disrupting, an important aspect of our self-image.⁵³

The sense of right and wrong, which is conscience, has its origin in God (Gen 2: 9). Thus, from the very beginning, man is confronted with a positive precept of God’s will (Gen 2:16), which constitutes the trial in paradise and its transgression entails the entrance of death into the world (Gen 3: 17; Wis 2: 24; Rom 5: 12). It’s clear that God did not leave man without a law. Man is governed by a moral law as God reminds Cain in (Gen 4:7). God gave man free choice of will and a sense of right and wrong. In fact, they had power to judge then and there what good to do and what evil to avoid. They would be guilt if they disobey his law. This was seen when

⁵¹ Cf. W. DUPRE, Art “Conscience” in the New Catholic Encyclopedia, (1967), 196 -293.

⁵² TAKEUCHI, *Conscience and Personality*, 23.

⁵³ G.W. ALLPORT, *Pattern and Growth in Personality*, 134.

the man and the woman ran away because of the wrong they had done. They hid themselves before God came to make inquiries. God gave a moral law to man and conscience protect that law and punishes whoever breaks the law.

In Genesis chapter 2 and 3, the conscience of the first man and the woman was tested. The conscience of their children developed naturally like other faculties. Obviously, the moral law together with conscience has its origin in God. Therefore, the primordial assertion of the church's anthropology is that the human being is the image of God and cannot be reduced to a mere fragment of nature or an anonymous element in the human city.⁵⁴ The late Pope John Paul II says, "the moral law has its origin in God and always finds its source in him: at the same time, by virtue of natural reason which derives from divine wisdom its proper human law."⁵⁵

Indeed, as we have seen that the natural law is the light of understanding infused knowledge in us by God, whereby we understand what is to be done and to be avoided. God gave this light and law to man at creation, as its affirmed by Pope John Paul II, "that conscience originated from God and that God gave it to man at the time of creation. Also, John Henry Newman adds that the light of conscience was the main guide of the soul and that it was given to man from the first dawn of reason."⁵⁶

"Conscience is another word like sin, but it's little understood, says social scientist, Gular. Theologians make a mistake by what they mean on moral conscience and with what psychologists mean about conscience when speaking of

⁵⁴ JOHN PAUL II, *Pueblo*, CIIR, London, 1980. 7.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 17.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 18.

the superego.”⁵⁷ For Pescke, conscience is a force inside human beings that has driven many cultures, philosophers, theologians, sociologist and psychologists into endless search about a name to give it, and this is true.⁵⁸

In different cultures, people uses various expressions to replace the word conscience i.e. among primitive cultures, heart, “reins” and “loins” are used for conscience. And from the Scriptures, the psalmist uses the expressions in form of questions, “who can see us? Who can search out our crimes? We have thought out a cunningly conceived plot. For the inward mind and heart of a man are deep!” (Ps 64: 5-6; 1Kgs 8:37-40; Ps 7: 9-13; Jer 14: 20).

In the Old Testament we read such expressions as, “He rejected a hardened heart” (Is 6: 9-10), and “a broken heart” is used for repentance” (Jl 2:12-16). Jeremiah speaks about God writing this law upon their heart (Jer 31: 31-33). An Ancient Egyptian text reads; “the heart is an excellent witness” and one must not transgress against its words, he must stand in fear of deporting from its guidance. Among the Hindus, conscience is regarded as the invisible God who dwells within us. Seneca expresses the same thought when he speaks of a Holy Spirit dwelling in man, “an observer” and watcher of good and evil in us, (Epist 41:1).

2.5 The Scriptural Formation on Human Conscience

Through the historical perspectives, God spoke to man in various ways; He spoke to Adam and Eve directly (Gen 3: 8ff). He spoke to Blessed Virgin Mary

⁵⁷ ADIMONY, *My Conscience My Guiding Light*, 12.

⁵⁸ IBID. 13

through the Archangel Gabriel (Lk 1:26). He also spoke to kings through the prophets (2 Sam 7: 4f; Heb 1:1f).

In the new era, He spoke to us through His only son Jesus Christ so that whoever listens to him will be saved. For eternity, God spoke to man directly and personally in the depth of his being. He still speaks to us today directly and personally, through our conscience. In Scripture, conscience is seen as the sanctuary where a person is alone with God.

Here the understanding of conscience is vividly shown in terms of relationship between human freedom and God's law. Speaking out for the dignity of human beings in the depth of his conscience, "man reflects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience, always summoning him to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience can, when necessary speak to his heart more specifically do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law written by God. To obey it is the very dignity of man, according to it he will be judged (cf. Rom.2: 15-16). In conclusion conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a person, there alone is God whose voice re-echoes in his depths (cf. Mt.22: 37-40; Gal.5: 14)."⁵⁹

The scriptural approach calls for a renewed perspective, from a morality of acts and laws to a morality of persons and attitudes; from a morality of efforts of good will to a morality of fidelity to the spirit. It focuses on the shift from the acts to the human person as the central and basic focal point of moral analysis. Formation must motivate the acting person to grow to maturity as a free and faithful follower of

⁵⁹ *Gaudium et Spes*. No. 16.

