

A Critique of the Relationship between the Catholic Church and the State in Zimbabwe: Towards an Empathetic Dialogical Method

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own reflection and a record of my own work. To my knowledge it has not been submitted in any previous application for assessment. However, since we build on other's fragments, the sources of my information have been specified and acknowledged by means of references, and all quotations have been indicated by quotation marks or in small print and setback.

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Abstract

This study serves to evaluate the effectiveness of the Catholic Church's prophetic voice in the post-independence Zimbabwe. It also serves to show that being prophetic is not enough unless this prophesy engages with the other. This study proposes a dialogical prophetic voice, which engages with the one to whom it is challenging. For the prophetic voice to be dialogical it has to be empathetic and being empathetic in this case points to the ability to understand the other party's perspective. Understanding in this context does not mean to sympathise or compromise but to be able to see through the eyes of the other party in dialogue in a bid to constructively challenge or criticize the other. This study suggests an Empathetic Dialogical method as central and foundational to an effective dialogical process. It also proposes Bonhoeffer's Church-State model as a conducive ground for an Empathetic dialogue.

The study ultimately wants to show that the ineffectiveness of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe to dialogue with the State is due to its predominately non-empathetic dialogical model. It (the study) specifically points to two trajectories: the first trajectory points to the Catholic Church's unwillingness to consult the State, while it has a tendency to prescribe for the State. The second trajectory lies in the failure of the Zimbabwean Catholic Church to speak with one voice, which consequently led it to compromise with the State.

This study is informed by the suffering Zimbabwean people at the hands of a ruthless regime and a Church whose prophetic voice is ineffective.

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Chapter One

An Introduction to the Study

There was dialogue¹ between the Catholic Church² and the State in Zimbabwe, in which the Catholic Church challenged the government about the deteriorating living conditions of the Zimbabwean people. This dialogue never stimulated any positive responses from the government and the situation of Zimbabwe never changed. Many questions can be raised about the nature of the dialogical method used by the Catholic Church and some of these questions are as follows: why was the dialogue ineffective? Was it due to the fact that the Catholic Church leaders failed to speak with one voice, or the Catholic Church's dialogical method is either irrelevant or not empathetic enough to be able to engage with the State? Or did the State adamantly refused to cooperate? This study will grapple with these questions.

This introductory chapter will provide the necessary material which will put the reader into a better position of understanding what this study is all about, in order to successfully provide the foundation of understanding the study, this chapter will discuss the following heading 1.1) The background and identification of the research question 1.2) The preliminary literature and location of the study 1.3) The research problem and objectives 1.4) The theoretical framework 1.5) The research design and Methodology 1.6) and The Structure of the study.

1.1) Background and Identification of the Research Question

Zimbabwe is in a crisis. According to a report by the *Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace* (CCJP) of May 2008, Zimbabwe is amidst an unprecedented economic meltdown, which signifies 364% inflation the highest in the world. The Zimbabwean

¹ Dialogue is defined as 'an agreement, to be reached in the realm of action, establishing the conditions under which certain set of objectives may be achieved, in spite of ideological differences' (Flannery 1980:1005). The definition of dialogue in this study goes further to include any form of challenge, critique or confrontation by the Church, which engages the State to positively respond to the Church's concerns on behalf of the people.

² I am using the Catholic Church in order to give the research a particular focus but the study aims to pose a challenge to the dialogical method of the Christian Church in general. The Church, in this context, refers to the Leadership or the Institutional Church and the State also refers to those responsible for making decisions on behalf of the majority of Zimbabwean.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined by more than 43% between 2000 and 2007. About 1.3 million Zimbabweans are in diaspora, 3 million earn their living through informal sector, unemployment is over 80% and the poverty level has doubled since mid-1990s (CCJP 2008: 6-7).

In response to this Zimbabwean crisis Dube (2005) in his book entitled *A socio-political Agenda for the Twenty-first Century Zimbabwean Church* was convinced that the Church has a responsibility to step in, but it (the Church) has failed to engage with the State because the Church ‘does not only lack a socio-political theology, but it has yet to find its own effective way of relating to the State’ (Dube 2005:85). This study focuses on the latter, which is the Church’s lack of a way to relate with the State. This study chooses to focus on the Catholic Church because it is one of the biggest institutions that have played a pivotal role in the history of Zimbabwean politics. Despite having a socio-political theology, the engagement of the Catholic Church with the State, in post-independence, did little to curb the deteriorating Zimbabwean situation.

This study attempts to investigate the possibility of how the Church in Zimbabwe can effectively dialogue with the State in a bid to alleviate the plight of the populace. This study focuses on the dialogue between the Catholic Church and the State in Zimbabwe in the light of Bonhoeffer’s Church-State model and the Empathetic dialogical method³.

This analysis is a self-critique of the Church. It is not so much about the mistakes made by the Zimbabwean government as it is about what I think the Church would have considered in dialoguing with the State. This study is a re-examination of the Church’s method of dialoguing. An Empathetic Dialogical method is significant in assessing the effectiveness of the Church-State dialogue in Zimbabwe.

Since this thesis uses the Empathetic Dialogical method together with a Church-State model which is derived from Bonhoeffer’s writings, I will highlight the relevance of Bonhoeffer and the level in which I will engage with him in this thesis.

³ The study will explain what an Empathetic Dialogical method and further explain Bonhoeffer’s Church-State model in the theoretical framework.

1.1.1) Bonhoeffer's Relevance to this Thesis

Unlike most theologians whose writings can be categorised in a particular theological discipline, Bonhoeffer's writings cannot be categorised because they transcend boundaries and classifications. de Gruchy (2007:7) points out that Bonhoeffer's writings can only be understood when one refers to their Christological thrust. 'For Bonhoeffer, the centre of reality, nature, history, politics, the Church and human life is Jesus Christ. So boundaries of faith and witness are clarified and established as he (Bonhoeffer) reflects on the meaning of Christ within specific context. It is Christ the centre who establishes boundaries' (:7). Bonhoeffer cannot be exhausted by the demands of this thesis but his Christological perspective is irresistibly relevant to the theme of this study. For him (Bonhoeffer), Christ is the centre of everything such that the Church cannot claim to have Christ for he is Christ of all created things. Christ becomes the bearer of the truth not necessarily the Church. In my opinion, Bonhoeffer breaks the belief that the divine revelation and true knowledge of everything can be drawn from the Church since it is a channel through which God transmits his knowledge. Once we assume that the Church has the knowledge, it follows that the State should yield to the demands of the Church in dialogue. It is Bonhoeffer's Christology which has made me use his essay of the Church and State to create a Church-State model which I attribute to him.

The other relevant perspective of Bonhoeffer to this thesis is the context in which he wrote his works. It was during turbulent times of war and his chief aim was to challenge the Church of his time to take into consideration the signs of the time especially the type of faith and Christianity relevant to such times. I am writing within the context of turbulent times in Zimbabwe where I am also challenging the Church to look at the signs of times for a conducive dialogue with the state. Considering Bonhoeffer's view of the Nazis, I do not think he would have tolerated the State of Zimbabwe as a legitimate partner for dialogue, especially when we reflect on the rule of Mugabe. On the other hand Bonhoeffer's challenge of the Church's character as

witness of faith as expressed in his *Letters and papers from the Prison*, to a larger extend, reflects my concern of this paper (Todd 2002: On line).

Bonhoeffer challenges the Church to adopt an existential perspective of faith, a faith informed by our everyday experiences but centred on Christ. This is explained by the way Bonhoeffer called for a *Religionless Christianity*, which means a type of Christianity which is not based on religious *a prior* or metaphysically oriented convictions but one which is ‘historically conditioned and transient form of human self-expression’ (Tinsley 1973:77). Bonhoeffer asserts the religionless Christianity as follows:

It is not with the beyond that we are concerned, but with this world as created and preserved, subjected to laws, reconciled and restored. What is above this world is, in the gospel, intended to exist for this world; I mean that, not in the anthropocentric sense of liberal, mystic pietistic, ethical theology, but in the biblical sense of creation and of the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Tinsley 1973 :80).

Bonhoeffer was convinced that a faith which is relevant to the historical context and wellbeing of humanity is inevitably inclined to challenge all sort of injustices. In his case it was the Nazi war and in my case it is an oppressive Mugabe regime.

