"IMAGINING A JUST AND EQUITABLE AFRICAN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY"

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION FUND/ECUMENICAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION (1910-2012)

By

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PIETERMARITZBURG

February 2013

DECLARATION

As required by University regulations, I hereby state unambiguously that this work has not been presented at any other University or any other institution of higher learning other than the University of KwaZulu-Natal, (Pietermaritzburg Campus) and that unless specifically indicated to the contrary within the text it is my original work.
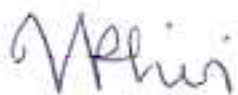

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FEBRUARY 2013

As candidate supervisor I hereby approve this thesis for submission

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26 February 2013

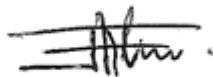## DR. RODERICK RAPHAEL HEWITT

26 February 2013

CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned declare that we have abided by the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics in the College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal's policy on language editing. We also declare that earlier forms of this dissertation have been retained should they be required.

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iii

DEDICATION

TO MY WIFE, MY LIFE AND MY BEST FRIEND
I owe you my life. You have been a friend
who has stuck closer than any brother or
sister.
Your sacrifice, insights and sustained belief in
this task has helped me to carry it through to
the end.

TO MY DAUGHTER
I believe your academic achievements will be
far greater than all my accomplishments.
The door has been opened to you so that you
can freely enter in.

TO MY UNCLE AND AUNT
You have been a rich source of my
inspiration.

**"Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O
my soul" (Psalm 146:1).**

**"The LORD is my strength and my shield. My heart trusted
him, so I received help. My heart is triumphant; I give thanks
to him with my song…The LORD is my rock, my fortress
and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge.
He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my
stronghold."
(Psalm 28:7, 18:2)**

ABSTRACT AND KEY TERMS

Abstract

This study utilizes a systematic review method to assess literature about the Protestant Christian tradition to enhance theological education in the African context. It explores the development and transformation of African theological education in the period 1910 to 2012. A 'follow the money trail method of investigation' was utilized to expose the theological issues that African theologians fundraised for African theological education through the Theological Education Fund/Ecumenical Theological Education of World Council of Churches. These were perceived as crucial in developing an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. The primary data was extracted by utilizing an approach that demanded searching various media sources which included electronic databases. The search strategy for electronic databases was developed from the key words and phrases of the research question. The search yielded about 10, 821 results and having carefully perused through them, 169 primary sources were included in this study. This was significant as it helped make sense of a large body of literature and was a means of isolating and synthesising the main theories and pragmatics of African theological education. The insights gained from this study are significant as a contribution to the current search for a vision of African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community in the twenty-first century.

The study makes two unique contributions in the search and vision for African theological education. The contribution lies in constructing an example of an African pedagogy of community of life which is based on education for life-giving. This pedagogy is based on the Bemba understanding of *insaka* which is a process of life-giving-learning methodology. This theme is as relevant for global Christianity as it is to the Bemba people in their quest for life-giving theological education. Another critical contribution lies in the understanding that through Africanization, African theological education has been in a process of acquiring its own unique character or theological identity. African theological education has shifted from a merely dogmatic orientation to praxis orientation. This is based on a theological pedagogy that recognises that doing theological education involves critical engagement in a missional process of liberation—of seeking fullness of life in its interpenetrative dimensions as spiritual-material starting with the least of the community, but embracing the whole of God's creation. To achieve

this, theological education has to cut across denominational allegiances, privileging of academic disciplines, and embracing the *insaka* pedagogy of life through ecumenical and trans-disciplinary approaches. The viability of African theological education resides in its critical engagement with the concrete societal challenges of the African peoples. As a result, this study argues that creating a just and equitable African Christian community to a large extent depends on embracing the life-giving pedagogy as an imperative in African theological education.

Key Terms: *Africa; Africanization; Bemba people; Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians; Community of life; Desmond Tutu; Ecumenism; Ecumenical Theological Education; Gender; Insaka; John Pobee; Kwame Bediako, Learning; Life-Giving; Praxis; Missio Dei; Nyambura Njoroge; Programme on Theological Education; Protestant Christianity; Theological Education; Theological Education Fund; Theology; Trans-disciplinary; World Council of Churches.*

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AACC	All African Council of Churches
ANTEEA	All-Africa Theological Education by Extension Association
ACM	American Christian Mission
AIC	African Instituted Churches
AFTE	African Fund for Theological Education
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
Associations	African Associations of Theological Institutions
ASATI	Association of Southern African Theological Institutions
ATISCA	Association of Theological Institutions in Southern and Central Africa
AU	African Union
BMS	Basle Missionary Society
CATNIP	Cataloguing Network in Pietermaritzburg
CATI	Conference of African Theological Institutions
CIM	China Inland Mission
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CWME	Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
EDAN	Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network
Edinburgh 1910	World Missionary Conference of Edinburgh1910
Edinburgh 2010	World Missionary Conference of Edinburgh 2010
EHALA	Ecumenical HIV and AIDS initiative in Africa
EI	Ecumenical Institute of Bossey
ELCSA	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa
ESSA	Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa
ETE	Ecumenical Theological Education
G8	Group of Eight nations of the world's largest economies
G20	Group of Twenty nations of the world's largest economies
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus infection and
IMC	International Missionary Council
LM	Livingstonia Mission
LMS	London Missionary Society
LWF	Lutheran World Federation

MF	Ministerial Formation
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
OAIC	Organization of African Instituted Churches
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PCR	Programme to Combat Racism
PTE	Programme on Theological Education
SACC	South African Council of Churches
SAMS	South African Missiological Society
SRPC	School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics
St. Paul's	St. Paul's University in Limuru,
TEF	Theological Education Fund
TEE	Theological Education by Extension
The Circle	Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians
UCCSA	United Congregational Church of Southern Africa
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WAATI	West African Association of Theological Institutions
WCC	World Council of Churches
WOCATI	World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions

DEFINITIONS

Theological education: is a process of preparing of women and men, both lay and ordained, to engage in the service of God. In the reflections of the World Council of Churches (WCC), they introduced the term *Ministerial Formation* which was interpreted in a broader sense as inclusive of the entire people of God. *Ministerial Formation* was seen not an end in itself but as serving in the mission of God (Kinsler 1982:137). In this present study, theological education is used as generic concept referring to the church's ministry of education in all its diversity. It is understood as holistic which is based on the assertion "that everything exists in relationship, in a context of connection and meaning—and that any change or even causes a realignment, however slight throughout the entire pattern." Schreiner *et al.*, (2005:17) have underlined eight principles of holistic education and the appropriate educational approaches with holistic elements. It is to be a total and holistic process which integrates these elements and characteristics. In addition, theological education is understood as African. This indicates that I am not dealing with theological education in Africa, but African theological education. It is significant to differentiate the two because even those institutions which are offering purely traditional Western forms of theological education are doing it in Africa but their education is not African because it does not represent the authenticity and originality of African scholarship. 'African' in this setting means the original, not counterfeit or copied, a *bona fide*, an unquestionable or authentically belonging, shaped from African traditional wisdom and philosophy. It is also "an attempt as much to forge some pattern of uniformity between and amongst African Christians as it is an attempt to describe an existent phenomenon" (Maluleke 2010b:373). It is a way of suggesting that a particular African form of theological education has emerged which both "observable and describe-able" (2010b:373). This also applies to the notion of African Church or Christianity. It is a form of education that is not simply informed by an African religio-cultural past, yet possesses a clear understanding that African culture is not monolithic, but is always progressing. In this case, it can be called African theological education. For example, there are current debates within the University of KwaZulu-Natal about its corporate vision to be "the premier University of African Scholarship" (UKZN nd:1). The aspiration of the University pertaining to its identity within the African world is to promote unity in diversity, promote African scholarship in every discipline and *Ubuntu* in its organizational culture, contextual curricula, recognizing African languages as academic languages etc. (nd:1).

Africa: The word 'Africa' and everything related to it in this study, refers to the sub-Saharan African continent and its people. While some scholars (Mbiti 1975a) have argued that one cannot talk of sub-Saharan African Christian community in the singular because of the diversity found in its peoples, it has also been observed that despite this diversity, there are more similarities that have persisted from pre-colonial times such of culture and religion (Phiri 1997b:13). John Samuel Pobee (1993a:387-398) outlines four ways in which the collective African identity manifests in the holistic understanding of life, communitarian epistemology and ontology, sense of finitude, a clear expression of the reality in songs, dances and rituals, in short ceremonialism. Evidently, the concept African identity is complex because Africa is too vast and diverse to be defined homogenously. Perhaps, it should be African identities in order to be mindful of the diversity nature of the continent. Yet to speak of African identity in singular as used in this study is to recognise a peculiar nature Africa people have as human beings with distinctive characteristics in both culture and being that is observable and can be described. This is what was proclaimed by Marcus Garvey (1974:214), the notable Pan-African philosopher as "Africa for Africans at home and abroad." He postulated the case that the African identity must be applied to all black people who identify their roots to the continent of Africa. Besides, sub-Saharan Africans also share similar historical experiences of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism. In addition, the people also share in extreme socio-economic distress, high rates of HIV and AIDS and a high demographic footprint of Christians in the world. This means that there are more concrete similarities than there are divergences. This in itself makes it possible to talk of African people in singular. Accordingly, this study will use the phrase in the singular to place emphasis on the similarities rather than upholding the differences (Pobee 1993a:396-397, Phiri 1997b:13).

Ecumenical: This notion is rooted in the word *Oikoumenē* derived from the Greek word oikein, "to inhabit", which means "the whole inhabited earth" or "the whole world" (Raiser 2002:840). The term is used "to describe everything related to the whole task of the church to bring the gospel to the whole world" (2002:841). As understood in the ecumenical movement, ecumenism is a living household (oikos) of God which embraces both the promotion of oneness and wholeness of the God's entire creation (2002:841). It is not limited to the WCC or any single Christian organization, but expresses the universality (or catholicity) and inclusivity of being the church of Jesus Christ. In this study, the term 'oikos' "embraces the quest for Christian unity, common witness in mission and evangelism, and commitment to *diakonia* and praxis of promoting a just and equitable society" (Raiser 1991:742).

Praxis: This refers to the action taken after critical reflection. According to Jack Johnson-Hill (1998:25, fn.95) praxis "suggests a dialectical relationship between action and theory." Praxis learning is one which is grounded in the actual practices of a particular community and is shaped by how that community has seriously reflected on its actions.

Ubu-ntu: According to the Bemba worldview, this is a life shared and experienced by the entire community. The community is an interlocking of forces which is life in participation (Setiloane 1986:14). This determines the way African people perceive themselves as existing only in relationship with others. This means that people become human as they share and experience life together with other human beings and the entire created order.

Missio Dei: Translated as the 'mission of God'. The phrase has gained a prominent place in the Christian theological understanding of the activities of God in the world. Historically, the Christian tradition saw the *missio Dei* as the activity of the church (Bosch 1991). The concept has been refined to describe the activities of the Triune God in which God the Father is seen sending the God the Son to reconcile all things to God-self; God the Father and God the Son sending God the Holy Spirit for the redemption of humanity (Stransky 2002a:780-781). In this process, the church is understood to be an agent of the *missio Dei*, and its *raison d'être*. In this sense the *missio Dei* refers to everything that God does in the world in undoing injustice and doing justice.

Trans-disciplinary: the prefix 'trans' in trans-disciplinary means "across; over; beyond; on the far side of; through" any "branch of knowledge, instruction or learning" (Choi and Pak 2006:352). This is more than multi-disciplinary approach which draws knowledge from various disciplines but stays within the boundaries of one distinctive discipline. It is also more than an inter-disciplinary perspective which only involves a mutual collaboration in analysing, synthesising and harmonising links between disciplines and yet disciplines remain fragmented and isolated. Trans-disciplinary is holistic in nature and a specific form of inter-disciplinary activity in which disciplines mutually transcend their boundaries of knowledge and perspectives through integration both different scientific disciplines and non-scientific (:352).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART ONE

INTRODUCING THE STUDY: THEORETICAL, AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMING OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING THE STUDY: ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH DESIGN: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

PART THREE

THE SEARCH FOR LIFE AFFIRMING THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:
LISTENING TO VOICES OF AFRICAN THEOLOGIANS

CHAPTER FIVE: LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF AFRICAN THEOLOGIANS I:
DESMOND M TUTU, OR "REHABILITATING AFRICA'S RICH CULTURAL
HERITAGE AND RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS"

CHAPTER SIX: LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF AFRICAN THEOLOGIANS II:
JOHN S. POBEE, OR "THE RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH AND A PERSONAL
COMMITMENT AND COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE WHICH IS MORE THAN JUST
SOCIAL ACTION"

CHAPTER NINE: TOWARDS A CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

TABLE OF FIGURES

PART ONE

INTRODUCING THE STUDY: THEORETICAL, AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMING OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCING THE STUDY: ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

> If it is to fulfil its mission, religious education must not so much bring the now into the future as to bring the future into the now. This is true because the educational experience is not one of preparing the learner to live in the future but rather of helping the learner to live the future right now (Lee cited in Schipani 1988:9).

1. Introduction

Theological education is a consciousness raiser and has the potential to lead to the liberation and creation of a community where humanity and the whole of creation can celebrate life in all its fullness. In this regard, liberation can be seen as a consequence of authentic theological education. One is also aware that it is not every form of theological education that liberates, rather it is intentional, consciousness-raising and deliberate pedagogical theological education that brings true freedom. Paulo Freire (1996), an intuitive thinker on education and liberation in the twentieth century has noted that "the educational spaces" can be both spaces of domination and liberation. He thus argued for an education that is pedagogical rather than domesticating. Accordingly, theological education is not so much about knowing about God as it is about "faith seeking understanding" through Christian praxis (Migliore 1991, Killen and de Beer 2001). In other words, theological education arises from the obligation and responsibility of the church to inquire about its faith in God. It is action-oriented and is open to transformation as each context and generation has the responsibility to understanding what it means to have faith in God and express that faith within their cultural milieu. In this perspective, theological education aims at the transformation of individuals to *become* like Jesus to their neighbour.[1] This is a theological education that does not simply develop consciousness about social challenges, but instead, develops a consciousness that leads to Christian praxis, lifestyle and discipleship in the community. It has a prophetic

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[1] Neighbour here means one's self, fellow human beings, the poor, the women, people living with disability, street children, nonhuman nature, etc. Humanity lives in the web of a neighbourhood of interaction.

perspective that the quotation from James Lee (cited Schipani 1988:9) highlights above, where learners are enabled to become faithful bearers of emancipating truth and empowered to serve as agents of liberation for their society. The emphasis is placed on personal development and spiritual formation. In that sense, the focus is very much upon the individual although it is not necessarily individualistic in the global north[2] usage of the word but in an African understanding that an individual finds meaning and humanization within the community. In this sense, there is no dichotomy between the private and the secular understanding of theological education. It is all about transforming individuals for the whole ministry of the whole people of God for the whole community (Pobee and Amirtham 1986).

It is the above understanding of theological education that calls for a critical assessment of the historical development and transformation of African theological education through the contribution of the Theological Education Fund (*hereafter,* TEF)/ Programme for Theological Education (*hereafter,* PTE)/Ecumenical Theological Education (*hereafter,* ETE) of the World Council of Churches (*hereafter,* WCC), an organization that from its inception in 1948, has worked toward an ethos of ecumenism as the basis of an African theological education that promotes a just and equitable African Christian community.

This chapter is divided into six sections. The first section outlines the context that has engendered the study. The second section underlines the rationale and motivation of the study. The third section states the research problem. The fourth section delineates the scope and central question including the objectives of the present study. The fourth section is a theoretical consideration. The sixth section brings this chapter to a conclusion with an outline of the chapters of the thesis.

2. Context of the Study

The study utilizes a systematic review method (see chapter 2) to assess the historical development and transformation of Protestant Christian efforts to enhance African

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[2] The term 'global north' is used here loosely to represent nations which originated from European, Greco-Roman history and worldview (included here are Europe, the US and Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The term also includes Japan and South Korea, based on their economic power).

theological education. The word 'Africa' and everything related to it in this study refers to the sub-Saharan region of the African continent and its peoples. The peoples of this region have similar contextual experiences which African theological education has been critically and analytically trying to engage since its inception (see chapter 4). A brief sketch of some of the common features of the new empirical situation in Africa is of particular importance as we seek to understand the principles that engender a just and equitable African Christian community.

The first common contextual feature is that of the Christian-demographic shift. Africa today is one of the continents in the world experiencing a rapid proliferation of Christianity. The global significance of African Christianity cannot be denied, since it is in Africa, during the last decades, that the largest accession to Christian faith has taken place (Walls 2010:5; Barrett *et al.*, 2001). Churches in Africa have seen vast numbers of people converting to Christianity. Barrett's (1970) predictions in 1970 were quite accurate in identifying this global shift and that the trend would continue for some years to come. This thesis argues that understanding this trend is crucial for the development of a theological education aimed at making a difference in Africa.

The second common contextual feature is that of globalization in Africa. As with the rest of the world, Africa is inherently globalized. Unfortunately, a neo-liberal economic order that dictates how the economy must function has become one of the main engines driving the impact of globalization across the continent. The economic development of industrialisation and the policies of advanced countries and international economic agencies continue to create unjust global economic systems and most African countries are victims of their exploitation and dominance (Mittelman and Pasha 1997:44-45). The global economic system is not created to integrate the so-called 'developing nations'[3] in order to improve and strike a balance in the livelihoods of the whole people of the whole world. On the one hand, technological advancement as well as information communication between the Western society and African subcontinent is closing the chasm. On the other, the economic gap between these continents is ever-widening. Industrial development is unevenly distributed and is viciously advancing through globalization. In fact, the industrialized nations continue to monopolise and dominate poor African countries thereby perpetuating social and economic inequalities and

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[3] I am not sure whether this phrase is well-suited in a contemporary globalized economic system that continues to ensure the under-development of Africa and tramples on the hopes of all its peoples.

debilitating poverty. The political, financial and economic power that is exerted by the Group of Eight (G8) and Group of Twenty (G20) nations of the world's largest economies along with strategic partnerships with transnational companies continues to put constraints on African leaders and the forces of globalization. Indeed, that which is perceived as the model for development is largely shaped by Western categories and is used as an instrument for the economic exploitation of African nations (Mittelman and Pasha 1997:40-41). This raises the question: in what ways is African theological education responding effectively to globalization?

The third common contextual feature is plurality. Africa is an embodiment of plurality. The continent is plural at every level: be it in religion, culture, race, among Christians themselves, ethnic groupings etc., while plurality is good for enriching the continent's life. On the other hand, it can lead to fragmentation which is becoming one of the main concerns in the continent. Dietrich Werner (2010b:276) echoes this concern that "the actual stage of African Christianity and Church[4] unity in Africa still leaves much to be improved and to be desired." There is a growing fragmentation coupled with an aggressive assertion of ethnic identities in Africa today. In some regions of the continent, religious plurality is becoming another threat to the wellbeing of its peoples. Some important questions arise: in what ways is African theological education helping African Christians in forging alternative ways of expressing unity in diversity? Are there some deliberate mechanisms in African theological education that prepare students for peaceful and harmonious co-existence in religious plural societies?

The fourth common feature is that Africa is socially and materially distressed (Katongole 2002:219). Jesse N. K. Mugambi (1995:160) has noted that Africa "is faced with a food deficit; it is the most hungry continent in the world. It is faced with debt crisis; next to South America it is the most indebted continent. It has the highest level of illiteracy in the world and half of the world's refuges are Africans." Jean-Marc Éla (1988:xvi) had earlier echoed a similar distressing sentiment that Africa is "a veritable empire of hunger." Mugambi (1995:161) believes that hunger in Africa is caused by both the social and natural factors. Yet, he insists that the main causes are "social factors" which are

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[4] In this, church is understood as African which means it is not the church in Africa, rather African church. Here too, it is important to differentiate African church and the church in Africa because there are many churches that reflect Western forms and style of worship in Africa but their ethos is not African because it does not represent the authenticity and originality of African. 'African' here means the originally, not counterfeited or copied, a bona fide, an unquestionable or authentically indigenous.

"more serious," because they have to do with the infrastructures that have been created. Africa is hungry today because of systems that make the masses poor in order to create space for the prosperity of the minority. African people are not poor by choice; they are poor because the structures are systematically tailored to make them poor. Walter Rodney in his classical book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, identified the root cause of material distress in Africa. Rodney (1972:264) argues that at the root is found the kind of education that was design for dis-empowering the African people. According to Rodney (1972:264), colonial education in Africa did not grow out of the Africa's environment but was meant to select "a few Africans to participate in the domination and exploitation of continent as a whole." It was tailored for the creation of the disease of dependency syndrome, "subordination, exploitation; the creation of mental confusion and the development of underdevelopment." These twin evils of imperialism and colonialism have left a form of disorientation on the African psychology that has led the majority of Africans to continue to accept uncritically the Western definition of Africa. Colonial [theological] education was a form of intentional domestication of the African people; to this day, Africa seems to continue to struggle to relinquish this yoke of domination. The question this raises is: has African theological education responded adequately to such issues?

It is in such a context that African theological education for over five decades has been working to be a prophetic voice for peace and harmony in society or to make a difference (see chapter 4). Besides, in such a context of Africa, this study is the first to utilize the systematic review method to assess the development and transformation of African theological education through the contribution of the TEF/PTE/ETE. For this reason, the present study makes a contribution to the current search for an African theological education vision for the twenty-first century in general and in condensing a large body of literature that has been written on African theological education tracing it from Edinburgh 1910 to 2012.

3. Rationale and Motivation

The rationale for this study has been motivated by a personal desire to investigate the developmental progress and transformation of African theological education since its

inception through the contribution of the TEF/PTE/ETE. With the main challenges the continent is facing, it is critical to understand the ground that African theological education has already gained in order to envision its future in the twenty-first century. African theological education seems to have raised the expectations of African Christians and given them hope for envisaging a just and equitable society.

This rationale implies that African theological education holds a promise for combating polarisation and fragmentation which is a threat to the effectiveness of the African Church. Currently, polarisation and fragmentation continues to manifest itself in injustice, gender inequalities, and discrimination against minority groups, as well as ethnic violence and denominational conflicts among Christians themselves. Mugambi (1995:41) questions the apparent contradiction of how the Africa of today remains the most 'religious' continent in the world, while its people continue to be the most materially and socially distressed in the world. Prior to Mugambi's comment, the delegates at the Nairobi 1991 proceedings of the All Africa Conference of Churches (1993:41), lamentably questioned "how can it be explained that this religious continent is also the continent in which people are most exploited? Could it be said that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of misery….?" If Africa is such a religious continent and yet it remains the most oppressed and exploited, it may imply that there is something wrong with some of the theologies that are propagated on the continent. This neither implies that material prosperity is equivalent to God's blessings as is believed in some quarters of Christianity, nor does it mean material distress is an indication of the disfavour of God. The existential challenges of the African people have raised serious questions with regard to the rootedness of Christianity in the continent, where traditionally an inclusive community was the basis of human existence. The questions this raises are: is Christianity improving the socio-political or economic conditions of the African people or deteriorating them? What is it that is still lacking in African Christianity that makes it ineffective in tackling social issues on the continent? Can the understanding and practice of Christianity in the African continent adequately address the global socio-political and economic forces presently impacting on the lives of the people?

Another aspect is my personal experience through studying theology in various institutions: The Pentecostal Bible College in Zambia, the Evangelical Seminary of Southern Africa (ESSA), the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics (SRPC) at the

University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in South Africa and the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey in Switzerland (EI), I have become acutely aware of the need for ecumenical liberation-praxis in theological education. Hence, one perceives the developmental study and transformation of African theological education as being of critical importance. Indeed, when looking at the current available literature, while there seems to be much discussion on renewing and strengthening African theological education, very little attention seems to be given to the promotion of a just and equitable African Christian community.

4. Stating the Research Problem

The research problem of this study is motivated by the reality that by utilizing the systematic review method an assessment of African theological education suggests that there is an inadequate number of written works that give an overview of existing studies on the historical development and transformation of African theological education since the beginning of Protestant Christian efforts to enhance co-operation in theological education from Edinburgh 1910 through to the contributions of the TEF/PTE/ETE in the period 1958 to 2012. Therefore, the intended objective of this study is to develop a vision for an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. The systematic review, as explained below (see chapter 2) brought together a number of separately conducted studies and formulated a synthesized result of them (see chapter 8). For this reason, it is hoped that this he study will contribute to the current search for a new vision of African theological education in the twenty-first century by condensing the various critical studies undertaken during the past one hundred years on the development of African theological education. This leads to the question: is the precise research question central to this study?

4.1. Hypothesis and Key Research Questions

The research is based on the hypothesis that the viability and life-giving nature of theological education is rooted in its relevance, excellence and contextual application. In this case, the sub-Saharan African theological education through the contributions of the

TEF/PTE/ETE could be considered as an instrument for promoting the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community (see chapter 4, section 4, chapter 5, section 4, chapter 6, section 2 and chapter 7, section 3). The thesis therefore argue that African theological education remains crucial in the changing landscapes of African continent and Christianity because of its holistic nature and full sensitivity to the integral needs, difficulties and dangers threatening the full realization of human life on the continent. This study therefore seeks to respond to the key research question:

> **What is known from the literature about the Protestant Christian efforts to enhance African theological education that could be used as a basis for envisioning a possible future direction to be taken in promoting the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community in the twenty-first century?**

In an attempt to respond to the above key question, the present study addresses the following four sub-questions: first, what is the significant of the Protestant Christian efforts in the development and transformation of African theological education? Second, in what ways has the TEF/PTE/ETE the contributed to the development and transformation of an African theological education that promotes principles of a just and equitable African Christian community? Third, what were/are the contributions of Desmond Mpilo Tutu, John Samuel Pobee and Nyambura Jane Njoroge (the former African executive on the TEF/PTE/ETE staff) to the historical development of African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community? Fourth, in what ways do the results of this investigation contribute to the current search for a new vision of African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community in the twenty-first century?

5. Theoretical Considerations

The challenge of this study is to draw and synthesize together some core elements from the contributions of both the TEF/PTE/ETE and the three former African executives on the TEF/PTE/ETE staff, towards the development and transformation of an

African theological education that promotes the principles and values for a just and equitable African society. To achieve that task, this study utilized three theoretical frameworks which were applied in an interlocking manner as shown below in figure 1.5. This figure shows that human history is interwoven with God's mission (*missio-Dei*) in the world. This process depicts theological education as an instrument through which God's mission can be carried forward in the world (see chapters 3 and 4). The arrows in the figure from both historical and missiological theories are pointing to both theological education and an African communitarian framework to show the theories are used in an interlocking manner as a process intended to create a life-giving community. The double arrow between theological education for a just and equitable African Christian community and an African communitarian framework reveal the crucial role that interaction between the two concepts plays (and their interdependent character) in the quest for a just and equitable society. The theories are used in an interdependent manner climaxing with the utilization of an African communitarian framework in proposing the Bemba people of Zambia's notion of *insaka* (a learning community—learning together for life-giving) as a viable learning methodology in an ecumenical theological education programme (see chapter 8, section, 5).
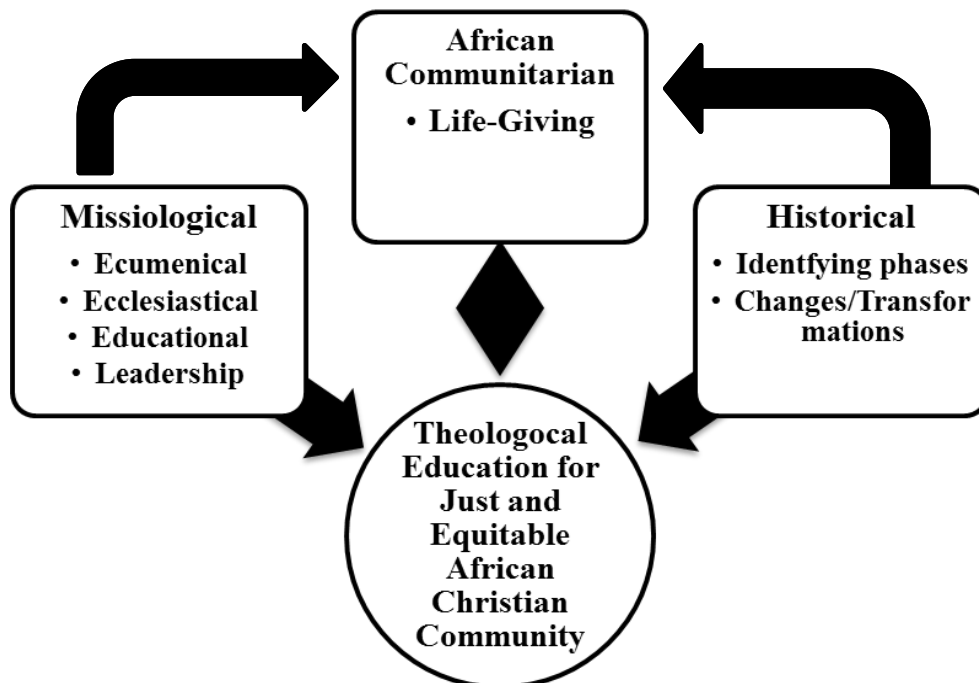
Fig. 1.5. How the three theories have influenced one another in the study

5.1.   African Communitarian Framework

The study utilized an African communitarian framework as an overarching approach which provides an adequate ground for underpinning the historical development of theological education according to an African worldview. It also provides grounds for explaining the meaning of equality and to construct a kind of ecumenism and the principles of ecumenical learning needed for African theological education (see chapter 8, section, 5). Within this framework, individuals are placed firmly within the community, which is perceived as a locus of humanization and realization of constructive individuality. This is significant because the concept of community as a basis for human existence remains pervasive in Africa where ontology and epistemology are essentially relational and communicative notions. This means that for theological education to promote the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community, it must be rooted within an African worldview, which is also enshrined within an African religio-cultural heritage (chapter 8, section, 2). Pobee (1993d:396, 1992d:16) depicts African ontology and epistemology as "communitarian" centred. This means that being human entails solidarity in relationship with God, other human being and all creation. As Mbiti (1969:41) observes, the African conception of person can be summarized as follows: "I am because we are, and we are, therefore I am." This expresses the intrinsic nature of respect and care for everyone and everything. In fact, this is "a factual description" and communal ethical behaviour, and every member of the community is expected to live in the light of this canon (Ramose 1999:49; Shutte 1993:46). The question arises: does this imply that African communitarian framework is grounded in promoting justice and equality within the community? Mercy Amba Oduyoye (2001:34) argues that according to African ideals there is a clear link between the community and the wellbeing of its people. In this way, the framework envisages an African community that promotes reciprocity, mutuality and partnership, denounces hierarchies, injustices and inequalities (Kasomo and Maseno 2011:159). Since community ideals remain strong in Africa, the commitment to eradicate systems of injustice and inequality requires solidarity with others in the community (Kanyoro 2001:169). The key strength of this framework is the fact that it does not romanticize African community, but perceives it as an African ideal, open to be challenged. Consequently, an African communitarian framework challenges the proliferation of injustice and appropriates only those positive aspects of the community. By so-doing, there is a constant challenge of struggling with African culture

11

towards cultural transformation while at the same time fencing off those who would wish to use their culture to under-rate those on the peripheral (Oduyoye 2001:12-13). Therefore, the framework is relevant to this study in Africanizing emerging models of African theological education (see chapter 8, section 2)

Within this framework, the study focuses on the following claims advanced by Oduyoye (2001) and also embraced by the majority of African theologians and philosophers in their defence for African communitarian ethos (Kenya Articles 2006:1): First, that the essential character of African culture is its community-orientation (Oduyoye 2001:17; Setiloane 1975:31). Second, that the community has ontological primacy over the individual (Oduyoye 1979:111; Setiloane 1979:63, 1975:31). Third, that within the African community are embedded the principles of justice and equity (Oduyoye 1979:111). Fourth, that an African communitarian ethos accommodates respect for the dignity and liberty of the individual (Oduyoye 1979:110; Mbiti 1969:141). Oduyoye (1979:111) as with Mbiti (1969:141) stresses that, individuals become aware of their own individuality, duties, privileges, individual rights and responsibilities towards them and others through the community. I have used these four aspects as frameworks to develop an ecumenism of life as an interpretative hermeneutical category of African theological education by borrowing some elements from the Bemba notion of insaka as an African ecumenical learning methodology (see chapter 8, section, 5). In order to achieve this, the study is placed within the unfolding historical development of theological education.

5.2. Historical Framework

The second framework is historical. This is meant to map the journey of African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African community since Edinburgh 1910 to 2012 (see chapters 3 and 4). It is used to identify phases, and provides a sequence and critique of the development and transformation of African theological education. In part two, historical framework is utilized to trace the historical development of African theological education from Edinburgh 1910 to the contribution of the TEF/PTE/ETE in the period 1958 to 2012. The framework is a tool for analysing the history in question from analytical interpretation (see chapter 2) to understand its life giving aspects by denouncing its imperialist and oppressive tendencies

that could have encroached on it (Southgate 2007:192). Beverley Southgate (2007:192) argues that only when one questions the assumptions of the past upon which human identities are constructed, can the present be improved. In other words, uncritical acceptance of the past hinders human beings from becoming the masters of their own destiny and constructing alternative futures.

5.3.   Missiological Framework

The second framework that is used throughout the study is missiological and embodies perspectives that are ecumenical, ecclesial, educational and transformational in leadership. The nature of the study demands that a missiological theory underpins its interdisciplinary approach. This analytical approach is systematic, integrative, interpretative, evaluative and embedded in the ecclesiological and ecumenical paradigms. The approach utilizes "inclusivist metaphors of integration, balance, multidimensional wholeness, mutually empowering cooperation and love" (Woodhouse 1996: xiii). First, as outlined in the figure 1.5 above, this approach is ecumenical in its orientation and is interwoven with an African communitarian framework that does not differentiate between the physical and the spiritual dimension but as an impenetrable web of interaction of forces. Konrad Raiser (1991:742) highlights that ecumenism is a relational, dynamical notion which transcends the fellowship of the Christians to include the whole of God's creation. In this sense, ecumenical vision is based on the affirmation that the co-operation of the church is inevitable for the restoration of the integrity of all creation through the social upholding of justice, peace and equitable. This is why ecumenical learning is a more excellent way of doing theological education because it underlies that the mission of God is inseparable from the struggle for a just and equitable African Christian community. It is squarely founded on God's mission, that is, a self-disclosure of God as all loving and concerned about the struggles in the world, and who is involved in and with both human's and nonhuman nature in dialogue in order to create a just and equitable society. Second, involvement in the promotion of justice and equity necessitates the ecumenical engagement of the churches. An ecclesiastical approach is used to understand how the church utilizes its theological resources in response to the world. This does not imply that the mission is the mission of the church but the church is privileged to participate and work with God in reconstructing and restoring the original

intention of God for the world. In fact, it is this process that demands the theological educational task of the church in order to develop leaders who are sensitive and ready to engage in with the challenges being faced in Africa. The task of developing 'life-giving leadership' in African can no longer be conceived as an individual denominational responsible. It is a collaborative responsible for the common good.

It is this approach that is used as a tool to develop a theology of theological education for *missio Dei* (see chapter 8). David Bosch (1991:10) illuminates that *missio Dei* pronounces "the good news that God is the God of both human and nonhuman." One can argue that this understanding of the mission of God is underpinned by the idea of conscientization, a process in which individuals do not just become aware and develop a critical consciousness of their religio-socio-cultural and politico-economic exploitation and oppression within their context, but are also steered for transformational-praxis. Therefore, it is with conscientized individuals that the triune God continues to work for the humanization of their context by responding to their reality in terms of undoing injustice and redoing justice. This is significant because the TEF/PTE/ETE itself as a societal instrument involved the strengthening and reforming African theological education as it participates in the mission of God to undo injustice and replace it with justice in African community. I utilized this approach to develop an argument that since God's intention for humanity is local and global, theological education should show forth the desire and nature of the triune God as that of justice and equality for all (see chapter 8). It is this kind of framework as outlined above that guided the research methodology. Chapter two offers a detailed explanation of the methodology the study used.

6. Chapter Summary

This study is developed in nine chapters which are divided into four parts. Part one introduces the study and is presented in two chapters that includes the present introductory chapter and is followed by chapter two, which presents the research design, methodology and methods. It maps the analytical method used in the study. It explicates the systematic review method, discussing first the process of data generation and then the process utilized to analyse the data.

Part two is a review of Protestant Christian efforts in the development of African theological education in Africa. This is covered in chapters three and four. Chapter three provides the historical background and traces the missiological and ecumenical foundations of African theological education from the beginning of the Protestant efforts to enhance theological education from Edinburgh 1910 to the International Missionary Council's survey of the situation of theological education in Africa from 1947 to 1958. Chapter four focuses on the development of African theological education through the contribution of the TEF/PTE/ETE in the period 1958 to 2012. It analyses the significant trends, debates and the concepts that have emerged through this programme and how African theologians responded to them.

Part three is a search for life-affirming theological education and covers chapters five, six and seven. Its focus is on a search for a life-affirming theological education and endeavours to listen to the voices of African theologians in order to understand what African theologians themselves perceived as being crucial in different moments of the development and transformation African theological education. The objective is to investigate the contributions of Desmond Mpilo Tutu (former African Associate Director of the TEF), John Samuel Pobee (former African Associate Director of the PTE and the Global Coordinator of ETE) and Nyambura Jane Njoroge (former Global Coordinator of the ETE) as lenses though which to understand change patterns and the main issues that have preoccupied African theological education in different periods through the TEF/PTE/ETE. The underlying analytical framework of these chapters is undergirded by following the money trail method of investigation to help uncover the significant issues and core functions of theological education in each period served by the above African theologian-executives (see chapter 2, section, 4).

Part four is a concluding part and has two foci: Chapter eight will provide a synthesis of core elements emerging from parts two and three. These models are selected on criterion that they are currently under discussion in African theological education. Chapter nine presents a tentative conclusion arguing for the significance of the study and opening new windows for further research.

In the chapter which follows, I present the research design, methodology and method utilized trough the study.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH DESIGN: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

> If procedures for the synthesis of the research are held to standards of objectivity, systematically, and rigor, then knowledge edifice will be made of bricks and mortar. If not, it will be a house of cards (Cooper and Hedges 1994:13).

1. Introduction

The previous chapter represented the set boundaries of my thinking and the specific thought forms that influence my understanding and how the study is to be systematically developed. I argued that the main interest of this study is the historical development of African theological education and what has been some of its theories and pragmatic foundations for promoting a just and equitable African Christian community.

In the current chapter, the rationale for the selection of systematic review as a methodology for the current study is explained. It argues that a systematic review is both an appropriate and useful method for analysing the historical development and transformation of African theological education. The chapter provides details of the research process used and justifies the methodology utilized in the data collection and data analysis. Included in the chapter is an essential background to the fundamental guidelines common in different approaches to a systematic review methodology and also the supplementary methods utilized within this main methodology. The subsequent three sections describe the data collection analytical phases for this study.

2. Systematic Review Methodology: An Overview

Systematic reviews represent one method for identifying, evaluating and synthesizing available evidence relating to a single phenomenon. As a qualitative research method, systematic review was initially applied in medical sciences. Currently, the method has spread to other fields such as "psychology, nursing, public health, occupational therapy,

speech therapy, physical therapy, educational research, sociology, and business management" (The Free Encyclopaedia 2012). I am yet to see find out how this is applied in theological studies. According to David Sackett *et al.*, (1996:71) systematic review which they defined as "evidence based medicine" arose in the mid-nineteenth century as "the conscientious, explicit, judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients." Archie Cochrane, the man who revolutionized the methodology in medical sciences, in his seminal (1972) book, *Effectiveness and Efficiency*, suggests the significance of applying evidence from randomized controlled trials as a much more reliable method to provide scientifically plausible information than other sources of evidence. The method allowed me to revisit the phenomena and systematically analyse its historical development over the past one hundred years.

According to the report of Barbra Kitchenham *et al.*, (2007:vi italics mine) a "systematic literature review is a means of evaluating and interpreting *all available research relevant* to a particular research question, topic area, or phenomenon of interest. Systematic reviews aim to present a fair evaluation of a research topic by using a trustworthy, rigorous, and auditable methodology." This statement encapsulates the essence of systematic methodology. The key phrase in the definition is *all available research relevant*. This phrase indicates that one cannot evaluate every written document but only those that are relevant and accessible at the time of writing. As a scientifically rigorous "stand-alone" method, according to Arlene Fink (cited in Okoli and Schabram 2010:1, italics original), it is "*explicit* in explaining the procedures by which it is conducted, *comprehensive* in its scope of including all relevant material, and hence reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers…" One key feature of this method, as with any scientific method, is that the study must be *repeatable* by others who would follow the same approach in reviewing the question. Christopher Stave (2011:2) agrees with Fink and argues that a systematic review "is a review of clearly formulated question that uses systematic and explicit methods to identity, select, and critically appraise relevant research, and to collect and analyse data from studies that are included in the review." More than this, a systematic review is a "comprehensive accumulation, transparent analysis, and reflective interpretation" of all relevant data pertinent to a specific question (Rousseau *et al.,* cited in Okoli and Schabram 2010:1). The method is currently being emphasized in health

sciences because it is believed that one of its great advantages is that it "minimize the bias in studies," so a crucial stage of a systematic review involves assessing the quality of each study (Petticrew and Robert 2006:3, Harden 2010:2). It is now commonly accepted that systematic review, like any other scientific review is not immune from the influence of human bias and that it requires a certain level of conscious subjectivity (Okoli and Schabram 2010:2). One does not have to believe a given study because one can redo the research in order to verify or falsify the finds. It also ensures that the phenomenon is explored through different perspectives which allow for difference ways in which a single phenomenon can be interpreted (Baxter and Jack 2008:544). This method "recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning, but doesn't reject outright some notion of objectivity. In this method, pluralism, not relativism," is stressed with a thrust "on the circular dynamic tension of subject and object" (Miller and Crabtree cited in Baxter and Jack 2008:545). Pamela Baxter and Susan Jack (:545) argue that this method is significant to conceptually to determine the factors that lead to the realization of or stagnation of a phenomenon from realizing its objectives. Martyn Denscombe (1998:159) classifies that this approach as library-based research in which written documents are used as sources of data in their own right, as an alternative to questions, interviews or observation. The sole reliance upon existing documentation was intended to assist in pervasive engagement with the historical transformation of African theological education and persuasively answer the key question.

3. Rationale for Choice of Method

A research method in this present study is understood as a way in which data about the African theological education (phenomenon) was gathered, analysed and synthesized. The rationale behind choosing the method is largely influenced by the orientation and the envisaged end product of the study. In a sense, a method could be said to be viable if it can be the best way to answer the key research question. My over-riding concern is that the method to apply in any plausible research should be both relevant to the research question, as set out in chapter One, scientific and rigorous in its operationalization. Systematic review was perceived as necessary for this research in order to integrate the relevant research evidence, to present that evidence and to seek to resolve uncertainties about the historical development and transformation of African theological education

and its focus on promoting the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. This kind of a research demands a procedures for the synthesis of the research which "held to standards of objectivity, systematically, and rigor," in order to come up with a concrete evaluation of the phenomenon (Cooper and Hedges 1994:13). The method is also significant as it helps to make sense of a large body of information that has been accumulated, and as a means of isolating and synthesising the main theories and pragmatics of African theological education (Petticrew and Robert 2006:3). Besides, by utilizing this method, I intended to include African voice on systematic review thereby overcoming the political bias of Western model of systematic review that seeks to develop and protect a select academic club that promote only certain literature of scholars (mostly Western) that are cited by their own peers.

4. Methodological Sequence

The study followed a specified sequence of a rigorous way in which existing research is carefully synthesized by applying a specific contextual technique (Arksey and O'Malley 2005:22, 25). The flowchart below shows the steps in the methodology.
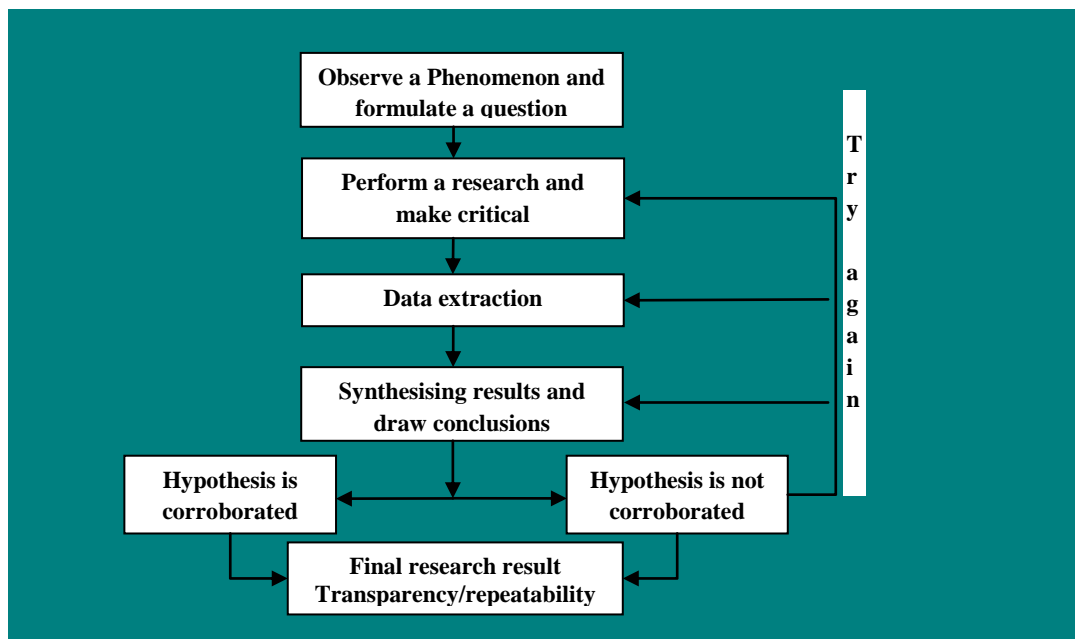
Fig. 2.1. Flowchart of systematic review as a scientific method

Adapted from Hilary Arksey and Lisa O'Malley (2005:22)

The flowchart above begins with the identification of a phenomenon, provoking enough to conceive that a question exists. For research to be regarded as systematic review, it must follow a clearly defined question which guides the entire process of the research. In my case, see the question above (chapter 1, section 4.1).

Second, the question helped to determine the parameters and dictated the kinds of literature to search. As highlighted already from the definition, the whole point of systematic review is to be as thorough "as possible in identifying primary studies (published and unpublished) and reviews suitable for answering the question" (Arksey and O'Malley 2005:24). I have therefore adopted a strategy which involved searching for principal sources in different sources which included electronic databases. The search strategy for electronic databases was developed from the key words and phrases from the research question. In step one, the key phrases and words searched were: "ministerial formation in Africa," "theological education in Africa," "theological training in Africa," "ecumenical theological education in Africa," "Theological Education Fund," "TEF," "Ecumenical Theological Education," "ETE," "Programme for Theological Education," "PTE," "Seminaries in Africa," "Bible Colleges in Africa," "Curriculum development in theological education in Africa." In the second step, the key phrases were names of the three African scholars who worked for the TEF/PTE/ETE, "Desmond Tutu," "John Pobee" and "Nyambura Njoroge."

I searched from six significant databases (ATLA, Globetheolib, World Christian Databases, Directory for Open Access Journals, Wiley Online Library, Researching World Christianity: Doctoral Dissertation on Mission since 1900, Google Scholar and the WCC <Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE)> (Future of African Theological Education—papers from ETE and Partners in Africa). There were huge variations in the references gathered ranging from eight (Directory for Open Access Journals) to 7, 178 (Wiley online library). The total references found were 10090. I am not fully aware how effective this process was in generating articles but from the total references, 168 articles were included in the final selection. Such information may be helpful for any future research that may be undertaken in this area. I tried to check the bibliographies of significant studies found through the database searches to ensure they were included in the systematic review. Yet, I was so overwhelmed by the number of articles that I found it hard to track the repeated articles to such an extent that although the searches could

have yielded new studies, I may not even have realized it. I think a study of this nature would be beneficial if two or more researchers were involved in the process. For the future, it would be important for any Doctoral or candidate who would like to use this method to employ research assistants. Another major challenge was to synthesize data from such a large data pool.

The second level of literature research was a hand-search (Arksey and O'Malley 2005:24) in ecumenical theological education and ministerial formation key journals which started in 1976 to 2008, *Ministerial Formation* and *Ogbomoso Journal of Theology*. The hand search was significant because electronic databases were incomplete on the articles that were written before the 1990s. It was also significant in searching through the archives at the WCC. Here the strategy was to count the boxes focusing on Africa. Another hand-search was done on the books in various libraries and conference papers and minutes. These various strategies of searching generated a total of 731 references (including boxes from the archives), 102 of which were identified as the study was progressing and were treated as those generated from online databases.

The third stage was the inclusion of primary studies. This study was restricted to publications in English and on Protestant Christian theological education in Africa. All studies that were accessed published in English and focusing on theological education in Africa were perused to select potentially relevant material based on their abstracts and titles. Full texts for all these studies were retrieved and assessed for a final decision on whether to include or exclude them. This indicated that many articles that are published in French and Portuguese and those that were not specifically focused on Africa were excluded. In addition, all duplicate publications, reports of the same study in different journals and books were excluded and only one complete version of each was included in the review. Most peer-reviewed articles and most articles written by Tutu, Pobee and Njoroge on the topic were included. Some publications were integrated within the main works that were reviewed. The figure 2.2 below presents key information in the process of exclusion/inclusion.

Online search:
    ATLA
    Globetheolib
    World Christian Databases
    Directory for open access Journals
    Wiley online library
    Researching World Christianity: Doctoral Dissertation on Mission since 1900
    Google scholar
    WCC <Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE)> (Future of African Theological Education – papers from ETE and Partners in Africa

Hand search of the text books

Hand search of all journals, archives, Conference papers and Minutes

Scanning total titles and abstract for duplicates and relevancy 10. 821

101 studies excluded on the grounds that:
- Were written in French or Portuguese
- No new contribution TEA
- Dealing with confessional TEA
- Repeated in different publications

Total articles reviewed 270

Included 169

Fig. 2.2. Flowchart of study selection

Out of the original 10, 821 studies, 270 were selected. Having read the studies in full, 169 studies were selected for inclusion in systematic review.

The fourth stage was to extract data. This stage is considered as the core of systematic review (Pawson *et al.*, 2004:23). Having identified all relevant studies, I began to systematically extract and scrutinize the applicable information from each of these studies based on my key research question. Ideally, in a systematic review, data must be extracted

by two independent reviewers in order to minimise bias, who should then agree on a final version through consensus. My experience in struggling with the data extraction seems to suggest that any doctoral degree research in theology that intends to utilize the systematic review method may require the supervisor to at least act as the second literature reviewer of primary studies in order to limit bias in the study. Generally, conventional systematic reviews "proceeds by lining up primary studies that have made it through the quality filter, fine-tuning the set of characteristics through which to compare them, combing through each source to extract precisely the same nugget of information from each, and recording these data onto a standard grid" (2004::23). In my case, I systematically summarized studies that traced the historical development of theological education focusing on Africa. The literature was appraised in an integrative way in order to systematically show how they whole study fit together. Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary (1997:318) have argued that literature must be summarized and presented in a way that makes its relationship to the whole study integrative themes explicit. Baumeister and Leary (:318) further argues that in this kind of literature presentation, critiquing of primary data is critical and is the essence of systematic reviewing. This demanded that not simply a descriptive analytical method which involves utilizing a mutual framework to all crucial studies, but also interpretative analytical method. The interpretative method is based on an understanding that a phenomenon can only be fully understood through subjective interpretation and not just description. Scientifically, it is admitted that there may be many interpretations of the same phenomenon, but maintained that these interpretations are in themselves part of the scientific knowledge (Livesey 2006:4). Hans-Georg Gadamer (1960/89:267, 269) argues that;

> A person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting. He *[sic]* projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text. Again, the initial meaning emerges only because he *[sic]* is reading the text with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning. Working out this fore-projection, which is constantly revised in terms of what emerges as he *[sic]* penetrates into the meaning, is understanding what is there. …A hermeneutically trained consciousness must be, from the start, sensitive to the text's alterity. But this kind of sensitivity involves neither 'neutrality' with respect to content nor the extinction of one's self, but the foregrounding and appropriation of one's own fore-meanings and prejudices.