Christ. Indeed, this would link formation and the life that is lived. By doing so, formation should aim at strengthening a person to get involved in moral judgment and discourse rather than impose a specific morality.

2.5.1. Christian Formation of Human Conscience

Christian conscience consists in creating freedom and faithfulness that arises from faith in Jesus Christ. Formation of conscience should be based on an ethical approach combining both deontological and teleological theories. From the deontological perspective actions should be judged in the light of certain commandments and norms, which calls for one's responsibility. In this respect, conscience concerns itself with moral and ethical universal judgment. On the other hand, conscience in the teleological context focuses on the goodness or badness of the intended consequences.

Christian formation of conscience aims at the importance of the subject or the acting person as a moral agent. It is based on moral life not basically as actions in obedience to the law, but basically consists in instructing people about what is in the law. The approach from the biblical foundation is a new turn of events, a move from morality of persons and attitudes or morality of efforts of good will to morality of fidelity to the spirit. Formation of Christian conscience must stimulate or motivate the acting person to grow to maturity as a free and faithful follower of Christ. A person should remain to be with others in mutuality and progressively to the development of the community towards ultimate end. The persons should be

conceived as part of the community, not in opposition to it, and this is a way in which conscience is formed in a social context.⁶⁰

2.5.2. St. Paul and the Concept of Formation of Human Conscience

In man, the sense of right and wrong has a divine origin. It's a necessary part of the divine plan to pursue man's existence, to prepare him for his future destiny by informing him about his place in the order of creation and the role he has to fulfill.

From the experience and knowledge of Holy Scripture, there is a faculty in man, which urges him/her to do good and avoid what he knows to be evil. This sense of right and wrong is in every human being and is universal. Saint Paul in his letter to the Romans implies that,⁶¹ "it is a universal endowment of all men (Rom 2:14), convincingly saying that gentiles who have not the written law, do by nature what the law requires and hence are a law to themselves. In (Rom 2:15) he exposes clearly the way they have to fulfill the moral law without knowledge of the written law. They show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them, and their thoughts between themselves accusing, or also defending, one another. St. Paul's view is that everyone posses a faculty of making moral judgments and a conscience."⁶²

⁶⁰ R.N. RWIZA, *Formation of Christian Conscience*, 97-102.

⁶¹ ADIMONYE, *My Conscience my Guiding Light* 14.

⁶² SCHNACKENBURG, *Moral Teachings of the New Testament*, 293.

2. 5.3 Vatican Council II and Formation of Human Conscience

We are morally bound to follow our conscience but this does not mean that what our conscience tells us is infallibly correct. Conscience frequently errs from invincible ignorance i.e. from ignorance in which a person is not morally responsible. Seeking a correct conscience is part of our dignity and responsibility. According to Vatican Council II, “the more a correct conscience holds sway, the more persons and groups twin a side for blind choice and strive to be guided by objective norms of morality.”⁶³

So to develop a correct conscience, Vatican Council II holds that in the formation of their conscience, the Christian faithful ought carefully to attend to the sacred and certain doctrine of the church, by the will of Christ, the teacher of the truth. It’s her duty to give utterance to and authoritatively to teach that truth, which is Christ himself, and also to declare and confirm by her authority those principles of the moral order, which have their origin in human nature itself. Christ is the perfect man who has restored in the children of Adam the likeness of God. By his incarnation, he the Son of God, has in a certain way, united himself with each man. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind, acted with a human will and with a human heart he loved.⁶⁴

⁶³ *Church in the Modern World*, 10.

⁶⁴ Cf. *REDEMPTOR HOMINIS*, 8.

2.5.4 Conscience and Situational Ethics

Conscience is a normal development within every human being. It is an indicator. It helps an individual act and thus become the kind of a person he/she is capable of becoming. So as one acts, one forms his/her character too. Cardinal John Henry Newman took vivid example; “that God is in us by our conscience, which is His representative.”⁶⁵ He speaks of conscience as a voice, imperatively and constraining, like no other dictates in the whole of our experiences. He said conscience does not repose on itself, but vaguely reaches forward to something beyond self divinely, discerns a sanction higher than self for its decisions as is evident in that keen sense of obligation and responsibility which informs them.

Newman proves beyond doubt that if on doing wrong we feel a tearful broken hearted sorrow as when we hurt a mother; and on doing right we enjoy the same sunny serenity of mind, the same soothing satisfactory delight which follows on our receiving praise from a father, we certainly have within us the image of some person, to whom our love and veneration look in whose smile we find our happiness, for whom we yearn, towards whom we direct our pleadings, in whose anger we are troubled and waste away.

The feelings in us according to Newman cannot be caused by anything else except an intelligent being; and we have no affection towards other things such as stones or shameful feelings before a cow or a goat, no remorse or compunction on breaking mere human law; yet so, it is conscience that excites all these painful

⁶⁵ Ibid. 9.

emotions, confusion, foreboding, self condemnation. It sheds upon us a deep peace, a sense of security, a resignation, and a hope due to emotions, which cannot be found in this visible world, but in the supernatural and divine world. But it's that conscience as a governor, a judge, holy and powerful, all seeing, retributive and according to Newman, it's the creative principle of religion. In other words, it's a connecting principle between the creature and his creator."⁶⁶

2.5.5 Concept of Original Sin as Error in Conscience

The whole problem inevitably boils down to the problem of evil in the world. The fact that there is evil in the world is undeniable, but how do we reconcile the existence of evil in a supposedly good world created by a good almighty God with/for a good purpose? Perhaps if the world was perfect, what would trigger us to trouble our minds with questions like why is there evil in the world? Maybe the philosophers in their naughty inquisitive behavior would have asked why the world is perfectly good. Well that is not the key issue here. It would be ironically fantastic to deny that human beings, at least doing their earthly lives, encounter evil in various forms notably physically and morally.