Bonhoeffer never proposed a Church-State model, but he wrote an essay on the relation of the Church and State. Bonhoeffer’s writings are not only restricted to the Church and State but he also wrote on other institutions like marriage etc. This thesis will specifically look at what he said concerning the Church and State exclusively. It is also of relevance and importance to recognise that this ‘Bonhoeffer’s Church-State Model’, in this thesis, is neither predominately based on the Ethics of Bonhoeffer nor his historical underpinnings. Even if the model draws its resources from his essay, it does not draw its inspiration from the convictions of Bonhoeffer as a person. The same criterion applies to all the Church-State models which I will use in this essay.

I am positively using the implication of Bonhoeffer’s essay to create a model which would accommodate an empathetic method of dialoguing between the Catholic Church and the State of Zimbabwe. Hence, this model is a modification of Bonhoeffer’s ideas of the relationship of the Church and State in order to suit the objectives of this paper.

1.2) Preliminary Literature Study and Location of Research

In search for relevant literature written on this topic, this study recognised Jimmy Dube's book entitled *A Socio-Political Agenda for the Twenty-First Century Zimbabwean Church* as very relevant because the main thesis of this book is also the main thesis of this study. Both this study and Dube's are trying to suggest ways in which the Church can effectively relate or dialogue with the State in Zimbabwe. The difference between this study and Dube's is that this study uses the Catholic Church as the focus of its analysis while he (Dube) used the Methodist Church as the focus of his analysis. Hence this makes the trajectories of this study and Dube's different.

This preliminary literature review consists of two levels. The first level will introduce the main models necessary in this study namely Bonhoeffer's Church-State model, the Catholic Church-State model and the Empathetic Dialogical method. This level will also give a motivation of why the Church is in a better position to safeguard the necessary needs of the people, as reflected by Moltmann. The second level will introduce the context in which the dialogue will be taking place.

1.2.1) First Level: Brief Introduction of the Models that will be used in this Study

Bonhoeffer's book *Ethics*, in the third section on State and Church, points out that the Church and State are two legitimate institutions which are different in the service which they offer to the same master (Christ) but both are necessary for the wellbeing of the community (1955:332-353). This model gives the State the same significance as the Church towards the welfare of humanity.

Among the Christian Church-State models apart from Bonhoeffer's model, the study concentrated more on the Catholic Church-State model. *The Catholic Encyclopaedia* in the Church-State section under the heading 'The range of Jurisdiction' the Catholic Church explicitly expresses its superiority to the State in as far as the welfare of

human beings is concerned as follows:

The State controls its subjects, in its own natural end, in all things where a higher right does not stop it. A higher right will be a right existent because of an ulterior or a more essential destiny of man (sic) than the purpose of the civil society pursues for him (sic)... The Church has a right to govern its subject wherever found, declaring for them moral rights and wrong, restricting any such use of their rights as might jeopardise their eternal welfare... (Macksey 1912 online).

This encyclopaedia seems very old but the position of the Catholic Church has not fundamentally changed, even after the revolutionary ideas of the Vatican II Council. Chapter two will highlight some ideas from the Vatican II Document which shows that the same old ideas still prevail amongst other changes. What this study attempts to do is to analyse how the Catholic Church understands itself in relation to the State. It also looks at how this understanding hinders the Church-State dialogue. This study further suggests a Church-State model which will facilitate an effective Church-State dialogue.

In the search for a method that will enhance the influence of the dialogue between the Church and the State this study proposes empathy as an important concept in any form of dialogue. This study derives the word *empathy* from its use in pastoral care in which the counsellor has to put him/her in the shoes of the client in order for the counsellor to be able to engage the client into the process of healing. I find empathy helpful in dialogue because it challenges the Church to look at the perspective of the State so that its confrontations are informed by the situation of the State. Empathy does not encourage the Church to sympathise with the State or compromise the truth; it encourages a reasonable challenge which engages the State. The study chooses to use empathy over other options which Dube proposed such as the Church's lack of socio-political imagination (2001: 89) and the Church's over-institutionalisation (:90) because the use of empathy in dialogue has never been extensively explored yet it is central in dialogue in as far as this study is concerned. This study's deliberate choice of a method of dialogue driven by empathy (Empathetic Dialogical Model) is based on the fact that we normally concentrate on the prophetic voice but we rarely comment on its ability to engage and make a positive effect on the recipient.

This study is a self-critical reflection of the method of dialogue used by the Church in its endeavour to relate with the State in Zimbabwe. This study is also written with the

conviction that the Church is in a position of contributing immensely in alleviating the plight of Zimbabwean people especially when one considers its ideal nature as expressed by Moltmann in his book *On Human Dignity* as follows:

[The] Church, Christian congregations, and ecumenical organisation have the clear task and duty of identifying, promoting, and realising human rights. Since they are neither private association nor statutory authorities yet must exist and work in the public eye, those Christian organisations can be expected to be less influenced by self-interest and to be better able to enter the struggle for human rights with less prejudice than other institutions. This is why one can expect from them self-criticism as well as criticism of the egoism of the nation, States, classes, and races (Moltmann1984:20).

1.2.2) Second Level: This Study is Located in the Context of the Studies on Church and Politics in Africa and Zimbabwe

For the Christian Church to be able to dialogue with the State it also has to understand the complications associated with the nature, structure and characters in politics. Isaac Phiri in his book *Proclaiming Political Pluralism: Churches and Political Transition in Africa*, tries to show that our zeal as Church people to advocate for justice is not enough until we confront the reality of politics. He did this by showing how Bishop Muzorewa failed when he tried to mix his ecclesiastical duties with political leadership (Phiri 2001:86). In the same line of thought, Bonino (1983) expresses that ‘political experience has been a school of humility, teaching Christians to be humble: humble about themselves and the claims of their faith, and humble also about the possibilities and claims of politics’ (:8)

In order to highlight the complication of the political situation in Zimbabwe, Jimmy G Dube in his book *A Social-Political Agenda for the Twentieth-First century Zimbabwean Church* highlights the effects of colonialism on Africa as a contributing factor towards the existence of dictatorship.

He expressed this fact as follows reflecting from the research made by Bill Berkeley:

African political leadership tends to be oppressive to their own people because of a century-long legacy of colonial tyranny whereby the majority were dominated by the minority in a system of “race based tyranny which relied upon institutionalised mechanism of coercion and co-optation that were inherently divisive” (Dube 2006:81).

The above statement is not meant to use colonialism as an excuse but to lay some important groundwork for the Christian Church to consider towards a conducive dialogue with the State. When dealing with a dictator, an in-depth analysis of both personal and structural faults are necessary. Dube (2006:77) is convinced that the root of African crises can be traced from global domination by the West to the irresponsibility and greediness of the African leaders.

Concerning the draconian rule of Mugabe, Dube pointed out that the Church in Zimbabwe did little to challenge the regime because it lacked 'political acts of theological imagination' (Dube 2006:86). The involvement of the Church was sporadic instead of a consistent and systematic response to socio-political problem (:87) save for the Catholic Church. According to this study's observation, even if the Catholic Church's Justice and Peace Commission's presence was felt, no significant changes were witnessed. The purpose of this study is to examine why this socio-political arm of the Catholic Church was less effective.

Peter Kanyandao in his article *Democracy in Africa: Challenge for the State and the Church* also expressed the fact that when dealing with the State, the Church should always remember that:

The misuse of power in Africa today, associated with nepotism and corruption, are not natural traits of Africans, as has been sometimes insinuated, with the suggestion that Africa is not capable of regulating its own affairs...The issues relating to undemocratic rule that was about to end, associated with colonialism and imperialism, and compensation for the looting of natural resources from colonies, were never discussed as issues to be addressed along with political independence and written constitutions. It is no wonder that many African leaders just took over and continued with systems of government which were not essentially intended for the good of the poor- a total contradiction of what democracy is (2007:86)

Denying that some African leaders have been a disaster, on one hand is unrealistic and on the other hand blaming the failure of some leaders, without critically analysing some structural factors, is also inadequate. This study tries to establish a dialogical method which sees the colonial effects as well as the irresponsibility of the leaders as contributing factors to the present chaos both in Zimbabwe and Africa.

1.3) Research Problem and Objectives

1.3.1) Research Problem

How effective can be the use of Bonhoeffer's Church-State model and the Empathetic Dialogical method in promoting fruitful Church-State Dialogue in Zimbabwe?