Every reader of the text engages in interpretation but the meaning of the text is not just a result of interpretation but is also influenced by the bias of the interpreter. It can be

argued that even those who claim to describe a phenomenon are prone to interpret it in one way or another.

Within data extraction, I also utilized a 'follow the money method' of investigation specifically in chapters dealing with the three African theologians who served as TEF/PTE/ETE staff members (see chapters five, six and seven). The method is utilised as a strategic signpost and tool in following up on the projects that the three African theologians namely, Desmond Tutu, John Pobee and Nyambura J. Njoroge sponsored and implemented during their term of offices with the WCC and identified by this thesis as a subject that necessitates in depth examination. This was meant to uncover the kind/types of projects that received sustained funding during the tenure of each theologian and to identify the reasons for the support.

I borrowed this method from law enforcement in which the money trail is seen as the leading factor to the issues perceived by people as significant (Gillespie 2002:3). It is argued in most cases that money is used as means to an end. James Gillespie (2002:3) argues that projects in which an individual invests significant financial resources are often shown to have implications on the core motives of the funder. In other words, money is a powerful tool in understanding the emphasis and motivations of a given individual. Since, these three chapters dealt with the three African theologians who were fundraising for African theological education in three successive time periods, an effective target in understanding their emphasis and thinking on African theological education was by utilizing the 'follow the money' analytical tool. Yet, the intention of this study was not to reveal the amounts of money that were spend on each project but rather to identify the projects that received *more sustained attention and financial support* during their time. Having investigated the emerging themes of these projects for each successive period, they were consecutively assessed in a complementary way with the written works of each of the three theologians in order to apprehend their theological thinking on the function and the ethos of African theological education. This is the approach that was applied in data extraction.

The fifth and final stage was to synthesize the evidence. This involved a critical analysis in order to integrate some merging models for theological education extracted from data.

The synthesis paid attention to relevant and recurring themes (theories) in African theological education and critically analysed them to form the basis for the future of African theological education. The synthesis approach utilized is a dialectical and critical reasoning that embodies the contrast and tension between the current existential experiences (which is) and the life imagined (which should be) (Wan-Tarah 1989:6). In this method of approach, where praxis influences theological orientation, I utilized the interpretive lens of African women communal analysis which focuses on the existential experiences of dehumanization, exploitation and oppression and God's activities through human agents aiming at humanization of the community.

This investigative tool is used in chapter eight and is focused on replacing hierarchies with mutuality, totalitarianism with egalitarianism, injustice with justice and inequalities with equality (Phiri and Nadar 2010: 15). This method was used to analyse and show that the *missio Dei* which is essentially the basis of African theological education is an antithesis of domination, exploitation and oppression and its sole reason is for promoting the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community (see chapter 8). As a consequence, within this study, the African women's communal analysis focused on extracting the core theories and pragmatics of an African theological education that promotes a just and equitable African Christian community (2010:96). This analytical tool is *systematic and praxis-oriented* and seeks to find alternative symbols, myths, images, analogies etc., within African culture as an effective grounding for envisaging the future of African theological education. It also could be considered as *relational-and-life-praxis oriented* that calls for transformed relationships that reflect equity, justice and affirmation of life by rejecting death-dealing ideologies in the community. It emphasizes the inter-relationship in the community of human beings and nonhuman creation. It is conscious of "multicultural and multi-religious contexts, it is culture-sensitive and intentionally dialogue oriented" (Kasomo and Maseno 2011:156). Such is the kind of perspective that is maintained throughout this study.

5. Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided the reasons for selecting the chosen methodology and how it is implemented throughout the study. Systematic review was chosen to conduct this

research because it was determined to be a useful and scientifically plausible method of analysing a large body of literature on the historical development of African theological education and its theories and pragmatics for promoting the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. It was observed that although the method has been utilized in other fields of study, it is new in the field of theological studies. Consequently, this study is also an attempt to apply this methodology within the field of theological studies. Hence, I have tried to 'panel beat' the methodology in order to fit it within the context of my study.

In the following first part (Part One) of the study presented in two chapters, I trace the historical development of African theological education as found in the TEF/PTE/ETE. Both chapters provide a systematic review of the development and transformation of theological education. The first part responds to the key sub-question: what is known in literature about the historical development of theological education in relation to the TEF/PTE/ETE? In other words, what is the contribution of the TEF/PTE/ETE towards the development and transformation of African theological education?

PART TWO

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW
HISTORY OF PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN
ECUMENICAL EFFORTS TO ENHANCE
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN AFRICA

In this first part I begin to review Protestant efforts in the development and transformation of African theological education in Africa. Chapter 3 outlines the historical background and chapter 4 analyses the contribution of the TEF/PTE/ETE.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:
TRACING THE MISSIOLOGICAL AND ECUMENICAL FOUNDATIONS

There must be African pastors who are adequately fitted to see the visions of what the Church of Jesus Christ should be on that continent; to make difficult decisions of principle and policy; to think and teach and write on high ground, for the needs of the Church and their people; to bear increasingly – and, if it be God's will, alone – the whole burden of the Church (Bates *et al.*, 1954:14, italics original).

1. Introduction

The previous chapter suggested the methodology employed in this study. I have argued that the systematic review method was chosen to conduct this study because it was determined to be useful and scientifically-plausible method of analysing a large body of literature on the historical development of African theological education. Systematic review is perceived as a useful tool in an endeavour to envisioning a possible future direction that African theological education could take in order to continue promoting the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community in the twenty-first century. The aim of the present chapter is to systematically trace the historical development and transformation of African theological education.

In this chapter, I offer a selective and concise historical overview of the development and renovations of African theological education. The significance of African theological education cannot be overemphasized. The need for well-prepared church ministers and theologians has engendered a continuous examination of the philosophical and theological underpinnings of theological education by searching for innovative models of doing theological education in terms of both its relevance and quality in the context of Africa.

This chapter is developed in three sections: the first section introduces the missionary context of theological education in Africa in the nineteenth century. The second section deals with the missionary inception of the vision and challenge of theological education

in Africa. The third section appraises the significance of the International Missionary Council (*hereafter,* IMC) and its commitment based on a survey of the training of ministry candidates in Africa.

2. The Missionary Context of Theological Education in the Nineteenth Century

The task from this point in the study is to explain certain key issues. Since the historical context affects the development of the phenomenon and the way it is dealt with concerns the complex contexts created through religious rivalry by missionaries is stressed to facilitate comprehension.

2.1. The Missionary Rivalry: The Founding of Christianity in Africa

The unwholesome context in which the church was planted in Africa is well documented by both African and Western scholars (Amanze 1999; Brown 1972; Ekechi 1971; Beidelman 1982). It is academically indisputable that Western missionaries were the first Africa's Christian theological educators. While Christian missions on the continent can be traced as far back as the Roman Catholic missionaries in Elmina (present day Ghana) in the fifteenth century, it was during the nineteenth century that a militant form of church mission emerged that projected mission in terms of Christianisation and civilization as its ethos. Mary Brown (1972:1) has shown that this come into view shortly after the Church Missionary Society (CMS) had sent out its first missionaries in 1804, followed in the 1820s by the Basle Missionary Society (BMS), the first American Christian Mission (ACM) and Livingstonia Mission had been established on the continent. Brown notes that the London Missionary Society (LMS) had already established in its roots in Southern Africa from 1799 (see also Johnson 1999:19). In addition, Brown (1972:1) identifies five different American church denominations (i.e., Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian and Lutheran) that were represented on the African coast from the 1820s to 1870s. It is significant to understanding that by the time these missionaries embarked on evangelism across the African continent, the post-reformation squabbles in Europe had already muddled doctrinal issues with political and socio-cultural exigencies. The various Protestant missionaries were a product of such

strife. Once they landed in Africa, the Western missionary agencies quickly became entangled in an unwholesome scramble for geopolitical space (Uzochukwu 2008:4). Amanze (1999:120) has observed that what was most significant in the missionary era were the divisions of Christendom fixed on missionary maps. Each claimed to be the true voice of Christ and thereby responsible for planting the true church of Christ. Obgu U. Kalu (1978:3) argues that such development was underlined by Protestant Evangelical principles which held that each missionary group was self-sufficient to proclaim the Christian gospel in any area they occupied. It is unfortunate that while these Protestant missionaries proclaimed the love of Jesus and reconciliation, they themselves were swollen with anti-ecumenical tendencies toward the other denominations, especially the Roman Catholic Church.

Norman (cited in Beidelman 1982:87) highlights that the Protestant missionaries "entertained consuming hatred of the Roman Catholic Church." The historical accounts reveal that the missionaries operated as rival factions and as instruments of division rather than people of unity (Ekechi 1971:205; Beidelman 1982:11). "To them, the idea of community building as understood and practiced by the Africans was foreign" (Byaruhanga 2009:3). Those who converted via other Christian denominations were to be treated as enemies. Felix Ekechi (1971:205) argues that from the nature of rivalry between the Roman Catholic Church and the other Protestant Churches was, "one may surmise that their preoccupation with outdoing one another precluded, at least temporary, any initiative for breaking new frontiers" in theological education. Eunice Kamaara (2010: 135) affirms that "worse than the scramble for souls by the church is the rivalry that accompanied this scramble. Different missions and Christian denominations colonized certain regions as their 'mission fields' sometimes barring 'other' missionaries from operating in the area." These territorial jurisdictions of different missionary societies should be understood within the context of 'mission comity' (Fiedler 1994:188). The 'comity principle' was an agreement that various missionary societies adopted in Africa in order to deal with their rivalry and competition. It was a mutual acceptance on the condition of organization separation, which primarily meant geographical appeasement and regulation between different denominational traditions (1994:188). This simply implies that there was no need to settle theological differences, yet being united through territorial separation. While it may have been seen as a solution to rivalry, it also complicated the situation of African people who absorbed and amalgamated these false

divisions within their ethnic groups that existed prior to the coming of the Christian missions. Looking at the current fragmentation of Christianity in Africa, it seems evident that the comity principle did not help in resolving conflict among the missionaries; instead, it only exacerbated the characterization of "denominational superiority and 'othernisation' of other denominations" (Kamaara 2010:135). This is a fact that the majority of African theologians have continued to lament about (Oduyoye 2000; Kobia 2001, 2003; Otieno and McCullum 2005; Uzochukwu 2008). Some African theologians (see Oduyoye: 1997:70) have even argued that African people were coerced and tricked into conversion based on rivalry, disunity and territorial segregations without being conscientized about the source of the problem. In fact the inherited denominational rivalries have been blamed for perpetual fragmentation, divisiveness and intolerance in contemporary African Christianity. Mercy Amba Oduyoye (2000:470) laments that the African converts, who were made to regard these divisions as prearranged, and who were uninformed about the roots of the doctrinal and socio-cultural disputes that engendered such ecclesial divisions in Europe, embraced this situation without questioning. African Christians have been socialized and they internalized syndrome of denominationalism and conflict which they had no background in nor played any part in creating (2000:469; Isichei 1995:232; Uzochukwu 2008:5).

These various European missionaries propagated their doctrinal and tribal divisions as an intrinsic part of the Christian gospel and did not take into account the African understanding of an inclusive community. Kamaara (2010:135) observes that "where different missions operated in the same area, hatred and rivalry was structural and so deep that some families remain separated to date by virtue of conversion to different 'brands' of Christianity." She further points out that schools and theological institutions were separate for various denominations, even among the Protestants, where hatred, intolerance and competition mainly characterized these groups (2010:135).[5]

Luke Mbaefo (1993:121) stresses that the discord in which Christianity in Africa was sown constitutes in part the current difficult in trying to reconcile various ecclesiological

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[5] In some extreme cases, Ekechi (cited in Uzochukwu 2008:4 fn.13) laments that some missionaries went to the extent of securing the deployment from some organs of the ruling colonialist administrators in overwhelming their 'rival' missionary groups during such struggles for strategic locations. For example, the Roman Catholic missionaries when they arrived at the coast of Akassa in the year 1885, appealed to the United African Company for assistance to be transported to the hinterland, but this request was turned down on the pretext that they (the rival missionaries) were unknown passengers.

frameworks in an effort to develop an indigenous Christianity. The church historian Elizabeth Isichei (1995:232), writing in 1990s, echoes Mbaefo by lamenting that without questioning this, African converts have not only appropriated these divisions but have also perpetuated them to an extent that the continent is at the brink of disaster. For example, Isichei (1995:232) argues that the missionaries' efforts for ecumenism in the copperbelt region of Zambia, while exceptional, did not last as well. It seems that Isichei's case was too dramatic since it has not materialized. Nevertheless, Isichei is right in affirming the negative nature of denominationalism. One can argue that the missionaries' exportation of their presuppositions to their African converts consciously or unconsciously instilled in them a prejudicial attitude against other Christian denominations and this is the basis of the current struggle against fragmentation, polarisation and denominationalism in African Christianity.

Kalu (1980) in his article "The Scattered Cross" has observed that earlier calls for ecumenism among the Protestant bodies in Africa were based on wrong motivations. First, it was perceived as a means to invade the Roman Catholic Church, which was seen as a strong rival in the mission field. Second, it was perceived as the means to overcome religious indifference among African people. Many missionaries worked tirelessly in order to turn the minds of African converts from their traditional religion and culture which were perceived as 'unchristian and primitive.' Both the intention and motivation for common cooperation or unity was based on wrong motives which are antitheses to the genuine ecumenical ethos. It is not possible to establish an effective ecumenical spirit without taking into consideration the cultural ethos of the indigenous people. This tendency is still being exhibited in various parts of the continent and seems to be hindering a full realization of the dream for an effective ecumenical theological education.

The missionaries not only considered their civilization as superior and identified Christianity with a superior civilization, but they relegated Africans to an inferior status, regarding their beliefs and practices as 'superstitious and heathen.' That said, they were enemies among themselves (Brown 1972:2). Brown (1972:2) argues that theological education for evangelization was introduced as an instrument for transmitting missionaries' denominational values, Western knowledge and skills of the superior religion of the Western countries. According to Brown (1972:2), the approach used in

the training of prospective African ordinands was that of replacement and not the integration of tradition insights and methods. In short, because they did not take into consideration the socio-cultural milieu, this resulted in many discontinuities which to a large extent have continued to hamper Africa's social, religious, economic and political development. There was little or no awareness that Africa had its own systems of education which equipped individuals for meaningful participation in every sector of social, political, religious, economic and moral life. Adrian Hastings (cited in Amanze 1999:120) has lamented that "nothing has weakened and confused Christian life more in Africa than the divisions and rivalries it has been subjected to from the beginning." To a large extent, the inherited fragmented nature of African Christianity has frequently rendered it inadequate—a liability rather than an asset or weapon for liberation and social transformation. While on the one hand, the above discussion shows the ambivalent nature of missions in Africa; on the other, ecumenical cooperation had already been discussed since Edinburgh 1910, as will be shown in the following section.

3. The Dream for Co-operation in Theological Education

The development of African theological education can only be understood against the background of the wider international developments in mission. The key events to recognise begin with Edinburgh 1910 through to the integration of the IMC with the WCC, which after years of preparation was finalized at the Third Assembly of WCC in New Delhi, India from 19 November to 5 December 1961 (Visser 't Hooft 1962:56). This background is necessary to understanding the development and transformation of theological education. This section appraises the contribution of Edinburgh 1910 and the IMCs survey for the training of Christian ministry in Africa. It is discussed in this section under two headings as follows:

3.1. Edinburgh 1910: Imagining [Theological] Education in Africa

The history of Christian missions in Africa is the history of theological education. For example, in the Report of the Edinburgh 1910 on Commission III, it was argued that "the subject of education in missionary work is of special and far-reaching importance" (World Missionary Conference 1910a:5). In fact, the dream to enhance theological

training in Africa was conceived in Edinburgh 1910. This conference is also widely assumed to have been a source of modern ecumenical movement at least in its Protestant form (Walls 2002:53; Bosch 1991:459). Yet, in order to appreciate the contribution of Edinburgh 1910 to the development of theological education in Africa, it is significant to place it within its political context.

3.1.1. A Conference Poised "Between the Times"

Before discussing image of theological education in Africa as posited at Edinburgh 1910, four issues with regard to the political context of the conference will need to be identified: First, the conference was held "under the *Pax Britannica* which ensured free trade across the globe and was gradually" assimilating every part of the world into capitalism (Kim 2009:3). At the turn of the century, Europe was Christianized which meant that being Christian was virtually equated with civilisation. According to Timothy Yates (1994:22), the Secretary of the conference, J. H. Oldham, "had an almost uncanny prescience that Edinburgh was poised 'between the times' and that very great issues hung in the balance." When looking at the political and ecclesiastical contexts in which the conference took place, it becomes clear that both international politics and economics were marked by the dominant Western industrial powers. Africa was completely under Western colonial domination. Second, the Western world at that time was under the pervasive influence of European value-setting and the categorization of others, suitably reinforced by the evolution theory of Charles Darwin (1860) that the 'races of humanity' claimed a hierarchal arrangement of humanity with Europeans at the top and African people at the very bottom. Third, as William Hogg notes, at that time, Western society possessed a pervasive optimism for the future which not only affected the West, but the way in which Western peoples related to people in the global South:

> For Western Europeans and Americans the nineteenth century had been one of hopeful optimism. The Industrial Revolution and Western European expansion had brought great material wealth. The appeal of the scientific method tantalized human minds with the thought of unlimited knowledge and achievement. Evolution from lower to higher forms, so apparent in nature, was thought to apply to history and human society. Naturally, belief arose in mankind's inevitable progress. All this encouraged a frame of mind designated 'the white man's burden'—an

obligation assumed to rest upon European peoples to give their higher civilization to benighted races (1952:99).

The implications of this statement are that the West sought to shape and influence the political and economic direction and growth of people in the global South, Africa in particular. The secular development in science and technology coupled with a long period of relative peace in the West seems to have influenced the views of the conference. For example, following in the footsteps of their secular counterparts, Edinburgh 1910's agenda involved universal expansion—"carrying the gospel to all-the non-Christian world" (Gairdner 1910:68). This perspective has an affinity with the 1884 Berlin Conference, where the European powers and the US established ground rules for the exploitation of Africa without consent and consultation with African people. In fact, the delegates at the conference felt to be so close to the centres of power that they were not ashamed to join forces with colonial governments in an endeavour to shape the world (Kim 2009:7). It was not simply an ecclesial decision, it was also political. The world of the day was not neutral; it held the veto power in both the political and economic spheres. In fact, they saw imperialism and colonialism as an opportunity for the evangelization of the non-Christian world. This also dictated the kind of relationship that existed between the missionaries and African converts. This relationship can be categorized as federal fraternal partnership (at times even feudal), where the missionary was perceived as superior and the African as subordinate. It seems that such political developments had not only greatly affected the need for organizing a missionary conference, but also to determine the conference's perspectives on the issues that were discussed, with particular reference given to theological education.

3.1.2. The Edinburgh 1910 Ideology of [Theological] Education

Although it has been understood in several of ways, within the Protestant tradition, theological education has been a concern through its missionary activities and Edinburgh 1910 marked a watermark of opinion for life-giving theological education. The conference revealed a profound concern about the challenges of theological education in the churches of the non-Christian world. I focus my evaluation on the *Report of the*

Commission III: Education in relation to the Christianization of the National Life[6] and the *Report of the Commission IV: the Missionary Message in Relation to the Non-Christian Religions.* This is significant in trying to understand the relationship between Edinburgh's conceptualization of African people and the kind of education that was proposed for the continent. The Commission III of Edinburgh 1910 was charged with the task of investigating the work of "education in relation to the Christianization of national life." The Commission outlined the various forms of education[7] it envisaged as follows: primary, higher, teachers training, ministerial formation, industrial, education for girls and education for evangelization of Muslims (World Missionary Conference 1910a:1; Kalu 2010:96). Kalu notes that the conference arrived at its rationale for education by exploring lessons from the New Testament Church. He thus argues that the New Testament Church recognized the significance of "*pilgrim/universal* and *indigenous/local*" (2010:96 italics original) principles in the development of Christianity. The question which arises is: to what extent did the Edinburgh 1910 manage to maintain the mutual tension between local and universal principles in the development of theological education in Africa?

The Commission III outlined the weaknesses of education which I have summarized in six point as follows: first, there was a tendency to alienate converts from the national life; second, it shared the weakness of Western methods; third, it revealed an awaking of national consciousness among the people of all religions; fourth, if the national church is to become indigenous, it is a matter of chief importance that leaders should be provided and trained; fifth, the educational missionaries were not trained as teachers, and sixth, the need for much fuller co-operation (World Missionary Conference 1910a:6-8). The Commissioners acknowledged that:

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[6] Edinburgh 1910 dealt with two kinds education: Education in relation to the Christianization of national life which was not limited to the formation and training of the Church leadership but extended to every aspect of national life in the mission lands by Christian ideals (Stanley 2009:167). Second, the Report of the Commission V: Training of the teachers dealt with the training of the missionaries (World Missionary Conference, 1910c).

[7] The aim of missionary education were summarised as follows: first, "education may be conducted primarily with an *evangelistic* purpose, being viewed as an" attraction "force to bring the youth under the influence of Christianity, or as itself as evangelising agency. Second, "education may be primarily *edificatory*, in so far as the school has for its object the development of Christian community through the enlightenment and training of its members." Third, "education may be *leavening*, in so far as through it the life of the nation is gradually permeated with the principles of truth." Fourth, "the motivation of missionary education may include the philanthropic desire to promote the general welfare of the people" (World Missionary Conference 1910a:369-370, italics original).

> The ideal method of propagating Christianity is that the Gospel should be received by each race through the ministry of evangelists from nations already Christian, *but that the Church should pass as rapidly as possible under the control of the native pastors and teachers*, so that while all Churches hold the same faith, use same Scriptures, cerebrate the same sacraments, and inherit in the same universal religion, *each local Church should from first have opportunity of developing a local character and colour*. It is the ideal method that the Christian converts should, with their children, *continue to share the education and social life of their own race and nation* (1910a:244, italics mine).

The recommendation echoed by Henry Venn's suggestion in 1854 was for missionaries to pass the responsibility of church leadership to the control of indigenous leaders. Venn was convinced that the proper aim of missions was to establish autonomous native churches with their own mode of government, development and resource sustainability (Mugambi 1995:91; Beidelman 1982:164). Mugambi (1995:91) stresses that according to Venn, the task of the missionaries ended when these objectives were achieved for a specific Christian community and the missionaries should return home or go off to another mission field. Unfortunately, it must also be pointed out that Venn also stressed inequality in that he felt that African clergy should be less educated and lower paid than their European counterparts (Curtin cite in Beidelman 1982:164). This understanding was rooted in the Western cultural concept of superiority/supremacy. In this perspective, a subject cannot be educated to the same level as her/his master. Therefore, education was designed to give the clergy confidence and pride as Africans but one which sought to develop docile leaders that could easily be controlled. This self-contradiction in Venn shows that the powerful do not easily surrender power voluntarily, but the subjects still have to claim their rights. The question that comes to the fore is: what constitute life-giving theological education?

Venn's perspective on indigenization was vigorously and more radically shared by the Bishop of Uganda, Alfred Tucker. According to Tucker, in order to develop an effective native church it was necessary for the missionaries to subordinate themselves to African leadership. Tucker (1908:112) felt "that the absence of immediate control [by missionaries] would lead to a stronger and healthier growth in the spiritual life of the native Christians." Tucker could thus argue:

> In training native Christians in the art of self-government it is tremendous mistake to hold aloof from their organization, and this from the simple reason that if the work of the European Missionaries is carried on outside

the limits of the native Church, there must an outside organization. In that case the native Christians will be slow to realize that the outside organization is under discussion in the Church and that their own organization is more or less a sham (Tucker cited in Beidelman 1982:164).

The question therefore arises: what would have happened if Edinburgh 1910 had given an opportunity to African Christians to indigenise Christianity?

In some respects, one is aware that this question cannot be separated from the role that European colonialism played and the desire for commodities in Africa. In others, it must be acknowledged that the statement above highlights that the commission understood theological education as crucial for giving indigenous people their own form of expression of Christianity. However, this opportunity of developing Christianity according to local expression was proffered more specifically for Japan and India (Kalu 2010:79). Hence, when dealing with Africa, the delegates argued that "what is needed is some form of educative and disciplinary organization which will replace, in an enlightened way, the old tribal unity" (World Missionary Conference 1910a:170). Why was Africa being marginalized with regard to education? The answer seems to lay in the way Edinburgh 1910 conceptualized African people as recorded in the report of Commission IV.

Although Africa did not constitute the entire evidence for "animism" at the conference, sixty per-cent of the reports of Commission IV related to this issue (World Missionary Conference 1910b:7). There was a general feeling that there were "practically no religious content in Animism," "devoid of doctrines," "lacking in scholar to expound its meaning" and was held as to be "religious beliefs of more or less backward and degraded" people (1910b:6). Indeed, some respondents at Edinburgh 1910 argued that Africans had "no religion" "simply heathenism" (1910b:6). African people even in Commission III were constantly depicted as "backward race" (1910b:376). Although there were reports that spoke vaguely of the existence of a Supreme Being in African systems of thought, the African religious heritage was thought to be at an advanced stage of religious decay (Stanley 2009:240). Brian Stanley (2009:241) analyses the inconsistent voices of missionaries from Africa at Edinburgh 1910 with regard to understanding Africa people. He reveals that the differences and contradictions from the voices of Nassau, Fraser, Armstrong, and Johnson which reveals there was a failure in utilizing "formal categories of analysis" (2009:240-241). The confusion and contradictions with which the conference

was laden clearly shows that Western scholarship did not succeed in entering the psychology of the African religious mind and instead ascribed to them the Western ontological categories. They simply categorized African people in terms of difference between their preconceptions of religion. There was a clear uncertainty in the way African religious systems were evaluated and this reflects the colonial perspectives that the Europeans were trying to reinforce at that time (2009:241). This was understood as an "intellectual hindrance" for animistic people who usually stood on a low stage of human development (World Missionary Conference 1910b:13). Crucial among those aspects of education for an animist were "to enable them read the bible," training their minds in order to make them "susceptible to the truth; free them from the bondage of superstition and error," to impart then with "knowledge and firmness to withstand the disintegrating influence of Western civilization" (World Missionary Conference 1910a:175). On the issues of education for African women and girls, besides the recommendation to train them for motherhood and marriage (i.e., domestic science), there was no other serious recommendation (1910a:213). In spite of these inherent contradictions, it is important to recognize that the conference took an initial step towards gender-sensitive education in Africa.

The 1910 Edinburgh conference was ambivalent in its use of English language in education in Africa. Many delegates saw English as a future language for Africa (World Missionary Conference 1910a:203-209). To an extent, English as colonial medium of communication facilitated domestication and ultimate control over African people. In this way, English was not a neutral language, but was developed in the interests of the colonizers. According to the Commission III, the use of the vernacular as a language of instruction and Christian thought, in the training of native Christian leaders as teachers and church officers to whom responsibility could later be handed over, was specifically referred more to China, India and Japan and not Africa (1910a:252-261). In fact, the chapter that dealt with "relating of Christian truth to indigenous thought and feeling," Africa significantly did not receive a section. Some scholars feel that the conference was a strategy for conquest, for "the end of conference [was] the beginning of conquest" (Mott cited by Walls 2002:62). In this regard, the use of the vernacular as a language of instruction became contentious. For example, Andrew Walls (2002:62) argues that from this conference, the "English language set out on its career as the successor to Latin as the International language of theology."

It is on the issue of literature that the conference was specific. Hence, African people "will always require books written for themselves whatever the language be employed." It was demanded that "native literature permeated with Christian" ideas be developed (World Missionary Conference 1910a:265, 347).

Kalu (2010:98) has identified three different standpoints on the aim of Christian education at the conference. The first was *assimilation*, by lifting the indigenous culture to the European level. The second was *cultural invaders*, which meant breaking up the social and ethical restraints of the old civilization. Third, *indigenizing*, how to Christianize national life through education. To this, Stanley (2009:189) has added a fourth, *diffusion* which places stress on the function of education in the diffusion of Christian moral principles that would subvert the structures of "paganism and heathenism."

For Africa, the confusion that rocked the conference shows its failure to overcome the tendency towards assimilation and diffusion approaches. Instead, it was education for cultural domination. The negative perception of African people and their religio-cultural heritage by the missionaries persisted until decolonization and explains the resultant hostility toward mission control of education (Kalu 2010:103). There was a lack of sympathy in the way African people and their culture were represented at the Edinburgh 1910 and in the subsequent studies that followed until into the late 1950s. During this period there seemed a gradual reduction of Western missionaries polemics on the African religious past by some missionaries (Tempels 1959), anthropologists (Evans-Pritchard 1956) and scholars of religions (Parrinder 1953; 1962) who began to examine African religion and culture in a more positive and sympathetic manner. In a broader sense, [theological] education was seen as integral to the task of creating new Christian identities and dismantling African cultures. Unfortunately, the Edinburgh 1910 perception of African people led to the further marginalization and rejection of African cultural heritage in the inception of theological education.

Stanley (2009:187) argues that there a close relationship in the minds of the delegates between preparing leaders who would not be exotic in their own culture and the diffusion of Christian moral principles throughout society. The delegates seem to have succumbed to "the trap of presenting Western culture as the normative expression of universal knowledge and the standard for Christian practice" (Shenk 2009:20). The report

on the Commission III seems to have emphasized raising African leaders who would be disgusted by and ashamed of their own indigenous culture. This is what undermined African spiritual vitality and rendered theological education in many quarters culturally irrelevant and singularly a project of domination and colonization. Despite the desire of the conference to protect African converts from European influence, [theological] education proposed becoming an instrument of uprooting African people from their culture as they embarked on a way of life which was preparing them to become pseudo-Europeans. They left behind their own culture and thought patterns and were initiated into European modes of thinking. James Downey (1977:28) rightly observes that through the seminaries, the African candidates have "been given the solutions to problems which no longer exist, and speaks in an esoteric language which his parishioners do not understand and which he has not yet learnt to translate." Kalu (2010:102) argues that in the aftermath of Edinburgh 1910, education was directed more toward social maintenance than liberating and emancipating people. It became a tool for making African people subservient to colonial administrators. In this way, education became one of the main factors in the underdevelopment of African people because of its suppressive power.

Despite its inherent colonial tendencies, Edinburgh 1910 nevertheless articulated the first embryonic elements of a paradigm of indigenized theological education, which took almost fifty years to come to fruition and only gaining momentum after European decolonization and a clear alternative mandate being formulated in the early stages of the TEF (World Mission Conference 1910:327 and 364). "Co-operation" in education was an important catchword of the Commission III which could be seen as sketching the way to a future ecumenical demand for theological education. In fact, the conference had already hinted at the goals of the TEF[8] in that it envisioned the kind of development that would be necessary for relevant theological education, yet did not workout a feasible common plan of action. The next decisive step in imaging theological education was at the third International Missionary Conference held at Tambaram in 1938.

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[8] Lienemann-Perrin (1981:4-5) and Russell (1995:94-105) share a similar view that some crucial aspects of theological education were discussed at the conference. First, the conference suggested that theological education should take the local aspirations seriously. Second, it was suggested that theological education should be based on patriotism and self-determination. Third, the need for developing theology from below was noted. Fourth, theological education was understood to be rooted in the experience of the local people. Fifth, the conference highlighted the need for dynamism and originality. Sixth, they saw a need for a worldwide encounter. Seventh, theological education was seen as part of the ecumenical tradition.

3.1.3. "The Weakest Element": The Major Concern of the IMC

One of the key terms of reference of the Edinburgh 1910 was "to consider when a further world conference is desirable and to make the initial preparations" (Mott 1938:303). The dislocations of the World War I prohibited the conference from taking. While it never took place immediately after the close of the war, by the mid-twenties the desirability of assembling another world gathering again came into vogue. During this time, in 1920 to be precise, "the Church of Constantinople (Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarchate) became the first church to appeal publicly for "the possibility of creating an international organ of fellowship and collaboration of all churches," a "League of Churches" (*koinōnia tōn ekklēsiōn*) similar to the proposal for "League of Nations" (*koinōnia tōn ethnōn*) after the First World War[9] (Stransky 2002b:1223). This call shows the magnitude of the political influence that the political circumstances of the time had exerted on the life and direction of Western-nation Christianity (see 3.2.1.1). Nevertheless, at the IMC conference held in Jerusalem in 1928[10] theological education remained an issue of critical concern (Mott 1938:303). Lienemann-Perrin (1981:6) citing the report of the Jerusalem meeting of the IMC argues that "this time the catchphrase was, 'transfer of the responsibility and authority to the younger churches.'" While this imperative had already been raised by Venn in 1854 (see above 3.2.1), it was not possible for the missionaries to transfer responsibility to indigenous leadership because they were considered ill-equipped. This meant giving more resources for the equipping of indigenous leadership and less for sending missionaries. Lienemann-Perrin (1981:6) laments that that despite the Conference's critical concern for transferring responsibility to the indigenous pastors, the training of missionaries for their service in the younger churches became prioritized.

It was only at the third General Assembly of the International Missionary Conference (IMC) held in 1938 at Tambaram, near Madras, India that any headway was made in trying to improve the situation of theological education in Africa. This was shortly before the outbreak of World War II. During this time, the world was in turbulence, and peace was seriously endangered by fascist-type regimes in Germany and Italy. While the

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[9] The establishment of the League of Nations as "an intergovernmental organization founded as a result of the Paris Peace Conference" led to the ending of World War I. The mission of this international organization was created to maintain world peace (The Free Encyclopaedia 2012).

[10] For the first time, "the terms 'older churches' and 'younger churches' were used in the conference. This was due to the fact that for the first time trusted leaders of both younger and older churches had come together in sufficient numbers and representing a sufficiently" (Mott 1938:307-308).

formation process of the World Council of Churches (WCC) was underway, the IMC expressed interest but decided to continue as an independent body (Stransky 2002b:1224). The plans to establish the WCC were eventually postponed with the intervention of the World War II. In fact, the war signalled a turning point for the world and the allied powers to discuss the creation of an international "organization that would seek to unite the nations and prevent Third World War in the future." Henceforth, the United Nations (UN) was created in 1945 (UN nd: 1) and shortly afterwards, the WCC was established with its inaugural assembly taking place in 1948 (Stransky 2002b:1225). With these international institutions coming into being, based on détente and cooperation, it is important to notice that political (secular) and Christian history are in constant encounter with one another either for the good or bad.

With political confusion rocking the world order, the IMC at Tambaram 1938 focused its discussions on the centrality and prominence of the church, specifically the local church in mission. A full section of the conference was dedicated to the issue of theological training in the 'younger churches' (International Missionary Council 1939:199-211). The young churches had registered a serious dissatisfaction in the way their leaders were being prepared for ministry. It was observed that not only were indigenous pastors inadequately trained but there was also a shortage of trained and ordained ministers. The conference, like its predecessors drew critical attention to the fact that theological education was neglected in the 'young churches' which were now the growing counterpart in the mission (Laing 2009:15). This situation highlights the missionary leadership's veto powers over theological education and the qualifications for ordination of clergy in 'the younger churches.' The delegates concluded that:

> It is our conviction that the greatest weaknesses in the whole Christian enterprise, and that *no improvement can be expected until churches and mission boards pay far greater attention to this work, particularly to the need to cooperative and united effort*, and contribute more largely in funds and in personnel in order that it may be effectively carried out (International Missionary Council 1939:211 italics mine).

The recommendation explicitly mentioned that in order to improve the situation of theological education in the 'younger churches,' a *cooperative and united effort* was imperative. They did not see it in any other way. They recollected that the previous conferences had given some direction to the envisioning of theological education (Laing

2009:15). The conference called for a much higher priority for this in the whole work of missions. Among specific agreements on several recommendations for the improvement of theological education in the 'younger churches,' Tambaram also affirmed the Edinburgh 1910 recommendations of developing of "theological education in vernacular languages rather in English" (2009:15). The report concludes with a recommendation for a comprehensive investigation of the state of theological education and possibilities for transformation. Although the interference of World War II hindered the IMC from realizing this recommendation, soon after the close of war through its various councils, a critical survey of theological education in 'younger Churches' was undertaken in an effort to arrive at a clear picture for the purposes of future development. The following section is a brief review of the three reports of the IMC that resulted from this critical stock-taking in Africa.

4. The IMC and the State of Theological Education in Africa (1950-1957)

In response to the IMC Tambaram 1938 recommendation, extensive studies were conducted from 1941 to 1957 and in Africa from 1950 to 1953. The aim of the study was to shed insight on what could be done to improve the quality of theological education in 'the younger churches,' African in particular. Dyron Daughrity (2012:42) highlights that "communication for the survey of African theological education began in May 1948 with a letter from Bengt Sundkler, Research Secretary of the IMC, to 'Principals of Theological Colleges and Bible Schools.'" Daughrity (2012:42) observes that the letter noted that the Witby conference had called on regional studies "for the recruitment, training and maintenance of the indigenous ministry in the young churches." Africa was considered 'high priority' because of the rapid numerical grown. The goal of the survey was laid as follows by Sundkler (cited in Daughrity 2012:42, italics mine),

> It is assumed here that the Witby Conference when initiating this research project did not primarily envisage a technical survey of the ways and means of missionary propaganda but rather, and above all, *a fresh interpretation, for our age,* of the theological foundation of the Missionary Obligation of the Church.

The implications of this statement are that theologians in every age have a clear responsibility to give a clear interpretation of theological education for their time. Theological education cannot afford to maintain institutionalized curricula that become outdated. Instead, they need to be relevant and continually reflect the changing circumstances. The three objectives of the survey were as follows: (i) investigate the current state of theological education throughout Africa, (ii) to report on the trends and tendencies as they affect the recruiting, training and supporting the ministry of the church, and (iii) to make suggestions on the future development of African ecumenical theological education (Goodall and Nielsen 1954:5; Bingle cited by Daughrity 2012:43). The survey was done in three parts. The first was done by Stephen Neill in 1950 and covered East and West Africa. The second was done by Searle Bates (Chairman), Christian G. Baëta, Frank Michaeli and Bengt G. M. Sundkler in 1953 and covered Angola, Belgian Congo, French West Africa, French Equatorial Africa, Liberia, Mozambique and Ruanda-Urundi. The third was done by Norman Goodall and Eric W. Nielsen in 1953 and covered the Union of South Africa, Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The three subsections that follow provide a brief appraisal of the core arguments of the three reports.

4.1. Stephen Neill and the State of Theological Education in Africa, 1950

Stephen Neill (1950:10) discovered through his assessment of theological education in Africa that "the weakness is not so much in the training itself, but as in the inadequacy of the general foundation on which it rests." He reinstated that "if the rising generation is to be in the service of the church, it will need the pastoral care of ministers who have themselves been educated from within the new context of African life, understand its problems, and can understand its new need" (1950:11). Neill found that the whole of the Western mindset which he seemed to be based on Greek dualism was destroying the African mindset which he perceived to be more Hebrew than Greek. Again, the imperial comparison of the European comes out. The African mind is African! Not Hebraic or Greek. Neill (1950:23) questioned,

> It is right that the African mind should be at once made subject to this
> whole weight of tradition, so little native to its own way of thought? Or

would it be wrong to deprive the African student, even for a little time, of what has been found so indispensable to the development of Christian life and experience in the Western world? Should a theological course for the African take its start from the Bible, in its Semitic context, with its dramatic, pictorial, realistic form of expression, and bring in the Greeks only at the end of the course, after the African student has fully, absorbed the biblical revelation directly and not through the distorting medium of Hellenism?

This paragraph highlights the deep struggle that Neill had about the models of theological education he found in Africa. Neill (1950:1) was bothered that theological training was related only to the life of the older churches in Europe, and to the culture by which in part that life was determined; it had no connection at all with the life and traditions of the church in the context in which it exists. Neill believed that with the rapid growing Christianity in Africa there was a need of developing indigenous theological education that could help "the Churches rise to the opportunity" and set the future of Africa "firmly and unalterably in the Christian direction" (1950:4). Downey (1977:29) observed that theological education in Africa "was taught in scholastic categories, which are not only foreign to the African ways of thinking but which are no longer part of the intellectual equipment of the West." It seems that the missionaries operated within the framework of colonialism and imperialism which brought in wholesale and uncritically Western models of education to Africa. In this sense, the missionaries perpetuated a Western hegemony, a trend which has continued to this day.

Neill (1950: 35) was convinced that to develop adequate models of theological education "depended on the courageous acceptance of the necessity for the full co-operation in an organically united theological" education. He believed that educating African ministry within Africa was crucial for developing a more adequate theological and pastoral grounding for relevance ministry (1950:61).[11] This observation was founded on the fact that the African church should take interest in funding for theological education. Neill (1950:61) argues that the "African churches are not poor in comparison to those in India," it is only the capacity to give that was not only partially developed, "but it may be hope that the self-support will steadily increase." Neill further argues that the "church is heading for disaster when it allows its ministry to be less educated than its laymen *[sic]*"

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[11] Neill's (1950:59-61) other recommendations included: more conferences to be held that could bring together theological teachers in the regions, exchange of information and experience should encouraged, setting up three colleges by united effort of the Churches (Kampala, Makerere and Ibadan), For more recommendations see Daughrity (2012:57).

(1950:949). He thus recommended the formation of an international committee on theological education, "to work on the reports of the various enquiries as they come in, to co-ordinate them, to formulate plans and commend them to the churches; and if the plans involve, as almost certainly they will, new financial outlay, to consider how and where" (1950:61) to raise the money. The main concerns seem to revolve around the issues of inadequate models to the demands of modern Africa on which theological education foundations were to be erected (1950:949). Neill however was not alone in calling for an international organization to deal with theological education. For instance, Stanley Smith (nd: 2) writing about at the same time as Neill, argued that theological education in Africa was not only weak but also in a most precarious position, because of its almost completely dependent on the missionaries at practically at every level of the church. Smith (nd: 2) made the urgent call for some organization to plan for the coordination and standardization of the work of theological education on an ecumenical scale.

Neill (1950:21; The IMC 1952:2) also recommended that due to the non-uniformity of African languages, the language of instruction in all theological education should be put into English. He felt almost certain that there would never be vernacular books of the advanced type for theological education at the degree level. This was in direct opposition to the recommendations from both Edinburgh 1910 and the IMC Tambaram 1938 (see sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3). By giving such a recommendation, Neill reinforced the colonial purpose of English to facilitate Western veto powers over the standards of education/accreditation/ordination. This ensured that their staff, whether white or black, would serve their agenda! Second, if the African struggle had been the struggle for authenticity, a fight against different modes of domination (Sindima 1995:60), what is then the place of vernacular and culture in self-realization? John Mbiti (1976:18, see also Idowu 1965:18; Endusa-Eyiso 2006:100-101) questions whether it would be unthinkable for African theological education to require a local language along with the teaching language? It is my argument that Africanization cannot be fully realized in the coloniser's language (see chapter 8.1). In Africa, people celebrate their languages as a cultural medium through which they make sense of themselves and Christian faith. Although, theological education is taught in English in most theological institutions, African people have learnt to make sense of Christian belief and practices through their local languages. Nevertheless, most of Neill's recommendations remain crucial for African theological

education today. For example, the need for ecumenical cooperation in theological education is still a dream waiting to be fully realized. In the case of educating African ministers, more and more institutions have embarked on offering postgraduate degrees, although not many are contextual in nature. Nevertheless, some of the recommendations that Neill raised have been followed up and achieved. For example, the formation in the 1958 of the TEF as the international committee seems to have been a direct response to Neil's recommendations. The following section continues with the second IMC report on theological education in Africa.

4.2. Searle Bates *et al.,* and the State of Theological Education in 1953

The IMC was concerned that the rapid growth of members in the African Church was not matched with the requirement of African theological education. "The need for better theological education was seen as acute and deserved a rapid response for the provision of an indigenous ministry in the younger churches" (Bates *et al.*, 1954:7-8). Bates *et al.*, (1954:14) discovered through the survey that "African pastors, teachers and other church leaders have been too cramped in education, in geographical range, and in particular ecclesiastical or mission tradition, to think freely, intelligently, and imaginatively, about the needed possible advances in their churches and in their training schools." Although this mentality is blamed on Africans, as observed above (see section 3.1) the missionary standard model was patterned off the colonial political model of governance with concentric circles of power relations to render African Christians subservient. One can argue that through theological education the missionaries unconsciously or consciously shared their presuppositions, paradigms and theological prejudices with African Christian and in turn Africans internalized these assumptions as Christian norms. Bates *et al.,* (1954:14 italics original) underlined the fact that,

> *There must be African pastors who are adequately fitted to see the visions of what the Church of Jesus Christ should be on that continent; to make difficult decisions of principle and policy; to think and teach and write on high ground, for the needs of the Church and their people; to bear increasingly—and, if it be God's will, alone—the whole burden of the Church.*

This imperative remains critical for African theological education. African theological education has an acute responsibility to effectively equip not only pastors but the

Christian community for the current situation in Africa. As Chukwudum Okolo (1977:16) pointed out, a critical reflection reveals that theological education is far from being adequate particularly when judged in the light of the contemporary challenges facing the continent. For example, Pentecostal theological education has been hailed as the one of the "prime generators" of Western Pentecostal fundamentalism and epistemology in Africa (Anderson 2004:5). In 1956, Paul Fueter (1956:377) observed that most "European missionaries come to Africa with Western ideas and ideals." Fueter (1956:378) further argued that "our aim ought to be not only to bring what is best from Europe to Africa, but also to help our brethren to know themselves and pacify this inner revolt." The need for independent thinking and to envision a distinctive destiny for African Christianity has been halted again and again by persistent interference from outside of the continent. It was therefore difficult for African Christians to develop a distinctive theological thinking in the atmosphere where they were being trained, consciously and unconsciously, to despise their own culture. Anthony N. O. Ekwunife (1997:197) affirms that having been trained in an atmosphere that was hostile to African culture and religion, one could not have expected Africans to inculturate the gospel. African pastors and teachers rightly argued "our people are dropping the old paganism and taking hold of the European paganism" (cited in Bates *et al.,* 1950:17). One can argue that the 'European paganism' was perpetuated through a theological education that did not give consideration to the African way of life. In this, three major difficulties were uncovered: (i) missionaries did not consider theological education as an imperative for Africans, (ii) the average age of a minister was much too high and hence they were often unable to find common ground with the youth, and (iii) the chronic discontinuity that resulted from missionaries doing everything by themselves (Bates *et al.,* 1950:50). The survey called for the inclusion of Africans on the staff of theological schools. It was also observed that women who made up the largest population of the church were neglected in theological education (Bates *et al.,* 1950:53-54). Bates *et al.,* (1950:54) questioned:

> If women with little training do so much for the churches, and if in their efforts natural leadership appears among older girls and young women, why should not the training programmes work with excellent material at hand?

This is the only report that gave attention to the need for women to be theologically equipped. The other crucial issue that Bates *et al.,* (1950:70) struggled with was the relationship between African culture and the gospel. Bates *et al.,* (1950:72) questioned:

What can be kept, modified, used for Christian purposes, from older
African culture? What elements of Africa religion and culture provide
useful points of contact for the presentation of the Christian massage?

The fact that Bates *et al.*,[12] could not provide any definite answer to the fear of syncretism
shows the deep ambivalence and suspicion with which African culture and religion were
viewed by the missionaries. Theological education lacked any form of contextualization
because the missionaries had negative attitudes towards African culture. Bates *et al.,*
(1950:26-27) as with Neill, recommended that all French and Portuguese territories
should use French and Portuguese as the required languages of instruction in line with
the government policies on language (see my critique above on Neill). For example,
Bates *et al.*, (1950:67) reports that "the use of traditional African tunes is a problem that
has to be met on the spot, according to the degree of injurious associations." It is also
clear from the three approaches which Bates *et al.*, (1950:73) suggested for teaching
African culture and religion, it should be as a comparative approach towards religion or
the history of religions. In this, African students should know the diversity of primitive
religions as an entity of paganism in Africa—not animism abstracted from its setting and
perhaps to seek to interpret student's own experiences. They also argued that few
missionaries and Africans were really qualified to conduct such a course. Theological
education in contemporary Africa seems to have retained this ambivalent character
towards African culture and religion.

4.3. Norman Goodall and Eric Nielsen: The State of Theological Education in 1953

The third report was undertaken in 1953 by Norman Goodall and Eric Nielsen (1954).
This report states that in some theological institutions the wives of students were given
some teaching but were not allowed to do theological studies themselves (1954:28).
Goodall and Nielsen (1954:28) argue that there was "extremely difficult to systematize in
relation to any given course of students on account of the very great disparity in the

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[12] Bates *et al.*, (1950:94-95) recommended that the training of minsters be moved to a central place in the
work of the churches and missions, that determined efforts to increase number of trained pastors be made
as well as to improve the function and personnel of the present catechetical, increase the training of laymen
and women, to develop purposeful and reflective study, carry our a continuous programme of recruitment
for the ministry, that each church and mission should carefully restudy its support for the ministry and
begin "at once a comprehensive and continuing effort of stewardship," inter-mission and inter-church
cooperation in the training of ministry.

general educational standard of the women." It seems that the teaching they were given was meant to simply keep them occupied. Phiri and Mombo (2010:57) affirm that during this period, women attended seminaries merely as the wives of their student husbands rather than as theological students in their own right. Women's access to theological education was a long and difficult struggle for the recognition of their God-given humanity and calling to ministry.

Goodall and Nielsen (1954:30) also highlighted the "European denominationalism" as a new form of tribalism that was fragmenting African people. Christianity was perceived by African people as destabilising the bond of community and this resulted in divided loyalties between church and African cultural allegiances (1954:30). At that time, institutionalized racism in Southern Africa also contributed to Africans growing indifferent to Christianity. Goodall and Nielsen (1954:32) felt that there was "taking place a resurgence of old pagan beliefs and traditions." Goodall and Nielsen (1954:41) argued that the primary "task of the Church is to witness within its 'given situation'; hence our sympathy with all attempt to give a 'realistic' edge to the minister's training." To adequately respond to the context, a minister must be theologically trained. This was not simply a subject matter in academic terms, but an ability to relate the Christian gospel to contexts in which the church exists (1954:42). Goodall and Nielsen (1954:42)[13] believed that theological education was a solution to what they called "the whole painful problem posed by the existence and rapid growth of the 'Separatist' churches." What Goodall and Nielsen did not take into account was to recognize the contribution these churches were making to the indigenization of African Christianity, thus proving that denominationalism was not all negative in Africa. Indeed, they became a counter movement against political and ecclesiastical domination by the Western missionaries and coloniser by giving local people a political voice. Goodall and Nielsen (1954:42) affirmed theological education as "one of the key points in the emergence of the indigenous Church." This meant that the missionaries were only paving the way for the emergence of "the church-that-is-to-be" that would continue the work of preparing its own ministers, not necessarily in continuity with its missionary beginnings, but along the same lines (1954:42). Probably this was one of the greatest insights that emerged from the

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[13] Goodall and Nielsen (1954:60-61) recommended the following: recruitment and adequately training of ministers must be one of the principal aims of the church, the structure of the ministry and the forms of ministry must be appropriate to the missionary situation in Africa, the in-depth improvement requires men who are not only aware of the issues but who have an aptitude to listen to Africans and as well as to teach them, and finally to set up resources and consider uniting existing colleges.

report. Goodall and Nielsen (1954:49) struggled to recommend English as the medium of instruction based on their understanding that language is more than just a means of communication but a reflection of the thought patterns and the ethos of the people. As a result, they supported the recommendation of Edinburgh 1910 and the IMC by clarifying the argument. Their argument is significant because one cannot escape the difficult of expressing theology in African languages by using English and consequently denying Africans the right to wrestle with finding their own processes of expressing Christianity in their own languages. Goodall and Nielsen (1954:50) were convinced that it was of vital importance that theological educators using non-African languages as their teaching medium be "acquainted with one African language, whether or not it is used as a principal language of instruction." Goodall and Nielsen (1954:43-44) further suggested that there was a need to raise the academic standards of training. It was their firm conviction that the most important steps towards achieving authenticity would be to give the responsibility of teaching of theology over to African theologians. This was a lucid observation and in it constitutes the first crucial step towards Africanization of theological education. If this step was made earlier, perhaps theological education would have intentionally journeyed more miles toward enculturation than where it is now. Goodall and Nielsen (1954:61) also suggested setting resources for theological education and asking the missionaries and African churches to recognise the gravity of the theological situation in Africa and consider uniting the existing colleges for further effectiveness.