The main problem that this essay seeks to address is to explain the presence of evil as a reality in this space-time world that has effect on God's creation without displacing or altering God's place. Basically, there are three main Christian responses to the problem of evil. The Augustinian response, hinging upon the concept of the fall of man from original state of righteousness, the Ireneus response,

⁶⁶ Ibid. 15.

hinging upon the idea of gradual creation of a perfect humanity through life in a highly imperfect world, and the response of modern process theology, hinging upon the idea of a God who is not all powerful and not able to prevent the evil arising in the human beings or in the process of nature. Besides these, there are also others whose theories are expounded, as we will see.

As transcendent beings, conscience has helped us to reflect on the existence of God. For St. Augustine, “the greatest problem of humanity is the attempt to know God. Philosophers have claimed to prove the existence of God, the fact remains that nobody knows what God is. We can know that God exists but we cannot know what He is.”⁶⁷ Aristotle taught that knowledge begins with sense perceptions, in this case if we refer to the gospel of St. John, we find that, “No one has ever seen God.”⁶⁸ And this has led others to conclude that we do not know God. Being transcendent, man has adopted analogy and anthropomorphism to describe God. Among the Luo people in western Kenya, and even among most cultures, interpretation about God is given as one who lives far from people in some vicinity especially in extreme places like on the mountains, hills, caves, deep seas including rivers and lakes.

For St. Augustine, “the beauty and order of creation manifest the existence of he who created them—the indivisibility, beautiful one, and that is non other than God. He insisted that we know God because he has influenced us. He is in our mind

⁶⁷ *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Vol.3&4, 344.

⁶⁸ Cf. (Jn 1:18), God has only manifested Himself in his son and His creatures.

and that is why we are able to recognize eternal truth.”⁶⁹ But for sin, he says, man was created as a limited being whose very nature deemed him to sin. That man shares in the character of all created beings; because they have all been made out of nothingness, all are inevitably deficient in some respect. This deficiency shows up as a tendency to lose time or to wear out quickly. In man it shows up as sin, which is seen as simply the kind of evil that result from a deficient will.⁷⁰

2.5.6 Conscience and Responsible Leadership

Leadership refers to the set of characteristics that makes a person a good leader in leading a particular group in the society. It’s concerned with essential function of authority, which would exist even in a society of perfect human beings. “Authority is the moral power or right of a society to direct and control the members so that they cooperate towards the attainment of the common good of that society.”⁷¹

According to the former President of Kenya, Daniel Toroitich Arap Moi, for a leader to be effective and popularly beneficial, “he must enjoy the faith and support of the people he governs, which in turn can urge him further to yet more constructive action. He says, what erodes the conflict of the confidence of the people in a leader are lack of self-respect, moral depravity and other evil tendencies in a

⁶⁹ Cf. M.T. CLARK, *Augustine; outstanding Christian thinker series on Augustine’s theory of illumination, As the sun helps our eyes to see an object, so too God enable our mind to grasp what is beyond it’s capacity.*

⁷⁰ JONES, *A History of Western Philosophy. The Medieval Mind*, 108.

⁷¹ M.A. GONSALVES, *Fagethey’s Right and Reason*. 9th edition., 312.

leader. He will not be the subject of their adulation and he will no-longer be their idol, for they have lost faith and confidence in him.”⁷²

“Similarly, laziness incompetence, or outright subversion undermines faith in the leadership, for after all people admire a leader because he guides the actions that will eventually resolve their problems, satisfy their needs and give them peace. Finally, a leader must reach out to the people, spurred on by his love of the people and the society so that he can defend their rights. A leader lives for those under him; “he is their guide and guardian. Competence, dignity, love and devotion to the cause of one’s nation and people are therefore the insurance of faith in a leader.”⁷³

2.5.7 Role of the Church and State in Human Formation of Conscience

The role of the church is limited to moral education and faith, while the state has recourse to coercive action for the sake of public order. There are two interrelated reasons for this; coercion does not belong to the nature of religion: the state gives orders and coerces while religion teaches and persuades as concerns spiritual and moral orders. The state prescribes law, religion commandments and so the state has physical power and uses it when necessary.

The power of religion is love and beneficence and thus we might say the church’s special role is to preach and teach us its moral spiritual authority to shape the people’s character and to educate about charitable actions. If educated people will be ready to act justly and tolerantly and to cede their own rights, then it will benefit those in need. Such characters and actions contribute to the happiness of the person and the society.

⁷² D.T. MOI, *Kenya African Nationalism; Nyayo Philosophy and Principle*, 26.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 26.