In order to answer this question, the following additional questions must be explained

- Which approach did the Catholic Church use in its dialogue with the State?
- What are the positive and negative contributions of this approach?
- What contribution could an Empathetic Dialogical Method and Bonhoeffer's Church-State model make in the Church-State dialogue in Zimbabwe?

1.3.2) Objectives

- Assess the approach used by the Catholic Church in its dialogue with the State.
- Identify the positive and negative contributions of this approach.
- Analyse the contributions that an Empathetic Dialogical Method and Bonhoeffer's Church-state model could make towards an effective Church-State dialogue in Zimbabwe.

1.4) Theoretical Framework

This thesis uses a Church-State model attributed to Bonhoeffer and the Empathetic Dialogical method as the theoretical framework because they enrich the Church to be able to successfully challenge and engage with oppressive governments. This study has confidence in the Church's prophetic role but it also understands its limitations and ineffective dimensions. This section presents Bonhoeffer's Church-State model and the Empathetic Dialogical method.

1.4.1) Bonhoeffer's Church-State Model

Bonhoeffer's book *Ethics*, in the third section on 'State and Church', states that the Church and State are two legitimate institutions which are different in their services but are servants of the same master⁴ and are both necessary for the wellbeing of the community (1955:332-353). It is important to highlight what was behind Bonhoeffer's mind when he thought of both the Church and the State as important institution of the same value under the same Lord while he is coming from a tradition which sees the purpose and value of the Church as higher than that of the State. To understand Bonhoeffer we have to listen to what he had to say about his understanding of Christian ethics. This is a quotation which is on the website *Philpaper.org* which presented a summary of Bonhoeffer's book, *Ethics* by referring to Bonhoeffer's understanding of the Church, Jesus and the World is as follows:

The Christian does not live in a vacuum but in a world of Government, politics, labour and marriage. Hence Christian ethics cannot exist in a vacuum. What the Christian needs is concrete instruction in a concrete situation. The roots and background of Christian ethics is the reality of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. This reality is not manifest in the Church as distinct from the secular world such a juxtaposition of two separate sphere is a denial of God's having reconciled the whole world to himself in Christ. On the contrary, Gods' commandment is to be found and known in the Church, the family, labour and government (Bonhoeffer 1955).

Bonhoeffer tries to show that God is manifest in the world just as he manifests himself in the Church, the Church cannot claim to have the truth which is not in the world but what the Church can do is to help the State realise the truth which it possesses.

As the study used this model it also presupposed two ethical implications. The first one is related to the nature of the Church-State relationship and the second underlies the fundamental value upon which this model is dependent. The latter implication is that the fundamental value which underlies the effort of the Church to dialogue, challenge and even criticise the State is the protection of the dignity of humanity. Humanity in this case refers to the ordinary Zimbabweans who need a prophetic voice to speak on their behalf. In this case, the plight of Zimbabwean people becomes the

⁴ The master is Jesus Christ according to Bonhoeffer.

basis upon which the ethics of the State-Church relationship is evaluated. The former is expressed by Bonino (1983:17) in his book *Towards a Christian Political Ethics* which calls for the need of a Christian Political Ethics which will avoid the politicisation of Christianity⁵.

1.4.2) Empathetic Dialogical Method

Lartey (1997) in his book *In Living Colours* refers to empathy as an important characteristic or skill of pastoral counselling. Empathy is important in this respect because it is a skill which enables the counsellor to imagine what it is like to be in the position of the counselee, this understanding is important for the counsellor to be able to help his/her client through the process of healing which is ultimately the responsibility of the client. Empathy is relevant to this study of the dialogue which involves the Catholic Church and the State in Zimbabwe because it highlights the need for the Church to consider the perspective and the situation of the State before confronting the State. This will help the Church to understand some of the complications or dynamic elements which constitute the political realm and this will consequently make the Church propose a reasonable critique of the State. Being empathetic does not imply being sympathetic or being prepared to compromise the truth. It implies being able to say the truth which frees both the oppressor and the oppressed. This study chooses to call this method an Empathetic Dialogical Method.

1.5) Research Design and Methodology

This study is a qualitative research, which involved an extensive literature review and analysis. The focus is on relevant library information from published or unpublished material, magazines, newspapers and articles from the internet. My literature search on the subject has been done in the library at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Cluster libraries, internet resources and from the archives/library of the Peace and

⁵ What I mean by ‘avoiding politicisation of Christianity’ is to avoid the danger of making Christianity an object of political expediency instead of a motivating religion for altruism.

Justice Commission in Zimbabwe. This study was done under the auspices of Political/Systematic Theology.

The study is basically an analysis of data from the Church documents which reveals the Church's response to political activities, which mainly consist of the injustices perpetuated by the Zimbabwean leaders. As part of the analysis this study compares the Catholic Church-State model with that of Bonhoeffer and the Empathetic Dialogical method. This comparison is a means to evaluate the effectiveness of the dialogue between the Church and State in Zimbabwe.

1.6) Limitations and Points to Note about this Study

The suggestions of this study are not necessarily meant either to sympathise with Mugabe or to change him, but they are meant to help the Church to dialogue with the Zimbabwean State more effectively possibly after Mugabe. The ultimate aim of the study is to highlight the importance of the Christian Church's contribution to political ethics and it further suggests a way of improving the method of dialogue between the Church and the State.

Since it is a Christian endeavour, the study chooses to use resources from the Catholic Church and those of Lutherans like Bonhoeffer and Moltmann. The combination might seem contradictory on ecclesiastical or doctrinal level but there is unity in their witness to Christian faith. This research has not concentrated on doctrinal differences but more on their common contributions to the mission of God. My concentration on the Empathetic dialogical method as a way of improving the dialogue between the Church and the State does not suggest that this is the only method but it is the one this study prefers because it has never been given serious attention before in the context of Zimbabwe.

1.7) The Structure of the Dissertation

In chapter two I show that Christian Political Ethics is necessary and I further seek to suggest a Church-State model which will better facilitate the dialogue between these two institutions. This chapter is divided into three sections, the first section I deal with the contextual nature of Christian Political Ethics. In the second section I concentrate on the reason why Christian Political Ethics is necessary. In the last and third part I attempt to suggest which Church-State model will better facilitate this relationship. The objective of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the models which I used as analytical tools in the critique of the dialogue between the State and the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe.

Chapter Three offers an analysis of the Empathetic method. Its concentration is on the historical events which constituted the architecture behind our present problems and inconsistencies, which culminated in the failure of many African statesmen. In order for the Church to be able to engage in fruitful dialogue with the State, it has to understand the condition which shaped the present leadership. In this chapter I provide the context of this study. In order to honor the objective of this chapter I start by giving a brief historical background together with a reflection of Zimbabwe under Mugabe; this will introduce the context of the study. The context of Zimbabwe must be understood within the wider context of African colonial history. My focus on the wider colonial history of Africa serves to show that the crisis in Africa is inseparable to some elements of the crisis in Zimbabwe. Under the African history I look at the rationale of colonialism and how colonialism is intimately connected to existing democratic governmental models. In the concluding part of this chapter I concentrate on the psychological effects of colonialism using the perspective of Paulo Freire.

In chapter Four I seek to analyse the dialogical method used by the Catholic Church in its dealing with the State. In order to highlight some dialogical efforts made by the Catholic Church, I present the Pastoral letters which were written by the Catholic Bishops' Conference in Zimbabwe responding to the crisis in the country. In order to

show that these letters are not just based on mere biblical speculation, I highlight some salient points about the Justice and Peace Commission which is the watchdog of the Bishops' Conference and serves as the social analytical arm of the Catholic Church. In this chapter I identify two non-Empathetic dialogical trajectories associated with the Catholic Church which I analyse in the fifth chapter.

In chapter Five I start by examining the non-empathetic trajectory of the Catholic Church's dialogue, which is characterised by a prescriptive and non-consultative conviction, in the light of the nature of the Catholic Church. In the last part of this chapter I look at the other non-empathetic trajectory of the Catholic Church which is characterised by its propensity to compromise with Mugabe due to its failure to speak with one voice. This will be done by examining the Zimbabwean tribal conflict.

In Chapter Six I conclude the study and offer a recommendation.