5. General Evaluation of the Missionary of Period from 1910-1957

A lack of available space does not make it easy to present a full evaluation of the development and transformation of theological education over such a long period of time. Instead, I will raise some cores factors that seem to reflect the situation of theological education in Africa from Edinburgh 1910 to the IMC surveys through to 1957.

First, while Edinburgh 1910 called for gender-sensitive education, theological education; in the aftermath of the conference, the mission agencies still operated according to a time-honoured patriarchal ideology (see section 3.1.3). Phiri and Mombo (2010:56) have

argued that since theological education was the privilege of the ordained ministry during the period of the evangelisation of Africa, denominations and missionaries who were against the ordination of women were also unlikely to include women in the programme of theological education. Clearly, church ministry was based on the priesthood of men which meant that theological education was almost completely dominated by men (Amanze 2009:123). James Amanze (:123) observes that even mission fields were dominated by males "at the expense of female missionaries whose presence was often overshadowed." Yet this changed, especially with the "Faith Mission"[14] which developed a new theological orientation that created room for women to be missionaries in their own right (Fiedler 1994:293). Fiedler (1994:293) has shown that Africa benefited from the policy that Hudson and Maria Taylor created who from the beginning counted women as full missionaries. This decision meant that women were also qualified and authorized to be sent as missionaries to Africa. Unfortunately, the relatively advanced position of women missionaries in the church was not transferred to African women. Phiri and Mombo (2010:56) lament that for a long time even the schools that were established by female missionaries educated only men because there was an expectation that they would take over from the female missionaries as leaders of the church. Phiri and Mombo (2010:57) stressed that the very low status women have had in African culture was the basis for denying them theological education. One would think that this should have been a main reason for offering women theological education but instead it was used as tool for suppressing them. This shows that African women had no place in theological education during this period.

Second, in observing the emphasis of the IMC survey reports, theological education in Africa was meant for the benefit of the minority—the ordained (male) ministry (see 4). In short, theological education was reserved for the ordained ministry to support a clergy-centred church. In many cases, it also became a tool for producing a professional elite class who were incapable of responding adequately "to the needs of the masses, preoccupied with position and privilege at the expense of dynamic, corporate ministry" (Kinsler 1981:8). Ross Kinsler (1981:14) argues that theological education was an "accumulation of information" at the expense of praxis. Since theological education was

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[14] The Faith Mission Movement in Africa was stimulated by the evangelical revivals of 1859-1873 and traces the origin of its principle to Hudson Taylor and his wife Maria and the China Inland Mission (CIM) they founded in 1865. The movement held the 'faith-principle' of financial support and was inter-denominational in nature (Fiedler 1994:11).

based on Western models, which affirmed that the Christian faith is best understood in academic terms utilizing scientific methods and as shown through proper referencing and bibliography, it engendered individualism and elitism. As a consequence, this provided opportunities for an individual's upward mobility (Smith 2007:21). This view is based on a modernist Enlightenment philosophy with its division of theology into the sum of the disciplines, the valuing of objectivity, theories and facts and where religion itself was considered to be a matter of individual conviction and private expression (Duncan 2000:25). This model is inadequate in terms of an African worldview which does not place a dichotomy between the private and public or the personal and community dimensions of religious conviction. It is also inadequate because it cannot penetrate the frontiers of the many contextual issues Africans face such as gender, race, classism, the ecological crisis, and so on. In this way, it reinforced a dichotomy between the clergy and laity and made the churches dependent upon a highly trained professional class of ministers (Kinsler 1981:12). This also reveals how expensive it was to maintain theological education of this nature. Kinsler (1981:24) observes that theological education during missionary era was "extremely expensive and created a heavy financial burden for the church…for the produce of professional pastors at higher and higher support levels." This also implies that theological education was content and individual oriented rather than context and people oriented (Pobee1997c:124; Byaruhanga 2009:5).

The legacy of this approach is threefold: First, it claimed theories that had no connection with the actual experiences of the base community of faith. Second, it claimed a 'zombie type ministers' who constantly endeavoured to apply the theory over which they had no ownership and which meant little or nothing to their churches. Third, it gave preference to abstract thinking. In this sense more value was given to the things that were seen as pure and everything material was seen as inferior. In these terms, theological education became a mind game at the exclusion of experiences and practices of the community of faith in which the minister serves. Fourth, while Edinburgh 1910 saw [theological] education as being *necessary* for developing an indigenous Christianity (see section, 3.2), it nevertheless ignored the keys players in the indigenization movement, misrepresented African Initiated Churches (AICs) and paid little or no attention to African culture (Kalu 2010:103). The assumption that African religion and culture were 'pagan and primitive' has perpetuated the contemporary pervasive reluctance and refusal by some Christian sectors due to their fear of religious syncretism to take the African cultural heritage

seriously as a substratum for the development of an authentic African Christianity. It was "the peril of syncretism as seen in grossly unsatisfactory churches or those prophets and sects which have smothered in pagan or semi-pagan practices all responses to the Christian Gospel, and even to the knowledge of the Gospel" (Bates *et al.*, 1950:72) that was so feared by the missionaries. The only remedy they saw was through cooperative efforts in theological education to combat such by transforming the minds of Africans.

The abovementioned three reports contradict one another. While they argue that the inadequacy of theological education in Africa was due to the church uncritically following Western patterns this argument fails to equip the pastors to deal with the contextual needs for social reconstruction and denies the space for African indigenous ideas of theological education.

Fifth, theological education was regarded as an *antidote* against denominationalism and academic departmentalism (see 4). The three surveys above underlined theological education as one of the crucial ways of escaping a denominationalism imprisonment that was hampering the progress and effectiveness of the church in Africa. Both Edinburgh 1910 and Tambaram 1938, in considering the immensity of the challenge of theological education, urged for missionary cooperative and united efforts in improving the standard of theological education in the 'younger churches' (see sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2). As a result, the challenge of denominationalism began to affect the efficacy of missionary work. Some of the theological institutions were characterized by very strong sectarian and isolationist tendencies and were completely controlled by missionaries of a particular denomination. Amanze (2009:124) notes that the curriculum of theological education was an exactly duplicate of the curriculum of the 'mother' Western churches in the global south. Hans-Werner Gensichen (1963:155) argues that little was done in many theological institutions in Africa to overcome the missionary legacy of confessional and academic departmentalization and narrow-mindedness.

Sixth, although the Jerusalem Council, 1921 had made a shift in its thinking to engage with other world faiths: "the life and message in relation to the non-Christian systems of thought and life" (Ariarajah 1991:49), the IMC reports completely neglected the religious plurality of Africa. The council was looking for values in other faiths, a situation which was further debated at Tambaram in 1938. While the Tambaram conference defended

the ultimate truth of the Christian message vis-à-vis non-Christian religions, it nevertheless recommended that missionaries utilize a listening and dialogical approach. Unfortunately, this crucial aspect seems to have been overlooked in the survey that was done on theological education in Africa.

6. Chapter Summary

The aim of this chapter was to offer a selective and concise historical development of the renovations of theological education in Africa from Edinburgh 1910 through to the IMC surveys, 1953-1957. The chapter argues, although not explicitly, for an African continent where already at Edinburgh 1910, the crucial need for [theological] education had been recognized. The first was the need for missionary cooperation in [theological] education. The second was the need for a gender-sensitive [theological] education. The third was the need for developing indigenous forms of expression of Christianity.

This chapter has also demonstrated that through the three IMC surveys on the situation of theological education in Africa, the need for well-prepared church ministers and theologians according to the standards and expectations of the missionaries was one of the more crucial foundations that engendered a continuous examination of the philosophical and theological underpinnings of theological education. This could only be achieved by searching for innovative models for doing theological education in terms of both relevance and quality in the context of Africa.

Tension between the interests of the academies as explained above (see 4), and the concern to prepare persons for critical engagement for social ministry pointed to the need for reformation at the intersection of knowing and praxis if theological education was going to become viable in Africa.

The next chapter continues with an intellectual excavation of the historical development and transformation of the TEF in the Protestant Christian efforts to cooperate in theological education. The historical assumptions underlying the issues will be analysed as well as the debates and trends which have emerged through distinctive manifestations of the TEF as significant in the process of realization of this dream.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION OF AFRICAN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION 1958-2012

> The crucial problem of African theological education is the achievement of theological relevance in the complex milieu of modern Africa (TEF 1959:21).

1. Introduction

In the foregoing chapter, I have shown that theological education had its roots in the missionary movement of the nineteenth century and its inspiration was to be found in the desire of missionaries to establish cooperation for greater success in the foreign mission field. I have explicated the missionaries' bias that led to rivalry and competition on the mission field that demanded an ecumenical approach to missions. In the pronouncements of the international missionary councils, theological education was constantly perceived as the weakest element in the entire missionary enterprise. Between 1950 and 1957, the International Missionary Conference (IMC) conducted a survey on the state of theological education in Africa in order to develop a strategy for improving the situation. As highlighted above (see section 3), this led to the call for an international committee on theological education. It was observed that while there was a worldwide concern and appropriate organization to deal with many of the ecumenical issues of Christianity throughout the world, the most crucial aspect of Christianity that is theological education was summarily neglected on all ecumenical fronts (Smith nd:2).

It is the IMC studies on theological education in the 'younger churches' as explained above (see section 3.3) that were the forerunners which lead to the establishment of the Theological Education Fund (TEF) as an international organization on theological education—a moment in time that was to prove a watershed moment in the life and orientation of African theological education.

The intention of this chapter is to demonstrate how significant transformations or paradigm shifts within the TEF/Programme for Theological Education (PTE)/

Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE) contributed to the development of essential elements, principles and conceptions of an African theological education that promotes a just and equitable African Christian community. The chapter covers the time from the formation of the TEF in 1958 to 1976, and through its subsequent transformations and developments as the PTE and the ETE from 1977 to 2012. In particular, the chapter will analyse the historical discourse underlying the issues, debates and trends within the TEF in relation to theological education in Africa and will be developed as follows:

First, an analysis of the historical[15] progression and transformation of the TEF will be offered together with an evaluation of the developments and debates on various methodological approaches that have emerged within various TEF conversations. Second, an appraisal will be made of the various consultations on African theological education. Third, an evaluation of the contribution of the TEF/PTE/ETE to African theological education will be offered. Finally, a summary will conclude the chapter.

In order to allow for a clear understanding of the historical development of the TEF and its associated institutions, the chapter is presented in chronological order, in as concise as possible a manner and in some places at the risk of providing an over-synthetic analysis. That said, a comprehensive analysis and assessment will appear later (see chapter 8).

2. The Wind of Change: The Formation of the TEF, 1958

The TEF[16] was funded under the IMC at the conference in Accra, Ghana in 1958. The formation of the TEF[17] was largely due to the tireless efforts and commitment of the

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[15] The purpose of this chapter is not to repeat the history of the TEF, although this is briefly brought to the fore. For a detailed discussion on the history of the TEF see Lienemann (1981) and Russell (1995) who have extensively analysed the historical development of the TEF according to its three mandates. Russell (1995) in particular has provided an in-depth evaluation of the notion of contextualization tracing it from the early church and later how it was understood and used by within the TEFs third mandate.

[16] The TEF was initially located in the city of New York and then later moved to Bromley, England (Tutu 1988:436). The TEF remained a commission and was changed to a programme when it moved to Geneva in the 1970s, to be physically located within the WCC (Pobee 2008:25). This meant a loss of degree of independence that the TEF previous had from the WCC. Nevertheless, it remained unique within the WCCs programmes through its practical function of distributing funds for the advancement of theological education in the so-called 'Two-Thirds' World. This function led to an on-going process of critical reflection on the nature, purpose and function of theological education in the part of the world. Pobee thinks that the relocation of the TEF base from Bromley to Geneva was a significant step in developing a global theological education which was given a significant support by WCC. "This important step not only physically located the TEF within the vicinity of the WCC, but also integrated the rich history" which

General Secretary of the IMC, Charles W. Ranson (Lienemann-Perrin 1981:15-16). The TEF was inaugurated with an initial capital of US$4 million. Half of this money was donated by the Rockefeller Foundation and the other half by the nine American mission boards to cover a period of five years (IMF 1958:53; 2008:12). It must be stressed that the Rockefeller Foundation had a long history in African education. This project involved the training of "domestic elites" in those African countries which were targeted for exploitation and domination. This was crucial in the time of the Cold War between the US-led NATO powers and the Soviet bloc countries from 1945-1990. In the midst of this political hostility, respect for Christianity in the Western bloc was so pervasive that some equated it with American patriotism. Accordingly, the Rockefeller Foundation's purpose of funding theological education was explicitly stated "to aid in the development of vital religious leadership" (cited in Whitefield 1996:187). In particular, education was viewed as a critical tool for social control and reinforcing the capitalist ideology that was the 'flip side' of the stigmatization of communist ideology. In this regard, the power of the Rockefeller Foundation was not in dictating what was to be told but in defining the kind of global south Christian leaders to be created who would be responsible for propagating an anti-communist ideology and thereby pay their allegiance to the capitalist bloc of Western countries. This seems to have determined the kind of projects that were funded (Arnove cited in Marshall 2011). One can thus argue that the purposes and consequences of Rockefeller Foundation funding for theological education in the global south was somehow influenced by cultural domination.

Having donated the money for the Theological Education Fund, emphasis was placed on its main purpose of sponsoring ecumenical understanding and not simply a concern for the US (Lienemann-Perrin 1981:15-16). The assembly was convinced that such a project should be international in support and operation and therefore urged every member of the board of the IMC to make an additional contribution to the Fund (IMC 1958:53). Furthermore, the assembly affirmed the statement made by the representatives of the

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WCC had accumulated over the years as bigger ecumenical body (2008:71-76). Pobee (2008:73) further highlights that the PTE blossomed to become the ETE. The Canberra statement stressed the ecumenical thrust and the context it engendered at the turn of 1990s. The Canberra statement was critical in facilitating creating a context in which the TEF could merge with the Ecumenical Institute in Chateau de Bossey, in order to form "one constellation of Ecumenical Theological Education" (2008:73).

[17] When the TEF-IMC was integrated with the WCC in 1961, the board which succeeded the IMC was the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CMWE) and the TEFs governing board became a division within this Commission. The TEF remained in existence for a further nineteen years and formally ceased to exist in 1977 being transformed into a new sub-unit of the WCC and changing its name to Programme on Theological Education (PTE) (Russell 1995:108).

principal donor to Ranson, who also became the first TEF Executive Director, regarding the administration of the Fund, and which was approved by the nine American mission boards in agreement to meet the offer of the Sealantic Fund,[18]

> It is recommended that the council set up a 'Theological Education Fund Committee' of approximately 20 members charged with the responsibility of supervising the project. The membership of the Committee would include Protestant leaders of various denominations from both the younger and older church areas, as well as representatives of mission boards contributing to the project. Two executive would be employed full-time by the Committee to administer the two main phases of the project, namely making grants to a few key seminaries and carry out a text Program (IMC 1958:53).

According to this statement, the 'younger churches'[19] were included in the committee right from the inception of the TEF to monitor its development and act as instruments in sketching the future of theological education within their respective continents. Second, by the fact that Africans were now given opportunity to participate in the international committee, it showed that at last there was recognition of the growing autonomy of the churches in Africa and their need to speak for themselves. This raises the question: to what extent was their voice heard?

Another purpose of the committee was to use the financial resources in two ways: first, "by grants to selected institutions, chosen on the basis of their strategic location, the quality of their present work and their plans for future development." Second, the committee was to assign approximately "one million dollars for use in the improvement of the libraries of theological schools and the preparation and translation of suitable theological texts" (IMC 1958:53-54, Ranson 1958:433). It was proposed that the committee should "pursue a policy of concentration by limiting its institutional grants to approximately twenty seminaries throughout the younger church areas" (IMC 1958:53; Ranson 1958:434). This limitation did not apply to the library which meant that any institution in the 'younger churches' could benefit.

What seems more explicit and crucial in these recommendations was the endeavour to *build on strength*. Accordingly, the strategic role of the TEF was to assist the 'younger

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[18] The Sealantic Fund was one of the principle foundations of John D. Rockefeller Jnr. that was instrumental in donating financial resources to religious institutions.
[19] Two Africans were included on the TEF Committee; C. G. Baëta (Ghana) and D. G. S. M'Timkulu (Rhodesia).

churches' in the strengthening and renewal of theological education. It follows that the purpose was to make grants in aid to promote the development of and strengthening of "indigenous theological education and theological thinking;" and the provision of "higher standard of scholarship and training" suitable to the demands of the churches (IMC 1958:54 and 434). This standing point of the TEF was significant for African Christianity at that time. What was of special importance was the fact that the TEF was inaugurated and its life-span had been located within the period of political liberation and decolonization of Africa. The 'winds of change' were sweeping across the African continent. Ghana, the hosting country, had just become the first African country to gain independence on March 6, 1957 (Pobee 1997:25). Vincent Khapoya (1998:148) observes that African people noticed the ambiguity between the Christian teaching of universal equality and the dignity of every human being and the treatment they received from missionaries. African people were tired of being oppressed and exploited within their continent and began to affirm their right to self-determination. Sindima (1995:60) argues that the African struggle for decolonisation was "a struggle for authenticity and identity; a fight against different modes of domination." Indeed, it can be argued that in the same way colonization necessitated the Edinburgh 1910 call for evangelization of the non-Christian world as highlighted above (see section, 3.1.2), political independence in Africa also necessitated or forced the churches to call for a Western moratorium on Christian mission. Lamentably, political independence has led to economic dependence and vulnerability. In terms of theological education, critical questions can be raised: in what ways has theological education improved from the time missionaries left Africa to the present day? What have been the developments in theological education since independence?

One assumes that this historical context somehow informed the TEFs self-understanding in relation to Africa. One can indeed argue that in the same way that colonialism made Africa 'the white man's burden,' Western missionaries had made theological education in African their burden. From the beginning, the TEF utilized the mandate system approach to ensure that its activities came up for regular evaluation of its progress and for the purposes of accountability and transparency. The life-span of the TEF covered three mandates in all from its governing body. Each mandate had a unique and precise focus as will now be shown.

2.1.   The First Mandate and Notion of Indigenization

The first mandate (1958-1965) attempted to raise scholarship, strived for academic excellence and scientific standards of theological education, and focused on the notion of 'indigenisation' in order to strength indigenous theological education. This process involved strengthening academic competence and of the student community by raising entrance requirements, curriculum revision, improving teaching methods, improving the quality of lecturers, dialogue with contemporary educationalists and the strengthening of Christian community in theological education institutions (TEF 1959:4; Lienemann-Perrin 1981:113-114). This led to the launch of two major programmes that supplied major grants as well as libraries and textbooks (TEF 1972:12). Precisely, the first mandate concerned with the advancement of theological education in Africa can be summarized as follows:

> We conceive our contribution…to lie primarily in the strengthening of a few representatively distributed institutions for the training of the ordained ministry. We will attempt to help those institutions which in return help others and serve to improve theological education over a wider area. We believe that we should build on strength, and by strengthening theological education. By theological education we mean combination of profound scholarship and deep devotion… reaching out dynamically to the wider society beyond the church. We look to such education for the development of *indigenous Christian thought in local language*…the crux problem is to find means of better education which will combine strenuous theological discipline, deep pastoral devotion, insight and capacity in dealing with African situation of today and tomorrow…the crucial problem of African theological education is the achievement of theological relevance in the complex of milieu of modern Africa (TEF 1959:1, 15, 21).

By quoting this TEF Committee report at length, it exposes the main elements of their concern. First, initially the TEF[20] was 'ordained ministry' focused. This perhaps was its

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[20] It must be noted that the problem of theological education in Africa was beyond the scope of the TEF at that time (TEF 1960-1961:17). The Ad Hoc Committee recommended that in addition to the framework of TEFs mandate another complementary programme dealing with critically important needs not included in the work of the TEF Committee. In response to this proposal, in 1961, the North American Consultative Committee on assistance to theological education in Africa was formally constituted which discussed the plans to set-up theological staff institutes for strengthening of those who are teaching in theological schools. Through this consultation, an annual sum of approximately US$15 000 was pledged for the year (TEF 1960:18). This was significant because its aim was deliberately at bringing higher theological learning to the largest possible number of theological instructors in Africa rather than giving a few individuals the privilege of doing postgraduate studies in Western schools. It was also an endeavour to increase the use of Africans as staff members and reduce expatriates (TEF 1961:2). The TEF Committee

limiting factor because around this time the majority of ordinands were male. Yet, it will be fair to say that while its focus remained on the ordained ministry, the TEF was still in the process of trying to clarify for whom it should educate and for what kind of ministry (Lienemann-Perrin 1981:85, 89; Arles 2006:426). Second, it was concerned with a combination of rigorous academic scholarship reaching out dynamically to society beyond the local church. Probably this was the beginning of theological education for social ministry in Africa. It was argued that the major step forward was to provide theological education on a new and higher level: the level of university instruction (TEF 1981:4). Although Lienemann-Perrin (1981:122) argues that the TEF was oriented towards the *élite* in both its work style and strategy, it could be argued that the TEF utilized this model because of its concern for the equal distribution of theological education in the world. The best theological education at that time was seen to be offered by the *elite* in Western society. To envision equality and justice, it was inevitable to replicate these models. Yet, by the TEF having indigenization as its primary objective, there was a possibility that Christianity will take root. Third, the TEF was concerned with developing indigenous Christian thought in the local language. The notion of indigenization was not invented by the TEF; it was a legacy of Edinburgh 1910 (see 3.2.1). The TEF understood the notion of indigenization "in the sense of responding to the Gospel in terms of traditional culture" (TEF 1972:19). It was an attempt to express theological truth within indigenous patterns and find new forms for the Christian ministry which reflected the indigenous social structures (Ranson 1958:437). Ranson (1958:437) further argues that indigenization was about assisting "the 'younger churches' to increase and strengthen a ministry which will 'possess' the heritage of Christian faith and be at the same time truly indigenous and 'at home' in the culture of its own land." Keith Bridston criticized the way the notion was conceptualized within the TEF. In his understanding, the view presupposed that there was a theological truth which could be abstracted from the Western form of theological training and 'reclothed' in an indigenous form (cited in Lienemann-Perrin 1981:106). In such a perspective of indigenization, the form and the content of theological truth were separated. In this sense, the truth which was to be extracted from the Western form was in a sense a part of the Western form itself, which unconsciously was being exported to the 'younger churches' (1981:107). As in the paragraph below, Bridston felt that the TEF lacked,

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was given the responsibility to receive and administer the funds that had been raised for the African staff theological development (Ad-Hoc Committee 1961:2).

…criteria for knowing whether this theology is either indigenous, or even good for that matter. In fact, we might even say because of our deeply ingrained intellectual and theological superiority complexes, it may be those who appear to us to be unintelligible, to be heretical, to be syncretic, are most likely to be the ones who are truly engaged in indigenous theological activities (cited in Lienemann-Perrin 1981:107).

This statement shows that the model of the indigenization within the context of colonization seems to possess hidden veto in the process that influences the model of ministry as well as the rights to ordination and post-graduate development. It was not the indigenous people that set the agenda for what was considered to be indigenous but the outsiders. Besides, the TEF conceptualization of indigenous knowledge does not express an awareness of the existence of African Indigenous Churches (AICs) and their need for a relevant theological education. That said, some African theologians have argued that the AICs theology had always been indigenized from its inception (Bediako 1995:118-119; Kalu 2010:103). The question that this raises is clear: was the TEF without being aware of it, utilizing indigenization as an imperialistic tool of exporting missionary colonialism to Africa?

It seems that the encounter between the gospel and culture that the TEF implied that the gospel without betraying its Christian identity, has to encounter, interrogate and clarify the African religious and cultural heritage and adapt whatever aspects of the African culture and religion it can without risking its integrity (Bediako 1992:354) and succumb to the problem of syncretism by its own advantage. Lienemann-Perrin (1981:122) feels that the TEF promoted the notion of indigenization from an elite "style and strategy; it expected the incentives for the innovation and improvement of ministerial training in the younger churches to come from the elites." The foregoing discussion shows that there were debates on the actual meaning of the notion within the TEF, I return to the debates on indigenization within African theological development in section 2.1.2. First, it is significant to briefly address the theological educational vision of All Africa Conference of Churches (*hereafter*, AACC) as another crucial ecumenical development in Africa that coincided with the establishment of TEF.

2.1.1 "Christian Education in a Changing Africa": The Vision of AACC, 1962

In the process of the development of this theological motif within TEF, AACC was inauguration in Kampala, Uganda, April 1963. In the same the same year TEF was inaugurated (see section 2), representatives from African churches who met at Ibadan in Nigeria, in 1958 decided to establish a regional ecumenical organization (AACC 2012). It has been argued that founding "of the AACC marked the end of the missionary era and the beginning of the autonomy of African Churches" (AACC 2012). While this may be true, one can also noticed that during this period, AACC could not be considered as an innocent or neutral endeavour that totally acted for the benefits of Africa and Africans. It seems to have acted as a *doubled edged sword*. On the one edge, it was financially undergirded by the global north which perpetuated dependence and worked against self-reliance and determination. Financing AACC was a strategy to maintain European influence on the continent. In this 'donor-recipient' relationship, Europeans maintained control and veto power over the local ecclesiastical structures. It reflected an emerging ecclesiastical colonial and imperial order. On the other edge, AACC was an instrument that facilitated the movement towards indigenization, the notion which was imported from the first mandate of TEF. The theme of the Kampala Assembly was "Freedom and Unity in Christ" which "addressed the colonial situation in the spirit of nationalism that permeated the political scene of the continent at the time" (AACC 2012). This was a call for indigenization in Africa as a strategy for liberation and self-determination. The method utilised to facilitating the movement towards indigenization was theological education.

Consequently, the road to Kampala Assembly was marked by a survey for a viable [theological] education[21]. This was one of keys issues that were later address at Kampala Assembly (Nile 1963:410). The survey conference for viable [theological] education was held under the auspices of All Africa Churches Conference at the University College of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe and Zambia) and Nyasaland (now Malawi) from 29 December 1962 to 10 January 1963. This conference was under the theme, "Christian Education in a Changing Africa". The focus was improving the general standards of living for African people. For the first time, more than 130 theologians and Churches leader in Africa came together to examine the African Church's task of education in its various dimensions in

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[21]Christian Education was understood in a broader sense which included all forms of education such as Christian teaching in secular institutions, Sunday school and theological education (All Africa Churches Conference 1963:34).

the new Africa[22] (All Africa Churches Conference 1963:5). The aim was to arrive at some common perspectives regarding the future role of the churches in education. It laid the foundations for a new Christian cooperation in promoting theological education. Among the various principles affirmed for [theological] education were,

> The Church is charged with commission to make the truth entrusted to it available to each generation. Each new generation must be taught the truth that sets the mind free and be challenged to live at its fullest and best and so to fulfil the purpose of God. Each person must learn what it means to live an abundant life in his [her] community. And each community must learn God's purpose for it and for the world (All Africa Churches Conference 1963:31).

Evidently, the ground was already laid for envisioning a viable theological education within AACC. The principle aim of this form of theological education was to liberate the mind from missionary domination. The conference also raised a number of criticisms against the missionary education. First, it neglected or was intolerant to African culture. Second, it was denominational and often increased division. Third, the method it followed fostered dependence and weakened self-reliance and responsibility among Africans (:33). Thus, the concern of the conference was for the theological "education of all people" (:34). The theme that was populated by TEF in the 1970s (see section 3.1) The conference perceived the goal of theological education as means for comprehending and appreciating God's creation; an instrument for developing genuine relationship and reconciliation; and for aiding responsible decisions (:34-35). These goals also touched on issues of governance and policy making within African countries. In the recommendations, four issues were considered as priorities, namely: equipping competent African teachers for theological education, development of leaders for African countries, education for women and girls. The issue of education for women and children was perceived as woefully "neglected and one of the main challenges was to correct the imbalance, which cannot be tolerated in a just and progressive society" (:60-61). The other priority was the creation of a Commission for central fund as means to "provide a continuing source for encouragement of self-aid in Christian education" (:75). As highlighted above, these issues were reaffirmed as significant at Kampala Assembly which called for "a more adequate theological training of both clergy and laity" (Nile 1963:410). Thus, AACC along with the TEF has continued to be a theological education force for envisioning an alternative society (see section 3.6). Like TFE, the notion of

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[22] Including Catholic Church observers and partners.

indigenization in theological education was crucial in the self-understanding of AACC. It is important therefore, to establish how African theologians understood this notion in relation especially to TEF's first mandate during which AACC was established.

2.1.2   An African Understanding of Indigenization

Accordingly, one of the key aspects for the TEF supporting any theological institution was in showing evidence of indigenization, this make it even more important to review the wider debates on the notion of indigenization by African theologians. Notably, the process of indigenization of Christianity in Africa was begun during the larger socio-political struggle for political and economic independence. Here, the focus will be on the debates of Bolaji Idowu (1965), John Mbiti (1979) and Kwame Bediako (1995). One of the most influential scholars in this area was Bolaji E. Idowu. In his book, *Towards an Indigenous Church*, Idowu's intention was to call upon African Christians to establish a church with an African stamp. Idowu (1965:23) believed that a church that is not indigenous lacks dignity and cannot deal adequately with the local needs of the people. Idowu was worried about the uncritical acceptance of theologies from the global north by the church in Africa and passing it on undigested to African Christians. He observed that the church in Africa was theologically spoon-fed by Europeans. He further lamented that the African Church did not produce theologians whose thinking bears a "distinctive stamp" of African originality and this he saw as a mark of failure. Idowu (1965:24) believed that African theological education can only develop a distinctive theology as a consequence of Africa's religious past experiences and personal appropriation of the Lordship of Christ. For Bediako (1995:114, 119) this was a false start for African theology because it was imbued with the foreignness of Western Christianity. Instead, Bediako strongly believed that Christianity was an African religion.

Two points need to be made: First, since Idowu began from the perspective that made Christian truth an abstraction from its Western form, he could not arrive at indigeneity. Second, Idowu did not pay critical attention to the achievement on the ground through the AICs. Bediako (1995:117) therefore endorses Mbiti's conceptualization of indigenization:

> To speak of indigenising Christianity is to give the impression that Christianity is a ready-made commodity which has to be transplanted to a local area. Of course, this has been the assumption followed by many missionaries and local theologians. *I do not accept it any more. The Gospel is God-given. The church in which it is incarnated is made up of people who are by "definition," indigenous "where they happen to be born or live or have their roots"* (1979:68, italics mine).

This is the same perspective that was reinforced by Bridston (see 3) and it implies that Christianity is never a pre-packaged commodity. Rather, it is manufactured and shaped within a given culture. Bediako (1995:118-119) therefore safely argued that indigenization had already being achieved in the past by the AICs because Christianity is not an 'already made' commodity but is fashioned as it translates into each culture. He feels that to seek indigenization was misguided because the task was regarded as a connection of two aspects conceived to be dissociated from one another. Bediako and Mbiti went further than Bridston by distinguishing between Christianity and the gospel. For them, the Christian gospel cannot be adulterated by Western culture because it is a free entity. It is not something that should be abstracted from Western culture but something that is grown within Africa. Christianity may have been influenced by colonialism and imperialism but not the gospel (Maluleke 1996:10). In responding to Bediako, Maluleke feels that such a dual and "abstractionist view of the gospel is not only contrary to the African spirit but also contrary to the African experience of missionary Christianity in both its past and present forms." The notion of indigenization emerged within a particular context as a process of defining African Christian self-hood and self-determination and give dignity to African cultural heritage which was 'demonized' by the missionaries. This stage was crucial for development African theology as an authentic and relevant theology cannot be produced by theological education that is "imprisoned within foreign" epistemologies, such is "impossible" (Idowu 1965:26). The model of indigenization is limited to socio-religious aspects of African life and contained practical orientations and overtones of decolonization. In the post-colonial context, the notion has implications of mind or mental decolonization. One can further argue that for Mbiti to have said "I do not accept it [indigenization] any more" suggests that there was a time he accepted the notion but outgrew it to the extent of understanding its limitations and implications. While the notion of indigenization was already present in Africa through the AICs, yet for it to become a key feature in the articulation of African theology in theological education was to some extent a contribution of the TEF.

2.2. The Second Mandate: Missionary Orientation

In the second mandate (1965-1970), under James Hopewell, the TEF expressed continuity and discontinuity with its first mandate. In the tradition of the first mandate, it had tried to strengthen ministerial training in 'the younger churches.' Yet, the situation was far more complex, involving the task of nation building after colonialism and the necessity to achieve an authentic African self-hood (TEF 1972:12). Lienemann-Perrin (1981:125) suggests that the there was a growing opposition of the (so-called) developing countries towards the economic exploitation and cultural alienation wrought by the industrialized countries. She adds that in the ecumenical discussion it became clear that the gulf between the industrialized and developing nations was being widened by development aid. Furthermore, "the consequences of neo-colonialism were just as clear in the world economy as they were in the world mission and education" (1981:125). The hierarchical modes of theological education introduced by the TEF spilled over to church structures and perpetuated the unjust structures of religio-cultural, socio-economic, political situation against women and poor in Africa (1981:126). This situation remains one of the major challenges in contemporary African society. Yet, it is this situation that forced the TEF to begin to question its self-understanding and the relevance of Christianity in African society. The response of the TEF to this situation was to make the indigenous people the subject of the mission of God (TEF 1972:12). Accordingly, the TEF emphasized the missionary orientation and thrust, calling upon itself to:

> Respond whenever evidence is found of creative development promising the achievement of excellence in training of ministry. The excellence to be sought should be defined in terms of the kind of theological training which leads to a real encounter between the student and the Gospel in terms of his own forms of thought and culture, and *to living dialogue between the church and the environment. The aim should be to use resources so as to help teachers and students to a deeper understanding of the Gospel in the context of the particular cultural and religious setting of the church, so that the church may come to a deeper understanding of itself as a missionary community sent into the world, and to a more effectual encounter with life and society* (Johnson 1972:12-13, 1975:91 italics mine)

For the first time a recommendation from the TEF links the church's self-understanding of its mission with its appropriation and assimilation of the Christian gospel with the cultural milieu of the people. In line with Edinburgh 1910 (see section 3.1.2) the

inescapable missionary nature of the church is now underpinned as the motivation and reason for theological education by increasing an awareness and significance of the *"context of the particular cultural and religious setting of the church."* Mission is now an imperative and is seen within the theology of the church as the people of God doing theological education with an understanding that they are called out of the world, positioned in it and sent into it as ambassadors of God's love and justice. What was mentioned more explicitly in this recommendation was that culture and cultural understanding within this perspective was expanded to take on a sociological dimension of theological education that is "life and society." The church is no longer seen as a sacramental institution alone, but also as sociological institution, as a missionary 'sent to an effective encounter with the life of a society.' Botha (2010:183) argues that this "could include social, political and economic realities." This raises important questions: to what extent was this approach radically implemented? Did theological institutions in Africa respond to this missiological call more vigorously? How has this call been carried forward in more practical ways by theological institutions in Africa?

One can argue that the missiological imperative with its emphasis on justice pointed to the fact that when people are at liberty to both think and act for themselves they are able to respond relevantly to their contextual challenges and shape their future in radical ways. Although the mandate does not specifically mention Africa, the content applies to African theological education.

2.3. The Third Mandate: "All Relevant Theologies are Contextual"

The third mandate was led by Shoki Coe, the first Director of the TEF from the global south. Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu (see chapter 5) served on the executive as the first African Region Director of the TEF (from 1972 to 1974). Before that, Tutu belonged to the core staff of the TEF between 1962 and 1966 (Werner 2010:278). The third mandate emphasized renewal and reform in theological education focusing on the central notion of "contextuality, the capacity to respond meaningfully to the gospel within the framework of one's own situation" (TEF 1972:19). The concept of contextualization comes to life in 1972 when Shoki Coe used it to describe the task of theological education in various cultural contexts (see Russell 1995). The notion is well

articulated in a small book published by the TEF in 1972 entitled, *Ministry in Context.* Unlike the first two mandates that had spelled out clear-cut policies, the third mandate was based on critical consultation with the beneficiaries on the implementation of the mandate which was also just tentative (Russell 1995:90). To make the mandate more efficacious, it began in earnest with a two year (1970-1972) period of study (1990:91).

This period encountered revolutionary theories of education around the world that posed challenges to the theological education framework of the TEF.[23] In fact, it was during this period that liberation theology in Latin America had gained momentum and had had tremendous influence upon Africa (Pears 2010:50). It was also the beginning of political contextualization or Africanization. For example, in the late 1960s, Julius K. Nyerere (1967:382-403), the former president of Tanzania developed a theory of education called "education for self-reliance." This educational framework with its combination of both theory and practice, reflection and action, had a tremendous impact on the African understanding of education and remains "influential as the social, economic and political arenas continue to be shaped by the form and function of the educational environments" in the continent (Major and Mulvihill 2009:21). In this, a two year period of study was crucial because it transformed the TEF strategy and methodological framework of education and sharpened the quest for authentic contextualization. Additionally, with the integration of Africa into a global liberal capitalistic economy, economic exploitation, poverty, cultural disintegration and ecological degradation began rocking Africa at its very core (Lienemann-Perrin 1981:143).

The crisis of the 1960s did not stop with the second mandate. Instead, it became worse as African Christians continued to question Western patterns and ways of thinking. These epistemologies were seen to be based on unjust and unequal systems. It was with these pressures from within and without that the third mandate (1970-1977) was formulated. Its aim was to respond to the revolutionary events in the global South, including the missiological challenges of the time and the search for renewal made at the Uppsala Assembly of the WCC (TEF 1972:13; Johnson 1975:91). The overall goal was a missiological imperative that the gospel be expressed and ministry undertaken in response to the three major issues in contemporary context. The first was the widespread

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[23] Lienemann-Perrin (1981:173) has highlighted the fact some of the 'anti-authoritarian' educational theories such as 'pedagogy of the oppressed' by Paulo Freire from Brazil, 'de-schooling' by Ivan Illich from Mexico, etc., had been developed and their viability tested since then.

crisis of faith and search for meaning in life. Second, there was a need for social justice and human development. Third, there was tension between local cultural and religious situations and a universal technological civilization (TEF 1972:13; Johnson 1975:91-92). In this locus, contextualization came to be perceived as "a theological necessity demanded by the incarnational nature of the Christian faith" (TEF 1972:19). The argument was made that theological education must take into account aspects of culture, such as social and economic concerns, which had previously been neglected by the terminologies such as "adaptation" and "indigenization." For Lesslie Newbigin (1980:154), "while indigenization implies that the missionary brings an unadapted, that is unadulterated by cultural influence, gospel to various cultural contexts, contextualization speaks of interpreting the gospel itself through the traditional elements of the receptor" culture. In this sense, "contextualization was originally intended to point to the insertion of the gospel into the living situation of the people concerned so that it was related to the living questions that they were asking, not so much about the past as about the future" (1980:154). Indeed, there are theological differences between the two but there were also socio-political differences. This difference becomes clear in the way the notion of contextualization was defined in *Ministry in Context* as follows:

> It means all that is implied in the familiar term "indigenization" and yet seeks to press beyond. *Contextualization has to do with how we assess the particularity of the Third World [sic] contexts.* Indigenization tends to be used in the sense of responding to the Gospel in terms of traditional culture. Contextualization, while not ignoring this, takes into account the process of secularity, technology, *and the struggle for human justice*, which characterized the historical moments of the *nations in the Third World* (TEF 1972:20, italics mine).

In comparison to the previous mandates, a new revolutionary language seems to have emerged that is more radical in this definition. While the TEF continued to relate the Christian faith to culture, it now went further to relate it to the issues of human *justice*. This implies that the TEF was from now on giving serious attention to the issues of religio-cultural, socio-political, and economic developments in the global south. From the TEFs (1972:20) understanding of the notion, five components can be drawn: First, contextualization was explicated as always being prophetic, arising out of a genuine encounter between the gospel and the world and is action oriented. Second, it was seen as a dynamic process, which recognises "the continually changing nature of human situation and possibility for change, thus opening the way for the future." Third, it

includes interfaith dialogue, economic power, etc. Fourth, while it accentuates the struggle to regard cultural identity and people to become subjects of their own history, it is also emphasizes an inter-dependence of all human contexts. Fifth, it stresses the local and situational concerns, by drawing its energy from the power of the Gospel which is for all people. In all these aspects, transformation is seen as being rooted within a particular context of the people. It is these people who are themselves wrestling in order to make the gospel meaningful within their context. This is not just about discerning the contextuality in particular historical moment, but also about renewal and reform so as to be able to respond to that discernment not only in words but deeds. Yet, by limiting the notion to the global south this could have led to the dangerous assumption that contextualization is studying the context of the oppressed, excluded, exploited, women, people living with HIV, etc. (Nadar 2010:132). Nadar (2010:132) argues that it leads to an assumption that the global south is "the raw data" for contextual theological education. For Nadar (2010:133) such an emphasis has three disadvantages. First, "it tends to 'exoticize' the discourse." Second, it does not leave space for the ways in which contextualization is also about the global north. Third, it is closed up from critiquing it. One can ask the following questions: To what extent is the notion of contextualization resisted the urge of turning the excluded, marginalized, women, nonhuman creation, etc. in the global south into objects for theological education? What mechanisms are put in place for protecting the notion from such abuse? In what ways is the notion used to promote a just and equitable African Christian society?

In sum, there must be a balance in "specifying experiences" (Legge cited in Nadar 2010:133) of both global south and north otherwise contextualization will always be marginalized and remain largely a global south affair.

Reflecting on the third mandate, Botha (2010:183-184) argues that:

> The issues no longer about tangentially looking at justice issues from the perspective of the Gospel, but to express the Gospel in a manner that will review justice. Such was the clarion call for contextualization hinted in the little statement as dialectical relationship or circular movement between the Gospel and the matter raised or put differently, an interpretative circular movement between text and context.

Indeed, contextualization is a revolutionary notion, which implies that it is not possible to talk about it without taking seriously the issues of justices and peace. Russell

(1995:149) argues that introduction of the concept of contextualization modified some of the TEF assumptions and emphases. Although the TEF maintained that there was a basic continuity between ministry in context and the mandate document, it seems that the introduction of the notion of contextualization somehow altered the mandate document because it was now read and interpreted in the light of the newly invented notion (Russell 1995:149). Contextualization, unlike indigenization, was thought to be past-oriented which placed far too much stress on the uncritical retrieval of African culture. Instead, the process of contextualization is dynamic and reflects not only on the cultural context but on current issues as well (TEF 1972:20). Unlike the notion of indigenization which lacked sufficient criteria for evaluation, the notion of contextualization had four key elements which were used as yardsticks to measure progress on various projects of theological education. The institutions were expected to demonstrate "a sense of urgency in seeking to revise, change, or create new options to meet the needs of its situation" at four levels (1972:31): First, at the *missiological level*, this meant that theological education was a renewal and reform initiative of the churches aimed at the development of human potential and the realization of justice. Second, at the *structural level*, the structures of theological education were called to correspond to the social and economic conditions of their particular contexts. Third, at the *theological level*, an authentic theology is one which relates the gospel to the urgent tasks of the church in Africa. Fourth, at the *pedagogical level*, authenticity is based on an educational process of liberating, dialogue and creative through overcoming the besetting dangers of elitism and authoritarianism in both the methods and goals of education. Some questions remain open: to what extent were theological curricula within African institutions reformulated to reflect these four core values of contextualization? To what extent has the notion of contextualization taken up an African face? In what ways does theological education in Africa unmistakeably reflect its context? Who has been doing contextualization in Africa and for whom?

2.3.1. An African Understanding of Contextualization

One of the major perspectives in the contextualization[24] debate is the perception that European theology itself is also contextual and therefore open to self-critique and has an innate ability to debunk its own classical untouchable status. This notion has gained prominence and relevance in African theology.[25] Indeed, it can be argued that doing contextual theology[26] in Africa today is not an option but a theological imperative (Bevans 2002:3). In fact, African theologies are contextual by nature. A variety of African theologians have engaged in doing contextual theologies: African women theologies (Mercy Amba Oduyoye, Nyambura J. Njoroge, Musimbi R. A. Kanyoro, Isabel A. Phiri and Sarojini Nadar), Liberation theologies (Jean-Marc Éla), Translation theologies (Lamin Sanneh and Kwame Bediako), Reconstruction theologies (Jesse K. Mugambi, John W. de Gruchy, and Charles Villa-Vicencio), theologies of African Initiated Churches (John Mbillah, Philomena Mwaura), African Charismatic/Evangelical theology (Byang Kato), Post-colonial theologies (Musa W. Dube), Theologies of Masculinities (Ezra Chitando), Contextual Bible study (Gerald O. West, Madipoane Masenya), Black theology (Simon S. Maimela, Tinyiko S. Maluleke, Itumeleng J. Mosala, and Desmond Mpilo Tutu), Cultural theology (John Mbiti, Charles Nyamiti, Justin Ukpong, and John S. Pobee). Many of these theologians crisscross in several of these strands. I have outlined the strands above to show that contextualization has become an African undergirding principle in authenticity, integrity and creativity in African theology.

These strands of African theology find their convergence in taking the African context and experiences in their varying dimensions as starting points for doing theology. Doing theology does not mean that the action, that is activism, is done without reflection. It

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[24] Werner (2011:253; *cf.* Kinsler 2008:11) argues that the introduction of the notion of contextualization engendered various liberation theologies and liberating theological education in various parts of the world. Probably this is a slight stretch of the truth. The historical context of liberation theologies began before the introduction of the notion of contextualization around 1950s, when many 'Two-Thirds World' theologians became disillusioned with the socio-cultural and political situations in their contexts (Pears 2010:50). What may appear to be true is the idea that contextualization is an endorsing and authenticating notion of the plurality of liberation theologies. In this sense it can be said that contextualization increases the awareness of the structures and dynamics of poverty, marginalization, exploitation and oppression, and therefore began to develop biblical theological and pastoral tools for personal, ecclesial, and social liberation (See Kinsler 2008:11).

[25] I have returned to the phrase African theology in its singular sense in order to affirm the unity of its various strands. I see African theology as a truck from which all various contextual theologies emerge. This implies that while each of these strands possesses a different focus all are fed by and respond to the same African experiences and context.

[26] Bevans (1992:27) has attempted to bring clarity to the question of contextualization by classifying different approaches to it under five models. These models are (starting from the least open approach in terms of culture and ending with the most open one): translation, synthetic, praxis, transcendental and anthropological models. Alternatively, Botha (2010:188-189) has outlined contextualization as methodology with various strands as: insertion, analysis, theological reflection and planning.

means theology is an interpretation of the signs of the time. From these lived realities, theology springs up like a wellspring or fountain of life to give new hope and courage for those who struggle for a just and equitable society.

The first step in African theology is a faithful sociological analysis of the context, after which reflection and action takes place. Derrick Mashaua and Martha Frederiks (2008:116) affirm that African theologians "use an approach of moving to the context, from the context to the text. By bringing issues from daily life to the text in order to seek answers and transformation of society; this method is known as 'the reversion of the hermeneutical circle.'" In this way, the notion of contextualization has been contextualized in Africa and has thus taken on a distinctive mark in the way it is utilized. Within the TEFs understanding of contextualisation, it had purposefully left room for the possibilities of emphasising political, gender, economic issues etc., and this led to a swift accommodation of African theological approaches. David Hesselgrave (1995:115) admits that the term is in fact an encapsulation of innumerable approaches: "It is obvious that a wide variety of meanings, methods, and models are attached to the word contextualization." Nevertheless, within African theology, there is a plurality of understandings of the notion. For some, contextualisation primarily involves biblical interpretation. "For others, it is multidisciplinary and involves the application of principles gleaned from the social sciences" (Coleman and Verster 2006:98). This implies that the notion can only be understood within a particular context.

Observably, even among Western theologians, there is no unified definition of the notion. Some argue that the starting point must always be the revelation of God in the Scripture (Newbigin 1980:67), while others emphasize that the cultural context must be at the forefront of the theological process (Pears 2010:1). Newbigin (1980:67), for example, contends that cultural context "must be read in the light of Scripture and not the other way round. If it is the true story of the world then everything else must be understood in its light." Yet, the underlying assumption embedded within the theory of contextualization requires that the one engaged in this process not only pays attention to the cultural context but also makes it the starting point of the entire theological enterprise. Nevertheless, Newbigin remains unwavering to his notion that makes the gospel the starting point that interrogates the context. Pobee (1992:39), following the steps of Newbigin demanded the avoidance of the term because he thought it might be

easily misconstrued. Instead, Newbigin's understanding of contextualization was a projection of the situation of mission in the West.

It remains that contextualization according to the way it seems to be utilized in African theology takes its critical starting point from action that leads to theological reflection from the perspective of African culture, religion, values, traditional philosophies, and historical experiences. Mika Vähähangas (2010:287) observes that within the TEF much of the discussion on contextualisation concentrated on the conscious, more or less academically-oriented theological programmes and processes. Contrary to this, in Africa, contextualization is utilized at both the academic and praxis level reaching to the people at the grass-roots level. For example, the Tamar Campaign under the leadership of Gerald West, a project of the Ujamaa Centre, housed in the School of Religion, Philosophy, and Classics at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, has taken the Contextual Bible Study method to the streets of South Africa and this is spreading to other African countries to conscientize the churches about issues of gender violence, injustice, inequality, HIV etc. Tamar's story (2 Samuel 13:1-22) has been used in the Contextual Bible Study method since 1996 (see West and Zondi-Mabizela 2004:5). This shows that African theologians through utilizing the notion of contextualization have continued to struggle to overcome all forms of injustice and dehumanization, in particular those based on race, religious pluralism, ethnicity, class, gender, global warming and ecological destruction, violence and militarism, the marginalization of the people with persons with disabilities, homeless children, migration, economic polarization and consumerism (Kinsler 2008:11). As explained below (chapter 7), African theological institutions with the support of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (*hereafter,* the Circle) have worked tirelessly to mainstream African contemporary challenges into the curricula of theological institutions and have been at the forefront to encourage and motivate that religious communities actively engage in responding to such issues as HIV, gender justice, ecological degradation etc. (Chitando 2011:399).

In sum, it seems that contextualization has become the locus of doing theological education for a just and equitable African Christian community. The notion has become an indigenous project done by the majority of African theologians for African Christianity. In 1977, the TEF transformed itself into the Programme for Theological Education (PTE). In the following section, an evaluation will be made of the period of

the PTE from 1977 through to the period of its successor, the Programme for Ecumenical Theological Education, from 1992 to 2012.