In the gospel, John the Baptist urged people to prepare for the kingdom of God, by means of repentance. He urged people to change their attitude by turning away from their bad deeds of the past (Mt.3:1-7;29). Jesus too spoke of conviction of his own authority, he announced the truth, spoke with confidence as one who knows that his own words and authority were enough. He went beyond the limits of the old law and even corrects the law on his own authority. His disciples were to emulate his own example to preach the good News to the whole world about the kingdom of God, which Jesus himself came to fulfill. So, there is always a continuation of God's initiative by humanity so that everything comes to perfection.

2.5.8 Church and State Collaboration in Conscience Formation

The church's political involvement is inevitable. For Joseph Kiwanuka of Uganda, it's a "conditio sine qua non" for the expansion of the gospel. Politics is being understood today as putting the liberating force of the gospel into practical terms. Political involvement is imperative for Christian believers, because God is a political God and politics is our required tool and expected response in our journey of faith. The collaboration can only be possible if both institutions are involved in dialogue to find ways of preparing programs to set up the formal sectors. For example people could be prepared to know their rights through civic education.⁷⁴

That to know God is to be concerned for the reestablishment of justice. And this demands love in action, which is only possible through political activity.

⁷⁴The Referendum for the new constitution; people were not well informed and so they didn't know what they were voting for, good or bad. "NATIONAL REFERENDUM, " 2006.

Christians therefore have a role to prepare a way for the kingdom of God, to further the rule of love and so to be concerned with the penultimate in the light of the ultimate. This is the modern way of feeding the hungry and giving a cup of water to the thirsty (Mt 23:31).⁷⁵

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how conscience plays an important role, both in our lives as Christians and as members of a given community. We often use different expressions for it as shown in the scriptural, theological, Luo and other various traditions. This shows how it is an important part of human nature. Conscience arms one with power and moral courage to come to terms with his brute and rational nature. Conscience guides one with moral judgments enabling one to choose between alternatives. Conscience should be properly formed so that it can perform its function credibly well. Through conscience one can fully exercise his/her own judgment and choice, but this must be based on responsible freedom. In the next chapter, we shall talk about inculturation of the Luo and Christian culture in the perspective of the formation of human conscience. This will be based on Rahner's communal anthropology of a personal identity.

⁷⁵STILTNER, *Religion and the Common Good*, 30.

CHAPTER III

INTERGRATION OF CHRISTIAN VALUES INTO THE FORMATION OF HUMAN CONSCIENCE AMONG THE LUO

Introduction

This chapter is going to focus on the meaning of inculturation and it's important, in the integration of Christian values into the formation of human conscience among the Luo people of western Kenya. We will discuss the events of life experienced that there exists a dichotomy between the formation of Christian conscience and the actual life experienced by Christians in modern Africa particularly the Luoland. The duality is an indication that the formation of conscience has not yet been made part and parcel of Christianity in Africa, and so there is a need for a deeper inculturation that can help solve this problem.⁷⁶

3.1 Definition of the Term

The reality of inculturation is important to all African Christians. It is the process that involves the incarnation of life and the "Christian faith,"⁷⁷ in concrete cultural aspects, i.e. the development of Christian life and worship within the

⁷⁶RWIZA, *Formation of Christian Conscience*, 103.

⁷⁷ Cf. Christian faith is the participation and growth through the reception of God's gift in Jesus Christ and the call to witness to the gospel in our every day lives.

“culture”⁷⁸ of a particular place, in order to make Christianity an integral part of people’s culture and thus part of their life.

Inculturation is the integration of the Christian experience of a local church into the culture of its people, in such a way that this experience not only expresses elements of this culture, but also becomes a force that animates, orients and renews, creating a new unity and communion, not only within the culture in question but also an enrichment of the church universal.⁷⁹

The link between culture and faith is very important, for faith that does not become a culture is a faith that has not yet been fully received, thoroughly thought out and fully lived.”⁸⁰ Inculturation itself is an on going process between Christian faith and other cultures. It involves a continuous conversion by which anything that is good in the cultural context, is freed to enrich the people’s Christian experience, giving to it, a truly integrated expression, which is at the same time truly African. A genuine Luo Christian conscience cannot be formed in a cultural vacuum, since inculturation should draw from the traditional values that which have continued to influence people’s lives and world-view.

Durability of the apostolate should also be looked into. There should be permanence of the proposed model for the formation of Christian conscience that depends on several elements; the traditional Luo values on which we base our

⁷⁸Cf. Culture can be described as a system of inherited conceptions that is expressed in a symbolic form by means of which human beings communicates, perpetuate and develop their knowledge and attitudes towards life. Cf. A. SHORTER. *African Culture, An Overview: Social- Cultural Anthropology*. 22.

⁷⁹F.X. SCHEUERRER, *Interculturality: A challenge for the Mission of the Church*, 113.

⁸⁰M.J. WALIGGO- R.A. CROLLIUS, *Inculturation: Its Meaning and Urgency*, 7.

formation must be durable, the formation that is based on outdated cultural elements has no future and therefore should be shunned. The other issue is the quality of its relevance to the needs and aspirations of the contemporary African. This is another condition of the durability of the model of formation. A formation of Christian conscience that is not in touch with the actual life experienced by people can have no future.⁸¹

Inculturation of Christian conscience should incorporate liberation. Human person needs to be freed from every element, which cramps the process to become fully human being. Only incarnated Christianity can attempt to provide an answer of hope to the crises faced by the people. In this case formation of a Luo Christian conscience has to be based on a model of African Christology, which links inculturation and liberation. In a situation of marginalized and oppressed people, God can only be experienced as a liberating God if he penetrates deep into the cultural roots of the people.