Chapter Two

The Necessity of Christian Political Ethics in the Light of Bonhoeffer's Church-State Model and the Empathetic Dialogical Method

2.0) Introduction

This study is fundamentally a critical analysis of the dialogue, which underlies the relationship between the Christian Church and the Zimbabwean State. The important question to ask is, why is it necessary for the Church to dialogue with the State. The question of the necessity of the dialogue between the Church and the State was answered by Bonhoeffer when he pointed out that the 'government and Church are bound by the same Lord. In their task government and Church are separate, but government and Church have the same field of action, man (sic)' (Bonhoeffer 1955:351). Verstraelen further affirmed what Bonhoeffer said by pointing out that the 'relations between Church and State are inevitable since both have to deal with the same people within a given society' (1998:45). A speech given by Robert Mugabe in 1982 to the Commission of Justice and Peace in Gweru also explains why the Church should dialogue with the State as follows:

...We are partners in the development of our country. The person whom we are dealing with as politician is the same one who is a Christian as well. It means we are dealing with the same person. And politicians and the Church are dealing with the same man (sic). Therefore we are partners also in the development of the country. And therefore let us join hands to consolidate our hard won independence (Mutume 1991:146-147).

Apart from the intentions which Mugabe might have had at the moment he gave the speech, what is important here is that what he said reflects the basis of why I am convinced that the Church and the State should work together. I do not deny that there might be other reasons which might stimulate dialogue between the Church and the State but this study chooses the humanistic aspect. This humanistic perspective, which is inspired by the plight of the Zimbabwean people, is central to the Church-State dialogue. This study's objectives point to the fact that the Church and the State are supposedly meant to serve the people, in this sense, their relationship will be regulated by the service they render to the people. In other words, the needs of the people will determine the nature of this relationship.

If the Church-State relation is necessary because of humanity⁶ then the involvement of the Institutional Church in the matters is inspired by the people's conditions, especially in the moments when the State fails the people. When the Church engages in dialogue with the State, which is political in nature this engagement should be informed by a particular ethics. It is in this sense that I call for Christian political ethics, in which the Christian Church relates with political structures. It is important to note that the political ethics in this study do not necessarily refer to the traditional understanding of political ethics which was associated with either the Catholic Church or Calvinism

In this chapter I seek to show that Christian Political Ethics is necessary. I further seek to suggest a Church-State model which will better facilitate the dialogue between these two institutions. I have divided this chapter into three sections: the first section will deal with the nature of Christian Political Ethics relevant to this study; the second section will concentrate on the reason why Christian Political Ethics is necessary; the third and last part will attempt to suggest which Church-State model will better facilitate this relationship. The objective of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the models which will be used as analytical tools in the critique of the dialogue between the State and the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe.

2.1) What is the Nature of Christian Political Ethics Relevant to this Study?

This study is inspired by the humanistic aspect, so the definition of Christian Political Ethics should be understood as people centred. Since the phrase Christian Political Ethics consists of three components namely Christianity, Politics and Ethics this study will define it according to its components and relevance to this study. Defining Christian Political Ethics according to its components is helpful because it clarifies how these components are going to relate to the study in question.

⁶ By humanity I mean specifically the Zimbabwe people

2.1.1) What is Christianity within the Context of this Study?

Ethically, Christianity is a religion followed by individuals who attempt to make Jesus Christ of Nazareth the model of their lives. This modelling of their lives on Jesus shapes and defines their lifestyle at a deeper level; and this level is not just ideologically inspired but genuinely touches both their faith and spiritual lives. For Christians, Jesus is not just a great prophet but God who became human. This understanding of God presupposes that God cannot be understood as exclusively spiritual, but God is also understood within history. Hence our spiritual lives as Christians are not complete unless they are expressed in our existential circumstances. The understanding of spiritual lives as concrete is consolidated by the way Jesus lived as a spiritual leader who never compromised with oppressive structures and corrupt leaders (Lk 13:34). Hence, being really spiritual means being committed to non-violent political struggle for freedom. In a *Sunday Independent* newspaper article of 4th July 2010 entitled ‘Thank God for politicians Like Dandala’⁷ the writer pointed out that ‘...black clergy (in South Africa) became political precisely because they were Christian’ (Ndletyana 2010: 13). This understanding implies that being Christian means non-conformity with injustice and oppressive structures. To further express more about the nature of Christianity relevant to this study I will highlight some convictions of Gustavo Gutierrez and Jon Sobrino in brief.

The Latin American theologians of liberation are known for having criticised all theologies which spiritualised the gospel and ignored its historical dimension. Jon Sobrino argued that ‘his main aim is to discover the historical roots of this renascence of the reality of the spiritual life- the historical roots of its concrete shape in our Christian and human lives today’ (Sobrino 1985:2). He further continued that:

We in Central America are witnessing a reemphasis of the indispensability of incarnation in the reality of our country. There is a new emphasis on the importance of incarnation not merely in our culture, but in our society as well, where we have a clearer picture today of the misery, oppression, injustice, and repression to which the Central American majority are subjected. This incarnation placed Christians and religious in more or less immediate contact with the poor, and- *mirabile dictum*- the

⁷Mvume Dandala is a former Methodist Bishop who gave up his ecclesiastical duty in 2007 as a Bishop to become a political leader. He has since resigned from politics and returned to the Church.

poor were transformed into the locus, the place, of the Christian life. (Sobrino 1985:2).

In this sense, the spiritual life of the Christians is foundational to their witnessing in an unjust world. Gutierrez, in his book *A Theology of Liberation*, also affirmed the concreteness of Christian spirituality by saying:

A spirituality is a concrete manner, inspired by the Spirit, of the gospel; it is a definite way of living “before the Lord”, in solidarity with all men (sic), “with the lord”, and before men (sic). It arises from an intense spiritual experience, which is later explicated and witnessed to (Gutierrez 1973:204).

An understanding of Christianity as expressed by Sobrino and Gutierrez will be central to this study because it highlights the priorities of the Christian Church relevant to this study.

2.1.2) What is Politics within the Context of this Study

Politics is a process by which a group of people make collective decision. The term is generally applied to behaviour within civil governments, but politics can be witnessed in other group interactions including the corporate, the academic or the religious (Palgrave 2010 online). Paul Chummar (2009:20) further affirms the above definition by adding that politics can be understood from the perspective of politicians, those with power to decide through governmental structures and institutions or from the perspective of those who are governed. Following Chummar’s position it should be noted that the ability to make decisions affirms the centrality of power and authority in understanding politics. It follows then that those with political power can decide which direction an organisation or State should take. In this study the term ‘politics’ refers to institutions and people with power and authority, in government, who decide upon the use and distribution of the country’s resources. Since I have briefly defined politics now for this study, I will go on to look at why politics should be the focus of the Church in this study.

The study will use the views of Gutierrez⁸, who is convinced that political structures should be the central focus of the Church if it is opting for a personal commitment to liberation, because politics is a dimension that embraces and conditions almost every area of human life and activity. He further went on to say that politics is the comprehensive conditioning factor for humans and the collective battleground in the struggle for human fulfilment (Gutierrez 1979:10). He continues to say that the political dimension is central to every human activity. 'To talk about the political dimension is not to disregard the multidimensional nature of human beings but rather to take it into account. It is to reject all narrow specialization that is socially unfruitful precisely because it distracts our attention from the concrete conditions in which human life unfolds' (:10).

The best way to help people in bondage by any form of dictatorship is to challenge the system which runs and controls the social dynamics in a society, this system is none other than the political system.

2.1.3) What is Ethics within the Context of the Study

Thiroux describes Ethics as 'the area of morality, which concentrates on human conduct and human values' (1977:2). The ethics of the Institutional Church should be anchored on human value and dignity. A church whose head is Christ should express its faith through the people which it serves; this is expressed in James 2:14-26. James' argument is that faith without works is dead. What James expresses is biblical and also the basis of general goodness. This is the challenge which this study poses to the Church. To support the fact that our service to our neighbours underlies the authenticity of our faith let us look at the words of Antonio Perez-Esclarin who says:

If a religion does not begin by undermining the bases of an unjust system, then it can not claim any connection with the biblical concept of religion. For, as the prophet and Jesus made clear, the bible sees religion as the concrete practice of justice. Authentic acceptance of God means accepting a God who impels people to construct a more humane and fraternal world and to eradicate every trace of oppression. If one worships a God who does not do that, then one is worshipping a false god, an Idol (1980:2).

⁸ This quotation is from an article entitled 'Liberation Praxis and Christian Faith' by Gutierrez from a book *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America* which was edited by Gibellini.