3. Beyond a Funding Programme: A New Creative Stage (1977-2012)

When in 1977 the TEF was officially integrated into the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the PTE was created after several months of study (The First Mandate of PTE 1978, 2008:25), the notion of contextualization remained a significant aspect in the thrust for theological education. The PTE[27] was created to carry on the work of the TEF by developing an ecumenical vision of theological education within a wider, six-continent perspective. The programme focused its mandate on "ministerial formation," "which was interpreted in the broadest sense to include all the people of God," ordained and non-ordained, recognized by the churches for the practise of ministry in its multiple forms and theological meanings (WCC 1976:1). Ministry was seen as belonging to the whole people of God, who should be given adequate opportunity of formation for active participation in the life and ministry of the churches. Theological education was aimed at enabling the whole people of God to discern the signs of time in the world and to respond relevantly to the challenges within their particular context (Sitompul 1975:74). It was discovered that the ministerial dimension of theological education was often neglected and that a concrete action by the churches was timely in order to redress the imbalance. The PTE explicated ministry as encompassing the whole lifestyle of self-giving love and service to the world in the name of Christ; it is existence inspired and sharing in lifestyle of service, which means ministry is for whole people of God who have responded to Christ's call to join him in his concern for humanity. Thus, PTE envisaged,

> Continuing efforts to deepen the understanding of the Christian faith and express it in an idiom and in attitudes which are life-affirming and meaningful to the human condition in every concrete context; the training of ministers, lay and ordained, women and men through a variety of programmes….and exploration of effective means for heightening the theological awareness of Christian congregations, which needs to be

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[27] The PTE was guided by its search for a fresh and genuine catholicity which could liberate theological education from the divisive confessional isolationism and self-sufficiency, racism, sexism and classism in their open and hidden manifestations, cultural arrogance and domination and economic and ideological imperialism (see WCC 1977:99).

interpreted into the whole theological task of the churches (WCC 1977:99).

In focusing on this perspective, the PTE believed that theological education cannot be an end in itself or simply an academic endeavour; it is not even bound to any one institution, but is an instrument of the mission of God. This understanding also necessitated the PTE to search for alternative models, such as the Theological Education by Extension (TEE)[28] in order to give the whole people of God full access to and "recapture for theological education the missionary passion and missionary vision it never should have lost" (Castro 1983:xi).

This section consists of a concise evaluation of reports from the consultations concerning theological education in Africa in the period between 1976 and 2012 in the history of the PTE and its successor the ETE has from 1992. These consultations are particularly essential in understanding the contribution of PTE/ETE to theological education in Africa.

3.1.   Nairobi 1976: "Education and Renewal in Search of True Community"

The Fifth Assembly of the WCC was held for the first time on African soil in Nairobi, Kenya from 23 November to 10 December 1975. The theme of the Assembly was "Jesus Christ Frees and Unites." The Nairobi Assembly met at a time when the churches of Africa were in search for meaning and freedom from neo-colonialism, racism, colonialism, and imperialism, oppression and gender inequality. In fact, this trend was influenced by the global south political leaders who called for a non-aligned movement

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[28] During the 1960s, another model of theological education was developed by Ross Kinsler called Theological Education by Extension (TEE) in Guatemala and later was brought to Africa. Its primary purpose was to extend access to theological education beyond just the clergy to that of all people. As a non-residential programme, it gives priority to local leaders who demonstrate their calling and dedication through their service within their own diverse cultural contexts, extended families, economic base, and ecclesial communities and responsibilities. More fundamentally, it was founded upon the principle that ministry is for the whole people of God and not just for the clergy. The movement has demonstrated the principle of justice and equity by giving opportunity for education to women as well as men, older as well as younger, less and more highly schooled, poor as well as non-poor, who had been largely excluded from formal theological studies (Kinsler 2011:9). During this period, the model of theological education by extension was introduced within the TEF and Ross Kinsler was called to replace Desmond Tutu as the Assistant Director of the TEF and continued in the PTE.

(NAM), a group of countries who considered "themselves not aligned formally with or against any major power bloc" during the cold War (The Free Encyclopaedia 2012). The NAM became a movement for justice, peace and security in the world based on the struggle against colonialism and imperialism (2012). By the fact that the WCC Fifth Assembly in Nairobi, November 1975 was addressed by Michael Manley, a democratic socialist and the then Jamaican Prime Minister, who was a member of NAM, reveals the extent of the influence the non-aligned ideology had on the church in the global south. In his keynote address at a plenary session of this assembly entitled: "From the shackles of domination and oppression," Manley (1976:52) called the capitalist system "the burial ground of man's *[sic]* integrity." He argued that "at no point of history has an economic system reflected the process of domination in political, social, psychological and, ultimately, even in philosophical terms, more completely than under capitalism" (1976:52). Likewise, Manley (1976:53) reveals the ambiguities of the capitalist system: "If capitalism was the engine that lifted man to new levels of economic and technological progress, it was equally the burial ground of his moral integrity." Manley (1976:54-57) strongly pressed the fact that:

> The process of liberation involves the elimination, both national and international, of those hierarchic systems in which the distribution and control of economic, social, ideological, political and other resources on the one hand, and of public and private burdens and disabilities, on the other, are unequal… Liberation must approach the political system in terms of truly democratic processes, if it is to fulfil our requirements and objectives... Equally, one must approach the economy in similar ways. A just society is one in which the economy is, first and foremost, directly and freely responsive to the overall needs of the community at large...In terms of social relationships, liberation can seek nothing less than the creation of a society free of all entrenched privilege.

In this statement, Manley puts the WCC theme "education and renewal in search for true community" in its perspective and shows the political implications of theological education. There is a clear connection between theological education and the church's social concern to express its Christian faith praxis in an attempt to build communities founded on the principles of a just and equitable society. During this same period, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was established in 1963, (now the African Union (AU)) was gaining momentum. One of its aims was to eradicate all forms of colonialism (The Free Encyclopaedia 2012). The mood of the period seems to have been towards finding a greater unity in the fight against colonialism and to look for the

resources within their context. This political search for unity, self-determination and independence is what pushed the church to seek for unity and freedom from oppression and exploitation. There was denunciation of "capitalism as another form of oppression" (Homrighausen 2011:80). The emergence of contextual theologies and the call for radical revolution in the theories of education by utilizing pedagogical tools for critical conscientization and praxis were some of the crucial aspects of education that were discussed (WCC 1975:98; Werner 2010:278-279). The Report on "Education for Liberation and Community" stressed that "the threats to human survival now looming call for changes in the world far beyond minor reforms in the present system" (WCC 1975:41). Yet education, although crucial, was seen to remain captive, serving the more powerful economic, socio-political structures of society (1975:41). Theological education was being pushed toward greater unity, mission and evangelism. Werner notes that the whole section dealt with "education and renewal in search of true community" (Werner 2010:279). It is significant to note that theological education was seen as a locus for human struggle for liberation and quest for development. Werner (2010: 279) adds that by this time, the PTE had become an integral part of the WCC within the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (*hereafter,* CWME), which since the merging of the IMC and WCC in 1961 was responsible for carrying out the tasks of the global missionary movement within the WCC. The PTE became an integral and identifiable part of the on-going work of the WCC, established within Unit 1 on Faith and Witness (See WCC 1976:30). In light of this, Werner (2010:279) argues that the formulation of the core mandate of the PTE in 1977 was informed by the voices from liberation and contextual theologies that were prominent during that period. According to Pobee (2002:387) the main concern of the PTE was to affirm the influence of context and culture on theological education and practice and to liberate theological education and practice from those bondages which hampered its faithfulness in the mission of God and the cross-cultural discussion of the key aspects of theological education.

Since the Nairobi Assembly, some African theological institutions took on the challenge for liberation and contextualization. Nevertheless, much still needs to be done. Five elements were identified as emerging concerns at Nairobi 1975 (WCC 1983:193-194)[29]:

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[29] Werner (2010:279-280) has identified nine convictions of the WCC about theological education between the period of Nairobi 1975 and Vancouver 1983: (i) Theological education remains an essential key and strategic factor in the renewal of the life and mission of the global church; (ii) Theological education is crucial for the interaction between church and society where many issues demand a sharpened stand and position on the part of Christianity; (iii) Theological education is deepening biblical knowledge and has the

First, *a comprehensive concept of ministry* emerged meaning ministry belongs to the whole people of God. Second, *a holistic* understanding of theological education implies that the aim of theological education is to provide a Christian community with a motivated people equipped for a life of service to God and humanity alike. Third, *contextualization* must be seen as an anchor of theological education and the enablement for ministry in cultural and social realties so as to make the gospel meaningful in specific situations. Fourth, the *ecumenical dimension* of theological education must enable theological education to transcend its confessional isolation and embrace a wider perspective. Fifth, *global solidarity* implies that theological education must take responsibility for the entire earth and humanity.

One critical issue in global solidarity that African theological education must respond to with urgency in its efforts to safeguard the dignity of all people is migration. There is also a need to develop an African theology of migration that can facilitate both theological education for migrant Christians and enhance the dignity of every immigrant. In this way, African theological education can provide a meaningful input into increasingly pluralistic societies. Sixth, *women* in theological education, apart from gender justice, theological education must provide insights on gender issues. Seventh, *spirituality*, which should have within it strong elements of social responsibility, is an antithesis of anything that prevents people from living in harmony.

These issues have been taken seriously by many African theologians. Amanze (2009:124-125) argues that there has been a shift in theological education in Africa which had led to gender issues being taken seriously, as well the political, economic, social and religious changes that were sweeping across Africa. Nevertheless, Amanze acknowledges that

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capacity to distinguish between and assess the different spirits and ideologies in order to discern God's working in this world; (iv) There are grave differences in the accessibility and quality of theological education programmes in different parts of the world, therefore equal access to theological education (between rural and urban areas, lay and ordained, men and women, young and old) is a key issue for all churches; (v) Ecumenical theological education and broad-based ecumenical formation is a vital priority for the changed landscape of Christianity in the twenty-first century and for the continuation of the ecumenical movement (a conviction affirmed again by the assembly of WCC in Porto Alegre 2006); (vi) Theological education not only serves the building up of the church, but also creates social awareness, political discernment, social involvement and Christian participation in the transformation processes of societies; (vii) The only proper remedy against religious fundamentalism is investment in education. The lack of education and theological formation is often one of the root causes for ignorance over against other cultures, religious traditions and special social contexts; (viii) In a number of churches women still do not have equal rights and access to theological education and are denied entry into the ordained ministry; (ix) Globalization, advances in technology and communication, as well as deteriorating standards of human rights and Christian ethos in many issues of the global world today place a strong demand for more theological and ethical expertise in a number of crucial areas of social, medical and political ethics.

some theological institutions have not completely broken their umbilical cord with their erstwhile European placenta in order to fully charter their own distinctive theological destiny leading to contextual relevance and authenticity. As a result, there is always unfinished business in theological education in Africa.

3.2. Accra 1986: "Theological Education in Africa: *Quo Vadimus*?"

This consultation was initiated by Pobee (for an analysis of his theological contribution see chapter 6 below) in his capacity as the Assistant Director of the PTE. This probably was one of the most decisive moments in the contribution made by the PTE to the development of theological education in Africa. It came a decade after the Nairobi Assembly in Accra 1986. Over ninety theological educators[30] from African and partner organisations in Europe and the US gathered in Accra under the umbrella of the West African Association of Theological Institutions (WAATI) to deliberate on the kind of church and theological education that would be relevant to Africans and motivate African Christians to be instruments of change for the kingdom of God in their context (MF 1986:cover page). In light of the shift in the heartland of Christianity from the global north to the global south, Africa was a influential role player in the discussions that took place in the consultation (1986:cover page; Werner 2010:281). The conception of theological education as mission that began in the 1970s continued to gain momentum in the 1980s. The emphasis was about equipping and building up the people of God for ministry and mission (Duraisingh 1992:35). Christopher Duraisingh (1992:36-39) reveals during this period the shift in the basic model and image of theological education that had taken place. Theological education was no longer just a process of developing "life-wisdom," or an individualistic (*habitus* model) or purely rationalistic (the "science" model) or a fragmentation of the branches (university model) or a professional parochial (the clerical model) but a process of formation for mission. This call for an alternative model came from the global south and brought about a greater emphasis in engaging young people in theological education. As a consequence, this mission thrust had tremendous influence on the consultation.

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[30] See the "List of participants" in Pobee and Kadadjie (1990:229-238).

The theme of the consultation was "Theological Education in Africa: q*uo vadimus*?" in other words, 'where was theological education in Africa going?' This question was prompted by the critical existential challenges present in Africa (MF 1986:cover page). Responding to such challenges, the consultation was concerned with developing an indigenous and creative theological education under four major themes: (i) theology, theological education, and the church; (ii) continuity and change in theological education; (iii) ecumenical perspectives and dimensions on theological education; and (iv) funding of theological education in Africa (Pobee 1986:5; MF 1986:cover page; Werner 2010:281). As observed above this was not the first conference to call for funding for theological education in Africa (see section 2.1.1). The consultation called for a contextual theological education that would not simply draw on the African religious and cultural heritage, but also equip students to respond relevantly and critically to contextual issues (Makhulu 1990:4). Basil Manning, one of the delegates at the consultation affirmed that the life-setting of the poor should inform theological education in Africa. Manning (1990a:72) argued:

> Theological education should be *contextual/situational,* it should take as its point of departure the concrete conditions of the oppressed in their situation; it should focus on the real life challenges and conflicts of the people; their concerns, needs, aspirations and dreams. Together with the learners we should consider and choose from real life situations themes for reflection/action.

By describing theological education as 'situational,' Manning departs from the deductive approach of traditional Christian theology and places theological education as part of an inductive approach where the actual experiences of the community determine the content of the curriculum. Such an approach always proceeds from the contextual existential experience of the community and from there seeks its response within the biblical text. In order for such a "theology by the people" to be a life affirming theology, it was argued that it must be undergirded by African community. Michael Manning (1990b:80) and Ambrose Moyo (1990:45) were in agreement that a root cause of the cry arising from among African Christians lay in the way theological education was done in some theological institutions that still held to the notion that one needed to abandon African-ness in order to be a true Christian. Indeed, it was this kind of mission understanding was responsible for perpetuating the crisis of identity among African Christians. Citing Paulo Freire, Manning (1990b:78) argued that what contemporary

African Christians needed was "a prophetic theology that leads naturally to a cultural action for liberation, hence to conscientization." The consultation called upon the TEE to promote such a one just model of theological education in Africa because it was based on the principle of educating the whole people of God (Manning 1990a, Pobee 1990). This call was reinforced at another consultation on the TEE in Africa in 1991 in Hamburg, Germany (Pobee 1993). This consultation noted the rapid spread of TEE, regardless of it having limited resources; almost no coordination, no updated information, and no direction as most of its staff were operating in isolation from one another. I will return to this argument below (see 3.6).

The Accra 1986 recommendation to theological education beneficiaries in Africa, underlined the need to foster inculturation and contextualization in teaching and practice (MF 1986:38; Pobee and Kadadjie 1990:189). According to the consultation in most of African theological education the following aspects still prevailed:

> The disparity between the context as well as the methodology of theological education and the context of people's life characterized by continuous exploitation, political instability etc. second, the apparent lack of commitment on the part of theological institutions to the on-going mission of the Church, in providing leadership in spiritual formation and the renewal of liturgical life of the Church; third, the elitism in Church ministry and theological education which not only excludes part of the people of God such as women, but also enervates the Church by depriving her of the full richness of the ministry; fourth, the resurgence of denominationalism even within united theological colleges largely due to the unclear ecumenical commitment of the churches (MF 1986:38-39, Pobee and Kadadjie1990:189-190, Werner 2010:289).

The fundamental presuppositions of these aspects seem to have been underpinned by the need for renewal in theological education. Renewal itself is a process that involves constant evaluation and re-evaluation of the methodologies and presuppositions that undergird theological education in the light of the emerging challenges. In view of the above the message, the Accra 1986 consultation proposed:

> The need for relevant theological education for all God's people to enable them to be involved in ministry. In this regard churches and theological educators are invited to reckon seriously with the complex and varied nature of the African context as well as *theologizing in local languages; that the traditional residential forms have proven totally inadequate for the overall theological education needs of the churches in Africa and so alternative relevant forms have to be*

> *created;* that we already enjoy a unity in the common humanity of our peoples which we seek to visibly express in Africa (and therefore) *the need for a more unified common theological reflection* in the teaching of religion, be it Islam, Christianity or traditional African religions, in universities and theological seminaries is affirmed; *that there is a need for new content and methods* for theological education in the light of particular political, economic and multi-faith factors of the global village we live in; *that ecumenism is affirmed through the informal structures of education as well as through* formal courses in colleges and seminaries (MF 1986:39-40; Pobee and Kadadjie 1990:189-192; Werner 2010:282-283 italics mine).

> ....*We have a vision of an Institute for Women and Religions and Culture in Africa which will bring together women to promote research and writing by women in Africa* (Pobee and Kadadjie 1990:186 italics mine).

These recommendations reinforced the key challenges that were prevalent in Africa during the 1980s with a focus towards responding to the various developments and changes that were taking place across the continent with a particular orientation to developing alternative theological education, sensitivity to cultural, theological, missiological, and pedagogical issues. The consultation noted the fact that African Christianity had reached a crucial stage in mapping its own theological destiny. The recommendation also underlined the need for theologizing in local languages. Theologizing in the 'mother tongue' had been one of the recurring themes since Edinburgh 1910 (see 2.1). The question that arises is: to what extent has theological education in Africa endeavoured to equip students to learn to reflect theologically in their local languages as way of developing local theologies?

It seems that theological institutions in Africa to certain extent have marginalized local languages. How can theological education be contextual if the languages that carry the values and thought patterns of the people are side-lined? In fact, theological education is yet to take seriously the issues of contextual Bible translation. The Bible for an African is not only for evangelism but as an indispensable tool for liberation and reconstruction. I argue that Bible translation in Africa is the next crucial stage of contextualization. Theological education in Africa will need to equip local translators with skills in linguistics and translation methods so that they can translate the Bible contextually.

The consultation recommendation also touches on finding a method of the *unified teaching of religion*. This is important in a pluralistic African contextual, where theological institutions can longer be teaching about other religions and find a neutral way of

teaching in dialogue with other faiths. This approach allows for interreligious exchange and learning which can overcome the mutual suspicions that have seeded in the past. Yet for this to materialize, it calls for the strengthening of a practical ecumenism among the different Christian denominations.

Another critical issue to emerge from this consultation was the birth of the vision for an institute for African women. This vision was realized in the formation of the Circle, inaugurated in 1989 in Accra, Ghana. Since then, the Circle has been instrumental in the transformation of theological curricula, community engagement with issues of gender, race and HIV, interfaith relations, as well as being prolific in publications for both the academy and church in Africa. The Circle has become a backbone of African theological education. The Circle continued to chart new alternatives of doing theological education (Maluleke 1997:22). Indeed, the Circle has gendered African theology thereby humanizing it. This was a new paradigm of doing African theology.

3.3. The Kuruman Moffat Mission 1995: "Renewal out of Africa"

At the Kuruman Moffat Mission (1-6 August, 1995) Consultation on Theological Education in Africa, John W. de Gruchy was involved as a consultant as well as John Pobee, who was now the Global Coordinator of the ETE. The PTE was transformed from 1992 to the ETE in order to align theological education with the vision of the WCC. This meant a shift had occurred from a concentration on its financial viability to the viability of theological formation itself while firmly upholding an ecumenical imperative as its central ethos. The context of the Moffat Mission also brought into focus the issue of ministerial formation for mission as a major implication of theological education. Within this understanding, the Kuruman consultation was held in preparation for the Global consultation on the viability of theological education in Oslo, August 1996 (Pobee 1997). Theologians from various parts of the continent gathered to discuss new perspectives on theological education in the light of contemporary Africa's hopes and challenges. The theme "Renewal out of Africa" resonated well with Walls (2010:6) arguments that in the twenty-first century, "Africa must become a centre of creative thinking, a world leader in biblical and theological studies…as a result theological adequacy, rubbing along, is not going to be enough." According to Walls, the key to

renewal in theological education involves a clarification of the meaning of the mission of God to broaden its footprint, not only to include practical social engagement, but also as an intellectual and public tool of engagement. The consultation was about how theological education can become an instrument for aiding churches in Africa to break down the walls of division and establish a community of inter-relatedness for the sake of the well-being of humanity and all creation (Pobee 1995:3).

The Kuruman report (cited in de Gruchy 1995a:6, italics original) stressed that "*when the church focuses on the needs of the world, its pain and suffering, denominationalism becomes relativised and ecumenical commitment is strengthened.*"[31] De Gruchy (1995a:2, see also Werner 2010:284)[32] identifies four aspects of the renewing vision of African Christianity: First, as a *holistic vision* with no shape separation between male/female, body/soul/mind, spiritual/material, visible/invisible etc. Second, as a *healing vision,* which can transform the human, social and ecological condition. Third, as a *communal vision that* stresses and celebrates the human family tree of interrelatedness and partnership. Fourth, as an *ecumenical vision*, inclusive of all Christian confessions, denominations, and people of other faiths, recognizing all of God's children as being created in God's image.[33] What do however appear to be missing in the report are specific guidelines for the church to focus on the challenges present in the world.

De Gruchy (1995b:13) explains that the consultation was fully aware that there had been a crisis in African theological education in the past decade. For de Gruchy (1995b:13) "the viability crisis in ecumenical theological formation is about more than financial concerns." Yet this crisis was not only affecting Africa, it was a global crisis. This made it

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[31] This vision raises the question of ecumenical theological education commitment which de Gruchy (1995a:3; Werner 2010:284-285) lucidly outline in the following way: First it "is demanded by biblical ecclesiology; by the multi-faith character of the continent; and by the need to share resources." Second, it needs to embrace those traditions with a long history and rich tradition in Africa, but should also be committed to pursuing the vision in company with new traditions that have not fully embraced the ecumenical ethos. Third, it needs to play close attention to the issues of dialogue especially Islam but also other religious orientations and ideologies. Fourth, there was an awareness of the forces of anti-ecumenism operating in Africa which is a legacy of the missionaries but also perpetuated by the new AICs.

[32] According to Werner's (2010) critique, the recommendation was too generalised and had no strategic grounding for future follow-up. Indeed, the consultation failed to deal with the 'how to question' which would have helped them develop concrete milestones for the WCC and the AACC to strategically deal with the issues at hand. There was a lack of feasibility in the strategic efforts and this probably led to the propositions going to ground because they were fundamentally too broad and lacked clear signposts for their clear implementation.

[33] Werner (2010:285; de Gruchy 1995a:6-7) identifies the crucial perspectives and priorities that emerged from this consultation that succinctly interwove catholicity and contextuality in theological education meant for the whole of the *laos*, i.e., the whole people of God. This demanded a new dialogue with the AICs and committed it to issues of practical theology.

clear: theological education is done in an ever-changing world in terms of political, cultural and economic systems. In addition, de Gruchy (1995b:13) relates that since theological education prepares the church to fully participate in the mission of God then the existential challenges the community of faith faces impinges directly upon theological education. Here, de Gruchy seems to be suggesting that theological education was not doing enough of what it should have been doing in order to aid the churches meet the situation. Theological education has a responsibility to foster the church to become a viable community of hope, healing, sharing, empowering and transforming. Theological education needs to be firmly located with the context of African society as a whole and in relationship to the people of other faith (1995a:7). The need therefore is for pastors to be trained as practical theologians by empowering them with critical methods of theological reflection based on the see-judge-act methodology and other methods of action and reflection, as well as the urgent need for curriculum reform which would "include African theology, history, spirituality and religious heritage; study in theologies and forms of ministry in AICs, tool for social analysis and models for thinking theologically about analysis; gender issues and perspectives, and an understanding of the social ethics" surround human sexuality (1995b:8). While this is interesting, one would have expected that the consultation would not just include African theology as a discipline among many other disciplines. Indeed, it should have taken a more radical perspective by calling for critical discourse regarding the mainstreaming of African theology in the theological curricula within an overarching theoretical and philosophical framework.

The consultation called for the redressing of the pervasive male domination of the theological curricula, staff, and student members (Phiri 2009:114). That said, the report does not seem to have articulated a way of overcoming the seeming polarisation extant between the church and theological education in Africa. It is however important to note that there seems to a great gulf between what a theological scholar can be expected to know in her/his capacity as a specialist and what the church thinks the teacher should know in order to be entrusted with ministerial students (Beumler 1988:167). I argue that ecumenism or ecumenical learning is needed between theological educators and the church. The question thus arises: How can theological educators foster such an ecumenical engagement.

The report made no serious reference to partnerships between the different types of theological institutions. I argue that it is very important to analyse some of the differences and tensions between the different types of theological institutions and the ways of developing suitable networks. This is particularly relevant to those church-related institutions that often feel university theological education is inadequate for preparing pastors for the ministry. In reflecting on the Kuruman consultation, Steve de Gruchy (1997:59) retorted that "theology in Africa needs to be focused primarily upon process rather than upon content and the leader we are looking for is the facilitator, the animator, the enabler." De Gruchy goes on to argue that theological education should teach the lay people:

> *How to run a Bible study; how to counsel the sick; how to lead worship; how to organise a meeting. And again, this will not be a fixed formula, but rather some basic principles offered together with the granting of permission to change them if local needs so require. Thus the empowering of people who have the skill, wisdom, and courage to forge new directions needs to be a priority throughout* (1997:95, italics mine).

The question remains: in what ways does African theological education explore the balance between academic theological reflection and a basic theological reflection for those with little or no education in Africa?

3.4.   Kempton Park 2002: "Journey of hope in Africa—Plan of Action"

The next milestone was the consultation held in Kempton Park, Gauteng, South Africa 17-22 September 2002 under the leadership of Nyambura J. Njoroge, then Global Coordinator of the ETE[34] jointly planned with the Council-wide Framework on Special Focus on Africa (WCC 2011:2). The objective of the consultation was to "reflect and critically evaluate theological education and ecumenical formation in Africa and, to formulate together strategies for action" (Njoroge 2002:1, WCC 2011:2). The consultation pondered on the question: "what kind of theologies and ethical value system inform and help shape the church, Christianity and ecumenism in Africa?" (Njoroge 2002:2). According to Njoroge (2002:1), the consultation was particularly concerned about the debilitating issues that continued to affect the African continent such as extreme poverty, violence, corruption, HIV, civil wars, etc. It was informed by the WCCs

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[34] For an analysis of Njoroge's theological contribution see chapter 7 of this present study.

concern about how church leaders were being equipped for their ministry, mission and ecumenical involvement. In addition, since the eighth General Assembly in Harare in 1998, the WCC had made Africa a special focus of programmatic activities until the next Assembly in Porto Alegre in 2006. The consultation was developed from the,

> Journey of Hope, which took a crucial step with the Harare Covenant of Africans both from the continent and the Diaspora at the WCC 8th (Jubilee) Assembly held in Harare, Zimbabwe in December 1998, called for "a new vision of life for our people in Africa and for the rest of the world" This vision was also an affirmation of the Johannesburg dream expressed by Africans in May 1997 which called "for creative unity and solidarity among Africans; the elimination of all dividing walls and structures of enslavement; reconciliation and healing of human brokenness; and responsible management of human and natural resources in the spirit of Pan-Africanism (WCC 2011:2).

Before I discuss the issues raised at Kempton consultation, it is important to underscore the Harare Covenant call for "unity and solidarity" of Africans both from the continent and the Diaspora. There seems to be connectivity between many of the issues that African theological education had been grappling with and the African Diaspora. Ronald Nathan (1998:3) has argued that African theological education resonates well with the African Diaspora in their quest "for the development of human identity, dignity and worth, especially where their social, political, economic and spiritual conditions are oppressive and degrading." Nathan (1998:9-10) goes on to identify four distinctive features of Pan-African theology in the Diaspora which bear an affinity with African theology: First, it is based on the harmony of all creation. Second, it is holistic. Third, it is an experiential theology as opposed to a dogmatic or systematic theology. Fourth, it is action orientated. This raises the question: to what extent is African theological Education in solidarity with theological education in the African Diaspora?

Coming back to the Kempton Park consultation, in the quest to respond to the consultation question mentioned above, the delegates developed an elaborative and concrete outline of commitments as part of the plan of action. These commitments, which were projected as being long term, were developed at five levels with critical declarations, each beginning with the phrase "we commit ourselves to…"[35] Njoroge,

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[35]The commitments broken down as follows: "the church and the ecumenical bodies, theological education and ministerial formation, theological education by extension/distance learning, lay training centres and other capacity building institutions" and publication presses in Africa. Each of these commitment carried

through the ETE until 2007, made an excellent contribution to the implementations and achievement of many of these commitments (Werner 2010:287). Werner (2010:286) narrowed the commitments to those that have made a noticeable impact since the consultation: first the Circle had received encouragement for the participation of women in theological education and research and for their voices to be heard more. Phiri (2005:37) sees that it is from this consultation that the Circle embarked on the process of engendering the Theological Education in Africa project. Njoroge (2004), through the ETE, assisted in curriculum development of gender and theological education and the call for mainstreaming gender issues in theological education. Some theological institutions in Africa have taken up the challenge of mainstreaming gender issues in their curricula; for example, the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics of the University of KwaZulu-Natal offer post-graduate studies in Gender and Religion. While others have acknowledged the significance of gender studies in theological institutions, Phiri, (2009:113-115) notes there are still some challenges African women face in their quest to engender theological education. She identifies that "the Circle's greatest challenge remains to find a way of circulating "its literature to the theological institutions in Africa and making sure that the books are being used to contribute to the shaping of the religious leadership on the continent." Second, the number of women theological educators/lecturers and women students being enrolled in theological studies is not impressive. Third, the theological curricula of most theological institutions in Africa still fail to reflect gender sensitivity. Phiri (2009:115) argues that another challenge is to motivate more male students and staff of theological institutions to be in dialogue with the literature produced by African women theologians. Priscille Djomhoué (nd:2) argues that the theological institutions in francophone Africa seem to consider the integration of gender in theological education as a marginal issue and therefore the measure still faces a number of significant hurdles before it can be fully implemented. This reality shows that there is a need to encourage more men to be involved in gender issues. It also shows that there is present a diverse theological educational model within the African context and that the agenda for African theological education is contextually driven.

Second, the commitment to take on board concerns such as violence, HIV and other dread diseases, gender issues, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and ecumenism has become a major concern of the ETE-based initiative for

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with it critical declarations which amounted to more than forty that we made by the consultation (Werner 2010:287).

mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in theological education in Africa—a programme which is now carried forward by the Ecumenical HIV and AIDS initiative in Africa (EHALA).[36] This programme led to the formulation of a multi-sectoral approach to education and research on effective ways of fighting HIV and AIDS (Njoroge 1999-2007:3). Musa W. Dube served as the WCCs HIV and AIDS Theological Consultant for Africa from 2002 to 2003, and has been instrumental in the curriculum formulation and training people for HIV competency in sub-Saharan Africa. The mainstreaming of HIV and AIDS in theological education curricula is perhaps one of the most crucial achievements in the history of theological education responding to this issue (see Dube 2003b; 2003c). The HIV and AIDS curriculum that was formulated has been translated in Spanish, French and Portuguese (Njoroge 1999-2007). While these achievements reveal significant progress, as Ezra Chitando (2010:243) is careful to point out: "there is still a lot of work to be done before theological institutions in Africa become HIV competent."

Third, the commitment to address the concerns of people with disabilities such as incorporating signed language subjects in theological curriculum has been vigorously applied by the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network (EDAN) in cooperation with the ETE/WCC. As Samuel Kabue (2010:232), Consultant/Executive Secretary for the EDAN has affirmed, the EDAN saw the need to focus on theological institutions as the most suitable approach towards conscientizing students and engaging the churches about people with disabilities. As a follow-up therefore, the EDAN and the ETE co-sponsored a four-day workshop in Nairobi, Kenya in August 2004.[37] With the assistance of the ETE, it drafted a curriculum flexible enough to be adapted in various contexts. Together with St. Paul's University in Limuru, Kenya that took the lead in this process, the institutions that took part in the initial consultation introduced disability studies as either integral to their established courses or as an elective module (Kabue 2010:235).

Fourth, the commitment was "supporting and encouraging the networking of all TEE institutions in Africa in their efforts to sharing materials and standardizing their qualifications." This commitment has been also been taken up by the formation of the

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[36] For methods of integrating HIV and AIDS in theological education, see Dube (2003c).
[37] The institutions in attendance were: St. Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya, United Theological College of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica, Stockholm School of Theology, Stockholm, Sweden, Asia Theological Seminary, Philippines and Lutheran Senior Seminary, Brazil (Kabue 2010:232).

All-Africa Theological Education by Extension Association (ANTEEA) (see Mabuluki 2010). I will return to this point below (see 3.6).

As has been seen, the need of African theological education is to enhance life and facilitate the creation of a humane-community within which justice and equality are enshrined as basic rights. The key in this consultation, as with those analysed above, is an inclusive focus on the contemporary challenges facing African people, rather than merely promoting a theological discipline. The quality of theological education is thus understood in terms of its contribution to the well-being of African society. Society is not only the recipient of theological education, but their experiences are the locus for theological education's definition of its philosophy, curricula, structures and pedagogies. While not wanting to reject the understanding that theological education should provide critical and corrective elements out of its very commitment to social engagement, an important question nevertheless surfaces in this regard: to what extent can a Christian translate Christian language and concepts into political language and concepts without losing its uniqueness and authenticity?

3.5.   The Maputo 2008: "Africa, Step Forth in Faith!"

Between Kampala Assembly in 1963 to the Maputo Assembly, AACC seemed to have lost its initial vision for theological education in Africa. The vision was resuscitated during its Ninth General Assembly in Maputo, Mozambique from December 7-12, 2008, under the theme "Africa, step forth in faith!" (Gatwa 2008:1-38). The assembly was attended by more than 1,400 delegates from its member churches and ecumenical partners. Following an intensive four-day discussion in "business and workshop sessions," the Maputo Covenant[38] was launched. The Covenant recognized the numerous challenges for the African Church in nine critical loci. Among those outlined were: "HIV and AIDS and other critical health conditions, the role of women as agents for peace and development, moral regeneration of the continent and entrenching human rights" (see AACC 2008:1-6; *Ecumenical Review* 2009:231-238). André Karamaga was elected and inducted at this assembly as the new General Secretary of the AACC for a five year term.

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[38] The Assembly understood the covenant as a call to action in unity in which the member churches of the AACC and its partners unite together in order to demonstrate to the world the means of living under the influence and the direction of God in Africa.

It is from here that a new major initiative for African theological education emerged which was supported by various ecumenical partners which participated in the major discussions, including the ETE/WCC. This initiative was due to the efforts of Tharcisse Gatwa, who at that time was the African regional Consultant for the ETE. Hitherto, the AACC operated without a theological department. However, after the assembly, theology came to be perceived as an imperative for every programme and for all activities undertaken by AACC with a view to meeting four specific challenges:

> [T]he search for the *unity* of both African continent and Christianity; the restoration of *human dignity and the image of God* to many African people who have lost hope, dignity and confidence in themselves and the institutions; *engagement in the quest for peace and harmony*, more specifically articulating the basis for *spiritual peace as a gift from Jesus*; and focus on *ecumenical formation* for young theologians and leaders for the churches and ecumenical movement (Gatwa 2009b:2 italics mine).

The list of challenges is impressive. Explicit in the statement were following four imperatives for the African continent: (i) the search for unity, (ii) the restoration of human dignity, (iii) the quest for peace, and (iv) ecumenical formation. What seems to bind together these imperatives is ecumenical formation. How the AACC understand ecumenical formation is therefore crucial and will determine the outcome of its activities. Unfortunately, there was a lack of clarity in some phrases within the statement. For example, what is the meaning of *spiritual peace* and how does it relate to the physical peace? What is the AACC understanding of the kind of *peace* that African people are looking for? Is it spiritual or physical peace? There is a danger that the AACC may fall into a dualist notion of peace. Another concern is whether the AACC is going to move from using the notoriously ambiguous terms *search* and *quest* to language that is more concrete or plausible? Be that as it may, in order to respond to these challenges the AACC introduced a 'Theology and Interfaith Relations' department as one of its six departments[39] with a vision "to promote contextual theology based on emerging issues in each sub region of the continent, facilitate theological movement to enable a better

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[39] The AACC has outlined a plan of action for its programme for 2009-2013 by initiating six major departments: Empowering and Capacity Building; Theology and Interfaith relations; Peace, He[a]ling and Reconciliation; Finance/Administration and Resource Development; The Lomé Regional Office; the Addis Ababa/AU Liaison Office.

future and well-being of the members" (Gatwa 2009a:2).[40] As Gatwa (2009a:2 italics mine) can further state:

> Clearly, what is sought is to *organise* the 'theological intelligence' of the continent for *new initiatives* in mission and evangelism to emerge including contextual theology and ecumenical movement that will edify Christian thought locally and [globally]. It is an *engagement* intended to make the kingdom of God- justice, peace and joy- available to all and to worship the God of life, *life in its fullness*.

In short, the new vision of the AACC is based on John 10:10, whereby the "churches in Africa [come] together for life, truth, justice and peace" (AACC 2011b). The phrase 'new initiatives' in the statement looks as if the AACC does not intend building on previous African theological initiatives. The key words in the statement are to *organise* and *engage* in theological discussions that transcend the local but promote *life in its fullness* within Africa. This phrase appears somewhat vague and needs to be clarified because it can mean different things to different people within Africa. The question that arises is thus crucial: what does the AACC understand by the notion *life in its fullness*?

The criteria to translate these theological engagements into actions have been well-summarized by Gatwa (2009a:2-3) in the following activities:

> …to organise a master continental plan for theological education; to elaborate a plan of joint writers process for handbooks in theological, social sciences and ecumenism; to accompany the network of young theologians initiated during the 9th assembly; …cooperation with partners and establish a global fund for theological education in Africa with the priority for [postgraduate] theological studies; to assist in developing curricula on thematic areas of new challenges; to assist in developing quality teaching methodologies in theological education and building up African theological digital library resources in cooperation with …others; to organise encounters between young theologians to strengthen the sense of belonging and solidarity among them. To produce a periodical on Cutting Edge theological issues accessible to leaders and ministers; to provide space at AACC for ongoing theological reflection among elder

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[40] Specific objectives include: developing African theological literature; revitalizing African associations of theological schools; initiating a mechanism for financial self-reliance of the associations of theological schools; initiating centres for theological reflection to inform every intervention, action and engagement of the church; organising theological publications accessible to both theological institutions and communities; developing theological library; organising electronic communication as tools of networking and training for young theologians; promoting interfaith dialogue; revisiting ways of worship, and seeking ways sermons and exhortations can promote holistic well-being of the people; providing space for young theologians for short term engagement and exposure to ecumenical experience through the AACC; working with an advisory group comprising representatives of networking organisations (Gatwa 2009a:2).

ecumenists and young theologians and to organise encounters and interactions to bring about healthy collaboration between Christian and Islamic theologians.

The statement has underlined significant and plausible issues. First, the issue of language has been seen to hold serious implications for the cultural reconstruction and contextualization of theology. Yet, the AACC seems to be silent in this regard! Are there possibilities for the AACC to develop important mechanisms to help promote mother tongue theologizing in Africa, at least alongside the so-called official languages of education? Second, while the AACC in its objectives suggest working hand-in-hand with the Circle (AACC 2009b:4), in their noted activities there appears to be no mention of gender issues. Overlooking such an issue is shocking, especially since the Maputo Covenant affirmed that women are agents for peace and development in Africa. In fact, one would have expected that the AACC in its search for 'hope and dignity in Africa" would be informed by the Circle in its search for the fullness of life. Several questions remain open: to what extent is the AACC taking gender issues as prominent on its agenda and organizational ethos? What are some of the theological models that the AACC intends to develop that can expose young African theologians to gender issues and ways of taking gendered actions in promoting peace and justice? Has the AACC taken its responsibility seriously to create and adopt policies and forms of organization that can facilitate and ensure the full participation of women in the life of theological education at every level? How is the AACC facilitating and encouraging its member churches to recognize and include gender studies on their agendas? In what ways does the AACC make mentoring of the next generation of theologians in Africa a priority?

3.6. Post-Maputo (2009-2012): AACC Activities in Theological Education

There have been various developments in theological education in the post-Maputo 2008 era. As explained above, since the Maputo Assembly, the AACC[41] has taken a more

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[41] The AACC summarizes its mandate as follows: (i) to initiate area programmes; (ii) to provide conceptual presentations that address such challenges as unity as a gospel imperative; (iii) to help African people move from human misery to the fullness of life (human dignity); (iv) to assist the continent in its search for peace and interfaith relations and training of young people (See AACC 2011a:1-3).

active role in theological education (3.5). The main objective of the AACC[42] in relation to theological education which is seen as the engine of the organization is to promote contextual theological education grounded in the emerging issues in each sub-region of the continent and promote a theological movement that will guide the church into new initiatives in mission and evangelism to enable an alternative future for Africa (Gatwa 2009a:2). Werner (2010b:179) stresses that this was an answer to the new developments going on in the AACC[43] which since its assembly in Maputo has committed itself to bring together key actors for a process of renewal of theological education.[44] Indeed, this initiative must be welcomed for there is still a deep struggle for the Africanization of theological education among the majority of theological institutions. There are some institutions such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA) who are struggling to Africanize theological education and still require some of its students to travel to Germany for key parts of their theological formation to be considered genuinely Lutheran (Makofane 2009:42ff). From this, it remains patently clear that the European control of theological education is still a major factor that has yet to be overcome.

Some of notable trajectories, trends and achievements in the post-Maputo era include: First, the critical involvement of the AACC as a piloting instrument for the continental synchronization of theological education in order to enhance its prophetic voice in communities overwhelmed by traumatic existential challenges. This has led to the launch

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[42] Previously, the Conference of African Theological Institutions (CATI) acted as an umbrella organization of sub-regional associations of theological institutions and was concerned with the promotion and strengthening of theological education in Africa. See Amanze (2010:346-374) who has made a survey of all the African associations that sponsor theological education.

[43] The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) on theological education in African within the Lutheran tradition with an understanding the theological education is crucial for the continuity of holistic and prophetic mission of the Church in Africa (see Filibus 2008:1-9).

[44] Among the critical strategies of the AACCs target are: to respond to the need of a contextualized and well-articulated theology that affects and transforms all dimensions of life within God's creation; to increase joint action on theological education on the African continent in order to serve the Lord by promoting unity of the Church and social cohesion to overcome fragmentation based on denominationalism, ethnocentrism, gender disparity and other divisive forces; to articulate a common vision for the future of religious and theological education which takes place in theological colleges and to develop new strategies for ecumenical cooperation in theological education in Africa; to promote research, production and circulation of contextual theological literature, textbooks and electronic resources and to enhance library and academic staff development; to explore ways and means of reviving sub-regional and regional Associations of Theological Institutions and creating a forum of theological education on the African continent; to explore ways and means of creating a fund for the promotion of theological education in Africa supported by contributions from local resources as well as international partners; and to encourage the churches and theological institutions and all other stakeholders to support the process and to exercise their responsibilities for theological education in Africa (AACC 2009a:1-2; Werner 2010b:179-180; Gatwa 2009b:1-2).

of the African Fund for Theological Education[45] (AFTE) as a separate account within the AACC.[46] In connection with this development, one can argue that the commitment to the struggle for anthropological dignity and for full humanity of African people is also a commitment for self-sustainability. It is indeed hoped that the AFTE will have a level of independence and self-sufficiency from the AACC so as to avoid dependency and be more flexible in its distribution of available resources. Another issue that seems to missing in the AACCs vision for funding theological education is in developing a cluster model of theological institutions such as that currently utilized in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, where the churches, together with their theological institutions partner with the State university (UKZN) to mutually offer theological education. It could be argued that this partnership forms a new and efficient model of ecumenical theological education which is better in quality and more economically viable than those churches and institutions which stand alone. I will return to this argument below (see chapter 9, section 4).

Second, there has also been a revitalization of African Associations of theological education since 2009. A group related to the AACC process for revitalizing of Associations in Africa consists of the following members: Simon Dossou (AACC), James Amanze, (University of Botswana), Isabel Phiri (University of KwaZulu-Natal) and Dietrich Werner (ETE-WCC). The reviving of associations is a significant step in the sense that they are indispensable for providing an ecumenical platform for theological discussion and exchange of ideas and resources among various theological institutions. Here too, as in the case of the AFTE, the concern is how much autonomy will the AACC give to the associations so that they can function more independently.

In addition, there has been more emphasis on publishing material for the consumption of African continent and the global Christianity. Currently, under the coordinators and chief editorship of Phiri and Dietrich, the process for the publication of a major handbook on theological education in Africa is underway. The handbook which is

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[45] Ten key areas were underlined as priority for funding: (i) leadership formation; (ii) women in theological education; (iii) literature development; (iv) library development; (v) women in theological education; (vi) literature development,; (vii) library development; (viii) theological curriculum development; (ix) advanced theological studies; (x) alternative and innovative patterns of theological education. The proposal was that the fund should compose of forty percent from partners and sixty percent of contributions from the AACC member churches. This is crucial for African dignity and overcoming the spirit of dependence (see AACC 2010:1-3).

[46] African Associations of theological schools are perceived as proper tools and instruments to strengthen theological colleges and faculties in their quality profile (See AACC nd:3).

envisioned as "a gift to the future generations" (Phiri 2012:62), which it argues is meant to show that "theological education in its varied forms is absolutely vital for the future of African Christianity, for the future of African church leaders as well as the social and political witness of the Christian churches in African nations." Projected to be made available for the AACC Jubilee assembly in Kampala in June 2013, as well as for the WCC assembly planned in Busan for 2013, this handbook will mark a major ecumenical achievement in African theological education and will be an indispensable resource for generations to come. Its major goals are as follows:

> To provide regional surveys of the development and recent challenges of theological education in the different regions of Africa; to identify some key common themes and challenges for the future of theological education in Africa; to describe the different and newly emerging forms of theological education in Africa (TEE; church related colleges, secular universities, Christian universities and distant-learning institutions); to provide more visibility and a comprehensive mapping of theological education institutions in Africa and to accompany the process of revitalizing associations of institutions of theological education by creating a common platform and presentation of Theological Education developments in Africa which will be crucial both for churches within Africa and their support for Theological Education as well as for relating to partners outside Africa (Phiri 2012:62).

The third significant development came from the two joint conferences of academic societies in Religion and Theology of Southern Africa. The first took place in June 2009, which was hosted by the Faculty of Theology, at the Stellenbosch University. The ETE-WCC, in joint cooperation with the South African Missiological Society (SAMS) also gave its support. The conference presented a unique opportunity to bring together theological educators from diverse backgrounds, both inside and outside Africa, to highlight the strategic importance of theological education for the future of African Christianity (Werner 2010:178-180). The second conference took place in June 2012, hosted by the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics University of KwaZulu-Natal, under the theme, "Knowing, Believing, Living in Africa: Perspectives from Religion, Theology and Science." This second conference was meant to stimulate academic reflection in the fields of religion, theology and science in Southern Africa and in the wider African context. Such networking has the potential to enable African theological education to develop a more solidified prophetic voice for a mature response to the common challenges in Africa and make a contribution to the global theological discourse.

Fourth, a significant milestone is the consolidation of the plans to launch a two-year Masters in Social Transformation (MST) at the *Universite Protestante au Congo* focusing on the issues of disabilities (Kamba nd:7). The workshop was organized and supported by the EDAN and the ETE in collaboration with *Universite Protestante au Congo.* This is a very significant development in the African quest for developing a just and equitable society and this may need more support from churches in Africa.

Fifth, there has also been a serious focus on how to improve theological education for AIC leaders with regard to the theological education by extension programme (OAIC 2009:1-31). The AACC in partnership with the ETE has played a tremendous role in initiating consultations on theological education under the leadership of the OAIC. The AACC and the ETE has been concerned to improve the theological education and ministerial formation of AICs leaders on the continent with regard to their theological education by extension programme (2009:1). To this cause, the ETE pledged some funds for projects aimed at combating poverty and ministerial formation among AICs. The OAIC (2011:Goals 2009-2012) has outlined the strategic framework vision for its theological department for a better world (for 2009-2013, see also Gichimu 2010:373) as follows:

> to strengthen the OAIC department of theology to become an effective tool for policy development and implementation; to facilitate the articulation, communication, and renewal of AIC founding visions and development of theologies; to enhance AIC understanding and practicing of mission, especially in cross-cultural and urban settings and among young people; and to promote positive teaching of AIC theologies and AIC issues in non-AIC theological institutions.

Some of its objectives are to develop guidelines and criteria for regional and international solidarity fund for theological education. The other objective is to represent the OAIC theologically and in the ecumenical dialogue internationally (AIC 2011:Strategic and Initiatives). This strategy is not only necessarily for the AICs theological development and promotion of unity among different denominations but also as a positive way of promoting African forms of theologizing through critical engagement with traditional Western theologies. These objectives also show a serious concern to do theological education without being overly dependent on foreign resources (Molobi 2011). There has been an understanding that ecumenical cooperation in theological education is crucial for

the holistic and prophetic mission of the church in Africa for a better world. In this regard, John Gichimu (nd:3), the current Co-ordinator of the Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC) has pointed to the conscious shift in the theological education of AICs ministers towards higher education and a search for accreditation.

Sixth, is that which emerged from the consultation of the World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions (*hereafter,* WOCATI) held 4-8 July 2011 in Johannesburg, South Africa. James Amanze, the General Secretary of Association of Theological Institutions in Southern and Central Africa (ATISCA) played a significant role in the organization and success of this consultation. The consultation was supported by the ETE office under the leadership of Dietrich Werner. For the first time in the history of theological education in Africa, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical, Pentecostal, and AICs gathered together to charter a common reflection on the essential elements of quality in theological education for schools of all denominational backgrounds represented by WOCATI. The participants emphasized the strategic importance of ecumenical associations in enhancing African theological education through the work of the AACC and other ecumenical bodies. The participants identified the need to construct a common approach among the theological institutions of the churches that were represented "on what constitutes quality assurance and enhancement in theological education" (WOCATI 2011). They further agreed that "a balanced concept of quality in theological education should include academic proficiency, spiritual formation and pastoral competencies" (WOCATI 2011).

Seventh, the AATEEA Conference held in Ghana in October 2010 under the theme "equipping and mobilizing all God's people for human transformation and ecological restoration: the role of TEE," was another significant 'moment' in the development chain of African theological education. This conference, under its General Secretary and Coordinator, Kangwa Mabuluki discussed issues of developing appropriate TEE study material/courses, the church as a healing community, towards an HIV/AIDS competent church, facing the ecological challenge: the role of TEE, human rights and social justice especially gender justice, utilizing information technology in TEE and issues of accreditation and standardization of TEE (see AATEEA 2010).

Eighth, the AACC is involved in the critical process of mentoring younger African theologians through the African Theological Institute which was introduced at the Maputo Assembly in 2008 (Gatwa 2010:7). As Gatwa (2008:1) has noted, the institute—which held every year—is meant to expose young African theologians to the global context of African church and its many challenges in the twenty-first century,

> to offer young theologians the opportunity to learn some effective strategies for transforming theology, spirituality, and mission for life against the backdrop of so much death today; to understand African virtual heritage and its contribution to the life of the church; to allow them share a new theological insight, addressing the question of life, hope and dignity in Africa and the world.

This approach of the AACC is both significant and commendable as it seeks to mentor the next generation of theologians and church leaders on the African continent.