3.2 Integration of the Luo and Christian Cultural Values through Inculturation

Through the process of inculturation, both Luo and Christian cultural values can be integrated to enable the Christian faithful to live and practice a truly Christian life. This can be successful in view of Karl Rahner's communal aspect in the life of a person in the society which is the core value of life lived by the Luo people.

Like most of the African communities, Luo people are oriented towards the communal life through which one is formed. Community life plays a very crucial

⁸¹ RWIZA, *Formation of Christian Conscience*, 116.

role when it comes to human formation for these people. So, when it comes to the question of formation, the cultural aspect has to be looked into in terms of its communal aspect. Therefore, Karl Rahner's communal anthropology on the human person can help us in the understanding to the inculturation of the Luo and Christian values.

For Rahner, the human person can achieve his personal fulfillment only through interaction with the fellow members of his culturally determined society. He rejects any opposition between person and community. As Rahner suggests, there is no fullness of humanity to those who are not in relation. A person "is" in so far as he/she gives up himself to others, for the good purpose that the people to whom he/she belongs will guide him/her through formation program. Rahner's communal anthropology is Christocentric in orientation, with Christ being the perfect expression of human nature. Christ has a defined human nature, as self-gift for us, openness and as love of one another. As a social being and corporeal being, giving, openness and love can only but occur in embodied and communal ways. This is the communal fraternal, a life of sharing to each other. We can locate this as Rahner suggests, in the human-divine encounter, that is, God's self-gift to us in Christ and our self-gift to one another, and through this to God, within the corporeal, concrete, and communal reality of persons, and more specifically in the community of the Christian Church.⁸²

The reality of a human person as a being should not be understood as separated, isolated and discontinuous from everything else. Individuality and the

⁸² M.H. DIAZ, *On Being Human*, 98..

abundance of being of a person, occurs through intimate unity and mutual participation with one another. Therefore, this statement gives a clear definition of a person as intrinsically interrelated for one another. One would not be what it is if it were not for the other.

The research data I got recently through mass media information proves the fact that a person can't be what she/he is, as far as human formation of conscience is concerned. A few weeks ago, there was a teenage girl who was rescued from the jungle of Cambodia. The prediction shows that she had lived in the wilderness for over ten years, due to the ravages of civil war that affected many people in that country. The young girl was unable to communicate and she behaves more like a wild animal.⁸³ This indicates that human conscience can only be formed in a communal way. So, the separatists and individualists understanding of human interrelatedness should be rejected.

Human person has been created for the sake of establishing a community, which cannot take place without persons. A person and community should be understood as analogous and correlative, for the community upholds uniqueness of each person in existence, thus each individual is defined within a communal context without falling into either individualism or collectivism.⁸⁴

⁸³ *Nation TV, Nine O'clock News on 24th January, 2007.*

⁸⁴ Cf. DIAZ, *On Being Human*, 99- 100.

3.3. Areas of Inculturation

Because inculturation is the process that involves all aspects of life and its interaction, it should touch the wider area of human person in the formation process. This should include the following areas: spirituality, community set up, family life and initiation.

In the area of spirituality the African ancestors have not been given a place of honor and recognition like the Christian Saints, for that case African baptism has not been relevant.

Secondly, in the area of community set up and family life, the widow have been left hanging since the issue of wife inheritance has been considered immoral, yet there is a need for the brothers of the deceased to protect and take care of the families. Wife inheritance was misunderstood to be an act of immorality, which is not the case from the way the Luo people looked at it.

The abandonment of some of the traditional values has led to the issue of individualism and lack of personal identity of belonging to a certain culture. Even the traditional medicine that are relevant are not being used by some people who considers them to be bad. So inculturation should play an important role so that are advised on what is good for them.

3.3.1 Spirituality

The formation in spirituality involves the sensitization of all the people of God about the values of the Gospel.⁸⁵ The African-Luo Christian community needs to be formed according to the gospel values and live it according to the concrete situation of their daily life. The African synod has made it clear that in all areas of church life, formation is of primary importance. It states that, people who never had the chance to learn cannot really know their faith, nor can they perform actions, which they have never been taught. So therefore the whole community needs to be trained, motivated and empowered for evangelization, each according to his/her specific role within the church.⁸⁶

3.3.2 Education

According to Vatican Council II's document, *Gravissimum Educationis*, true education is directed towards formation of the human person, of his final end and the good of that society to which he belongs and the duties of which he will, as an adult share.⁸⁷

The language that is best used in reference to formation of conscience in the western culture is education. Christianity was inculturated using western cultural approach and so the methodology that is used to form and initiate a person into Christianity is of western style. For the Africans, the methodology is traditional, and

⁸⁵C. MCGARRY, - P. RYAN, *Inculturating the Church in Africa: Theological and Practical Perspectives*, 227.

⁸⁶ *Ecclesia in Africa*, 136.