This study is based on a humanistic ethics or an ethics of service. Hence, the preservation of human dignity should be foundational to the values of the Church. If the State fails the people then the Church engages with or challenges the State for the sake of the people. In other words, the fundamental value which underlies the effort of the Church to dialogue, challenge and even criticise the State is the protection of the dignity of humanity. In this case humanity becomes the basis upon which the ethics of the State-Church relationship is evaluated.

It is necessary to reflect on Wassmer's binary distinction of the nature of ethics. According to Wassmer, ethics can be understood in two ways: Ethics of conviction and Ethics of responsibility. The former refers to an ethic whose ultimate concern is based on principles but is more or less indifferent to consequences (Wassmer 1969: 2-3), while the latter, is an ethic regulated by the prevailing situation (:2). This Study encourages the Church to ensure that its convictions are informed by the situation which challenges the being of the State. Such an attitude makes the convictions of the Church strong because they will be informed by reality. It is in this sense that these two types of ethical operations⁹ will be working in a dialectical tension according to Wassmer (1969:2-6). Considering the perspective of the 'other' (the State) in dialogue enriches the Church's evaluative judgement when dialoguing with the State. In this sense, the Church's principles become relevant to the other party because they are informed by the situation of the one with whom it is in dialogue. Wassmer's Ethic of conviction and of responsibility reflects what Bonhoeffer said concerning the dialectical tension between ethical discourse and the concrete situation in which they are applied as follows:

...ethical discourse is subject to concrete limitations. Ethical discourse cannot be conducted in a vacuum, in abstract, but only in a concrete context. Ethical discourse, therefore, is not a system of propositions which are correct in themselves, a system which is available for anyone to apply at any time in any place, but it is inseparably linked with particular person, time and places (Bonhoeffer 1955:271).

After having explained the components of Christian political Ethics relevant to the study, I have come to realise that the relation of the Church with the State makes the Church a *Political Church*. Being a Political Church does not mean a politicisation of the Church or that Church becomes a constituent of a political structure; 'on the

⁹ The two types of ethical operations are the ethic of Conviction and ethic of responsibility.

contrary, it means a Christianization of the Church's politics according to the yard stick and plumbline of Christ' (Moltmann 1977:15). Now that I have explained the relevance and contextual meaning of Christian political ethics, the next stage is to determine whether this type of ethics is necessary.

2.2) Is Christian Political Ethics Necessary?

Political institutions have their own ethics which regulate and prescribe certain conduct which office bearers have to follow. Smith in his article 'What are Political Ethics' defined Political Ethics as 'a set of codes of behaviour pertaining to political activities' (Smith 2003: on line). In democratic societies these codes of behaviour regulate the conduct of political leaders or institutions so that they will effectively serve the people who elected them. In principle this ethics decides whether political leaders should be re-elected or not. The main objective of Political Ethics is to reduce abuses in governmental systems. Is another ethics necessary when there is an existing one, which serves more or less the same purpose? Is Christian Political Ethics an unnecessary duplication of what exists already?

One of the main reasons this study proposes the need of Christian Political Ethics is that the politicians like Presidents or Prime Ministers are guardians of Political Ethics which is supposed to make them accountable. One of the most controversial moments in Zimbabwe occurred 2000 when the people of the Zimbabwe rejected the constitution which was proposed by the government because it gave a lot of power to the President making him less accountable to the people. Once the President has the power to decide on almost every issue, then Political Ethics becomes subject to the Zimbabwean President. In other words, he becomes the deciding voice of what is permissible and what is not. In such a situation there is a need for an independent body, not subject to political powers, which helps to make sure that political leaderships do not take advantage of their position to manipulate the people. Among many organisations in Zimbabwe which exist as a watchdog to make sure that the government does not compromise its ethics by misusing its power to the detriment of the people, is the Church. What makes the Church an authentic candidate among others is its nature as an institution.

Another reason why there is a need for an independent body like the Church to monitor the activities of the State is that there are 'many gods' in politics which a politician needs to pay allegiance to. Politicians have obligations not only to the people who elected them but also to the parties which support them in order to acquire political leadership and maintain power. Most politicians find themselves divided between their party obligations and their vocation to serve the people, and in most cases the former takes precedence at the detriment of the latter. The position which politicians find themselves in renders them not competent to be custodians of political ethics to which they are supposed to be accountable.

There is no doubt that there are other independent bodies which can monitor the State's activities but why is the Church the best candidate? Moltmann gives us some of the qualities of the Church which make it most preferable over other organisations. He points out that the Church's nature as neutral and self-critical puts it in an unbiased position to serve as follows:

[The] Church, Christian congregations, and ecumenical organisation have the clear task and duty of identifying, promoting, and realising human rights. Since they are neither private association nor statutory authorities yet must exist and work in the public eye, those Christian organisations can be expected to be less influenced by selfishness and to be better able to enter the struggle for human rights with less prejudice than other institutions. This is why one can expect from them self-criticism as well as criticism of the egoism of the nation, States, classes, and races (Moltmann 1984:20).

The description of the Church given by Moltmann might be ideally what the Church should be, but this description is never closer to any other organisation than the Church. The nature of the Church and the dilemma which political institutions encounter makes Christian Political Ethics necessary. If Christian Political Ethics is necessary, then what type of Church-State model will suffice to express the most useful and beneficial dialogue or channel of communication between the Church and the State?

2.3) Which State-Church Model will present an Effective Dialogue between the Church and the State?

I will use four Church-State models. Calvin's Church-State model will present a model which tried to unite both the Church and the State, Luther's model tried to do the very opposite of Calvin, for it tried to distinguish the Church and the State. The Catholic Church tries to respect the separation of the Church and the State but exalt its position by claiming to have a higher goal for humanity than the State. Bonhoeffer developed his Church-State model from Luther but introduces a model which recognises that both the State and the Church operate under the same law and are at the service of Christ. The Empathetic dialogical model supports Bonhoeffer's model and critiques other Church-State models for failing to appreciate the importance of the secular government as equally essential as the Church.

2.3.1) Luther's Church-State Model

Benino (1983:23) tries to locate Luther's theory of the two kingdoms from the document *Luther's Works*. The model is under the heading 'Temporal Authority: To what extent should it be obeyed?' This work was written by Luther around 1523. Luther divided humanity into two kingdoms, one of God under Christ and the other which is not of God. The latter's influence extends only to the body and the former deals with genuine/real matters of the soul. In other words, Luther restricted the task of the Church to the spiritual and inner realm and the outside or physical realm to the secular world. He regarded both the spiritual powers and the secular world as God's ways of exercising his rule. The task of political authority in the kingdom of the world, that is among those humans who are fallen victims to sin and the devil, is to seek to establish external peace and justice, to hold the effect of sin in check. The 'government is to punish the criminal and to safeguard life. Thus a reason is provided for the existence of government both as a coercive power and as the protector of outward justice' (Bonhoeffer 1955:335). The political authority has nothing to do with

the inward life of human beings and conviction. The political order has nothing to do with human destiny; it is nothing more than an emergency measure which God provided against sin. In essence, a Christian sees the political order as necessary, but inferior, to the Church's mission.

Pannenberg (1977:127) argues that Luther's doctrine cannot be regarded 'as the final and decisive word for a Christian theory of Politics (because) the synthesis of Christian tradition of political theology which Luther's theory presents is too one sided'. He further said 'Luther did not do justice to the positive relationship between the hope for the kingdom of God and the themes of political life, but instead regarded the latter as only an emergency against sin' (Pannenberg 1977:129).

2.3.2) Calvin's Church-State Model

Calvin on the contrary introduced a 'Christian polity'. The original version of the writings on Christian polity is found in Calvin's major work *Institution of the Christian Religion*. In this work Calvin 'taught unquestionable obedience to secular authority whose duty it was to safeguard external manifestation of righteousness while true, i.e. internal, religion was left in the hands of the Church' (McLellan 1997:46). In Calvin's later life he realised that 'the relation of civil to spiritual authority as potentially one of close co-operation' (:46-47). As a result of this realisation, the State and the Church were closely aligned. This theocracy, according to McLellan, subordinated the State to the Church in such a way that both secular and ecclesiastical representatives derived their authority from God and their close co-operation was consequently meant to build the kingdom of God.

During Calvin's time the Church practically controlled the State by imposing its principles as the only ones possible to run a nation. In this sense the State becomes a department within the Church structure and its autonomy is neutralised into a means to the Church's end. The difference between Luther's model and that of the Calvin is that the former separated the State from the Church and regarded the State as necessary due to the prevalence of sin, while the latter used the State as an instrument necessary to act as a means to satisfy the ends of the Church. Both models

hierarchically subordinated the State to the Church, making the Church more accessible to the divine than the State.