These above initiatives represent clear pointers in the right direction that African theological education is presently taking on the continent. It is apparent that theological education has moved from the periphery to the centre stage in its search for a just and equitable African Christian community. It is significant to acknowledge the crucial role the Circle has played in giving African theological education a more human face. Theological education in a continent ravaged by a host of distressful challenges such as HIV and AIDS, the ecological crisis, civil war, poverty, migration, gender violence etc., needs to take African women's reflections on the theology of life more seriously. It is the Circle that has been publishing much material on critical issues such as HIV and AIDS in Africa. Chitando (2010:244) argues that the Circle has emerged as the single most vibrant group of writers who have consistently written theology on Africa's challenges. He adds that names such as Mercy A. Oduyoye, Musa W. Dube, Isabel A. Phiri, Madipoane Masenya (ngwan'a Mpahlele), Futala Moyo, Esther Mombo, Sarojini Nadar, Nyambura J. Njoroge, Musimbi R. A. Kanyoro, Philomena Mwaura and many others have formed the engine of theological education on the African continent. It is therefore important to understand the ways in which African women have shaped the future of African theological education. The Circle is motivated by life and a desire for all to share justly and equally in this life. The question that emerges is as follows: is it possibility for the AACC through ecumenical and academic associations to encourage the theological institutions to utilize some of the methodologies and frameworks that have been

developed by the Circle for a life-giving and affirming theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable society?

4. The Contribution of the TEF/PTE/ETE: A Brief Outline of Observations

From the forgoing discussion, a critical question needs to be reinstated: what has been the TEF/PTE/ETE's contribution on theological education in Africa?

To begin with, one could not imagine what African theological education would have been like without the contribution of the TEF/PTE/ETE which has given hope to theological education in Africa through the programmes and models of theological education it has developed over time. It has contributed greatly to African theological education. Here I will only highlight a few of these contributions. First, it has helped to broaden the continuing theological education horizons for the entire people of God beyond theological educational settings other than through residential theological education. While it has struggled to help African Christians reach a level where ministry is no longer assumed as being the sole reserve of the ordained priesthood, it has nevertheless made significant inroads in establishing a paradigm shift towards seeing ministry as an inclusive activity based on the mission of God. Second, it has continued to remind churches in Africa of their stake in the continuing theological education renewal and reform for the sake of the mission of God. As observed above, it is through the initiative of the ETE that the AACC is now taking theological education seriously. Third, through the ecumenical sharing of resources, since its inception the TEF and its successors have continued to improve theological libraries and in some cases have even assisted with the reconstruction of infrastructural facilities of theological institutions. Fourth, it has continued to contribute towards faculty development in creating a cadre of outstanding and sensitive African theologians who have continued to engage in contextual theological reflection for life-giving theologies. The majority of these theologians hold significant positions either in church or/and society and are making substantial impacts on the churches and in theological education in Africa. Fifth, through the holding of consultations it has been a catalyst in identifying specific issues about which African theological educators need to focus (such a disabilities, poverty, justice,

gender, politic, ecological preservation, and so on). Sixth, it has helped in developing networks within the continent through creating ecumenical organizations. It is through the efforts of the TEF that associations for theological education have been created and currently have been revitalized with the efforts of ETE. In fact, it is also through the contribution of the PTE that the Circle was founded (see 3.2) and the majority of the prominent voices within the Circle were theologically educated through the efforts of the PTE and its subsequent successor. Thus, it has helped in developing a gender sensitive African theological education. Seventh, it has helped in breaking down the barriers of isolation which had for generations kept African Christians apart. There has been a strong bond of ecumenism that has development among African theologians across the continent. This can also be validated through theological interaction and engagements. Eighth, it has been a platform on which African theologians can contribute their theological voice to global Christianity. In this sense, it has been a tool of global network that has helped African theologians transcend their theological isolation and embrace the interdependence of human contexts and learning from other contexts in the world.

Ninth, the notion of contextualization which has become the overarching objective in doing African theology was exported to the continent through the efforts of the TEF. In a sense, the TEF and its subsequent successors have continued to contribute to the development of African theological education. It can be argued therefore, that the TEF/PTE/ETE has been very instrumental in empowering African theological education with relevant tools and mechanisms for promoting the principles of a just and equitable African Christian society.

5. Chapter Summary

The aim of this chapter was to investigate the contribution of the TEF through its distinctive transformations or paradigm shifts from 1958 to 2012 towards the development of African theological education that promotes principles of a just and equitable African Christian community The foregoing discussion leads to the following: First, a shift in methodology to overcome the dichotomy between theory and practice. African theological education has been utilizing the 'experience-reflection-action' process of theologizing. This has also occasioned the adoption of the 'problem posing' model of

leaning, especially in the ecumenical theological institutions. This model is based on critical consciousness (conscientization) and sometimes takes an activist perspective in which students are helped to become aware of their contextualized subjectivity by placing them in conscious critical confrontation with their societal challenges, and thereby help them to become agents of social transformation (Freire 2005:12).

Second, there has been shift in the curriculum orientation from an institutional focus to that of an existential challenge focus. The reading of the signs of the time and the need to be relevant in the context of theological education has become of great importance in the post-missionary era. In contrast to the missionary era, the emphasis is now placed on the actual experiences of African people rather on the subject matter. In this sense, theological education has become purposeful or goal oriented. This means that theological education has become a process of learning in the context of the everyday human experience of hopelessness and helplessness, while displaying a certain resilience and unswerving hope for a just and equitable African Christian community.

Third, in the light of the above it can be said that African theological education has become holistic in orientation. In line with the African worldview, theological education endeavours to be relevant by embracing the total African experience.

Fourth, theological education is no longer the privilege of the ordained ministry; instead, it is theological education by and for the entire people of God. As a result, theological education is not simply context or goal oriented; instead it has become people-oriented.

Fifth, there has been a critical emphasis placed on publication and the inclusion of African theology in the curricula of theological institutions of learning. Yet, little or no effort has been made by the majority of institutions to mainstream or integrate African theology in theological curricula.

Sixth, there has been a process of gendering theological education. With the unceasing work of the Circle, Africa is gradually becoming a centre of gendered creative thinking. Indeed, in recent years there has been more theological literature coming from the Circle than from any other theological sector in Africa. The Circle is shaping African Christianity in ways that no one could have imagined twenty years ago. One is tempted to

argue that the future of theological education and scholarship in Africa is dependent on how well African Christianity will work in critical solidarity with African women theologians. Maybe the time has come in the history of Christianity for African women theologians to lead the way? Theological education is in the process of acquiring a gender neutral face. Perhaps, this is one of the greatest contributions that African Christianity can make to global Christianity.

PART THREE

THE SEARCH FOR LIFE AFFIRMING THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: LISTENING TO VOICES OF AFRICAN THEOLOGIANS

Having evaluated the contribution of Theological Education Fund (TEF)/Programme for Theological Education (PTE)/Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE), it is important to understand what African theologians themselves considered crucial in different moments of the development and transformation African theological education. The objective of this part of the study is to investigate the contributions of Desmond Mpilo Tutu (former Associate Director of the TEF), John S. Pobee (former Associate Director of the PTE and Coordinator of the ETE) and Nyambura J. Njoroge (former Coordinator of the ETE) as *lenses* to understand the patterns of change and main issues that have preoccupied African theological education in different periods through the TEF/PTE/ETE. This part of the study is divided in three chapters: Chapter five: *Listening to the Voices of African Theologians I: Desmond M. Tutu, or "Rehabilitating Africa's Rich Cultural Heritage and Religious Consciousness"*; Chapter six: *Listening to the Voices of African Theologians II: John S. Pobee, or "The Renewal of the Church and a Personal Commitment and Community Lifestyle which is More than Just Social Action"*; and Chapter seven: *Listening to the Voices of African Theologians III: Nyambura J. Njoroge, or "Help Us to Understand How We Travel with God Our Creator and Source of Life in a Church and World Full of Strife and Tensions."* The underlying analytical framework of this part of the study is guided by the same 'follow the money trail' method of investigation employed thus far in this research study (see chapter 2.4). It argues that the kind of projects that received the most financial support will signal what each key theologian thought was significant for theological education in Africa. In addition, it signals their theological thinking and theological education ethos.

CHAPTER FIVE

LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF AFRICAN THEOLOGIANS I: DESMOND M TUTU, OR "REHABILITATING AFRICA'S RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE AND RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS"

> Theological education in Africa…must become authentically African helping the whole people of God to engage in God's mission to his [sic] world to liberate men [sic] from all kinds of oppression, to set them free to enter into the glorious liberty of the sons [sic] of God, to enable them to be fully themselves so that they will grow to full personhood that is to be measured by nothing less than the personhood of Christ, the perfect person (Tutu 1973:271)

1. Introduction

The previous chapter investigated the contribution of the Theological Education Fund (TEF) through its distinctive transformations or paradigm shifts from 1958 to 2012 towards the development of a theological education that promotes principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. This was essential because it laid down a historical and factual basis from which critical elements can be drawn for a synthesis proposal for the future prospects African theological education.

This present chapter discusses Desmond Mpilo Tutu's contribution to theological education as a former TEF African region Associate Director.[47] Tutu is the first of three successive chapters which will seek to analyse the core theological thrusts of the three African staff members of the TEF/PTE/ETE over three distinctive periods of time. The aim is to use Tutu as a *lens* through which to understand what was the main preoccupation of African theological education and what he considered to be the main function of theological education during his period of involvement with the TEF and how that continued to influence his theological thinking and writing.

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[47] At this time, each continent had its own director who was called associate director to the overall director of the TEF. Thus, Tutu was designated as associate director because his responsibility was specifically to fundraise for theological education in Africa.

The investigation into the search for life-affirming theological education as contributed by Tutu to the TEF/PTE/ETE, former African region Associate Director is divided into three main sections. The first section is a brief biography of Tutu. This is followed by an evaluation of the main issues that Tutu focused on in theological education as its African region Associate Director. The third section is a concise analysis of his theological contribution.

2. "A Good Way of Serving my People": A Brief Biography of Desmond Mpilo Tutu

José Romas-Horta and Jeffrey Hopkins in their edited book (2000:93) have observed that "a social and political system that stifles the talents and dignity of its subjects can unintentionally channel those talents back on itself." Tutu is one of the most influential and potent public-prophetic-voices ever to emerge in South Africa who stood against the unjust and repressive oppressive and exploitive system of apartheid. There are few African theologians that have given such a sustained and lived out critical praxis of their theological reflection as far-reaching as Tutu.[48] Without doubt, Tutu is a beacon of a lived theological experience.

Born in 1931 in the gold-mining town of Klerksdorp, at the age of twelve, he and his family moved to the black township of Sophiatown outside Johannesburg (Romas-Horta and Hopkins 2000:94). Tutu became a high school teacher in 1954. He later gave up teaching "in protest against the deteriorating standard of Black education. This was due to the implementation of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which reduced Black education to second rate. He decided to become a priest and enrolled at St Peter's Theological College" (2000:94). The College later merged with other colleges to form the Federal Theological Seminary (*hereafter,* Fedsem). Tutu narrates (cited in Romas-Horta and Hopkins 2000:94, italics mine) "it occurred to me that, if the church would accept me, the profession of the priest could be a *good way of serving my people.*" It seems this is the initial motive that sustained Tutu during his dark years of struggle against the apartheid

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[48] Tutu received various peace prizes in recognition of his contribution towards the nonviolent confrontation of institutionalized racism and oppression in Africa. Among these awards are: "the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, the Albert Schweitzer Prize for Humanitarianism in 1986, the Pacem in Terris Award in 1987, the Sydney Peace Prize in 1999, the Gandhi Peace Prize in 2005 and the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009" (See The Free Encyclopaedia 2012).

system. By so doing, one can argue that Christianity remained "*a good way of serving*" African people.

Tutu was ordained to the Anglican priesthood in 1961 and moved to London to study for a master's degree at King's College under the scholarship of the TEF (Boddy-Evans 2012). He returned to South Africa and taught at Fedsem in Alice, Eastern Cape. Tutu was the first black South African Archbishop of Cape Town in South Africa and the primate of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa (CPSA).[49] In the words of Leonard D. Hulley Tutu is seen primarily as a "working theologians"[50] who is deeply committed to a Christian ethos, but at the same time is patently aware of the challenges of contemporary Africa. Naturally, Tutu has become a common point of reference for any scholar dealing with the contribution of Christianity towards the liberation and the making of a "rainbow"[51] South Africa. Yet, what the majority of scholars do not realize is that Tutu's contextual theological thinking emerged during the time he served as the Associate Director of the TEF in Bromley, London from 1972 to 1975.

3. The Making of a Contextual Theologian

Tutu was asked by Walter Cason, the then acting Director of the TEF to consider an appointment as one of the TEFs Associate Directors. South Africa at that time was faced with the situation that the apartheid regime regarded its racial segregation policy as being morally legitimate (Hulley 1997:327). When Tutu took up this position, the World Council of Churches (WCC) was perceived with hostility by the apartheid regime. This was deepened by the fact that since its inception, the WCC had declared racial segregation to be a direct antithesis of the Christian faith (Gish 2004:49). As a result, the South African leaders of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) had withdrawn their denomination from the WCC in protest. The WCC continued to generate controversy in the years that followed. Steven Gish (2004:50) observes that in 1966, the WCC held a conference on the church and society in Genève where the revolutionary struggle against

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[49] In 2006 the church was renamed the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

[50] Tutu is not necessarily an academic theologian but a "working theologian." This means that Tutu does not consciously work at a systematic presentation of his ideas but presents the statements occasionally arising from specific situations as a prophetic respond like the Hebrew prophets in Old Testament (Hulley 1997:327).

[51] The concept of the 'rainbow people of God' was coined by Tutu to describe the pluralistic context of South Africa during his speech in which he called for an inclusive community (See Tutu 1994).

racism was supported. The conflict between the ecumenical churches and the South African regime escalated in 1968 when the South African Council of Churches (SACC) issued a statement denouncing apartheid as unchristian because it made fellowship among different people groups impossible. In that same year, the WCC Central Committee established the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR). The purpose of the PCR was to develop a framework in which ecumenical policies and programmes can be established towards the liberation of the oppressed black peoples of South Africa in the context of the system of institutionalized racism commonly called apartheid. Although it attempted to deal with racism in a wider context, the programme's energy and much of its attention was channelled on apartheid in Southern Africa (Gish 2004:50). It is within this context that Tutu accepted the position with the TEF. Hence, when Tutu applied to the South African government for a permit to travel to the United Kingdom, the authorities initially refused to grant it to him. The permit was only granted after an appeal was made to then Prime Minister, B. J. Vorster (Gish 2004:50).

Tutu's time in London proved to be very decisive in his later involvement in the anti-apartheid movement and activism for the humanization of South African society. Tutu's Anglican ecclesial heritage being a black man in a white world no doubt shaped his theological formation. His theological education at Kings College, London and his subsequent rise through the Anglican hierarchy equipped him to understand and deal with the white political system of power. His ecumenical formation was crucial in developing his liberation perspective. Tutu perceived being a black man in the white world as a weapon for liberation. As Tutu (2008:9) asserts, "[it was] without fear of contradiction that my stint with TEF gave me the best possible preparation for my work in South Africa as we struggled against the viciousness of apartheid." He further confesses that staying in London made him aware:

> ...how living in free societies has helped my family and me to develop into slightly better human beings, realized from the claustrophobia of apartheid. Consequently, I am obsessed with concern that as many South Africans, especially blacks, get opportunity to experience what it means to be accepted and treated as a human being (cited in Gish 2004:52).

It is clear that working with the TEF was crucial in forming Tutu's theology of liberation. Indeed, his appointment came at a time when liberation theology in Latin America had gained momentum and the TEF was involved in studying ways that theological education

could be contextualized in the global south to reflect the local ethos of particular cultural contexts (2004:53). Coupled with this was his extensive travel to unstable or crisis-ridden African countries to investigate theological education. This exposed him to the socio-political, religio-cultural and economic struggles of African people. Through these experiences, Tutu saw the need for theological education to struggle for the humanization of societies in Africa. In an interview with Mary Marshall Clark (1999), Tutu explains that he "encountered, for the first time, the heady stuff of liberation theology. The TEF worked under a mandate called contextualization, where you were saying, 'You've got to try and make, or help make, the gospel relevant to their particular settings.'" Tutu further points out that when he went back to South Africa as the Anglican Dean of Johannesburg, he took it as a platform to start implementing these new insights he had gained from the TEF, focusing on South African social problems characterized by injustice, oppression and racism. Through this broader perspective of the problems of African people, Tutu (1973:271) became aware of the inadequacies of the inherited Western epistemologies in the African context and called for a "radical decolonization" of African theological education as a paradigm for social transformation. The raises a key question: during Tutu's time as the African region Associate Director of the TEF, on what kind of projects did he commit significant resources to in respect to Africa?

4. Tutu's Major Sponsorship Emphasis

In this section I expose projects that sustained most attention during Tutu's period as the African region Associate Director of the TEF from in 1972-1975. While there are many projects that Tutu supported in various regions in Africa, here I will only reflect on five major projects. This is because according to the reports in the WCC-TEF archives, they seem to reflect his understanding of the core ethos and philosophy or function of African theological education during this period.

The first of these projects which Tutu supported was Fedsem, located at Alice in the Eastern Cape. During this period Fedsem was one of the TEFs Major Grant projects (TEF 1974a). Fedsem was established in 1963 through the efforts of the TEF and occupies a special place in South African Christianity as a beacon of ecumenism and an

important symbol of the churches' triumph against apartheid (TEF 1974a; de Gruchy 1975; Duncan 2006a; Denis 2003, 2009). Indeed, it is reported that Fedsem was "a thorn in the flesh of the authorities" (TEF 1974a:11). This ecumenical institution was founded at Alice in the Eastern Cape for theological education of Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregationalist ministers. Graham Duncan (2006b:95) has shown that Fedsem came into being during the developing political turbulence and segregation which precipitated the need for a joint venture to safeguard theological education in apartheid South Africa. Its philosophy therefore was oriented towards resisting and struggling against injustice and the violation of human rights. The students were deeply involved in Black Consciousness and Black theology (1973:1). In fact, one of its students (Sabelo Ntwasa) was responsible for organizing the country-wide Black theology seminars as the temporary travelling secretary of the now disbanded University Christian Movement (UCM) (TEF 1974a:42, 1974b:11). Philippe Denis (2003:72) has observed that at Fedsem, Black theology was one of the most significant components of the course in systematic theology. Black theology was given attention long before it received any recognition in theological circles, whereby "students and staff developed together a genuine contextual theology." The TEF reports show that Fedsem was also involved in training students as literacy teachers using the 'see-judge-act' method. This was meant to inculcate a political lesson by helping them look at their own situation, "making a judgement about it, and (sometimes) deciding to change it" (TEF 1974c:11). In order to succeed, the students were required to complete a booklet in their own language for use in their parishes as a resource for training their congregants (TEF 1974c:11). It is seems that the Fedsem ethos was in line with Tutu's theological orientation and passion for connecting black theology and African culture. One may indeed argue that the political orientation of the seminary was one of the main reasons Tutu channelled so many of TEFs resources to it.

The second project that Tutu funded was the Institute of the Association of Southern African Theological Institutions (ASATI) (ASATI 1974:1-2). The ASATI, now defunct, was seen as an agent of renewal in theological education in Southern Africa (de Gruchy 1974:1-2). Since its inception, the association was strong on racial issues. For many, ASATI was of crucial importance in the fight against apartheid. At one time, it was accused of liberalism and communism by the South African government due to its non-discriminatory orientation and conviction that racism was a sin (Naude 1963:1;

Consultation on the Role of the church in African Education 1973:1). ASATI was also involved in issues around Black theology, justice and reconciliation; subjects that were very much close to Tutu's heart (ASATI 1974:1-2). Tutu saw this organization as a platform for developing Black theology that could respond effectively to political injustice in South Africa. It was Tutu who also sponsored the first four initial issues of the *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* (JTSA) which was produced by the ASATI and the South African Council of Churches (SACC). The journal's editorial board was multi-racial in composition from its inception. Two of the overarching objectives of the journal were the search for a theology in African context and the practical application of theology to the issues the church was facing (TEF 1972:18).

Third, Tutu's concern for resolving the relationship between African theology and Black theology led him to call for and sponsor a collaborative seminar with the AACC. It was here that he presented his paper: "Black theology and African Theology: Soul mates or Antagonists" (Mugambi 1974:2). This seminar was meant to find the convergences and divergences between African theology and Black theology in order to overcome the dichotomy that existed between these two theologies. He also sponsored the Institute of Church and Society in Nigeria on its consultation on primal worldviews. The debate surrounded the planting Christianity in Africa, where many missionaries did not take the traditional African religion seriously, but instead sought to uproot it (TEF 1973:1). As a consequence, contextualization in Africa must take into account the cultural and religious heritage and pluralistic composition of Africa (1973:1). These issues were close to Tutu's heart and remain vital in contemporary Africa.

Fourth, another significant project that Tutu was involved in sponsoring (as well as influencing its content) was a research programme conducted over two years at seminars and conferences across eight universities and ecumenical centres in Africa and universities in Los Angeles and London (TEF 1974c:16-17; Fashole-Luke *et al.*, 1978:preface). This project resulted in the publication of the book, *Christianity in Independent Africa* (papers selected from over 200 presented at various seminars between 1973 and 1975) which edited by Fasholé-Luke *et al.*, The perspective of the book is ecumenical and more than half of the authors are African. It is divided into two parts; part one provides twenty-three articles dealing with "Religious and Secular Structures" and part two, deals with "Traditional Religion and Christianity: Continuities and

Conflicts." The book focuses on the African experience with structural programmes and contextualization. Tutu (1978:367-368) contributed an article titled "Wither African Theology?" in which he pleads for a plurality of theologies. At the heart of this argument lies Tutu's conviction that African Christianity must be informed by an African religio-cultural heritage.

Fifth, Tutu was also involved in sponsoring the AACC Assembly in 1974. It was a time when the AACC was seen to be struggling to tailor large-designed structures and institutions towards local needs and resources (AACC 1975-78:7). It was also at a time when scholars began to seek understanding about those African symbols which could bring Christian theology to life within African culture. It was (AACC 1975-1978:8) also at a time when the fight against the distraction of African people and family under the slavery of apartheid in Southern Africa and the social injustices in some African independent countries was at its height. The motto was self-reliance which was understood as an attitude of willingness and ability to share in mutuality. The foregoing brief sketch of the main concentration of funding and sponsorship by Tutu during his period as the African region Associate Director of the TEF raises two particular questions: what was Tutu's perception of the purpose of African theological education? What was his apprehension of the basis for such a theological education?

5. Tutu's Theological Thinking on African Theological Education

In the light of the above discussion, the aim of this section is to evaluate some of the emerging themes from these projects in the light of Tutu's written works in order to understand his vision or theological insights on the kind of African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable society. The following represents an evaluation of some of the key emerging themes identified from the above discussion:

5.1. "Radical Decolonization": Africanization of Theological Education

From the above discussion, it can be observed that Tutu was concerned that Christianity should be informed by African culture. He believed that the Christ that was preached to African people was a particular Christ who did not speak with clarity to many Africans in the church. Through travelling to various parts of Africa as the TEF African region Associate Director, Tutu (1973:269) became conscientized that even in the countries were the church should have been relevant, it was either trying to disentangle itself from the ingrained past cultural domination or was unconsciously perpetuating the inherited Western practices. Tutu (1973:269) lamented the fact that even theological education which should have helped the African church was not cut-loose from its erstwhile Western domination, but instead was held captive in every respect, including its curriculum, subject content, worship and lifestyle. Consequently, what was being developed and taught to theological students was largely a continuation of the Western Christian heritage. On the one hand, Tutu (1973:270) lamented that "it seems in the whole Christian enterprise African people have to be circumcised into Westerners first" before being considered as Christians. On the other, he reprimanded African Christians for being "content to be reproduction" of Western Christians. For Tutu (1973:270-271), this scenario hampered an independent development of African Christianity on three levels: First, the majority of Western-reproduced theologians were unable to engage in the more demanding, but infinitely more rewarding task of creating a theology that was authentically African. Second, African Christianity inherited structures and institutions which were too expensive to maintain and which proved inappropriate to the needs and situations of African people. Third, these theological institutions were guilty of developing authoritarians, professionals and *elite* individuals who could not serve their community with humility like Jesus Christ. Developing this thought, Tutu argues that it was high time that African Christians looked to African value systems, as well as African spiritual and cultural resources for their theological education. For Tutu (1973:271), the solution for developing a life-oriented African theological education lies in the "radical decolonisation in cultural and spiritual matters." He demanded that theological education must engage in mutual dialogue with the African religio-cultural heritage in order for it to become authentically African and thereby help the entire people of God engage in God's mission for liberation of humanity from all kinds of oppression and help them to affirm

their humanity and personhood. Tutu (1999a:10) believed that the solution to African problems would only come from African's own experiences and religio-cultural heritage. On this point, while acknowledging the significance of the African religio-cultural heritage in the development of Christianity, African women theologians have cautioned that there are certain cultural practices and beliefs that are even more deeply rooted than Christianity and which militate against women's full realization of their humanity as human beings created in the image of God (Njoroge 2000:125). Therefore, the Circle has called for a critical engagement with African culture in order to affirm what is good and denounce what suffocates life in the community (Njoroge 2000:125; Phiri 1997a:68-69).

By underpinning his theology of liberation on African religious experiences and heritage, Tutu argued that the African religio-cultural heritage was not illusory and that it should be used as the vehicle for transmitting the Christian faith in African Christian communities. Tutu (1978:367) believed that African theology is crucial for the "rehabilitating Africa's rich cultural heritage and religious consciousness" which is imperative for African Christians own affirmation of self-respect and acceptance which can help them envision their own destiny with determination and pride. Tutu acknowledged the fact that theological education possessed a colonial origin and was heavily influenced by imperialist and racist ideas which denounced every aspect of African religio-cultural heritage. As a result, its European categories were deemed unfit for the liberation of theological education; instead, what was needed was a critical and spiritual decolonisation of theological education to ensure its authenticity and relevance in the African context. In order to achieve this, there must be the self-assertion of African identity and a critical demonstration that African space will not be surrendered to others in the global Christian community. As was highlighted above, both female and male African theologians affirm the significance of the African religio-cultural heritage as being vital for the authentic development of African theological education (e.g., Oduyoye 1979; Phiri 1997b; Mbiti 1969; Dickson 1984). However, the argument from Eboussi Boulanga (1981:17) makes the project of Africanization of theological education complex for if the impact of colonial Christianity on the humanity of African people rendered them "essentially locked out" "lost" and "strangers to themselves," then it means that before African theologians can venture towards the process of Africanization, they must be 're-Africanized' themselves. It seems that no African currently engaged in theological reflection has managed to escape what Engelbert Mveng (1994:156) calls the

"anthropological poverty" that fundamentally altered the African's self-perception of world or 'being-ness,' reducing them to "a thing" in history. This is a total disorientation that leaves no room for recovery. On the contrary, Jean-Marc Éla (1986:123) seems to have made a fairer diagnosis of the African situation in that African people did not lose their cultural heritage, but instead have been denied the basic human needs which nurture human dignity and respect. This means that there is a possibility of critically reclaiming those life-affirming aspects from the African cultural heritage to inform African theological education. That said, Tutu does not seem to give specific guidelines on how to decolonize theological education from Western captivity. As a consequence, the following question remains: what are some of the specific guidelines for decolonising African theological education?

5.2.   Theological Education as Essentially Incarnational

The second theme emerging from Tutu's TEF funding project has to do with the incarnational paradigm. Although Tutu was firm about Christianity being informed by African culture, he nevertheless was careful not to lose its biblical foundations. Proceeding from his ethos was his further intention to anchor African theological education on the notion of the incarnation in order to retain its biblical foundation. Tutu's chief concern was how the incarnation can provide a framework for translating African theological education into an African worldview. According to Tutu (1979:166), one cannot speak of God without a human face and there is no humanity without God. In other words, it is the experiences of humanity that demanded the incarnation. In this perspective, incarnation is God's love response to the world. This means that Christianity is always translating into other cultures and this protects it from cultural monopolization (Bediako 1995:109). According to Tutu (1979:166, italics original) this also declares that the God of the Bible Yahweh is in critical solidarity with the downtrodden to "save them *from* a death-dealing situation *for* a life-giving situation." Tutu (2008:9) argues that contextualization as introduced by the TEF meant that theological education should "take seriously the specificity, the scandal, of the incarnation." Bonganjalo Goba (1986:61-62) observes that working with the TEF brought a paradigm shift in Tutu's theological perspective. Liberation theology was critically "reflected in his sermons,

speeches and even conversations which reflect deep spirituality whose characteristics are utter devotion and trust in God who has been revealed in Jesus Christ; and a deep concern for those who suffer and are victims of oppression." Goba adds that such a theology finds its locus within the church. As a consequence, Tutu (cited in Goba 1986:62) stresses that:

> The Church of God must produce a relevant theology which speaks to hopelessness and despondency. The Church must declare the Lordship of God and Christ—that God is the Lord of history and of this world despite all appearances to the contrary, that he is the God of justice and cares about oppression and exploitation, about deaths and detention, about front-end loaders, squatters' shacks, about unemployment and about power.

For Tutu (1984:39), there should be no dichotomy between religion and the world of politics. Simon Maimela (1986:43) observes that in view of the inseparability of religion and the world of politics, Tutu condemned "apartheid as an unjust, wholly immoral, and unchristian political system which must be dismantled and replaced by a more just, humane political order." Indeed, Tutu (1980:12) is of the opinion that the notion of the incarnation was a revolutionary teaching in the ancient world which radically triumphed over the dichotomy between politics and religion, matter and spirit, women and men etc. and became the basis for establishing the kingdom of God, grounded in peace, justice, reconciliation, compassion, love and the church as a dedicated agent of this kingdom. In Tutu's view, this seeming separation forms a disparity in the incarnation because it brings about a distortion that appears to legitimize the *status quo* of an unjust and oppressive system. Christianity has consequences in the public sphere which means it can never be neutral in situation of injustice. However, if the church chooses not to oppose injustice, it has chosen the side of the oppressors (Tutu 1982:34). Theology, as understood by Tutu, "is not simply an ordination requirement on a seminarian's curriculum but a fundamental resource for Christian existence, suffering, and [resistance] in a time of historical oppression and crisis" (de Gruchy 1991:216). God is never neutral in the situation of oppression. God critically sides with the oppressed and the excluded. Since God sides with the wretched of the earth, the church must likewise side with such within the concrete historical context of struggle. Tutu therefore sees theological education as a site of struggle against social injustice and every form of human abuse. In fact, Tutu's perception of theological education as a tool for socio-political liberation was underlined

in the goals of Fedsem which stated: "leading South African society into justice and freedom and trust…authenticity, relevance, unity and non-racialism" (Mogoba cited in Duncan 2006:844). However, Tutu's insistence on an unqualified notion of 'biblical' can easily be misinterpreted in some quarters of Christianity as sanctioning an uncritical approach to the bible. The danger of using theological notions such as the incarnation without the necessary qualifications is too often used by Christian fundamentalists as a tool to abuse and exploit others.

Tutu (1990:7) believes that incarnation is an historical event that shows God's determination to liberate humanity from oppression and dehumanization. Theological education must concern itself with developing methodologies that seek to make African Christian communities "more humane and 'user friendly' and not red in tooth and claw." Tutu (1979:166-167) further argues that a biblical paradigm of liberation theology must be meticulously followed so as to speak authoritatively into a specific situation of socio-political oppression, injustice, and economic exploitation such as that of apartheid, practised and legislated in South Africa. God is a God of compassion who "saves the oppressed for the sake of their oppressors." The authenticity of liberation theology according to Tutu (1979:168) "must be judges by whether it is biblical, by whether it is consistent with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by whether it is guilty of self-contradiction, and by whether it works." It is because of his understanding of liberation theology as incarnational that Tutu (1979:168) called for "the churches everywhere to be true to their prophetic ministry in speaking up for the dumb, the voiceless, for those who are weak to speak up for themselves, to oppose oppression, injustice, corruption and evil wherever these may be found." What I find particularly refreshing in Tutu was his explication (and resultant enthusiasm) of the incarnation paradigm and how such a model contains positive theological values for promoting a just and equitable society. However, Tutu does not go into any specific detail about how such a posture can bear interpretive fruit in relation to gender justice, although he is very conscious of the pressing challenges of contemporary Africa.

Tutu's argument for a plurality of theologies within incarnation paradigm in Africa is crucial. He may not have explicitly dealt with gender issues but the fact that he acknowledges the provisional and limitations and conditioned-nature of all theologies, he seems to make room for feminist theological reflection (Tutu 1979:165, 1987:37). While

Tutu's vision of theological education is monumental, the fragmented and polarized nature of contemporary African Christianity makes the realization of the liberating and prophetic essence of the church almost impossible (Goba 1986:67). Another shortcoming concerns the ambiguities or tensions within the model itself. Tutu fails to show how the incarnation paradigm can be applied in the context of religious plurality. The raises a question: how can an African Christian community enjoy the principles of a just and equitable society without living in solidarity with people from other religious traditions?

To a greater degree, the incarnational approach can lead to a mood of defensiveness by building even higher walls of exclusion. In this sense, because of its radical and exclusively focus on Jesus of Nazareth and not the Trinity, it poses the problem of Christian exclusiveness in the context of religious pluralism and harmonious co-existence. In addition, Tutu's use of the notion is anthropocentric in that he does not show how it can be utilized in the context of the ecological crisis.

5.3. "If I diminish you, I diminish myself": Theological Education for Ubuntu

Third, by Tutu sponsoring projects focusing on issues dealing with African culture, he seems to believe that theological education was an instrument in the realization of *Ubuntu* (i.e., inclusive community). Perhaps the main reason Tutu refused to remain aloof from socio-political involvement in obedience to the imperative of the Christian gospel and speaking against evil of oppression and domination of the powerless (Maimela 1986:57) by the powerful could be found in his unswerving vision of an inclusive community. One of the major contributions of Tutu to African theological thought is his firm apprehension of the notion of *Ubuntu*. According to Tutu, one of the crucial functions of African theological education was to prepare students for *Ubuntu*. The notion itself is an embodiment of the ideals of social justice. Ubuntu is the essence of what it means to be a human being intimately connected with others in the web life (Tutu 2007:3). As Tutu (2007:4), has shown, "those who seek to destroy and dehumanize are also victims— victims of pervading ethos, be it political ideology, an economic system, or a distorted religious conviction." The implication is that a person is only human in relation to other

humans. Evidently, by choosing to support theological projects that were advancing such notions of the relationship between Christianity and African culture, Tutu's reveals his concern about theological education conscientizing students about the African community of sharing and acceptance. This is contrary to the popular usage of the notion of conscientization which seem to pay more attention on making students aware of their social problems and become agents of liberation. Instead, Tutu seems to suggest that students should be made aware first of the good in their society and become agents of the realization of that good. This is why he insisted on the mutual interdependence and mutual experiences of human beings. He affirmed that the essence of being human was only found in mutual relationship and interaction, using its strength on behalf of others—the weak and the exploited not take advantage of them (2007:3). In pleading for an inclusive community in South Africa, Tutu suggests the concept of "rainbow people of God" as a paradigm for acceptance and integration of plurality (see footnote. 49 above). The notion itself draws essence and meaning from *Ubuntu*. He persuades that "you are the rainbow people of God. You remember the rainbow in the Bible is a sign of peace. The rainbow is a sign of prosperity. We want peace, prosperity and justice and we can have it when we, all the people of God, work together" (1994:vi). Tutu underpinned liberation theology on *Ubuntu* which he saw as a foil against falling prey to theological exclusivism. Tutu (nd) argues that the commitment for black liberation is engendered by a commitment for white liberation. This understanding arises from Tutu's affirmation that all human beings are created in the image of God which finds its clear expression through *Ubuntu*. While Tutu has popularized the notion of *Ubuntu*, it is also important to understand the notion is not as perfect as it seems to be depicted. The quest for self-discovery, self-affirmation, and self-inclusion is not equivalent to a romantic apprehension of African culture. As discussed above (subsection 5.4.1), the African community possesses its own limitations as has been revealed by the Circle (Phiri 1997a:68; Njoroge 1997a:77). It must therefore be clarified that while the notion of *Ubuntu* is imbued with ideals of a just and equitable society, it is not equivalent to justice and equality. African community itself is all about the quest for justice and equality.

As Toshihiro Abe (2004:158) rightly observes, Tutu's usage of the concept of *Ubuntu* should be understood within the parameters of his dedication to Africanize theological education. This becomes clear when one looks at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), an official organization which was launched to deal with the past

human rights violations and judging amnesty applications in post-apartheid South Africa. As the chair of this project, Tutu utilized *Ubuntu* as a framework for racial reconciliation and the securing of peaceful co-existence in South Africa. Scholars have argued that the notion of *Ubuntu* shaped his judgment in trying to make racial reconciliation comprehensive to African people (Russell 2004:161). For Tutu, *Ubuntu* was the main resource that enshrined not only healing for the wounded nation, but as the basis for envisioning an alternative future because of its opposition to vengeance as well as openness and acceptance of one's enemies with love. As Tutu (1999b) would argue, there is "no future without forgiveness." Nevertheless, Tutu is also aware that forgiveness does not mean condoning past injustices. Tutu's (2008:9) longing for African theological education is that it should grow "from strength to strength as it prepares candidates to deal with urgent contemporary challenges such as HIV/AIDS, poverty, corruption in high places, injustice, oppression and perennial conflict." Be so doing, Tutu acts as a pragmatic and academic theological bridge for envisioning a utopian community within the context of struggles. In his public life, Tutu has practiced the incarnational theory he has developed with the ultimate objective of establishing human liberation and dignity, by calling for a just and equitable Christian community

6. Chapter Summary

Through utilizing the methodology of 'follow the money trail' this chapter has sought to demonstrate the links that exist between the projects that Tutu supported in his time as African region Associate Director of the TEF and his understanding of the function of African theological education. For example, he supported Fedsem, an ecumenical seminary which focused on the issues of justice and equality. These issues circulate through the veins of Tutu's theological perspective. In addition, it is also instructive from his writing that Tutu was concerned with a theological education that can help create a more humane community in South Africa and Africa in general. Three themes are evident in Tutu's vision for a theological education that promotes principles of just and equitable African Christian community. First, it is authentically African. This is based on an understanding that authenticity comes before relevance. He thus called for African theological education to decolonize itself from its erstwhile Western theological captivity. Second, it must be incarnational by translating in critical

historical experiences of the African people. The issues of racism were central to Tutu's incarnation theology. The incarnation implies that God is never neutral but is in critical solidarity with the exploited and excluded in order to bring about justice for them. Third, it is a theological education for *Ubuntu*. This spells the creation of an inclusive community where each human being enjoys the same fundamental human rights of justice, peace, equitable and liberty. For Tutu, this is the reason for theological education. However, as the chapter has argued, while on the one hand, Tutu's stance on African theological education was strongly against institutionalized racism (e.g., apartheid); on the other, he did not deal with the specific challenges of gender or the ecological crisis. Instead, he took a more generalized approach that pushed these issues to the peripheral of theological education. Furthermore, while he called for the decolonization of African theological education, he did not give specific guidelines on what steps needed to be taken in order to achieve such a goal.

Utilizing the same analytical framework, the following chapter examines the perspectives of John S. Pobee, as the second *lens* through which to understand the change patterns and focus of African theological education.

CHAPTER SIX

LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF AFRICAN THEOLOGIANS II: JOHN S. POBEE, OR "THE RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH AND A PERSONAL COMMITMENT AND COMMUNITY LIFESTYLE WHICH IS MORE THAN JUST SOCIAL ACTION"

> The Renewal of theological education is imperative for the future of the Christian Church (Pobee 1997)

1. Introduction

In the quest to comprehend the change patterns and resultant transformations of African theological education and the main preoccupations of the various leaders of the PTE/ETE that promote the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community, the previous chapter discussed Desmond Mpilo Tutu's contribution to African theological education as the former African region Associate Director of the TEF. The chapter demonstrated that there was present a strong link between the main focus of the nature of the projects that Tutu supported and his understanding of the purpose of African theological education.

Utilizing the same analytical framework from the previous chapter, this chapter examines John S Pobee's core theological thrust and understanding of the function of African theological education. The aim is to use Pobee as a *lens* to understand what was the main preoccupation of African theological education during his period of involvement with the Programme for Theological Education (PTE)/Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE) and what he considered to be significant and how that has continued to influence his theological thinking as can be seen through his various writings. As with the previous chapter, this chapter will also argue that the projects which received the most attention will reveal Pobee's main theological concerns and his understanding of the function of African theological education.

The present investigation is divided into three main sections: the first section provides a brief biography of Pobee. The second section offers an evaluation of the main projects that Pobee sponsored in African theological education during the time of his involvement with the PTE/ETE. Drawing energy from the second section, the third section analyses the emerging themes in African theological education in the light of Pobee's theological perspectives.

2. "Enabler and Conductor": A Brief Biography of John Samuel Pobee

John Samuel Pobee certainly deserves his place as one of the most influential contributors to the development of African theological education. In particular, his influence and contribution to theological education has been hailed as promoting the theological progress of African women theologians (Phiri 2009:115). His passion for a life-giving theology far transcends the borders of the African continent. Indeed, Pobee could be numbered as one of the greatest thinkers in African Christianity. A Ghanaian, Pobee is an Anglican bishop and Professor (emeritus) of New Testament and Church History at the University of Ghana. As with Tutu, Pobee is an Anglican and ecumenical leader; both are products of countries that were once under a British colonial rule in which the Anglican Church functioned like a state church that wielded political status and power. Both have developed models that critique Western theology and have learned how to find life in the midst of contradictions or where certain death was inevitable.

Pobee was born 9 July 1937 in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and grew up in a family that respected and practiced religious plurality. He lectured for several years before he was appointed African region Associate Director of the PTE in Genève, Switzerland and later as Executive Director of Theological and Ministerial Formation Programme of the WCC (Pobee nd:113, Fulljames 1993:63). From 1992 until 1998, Pobee was the first Global Coordinator of the ETE Programme when it changed its name from the PTE. He remains a significant church leader, missiologist and ecumenical theologian. He worked with the PTE and the ETE for a period of fifteen years and unlike Tutu, he made a significant contribution in both his writings and in the ethos of the organization. During his time serving as Global Coordinator of the ETE, Pobee (nd:115) was significant "as an enabler and conductor of the team" in search of a viable theological education within

the ecumenical movement. Pobee (nd: 110) was convinced that theology was not only "reading but doing and living." In those areas in which Pobee significantly contributed in the theological discourse, he was known for his unswerving affirmation that theological education must concern itself with ordinary African Christians, in their daily struggle for survival in the world. Pobee (1990b:56) firmly held that "theological education that does not produce a sense of commitment to Christ is a contradiction in terms; it should result in the renewal of the church and a personal commitment and community lifestyle which is more than just social action." Second, it lies in his contention that ecumenical theological education holds a promise for promoting the principles of a just and equitable African community. Pobee (1992b:146) notes that meaningful theological education should transcend confessionals and particularities to embrace the wider community of the church. For Pobee (1997), the renewal of theological education is an imperative not just for the future of African Christianity, but for theological education itself to become viable in promoting principles of a just and equitable society. The question the next section seeks to respond to is: what were the main projects that Pobee sponsored during his time as the Global Coordinator of the ETE?

3. Pobee's Sustained Attention and Sponsorship Emphasis

More than Tutu, Pobee sponsored numerous theological education projects in Africa. Here I focus only those projects that received the most sustained attention because they seem to point to his overall emphasis. First, Pobee spent much of the ETEs financial energy on funding women in Africa to enable them to study theology. It was during Pobee's time with the PTE and the ETE that the majority of African women theologians completed their post-graduate theological studies. Yet, he was not only concerned about women studying in theological education but also their inclusion in leadership structures (Pobee 1992c:1). Consequently, Pobee invested resources in the Circle (Kanyoro 2002:24, Phiri 2009:115). He also helped to fundraise for Circle women to attend international conferences and included them in his programme as resource persons or as sponsored participants to events. In addition, he attended the meetings of the Circle and shared ideas and encouraged the use of the publications by the Circle in African theological education (Kanyoro 2002:25). Pobee (1986c:2) unequivocally stated his theological vision as "building a community of men and women and no one will

disenfranchise me on that debate." Pobee (1986c:2) had a personal interest in gender issues despite the fact that the PTE made some "avowals of the cause." As if that was not enough, following the WCC declaration for churches' decade (1988-1998) on women, Pobee (1987b:1, italics mine) declared that:

> …as from 1988, 40% of PTE's resources will be committed to faculty development of women. In 1990, 60% of PTEs resources will be allocated to projects related to women. *1998 all of PTEs resources will be allocated to the projects related to women.* PTE decided to give priority to development of women in theology and ministry as well as other related programmes.

The critical and risky nature of this step has caused Pobee's successors to unsuccessfully emulate his lead in giving 100% of available resources to the theological advancement of women. Yet, this shows the intensity of Pobee's passion for a just and equitable Christian community as something so valuable that he was willing to take enormous risks to ensuring its success.

Among the numerous projects that Pobee initiated and sponsored on gender issues were two major book projects. The first was, *New Eyes for Reading the Bible: Biblical and Theological Reflections by Women from the Third World,* which he co-edited with Barbel von Wartenberg-Potter was published in 1986 by the World Council of Churches in Genève. Comprising of nineteen essays by women theologians from Africa, Asia and Latin America, the book is a significant contribution of women's theology from the global South (*cf.* Pobee 1986c:1). The second book was, *Culture, Women and Theology*, which Pobee edited and was published by the ISPCK in Delhi in 1994. In this book, Pobee (1986d:1) was particularly concerned with the production of theology in a pluralist world which he felt should be open to insights gained from other religious orientations. He therefore suggests a theological approach that transcends Christian theology. In this book, out of the fifteen essays that were collected, six were written by Africans.

Second, Pobee also focused on projects that dealt with the connection between African culture and Christianity. Pobee initiated a consultation in Ghana in 1986 which he co-financed with another organization to promote African theological education. He sponsored another consultation on Confessing Christ in Africa. This consultation dealt with the question of the relationship of Jesus to Africa. In seeking to understand Jesus Christ in the context of African Religion, it was an endeavour to decolonize Jesus from

the European understanding so that he could be embraced within in African worldview. Thirteen essays from this consultation, written mostly by Africans, were published in the book, *Exploring Afro-Christology*, edited by Pobee (1992c). That said, the consultation did not question whether Jesus was a black African. By default, this makes the European Christ whom the missionaries brought to Africa remain virtually untouchable.

Third, Pobee sponsored another consultation on Theological Education by Extension in 1991 (see chapter 5, section 6). Both consultations raised the issues of how African culture can inform theological education and consequently how theological education can become missiological in its orientation by responding to the issues of social justice and transformation. Pobee (1993g:78, 1990a:194-195, 1990b:58-59), presented papers at these consultations in which not only did he lament the global north captivity of theological education, but called for a new paradigm which he said was "badly needed." His commitment to cultural theology was not only reflected through his writings, but was also expressed in funding the publication of a textbook on religion and theology for African scholars and student (PTE 1989). Entitled, *Religious Plurality in Africa: Essays in Honour of John S. Mbiti and* edited by Jacob Olupona and Sulayman Nyang (1993: acknowledgement) and published by Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin in 1993. Pobee spent substantial resources trying to convince African theologians to refurbish African theological education by utilizing African religio-cultural resources, practice and beliefs.

4. Pobee's Theological Thinking on African Theological Education

In this section I attempt to evaluate the emerging themes from the critical projects that Pobee both sponsored and initiated so as to draw a picture of his theological vision for an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. Various themes can be drawn from the above discussion; here I draw on six which are interpreted in the light of his written works.

4.1. Doing Theological Education

First, Pobee's concern was doing theological education. Indeed, Pobee (nd:110) is firm in his view that theology is not something that is simply studied in the classroom, but is something that is done and lived within the community. Pobee (1993b:2) argues that doing theology is more than merely studying or learning theology because it leads to a conscious and deliberate commitment to social transformation. In other words, doing theology is more than an intellectual activity, but a commitment and passion to make the Christian gospel meaningful within a particular context of theologizing. His commitment to theological education for African women should be understood within this perspective. Since theology is done in community, by sponsoring African women to be educated theologically, Pobee endeavoured to present theology as a shared responsibility of all members of the community. Pobee (2001:320) believes that the emphasis on doing theological education by the community of women and men challenges the male hegemony of the ordained clergy, thereby challenging the *status quo* in churches. Hence, theological education "is the encounter between revelation and social reality" (2001:321).

In order to be faithful to the context, Pobee developed much of his theological thoughts within the Akan cultural context in Ghana (1979:19). For Pobee (2001:78), the task of African theological education meant "translating" Christianity into authentic African categories. He insists, as does Idowu (1965) before him, that in order for Christianity to relevant in Africa, the core of Christianity must be translated into African categories. Here Pobee seems to be working within the paradigm of indigenization. Pobee (1997:18) observes that without a concrete underpinning of theological education with a given context, it can become irrelevant and an instrument of ideological manipulation leading to the diminishing of life. In this instance, theological education can be said to be nothing but a tool of oppression and life denying. Nevertheless, Pobee is aware that the positive affirmation of African culture is not equivalent to an uncritical acceptance of every aspect of the culture. Instead, Pobee (1996b:163) stresses "theologians are located in their community of faith as its articulate individuals in its womb."

Pobee stresses that a liberating theological education emerges out of the concrete awareness of the contextual issues which then leads to the development of theology in the community. Here, the context is not only the locus but it should also influence the

shaping of theological education and its response. This means that a life-centred theological education should emerge in the context of those in need of liberation, thus making it a communal process. By sponsoring women to do post-graduate theological studies, Pobee prophetically allowed for an inclusive communal process of doing theology. In Pobee's (1993b:4) view, theological education must endeavour to ensure that society is "organized so that there is bread for all, and then it is that the spiritual question will present itself before (humanity) in all its depth." It is because of this perspective that Pobee argues that theology and theological education should be a community enterprise, because it has to do with the wellbeing of the whole community. Pobee (1990a:202) demands that "theological students should be equipped with social science methods to enable them face the cultural realities of their contexts." This is often called "theology by the people" (Amirtham and Pobee 1986). This is significant because only when the mission of God in Africa is inclusively discerned by both women and men can it be owned by the entire community as liberating and life-affirming mission. In the words of Oduyoye (1997:78), Pobee's theological aspiration was to ensure that the liberative and social reconstruction voice of African women "become integral part of the church's contribution made visible in the church and the academy."

4.2.   African Culture as Substratum of Theological Education

Second, the projects that Pobee paid more attention to focused on the relationship between theological education and African culture. Pobee, as with the majority of African theologians (Mbiti 1976; Maluleke 1996; Manning 1990b), is concerned with explicating African theological education within the reality of African traditional wisdom and ethos of education. Accordingly, theological education should operate in conscious and deliberate dialogue with African culture and religion. Pobee (1992b:131) emphasizes that African theological education should not start with a *tabula rasa*. This means that for theological education to be authentic and relevance, it must be translated and expressed within genuine African idiom and categories. While Pobee affirms Bediako's (1995:119,123) argument that "translatability is the only true basis and starting point for seeking indigeneity," he nevertheless parts with him on the point that Christianity is already indigenous. Pobee perceives indigeneity as a conscious and deliberate process of articulating Christianity within African culture. In his article contributed to the

consultation on African theological education held in Ghana in 1986, Pobee (1990b:55) argues that theology is the "discipline which through participation in and reflection on the good news of God's activity in the world culminating in Christ seeks" to articulate "the eternal truth in new times" in order to produce "commitment and passion for the good news of Jesus Christ in a real world to engage it for God through Christ" (1993b:25).