⁸⁷ *Gravissimum Educationis*, 1:3.

because of this it might not be easy to use an African way of formation for Christian formation unless there is a proper inculturation. The similarity is that the immediate members of the family are so much involved. In the Christian way, the parents are given the responsibility to guide the child by teaching and showing the child how to live the Christian values of life. The difference is the content and that in the Luo tradition elders are given priority to share the values of wisdom to the young, while parents assigns the responsibilities.

3.3.3 Baptism

In the initial stage when a child is born, it is under the care of the parents. During the time for baptism, both parents and other members of the Christian families too play an important role. The godparents, who represents the Christian community work together with the parents to help in the instruction of the child.

In the Luo culture, those involved in the naming of the child are grandparents, the parents are to bring up the child taking care of them through the provision of shelter, food, clothing etc. The grandparents give a child the name of one of the ancestors who is close or related to the family, and this is like baptism in Christianity whereby one is given a name of one of the saints who belongs to Christian family. The African names have not been made relevant to the sacrament of baptism, and this is killing the African spirituality. The African name should be used for baptism in order to honor our own African “saints,” for example, the Luos

have great “saints” such as Ramogi, Lwanda Magere, Odera Akango, Ojuodhi, Rading, who played great role to unite and protect the community.

So, there is need for relevance and realism in the formation of the conscience of the Luo child. The formation has to take into account, the needs and the life context of the child. Children should be taught relevant aspects of their culture and the family has a right to educate, care for, and show love to their children for its own sake and not as a means to an end, otherwise there will be no genuine love for the child. There is a need to have a proper formation of children within their respective families. In an atmosphere of love, children learn more quickly the true scale of values, which integrate the totality of the human person, such as the values of justice and peace.

3.3.4 Initiation of the whole Person

When it comes to formation and initiation, we see similarities in that, in Christianity, we have the catechist, who helps in the teaching of Christian values and norms. In the Luo culture, we have the elders, who teach the norms, proverbs, stories riddles, folk songs and in the initiation process show guidance to the young people on how to live a perfect life in the society.

In Christian theology a person is looked at from the perspective of body and soul and it goes as far as propagation of the theology of the salvation for souls. Conscience has also been connected/identified with intellect (Thomistic text), or will (Franciscan approach). The reason why there is problem in the understanding of the

gospel message is because preachers tend to proclaim a timeless set of truths, abstract principles without any relation with the concrete and existential lives of the people.

The formation of Christian conscience has to be made in view of the integral well being of the whole person, and this should focus on the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual well-being. There is need to overcome the dichotomy which is one of the major problem to overcome in the African evangelization. The solution for it is a move towards a genuine African healing ministry, which is concerned with the recovery of the person's whole self for creativity within the community. The healing of an individual person is also the healing of the community. This is the reason for many healing homes in the Luo community, where there are many independent church groups and the popularity of the healing ministry in the mainline missionary churches can be understood.

Despite the presence of health facilities and churches, when people are sick due to psychological problems they would go to witchdoctors in order to be cured. In such a situation, neither priest nor doctor feels competent to deal with him/her in such a situation. Such problems do eventually push people to search for healing ministry.

The conscience formation can make the greatest contribution by enabling people to be aware of the world around them. This could be done through transformation of the Luo cosmology from the many fears and anxieties that lead to psychological or psychomatic problems, which are caused by the belief in the

African world which could be corrected by a positive understanding of the world we live in and the phenomena around it. Without doing this, the healing ministry whether by the mushrooming African churches or by the mainstream churches will only serve as a refuge shelters from the reality of life.⁸⁸

3.3.5 Moral and Pastoral Problems

The pastoral problem has been experienced because of a dichotomy between the formation of Christian conscience and the actual life experienced by Christians. Christians find themselves divided, whereby one is a Christian and on the other hand African. During times of joy or peace many people may be able to live a genuine Christian life, but when faced with difficult moments they go back to a divided loyalty, involving themselves in traditional rites and beliefs that are contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church.⁸⁹ This is an indication that the Christian formation of Christian conscience has not been made part and parcel of the Luo people.

3.3.6 The Christian Family

The local church family plays an important role in the formation of Christian conscience. It involves each of its members through ongoing education and catechesis. First, the ecclesial community announces the gospel to each of its members as they grow up towards Christian maturity. It is here, as a family, that the community of persons is formed. So the family plays an important role in the

⁸⁸ RWIZA, *Formation of Christian Conscience*, 117-119.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 104.

formation of conscience. The parents have a great duty to help their children seek the truth from their earliest years and live in conformity with the truth: to seek good and promote it. Among the Luo people the significance of community is vital. The extended family can be understood as a domestic church, as an icon of the Trinity on earth.

3.3.7 The Small Christian Community

The small Christian community (SCC), would be the convenient context for re-creating a stable society and a community of love, in which Christian marriage life could prosper. The SCC consists of laity, which constitutes the highest percentage in the church (99 percent). They are those faithful who by virtue of baptism are made one body with Christ and are established among the people of God. Since they have a definite role in the church's mission of evangelization and sanctification its not possible to have a sound and sufficient formation without them or an active and lively community of believers if they are excluded from the vital decision making process in their own church. In most cases the clerical authority in charge of the parish makes the decisions.