2.3.3) Catholic Church-State Model

For the State-Church model of the Catholic Church, the study will use the Catholic Encyclopaedia online and a Vatican II Document. The problem associated with the latter source is that it does not look at the Church and Politics as such but it looks at the Church and Society in relation to religious freedom. *The Catholic Encyclopaedia* introduces the relationship of the Church and State as follows:

The Church and the State are both perfect societies, that is to say, each essentially aiming at a common good commensurate with the need of mankind (sic) at large and ultimate in a generic kind of life, and each juridically competent to provide all the necessary and sufficient means thereto. The State is ethically demonstrated to be such, and the Church has a like demonstration from the theology of Christian Revelation. By reason of coexistence on the earth, community of subjects, and a need in common of some of the same means of activity, it is inevitable that they should have mutual relations in the juridical order (Macksey 1912 online).

The above quotation presents the Church and the State as equal partners but as we go further we realise that the relationship is not as mutual as it appears. The Catholic Church, explicitly; expresses its superiority to the State in as far as the welfare of human beings is concerned as expressed in section 1.2.1. Once the Church is convinced that it has a higher role in the welfare of the people, it inevitably assumes that it knows the needs of humanity better than the State. In this sense, the State should listen to the wisdom of the Church. Such hierarchical dualism is not healthy for dialogue because it presupposes that the less informed should listen to the more informed. Due to the Church's conception of itself as superior in terms of the welfare of the people the Catholic Church further asserts its right for religious freedom in the Vatican II Document as follows:

..., the private and public acts of religion by which men (sic) direct themselves to God according to their convictions transcends of their very nature the earthly and temporal order of things. Therefore the civil authority, the purpose of which is the care of the common good in the temporal order, must recognize and look with favour on the religious life of the citizens. But if it presumes to control or restrict religious activities it must be said to have exceeded the limits of its power (Flannery 1975:705).

What the study recognises in this position is that the Church seems to decide for the State. The convictions of the Catholic Church are debatable because they are based on its assumption that it possesses the truth and it therefore has the mandate to speak on behalf of God. What is important here is not the authenticity of the Catholic divine truth but whether this truth is convincing to the secular mind, and if dialogue is to take place, the Church has to take cognisance of the perspective of the other party.

The way the Church-State model of Bonhoeffer presents itself, it seems more likely to readdress or reverse the previous model's perspectives. Bonhoeffer's model seems to make the Christian Church reconsider the extent to which Jesus works through the Church and the State. The suggestion which Bonhoeffer's model gives is not meant to make the Church secular or to spiritualise the State but to see to it that these two institutions (Church and State) serve Christ. As a way of reconciling Luther, Calvin and the Catholic models, I now turn to the model of Bonhoeffer, which is consolidated by the Empathetic Dialogical Model.

2.3.4) Bonhoeffer's Analysis of other Church-State Models

Before Bonhoeffer gives his understanding of the Church-State relation, he begins by analysing the weaknesses of other Church-State models. The first model which he analyses is the Catholic model. He recognised that the Catholic Church adopted the idea of the State from the Greek understanding¹⁰ of the State, in which it was 'a product of human nature' (Bonhoeffer 1955:333). In this sense the ability of human beings to live in a society is derived from creation, so is the relationship of the rulers and the ruled. 'The state fulfils the assigned purpose of the human character within the sphere of the natural and creaturely. The State is the highest development of the natural society' (:333). The Catholic Church leaves the understanding of the State at this level that is why it is not surprising that it saw the purpose of the Church as higher. The Church's purpose is higher because it goes beyond the temporal world. In this sense the Church is a divine institution and the State is a secular institution. The

¹⁰ The Greek understanding of the State by the Catholic Church is derived from Aristotle and is passed down to the Catholic Church through Thomas Aquinas who converted Aristotelian philosophy into Christian philosophy. The Catholic Church recognises most of the Aristotelian-Thomistic writings into its official teaching up to this day.

Catholic Church sees the State as a product of the nature of creatures, so is the authority of the government. For Bonhoeffer, the State is not just the fulfilment of the rational character of humanity but it is the creative will of God in the people. In as much as Jesus is of the Church he is also of the State because he created both the State and the Church to serve one Lord. Bonhoeffer derived the relationship of the Church and the State from Luther but denied the different conditions relating to sin which Luther gave to these institutions.

His second critique is on the Lutheran Model out of which he developed his model. Bonhoeffer states that the reformer took the State not as a community arising from the created nature of humanity, but on the origin of the fall (Bonhoeffer 1955:335). It is sin which made it necessary for the divine institution of government. In this sense the reformer did not understand the State from below, in which humanity was the agent of its being, but from above which is the divine view point. Bonhoeffer uses Col 1:16 which says, it is in Jesus Christ that all things exist. 'Government like all the created things consists only in Jesus Christ; in other words it is only in Him that it has its essence' (Bonhoeffer 1955:337).

2.3.5) Bonhoeffer's Church-State Model

What is the State and how does it relate to the Church according to Bonhoeffer? 'In its being government is given to us not as an idea or task to be fulfilled but as a reality and as something which *is*' (Bonhoeffer 1955:339). Government is divine in its being. Those who serve the government are just its representatives. Ethical failure of the government cannot be attributed to its being but to the weakness of its representatives (:339). The government is meant to fulfil a task, which is serving Christ on earth. The source of knowledge which it uses to serve is derived from the preaching of the Church or from natural law, whose source is the creator of nature (:341). The nature of the service rendered by the government is to praise and protect righteousness. Service defines the essence of the government and its claims are divine because they proceed from Christ. Obedience to the government can be denied if its representatives fail to follow the office (:342). For instance, the failure of Mugabe as a representative of the government can never be attributed to the failure of the government as a divine

institution. We can never presume to deny the idea of government because its officials fail to live up to its standards.

The Church cannot monopolise the concept of divinity for itself as witnessed in the Catholic model. The government is linked to the Church only if it fulfils its mission as prescribed by Christ. Neither the government nor the Church should dominate each other. The Church preaches and testifies that Jesus is master of both the Church and the government. The relationship of the government to the Church helps the Christian to serve in the world. The government does not necessarily have to be a 'Christian polity' as in the case of Calvin, but a true government exists according to the divine task allocated to it by Christ (Bonhoeffer 1995:347). For the sake of their master, the government and the Church should acknowledge each other, but remain independent institutions. In summary:

Government and State are bound by the same Lord (though separated) by their tasks ...have the same field of action, man (sic). No single one of this relationship must be isolated so as to provide the basis for a particular constitutional form (for example in the sequence state church, free church, national church); the true aim is to provide room within every given form for the relationship which is, in fact, instituted by God and to entrust the further development to the lord of both government and Church (Bonhoeffer 1955:351-352).

The next section concentrates on the nature of Bonhoeffer's model and how this model facilitates or accommodates the Empathetic dialogical method.

2.3.6) The Empathetic Dialogical Method and Bonhoeffer's Church-State Model

Bonhoeffer exposed the weaknesses of other Church-State models because they tended to look down on the State as a means to the goals of the Church. Luther regarded the State as an emergency for a sinful world; the Catholic Church sees the State as only responsible for the temporal needs of humanity. Calvin decided to make the Church control the State by uniting these two institutions. In response Bonhoeffer stated that the State is just as divinely commissioned as the Church and its contribution to the wellbeing of the people is just as worthwhile as that of the Church. The State cannot be judged on the basis of the office bearers but on the basis of the sacredness of the office itself. In response to Calvin, Bonhoeffer opposed the idea of

uniting or dissolving the State into the Church as undermining the God who created these two institutions to serve humanity on different complimentary levels. The State and the Church are independent institutions which serve the same master and his people. In response to Luther, Bonhoeffer seems to say that there is only one law which applies to both the Church and the State. Bonhoeffer is trying to put both the State and the Church on the same level making Jesus the master who decides for both institutions (Bonhoeffer 1955:351). The Church is no longer the ultimate decider but the Lord. It is no longer the Church which rules the State but Jesus Christ.

Equal partners in dialogue tend to respect the other's perspective and dialogue is normally based on understanding the other's position or perspective before challenging or critiquing him/her. In this study I chose to use Bonhoeffer's Church-State model because it brings the Church and government/State on *par* with each other and makes them instruments of service to the people on behalf of Christ who is the master of both institutions. Being an instrument of service means that if the State fails the people the Church has an obligation to challenge the State; but before challenging the State, the Church should empathetically evaluate the possible factors which might have caused this failure.