In another article entitled, "*En Voie* Theological education in Africa," Pobee expresses the opinion that theological education in Africa was on the right track. Here he extrapolates his understanding of theology more concretely from the reality of the excluded voices in society and contends that "theology is the reflection and articulation by real human beings of their hopes and fears" (1990a:193). This means that although the excluded African people can express fear over the difficult circumstances they live in, they are not without hope. Hence, for Pobee, the task of theology is to empower Africans so that they can be enabled to walk through their fears and envision their own hoped future. This theme runs like a threat throughout his theological reflection on theological education. In Pobee's (ndb:2) opinion, theological education must be committed to "orthopraxis," a correlation between correct belief and correct practice. His understanding of theological education was influenced by the existential issues in the African context. This he classifies as "purposeful" theological education (ndb: 3). In other words, theological education must be done with the clear purpose of creating a just and equitable African Christian community. Pobee (1990a:201) further challenges that "theological education cannot become an accomplice or accessory in the resurgence of any form of sectionalism but must foster wholeness of peoples and societies, of the church as the state; it should foster an inclusive community." Being a Christocentric universality theologian, Pobee's definition of theology is concerned with aspects of Christology. He (1990b:55) states that the task of theology in Africa is to "scientifically" identify "the good news" as well as "reconstruct and repair a holistic Christocentric worldview." Evidently, although Pobee is aware of the plural nature of the African continent, he fails to go beyond his Christocentric universality model to apply a more African inclusive approach without losing the central place of Christology within Christianity. This model, which was developed by Karl Barth, identifies Jesus as the answer to the question of human history rather than the Kingdom of God. The final element is its emphasis on salvation history and eschatology as a central category of

133

thought. This paradigm, Konrad Raiser (1991:45-46) rightly argues is unable to respond adequately to issues of religious pluralism, various forms of oppression and injustice, and the ecological threat questions its viability in Africa. It can be argued that having begun from a Christocentric perspective, Pobee was never able to arrive at an inclusive paradigm for theological education in a religiously plural Africa.

4.3.   The *Skenosis* Nature of Theological Education

Third, through various projects Pobee sponsored in African theological education in his constant search of a new paradigm for theological education. Instead of utilizing the concept of contextualisation, Pobee (1992:38) developed the notion of *Skenosis* upon which he uncompromisingly underpinned his Christology. He coined the terminology from the Greek word *skenoo,* which means "a tent, a dwelling, abode, or lodging." The imagery is taken from John 1:14, "the word (Greek: *logos*) became flesh (Greek: *sarx egeneto*) and lived for a while among us (Greek, *eskēnōsen in hēmin*)" (1992a:25). Pobee elaborates that *sarx* (flesh) "designates the transient, the contingent that may be described as this time," this religio-cultural, socio-political and economical circumstance. His passion for *Skenosis* African theological education led him to sponsor a consultation on theological education in Africa: *Quo Vadimus* (see chapter 4, section 3.2). At this consultation, Pobee (1990a:193) convincingly presented the aforementioned article "*En Voie*: Theological Education in Africa" in which he claimed that the concept of *Skenosis* can assist African theological education to navigate the problem of misinterpretation and misunderstanding embedded in the word contextualization. The question which arises is important: what problem did Pobee see in contextualization?

Pobee found the concept of contextualisation as problematic, because it does not add to the clarity and precision of the theological discourse. According, Pobee (1992b:25) echoes Lesslie Newbigin's position on contextualization that its meaning was being altered by the process, which began with the experiences of the community instead of the biblical revelation and preceded to theological reflection, resulting in a programme or crusade rather than good news, becoming law rather gospel. In other words, Newbigin believes that the gospel is not to be interpreted in the light of the culture and human experience but that culture and human experience must be seen in the light of the gospel

(see chapter 4, section 2.3). It is clear that Pobee was influenced by Newbigin's theological position. Yet, one can argue the fact, that the concept has been misconstrued. This does not however necessitate its dismissal because every concept is prone to such misinterpretation. Indeed, African theology as has been observed above, takes as its starting point the historical experiences of African people within their cultural milieu (see chapter 2, section 2.3.1). Thus, Pobee fails to demonstrate the falsehood of the notion of contextualization.

Pobee (1992b:33) argues that *Skenosis* is more preferable because "the tabernacling of the non-negotiable Gospel of Christ in different contexts." He further contends that the merit of this term is that it does not lose sight of the eternal Gospel, which is to be translated and at the same time emphasizes its expression in African cultural control (1992b:39). Indeed Pobee (1992b:40; Éla 1988:44) feels that this approach safeguards the gospel from being watered down and it is truly biblical and in tune with translating the eternal "non-negotiable" Word of God into real African terms. One wonders what Pobee means by the non-negotiable Word of God. Two questions in particular arise: Are there 'non-negotiable' aspects of the gospel? Can there be a Christian gospel without context?

This seems like a serious theological pitfall. Pobee appears to believe that there are such 'non-negotiable' aspects of the gospel. Maluleke (1996:10) observes that "the distinction between Christianity and Gospel is a fantastic dualism—a neo-docetism which, while it may hold some tranquilizing prospects for a guilt-stricken Christian West, will fail to capture the imagination of Africans." Pobee's perspective is contrary to the African worldview which does not place a sharp dichotomy on things. Yet, Pobee (1992a:25) feels that theological education as *Skenosis* or "re-contextualisation" speaks of its ability to translate across cultures, time and space, and is expressed in real and specific situations of the African context. In this regard, Pobee appeals to Jean-Marc Éla's assertion that the confrontation between the Christian gospel and the African situation must bring forth meaning in the context of the excluded people from the centres of privileges to transform the lives of African Christians. Éla believes that one of the major tasks of African theology is to reformulate Christian faith through the mediation of African culture. Building on this view, Pobee's perception is that *Skenosis* as a paradigm can

adequately respond to the contemporary situation of African people. This raises a further question: how does *Skenosis* differ from the concept of incarnation?

Having established this *skenoo* foundation of African theological education, Pobee (1992a:26, 1992b:40) safely argues that "the practice of *tabula rasa*, which put Africans in a North Atlantic captivity, well intentioned as it may have been, is wrongheaded." For Pobee *Skenosis* theological education is only possible when African Christianity disengages itself from its Western theological captivity and envisions its own distinctive theological education journey. This proves becomes a basis for renewal and fresh commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ which is the locus for social transformation.

4.4. The "North Atlantic Legacy of Re-Theology"

Fourth, as observed in the projects that received his sustained funding and attention, one of Pobee's aims for sponsoring these projects was to conscientize African theological educators about the need for disentangling theological education from its North Atlantic domination and instead utilise the African cultural heritage as its substratum. The call for decolonization in African theological education was probably a carryover from Tutu (See 5, section 5.1). At one of the consultations, Pobee (1993g:78 italics mine) was to characteristically remark: "A new paradigm for Christianity in Africa! A new paradigm for mission in Africa! A new paradigm for Christian theology in Africa! *These are badly needed*" (1993g:78 italics mine). These words emerge from a heart that had grown weary of waiting for renovation and indigenous of Christianity in Africa. Over three decades earlier, Pobee wrote his classic book, *Toward an African Theology*, in which he gave a vision for Christianity in Africa. The word "toward" is very important for there is no book on 'towards a European or North Atlantic Theology. On the one hand, the non-systematization of African Theology along the lines of North Atlantic Theology may be seen as a challenge to African Theology. On the other, one of the most distinguishing factors of African Theology is its ability to acknowledge the partial nature of all theological reflection in comparison to the systematic nature of North Atlantic Theology. Pobee could argue that Western colonialism and imperialism compromised African theological education. After a decade from the time he wrote his vision, Pobee (1994:13) observed that very little had changed; theological education was still done in a way that

promoted a global north style. It is at the centre of this longing that Pobee (2001:321), over two decades later, came to realize that theological education and ministerial formation should be among the first areas to be addressed in the African quest for an African Christianity informed by African culture and worldview. Pobee (1994:13) realized that theological education should not "work its way up from Greek and Hebrew roots, through various forms of Biblical criticism to the superstructure of the church community, but up from the concerns of people of God to the theologies." Early on, this perspective was the basis upon which he rejected contextualization and coined *Skenosis* as an alternative (see section 4.3). This should not be seen as a self-contradiction but a critical realization that if African theological education can envision an alternative destiny and free itself from its erstwhile North Atlantic captivity, it needs another way of theologizing that is informed by a different approach which takes the community's experiences as its starting point. Lamentably, Pobee (1986c:98) observed that by the fact that theological education in sub-Saharan Africa was introduced by the North Atlantic nations, it naturally became a duplication of the Western theological epistemologies and hardly any positive value was taken from African wisdom and ethos to enrich it (see chapter 3).

Over three decades later from his first observation about the North Atlantic captivity of African theological education, Pobee (2010:338), in his article, "Stretch Forth Thy Wings and Fly," re-stated the notion that "theology in Africa began with a North Atlantic paradigm and artefacts, which also short-changed African identity, ethos, use and creativity." He identifies four models of this legacy that he sees to be persistent and yet in antithesis to an African worldview. The first model was the introduction of enlightenment culture, which was based on the maxim, "I think, therefore I am." This maxim reflects the Western epistemology and ontology, which is rationality and individualism. This in itself is different from the African way of life in that it finds meaning in relationships. For African people, theology is not an abstract principle but participation and experience of a relational God. Pobee laments that although there is a growing consciousness that this legacy needs revision and review and laid to rest once and for all, it still holds a strong grip on the minds of the majority of African seminaries and university departments (Pobee 2010:338). Pobee feels that the lingering foreign artefacts inherited from the colonial Christian structure has tripped and short-changed the viability of Africa theological education (nd:3). Second, the introduction of

individualism was an antithesis of an African traditional communitarian epistemology (Pobee 2010:339). Western theological education has tended to focus on producing an individualist, professional and educated clergy who are unable to be relevant in their social context. Third, the introduction of a dichotomy between theology and spirituality that is divergent from African spirituality, places a sharp distinction between spirituality and the secular. This means that African theological education must engage the word of God with social, economic and political issues (2010:339). Fourth, the monopoly tendency in which Christianity was introduced has contributed to the perpetuation of conflict and instability in Africa (2010:340). This in itself increased religious tensions and conflicts, which sporadically have resulted in bloodshed. Pobee (1979:17) therefore argues that "in the African context, if there is to be a serious and deep communication and the rooting of the gospel of Christ, the African stamp will have to replace the European stamp."

By giving it an African expression in essence and orientation, Pobee (2010:27) maintains that theological education "is not abstruse speculation, an academic game, running the danger of raising and answering questions, which no one asks." This means that a relevant theological education can assist Africans to understand and deal with their daily life experiences in the light of the gospel of Christ. Pobee (2010:17-18) stresses the need for each African cultural context to translate theological education or reflection into genuine African categories and thought forms. It is this passion for an authentically African theological education that lingers throughout Pobee's theological reflection on African theological education. Until theological education is freed from its Western epistemologies, it cannot be regarded as *truly* African. If it cannot be African, it cannot respond *adequately* to the pressing African existential situations. In fact, Pobee (1990a:197) rightly argues that "the North Atlantic captivity of the churches in Africa is manifested *inter alia* as the persistence of denominationalism." A large number of critical questions remain open: has African Christianity finally managed to free itself from this heritage? What are the signs that African theological education is shaping its own distinctive destiny apart from North Atlantic? How much of the material published by African theologians is utilized in theological institutions in Africa? In what ways does the theology taught in African theological education differ from the way the missionaries taught theology to Africans? How much is theological education in every part of Africa contributing to furthering African theology that engages the people of God in their

contexts and daily experiences? In what ways are students being theological prepared to affirm their cultural identity?

Pobee is not simply reacting against Western theologies, but rather, he conveys a profound cognizance that all theological reflections bear a distinctive stamp of the context that informed them and consequently, they are tailored to respond to particular contextual needs. Pobee sees this as a crucial concern that deserves undivided attention and substantial funding for the liberation of African theological education.

4.5.   *Missio Dei:* "The Reason for the Church's Existence and Being"

Fifth, Pobee believed theological education serves in the *missio Dei.* The mission is not just proclamation or the making of Christ's disciples, but is also the process of giving life to the socio-ethical imperative of the Christian gospel (Pobee 2001:321). Pobee (2001:321) argues that mission is not a task of being church. Rather, it defines the essence of the church. "It is the reason for the Church's existence and being." As observed above (see section 2), Pobee (2001:321) was concerned that although "Christianity has always been universal in principle, and has gradually become more so in reality," the principle was clouded by the global north, "especially when the Church became mixed up with colonialism and other ideologies of power." In essence, this implies that initiating and funding theological education consultations and projects in Africa was a process of conscientising theological education about taking the mission as its own burden. It seems for him, undertaking the task of funding was obedience to the mission imperative of God. Pobee (nd:115) sees his role in funding and initiating consultation on theological education "as an enabler and conductor." It is in this sense that Pobee was a prophetic missiologist. Pobee (cited in Grainger nd:63) saw the mission as interpenetration, as *perichoreisis*, a mutual encounter between God and the world, and world and God through the community of faith. Citing Sam Amirtham, Pobee (1990a:10) goes on to argues that theological education should equip the African church to comprehend its role as an agent of God's mission in its particular context. In other words, it must equip the whole community of faith to respond efficaciously to social-material distress, the challenge of plurality, the struggle for human dignity and Christian identity. This mission is entrusted by God not to some special people but to "the whole

people of God" and this means that theological education should be concerned with the whole people of God (2010:28). This implies that theological education is not merely teaching a set of courses or providing some professional skills for ordained ministry. Instead, it is an invitation to the community of faith to develop a critical consciousness of society and to evolve a prophetic response to the challenges of their context. Such a theological education, while not neglecting the traditional models of theological education, deserves such as rigorous and scientific analysis:

> It is certainly not merely teaching a set of courses or proving some professional skills for mission. It is rather an invitation and initiation of persons into life long process of visioning, with passion, the *missio Dei* in concrete historical struggles of people. It is a process of faith reflection upon the context and developing a lifestyle of being partners with God in personal and social transformation (Duraisingh 1992:42, also cited in Pobee 1993c:196).

It seems that the notion of the mission of God should interpenetrate everything involved in what it means to be a Christian and to do theology. This raises further questions: Does *missio Dei* as a concept still resonate within the contemporary missiological debates and discussions on missionary practice? What about other concepts like mission as dialogue, of which one may think as relevant with regard to the prevalent plurality in Africa?

Developing ideas from the notion of the *missio Dei.*, Pobee and David Bosch (1985:68-69) identify four aspects of social transformation. First, social transformation is holistic in the sense that it touches every aspect of what it means to be human. It must be understood in terms of liberation and human dignity in the spheres of politico-economical, socio-cultural and religious aspects. Second, it happens at both individual and communal levels. Humanity is created for community and fellowship and therefore, social transformation is incomplete if it touches only an individual; it must be experienced by the "community together experiencing liberation, dignity and the Beatific Vision" (1985:68). This raises two related questions: how did African tradition society explicate individual and social justice? Did they place a dichotomy between them?

Third, social transformation is a lifelong process that demands continually struggling with God in order to overcome the historical conditions of that prevent wholeness of human life. "It is spiritual not in some otherworldly sense; it is not to opt out of this world; rather it means redeeming everything for Christ, doing everything to the purpose and

ends of God" (Bosch 1985:68). In other words, social transformation can only be occasioned in the light of the liberating Christ.

Fourth, because it is occasioned in the light of Christ, social transformation becomes "a gift of God." This implies that as it is worked and achieved by God; human beings yield and cooperate with the Holy Spirit. This is questionable for if social transformation is a "gift of God," why do human beings have to struggle for social transformation? Sharon Welch (1985:66) reminds us that the type of humanity envisioned by theological education does not come about naturally; it has to be achieved. This type of human community is not a "free gift" from God as Pobee and Bosch right assert; it is something that the community of God must fight for in order to realize. African theological education is part of this struggle for the establishment of a particular kind of subjectivity, and not a declaration of the *a priori* existence of that subjectivity. In other words, the critique of an observed socio-political, religio-cultural and economic injustice can lose its force unless accompanied by some idea as to what constitutes a just and equitable African Christian community in terms of a concrete and critical praxis. No doubt this will make theological education "deeply and dangerously 'political'" (Katongole 1998:37), but this is unavoidable in the context of such deep socio-material distress.

Pobee and Bosch (1985:68) further argue that social transformation is a "remodelling on Jesus the servant-Lord." This is also a dangerous move. If Africa is religiously pluralistic, to underpin social transformation exclusively on Christology can be seen as being indicative of Christianity's perceived monopoly over other religions. Contentiously, social transformation requires co-operation with other religious traditions. In talking about religious plurality in Africa, Mugambi (1995:31) has rightly argued that "as far as religion is concerned, Christians, Muslims, traditionalists and nihilists should co-exist and co-operate to build one nation without fear or favour." Thus, a narrow framework of understanding social transformation is unhelpful in the quest of this nature. The question that arises is key: is there a broader and whole embracing framework within Christianity and African culture that could be utilized as a new paradigm for theological education for a just and equitable African Christian community?

In Pobee's (1996:488) view, this understanding of social transformation, "demands a new paradigm in theological formation, which in turn will require tools for social analysis and

models for thinking theologically and ethically about that analysis, as well as a renewed curriculum including all contextual theologies, ministries, spiritualities and religious heritages." Pobee (1993e:167-168) calls this the "mission from below," a mission of the excluded, in which they are empowered to respond meaningfully to challenges, utilize community resources and realize their potential and their own destiny. The question remains: how does one do mission from below in a religious pluralistic environment without prejudice against other religions?

Pobee is not talking about the kind of mission that tends to be an-other-worldly affair that has very little or nothing to do with the present situation of the people in which spirituality is seen as a private or individual affair. For him, mission concerns those who have been excluded from social structures of power. Through pedagogical theological education they can again become the subjects of their future through their engagement in the struggle with God for their emancipation and thereby envision a new and just world order. This can only take place in the sphere of critical theological education, which issues in solidarity of the excluded for their liberation.

4.6. "Ecumenical Imperative, Catalyst of Renewal"

As can be observed above (see section 3), all the projects and consultations that Pobee initiated and funded were ecumenical in nature. Pobee (2001:319) reveals himself to be an ecumenical theologian, for he is convinced that ecumenism is not an option for the churches but a gospel imperative which theological education should foster. Pobee (2001:320) further argues that ecumenism is a renewal movement and not an institutionalized church. It is a movement composed of diverse groups with a commitment and passion for common action. Accordingly, (2001:319) a theological education vision of ecumenism should move students to live the ecumenical imperative and take seriously the language and idiom of the field of action. This implies that ecumenism must be embedded in the people's cultural practices and symbols. One would have expected that Pobee would suggest some African symbols of ecumenism. Unfortunately, Pobee left this crucial point hanging and does not elaborate on it further. Instead, he identifies three marks of a renewed ecumenism in theological education (2001:341). First, theology is marked by holism. This means that there must be no

distinction between the sacred and secular, matter and spirit, women and men, individual and community etc. The second mark is similar to the first in that theology must apply itself to every aspect of human life and not some things. Theological education must not lose its focus on its spiritual dynamic in its involvement in social action; otherwise, the church will not differ from humanitarian secular organisations. Theological education, even in its interdisciplinary approach, must always endeavour to return to being distinctive from the secular disciplines by affirming its theological ethos or spiritual dynamic. This raise more questions: is there a possibility that African theological education can integrate itself both in scientific and non-scientific forms of human knowledge? By so doing, can it transcend the traditional boundaries of other secular disciplines?

It seems that its integral approach to human knowledge may be the distinctive nature of an African theological education. For Pobee, the transformation in Africa is impossible without spirituality. This resonates well with Mbiti (1969:1) who observed that "Africans are notoriously religious." This implies that as blood is to the body, so is spirituality to the wellbeing of an African.

Third, theological education must help the churches to live in critical solidarity with each other. Pobee is making a very crucial point here but one still wonders how such processes can be carried out. Significant questions arise: how does theological education help the churches live in solidarity? What are some of the guidelines that theological education should follow in order to realize this vision?

It is by understanding concrete ways that theological education should follow that it will be possible for theological education to empower the community of faith to imagine their own emancipation. This is not to deny the fact that genuine transformation can only take place when principled attention is given to the ecumenical imperative because it lies at the foundation of critical awareness and renewal of the church's engagement in the *Missio Dei* (Pobee 1995a:259).

Pobee (1996:484) points to some crucial issues for African theological education. First, it must engage in the mutual dialogue between African culture and the gospel of Christ. After all, theological education must equip people from different perspectives to engage

in a process of conscious and creative inculturation. This means students must be equipped to wrestle with the gospel and culture debate and this demands a dynamic understanding of and fidelity towards African culture.

Second, it has to include gender issues and perspectives, not polemically, but in order to seek for gender justice in the church and society (Pobee 1996:489). Pobee observes that in African society, the community and the church are impoverished because the experiences and the voice of African women are not given their due attention. While there have been several significant publications by African women's theologians, many African male theologians have consciously disregarded the voice of African women (Maluleke1997a:210-219). Pobee (1990a:201) laments the fact that very few women are found in the university departments of theology or religious studies, seminaries and also in top positions in the church. African theological education must pay serious attention to this failure and come to grips with the creative voice of women in African theological thought:

> If we seek to envision a new church in Africa in which women are more than one half and the vibrant, energetic part—then the African theological education agenda, which defines the church should seriously engage African women's theologies (Pobee 1991:329).

Pobee (1994:13) laments the fact that African women who make up the largest population of the church "have been treated as if they had no integrity, identity and authenticity of their own, being either accommodated or assimilated to male or being marginalized" in theological education. Pobee (1995c:47) therefore urges for the promotion of "the idea of *koinonia* as the hermeneutics" for theologizing and theological education in respect of women and men. This is what led Pobee, through the PTE and the ETE to promote and encourage African women to study theology so that their voice can be included in the African theological discourse and church.

Third, African theological education needs to address critically socio-political and economic issues in Africa and "work for reconciliation and together face up to the challenges the world poses to faith and religious institutions such as civil wars in Africa, poverty, unrest, sexism, ageism," HIV and AIDS, unemployment, ecological crisis and disability (Pobee 2001:330). Indeed, these issues can only be tackled effectively in an ecumenical response. In addition, these issues place a demand upon theology to take up

an interdisciplinary approach, in which theology can inform and be informed by other disciplines yet without losing its distinctiveness. This argument will be dealt with further below (see chapter 8, section 4).

Fourth, Pobee (2001:325) observes that "in Africa the old ideology of Christendom is out of place because of the reality of religious pluralism." By this statement, Pobee (2001:326) is declaring the fact that religious plurality makes churches susceptible to political manipulation, conflict and even persecution. For Pobee, the prerequisite for imagining a new church, especially in Africa, is to eliminate the ideology of power. This implies that African theological education must commit itself to explicating God's revelation in a pluralistic manner and worldview. Pobee (1990a:200) stresses that "theological education in Africa needs to be more than conscious of the context of pluralism, which is all to be brought under the sovereignty of God through Christ." As a consequence, ecumenical formation in African theological education should be at the very centre of fostering dialogue between different religious persuasions, in an atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding and peace. Pobee observes that doing theology in a context of plurality also forces the church to adopt a new understanding of the "uniqueness" of Christ. Pobee (2001:326-327) argues that he opts for "uniqueness" of Christ rather than "finality" and "absoluteness" because the latter has imperialist implications. Yet, to adopt the "uniqueness" of Christ as a paradigm rather than "finality" does not overcome imperialist tendencies inherent in Christianity. The need in a pluralistic context is to go beyond the Christocentric worldview to an inclusive paradigm without losing the central place of Jesus within Christianity (see my critique above section 3). This must be established by a theology of pluralism, as there are also plural cultures and ethics in Africa (1995a:269). In other words, more emphasis must be placed on developing theological education in a matrix of religio-cultural and socio-political struggles, rather than within the Western ivory towers of academia or the sacred cloistered halls of churches. I tend to believe that a theology of pluralism will foster critical thinking by recognizing the impact of plurality in Africa and help provide a comprehensive pluralistic perspective and response. In this, several questions can be raised: how can people committed to different faiths live and work together for social reconstruction? What is the Christian obligation in the quest for a just and equitable community in a religiously plural Africa?

Fifth, African theological education must pay close attention to the issues of publication. As can be observed from the above, Pobee was concerned with promoting African thinking in the global theological discourse. The publishing of African theological materials for African consumption was seen as being critical for a theological education that promotes principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. Pobee observes that in the past, issues of Africa and Africans were written by Western scholars, who usually projected their own philosophical categories on Africans. Accordingly, for ecumenical engagement to be authentic, it must include every story, identity, and different spiritualities of the people in its theological discourse (Pobee 2001:331). Young African scholars must be mentored for the purpose of publishing ecumenical engagement from African perspectives in order to advance the uniqueness of African scholarship in the global ecumenical family. The question that follows is important: how much attention does African theological education pay to promoting publication within Africa?

Much of the published material dealing with African issues seems to emanate from the global north and never return to the people who supplied it. As a result, it rarely benefits the African people (Mugambi 2000:29). The following questions can be raised: in what way has African theological education taken responsibility to ensure that knowledge collected from Africa is published in Africa so that African theological students can have easy access to it? In what ways can African theological education work in collaboration with the publishing companies in order to publish with them and promote a publication market within the African continent?

The questions naturally leads to how the African academy, both inside the continent and within the Diaspora can guard itself against the exploitation of knowledge by the West. The only shortcoming recognized in both Mugambi and Pobee is their lack of recognition of the role of African theological institutions as research academies. This important oversight has not only affected the self-understanding of African theological education and the majority of African theological educators, but also the expectations of students and churches, together with the allocation of resources and perhaps even the kind of literature expected to be published. This raises a significant question: in what ways can theological institutions be encouraged and promoted as centres of research for the African church?

5. Chapter Summary

This chapter has demonstrated that there is a very strong connection between the themes of the theological education projects that Pobee sponsored and his theological thinking. In summary, Pobee's vision for an African theological education is one that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. This is based on four imperatives. First, it is a vision for Africanization. Like Tutu, Pobee (1990a:193) believes that excellence in African theological education lies in its ability to address its global north captivity and free itself so as to be authentic and translate itself in terms of African culture. By so doing, it can become the source for the construction of all forms of theological reflection within theological education. Second, it is a missiological vision with a special focus on gender issues. The *missio Dei* in the world defines the essence of theological education and it is the reason for doing theological education. Third, it is a *Skenosis* vision. Like Tutu, it is based on the incarnational theology. Pobee felt that the notion of *Skenosis* was important because it can help African theological education navigate the problem of misinterpretation and misunderstanding embedded in the word 'contextualization.' Fourth, it is an ecumenical vision. All the above imperatives are summed up in an ecumenical imperative which is non-negotiable for African theological education.

The following chapter is the third investigation that utilizes a 'following the money trail' methodology. It examines the perspectives of Nyambura Jane Njoroge, as the final *lens* through which to understand change patterns and transformations within African theological education.

CHAPTER SEVEN

LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF AFRICAN THEOLOGIANS III: NYAMBURA J. NJOROGE, OR "HELP US TO UNDERSTAND HOW WE TRAVEL WITH GOD OUR CREATOR AND SOURCE OF LIFE IN A CHURCH AND WORLD FULL OF STRIFE AND TENSIONS"

> Even long before the scourge of HIV/AIDS, dare I say that creating new theological thinking is long overdue? For so long, many churches in Africa have been living with imported theology, which does not speak to the fears and hopes of the people… I am here begging for a theology that will help us ask critical questions about our inactivity or wrongdoing…a theology that will creatively help us to retell our story of colonization, cultural and religious imperialism, people's resistance and struggle for land and freedom (uhuru, in Swahili) to the point where we say no to injustice, exploitation, globalization and senseless death (Njoroge (2001c:254)

1. Introduction

In the previous two chapters an attempt was made to analyse Desmond Mpilo Tutu's and John Samuel Pobee's visions for an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. These two chapters have sought to demonstrate one of the common features of both these scholars: namely, their strong conviction that Africanization is imperative to a relevant and authentic theological education. Comparably, it was shown that Tutu focused more on institutionalized racism in South Africa as a *locus* for doing theological education; whereas, Pobee gave focus more to issues of gender in Africa as crucial factors in doing theological education in the community.

As a third level of investigation, this chapter explores the theological thrust and understanding of Nyambura Jane Njoroge in respect to the core functions and practices of African theological education. The central concern guiding the reflection will be to utilize Njoroge as a *lens* to conceptualize what is seen as her main concern of theological

education during her tenure as Global Coordinator of Ecumenical Theological Education (*hereafter,* ETE). The second aim is to investigate what she saw to be significant and how that has continued to influence her theological thinking through her writings. The investigation is divided into three main sections. First, I provide a brief biographical account of Njoroge. In the second section, I evaluate some of the main projects that she sponsored in Africa. In the third section, I analyse some of the emerging theological themes in the light of Njoroge's theological thinking on theological education.

2. "Lamenting Woman Theologian": A Brief Biography of Nyambura Jane Njoroge

Nyambura Jane Njoroge (2002:53), whose first name literally means "the-rain," is one among the most influential African women theologians with an innate ability to articulate a vision of African Christianity that is firmly anchored in African experience and its religio-cultural heritage without losing its historical roots and ecumenical dimensions. Njoroge has lived up to her name as a theological blessing to the church in Africa. See sees her theological voice as a lamentation, a tool to decolonize the mind from internalized exploitation and oppression as women and as Africans (2002:51). At the foundation of her academic life has always been an insatiable craving and a search for a "life-transforming and life-giving ethics" for an "empowering and liberating ministry" (2008b:114). Kenyan born, Njoroge has had an experience of "a lifetime of firsts," including being the first African woman to study at St. Paul's United Theological College, (now St. Paul's University) located in Limuru, Kenya and at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in the US (Hill and Melton 2009). She was the first woman to be ordained to the ministry in the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in 1982, and the first African woman to receive a PhD from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1992 and the first ordained African woman to earn a PhD. in any theological field (Hill and Melton 2009). In addition, Njoroge was one of the founders of the Circle (Njoroge 2001d:252-253). Njoroge worked with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), in Genève, Switzerland before she served as the first woman Global Coordinator of the ETE of the WCC, a position she held from 1999 to 2007, whereupon she moved to her current position as Coordinator of the Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiative in Africa

(EHAIA)[52] of the WCC. Through her critical reflection on African Christianity, Njoroge has shown the crucial role that the church must play in the transformation of Africa through a critical engagement between the religio-cultural and social, political and economic context of the contemporary African experience and the gospel promise of liberation, justice and abundant life for all members of the African Christian community. The approach of Njoroge (2008b:118) to theological education is to work in collaboration with theological educators and students to critically examine the way the church and community leaders can be prepared for a broader range of ministries both for the ordained and laity. Placed within the broader perspective of African women theological pedagogy, it becomes clear that the methodological orientation of Njoroge offers a critical contribution towards African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community.

3. Njoroge's Sustained Attention and Sponsorship Emphasis

Njoroge, as with Tutu and Pobee, has done a lot for African theological education. Some of the projects she sponsored have had a tremendous contribution not only across Africa but internationally. Following in the footsteps of Pobee, who was her predecessor, she not only kept the tradition of supporting the Circle, but also took a keen interest in strengthening African women theologians and students in theological institutions (Kanyoro 2002:25). She has also enabled Circle women to travel for theological conferences and consultations. Njoroge has also assisted in curriculum development of gender and theological education. The process began with the "Journey of Hope" a conference she organized and financed in Johannesburg in order to evaluate theological education and ecumenical formation (see chapter 4, section 3.4). The conference embraced African women's theology as being crucial for contextualizing African theological education. As part of the plan of action, the Circle and the ETE formed a "partnership in 2003 to initiate a process of engendering theological education through curriculum development" (Phiri 2005:35, Njoroge 2005c:3). Developing the curriculum was a strategy in mainstreaming gender in African theological education. Yet, as Amanze

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[52] "The programme brings ecumenical dimension to the churches' care, education and counselling programmes. It strives to assist churches and related organizations to achieve professional levels of efficiency, coordination, capacity-building and communication in all HIV-related activities" in order to become AIDS competent churches (WCC 2012).

(nd-b: 11) has observed, theological education in most regions of Africa lack policies to mainstream gender issues in theological education. "This situation is not only worrisome but disappointing."

In her email to the academic dean of St. Paul's University in Limuru, Kenya, Njoroge (2004) argued that there was a need to address gender issues "not just in research, writing and publishing for the Circle books but also to be part of the curriculum." In fact, through the initiative of both Njoroge and Musimbi R. A. Kanyoro, a section within St. Paul's University library was developed and equipped with books on feminist theologies and other related subjected (Njoroge 2001d:257). Through this effort the library has become one of the best theological libraries in Kenya. Njoroge has contributed much in developing St. Paul's University in every aspect. It was also during her time as Global Coordinator of the ETE that the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa introduced the Programme of Gender and Religion at a postgraduate level under Sarojini Nadar as director of the Programme. This programme attracts by many young African scholars, both women and men, as well as other students from around the globe. Several questions come to the fore: how has the programme performed since its inception in 2002? Has there been any empirical research to follow-up on the students who have been through the programme in order to understand the extent to which the issues that are raised in the programme are implemented?

Njoroge has also been in forefront of supporting the project for HIV and AIDS curriculum development for theological institutions in Africa. The curriculum was published in 2003 as *HIV/AIDS and Curriculum* and edited by Musa W. Dube, who herself was instrumental in formulating the curriculum as the WCCs HIV and AIDS theological Consultant for the region of Africa (see chapter 4, section 3). The curriculum has been translated into Spanish, Portuguese and French. Ezra Chitando (2011), the current Theology Consultant for EHAIA, notes that the curriculum has made a significant contribution to the relevance of theological institutions in Africa. Furthermore, as already noted above (see chapter 4, section 3.4) Njoroge has also been concerned about people with disabilities, and to this end has worked in partnership with the EDAN to promote curriculum development. This too has been translated into Spanish, Portuguese and French (Njoroge 2006:7). This curriculum led to the introduction of a two-year MST at the *Universite Protestante au Congo* (see chapter 4, section

3.6). The global significance of these two curricula demonstrates that Africa has reached a stage at which African Christianity is seen to have something significant to share with the global ecumenical family. Africa is becoming a global theological womb. In summary, it is through such projects that Njoroge endeavours to promote the WCC agenda for African theological education. The questions that arise are: by supporting such projects, what kind of theological education does Njoroge envision for Africa? In other words, what is Njoroge's theological understanding of the function and purpose of theological education?

Building on this question, the next section will explore Njoroge's theological vision for an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community.

4. Njoroge's Theological Thinking on African Theological Education

The aim of this section is to articulate Njoroge's theological vision for an African theological education by analysing the emerging themes from the kind of projects she supported during her period as the Global Coordinator of the ETE. A thematic approach in the light of Njoroge's written works is utilized with a view to giving a concise view of her theological vision for an African theological education. Of the many themes which can readily be identified from Njoroge's sustained sponsored projects, three in particular will be discussed.

4.1. An Appropriate Curricular

One of the main concerns emerging from above is the need to create an appropriate curriculum for African theological education. Njoroge spent much of her resources and energies in trying to develop appropriate curricula. She is convinced that the dominant content of the curricula reveal the kind of theologies that are shaping and influencing the destiny of the African continent. Njoroge (2004:87) believes that the twenty-first century context of Africa demands an ecumenical theological curriculum that includes a critical

evaluation of what exists in all areas of study currently offered. The question is: what kind of ideology should shape ecumenical theological curriculum?

The answer to the above question will enable theological institutions to make informed decisions about what should be included or dropped from their teaching curriculum. Njoroge (2004:87) argues that the curriculum that is most needed is one that enables theological institutions to explore the causes of pain and suffering in the lives of African people and seek to identify what can bring life to people in the midst of destruction and death. According to Njoroge (2004:87), such a curriculum takes seriously the pedagogy of the oppressed and education for critical consciousness while affirming its biblical, theological and spiritual orientation consistent with the mission of God. The curriculum will have to pay critical attention to gender issues, leadership models, people with disabilities, HIV and AIDS, refugees, the poor and the many other challenges present in Africa. Such a curriculum implies that contextualization must take seriously these existential challenges. Njoroge (2004:99) further argues that an appropriate curriculum for ecumenical theological education should be both deconstructive and constructive and must utilize a variety of disciplinary tools. Put differently, Njoroge calls for a curriculum that can utilize feminist and liberationist theories to help foster justice, peace, dignity, freedom and responsibility in Africa (Njoroge 2004:100). Njoroge (2001d:255) urges that theological education must ensure a fresh and critical engagement with socio-cultural critiques that leave no stone unturned in an ecumenical search for healing, wellbeing and fullness of life. For Njoroge (2004:100), space must be given to baptized members of the church to fashion the curriculum under the guidance of trained leaders and theologians. That said, Njoroge does not give space to interreligious dialogue in the formulation of the curriculum. This raises a question: In recognizing the religious plurality of Africa, should theological curriculum create a 'diaspace' (dialogue space) with other religions? If so, to what extent should 'diaspace' be given without Christianity losing its theological purpose in Africa?

This implies more than just introducing a new curriculum or adding some few new courses to the old. Instead, it demands a paradigm shift about African theological education. Furthermore, while there is truth in Njoroge's contention that rethinking curricula and pedagogical assumptions in the majority of theological institutions in Africa is long overdue, I also think that contextualization of curricula is only meaningful to the

extent that there are contextual theological educators in each theological institution in Africa. This implies that creating an integrated curriculum should go hand-in-hand with developing theological educators with contextual mind-sets. The creation of new curricula will yield very little results with the same brainwashed theological educators who see African cultural heritage as an 'old fashioned or pagan culture.' Indeed, at a risk of being misconstrued, it can be argued that the people who perpetuate Western imperialism and hegemony in African theological education in most cases are theological educators. If this is true, rethinking theological education curriculum should begin with the following questions: what kind of theological educators dominate African theological education? What do the majority of these theological educators perceive as being priorities in African theological education? What ideologies influence their understanding of theological education?

In order to understand the dominant ideology influencing the continent, there is a patent need for an empirical survey of the theological orientations of theological educators in Africa. This does not in any way suggest that there are no contextual theologians in Africa. Indeed, I acknowledge a small number of contextual theologians (see chapter 4, section 2.3.1.3) who have been trying to ensure that the content, tone, and pedagogies of the curriculum, as well as the structures that support African theological education are translated within the African cultural milieu and thereby reflect the contextual challenges in Africa.

4.2. Doing Rather than Thinking Theology

Second, already in her doctoral thesis, published in 2000, *Kiama Kia Ngo: African Christian Feminist Ethic*, Njoroge (2000, 1997b) had called for a critical orientation toward a liberating and transforming theological education when she criticized African male theologians for their uncritical retrieval of African culture and their failure to include the voice of African women in liberation and inculturation. As with many African women theologians (see for example Phiri 1997b:68), Njoroge's African womanist theological perspective initially emerged as a reaction to the exclusion of African women's experienced in a patriarchal society. Njoroge (1997b:77) argues that by taking seriously the religio-cultural plurality of Africa, the Circle decided to embrace African women with

various religious orientations and ideologies to be part of the sisterhood of 'doing' theology. Njoroge (1997a:8, 1997b:77) delineates that doing theology as way of "participation and exploration, emphasizing the activity that produces theology." In other words, it is the struggle with God's word to find meaning in meaningless circumstances as African Christians confront the systemic socio-political and economic powers and principalities that continue to deny them life. This emerged from an understanding that as the situation changes so is the way theology is conceptualized. Theology is no longer seen as a complete and established body of knowledge that must be handed down to students. Instead, theology is an activity of a given community that demands emphasis be laid not so much on thinking as on doing. Doing theology focuses not so much on abstract and ontological ideas emerging from the past generations. Instead, it finds its *locus* in addressing current life-threatening/destroying and life-affirming/giving issues. Consequently, authentic theological education emerges from within the womb of a given community and responds to the existential challenges of that particular community. Despite this new orientation of theological education, Njoroge (1997a:9-10) highlights three issues that have not been address adequately: First, the purpose of theological education is to help students in their quest to "learn to be human." Njoroge feels that African Christians have not yet learned to be truly human, for when one looks at the extreme violence that has been perpetuated on the continent, it is doubtful whether theological education is making any difference whatsoever. Second, African Christians have not been taught how to do theology or how to seek to live as Christians in their context by applying their minds and faith to their problems in the light of a global agenda. Instead, the African church has perpetuated a soul-saving theology inherited from its Western missionary progenitors, which disregarded societal challenges. Third, the awareness has not been created that by participating in doing theology, the masses in the church engage in the event of producing theology, which theologians craft systematically into academic language. The implication of this is that constructing and living theologically is a shared communal process. In this process, both lay people and theologians as members of a given community are involved in various ways in articulating a theology for their community. It also implies that all learning is contextual in the sense that it is historically, socially and culturally situated and responds to such a context.

155

Njoroge (2001c:240) believes that the most important resources that is most often overlooked and undermined in theological education is that of the people in the community. Indeed, sometimes theologians are in danger of living as if they are not members of any community. To counter this, Njoroge (2001c:237) proposes a holistic community-based approach, especially in the context of HIV and AIDS which is based on encouraging people to undergo "self-scrutiny, discovery, repentance, healing and growth." This model demands a critical, social, ethical, cultural, theological and biblical reflection and analysis of the daily realities of the community through critical encounter with them as *subjects* of their life and not *objects* to study. In other words, doing theology is based on cultivating holistic interdisciplinary theological ways of looking for solutions in Africa. Njoroge (2008a:226) argues for the urgent need to provide a holistic interdisciplinary approach to the multiple existential challenges the African continent is facing. While interdisciplinary perspectives must be stressed, it is also important to highlight that the approach is limited in the sense that it does not give theological education the power to transcend the boundaries of academic disciplines embracing their integral nature. This is important because the challenges being experienced in Africa are not confined to any single discipline. The following question must be asked: in what ways can theological education embrace an integral approach to human knowledge without reducing into a mere social education?

The spiritual thrust of theological education needs to be affirmed and appropriated in the lives of the students in order for theological education to return to its holistic purpose. It nevertheless remains that doing and producing contextual theology is a community enterprise that can never be accomplished by theological educators alone. It seems from the above that African theological education should be determined by the process of engaging with the community of faith and society as people struggle to live out their faith in socio-materially distressing circumstances. Critical questions can be raised here: in what ways is African theological education resisting the dominant meta-narrative language of universality and disempowering approaches to theological education that remain prevalent on the continent? What unit of analysis can be used in determining what should be an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community?

4.3. "New Ways of Doing Theology"

Third, in calling for disordering theological education from its colonial entanglement, Njoroge (2001c:254) laments that the process of creating a new theological thinking in Africa has been long overdue. The current existential challenges in Africa are screaming in the ears of African church to construct its own theological discourse, which will inspire Christians to speak words that affirm life by condemning theologies of death. Njoroge (2001c:254) calls for a theology that will empower African Christians to retell their "story of colonialism, cultural and religious imperialism, people resistance and struggle for land and freedom (*uhuru*, in Swahili) to the point where we say no to injustice, exploitation, globalization and senseless death." In short, the theology that Njoroge is calling for finds its locus in the concrete existential experiences of African people. Njoroge (2008b:118; 2005a:29-46) believes that theologians stand to gain if they pay critical attention to the lived experiences of people who have made a significant difference in ending suffering and restoring dignity in seemingly hopeless circumstances. In the view of Njoroge,

> building on communitarian ethic means taking into account African methods of sharing information and passing on knowledge, for instance, singing musical dance, storytelling, folklore, proverbs/sayings and rituals, which would reaffirm cultural values that give sense of belonging and meaning to people (1999:54).

It is in this context that she demands a transforming theological education that can facilitate social transformation in Africa.

Njoroge describes the process of such transformation in five crucial steps: First, it must take the mission of God seriously as the liberating response of God to Africa. Such a mission is God's agenda which comes to us through the life and person of Jesus Christ (Njoroge 1994:21). This mission demands a partnership between women and men as the substratum for "participation and community building where mutual love, justice and respect for all life are the building blocks" (1994:30). Njoroge (nd:3) argues that there is an urgent need for Christian leaders with wisdom and deep insight into what is going on in communities and are involved in self-retrospection and theological reflection on God's vision of a just and equitable African Christian community enshrined in the biblical promise. This is crucial especially because the struggle for contextual theological

157

education and theological thought has already begun to bear fruit on the African continent. Njoroge (nd: 4) reveals that in the last two decades there has been a small yet significant group of African theologians who are the product of the contextualization of theological education stepping in to provide important leadership in addressing the HIV pandemic, violence, globalization and in developing contextual theologies and teaching in new and creative ways suited to the context of Africa. In Njoroge's view, unless theological education finds its locus in developing leaders for Africa; the quality, effective and empowering of leaders for the church and society at all levels will remain inadequate.

The second crucial step is that theological education will need to include the voice of African women. As has already underlined above (see chapter 4, section 3.6), African women through the Circle have written articles and books on women's experiences and perspectives in African religion and culture, affirming its life-giving practices and criticizing its destructive elements. Njoroge (1997b:80-81) contends that in order for theological education to become more liberating in Africa, it must affirm and ensure women's full participation in both studying and teaching theology, otherwise the "truth will remain hidden and the life-affirming African theology is doomed to fail." Indeed, theological education would benefit significantly if it takes the voice of African women theologians seriously. This raises several important questions: to what extent are the books written by African women theologians utilized in various theological institutions in Africa? Are there some empirical studies that have been conducted across the continent to investigate the number of theological institutions that use as part of their theological material the literature written by African women theologians? In what ways is African theological education encouraging the use of these materials or making them available in various theological institutions?

In the view of Njoroge (1996a:12, 1996b:9), unless theological education helps to facilitate building an inclusive community which takes the concerns of children, the poor, women, and the neglected at heart, theological institutions will continue to produce men and women who are gender blind and who have no compassion for the excluded and oppressed. Njoroge (1997b:83) firmly calls for a "justice-oriented" theological education which will take into account everything that keep women economically and sexually exploited, culturally dominated, and politically alienated. What is being underlined here is the need to encourage and empower African women study theology by finding ways and

means of raising theological scholarship grants for them for this seems to be the most critical hindrance. Justice demands that theological institutions in Africa respond to the needs of women, their experiences and perspectives in such as way that they are taken as core values in shaping theologies, teaching and research methodologies, in the way of doing theological education (2005a:41).

The third crucial step for African theological education is found in the theological response to HIV and AIDS. For Njoroge (nd: 2), this requires the church in Africa to make a 'U-Turn' in the way it has addressed or not addressed this crucial issue. She sees HIV and AIDS as a disease that thrives on the multi-dimensional social injustice at every level. "It is an epidemic within the social epidemic of injustice" (Dube 2003:vii). This means that theological education must confront the issues of HIV and AIDS in an activist manner. In this, Njoroge argues for the need to address the violent legacies of bad theology in order to envisage a theological education that can help in creating a new future. In citing Tinyiko Maluleke, Njoroge (nd:2) argues that theological institutions are the site of struggle against existential challenges in Africa. Njoroge (:2) recognises the efforts of small groups of theologians and pastors who have worked hard to formulate ecumenical HIV and AIDS curriculum for theological institutions in Africa and later in regard to the TEE methodology. Njoroge (cited in Dube 2003:vii) is of the view that this needs to be properly addressed within the broader social injustices of violence, human rights abuses, racism, poverty, child abuse, gender inequality, ageism, classism, ethnicity, international injustice, sex-based discrimination etc. By so doing, theological education will be crucial in facilitating ways in which the community of faith can become aware of the importance of food security, healthcare, human rights and the human dignity of the majority of African people who live in the constant struggle of such existential needs. It must also engage in peacemaking and the transformation of the African church from the house of oppression and languishing for women to an inclusive household of God, free of sexism, exploitation and oppression (Njoroge 2001b:81).

The fourth crucial step that African theological education must make is towards issues of persons living with disabilities. There is an urgent need for African theological education to be inclusive, sensitive and relevant to persons living with disabilities both in the churches and society in general (2001a:7). Njoroge stresses that ministry with and for persons living with disabilities is not an option but is an integral part of the life and

mission of the church. This is why theological institutions must be in the forefront of promoting and supporting the work of EDAN. For Njoroge (2001a:9), addressing concerns voiced by persons living with disabilities means being critically engaged in the societal and political issues of the day. Hence, persons living with disabilities must be seen as the people of God who need to be prepared for the mission of God in world.

The fifth crucial step is the search for ecumenism in theological education. Promoting ecumenical learning seems to be the most difficult task of African theological education. Njoroge (2003:34-40) acknowledges the daunting nature of the task by identifying five challenges and obstacles for ecumenical learning as follows: (i) the art of teaching ecumenically; (ii) relevant and contextual theological literature; (iii) stewardship and ecumenical leadership formation; (iv) teaching about faith and economy; (v) mainstreaming other major issues affecting African people; (vi) mentoring and networking. Njoroge argues that the majority of theological institutions in Africa are yet to conceptualize the meaning and the implications of ecumenical learning. This raises the important question: to what extent are theological educators in Africa familiar with the concept of ecumenical learning?

One can contend that with the mushrooming of Christian universities in Africa, ecumenical learning will become crucial for doing theological education. Even though ecumenical learning may not yet be taking place, the majority of these institutions are ecumenical in their teaching staff which can act as platforms for envisioning ecumenical learning. Njoroge (1998:10) contends that with the multi-dimensional existential challenges of contemporary Africa hold some of the keys to empower and encourage "churches to engage in mutual learning process not just within the same denominations but ecumenically." In the view of Njoroge (2001d:306), ecumenical theological education "is a holistic approach in recruiting, nurturing, guiding, equipping, training and preparing" students for "a life of faithfulness in God and critical engagement in the church and the world." As with Pobee (see chapter 6.3.6), Njoroge (2001d:316) believes that ecumenism is not an option but a gospel imperative, rooted in the Scriptures and yet demands to be conceptualized within "African culture, religion and the stories of African people, their struggles for liberation, freedom, justice, wholeness and life." Similarly, Emmanuel Katongole (1998:39) has called for African theological education to take African people's "story seriously, as a socio-political ideology, capable of mobilizing

creative social goals and possibilities, as well as of engendering a distinctive and alternative social praxis." Two questions from this discussion can be raised: in what ways does African theological education take seriously the stories of African people? What kind of theological education can take seriously the stories of African people?

For Njoroge, African theologians must wrestle with the meaning of ecumenism from the experiences and perspectives of African people. Yet, ecumenical theological education must not be seen as "an end in itself but a means of systematically and intentionally enlightening and educating" the whole people of God for God's mission (Njoroge 2003:34). As with Edinburgh 1910 (see chapter 3) and the TEF and its successors (see chapter 4), Njoroge (2005b:235) affirms that it will be only through ecumenical theological education that the African church will be able to overcome "the captivity of narrow confessionalism" and liberate theological education from its erstwhile narrow theological reflection. Njoroge (1995:23) adds that ecumenical theological education is also important for addressing the African disease of dependence on Western systems which permeates all spheres of African life. In addition, there is a need for ecumenism in confronting the many challenges that face Africa today. Njoroge has managed to demonstrate that identity and personhood is gained through the struggle for social transformation and liberation. Hence, the task of theological education is to motivate people to understand their situation and ecumenically work together to experience the liberating and transforming Word of life. Nevertheless, Njoroge fails to develop her ecumenical theological education vision in addressing the central issues of economic development theory in Africa which is "the balance between industry and agriculture, the best way to finance social expenditures, improving trade relationships between industrialized and industrializing countries, incentives for private producers, how to create jobs and the trade-off between the incomes of this generation and the next," capitalist liberal free market and so on (Fitzgerald 2008:257). The question which arises is therefore important: does African theological education create leaders that give theological support/justification to the neo-liberal economic system that is denying the poor fullness of life?