The clergy should be involving and allowing the participation of the faithful in the institution. They shouldn't be power conscious and centered, for a clergy should not fail to live up to his dignity. The clergy should collaborate with the whole people of God and in solidarity with the real living conditions of the people at large. "He should preach the spiritual values, which involves the practical life of the

people. This includes; coordinating planning, renewed pastoral strategies and realistic expectations in coping with the modern change and its effects on the conscience of the people.”⁹⁰

The SCC is a vital sign within the Church. It is an instrument of formation and evangelization, a solid starting point for a new society based on a civilization of love, where people are involved to solving their problems, in decision making as well as implementing decisions. So, SCC is effective means of forming Christian conscience in the context of dialogue and participation through which believers reflect on their lives, consider their questionings and difficulties and are inspired by the gospel. They facilitate the formation of Christian conscience by helping people discover the active presence of Jesus Christ in their lives and become more conscious of his liberating power.

An important goal of Christian community building is to initiate and motivate a formation of Christian conscience. The SCCs are localities where a genuine encounter between African values and Gospel message can be realized among the Luos. People can reflect on their traditions in the light of their faith and their lives. Such communities are agents of conscientization of the people with regard to justice and peace as well as other issues at the grassroots levels. The purpose is to ensure that believers can practice their faith in place where they work and live and bring a greater lay participation.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Ibid. 120.

⁹¹ Ibid. 123

3.3.8 Church as a Family Unit

The communities and parishes should fulfill the role of an extended spiritual family, facilitating the formation of Christian conscience. In order to form and promote families, which are truly Christians and truly Africans, family catechesis must start at an early age for every Christian family. Married couples need this catechesis for their ongoing formation in the vocation and mission of marriage and family life.

Christian family is the center of re-evangelization because the family is the school for dialogue where witness and values are learnt through words and deeds in the context of the extended family, clan, tribe and the nation. It is a place where justice and peace are learnt and practiced at first hand. The Christian family is a place where communication can grow naturally not depending on expensive and manipulative means.⁹²

3.3.9 Formation of Seminarians

The formation of clergy and religious should be viewed so as to set up a sound criteria for the formation of candidates at all levels. The kind of formation that we have at the moment of priests and religious tend to create a class apart, separated from the life of the people and from their problems, challenges and sufferings. Formation should be based on the real needs, aspirations, and expectations of the Christian community. What is offered in the houses of formation should address the real problems to the core.

⁹² Ibid. 123-125.

There is a tendency to be cult centered and what takes place in society has only a very limited impact on pastoral plans. The issue of cult is important, provided the pastor's involvement in the life of the people is properly concerned as worship, which expresses and mediates the divine human relationship (Rom 12: 2).

In many cases, most seminarians have a vague concept of genuine African identity and one might not have interest in constructing an African church. In this case many questions could arise as to why one is doing theology and for whom. These questions call for a renewal of seminary formation, and a Christian renewal depends on the context of theology taught in seminaries and theological faculties. Theology must respond to the joy, sorrow, hope, and fear of the community of faith that the theologian represents.

The theologian's primary audience, therefore, must be the community of faith on whose behalf he/she engages in the theological quest. Formation centers must aim at being integrated within the local community, in order to facilitate the role of being servants and animators of Christian communities. The formation of clergy and religious in Africa should be considered in view of the intended model of the church in Africa so as to look at the church as God's family. Therefore there is need for inculturation in formation and culture to be conceived as a dynamic process.

It is important to note that human formation is the basis of all priestly formation and this has a notable implications on the growth of an individual's ability to distinguish right from wrong, to develop a system of ethical values, and to learn to

act morally. Spiritual formation should imply communion with God and is in search of Christ.⁹³

3.3.10 Applications

Naturally, every human person is a leader in one way or the other and so the term stewardship qualifies this argument. This is based in the fact that a person is a responsible being. From the scriptural perspectives, a human being is created in the image and likeness of God and this qualifies us to be co-creators. We are to manage the world resources including our own personal organizations. Every individual person has a call to manage and sustain human and natural resources using the gift of conscience that God has given him/her. When using the little resources we have, we should put into consideration the lapse of time, i.e. both present and future generation.

The main aim is to improve the environment for the purpose of sustainable development. New measures needs to be put in place to encounter various challenges we're facing due to changes that has come as a result of human activities, as such things are to be used in a measure.

3.3.10.1 Stewardship

Stewardship, from the biblical context, refers to our human responsibility, for carefully husbanding God's gifts. All Human beings are made in God's image and are gives authority over the dominion of creatures (Gen 1:26). Man's further role is

⁹³ Ibid.128-130.

also clarified (Gen 2:15), that he was also put in charge of the garden, the Lord took the earth creature and put it in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

The term stewardship has evolved since its early biblical use and today; it is commonly used, both by the business and academic communities to refer to our relationship to natural resources. It has been suggested that this term should be used in its total context beyond the natural environment to include the relationship between organization and their human resources. Currently the concern for stewardship is found primarily in the field of leadership, where it implies a willingness to serve rather than control others and to be accountable for the well being of the larger organization.