A method of dialogue in which the perspective of the 'other' is empathetically discerned before a prophetic confrontation is what this study calls the Empathetic Dialogical method. As defined in chapter one, it essentially means taking time to be in the shoes of the person or institution which you want to help, challenge or critique. The understanding of the relationship of Church and State of Bonhoeffer creates a conducive ground for an Empathetic dialogue between the Church and State in Zimbabwe. Empathy will help the Church to understand some of the complications or dynamic elements which constitute the political realm and this will consequently make the Church propose a reasonable critique or challenge whose demands are attainable and realistic.

2.4) Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to show that Church-State relations are of mutual necessity and that the involvement of the Church in the State matters must be inspired

by the people's conditions, especially in the moments when the State fails the people. This involvement by the Church is regulated by certain values or a mode of ethics which preserve the dignity of humanity. When the Church engages in dialogue with the State this engagement should be informed by a particular ethics. This relationship, in which the Christian Church relates with political structure, is called Christian Political Ethics. The study concluded this chapter by suggesting a relevant Church-State model which will effectively facilitate the dialogue between the church and the state.

In this chapter, I gave a skeletal presentation of the argument relevant to this study and generally introduced its conceptual analysis. In the next chapter I begin with a contextual analysis that attempts, to address what the Church should first understand in order to successfully dialogue with the State. This is a presentation of the structural, psychological and ideological complexity of the State apparatus which should inform the theological reflection of the Church before it engages in dialogue with government.

Chapter Three

An Empathetic Perspective: A Psycho-political Structural Analysis of the Zimbabwean Government and African Governments and Leadership in General

3.0) Introduction

It might be too late to think of engaging in dialogue with Mugabe, especially when we consider his age and his defiance towards suggestions which might help to reconstruct Zimbabwe. However, this study highlights the failure of the Church to engage in its dialogue with Mugabe. I also present a challenge to the Church to evaluate its dialogical method with the hope that this evaluation will, in future, help the Church to facilitate effective dialogues with the State, possibly after the Mugabe era of governance.

In this chapter I intentionally focus on the perspective of the State. I present another perspective and context which the Church needs to discern when dialoguing with the State. It is an enquiry into the desires of nationalist leaders and the difficulties they faced. This is not an excuse to exonerate or mitigate the African leaders' greediness and selfishness; it is just an enquiry into their positive intensions apart from their greediness. I will make both the colonial history and the present leadership responsible for the current plight of African people in general and Zimbabweans in particular. Furthermore, I diametrically argue with theologians like Mugambi (1995) who are convinced that the phase of liberation for Africa is over and what is needed is reconstruction. However, although there is a need for reconstruction, liberation on the level of the mind is a more urgent need. This type of liberation is necessary to understand the complexity and even the impossibility of reconstruction in the African states.

In order to honor the objective of this chapter I will start by presenting a brief historical background together with a reflection of Zimbabwe under Mugabe; this will introduce the context of the study. My focus on the colonial history of Africa serves to show that the crisis in Africa is inseparable from some elements of the crisis in Zimbabwe. Under the African crisis the study will look at the rationale of colonialism

and how colonialism is intimately connected to existing democratic governmental models. The concluding part of this chapter will concentrate on the psychological effects of colonialism and the analysis will be influenced by Paulo Freire.

3.1) A Brief Historical Outline of Zimbabwe under the Leadership of Mugabe (1980-2000)

There are about five important epochs or periods in the Zimbabwean history namely 1) the Honeymoon, which lasted for about ten year 2) The Matelebeland ‘Genocide’ which happened concurrently with the honeymoon period 3) ESAP¹¹ (an economic recovery programme after the honeymoon period) 4) The Constitutional referendum, which marked the end of Mugabe’s reign and 5) The Land distribution programme, which was used by Mugabe to hold on to his eroding powers.

3.1.1) Honeymoon Period (1980-90)

This phase began when Zimbabwe attained its independence and Mugabe’s party won an overwhelming majority during first Zimbabwean general election. Mugabe, on the eve of the independence of Zimbabwe on 17th April 1980 expressed what type of Zimbabwe he was going to lead:

Our new mind must have a new vision and our new hearts a new love that spurns hate and a new spirit that must unite and not divide. This to me is the human essence that must form the core of our political change and national independence...Is it not folly, therefore, that in these circumstances anybody should seek to revive the wounds and grievances of the past? The wrongs of the past must now stand forgiven and forgotten...If ever we look to the past, let us do so for the lesson the past has taught us, namely that oppression and racism are inequalities that must never again find scope in our political and social system. It could never be a correct justification that because whites oppressed us yesterday when they had power, the blacks must oppress them today because they have power. An evil remains an evil whether practiced by white against black or by black against white. ([Mugabe](#) 1980: online)

This is a very progressive speech of a leader who has experienced a true spirituality of liberation and is prepared to move forward and reconstruct the country. When I read the whole speech I realized that it is carefully drafted such that it encompasses

¹¹ Economic Structural Adjustment Programme proposed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) as an economic recovery strategy for Zimbabwe after the honey moon period.

everyone including those who colonized the country. It expresses gratitude to everyone and promises a future of milk and honey, where both white and black people live in 'eternal' peace. As a result of such a wonderful speech given by an energetic and charismatic leader, the world expected Zimbabwe to be an example of an African state with obvious potential to prosper like any other country in the world.

Peron (2000) highlighted how people expressed hope in Zimbabwe from various walks of life. Among these people was Lord Soames who helped Mugabe negotiate into power a few years earlier, he said he was 'delighted to see how the country had developed into a multiracial and largely harmonious society' (Peron 2000:1). Kaizer Nyatumba, of the *Star* wrote that in South Africa 'some of us recall very clearly the joy and excitement which swept our township following the news of the ascension of Robert Mugabe to power after the democratic election in 1980' (Peron 2000:1). The praise continued until in the 1990s. The most important question is what caused the end of the honeymoon period?

After independence the government adopted Socialism as a blueprint for creating development that would enhance the quality of life of the people but the socialist mentality lasted for only a decade. During the first ten years 'the government undertook policies for the benefit of the Black majority: expansion of education facilities in rural areas, free health services, subsidy of basic consumer goods (mealie meal, milk, cooking oil etc.) and a minimum wage system (Verstrelen 1998:58). These incentives, inspired by a socialist spirit, put strain on the economy by 1990, and the government took up a proposal suggested by IMF¹² and the World Bank called ESAP which was to help the country to recover economically. The study will continue with the effects of ESAP on Zimbabwe after a critique of the Matebeleland 'Genocide' which occurred concurrently with the Honeymoon period.

3.1.2) Matebeleland and Gukurahundi¹³ (1982-1988)

Apart from all the praises and developments in the Honeymoon period, Peron argues that Mugabe had a plan inspired by the ideology of Marxist-Leninist of wanting to

¹² International Monetary Fund

¹³ *Gukurahundi*-means the wind that blows chaff

create a one party state. Zunga (2003) further argues that Mugabe's view, towards the creation of a one party state, was that victory is achieved by overrunning the enemy. This attitude surfaced in 1981 when 'instead of continuing with the reconciliatory approach and fairness, party politics entangled his rule, causing division in Matebeleland' (Zunga 2003:35). A massacre was witnessed in Matabeleland in 1982, and Mugabe is believed to have been responsible because he wanted to silence his main opponent Joshua Nkomo. The occasion for Mugabe to crush the opposition came when:

Some... former ZAPU¹⁴ soldiers took arms, almost certainly supported by South African desires to destabilize Zimbabwe. The action of these 'dissidents' provided the pretext for a major onslaught against not only ZAPU, but people of Matebeleland and the Midlands. The North Korean trained Fifth Brigade of the army conducted a campaign which was code-named *Gukurahundi*, (the wind that blows away chaff). Nkomo went into voluntary exile. After this decimation of the only potential opposition, Mugabe again offered 'reconciliation', and a Unity Accord between ZANU and ZAPU was signed in 1987, creating the present ruling party, ZANU (PF) ¹⁵ (Love and Vezha 2009 :434).