While this agenda might seem too demanding of theological education, to neglect these more practical issues will have serious consequences on the rest of the challenges confronting the African continent. A viable theological education has a responsibility to

evaluate the ways in which the economies of African countries affect the quality of life in the continent as a whole. As Katongole (1998:38) observes, African theological education must be aware and critique not only the political forces but also the church for there is a Christian practice "which make it impossible for Christians to be good consumers in a liberal capitalist economy." Second, as with Pobee, Njoroge also generalizes about the concept of ecumenism in its obscuring of the African religio-cultural symbols and metaphors. In short, she has not given adequate attention to the contextual grounding of the ecumenical imperative for African theological education. It is my contention that every ecumenical imperative needs contextual metaphors for expression and it is these metaphors which are the embodiment of social transformation. I return to this argument below (see chapter 8). Third, one would have liked to see how ecumenism can help African people deal with the current ecological crisis. The question is decisive: how does the 'care for creation' become incorporated into theological education and thereby develop theological students as eco-activists for the whole of the created order?

Fortunately, many African communities are culturally protective towards creation. Yet, how can ecumenical learning take advantage of that culture in the quest for protection and care of creation? From the forgoing discussion, it is clear that none of the three African theologians in view have dealt adequately with the role of masculinities in theological education. The focus on gender is recommendable but it does not adequately dealt with the role that dysfunctional masculinities has contributed to African theological education and how positive masculinities can contribute to a better theological education. Because the concept of manhood is so strong in some African cultures, the question which arises is crucial: should African theological education be looking at mainstreaming masculinities within its theological curricula?

5. Chapter Summary

The chapter has demonstrated that Njoroge's vision of African theological education is more than just a call for recuperating the link between Christian faith and historical realities of African Christians. Instead, it is a call for an alternative African community that celebrates the full humanity of women and men. A critical concern for *life itself* is seen as a criterion for analysing social challenges. Njoroge calls for a theological

education that bears witness to the truth of the Christian gospel, through which the incarnation promises to establish a kingdom in the midst of the people of God with justice, peace righteousness and wholeness. From the forgoing discussion, Njoroge's vision for an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community can summarized as follows: First, following in the footsteps of Tutu and Pobee, Njoroge acknowledges the critical need for the Africanization (i.e., contextualization) of theological education as the first step. However, unlike Tutu, but as with Pobee, Njoroge is not simply calling for an uncritical Africanization, but for a life-giving Africanization that promotes abundant life for the entire community. Second, unlike Tutu and Pobee, the approach of Njoroge to the existential challenges facing African continent is firmly multi-sectoral. There is no possibility of over-emphasizing other existential challenges for they are all interwoven in a social web of injustice. Third, as with Tutu and Pobee, Njoroge view is unmistakably missiological in intent, centred as it is in the *missio Dei*. She believes firmly that the *missio Dei* should be based on a partnership between women and men for the liberation and transformation of society. Four, as with Pobee, Njoroge holds an ecumenical vision. Theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community should be ecumenical by nature otherwise it cannot help African Christians realize a community built on equity and justice. Fifth, it is based on an interdisciplinary approach. It was also highlighted that the interdisciplinary perspective does not transcend the problem of artificial boundaries of academic disciplines. Instead, it only opens the way of dialogue among disciplines while returning their distinctives. It is significant therefore, that theological education will not only uphold interdisciplinary scrutiny, but also embrace a more integral approach that brings coherence to the academic disciplines (see chapter 8). Theological education must come out of the confinement of isolationism and narrowness on theological discourse and transcend the boundaries of disciplines through a more integral approach (this is unavoidable because of the cognitive nature of pluralism, language, ethnic, religions, denominations, etc.) in order to give viable solutions to the critical existential questions that African Christians are struggling with in their daily lives.

The following chapter gives a synthesis of some of the emerging elements from parts two and three in order to envision an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community.

PART FOUR

TOWARDS A VISION FOR AFRICAN ECUMENICAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The concluding part of this study has two foci: Chapter eight will give a synthesis of the core elements emerging from parts two and three. The central question is: *in what ways do the results of this investigation can contribute to the current search for a vision of African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community in the twenty-first century?* Chapter nine provides a tentative conclusion of the critical issues of the present study which seeks to open new avenues for future research.

CHAPTER EIGHT

TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF AN AFRICAN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION THAT PROMOTES PRINCIPLES OF A JUST AND EQUITABLE AFRICAN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

> The only future that theology has, one might say, is to become the theology of the future. Its attention must turn to that future which God makes possible but for which man [sic] is inescapably responsible. Traditionally it is prophecy that has dealt with the future. Hence the fate of theology will be determined by its capacity to regain its prophetic role…prophecy calls man [sic] to move into the future with confidence informed by tradition but transformed by the present. Theology helps prophecy guide the community of faith in its proper role as the avant-garde of humanity (Cox cited in Livingstone Fellowship 1968:1)

1. Introduction

This study has been an attempt to articulate an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. In order to achieve this goal, the study systematically followed a thread which begins to develop from chapter three through to chapter seven. Chapter three offered a systematic review of the crucial literature on the decisive turning points in the historical development and renovations of African theological education from Edinburgh 1910 to the IMC surveys on theological education in Africa between 1953 and 1957. The chapter argues—although not explicitly for the African continent—that already at Edinburgh 1910, the crucial need for [theological] education were raised and continued to be recalled through the proceeding missionary conferences. It is this need for a viable theological education in the 'younger churches' that led to the founding of the TEF which since its inception has been the main engine for the development and renovation in African theological education.

Chapter four investigated the contribution of the Theological Education Fund (TEF)/Programme for Theological Education (PTE)/Ecumenical Theological

Education (ETE) to the development of African theological education from 1958 to 2012. It argued that there had been a paradigm shift in African theological education from a mere academic, context or goal-oriented approach to a people-oriented approach. Building on these two chapters, chapters five, six and seven investigated the contributions of Desmond Mpilo Tutu (former Associate Director of the TEF), John Samuel Pobee (former Associate Director of the PTE and Coordinator of the ETE) and Nyambura Jane Njoroge (former Coordinator of the ETE) as *lenses* through which to understand the change patterns and the main issues that preoccupied African theological education in distinctive moments in the history of the TEF/PTE/ETE. Figure 8.1. shows some of the emerging models of theological education on African theological education.
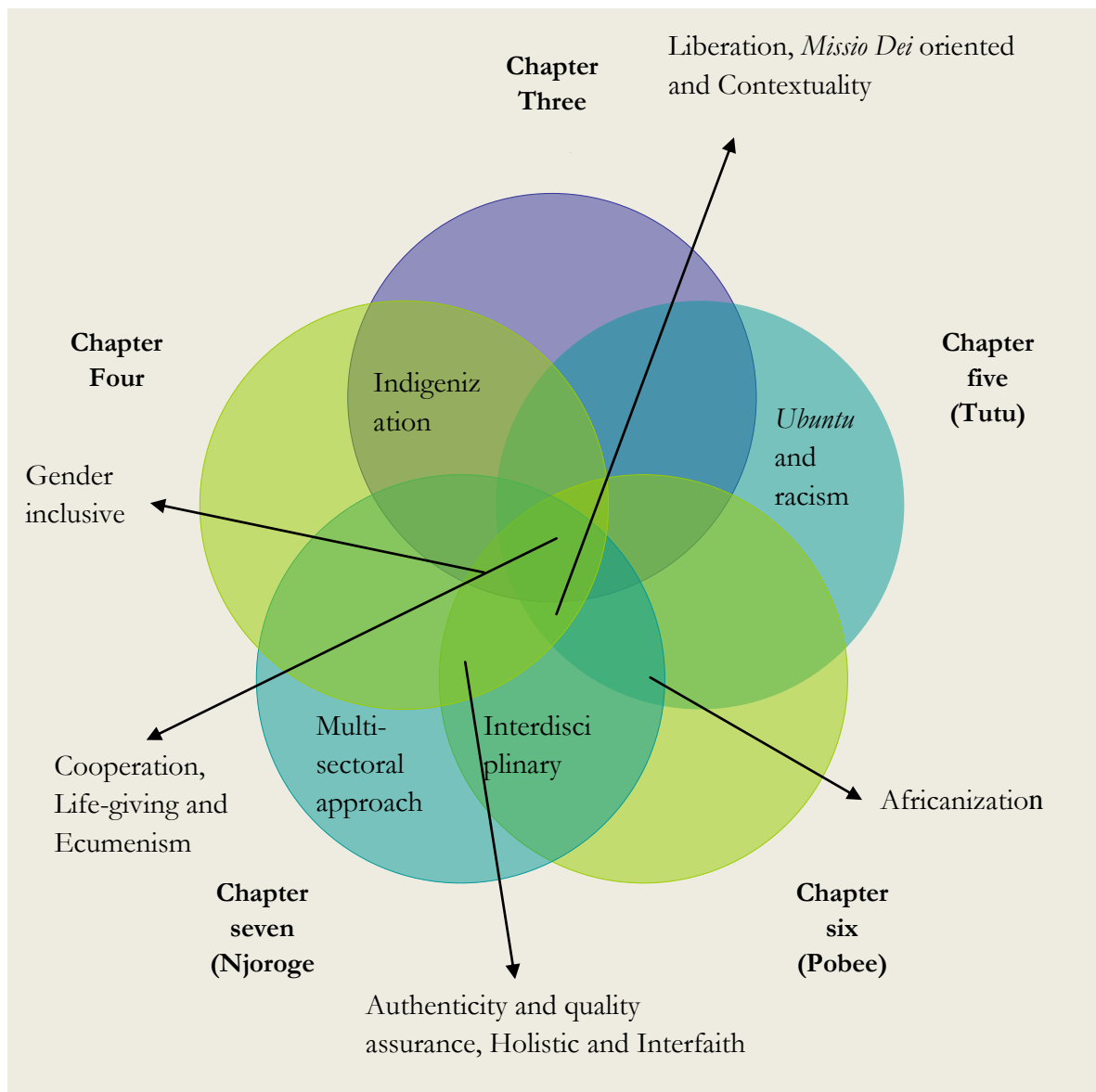

Fig. 8.1. Some of the emerging models of African theological education

The aim of the current chapter is to draw together some of the emerging models found in figure 8.1 and synthesizes their contribution to the current search for an African theological education in such a way that they promote the principle of a just and equitable African Christian community. These models are selected on criterion that they are currently under discussion in African theological education. It is the conviction of the present researcher that counter-arguments to the conclusion of this study are inevitable and could be seen as building blocks in the quest for a more concrete vision for African theological education. This chapter is organized in four sections. The first section synthesises the notion of Africanization. The second section develops a gender-inclusive model of theological education. The third section develops a theology of *missio Dei*-centred theological education. The fourth section proposes the community of life as an interpretive transformational framework for an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community.

2. A Theology of Theological Educational Identity

An African proverb states: "*When lost, it's better to return to a familiar point before rushing.*" In citing this proverb, Joseph Ki-zerb (1990:40) urges African scholars to retrace their intellectual footsteps back to African philosophy and wisdom as a way forward in constructing a uniquely African theological education. As was observed above, Tutu (see chapter 5, section 5.1), Pobee (see chapter 6, section 4.2) and Njoroge (see chapter 7, section 4.3) are unanimous in their view that African historical experience and culture must be the substratum and source for the construction of all African theological education. They are agreed in the opinion that for theological education to be African, it must be Africanized. Pobee (1996c:49) stresses that "the task is to develop an authentically African expression of the one gospel…in such a way that not only will Africans see and understand it but also non-Africans will see themselves as sharing a common heritage with Africans." The question of Africanization is still very paramount in current debates in African theology (Phiri 2008/2009; Maluleke 2006). In fact, some African theologians have posited that Africanization of Christianity is the new task facing African theological education (Bediako 1995:4). The question that arises is as follows: what do they mean by Africanization?

There is no one single definition agreed upon by African intellectuals. Melegapuru Makgoba (1998:49) sees Africanization as a critical process for interpreting, defining, promoting, transmitting and articulating Christian faith into African thought, identity, philosophy and culture to students. It encompasses a paradigm shift from the European orientation to that of an African worldview. It is based on a conception that all forms of knowledge, like culture, is a human construction and is tailored to fulfil specific functions within the context of its production. The motivation for Africanization as Mogobe Ramose (1998:vi-vii, italics mine) rightly argues is that:

> It holds different foundations exist for the construction of pyramids of knowledge. *It holds further that communication is possible between the various pyramids.* It disclaims the view that any pyramid is by its very nature eminently superior to all others… *It is a serious quest for a radical and veritable change of paradigm so that the African may enter into genuine and critical dialogical encounter with other pyramids of knowledge.* Africanization is a conscious and deliberate assertion of nothing more or less than the right to be African

From this statement, three crucial aspects can be identified as follows: First, as per the call of Ramose, there is a need for self-determination: displayed in the contest against intellectual dependency and notion of Western colonial imperialism which upheld the view that only one segment of humanity had the exclusive right to reason. It decolonizes this approach and places the African worldview at the very centre and as a substratum of any analysis. Asante (cited in Seepe 1998:64, italics original) rightly argues that Africanization is "*a perspective which allows Africans to be subjects of their historical experiences rather than objects on the fringes of Europe.*" It is not just "conceptual decolonization" (Wiredu 1995), but also a conceptual contextualization. It is not only a kind of mental decolonization and liberation from stereotypes, but also a mental contextualization so that African scholars can think for themselves as Africans. This is not simply about the contextualization of knowledge but also about the conceptuality of African people. The complexity of this process raises a gnawing question: what are the mechanisms and appropriate tools for mental decolonization and contextualization?

Second, it is a search for an African mode of selfhood within a broadly global intellectual framework. As Maluleke (2006:70) rightly argues, "Africanization involves a critical engagement with both Christian theology and its context while at the same time attempting to chart the both for liberation." Here, liberation is the catchword. The

attempt towards Africanization should not perpetuate certain oppressive aspects of African culture against women. The significance of Africanization is not only to affirm African identity but to occasion liberation of both women and men and build a just and equitable African society. While theological education in Africa has to represent African experience and ideas, it also has to draw its resources from African culture. In this latter respect, it is imperative to hear from the Circle of African women theologians. Indeed, African women theologians (Phiri 1997:70; Njoroge 1997:77) have argued that a theological education aimed at promoting the principles of a just and equitable society cannot uncritically retrieve African culture and historical experiences, for not every aspect of these ideals are life-giving. African theological education must aim at providing students with the tools, methods and habits of mind that enable them to analyse their societies and critically address every aspect of culture that does not speak to the fullness of life for the whole community.

Third, Africanization does not mean the complete rejection of all aspects of Western cultural attributes since there is no culture that is monolithic and cultures are constantly changing, adapting and shaping one another through cross-cultural encounter. The question therefore remains: how would African theological education look after the completion of the process of Africanization?

2.1. The Task of Africanization of Theological Education

In his article "The Africanization of Theological Education," Maluleke (2006) has outlined the concept Africanization in such a way that it opens up promising vistas for the future of theological education. In his article, Maluleke (2006:72-74) outlines what he calls the six-fold task of Africanization of theological education. Since Africanization is about being relevant and responsive to the needs of African people, I have added two more aspects to this task. In what follows I provide a summary of the task of Africanizing theological education.

First, Africanization is a moral option and process. This means that it is not an automatic and one-time event, but a matter of personal choice and decision. In this sense, Africanization "is a conscious and deliberate assertion of nothing more or less than the

right to be African" (Ramose 1998:vii). 'The right to be African' is crucial because only when African people are committed to their own identity can they truly contribute to the global theological reflection. Here, the theologian begins the exploration from a clear understanding of the particular and moves on to the universal. Without a firm grip of the particular, globalization or universalism has the potential to completely erode the project of Africanization and its associated African cultural wisdom and philosophy. It is about the deliberate choice to make African experience a source of ideas resulting in the formulation of theological education policy. Yet, this argument also raises some important questions that need to be addressed: what are the sources of inspiration for Africanization of theological education? What values would the Africanization of theological education add to the majority of African people who cannot put a loaf of bread on their table? To what extent are grassroots communities involved in the process of Africanization?

Second, it is about the liberation and emancipation of every member of the African community, but specifically those who have been excluded from the centre of socio-political, economical and religious privilege. This demands pedagogies that are responsive to the socio-cultural backgrounds and educational needs of the students (Lebakeng 2006:78). There is a need for new modalities of intervention so that policy-oriented research and development projects are informed by the needs and aspirations of the everyday struggles of people on the African continent such those living with disabilities, the ecological crisis, migration, gender, HIV and AIDS and many other social epidemics.

Third, it is not enough to sugar-coat theological courses and institutions with African symbols and persons; neither is it enough to inculturate and indigenize, or merely present foreign ideologies in African forms while the original ideas are left intact. Africanization is more than a change of structure of management, or of the racial composition of both staff and students; instead it entails a critical interrogation of curricula content, language of instruction, aims, objectives and visions, in order to inculcate a theological reflection that is truly African and can contribute and facilitate the liberation of every African person within their specific contexts (Seepe 1998:65). One such exemplary university that has taken African language seriously as tool for Africanization is the University of Limpopo in South Africa which has introduced a course that encourages multilingualism and the promotion of African languages. Through its Bachelor of Arts programme as

Tebogo Monama (2011) reports, "in Contemporary English and Multi-lingual Studies (BA CEMS), the institution has been offering the first and only dual-medium degree in which an African language, *Sepedi*, is used as a medium of instruction and assessment with English." The question is: with the basic ambition of African scholars to attain international recognition, to what extent are African theological institutions willing to include at least some local languages as media of instruction alongside English?

Clearly, Africanization of theological education has nothing to do with the mere "survival" (Mbiti 1978:10) of the community, but the emancipation of the community which leads towards its self-reconstruction for a sustainable livelihood and development. It is a theological education for justice. This in itself requires the constant generation of concepts and theories from African socio-cultural and historical experience (Lebakeng *et al.*, 2006:78). In this sense, the task of Africanization of theological education, as Lebakeng *et al.*, (2006:77) argue, refers to the analysis of a shared African worldview which includes "the ontological, epistemological, paradigmatic and ethical assumptions underlying what is taught and researched" in theological education. While this call is ingenious and emphasizes relevance, it arguably fails to do justice to the issue of what kind of lecturers are needed for the task. One tends to think that a radical paradigm shift of this nature demands also a shift in the attitudes and mind-sets of its lecturers. It seems the project of Africanization should go hand-in-hand with developing an African theological task force with changed attitudes, mind-sets and clear intentions.

Fourth, it is about taking an honest look at the profile of both the teacher and the institutional structure through which theological education is mediated. A theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community cannot be exclusively dominated by men. Theological institutions must aim at being gender inclusive and practice gender justice at all levels. In other words, they must be institutions which both practice and promote justice and equity. The invisibility of women and people living with disabilities is still worrying in African theological education. The process of developing a Christian community that can affirm and uphold principles of justice and equality demands the participation of everyone in the process of theological education. Critical questions can then be raised: is African theological education structured with the needs of those of the majority in mind? Who sets the agenda for and in whose interest is African theological education done?

Fifth, it is not a return to the African past, although it signifies the love and affirmation of African identity. It is not cultural romanticism or nationalism, for it involves the liberation of both women and men for a gender just society. In fact, African women's theologies have long conscientized the inherent patriarchy and oppressive tendencies against women in African culture and religion (Oduyoye 2001; Phiri 1997a; Njoroge 1997). Therefore, Africanization is not a cultural romanticism, but a critical approach to African culture and religion in the light of an ethos of human liberation.

Sixth, Africanization is not only a multifaceted and complex ideological process, but is also by its very nature, controversial. Maluleke (2006:73) is of the view that Africa is so diverse and divergent that it is almost impossible to find a mono-definition of an African, just as it is difficult to define the notion of Africanization. One can argue that there are as many definitions of Africanization as there are African cultures. This is what makes the process more complex because it requires sensitivity towards the African reality of diversity. It is significant to bear in mind that Africa has always existed in diversity and yet, this diversity was based on equity and justice for all members of a given community. As a result, any viable transformation of theological education should take African diversity as a critical point of departure for its theological reflection and praxis.

The seventh task of Africanization is about enhancing resources for theological education within Africa. The majority of theological institutions in Africa remain dependent on foreign funders and outside human resources who also have a level of control on what is to be taught and researched. Consequently, new modalities of intervention are required to mentor future generation of theologians and fundraise for theological education within the continent. There is a need for funding policies that are informed by the needs and intentions for Africanization of theological education. African theological institutions will only become centres of excellence and self-determination when they become financially viable. Africanization is not something that can be entrusted to outsiders or achieved with external resources. It is a burden that demands that Africans themselves undertake both its funding and development. It requires planning for financial praxis. Such planning includes forming groups or networks for financial diapraxis (financial dialogue based on action), bringing business people from

within the continent and African diaspora, individuals, companies, churches and Christian organizations to address the need for theological education funding.

Eighth, Africanization is also about publishing relevant African theological literature for theological education. This fact was recognized even at the Edinburgh 1910 (see chapter 3.2.1). In addition, currently the AACC has pointed out the need for publications by African scholars for both theological institutions and communities (Gatwa 2009a:2). Indeed, in contemporary Africa, Africanization is meaningful when it goes hand-in-hand with publishing literature informed by African experience and culture. This is especially significant for immersing students in the process of mind decolonization and emancipation for social transformation. In addition, publications also assist in the self-critical analysis of the African cultural heritage and in theological dialogue with the ecumenical Christian family. Notwithstanding, as observed above (chapter 4, 3.6), African theologians have been developing literature for intellectual decolonization and emancipation. Their enormous contribution has resulted in the current alternative thinking with regard to African theological scholarship and its appreciation of the African religio-cultural heritage as having something valuable to contribute to global Christianity.

Ninth, the task of Africanization is about networking with theological education by Africans in the Diaspora. Theological education is a safe space for mobilizing the global African family for reconciliation by overcoming human constructions and the historical alienation that slavery wrought. In other words, theological education should assist Africans across the global to reunite through embracing its African roots and heritage. This reunion is significant not merely for reunion to take place, but for developing a mutual perspective for the critical and synchronized intellectual response to the African family struggle for wholeness and the restoration of self-worth and dignity. Africanization contains within it inclusive implications that demand the mobilization of all peoples of African descent in the struggle for social and economic liberation and reconstruction, in other words, a just and equitable present.

3. A Gender-Inclusive Theological Education

Since Africanization is about humanization, creating a gender-inclusive theological education means developing a just and equitable African Christian community. The need for gender-inclusivity in theological education is a call shared unanimously by theologians in Africa since Edinburgh 1910 (see chapter 3, section 3) and through the PTE and the ETE (see chapter 4, section 3). This theme has been developed further in the theologies of Pobee (see chapter 6, section 4.6) and Nyambura (see chapter 7, section 4.3). For example, Pobee (1996:489) argues that theological education must be gender-inclusive in its approach and perspective, not polemically, but in order to seek for gender justice in the church and the society at large. For over two decades, African women through the Circle have persistently called for the mainstreaming of gender in theological education, a call most theological institutions in Africa have largely ignored. Regrettably, even in those countries where national governments have called for gender-inclusive educational approaches, according to Beatrice Stephen (2011:13), the majority of theological institutions have not taken sufficient heed, and "looking at the gender disparity injustices, you realize that theological education has done almost little in equipping theological students to address gender issues in the community." This underlines the fact that gender justice in Africa theological education remains an issue that needs critical attention. The question therefore follows: why is gender inclusive theological education needed? This question can only be answered with another question: if indeed theological education is a theology by the people, how can it neglect women who make up two-thirds of the church's membership in Africa? If African theological education seeks to create a just and equitable African community in which women are more than one half of the population as well as making up its vibrant, and energetic core, then the African theological education agenda which defines the church should be more inclusive and take the inclusion of African women seriously (Pobee 1991:329).

In this context, justice means being committed to developing systems of theological education that honour all of God's creation. It cannot be a theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable society, if the groan of the majority of its members (i.e., women), are neglected. For theological education to become life-affirming it must first begin by affirming the humanity of women by allowing "gender issues to play a vital role in theological reflection and women should have equal representation and

roles in theological teaching and research" (Werner 2010:3). In addition, theological education curricula should have an intentional gender dimension to it. I have argued elsewhere that "it is not a mere addition of a few new courses dealing with gender issues within an existing theological education programme, but reformulating a gendered core-curriculum, theological ethos and structures for gender justice" (Kaunda 2012c:3). In this regard, theological education is not just informed by gender issues and praxis but it is itself gendered. The implications of this are twofold: first by engaging in gender inclusive theological education, students become witnesses (conscientized) to gender violence and injustices in society. In this sense, theological education becomes a prophetic-social movement through critical engagement with actual problems, whereby students learn to do pastoral ministry in the church as well as engage meaningfully with society from a gender perspective.

Second, by engaging in gender-inclusive theological education, students become aware that women have not resigned their hopes to suffering but are constantly struggling for a just and equitable society. This realization can transform the missional praxis from praxis only to becoming partnership and relational oriented. To be together in solidarity as men and women can become a powerful tool for concrete actions that can lead to social transformation. Through this process, students can become catalysts for the community's praxis as they inspire the community to liberate the biblical truth from the dominant patriarchal hermeneutical paradigm to a gender-sensitive hermeneutical paradigm.

3.1. Implications for Theological Education

The above discussion on gender inclusive has several implications for African theological education. The following three are particularly highlighted:

First, there is a need for reformulating the core content of theological curricula and creating a gender balance in the numbers of both administrative and teaching staff. Some institutions, especially within public university faculties or schools have already embarked on the process of building inclusive theological education communities through employing equal numbers of teaching staff and mainstreaming gender issues in the core disciplines of Biblical Studies, the History of Christianity, Systematic Theology and

Practical Theology. Yet, much still remains to be done in making gender issues an intentional dimension of every discipline taught. In the case where there is a male teacher who has no exposure to gender issues, the possibility of the conscious or unconscious marginalization of such issues is high. This means that the issue can remain only an interest of women and a few enthusiastic male theologians. Yet, mainstreaming is not about the interests of a few theologians, but a matter of gender justice, period. This also places demands on the conscious and deliberate gendering of theological institutions. The question therefore remains: how can the theological institution ensure that gender issues are given serious attention in every course?

Second, theological institutions must develop deliberate gender refresher courses for all teaching staff. The majority of theological teachers in African are ill-equipped in dealing with gender issues. Many theological institutions have no serious mechanisms that ensure that everyone engaged in teaching in theological institutions has an informed background in gender issues. Consequently, a gender refresher course can act as a reorienting paradigm and a reminder of the need for gender-sensitive teaching. To have a gender-sensitive curriculum also requires having gender-sensitive teachers. Second, through the constant appraisal of staff and students as regards an evaluation of the courses being taught as to whether they reflect gender sensitivity. There is a need for the intentional gendered evaluation of the course content with a bias on the gender sensitivity of the teacher. This also requires a balance in terms of gender issues on the examination questions and the assignments given to the students.

Third, there is a need for theological institutions to develop an ecumenical policy on gender inclusivity in theological education. As Ernst Conradie (nd:11) directs,

> This applies especially to self-governed institutions that do not form part of larger educational institutions like universities (which would be less easy to influence). The challenge here has to be addressed both within and outside the institution.

Perhaps it is the self-governed or denominational institutions who are the most difficult to influence in the quest to develop an ecumenical policy for a gender-inclusive theological education. This may require the accrediting agencies and theological networks and governing bodies of such institutions to be gender-inclusive themselves, and to include a component of gender inclusivity in their requirements for accreditation and membership. There is an obvious need for a concrete public witness towards gender

inclusivity in theological education. This imperative has been long overdue and it is high time it became implemented. The institutions must do a self-introspective on why it is difficult for them to be gender inclusive and make firm decisions to implement gender-inclusive policies. This will change both the attitude of the teaching staff and students alike, toward gender issues as it becomes an ethos for institutional development.

Fourth, a gender inclusive policy can clarify the purpose of theological education and the kind of society it is aimed at building. The majority of theological institutions have constantly placed emphasis on academic excellence, authenticity, contextuality and spiritual formation for ordained and lay ministries alike, but paid little serious attention to the kind of African Christian community they intend or envisage to build. As Conradie (Conradie nd:14) questions: "what is the purpose of any form of education? Clearly, theological education has missional praxis overtones and is meant to witness to the reign of God in the world. It cannot afford to lose the vision of God for a just and equitable African Christian community. This is not based on the establishment of a perfect African Christian community, but rather the conviction that the present gender imbalances within African theological education, church and society are unacceptable. African women theologians have passed an indictment that sexism in the church and society is atrociously sinful (Phiri 1997a:68). While being aware that there is no possibility of eradicating both individual and structural sin, there is nevertheless no concrete reason for accepting the sinful structures that control African society. African people are not looking for a just and equitable future, but are constantly struggling for the just and equitable present. Theological education should therefore provide the democratic space or site for creating a just and equitable African Christian community where everyone feels safe, respected and appreciated. It should be a community where gender will no longer be an issue of concern.

4. A Theology of Mission Centred Theological Education

The above discussion seems to imply that the quest of African theological education has been more centred on what it understands to be the mission of God. Indeed, the mission of God is seen by the TEF (1972:12-13), Pobee (2001:32) and Nyambura (1994:21) as a crucial aspect of theological education. As Bosch (1991:372) has argued, "it is impossible

to talk about the Church without at the same time talking about mission," without talking in the same way about the world to which it has been sent. This model of mission is based on an understanding that the mission of God is not the activity of the church, but an attribute and a way in which the Triune God relates to the world. Pobee (1993e:150) argues that as vital as the church is, it is not the goal of mission. At best, the church is only an instrument of God's redemptive purpose. Indeed, mission precedes the church. As Bevans (2010:207) correctly notes, the "mission is first of all God's: God inside out in the world through the Spirit, God in Jesus teaching, healing, including suffering." In this way, it can be affirmed that the mission is the very nature of God (Bosch 1991:390). It is who God *is* and *an* act of grace in the world. It is "not that God *has* a mission, but that God *is* mission" (Bevans 2010:202, italics original). For Bosch (1982:24) "mission is epiphany, God's arrival on the scene" to liberate creation from oppression and exploitation which sin has brought about. Bevans (2010:201-203) further argues that "God is a verb" for the mission is an expression of God as "self-diffused love, freely creating, redeeming, healing, challenging that creation." Theologically speaking, to inquire about God is to inquire about mission. It seems that mission signifies God as that pure and integrated humanizing action in the world. In actual fact, since mission is what God is and does in the world, as Njoroge (1994:20) observes, "mission is focused on promoting love, truth, freedom, peace, reconciliation, justice and right relations in the world." This means that when human beings imagine and struggle for a society free from injustice, oppression and inequalities, they participate in the *mission Dei* and consequently, share in the very nature of God. Steve de Gruchy (2010:47) points out that *missio Dei* as a hermeneutic category for thinking about God's activities in the world shifts the focus of the main agent of mission from the church to the Triune God. In this sense, theological education can also be said to be a practice of *missio Dei*. Indeed as Bosch (1990:390) rightly argues, there is church because there is a mission, and not *vice versa*. In other words, the church was born for one intention to participate in the mission of God and in that it finds its essence.

In reflecting on Bosch's notion of mission, Maluleke (2010a:213) appraises that Bosch seems to see the transition from 'mission is' to 'mission as' as a complete and single movement to replace the other. Indeed, Maluleke (2010a:213) argues that 'mission as' is not a replacement of 'mission is,' but an expression of it. This means that theological education in its context has a challenge to both define what 'mission is' and to

contextualize ('mission as') mission. In this regard, mission should be understood as an integrated or holistic principle in which the people of God within their cultural milieu cooperate with God in the process of translating Christian faith into their culture. The forgoing discussion can be concretely illustrated in figure 8.2 below.
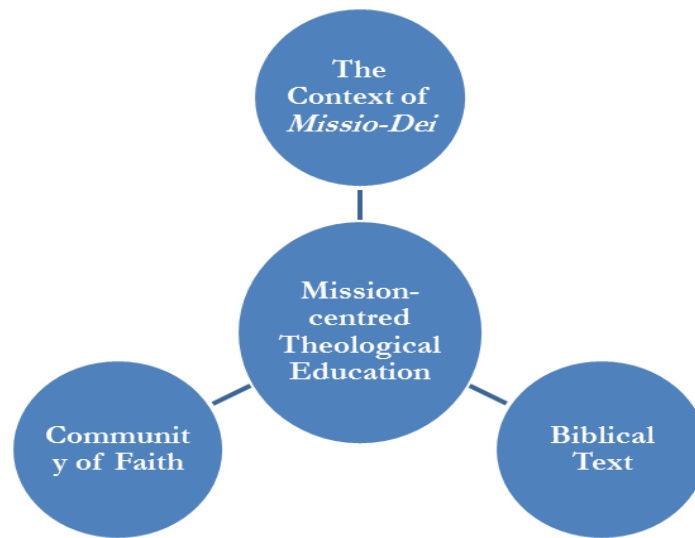
Fig. 8.2. Mission-centred theological education

Figure 8.2 shows that the *missio Dei* centred theological education is an integration of the faith community's experiences within its specific cultural setting as it wrestles to make sense of the biblical text within its specific time and context by discerning the specific existential challenges that demands missional response. According to the diagram above, theological education seeks to understand God's mission, God's intentions and purposes, and equip the church (faith community) as an instrument for God's mission. This is done so that the faith community can discern and respond appropriately to their societal challenges for the purpose of the humanization of their society. This is significant because the mission of God always takes place in a specific context. Consequently, *Missio Dei* centred theological education emanates from its sociological analysis, critical biblical reflection and contextually-appropriate missional action. Just as the church cannot be conceived without mission, and not *vice versa*; theological education cannot be conceived without the church, and not *vice versa*. Hence, the church is missional by its very nature and theological education is nothing more than the church's self-critical reflection and educational ministry in relation to its involvement in mission (Ott 2001:211). There

would be no theological education if there was no church with an obligation to participate in the mission of God in God's world. In this sense, theological education renders service to the life and the witness of the church in mission. Theological education is that instrument of the church in mission that God uses to conscientize and empower the community of faith so that it engages in the mission of God in a more informed way. Theological education remains the task of the church which reflects on the rightness of the churches' participation in the mission of God. It is not only the metaphysical experience that theological education has to concern itself with, but the holistic experience of the people of God. This also suggests that a *missio Dei* centred theological education is itself engaged in *missio Dei* praxis. De Gruchy (2010:42-46) suggests four requirements for *missio Dei* praxis theological education: first, it requires an outward orientation toward the world, rather the church and academy. Since the church finds its reason for existence in what God is doing in the world, then *missio Dei* should guide both the content and process of theological education. De Gruchy (2010:43) argues that when the *missio Dei* is removed from theological education it loses touch with the world and becomes meaningless and creates problems, tensions, arguments and debates that are wholly internal to academic involvement. The following questions remain: in what ways does theological education in Africa orient everything that happens in classroom such as debates or assignments towards *missio Dei*? How are students equipped to critically engage in the *missio Dei*?

Second, *missio Dei* also provides theological education with a purpose for furthering the *telos* of life. The mission of God is a mission of life. It is the mission of "God's redemptive intention in a world struggling with injustice, sickness, alienation, corruption, violence, oppression, and dislocation" (2010:42). Its mission has to do with a comprehensive notion of salvation in which life can be celebrated in its fullness. Nicholas Walterstoff (cited in de Gruchy 2010:43) is of the opinion that "the vision is one of peace, of healing, of justice, and of inclusion."

Third, it is about learning from engaged praxis. The fact that God is already at work in the world means that people are already responding to the mission of God. The theory for theological education must therefore emerge from the ground up. In social theory, this is called 'grounded theory.'

Fourth, it should be intentionally trans-disciplinary in nature. A *missio Dei* centred theological education, as argued above (see chapter 7, section 4 and 5) demands a comprehensive understanding of the world. As will be argued below, this demands more than an interdisciplinary approach but what can best be called a trans-disciplinary approach. This implies that theological education should not just open the space for cross-communication or merely draw from (interdisciplinary) other disciplines for an adequate view of the world. Instead, it must deliberately seek to transcend the boundaries of all disciplines, "knowledge and perspectives from different scientific disciplines as well as non-scientific sources are integrated" (Flinterman *et al,* cited in Choi and Pak 2006:355) I return to this point below. While this is not an easy task, it has the potential to lead to the promotion of principles of a just and equitable African Christian community.

4.1. "As the Father has Sent Me": The Example of Jesus' Missional Approach

This is illustrated from the incarnational ministry of Jesus, which occurred at a specific time and place. This same approach was also required of his disciples. In commissioning his disciples, Jesus (John 20:21) urged "as the Father has sent me, I am sending you." In stating this, Jesus was commanding his disciples to follow him as an example. From Jesus' missional approach, two aspects are crucial for an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community.

First, Jesus' mission was comprehensive. Jesus preached, taught, healed, conscientized, and prophetically challenged the ways of the powerful (Hendricks 2006:147). This implies that mission provides a holistic system that subordinates forms of knowledge and perspectives by harmonising and integrating them into a whole. This transcends the interdisciplinary perspective which attempts to integrate knowledge according to the logic of mechanistic science (Schreiner *et al.,* 2005:23). A trans-disciplinary perspective, as understood from the missional approach of Jesus and African system of thought, attempts to overcome the isolated scientific disciplines by affirming the validity of all forms of knowledge, including non-scientific forms such as traditions and spirituality, by integrating them in a holistic manner (2005:23). This approach provides a powerful

antidote against theological narrowness and is a valuable tool for theological education to promote the principles of a just and equitable African society in the context of religious and cultural pluralism. Pobee (1995a:269) suggests a pluralistic perspective to theological education. Njoroge (2008:226) more concretely argues for the urgent need for a contextualized curriculum to provide a holistic approach to the multiple existential challenges facing the African continent. In fact, success and synergies in theological education can be achieved through trans-disciplinary approaches necessitating an integrated or holistic approach which deals with all existential situations as its priority. Currently, most theological institutions generally encourage independent and original research utilizing interdisciplinary approaches to theology. Yet, one can argue that the current quest for interdisciplinary education in Africa is not something new. In fact, the interdisciplinary approach to education is a reduction of the holistic nature of African indigenous education which is trans-disciplinary in nature. The trans-disciplinary nature of indigenous has been well summarized by Itibari Zulu, who suggests that:

> African indigenous education involved understanding as; means to an end; social responsibility, spiral and moral values; participation in ceremonies, ritual; imitation; recitation; demonstration; sport; epic; poetry; reasoning; riddles; praise; songs; story telling; proverbs; folktales; word games; puzzles; tongue twisters; dance; music; plant biology; environmental education; and other education centred activities that can be acknowledge and examined (2006:36).

According to this observation, indigenous education was done across all disciplines. It involved cultural-political processes, historical information that was passed on through the myths, arts through poetry, songs, painting etc. In addition, it involved the natural and social sciences through the interaction and utilization of natural resources as medicines etc. One can argue therefore, that it was intrinsically trans-disciplinary in its approach. Sharon Omotoso (2010:225) notes that African traditional education embraced every aspect of life and understanding in its teaching. The priests were not simply taught African traditional spirituality but it included every aspect of their social education. Hence, the fisherman was not only taught fishing techniques, but also African traditional spirituality (Pobee 1992b:136). This raises an important question: in what ways does African theological education search for new approaches of cross-connectivity and interdisciplinary engagement informed by African tradition wisdom and philosophy?

The intersections and interactions of disciplines are not meant to transcend any particular discipline, but are intended to transform the human approach to the social challenges of life. However, there is a danger, if care is not taken, that theological education can lose its uniqueness and conform to secular forms of the discipline. Theology is not a mere rationalization of facts, but an exploration of what human beings believe in order to gain informed insights into the commitment and calculated response towards the mission of God. This is where the discipline differs from all other sciences. It must fight the urge of reductionism and accommodation to the general secular culture of education. If theological education is to survive and continue as a respected discipline both within the university and theological institutions, it has no option but to affirm an "inherent interdependence of evolving theory, research and practice" through the integration of human knowledge, including both "scientific and non-scientific elements, logical and intuitive, cognitive and aesthetic" (Schreiner *et al.,* 2005:24-25). Such an integrated approach to learning is critical for promoting the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. As observed above, African theological education teaching is no longer the mere transmission of knowledge for the survival of the community, but is a tool for conscientizing its students for social transformation (2005:25; see also chapter 4).

Second, Jesus' approach towards mission was inclusive. Hence, any ideology of exclusion such religio-cultural, gender or race was dissolved (*cf.* Galatians 3:28). Instead, Jesus introduces a new focus of relationship based on his self-diffused and equal love for all creation. The basis of this approach is partnership. Such partnership is without hierarchy. As Kirk (1999:187) argues, such a "partnership belongs to the essence of the church: partnership is not so much what the church does as what it is." The whole people of God are first partners with God and then partners with one another in the mission of God. As Kirk (1999:184) further defines:

> Within world Christianity 'partnership' expresses a relationship…based on trust, mutual recognition and reciprocal interchange. It rules out completely any notion of 'senior' and 'junior', 'parent' and 'child' , even 'older' and 'younger'. The term is designed to show how different parts of the church belong to one another and find their fulfilment through sharing a common life. It implies a relationship in which two or more bodies agree to share responsibility for another, and in which each side meaningfully participate in planning the future of the other. Put in this way, partnership is an ideal to be aimed at. In practice, there are real difficulties in the way of a truly equal relationship.

Similarly, Desmond van der Water (2011:55) writes that partnership "means that all parts concerned bring their best to the table from the gifts and abilities that God has bestowed on each, irrespective of the age, sex, gender, class, colour, caste or race." For Phiri (2011:77), "partnership is an issue of social justice." The question therefore arises: to what extent has African theological education developed theological pedagogies based on mutual love, justice and respect for all life building blocks?

As Nyambura (1994:30) demands, there is a need for new models of theological education where everyone can participate fully as instruments of God for mission. It is not an easy task because it demands new ways of living and thinking, changed mind-sets, attitudes and ways of relating with one another. The promotion of partnerships in theological education is based on postcolonial just relationships across the spectrum of cultures. It is here that gender forms one of the most vital aspects of a just and equitable African Christian community. The following questions remain: how does all this relate to theological education? How can the assumption that the church is missionary by its very nature be reflected in the life of theological education?

4.2.   Implications for Theological Education

Andrew Kirk (1997:9-10) remarks that a theology that seeks to be a faithful witness to the desire of God for a just and equitable society "must have a personal dimension oriented to the present: that is, to personal, openly declared preferences involving engagement and commitment, including a solid identification with the Christian community." According to Kirk (1997:2), the reason for this is that the subject of theology, the living God, calls the church to active obedience, makes demands and sets tasks for the church. In this perspective, the task of theological education cannot remain detached and uncommitted to the imperative of mission.

From the foregoing discussion, several implications for theological education can be identified. Only four will be mentioned here. First, theological education has to make sense of the present African existential realities in relation to God's original plan for the whole of creation and the promise of realizing the fullness of life in Jesus Christ (John

10:10) within the present as a springboard for the eschatological consummation of life. At stake here is nothing less than maintaining an intricate balance between the 'yet' and the 'not yet' actualisation of the fullness of life for the whole creation. These demands constantly reform and renew theological education in order to reflect new social challenges. God's creative and redemptive activity takes place in the midst of socio-political, religio-cultural and economic turmoil. Theological education being the instrument of the church which is always wrestling to understanding God's redeeming act in its specific context. Theological education critiques the contradictory nature of the present existential challenges of African people through engaging in reflection and action which confronts their context with great hope and provides a plan for an alternative society based on the principles of justice and equity. In this sense, theological education has a responsibility to instil in students the radical nature of the mission of God for a socially-responsible ministry. One can further argue that participation in the mission of God is a process of protesting against the present by describing a different society right here and now by denouncing everything that negates life. Miguez Bonino (1983:90-91) rightly argues that theological education explores an as yet unrealistic possibility that relates imagination to reality by projecting either in time or vision a different or transformed reality. Bonino (1983:91) further argues that theological education which implies the mission of God demands the rejection of a "tyranny of reality" which the dominant ideologies try to impose. This resonates well with Harvey Cox's (cited in Livingstone Fellowship 1968:1) argument that the only future theological education has, is to become the theological education of the future by turning its attention to that future which God makes possible and for which humanity has an inevitable responsibility. Cox (cited in Livingstone Fellowship 1968:1) further lays emphasis on a theological education that has the inevitable responsibility to "guide the community of faith in its proper role as the avant-garde of humanity." This is not a naïve optimism which fails to consider objective factors, but is an anticipation and vision which emerges from a critical reflection on praxis. A failure here will eventually cause the failure theological education to fulfil its task of empowering the church to stand beside God and look with God into the mysteries and existential challenges of life in Africa (Ott 2011:63).

Second, it is to constantly remind the church of its calling as an agent of social transformation, so that its whole life can reflect God's intention (Kirk cited in Ott 2011:63). It is a firm theological perspective that God is the God of justice and *does not*

and will not tolerate exploitation and oppression to have the last say. Instead, through the Holy Spirit, God is working in the world to bring about a society that is just and equitable. This perspective implies that the church can longer speak for the exploited and oppressed, but instead speaks with them a word of justice and liberation (Bevans and Schroeder 2004:371). This is often called mission from the margins which involves a commitment to struggle and resist those powers that would otherwise impede the fullness of life that God wills for all (Manchala 2011). This pushes toward praxis and an affirmation that among other things, seeks the transformation of the social circumstances of the marginalized, oppressed and exploited, where the groaning of creation is the very reason for the mission of God. Consequently, they are the propriety subject for theological education. Jesus' own praxis of the mission of God reflects the purpose and motivation of mission which is the social transformation of the whole life toward shalom. In this regard, theological education is in the service of the mission of God. Genuine transformation requires a radical reversal in the social order by redressing economic imbalances (Melba 2010:180-181). To do theological education is to be critically concerned about social transformation.

Third, it is to be critical conscious (the intellectual ministry) of the church in the mission of justice. The history of the church shows the tension between upholding God's mission and aligning itself with the powerful. The church often loses sight of God's mission and often aligns itself with the powerful and in turn becomes an oppressor and exploiter (The Kairos Document 1986). The church is always at risk of becoming inadequate and losing sight of the mission of God because of the multiplicities of social injustice that are demanding a missional response of the church. Theological education therefore exerts a critical function as an aspect of the church's self-understanding in mission. Theological education is an instrument the church uses for self-critique in its attempt to promote the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. It acts as a conscience raiser, intent on empowering the whole people of God toward the self-awareness of their own power, subjectivity, strengths and capabilities. This means that theological education helps people to discover their own voice and speak within their own culture, traditions and their own humanity (Bevans and Schroeder 2004:372). This is significant, for as Bevans and Schroeder (2004:372) have argued, it is only when people become masters of their future, certain of their power, their own right to justice, their own goodness and dignity as human beings created in the image of God, will the

outcome for the struggle for justice be assured. Theological education is thus a tool for pioneering creative efforts to give social form to new possibilities. This first implies that mission is about both liberation and social reconstruction. Second, it also implies that mission often involves theological criticism of death-dealing social, religious and cultural practices. Theological efforts to create a just and equitable society never cease, and the chasm between the wider worlds remains fluid. In other words, new challenges in Africa are continually arising, all of which demand continual reflection and action. Theological education has the challenge of helping the church in translating the language of faith into the language of political and economic justice. It is significant to bear in mind that the current inadequacies of African society are a clear recognition of the need for theological education to assist the church in realizing its calling in the mission of God and the kind of mission that contemporary challenges are demanding. It seems that a mission-centred theological education has the potential to urge the church toward the renewal of its self-theological conception as an instrument of God in the mission of love and justice for a more humane world. The question that arises is important: in what ways is African theological education awakening the people of God to become conscious of the mission of God toward the actualisation of a just and equitable African Christian community? In other words, is African theological education at the place of envisioning an African Christian community that can only be imagined as an inclusive community? This requires the constant critical confrontation and transformation of cultures that function as sources of oppression, abuse, destruction and exclusion (Manchala 2012:164). In this way, theological education can break ideological blinds and expose students to the social and political implications of the mission of God.

Fourth, since theological education is an intellectual ministry (or gift) of the church, it follows that its task is to develop prophetic tools for the church in the mission of dialogue. It was affirmed at Edinburgh 2010 "that engaging with people of other faiths is an essential component of theological education" (Balia and Kerr 2010:171). Mission as currently conceived as dialogue can be understood in the following four ways: First, it means that mission takes people where they are, it is open to their traditions, culture and experiences. Second, it means mission calls people to conversation by first recognizing the validity of their own religious persuasions and the integrity of their own religious ends (Bevans and Schroeder 2004:285). Third, it emphasizes the personal agency of individuals as they strive to make sense of their lives in a religiously plural context.

Fourth, it is about developing a common praxis with people of other faiths by understanding the common social challenges and best wisdom nourished and represented by the various religious traditions (Jackelén and Hefner 2004: 406). Theological education is thus a dialogue for shalom and the wholeness of life in society. In contexts such as Africa that are characterized by cultural and religious pluralism, theological education can act as a remedy in developing alternative patterns of Christian community that uphold the notion of dialogue as its guiding principle in the process of coming to a mutual understanding. Joy Thomas (1997:229) insightfully argues that theological education should help the church to see dialogue as a "pilgrimage towards the fullness of life and truth, through mutual communication, which demands a deep commitment to one's own faith and genuine openness to that of the other." It is in this way that the church can help bring healing and wholeness to all of life and thereby overcome mutual suspicion.

The forgoing discussion raises several open questions: to what extent is the mission perspective an undergirding principle of the African theological educational process? Do all theological disciplines and courses reflect a missionary dimension and are they constantly challenged by the concrete societal issues which are a locus for the mission of God? What criteria can be used to evaluate theological curricula in order to make them relevant and of quality in relation to the mission of God within its context?

5. The Pedagogy of the Community of Life: Education for Life-Giving

One of the crucial elements that the ETE, Pobee and Nyambura have firmly called for is the promotion of ecumenism and ecumenical learning as an intelligent approach to theological education task for envisioning an alternative society. Nyambura (2003:33, 2005:250) argues that the affirmation of ecumenism in theological education "should be of utmost importance" if the church in Africa is to develop "resources that are life-affirming and life giving for humanity and the whole of created order." Njoroge (2001d:316) further suggests that "African theologians must wrestle with what 'ecumenical' means from the experiences and perspectives of the African people." Similarly, Pobee (2001d:319) believes that for "the vision to move peoples to live the ecumenical imperative, it must also be emotionally satisfying so that it challenges people

to action." Accordingly, ecumenism and ecumenical learning occur at the intersection where faith meets life and life meets faith. This raises the question: what models of ecumenical approach and learning is needed for African theological education? Linked to that is another question: what kind of African Christian community does African theological education is trying to build?

The implication developed here is that the notion of ecumenism must be incarnated in the form of African ideals, language and idiom for it to determine commitment for creation of a just and equitable African Christian community (2001d:319-320). This call is critical at various levels: first, the task of theological education can become too demanding and too delicate for one denomination to handle. This is not only in terms of financial and human resources, but with respect to the entire missional task of the church as explained above (see section 4). Second, the task of Africa theological education as a struggle for Africanization and humanization of African communities is not something that can be achieved by one single denomination; instead, it requires a particular kind of ecumenical approach informed by the context itself. Although this ecumenical approach is to be expressed within a particular context, its ethos should not be limited to that particular context. Instead, it should seek to integrate each context into the wider (catholicity) Christian community as it relates to theological education. This is significant because the African continent is continuously influenced and shaped by external forces that theological education has an obligation to constantly respond. Third, since the heartland of Christianity has shifted to the global south with Africa as the main player, African Christianity has a critical role to play in redefining the notion of ecumenism. Fourth, in an endeavour to redefine the notion, it is crucial to appeal to the traditional wisdom and philosophy of the people. In this way, the notion will become more meaningful to African people and will motivate and aid a commitment for ecumenism and ecumenical learning. In other words, theological education should not only be intentionally ecumenically-oriented but its departure point in quality and authenticity has to be informed by an ecumenical ethos. In this regard, the task of theological education is not only to construct an African ecumenism that is both African and Christian, but that it should also be informed by such a notion of ecumenism.