From historical perspective, stewardship is to hold something in trust for another. It was a means to protect a kingdom while those rightfully in charge were away, more often, to govern for the sake of an underage king. The underage king for us is the next generation. We choose service over self-interest most powerfully when we build the capacity of the next generation to govern them. The positions of environmental initiatives range from adamant opposition to strong advocacy of protecting the environment.⁹⁴

3.3.10.2 Stewardship of Nature and Human Resources

The theme of this passage is connected to dominion and is meant to imply care for the most vulnerable in creation. At present, the most vulnerable are found in

⁹⁴J.C. DEMPSEY, - A.R. BUTKUS, *All creation is Groaning: An interdisciplinary vision for life in a sacred univer.* 169.

both the human and non-human dimensions of life and therefore the exercise of dominion-good stewardship is to care for natural and human resources. The main concern is towards the contemporary environmental issues and their ethical implication.

The most important thing is that there are series of warnings as calls to humanity. It touches on all humankind, and overall economic environment. This involves business organizations in their awareness and progress towards understanding and professed relationships to their natural environment. There is need for systematic balance of environment whereby one must be balanced by progress in others. A balanced ethics is required not only in our relationship with natural resources but also in our relation with human resources.

Stewardship of the planet's resources is absolutely critical to the survival of both our organizations and the economy in general, yet stewardship of natural resources cannot exist in a vacuum. It is imperative that we have a balance: that organizations recognize their equal responsibility for rewarding their human resources. This theme illustrates the paradigm that seems to be emerging as a guiding framework for humanity's organizations, as they manage their relationships with the natural environment, and to develop a comparable framework to guide business firms in their relationships to their human resources.

3.3.10.3 Evaluation

There has been a lot of arguments concerning the issue of inculturating the Christian way of life into the African cultural context. This is because of the experience that people have encountered since the time of the first missionary activities.

In this era of inculturation people should realize that the first missionaries used a wrong approach in evangelization. They imposed the Christian tradition, which was composed of the western cultural influence that Africans could not cope with, but just has to adjust themselves to it. This led people into confusion since many of the converts were leaving a double standard of life and this trend has continued in people's life and has developed as a culture. It has led to the confusion of many people especially the youths, who are confused as they are struggling with their faith. They try to find out where the balance in life is prompt, either Christian tradition or Luo tradition. For some of them either side has a problem, for a pure Christianity is seen to be a life based on western culture, while that of Luo is down graded by the modern civilization. In this case the only solution to the problem of faith and culture is a proper inculturation of formation of human conscience.

Conclusion

The Luo community among the African Christian faithful, living and professing their faith have been faced with the spiritual corruption of dualism. This is a crucial moral and pastoral problem. Dichotomy is a spiritual corruption because

it is a cause of religious crisis. It has resulted in seeing people practicing their Christian faith in a way that does not motivate their inner spirit.

So, there is a need for a formation of conscience that considers the whole human person. This can only be possible through inculturation, which is the marriage of the professed faith and concrete life. It is the only way to save the situation that has caused a lot of divisions, discrimination and spiritual stigmatization in the Luo community. The inculturation of Christian conscience should focus on the ability and wisdom to integrate the Luo traditional values and modern values. Also it must incorporate liberation of the people of God from their wretchedness. In this case, formation of Christian conscience has to be made in view of the integral well being of the whole person as a free follower of Christ.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

As I had mentioned earlier, my aim was to analyze the nature and uniqueness of a human person in terms of his distinctive character. This uniqueness is something to do with conscience, which gives a human person a behavioral identity in relation to God, people and other creatures. Conscience helps a person to make decisions and to pass judgments, and that perfection in conscience is acquired when one grows in relationship to others. It gives one personal identity in order to perform his functions as a person.

Conscience helps a person to be dynamic in his transcendental spiritual journey of faith. It leads one to achieve goodness if it is well informed. I had

mentioned in the beginning of the thesis statement, that our conscience acts as a liberator and redeemer. One may ask questions to find out whether this statement is true or not. To my opinion, this statement is true because we are created in the image of God and thus co-creators in the activities of creation, and so we have a role to play as stewards in the sustainability of creation.

Inculturation as a tool for the Christian formation of human conscience will give the Luo community a new direction. This will include the sphere of modeling the children, youth, Christian family, small Christian community, the laity, clergy and the religious. Through this process, people will feel that they are living a true community life that is spiritual.

Through the process of inculturation, the Christian formation of human conscience should be able to intergrate the African-Luo cultural values and their imagination of community aspect in the understanding and formation of human conscience. The focus should be the community life, which is a Christian cultural value. In this way the Luo people can live an authentic Christian life.

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW

1. What is the human nature in relation to conscience?
2. What makes a human person distinct from other creatures?
3. What is the role of human beings in the order of creation being the image of God?
4. What is the Luo understanding of conscience?
5. Why human beings error despite having conscience?
6. Are there important values on Luo formation of human conscience?
7. What is the Scriptural and Theological understanding of human conscience?
8. Are there possibilities to inculturate the Luo- Xstian formation of human conscience?
9. What are the possible cultural values for integration in the process of inculturation?
10. What are the causes of spiritual corruption in the society today?
11. What are the effects of spiritual corruption?
12. What possible measures can be applied to solve this problem of spiritual corruption?

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