In an attempt to contextualise ecumenism, African theologians from both Roman Catholic (Uzochukwu 2008) and Protestant Churches (Oduyoye 1989) have proposed

metaphors of community where each member participates and shares, and by which as a family it embraces the living and the dead (Phiri 2005:29). These metaphors are significant in both Christian tradition and an African worldview. Nevertheless, African women theologians in accepting these metaphors have insisted that African community and family are structured on patriarchal principles which are oppressive and exploitative to the entire community. Both in the community and family, patriarchy remains so pervasive that injustices and inequalities often reign without detection by outsiders. Indeed, many of the abuses and injustices are protected from public knowledge because they are considered as private matters. While it is not necessary to discard the metaphor of community, it is important to draw life-affirming principles from it in order to develop a vision of an ecumenism that can be applied to all Africans with equity and justice. On the one hand, the diverse nature of the African continent makes it almost impossible to develop a monolithic vision of ecumenism, just as it is impossible to define an African in the singular. On the other, wherever the differences are imbued in these various cultures, they are synchronized by the notion of life. This notion functions as a hermeneutical criterion for understanding the metaphor of the community of life as an African expression of ecumenism.

In trying to develop the principles of an African ecumenical learning programme, I have decided to found it on the Bemba people of Zambia. Being a Bemba and having grown up within this worldview, I understand the language without too much effort. The aim here is to show that the Bemba understanding of the community of life as a life-giving-learning community is a relevant theme for global Christianity. Indeed, it is only through the particularity of Christianity that it becomes tangible; hence, the Bemba people's quest for the fullness of life is one such tangible way in which the notion becomes viable for promoting the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community (Kaunda 2012a:42).

5.1. *Insaka* (Life-Giving-Learning): The Bemba Learning Methodology

The Bemba people's quest for the fullness of life is a grounding principle for being human. To speak of the fullness of life means that there is a level that can be realized

through community learning efforts for the renewal of the community in its affirmation of life. It is this quest that informed the Bemba learning methodology. Learning is considered the most crucial task of the community in its quest for the realization of the fullness of life. The Bemba community as a community of life is based on *insaka* which means a learning community or a community on a mission of learning together for the purpose of the realization of the fullness of life (Kapwepwe 1994:140-141). For the Bemba people, the mission of community learning means conscientizing themselves about the need to affirm life in its totality by developing authentic relationships. In this sense, learning together is not just central but is crucial for nurturing sound relationships in order to create wholeness in the community. This implies that the affirmation of life in the community demands critical and holistic learning by the whole community. Interestingly, the Bemba notion of a Supreme Being, like the Christian God, is depicted as the God of life, and it is on this basis, that the learning praxis of the Bemba community is the praxis of giving life. This is captured well in the Bemba notion of *ubu-ntu*. The term *ubu-ntu* is a compound word (noun) consisting of a prefix *ubu*—a neutral word which qualifies the *ntu*—a locative noun which points to that which is collectively, commonly and equally experienced and shared by the whole community (i.e., human beings and nonhuman beings) but which is not owned by either human beings or the nonhuman creation. This is a common principle that is pervasive in all existence which the Bemba people call *Umweo* (life). *Umweo* is likened to the rays of the sun. As the sun continuously emits its rays without becoming exhausted, so it is with God. Just as a single ray of sunlight expresses the character of the sun, so too, *Umweo* expresses the character of God in creation. It is the very essence of God that gives all things the quality of divinity (Setiloane 1975:31-32). Thus, only God (*Mweo*) is the Ultimate source of and the Giver of *Umweo*, who is Life itself (*Mweo*). *Umweo* is an organizing concept of value and meaning which is based on the self-giving-love of God (Sindima 1995:212). As a unifying principle, *Umweo* is manifested in conscious self-limiting and mutual uplifting, as well as respect and recognition. The figure below provides a list of noun groups derived from *Ubu-ntu* which are significant in understanding the Bemba notion of an inclusive community of life. It shows the prefixes hyphenated in bold script to aid the eye.

CLASS	SING./PL.	NOUN	ENGLISH
1	Singular	**Ubu**-*ntu*	Experienced and shared humanity and life
2	Singular	**Umu**-*ntu*	Person
3	Plural	**Aba**-*ntu*	Humanity
4	Singular	**Ichi**-*ntu*	Nonhuman
5	Plural	**Ifi**-*ntu*	Nonhuman beings
7	Singular	*Umweo*	Life-force (God - Shared principle)
8	Singular	*Insaka*	A learning community (life-giving learning)

Fig. 8.3. Modification adapted from Geo Sims (cited in Badenberg 1999/2002:108).

The nature of the 'givenness of life' demands that human beings engage in a perpetual process of learning together in order to uphold the intricate balance of life. In this locus, the notion of *insaka* (=life-giving-learning or a learning community or learning for praxis) encapsulates what it means to be a community of life among the Bemba people. *Insaka* has long been a model of communal education through which the community engages in order to learn together. The sharing and experiencing of life in all its fullness underpins relationality, equality and differentiated unity within the community. The Bemba community is organized around *insaka* as a hub, where the whole community regardless of age, gender, social and economic status come together on a regular basis in order to learn together for the enhancing and nurturing of life together in the community.

Figure 8.4. below, presents the centrality of *insaka* as the community's instrument in the Bemba quest for the fullness of life. *Mweo* is at the very beginning, as the Ultimate Source of life shared and experienced in the community of life. This shows that the fullness of life is not sought outside of God, but within. This also indicates that in the community quest for the fullness of life, it demands a critical integration of spirituality in every educational activity. The broken arrow in the diagram linking the community of life with its quest indicates that while life is experienced in this community, it is not in its fullness. The *insaka* encompasses community of life, its experience and praxis. The community's conflictive, ambivalent and often diminished experience of life is the reason for the educational praxis of *insaka,* expressed in the mutual learning together for experiencing the fullness of life. In this sense, *Insaka* as life-giving learning is critical for reflecting on the mission of the community in order to construct concrete actions (praxis) in search of the fullness of life.
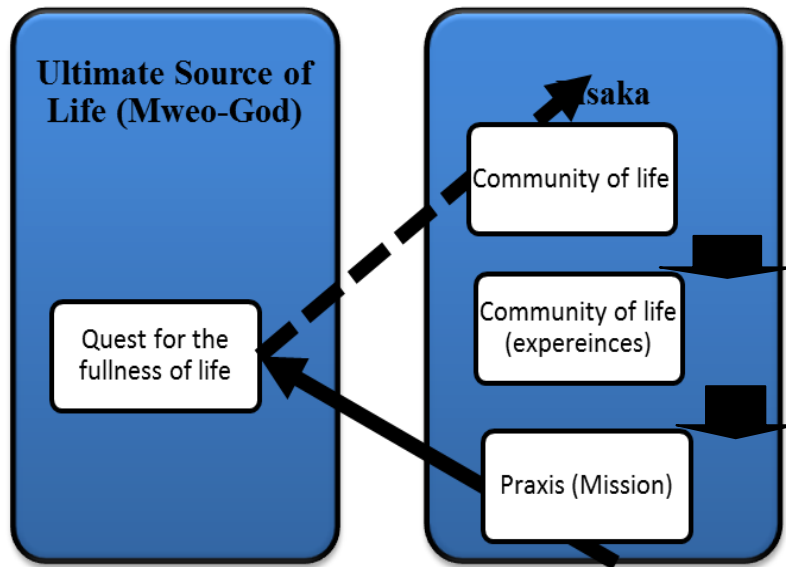
Fig. 8.4. The centrality of *insaka* in quest for the fullness of life

The *insaka* educational process is shown in figure 8.5 below.
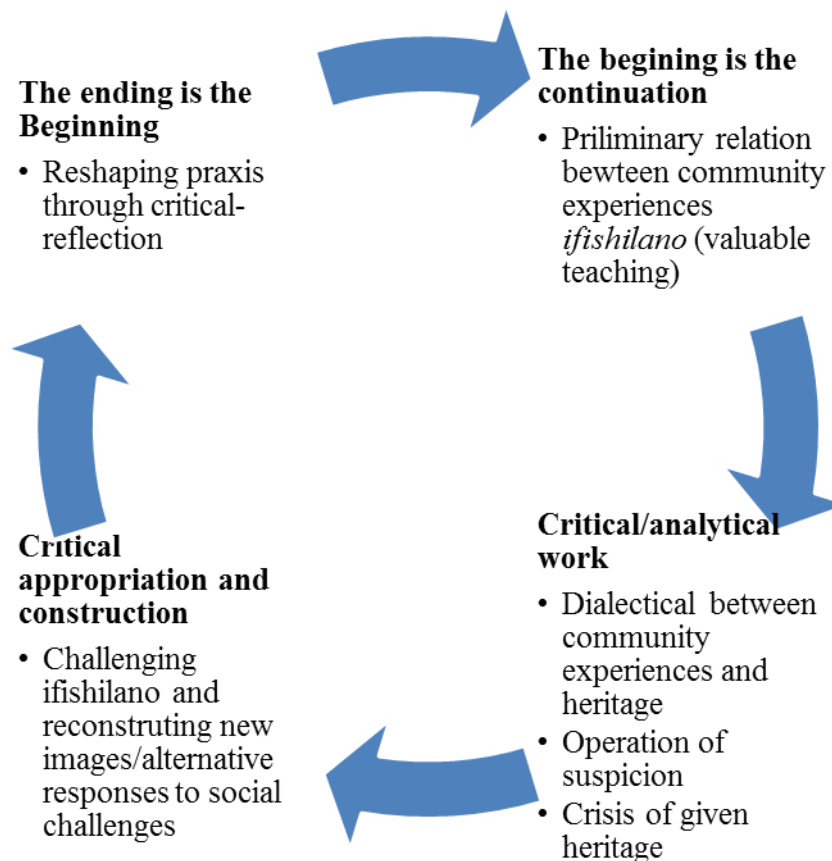

Fig. 8.5. The *insaka* process of education (the diagram is a modification of Duraisingh 1992:44).

According to the two diagrams above, the vision for the fullness of life begins with the community's understanding that life is a gift from God which must be experienced and shared equally and justly by all members of the community. This leads to a search for the best mechanism for enhancing it within the community. The next step is the construction of the mission of the community out of its existential experiences (e.g., becoming more human, transformational leadership, and reasoning together, moral-ethical imperative and community values [justice, equality, hospitality etc.]). The figure 8.5. above, more specifically shows the hermeneutical cycle of the *insaka* process of learning and reflecting together. It begins with the practical engagement of the community's experiences with *ifishilano* (i.e., the time-honoured teaching values of the community) so that learners become well-acquainted with *intambi* (the tradition). It is this engagement with the *ifishilano* and its observed problems that leads the *umusambi* (student/learner) to start questioning and suspecting its viability in a changed context. This question leads the community back to the drawing board by applying critical social analysis and at the same time reconstructing new and alternative responses to their social challenges. The last stage is a practical application of the vision for life-giving in the community. At the same time, a new process of reflection and dialectical engagement between the community experiences and *ifishilano* continues. This became a continuous process of learning together for social harmony and renewal of the community in order to develop an ideal community where life can be fully affirmed. Hence, *insaka* takes its central place in the community, where facilitators (no teachers), wise and spiritual men and old women are to be found (Kapwepwe 1994:140-141). *Insaka* is a purposeful learning for praxis which also includes eating together. Every household prepares food and is brought to *pankasa* (lit: 'a place of learning together') in order to share together as a community. Eating together is seen as a way of learning for together for the purposes of generosity and hospitality. It is also a place where men are taught hunting skills and hard work. In this worldview, ignorant people are those who cannot uphold the equilibrium of the life force, and thereby endanger the wellbeing of the community. This failure is believed to lead to misfortune being experienced by the entire community. Hence, ignorant people are seen as a danger to the community. The marks of ignorance are manifested in injustice, witchcraft, abuse of power, oppression and exploitation. These are people who sit at *pansaka* but do not put into practice what is learned together.

It is important to note that the Bemba notion of *Ubu-ntu* does not refer to human beings but to the quality and fullness of *Umweo* which is as a result of praxis. This *Umweo* resides in *ntu* and refers to that principle of community which has the capacity for self-transcendence and makes everything alive. *Umweo* is an organizing concept of value and meaning that is based on the self-giving love of God as an interpretive criterion for *insaka*. It must be clarified that while *insaka* is open to women of all ages and that women can contribute to the learning process, only old women have rights to leadership and become community facilitators. Unlike their male counterparts, young women are side-lined. This is probably one of the serious setbacks of *insaka*. Nevertheless, *insaka* conceals life-giving principles that can be drawn upon for envisioning an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable society. At *insaka*, learning for life-giving together takes place at various levels. Clearly, *insaka* connects well with the ecumenical language of learning. It is a local expression of the universal or ecumenical hermeneutic paradigm for learning. It offers a specific model of ecumenical learning as a contribution to African theological education and its search for a viable ecumenical learning experience.

5.2.   The Defining *Insaka* Pedagogical Characteristics

The *insaka* pedagogical characteristics are firmly based on learning together as a community in praxis. There are several principles that undergird *insaka*. The following five characteristics of the *insaka* learning methodology will be expressed below:

First, *insaka* is learning for *abantungwa* (lit: 'becoming more human'). This is based on its contextual character which is in the form of trans-disciplinary integration of practice and theory through the utilization of an action-reflection style of learning together where both the instructor and the candidate are engaged in reflection after their practical engagement. *Insaka* as a mutual learning community affirms the trans-disciplinary perspective "using a shared conceptual framework, drawing together discipline-specific theories, concepts, and approaches to address a common problem" in the community (Choi and Pak 2006:355). This kind of learning community integrates, amalgamates, assimilates, incorporates, unifies and harmonizes scientific and non-scientific disciplines, views and approaches (2006:356). In addition, *insaka* epistemology upholds

195

interpenetrative disciplinary epistemologies which cut across disciplinary boundaries (Kerner 2005:182).

This form of mutual learning based on the Bemba worldview, understands *ubu-ntu* as a shared and experienced form of well-being. First, this shows that the Bemba people understand life as integral. It is understood as multi-disciplinary in nature. As a result, knowledge is not artificially fragmented, but holistic in nature. Second, it shows that to resolve complex societal problems, a holistic approach to human knowledge is utilized without separating scientific and non-scientific elements. Third, it shows that in providing for various perspectives on a given problem, it allows for a comprehensive picture to be drawn and adequate solutions to be found to social challenges. The process of bringing the community to this level is fostered through a sense of developing an individual's self-worth and the affirmation of personal difference as the strength of a community. This is education for the humanization of the community. It is based on acknowledging diversity as a central category to what it means to experience and share well-being. In this way it could be said that *insaka* learning "transcended barriers" (Becker 2002:379). In fact, differences have existed side-by-side for a very long time and yet, this is not seen as a threat but as an indication of the various ways in which *Umweo* expresses itself. Kenneth Kaunda (1966:24) argues that among the Bemba people, diversity and difference is seen as the power of the community. It is based on the notion of understanding difference and allowing for mutual development. In this regard, the community of life can be classified as an accepting community. Kaunda (1966:25) further notes that it does not take account of the failure of an individual in an absolute sense. Women, children, persons living with disabilities etc., are accepted as vital in the process of learning together (Kaunda 1966:25). As the Bemba proverb states "*batila kafyalweni tabatila kapalaneni*" (lit: 'they say, go and be born, not go and be the same'). Here the process of promoting interactional integrity means that respect for difference is affirmed. In order to achieve this, learning together is critical (Becker 2002:379). This factor is significant in learning together for interdependence which is assumed by the sharing of power and responsibility among all the members of the community. It is the actualization of the community together that is the means of empowering acting together for creative transformation. To realize the fullness of *Umweo* mutuality is of particular significance. Yet, the community is also aware of human nature that so often takes its own course and brings conflict and disruption that at times is the result of socio-economic and political

196

disparity. This necessitates an educational model that is sensitive to the complex nature of reality of the community. The *insaka* acts as a mechanism for learning together to resolve conflict. As the Bemba proverb affirms, "*imiti ipalamene taibula kushenkana*" (lit: 'friction for the tree close to each is inevitable'). In this regard, the Bemba people remain steadfast knowing that since the community is the locus of life, death cannot have the last word. The community utilizes *insaka* as a safe space for learning together in community so as to embrace complex realities and engage their existential conflicts in the search for wholeness, facing ethical dilemmas and the need to make sense of their struggles. The mechanism of *Insaka* is necessary for promoting social harmony. This is of vital necessity in such a community where almost every activity is a matter of experiencing life-together (Kaunda 1966:25). As the Bemba proverb highlights, "*umunwe umo tausalanda*" (lit: 'one figure cannot pick the lice'). In this regard, being together is seen as a precondition for the development of a life-giving community. In borrowing Becker's (2002:379) phrase, it is through "learning in community" that critical solidarity for the community is developed. Hence, *insaka* is learning for individual and community humanization. To be *umu-ntu* is to be in the process of becoming more human. For the Bemba therefore, the isolated individual and the solitary subject are deficient modes of being human, because they are unable to express community values. Besides, *umu-ntu* does not take priority over the community of life and the community of life cannot take priority over *umu-ntu*. The *umu-ntu* and *ubu-ntu* are interpenetrative aspects which cannot sharply be separated but consist of the same life process. Hence, *insaka* is critical in helping the community overcome the dual understanding of the individual and the community.

Second, *insaka* is learning and affirming the community moral-ethical (*mafudende, amalango pamo nefibelelo ifyalinga*) imperative which is based on the affirmation of human dignity. This is the instructional interface between insights taken from a variety of disciplines and fields such as the environment, practical life, historical experiences, and so on. According to Bemba people:

> *umuntu-nse onsefye apo apela lishilu kabili ciswango. Kanofye abuntu abene umutundu nomutundu wasala inshila yakusungilamo…pakuti icaalo cibe umutende … kanofye umuntu-nse mwamukaka mwikoli lya mafudende, amalango pamo nefibelelo fyakwe ifyalinga* [Every person is born insane and dangerous or destructive to community harmony. Unless people of every ethic group seeks for a way of learning together as a community in moral and ethical

issues for promoting justice and peace in the community] (Kapwepwe 1994:33, my translation).

From this statement it is clear that the moral or ethical instruction for the affirmation of human dignity is seen as a goal and purpose for human existence within Bemba society. As Laurent Magesa (1997:64) argues, in this worldview, "the realization of sociability or relationships in daily living by the individual and the community is the central moral and ethical imperative." The moral thought of the Bemba people is enshrined in upholding authentic relationships with God, human beings and the nonhuman creation. Harmony is an imperative that determines the ethical agenda of life (Magesa 1997:77). Hence, to be *umu-ntu* is to be a moral, ethical individual. African people are aware that when the wellbeing of the community is disrupted, the wellbeing of the individual is disrupted. The community of life forms a communion in struggle for justice and wholeness. This implies that life is shared and experienced through justice and equality. In the Christian sense, this worldview comes closer to participation in the Trinitarian communion. In contemporary theology, the Holy Trinity is conceived in communal terms as fellowship or *koinonia* (McDougall 2003:179). Citing Jürgen Moltmann, McDougall (2003: 186) argues that the Holy Trinity "signifies the 'social unity' that is constituted by the reciprocal self-giving love among Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." McDougall (2003:192) further argues that:

> God has no ontological content, no true being, apart from communion. We may thus speak of a social Trinity and perichoresis: the persons of the Trinity "pouring life into one another permanently in divine loving harmony." Such a Trinitarian understanding has in view a God who promotes relational life, not just private faith.

In this sense, communion is not something excluded from the human concern for life, but is physically manifested as *umu-ntu* (or *ichi-ntu* in relation to the nonhuman creation). This life is a relational life which balances every aspect of the community. It transcends gender and cultural barriers. The inner life of the Holy Trinity is commonly shared in radical equality through infinite generosity (McDougall 2003:186-188). It is in this communion that Christians through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Giver of life, share and participate. Hence, communion within the Holy Trinity becomes the model by which human community can be modelled through the experience of mutual learning. This predicates open mutual reciprocity, justice and equality among human beings. Thus, *umu-ntu* is seen as the one whose behaviour, moral life and relations with

others are dictated by the affirmation of their full humanity (Sindima 1995:207). In order to achieve this, the community of life uses *insaka* as a mechanism for mutual learning and teaching and raising children together for the common good. As the Bemba proverb confirms, "*cisenda umushi ukukusha umwana*" (lit: 'it takes the whole village to raise the child'). It is here that children are taught to engage in cross-cultural exposure. As the Bemba proverb states, "*umwana ashenda atasha nyina ukunaya*" (lit: 'a child without exposure can be blinded by his/her ways of life'). It is believed that through cross-cultural encounter there is found a level through which a community can experience the fullness of *Umweo*. Hence, *insaka* is crucial not simply for transmitting the community moral-ethical imperative, but also for preparing the members of the community for cross-cultural encounter.

Third, *insaka* is a place of nurturing and equipping transformational leaders (*intungulushi*) for the community. This takes on a formational character in which the candidate's personal identity and leadership identity are integrated through the development of life-giving attitudes, values, leadership wisdom and skills appropriate for enhancing life within the community. The Bemba community invests in the formation of its leaders because of their belief that "*imiti ikula empanga*" (lit: the trees that are growing make the forest). Kapwepwe (1994:140, my translation) explains that this means that children are the future leaders who will protect the community from destruction. The Bemba believes that "*umushi ngawabula uwamano nechipuba chibemfumu*" (lit: 'when the country lucks wise people, even a fool can become the king)'. Developing sensitive and just leaders is seen as crucial for sustaining a life-giving community. Everything that takes place in the community is believed to be a reflection of the kind of leadership that is in place. Hence, learning together is central in developing life-giving leadership for the community. As the Bemba proverb says, "*amano yantungulishi amaso yabwingi*" (lit: 'the wisdom of the leader comes through community learning'). It is wisdom of others that makes a wise king. A wise king is not only someone intelligent but is also passionate about justice, and has a commitment to social progress and human development. At *insaka,* the community invests its energies in mentoring and equipping passionate leaders for mutual justice and equal distribution of the community's resources. This is the kind of leadership that gives people what they want and not what they deserve.

Fourth, *insaka* is a critical space for *ukupandana amaano* (lit: 'sharing wisdom and diapraxis') (Kapwepwe 1994:141). It is a mechanism for a community in diapraxis in order to formulate meaningful action, coupled with love. Diapraxis is a call for the community in action to develop a common praxis for linking the best understanding of the common social challenges in their pilgrimage towards the fullness of life which demands a deep commitment to justice and peace (Kaunda 2012c:12). It is a critical reflection on the community's praxis and experience. Wisdom is believed to emerge from the community's concrete experiences. In this sense, learning together is done in action and from such actions emerge theories which are expressed in proverbs, riddles, songs etc. Hence, learning is not simply done in critical solidarity, but is action oriented. Moreover, it is believed that wisdom resides in every individual. It is affirmed in the Bemba proverb, "*amano yafuma mwifwesa yaya muchulu*" (lit: 'wisdom can come from a molehill and become a mountain'). The community is gathered to think together about their experiences and seek a common consensus on how to deal with them. This is learning through experience or experiential/situational learning (see chapter 4, section 3.2). In this form of learning, theory emerges from praxis. Besides, *insaka* is open to strangers. It is at *insaka* that every stranger in the community is received. Among the Bemba people, "to receive a stranger was perceived as great honour because it demonstrated the community's generosity" (Kaunda 2012c:10). This is captured well in the Bemba proverb, "*ig'anda (nangu umushi) ishipokelela beni itani,*" (lit: 'a village that does not receive strangers is greedy'). In such society, strangers are highly regarded. Another Bemba proverb stresses that "*umweni kulu kwampombo takulala palwino*" (lit: 'a visitor is like a choice piece of meat that must be protected'). Hence, *insaka* is a place of welcome and refuge for strangers. One can indeed argue that in some ways, the interactions with strangers made *insaka* a place of intercultural encounter and learning.

Fifth, *insaka* is learning *in* and *for* justice, peace, equality, hospitality etc. (community values). It is believed that just as the community is an embodiment of the life-affirming principles of justice, equality, generosity, peace, love, human rights etc., of which every human being is a bearer. Hence, through the process of *insaka*, the community opens up the possibility of every person to reflect the ideals of the entire community in a unique way through solidarity, hospitality, and justice and the affirmation of the equality of all human beings and the nonhuman creation. This implies that although *umu-ntu* is fully human and the bearer of all community values, the individual can only nurture and

express this in the community. The isolated individual and the solitary subject are deficient modes of being human, because they are unable to express these community values. Besides, *umu-ntu* does not take priority over the community of life and the community of life cannot take priority over *umu-ntu*. The community is called a learning community because learning is not just a central category and the foundation of the community of life. Rather, it is through learning together that every member of the community seeks to be a life-giver. This does not imply that there are no contradictions or that the practice is always fully realized. Instead, it is a utopian vision which African people seek to realize for a just and equitable society. Despite the contradictions, such a community is bound together by a common vision of justice, equality, peace, dignity, security, and the fullness of life for all. According to this worldview, *umu-ntu* or *ichi-ntu* through acts of righteous (e.g., love, justice, solidarity, generosity, hospitality, hard work, etc.) can participate in the divine life-giving to other human beings and the nonhuman creation. Hence, for African people to be truly human is not something that an individual can attain by personal initiative but by participating in life. This also implies that the primary duty of every individual in the community of life is to learn together with others in order to maintain the "vital circuit, to give it an ever wider and intenser 'magnetic field,' to remain" ever-connected with the main Source of life (Mulago 1969:143). In this sense, "the community is never a community unless the dignity of all members is affirmed and their rights to life acknowledged" (Kaunda 2010:42). This means that the viability of education is measured not only in terms of the development of personal intuition but in terms of how an individual's education affects the quality of life of the community as a whole. Arguably, the Bemba vision of the community of life is grounded not only on the centrality and affirmation of the value of life through critical solidarity and authentic relationship, but it also seeks to actualize this in the present. Hence, it not only inspires reconstruction, but embraces plurality as the basis for rebuilding society, including all of God's creation. This is an ecumenical vision (Raiser 2002:841). Accordingly, the Bemba notion of *insaka* offers an opportunity for deeper ecumenical learning. It enshrines ecumenical principles that can be exploited for ecological ecumenical learning in a pluralistic context. Moreover, while patriarchy remains prevalent in African culture, at the core of insaka is a community of women, children, men and all of creation encountering one another in a healthy, life-giving relationship. *Insaka* therefore, has in it all the foundation necessary for building a gender just society. It also

appropriates the issues of ecological justice as the community of life is inclusive of all creation.

Lamentably, the notion of *insaka* is presently under threat and is seriously being undermined as a result of globalization, a paradigm that has encroached on the community life. The current distortion of community of life as a symbol of interpretation of the world and human life can be seen in segregation and the exclusion of others (Sindima 1995:200-201). Nevertheless, if theological education is aimed at making a difference in Africa, the principle of African community of life which is *insaka* is one such example which remains crucial as an ecumenical methodology for life-affirming theological education to take place in a religiously plural Africa. This means that life according to African understanding could be seen as a point of departure for theological education. The question nevertheless remains: what are the implications of *insaka* for African theological education?

5.3.   Implications for Theological Education

The Bemba notion of *insaka* has several implications for an African theological education that promotes principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. The following three principles will now be discussed:

First, there is an obvious need not only to integrate life-affirming principles of *insaka* as an African paradigm for ecumenical learning but to express its affirmation of diversity in curricula development. Theological institutions need to take an intentional non-discriminatory policy that affirms diversity in the process of mutual learning for the creation of a just and equitable African Christian community. A number of institutions such as St. Paul's University, Limuru, Kenya; the University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana; the University of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe; the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, the Akrofi-Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission, and Culture, Akropong, Ghana, etc., are paying some attention to this aspect but much still remains to be done. It is simply not enough to introduce a course on ecumenism, or even to have gender diversity in the composition of the students and staff. Instead, every course should have a dimension of an African understanding of the community of life as its

ecumenical interpretative, even where it is not intended to be addressed. It is important therefore to identify, not just what (content) or how (process) or where (context) theological education is taking place, but also the ways of theologically equipping contextual-global thinkers who can contribute effectively to the global discourse on ecumenism. There is a need for both theological educators and students alike to engage in critical contextual literature production (Njoroge 2003:37). This will demand theological institutions to develop mechanisms for nurturing contextual ecumenical thinking and living within its students.

Second, theological educators in Africa should have a clear understanding of how the notion of the community of life functioned in African traditional society and its implications for the current quest for ecumenism in the African church and how it can contribute to the global quest for ecumenism. The process of theological education should be approached with a critical and deliberate interest in the whole church in Africa. Since the 1950s (see chapter 3 sections 4.1 and 4.3), theologians have urged theological educators in Africa to seriously acquaint themselves with African thought forms in order to effectively prepare African Christian for an ecumenical ministry. It is only when theological educators themselves have an intimate knowledge of the African community of life that they will be able to help students formulate an ecumenical vision for the African church from the perspectives and experiences of African people. This does not imply a return to the past, but a breakout out of the past, while taking life-affirming aspects of the community of life as the locus for developing an authentic ecumenical vision for contemporary society. In this case, the emerging vision will be in continuity with the old because culture is never static or monolithic but dynamic. An authentic evolution of humanity is never totally dissociated with the past but springs out of the old "like new shoots on well pruned tree" (de Gruchy 2011:12). Consequently, the task of theological education is to challenge the African church to rediscover and critically retrieve its traditional ecumenical resources as a contribution to shaping global expressions of the catholicity of the church. It is here that the true *koinonia* as promised by Jesus Christ can be expressed by the church. It is also here that the community of life seems viable because it has not been associated with those notions which have divided the churches. In addition, the community of life is neutral in that it is not a notion owned by the church, but instead encompasses all creation. Challenging questions nevertheless remain: to what extent are theological educators in Africa cognisant of an African

ecumenical vision of theological education? Is there any self-determination and motivation to see the realization of such a vision?

Third, there is a need for theological education to give more attention to issues of religious pluralism, gender justice, economic justice, disability justice and ecological sustainability. These issues must receive priority in African theological education. *Insaka* is inclusive in its vision of humanity. It affirms the dignity and equity of every member. A primary task of theological education in society, as de Gruchy (2005:268) argues, "is to enable those who have previously been excluded from corridors of power to gain access, and to ensure that power is exercised in such a way that it works for the good of society as a whole." Focusing on such issues will also help position theological institutions in the current discussions policy making for a just and equitable society. The community of life as can be seen in figure 8.4. above focused as it is on promoting the moral-ethical obligation which demands to let others be. Elsewhere, I have argued that "the task of theological education is to reconstruct an African moral-ethical system that will promote social transformation for gender justice and peace" (Kaunda 2012b). Any society that places too much emphasis on civil liberties and individual rights and not enough on the moral-ethical imperative is in endanger of isolating individual responsibilities to others and in isolating individuals from the community (Sindima 1995:214). It is this separation of the individual from the community of life that makes it difficult to occasion a process of realizing a just and equitable African Christian society. According to John Westerhoff (cited in Schipani 1988:243), a student is theologically equipped when s/he can accept difference and diversity without being judgemental; when s/he can seek justice even for those who do not seem to deserve, when s/he is "liberated from private property, life and commitment and are led into public property, life and commitment; and when the needs and the concerns" of ecological sustainability, marginalized and excluded are made her/his "for service and prayer." The task of theological education is therefore to equip the church to live as a modelling and pedagogical community of life. The question remains: in what ways can theological education help civil societies find convergence between the current civil liberties and human rights and the African tradition understanding of these concepts?

6. Chapter Summary

This chapter is a synthesis of some emerging models as a way of contributing to the current search for a viable vision of an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. These models are selected on the basis that they are currently under discussion within African theological education. Beginning with Africanization, I have argued that the notion remains crucial for theological education. However, by calling for Africanization, it does not mean a complete rejection of all aspects of the imposition of Western culture on African life. Instead, it means building on the African traditional life-giving aspects as forms of continuity. Second, gender justice develops the notion of a gender-inclusive theological education for a just and equitable African Christian community. I have argued that a life-affirming theological education must itself affirm the humanity of women by being inclusive in every respect, including representation and roles in theological teaching, research and student enrolment. Third, I have developed a theology of *missio Dei* centred theological education which is an integration of the faith community's experiences within its specific cultural setting as it struggles to make sense of Christian faith within its context by discerning what God is doing in their particular society. Fourth, I have developed the community of life as an ecumenical interpretive concept for theological education to promote and establish the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community.

The following chapter presents an overview of the study as a whole as well as a tentative conclusion.

CHAPTER NINE

TOWARDS A CONCLUSION

> …theological education is the seedbed for the renewal of churches, their ministries and mission and their commitment to church unity in today's world (Werner 2009:5).

1. Introduction

An African proverb says that the *Sankofa*[53] bird knows the end of the journey because it looks backwards to see from where it came. To begin with, by looking backwards, one affirms the observation of the World Study Report on Theological Education 2010:

> …theological education is the seedbed for the renewal of churches, their ministries and mission and their commitment to church unity in today's world. If theological education systems are neglected or not given their due prominence in church leadership, in theological reflection and in funding, consequences might not be visible immediately, but quite certainly will become manifest after one or two decades in terms of theological competence of church leadership, holistic nature of the churches mission, capacities for ecumenical and interfaith dialogue and for dialogue between churches and society (Werner 2009:5).

This statement becomes critical when understood within the context of the demographic shift in the heartland of Christianity from the global north to the global south, with Africa being the main player. It is this shift that suggested the systematic review of the development and transformations of theological education in Africa. The study endeavoured to investigate the contribution of African theological education towards the creation of a just and equitable African Christian community. It took a historical and conceptual analysis of the literature written on theological education in Africa in the period from Edinburgh 1910 to 2012. This led to a synthesis of some of the emerging central concepts in order to envision an African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable society in twenty-first century Africa (see chapter 8). This chapter forms a backward gaze to review the thesis and conclusions of the study, by drawing together important insights from the research findings. The presentation is

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[53] *Sankofa* is a depiction of a mythical bird that flies forward and often looking backwards.

organized in four sections. The first postulates the thesis of the study. The second states the new knowledge the study has contributed. The third is a brief outline of the suggestions for future research from the gaps that have been identified in the study. The final section concludes with reflections of the study.

2. Postulating the Thesis of the Study

The overarching research question the study sought to respond to was:

> **What is known from the literature about the Protestant Christian efforts to enhance African theological education that could be used as a basis for envisioning a possible future direction to be taken in promoting the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community in the twenty-first century?**

In trying to respond to this question the journey began by outlining the theoretical and methodological frames and showing how they were used in the process of developing the study. Systematic review was used as a method of conducting the research because it allows for evaluating a large body of literature written over a long period. Using this method, chapter three provided a concise review of the historical development and renovations of theological education in Africa from Edinburgh 1910 through to the IMC surveys on the situation of theological education in Africa between 1953 and 1957. The chapter argued that Edinburgh 1910 had already raised crucial needs of cooperation, gender sensitivity and developing indigenous forms of [theological] education (see chapter 3).

This chapter was followed by chapter four which is a continuation of the intellectual excavation of the contribution of the TEF/PTE/ETE through its distinctive period from 1958 to 2012 to the development of African theological education that promotes principles of a just and equitable African Christian community. The following paradigm shifts were observed: first, the shift in the methodology from being only academic oriented to a combination of the theory and praxis approach. Second, the shift in the curriculum orientation from an intentional institutional focus to a focus which

foregrounds actual life experience. Third, it has shifted from a cognitive and narrow concept of rationality to a holistic approach. Fourth, it has shifted from privileging the ordained ministry to the whole people of God. Fifth, it places emphasis on publication and the inclusion of African theology in curricula development. Sixth, there has been a process of gendering theological education (see chapter 4).

Within this historical development and transformations of African theological education, the next step was to pause and listen to those voices of African theologians who served as executives on the staff of the TEF/PTE/ETE. This was significant in understanding what African theologians themselves saw as being crucial in different moments of the development and transformations of African theological education. The underlying analytical framework was undergirded by 'following the money trail' method of investigation (see chapter 2.4). I argued that the kind of projects that received most financial support clearly signalled their thinking and theological education ethos. This analytical process began with Desmond Mpilo Tutu, the first African region Associate Director of the TEF. Chapter five reveals that Tutu was concerned with theological education that could help tackle issues of justice and equality. His vision for a theological education was threefold: First, it must express its African authenticity. Second, it must be incarnational by translating the critical historical experiences of the African people. Third, it is must be concerned with the creation of *Ubuntu* (inclusive community) where each human being can enjoy the same basic human rights and fundamentals of justice and liberty, which is the reason for theological education. In the same way, chapter six analysed John Pobee's contribution and shows that his vision for an African theological education was based on four imperatives. First, like Tutu it was based on the call for Africanization. Second, it was based on the mission of God with a special focus on gender inclusiveness. Third, like Tutu, it was based on an incarnational theology which Pobee named *Skenosis*. Fourth, it affirmed an ecumenical imperative.

Chapter seven, which analysed Nyambura Njoroge, was the third in the succession of the 'follow the money trail' investigation of the development and transformations of African theological education. It demonstrated that Njoroge's vision of African theological education was contained in her call for an alternative African community which celebrates the full humanity of women and men (see chapter seven). First, Njoroge, like her two predecessors, called for Africanization as the first step for an authentic African

Theological education. For Njoroge, such a life-giving Africanization promotes abundant life for the whole community. Second, unlike both Tutu and Pobee, her approach was intentionally multi-sectoral towards the challenges facing the African continent. Third, as with Pobee, it was missiological in its orientation. Fourth, as with Pobee, it was ecumenically oriented. Fifth, it was based on an interdisciplinary approach.

Having outlined the historical development and transformation of theological education from Edinburgh 1910 to 2012, and having analysed the contributions of African theologians themselves, the next critical step in the study was to develop a synthesis of the emerging models from these two parts. The central concern of chapter eight was to find ways in which the results of the research could contribute to the current search for a vision of African theological education that promotes the principles of a just and equitable African Christian community in the twenty-first century. These models were selected according to the criterion that they are currently under discussion in African theological education.

First, I postulated the notion of Africanization, arguing that it remains one of the most crucial mechanisms for developing African theological educational identity. Second, I developed a methodology for theological education gender-justice arguing that a life-affirming theological education must itself affirm the humanity of women by being inclusive in every respect, including their representation and roles in theological teaching, research and student enrolment. Third, I developed a theology of *missio Dei* centred theological education which is an integration of the faith community's experiences within its specific cultural setting as it struggles to make sense of the Christian faith by discerning what God is doing within a particular society. Fourth, using the Bemba learning methodology of insaka, I have drawn the principles of learning together that promote a comprehensive understanding of knowing and learning together for a just and equitable society. At the core of this learning model is the affirmation and integration of spirituality as being integral to all learning activities of the community of life.

3. Contribution of the Study to Knowledge

An important objective of this research study has been to make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge in a number of ways. The following three steps have been taken to achieve this goal:

First, as a systematic review, it is hoped the present study will make a significant contribution through the historical analysis of theological education in Africa over a period of over one hundred years by providing a summarized, yet informed report on some of the important extant literature. The study has created an updated summary upon which theologians who are engaged in theological education in Africa can build, in order to formulate a vision for theological education in the twenty-first century. The argument of chapters three and four collects a number of significant sources together representing the critical developments and transformations of theological education in Africa.

Second, the ecumenical nature of the study makes it critical, because the challenge of theological education is articulated in an ecumenical perspective. The study has shown that one of the contexts that have had a deep effect during the past thirty years is the call for ecumenism and ecumenical theological education. Taking this ecumenism into account is what has affected many developments and transformations in theological education in Africa. Hence, the study has developed an African ecumenical learning methodology as a contribution to the current quest for constructing an African ecumenical ethos (see 8.4). This contribution is invaluable for those African theologians who wish to construct an African ecumenical learning methodology.

Third, the focus on Africanization and the mission of God placed this study on an interdisciplinary approach as a fresh contribution to the discourse on African theological education. Through this process, the study has shown that the way to a life-giving theological education in twenty-first century Africa is towards a more integrated future research. In this way, one can argue that the study has posed some new questions specifically with regards to the concept of learning for life-giving as a departure point for African theological education.

4. Gaps and Intimations toward Future Work

The systematic review of literature of the development of African theological education raised a number of areas for on-going research and development within the area of theological education. In this section I attempt to identify three important areas for future research:

First, there is a need for empirical research on the African scholarship beneficiaries from the TEF/ETE. Since its inception, the TEF/ETE has given priority to faculty development in Africa (see 4.3). The understanding of the TEF/ETE has been that faculty development is a key to developing contextualized theological education. It is the faculty which serves as a catalyst to foster fundamental development in theological education. Evidently, faculty development programmes and theological scholarships have been seen as critical for developing an authentic and relevant African theological education. Consequently, future research will need to empirically examine the contribution of the TEF/ETE in advancing theological education in Africa through faculty development. The questions to explore may be based on how they are involved in promoting ecumenical principles and values, issues of justice (e.g., gender and ecological), equality etc.

Second, connected to the above, the TEF/ETE has worked tirelessly for curriculum reformation. It was argued that theological educational curricula in the younger churches were duplicates of the Western curricula (see 3.4). While within several theological institutions and university faculties there has been a clear commitment to the contextualisation of the curriculum, the trend of duplicating curriculum from the global north seems to have persisted even in the post-missionary era. There is a need for an empirical survey on the curriculum trends in the post-missionary history of theological education. It is important to investigate the differences in the development of the curriculum between the TEF/ETE associated institutions and institutions associated with Evangelical and Pentecostal traditions. One question that can be asked is: what are some of the differences in methodological approaches within the TEF/ETE associated institutions and Evangelical and Pentecostal associated schools? This research will need to take a comparative approach in order to understand various curricula on the continent and suggest the best way to formulate a uniform curriculum which can lead to the better

preparation of student for God's mission in Africa. This can also provide suitable means to guarantee the quality and relevance in theological education, while guarding against infringing upon any denomination's responsibilities with regard to selection, teaching, examination, and ordination of their clergy. This general survey of the developments and trends in the curriculum is significant in order to understand how much ground has been gained since the call for moratorium. The research can look at the following question: are there/what are general developments in the curriculum since independence? The basic pattern of research can carefully analyse how the theological institutions relate the theory and practice to the content fields as well as practical fields. Each of these poles and their relationship towards each other will be crucial for understanding the kind of clergy being prepared for the African continent.

Third, there is a need for a critical survey on the literature development in theological education in independent Africa. This research unravels the fact that the viability and ecumenical nature of theological education go hand-in-hand with contextual literature (see chapters 4, 5 and 6). Accordingly, contextual literature is critical for Africanization or the contextualization of theological education. As was seen above (see chapter 6, section 4.6) much of the literature review does not give sufficient attention to the role of theological institutions as centres of contextual theological research for the consumption of African church. I have argued above that theological education is an intellectual ministry of the church and as such has the responsibility to publish relevant material in order to shape the course of the church in Africa and elsewhere (see chapter 8, section 4.2). The survey may carry a continental perspective in investigating how much has been published on theological education in Africa since moratorium. Second, the investigation may also seek to explore the kind of institutions that are giving adequate attention to such resources.

Fourth, one significant issue the study has raised is the need for African theological education to be in global solidarity with the African Diaspora (see chapter 4, section 3.1). One question that could be investigated is how African theological education continues to converse with Afro-Diaspora theological education. This dialogue and mutual consultation is critical for the future of African Christianity. Theological education is more than just an African commodity but inclusive of all Africans who belong to the

continent itself. Such a research may prove beneficial in analysing the viability of African theological education in relation to Afro-Diaspora theological education.

Fifth, another direction in the literature could include an empirical research on education for theological educators. The need for the continuous education of African theological educators cannot be emphasized (see chapter 6, section 4.6, chapter 7, section 4.1 and 3 and chapter 8, section 5.3). There is inadequate literature on the subject. This calls for a detailed examination of the ways in which on-going education can become part of the faculty continuous educational development. The study shows that the majority of African theological educators are not adequately equipped to tackle current issues such as gender studies, child studies, ecumenical studies etc. This makes it difficult for many to apply interdisciplinary tools in their teaching approaches, worse still to develop trans-disciplinary perspectives could prove an even greater challenge. Apparently, after the completion of their postgraduate theological studies, the majority of African theological educators have no professional obligation or even encouragement to engage in continuous educational forums outside their own specialization. One can argue that theological education rises and falls on its theological educators. There will be no authentic African theological education without having authentic African theological educators. They are a key to the future prospects of African theological education.

5. Concluding Reflection

Through the review of the literature on the historical development and transformation of African theological education, it has become clear that in the post-missionary era, Protestant theological education has acquired a progressive element which has led to self-criticism as well as social and political criticism. Theological education is no longer thought of as the transmission of ancient Christian doctrines or a mere "faith seeking understanding" (Migliore 1991), but as an intellectual ministry, it helps the church to critically reflect "on praxis in the light of the Word" (Gutierrez 1988:11). The viability of theological education in responding to contemporary societal challenges has been the critical concern of African theologians. There is a perception that the future of society depends to some extent upon the sort of theological education being offered in Africa. Hence, within the Protestant tradition, the theory of theological education has been

undergoing transformation from the individualist assumptions of the Western missionaries to the task of preparing both laypeople and clergy for living together as a community of justice, equality and peace. This has led to various transformations and formulations of principles upon which a life-giving theological education can be based. Four principles may be identified:

First, to maintain educational relevance and quality, African theologians have engaged in developing new methods. This shows that educational methods are not unchanging, monolithic or static but constantly transforming in order to adapt to the African theological vision of a just and equitable African Christian community. Based on this idea, theological education has acquired activist overtones of "denouncing dehumanization, oppression, and alienation and announcing alternative structures for humanization and liberation" (Schipani 1988:14). Daniel Schipani (1988:14) notes that the language of protest, resistance, and critique in theological education "is coupled to the language of possibility and hope." As a result, theological education takes a prophetic and hopeful stance which keeps the future open for those involved in the process of creating a just and equitable Christian community. The argument is based on the fact that a theological education with a vision to create a just and equitable society cannot afford to use methods that an oppressive, exploitative or dictatorial to its purpose.

Second, all theological methods are recognized with reference to the progressive reconstruction of society. In other words, the methods are developed in the light of theological education's social commitment. Mugambi (1995:225) argues that "the key to Africa's economic, social and industrial transformation is educational reform." This need has urged theological education to balance liberation and reconstruction. This need continues to be grounded on theory and praxis as a viable means of bringing education closer to the everyday experiences of the people of the community. This has led to two critical motives of theological education which may be identified as follows: first, a clear indication of the kind of society that is desired. Second, the need to prepare self-motivated agents for developing that desired society. This has demanded that candidates be equipped with tools and methods of the social sciences. The social analysis learning context is meant to equip students with the tools of critical consciousness. In addition, the candidates are constantly challenged to be in critical participation in social/community praxis. Subsequently, the theological educator-student relation is seen

as reciprocal self-realization by sharing experiences. This is a pedagogical learning in dialogue which the educator and the student learn together in a jointly responsible process for justice. This is called contextual learning, which is more than its physical setting but also a context of "liberation and transformation" (Johnson 2003:387). Lydia Johnson (2003:388) further argues that this form of learning "is an exegesis of experience,' aimed at rediscovering the power of the Scriptures to overcome oppression in one's own context." It takes a form of problem-posing where the learners are "critical co-investigators" of problems along with educators (Johnson 2003:392). According to Freire (1996:56), this approach to education stimulates learners to reflect openly and critically on their reality, as "beings in the process of becoming." This is what makes theological education highly political in its orientation.

Third, African theologians have been unceasingly working on the development of a new theory of a life-centred curriculum. Such a curriculum is based upon the idea that Christianity faith is "intrinsically translatable" which claims that God makes God-self known through cultural translation in concrete experiences of human life (Bediako 1995:109). Bediako (1995:109) maintains that translatability is the basis for the universality of Christianity in that Jesus was incarnated or became a human being at a particular time and in a specific historical, socio-cultural, economic and political human reality. Such a dialectical theological education does not begin with a concern for the curriculum but it is the process of equipping for social praxis that is seen as crucial. The curriculum only serves the process of equipping the whole people of God for God's mission. In short, the curriculum is not an end in itself, it is "merely an instrument and courses are only tools in initiating and maintaining the process" (Duraisingh 1992:41-42). The aim of such a curriculum is first, to affirm the need for develop theological education on a creative and critical retrieval of African culture by upholding only those aspects that affirm of full humanity of women and men in the community (Phiri 1997b:68; Njoroge 1997a:77) (see chapter 5, 6 and 7). Second, it endeavours to help the students develop a passion for justice by cultivating sensitivity to the pain of the world and readiness to confront it publicly through active participation in the *missio Dei*. This requires growth in the knowledge of Scripture, gender sensitivity, current experiences, social sciences (e.g., the need for a trans-disciplinary approach) and challenges in African context and critical thinking. Third, the vision for an alternative theological education for the creation of a just and equitable society is social criticism. African theological

education has taken on the "capacity to critique the present and dismantle oppressive structures" (Duraisingh 1992:41-42). This makes African theological education to be more sociologically oriented than philosophical. Under this conception of the curriculum, the student becomes aware that the present is neither divinely given nor sacred but is a human construction. This curriculum arises out of the present experiences of African people. African theological education is constantly perceived as a dialogical learning space where the process of liberation, socialization and humanization takes effect and continues into the wider society.

Finally, what is the way forward on the issue of ecumenical cooperation in African theological education? Here I give the example of the Cluster of Theological Institutions in Pietermaritzburg as an emerging, viable and workable model of ecumenical partnership in African context. This model seems to be viable based on the following observations raised in this research: first, the model of denominational theological education has proved to be extremely expensive to sustain and does not adequately respond to the needs of African people (see chapters 3 and 5). While the churches are working around the clock to invest in equipping its people theologically, its resources are diminishing. Further, the financial crisis that has hit the global north economies has had an impact on the delivery of theological education in Africa (see chapter 4, section 3.3). Therefore, fresh questions must be asked for developing new models of ecumenical partnership for a just and equitable African Christian community. Second, the nature of knowledge in contemporary society demands that theological education be based on critical engagement in an ecumenical environment "with basic ways of taking one's life as a whole (religion in a broad sense) furnishes a critique of the typical oversights of contemporary culture" (Giddy 2011:527). The secular universities offer tertiary education through institutions that embody faculties, schools and disciplines that equip leaders with high level of theological education which promotes personal growth and the development of a more convivial African Christian community. Within African, this model is present in South Africa at the UKZN, where quality and authentic theological education is being offered. This model is based on a memorandum of agreement in which the church denominations can choose to sign this agreement with the UKZN. This agreement is based on the church's intention to equip its students with the UKZN in partnership with its House of Formation/Seminaries in the following ways: first, academic arrangement (the students enrol full time according to the academic

requirements of the university, follow the syllabus stipulated by said university and receive sixty to eighty percent remission of the UKZN tuition fee). Second, staffing arrangement (the church has a secondment agreement whereby one of its ministers is appointed as a fulltime member of staff within the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics). Third, facilities such as the library become part of the Cataloguing Network in Pietermaritzburg (CATNIP) (Draft Memorandum of Agreement 2010:1-2). In this way, the church becomes proactive in working with the State. In this context, students have a double benefit. On the one hand, they are enriched through ecumenical engagement in their theological education. On the other, they are enriched in their church tradition through denominational formation in their particular House of Formation. In this way, the church keeps its distinctiveness in the House of Formation but within class they learn ecumenically. This seems to be a more viable model of ecumenism for a just and equitable African Christian community. I conclude in the words of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (cited in Bryant 1920:91):

For what is freedom, but the unfettered use of all the powers that God for use had given?

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