In order to justify his actions, Zunga argues that, Mugabe linked the 'dissidents' to the ZAPU of Nkomo. This constituted the worst massacre of the Ndebele people by Mugabe which was almost tantamount to a genocide in which more than 3000 people died as confirmed by the Peace and Justice report of 1997 entitled *Breaking the silence*.

The election of 1985 was conducted under the siege of the 5th Brigade. Due to this harassment the ZANU (PF) continued to win. In 1987 a unity accord was signed between Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe which saw PF ZAPU submerged into ZANU PF, this was the death of a strong opposition party. After the reconciliation there was no strong opposition until the formation of a political party called Movement of Democratic Change (MDC¹⁶). This party was formed around 1999/2000 by a former Trade Unionist boss Morgan Tsvangirai.

¹⁴ Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), this was a party led by Joshua Nkomo

¹⁵ Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU (PF)), this is the party which is being led Robert Mugabe now.

¹⁶ Movement for Democratic Change was the second main opposition party in Zimbabwe after PF ZAPU since independence.

3.1.3) ESAP (1991) (Economic Structural Adjustment Programme)

Even though Mugabe used violence to pave his way towards the one party state by killing and torturing as reflected by a document by Amani Trust¹⁷ entitled *Torture in Zimbabwe, Past and Present* the economic situation threatened his one party state goal. By 1990 the economy was deteriorating due to excessive spending inspired by the defective economic policies as indicated in the honeymoon period and it is also believed that the honeymoon period presented an opportunity for the ruling elite to enrich themselves.

This is the period when the IMF and the World Bank proposed ESAP as the new economic plan to resuscitate the economic situation of Zimbabwe. Unfortunately,

five years after the introduction of ESAP which was introduced in 1991, under the pressure and lure of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the 'socialist gains' were fading away: educational, health and other fields of social services were steadily eroded while inflation affected mainly the low-income groups (Verstraelen 1998:58).

As a result of the hardship which the majority experienced due to the failure of ESAP by December 1997 to January 1998 'massive demonstration and riots were confirmed against inflation and additional measures taken by governments which increased hardships of people's lives (Verstraelen 1998: 59). It is during the 1990s that the Zimbabwean economic meltdown revealed its symptoms and at the same time the ruling party's popularity with the urban areas was dwindling.

3.1.4) Constitution Referendum (2000)

From 1980 until the time the need of constitutional reform was expressed Zimbabwe used the colonial constitution except for some amendments which were made by the government which gave power and influence to the President and the government (Verstraelen 1998:62). In 1997 an organization called the National Constitutional Assembly was formed (NCA) which spearheaded a need for constitutional change. This organization included churches, human rights organizations, students,

¹⁷ Amani Trust is the only Trust, which has been working with victims of human rights abuses. Its members include Medical doctors, Psychologists and the outspoken archbishop. Like the Justice and Peace it also compiled data on torture and violence in Zimbabwe.

professional women organizations and interested individuals. It was launched in 1998 at the University of Zimbabwe and government declined to attend because it said it had already began the process. Among the objective of this organization was the need to encourage a culture of popular participation in decision making. According to an article by Pottie (2000 online) entitled *Zimbabwe: Constitutional Referendum in Zimbabwe*, the NCA campaigned against a draft constitution, which a commission appointed by the government had drafted because it was not democratic and home grown for it furthered the whims of the ruling party. As a result the people rejected the draft constitution.

Emmanuel Ndlovu in his thesis entitled 'Eucharist and Social Justice in Zimbabwe', using the Amani Trust document as a source commented that:

In 1999 the tension between the Government and the growing constitution reform movement increased rapidly, and ZANU PF tried to seize the initiative by appointing a Government Constitutional Commission. The result was a historic defeat at the poll as the government's proposed constitution, which had been designed to consolidate Mugabe's position, was rejected (Ndlovu 2008:12).

It was in the year 2000 when, for the first time, the people of Zimbabwe showed that they no longer had faith in Mugabe's wish of a one party state by denying the constitutional referendum which gave more power to the President.

3.1.5) The Land and Constitution Reforms (2000)

Venter (2000 on line) in his article entitled *Zimbabwe before and after June 2000 Election* pointed out that the national referendum held on the 12 and 13th of February delivered 'a sharp rebuke' to both Mugabe and The ruling party. The overwhelming majority which voted against the draft constitution were mostly urban dwellers than the rural dwellers. Venter further pointed out that the government moved to a unilateral amendment of the previous constitution in which it added the clause on the land confiscation to proceed so that by the end of 2000 about 157000 families will be resettled. Venter is convinced that Mugabe's fast track was not meant to cater for the needs of the people as it was meant to help him acquire votes from the rural people where he still had some support. This study agrees with Venter that Mugabe was afraid that this election was going to be his first major defeat because the leaders

of the new main opposition party MDC, which he was going to compete against for vote, were the ones who were against the constitution drafted by the government as Trade Unionists. What does this mean? It means all the people who voted against the constitution draft would most probably vote against Mugabe as well. In this sense, using Venter's words, 'the land issue had become his only trump card as he fought for political survival'. Apart from using the Land for votes Mugabe also used force and other manipulative strategies as an assurance of maintain power as reflected by Love and Vezha below.

...the government (of Zimbabwe) made repeated efforts to suppress the democratic opposition, ranging from a trumpet up but lengthy and expensive treason charges against Tsvangirai to frequent anti-opposition violence. An election was held in 2005 which was widely considered to be seriously rigged in favour of the ruling party and was accompanied by anti-opposition violence. The political history of Zimbabwe can perhaps be characterized as a series of waves, in which attempts to promote unity behind Mugabe overcome efforts to form alternative, oppositional structures (Love & Vezha 2009:436)

The formation of MDC party, the outcome of the elections in 2005 and the results of the constitution referendum were a sure sign for Mugabe that his wish of a one party state was nothing but a dream impossible to realize. The intimidation of the opposition and the rigging of election of 2005 were just ways of trying to maintain some dignity, because the outcomes of political events assured him that he was no longer popular and that people were tired of him.

3.2) A Reflection on the Brief History of Zimbabwe under Mugabe as the Basis of the Empathetic Dialogue of the Church with the State.

There are a number of things which the Church needs to note here. It is beyond doubt that Mugabe failed and the Church should hold him responsible for the suffering of the Zimbabwean people. What contributed to his failure is his strong belief in Marxist-Leninist principles which advocated for a one party state as opposed to a multiparty democracy. This is evident by his response to a question which he was asked in an interview on 'Church-State in independent Zimbabwe' about the ZANU PF's policy on Religion, Mugabe urged the Church to look at the doctrine of Marx and Lenin in a new light as follows:

I don't believe that Marxist-Leninism runs counter to the Christian practice, if one emphasizes practice. I think the organization of society on Marxist-Leninist principles is the best thing that could ever occur in the sphere of trying to get people to work together towards building a harmonious society. The individualism of the West allows so many contradictions and we have had a perpetual state of conflict between those who have not (Verstraelen 1998: 55-56)¹⁸.

To support the connection between Mugabe's Marxist-Lenin program and the one party state political ideology, there is a further affirmation by the *Time* magazine to that effect. The *Time* Magazine of Monday 20th of August 1984 carried a story entitled *Zimbabwe: One Party State* which revealed a public announcement by Mugabe that Zimbabwe was going to be transformed into a one party-state. This is not a surprise because in 1982, which is two years earlier, Mugabe started a campaign to crush PF ZAPU which was the main opposition at that time.

Even if he signed the Lancaster agreement, it seems as if he just wanted to use it as a means to achieve his end, which was a one party state inspired by Leninist principles. It is not surprising why Mugabe disregarded everything which the Lancaster agreement stipulated. Zunga (2003) quotes what Mugabe said expressing his dissatisfaction of the Lancaster House Agreement as follows 'as I signed the document, I was not happy at all. I felt we had been cheated to some extent, that we had agreed to a deal which would to some extent rob us of a victory we had hoped we would achieve in the field' (:34) For Mugabe, the Lancaster Agreement was not the dawn of a new era but an opportunity to implement the Marxist-Leninist ideology.

Applying communist overrated principles in a capitalist designed society is just like forcing a square in a circle, hence his failure¹⁹ as head of state. The first ten years of Mugabe's rule was characterized by a socialist spirit in which he expanded education facilities, free health services, subsidy of basic consumer goods (Verstrealen 1998:58) until he was approached by the IMF which suggested ESAP as an economic turnaround plan which resulted into a disaster and this disaster threatened his popularity and political support. He failed because he was blind to see that the country's economy was not designed to cater for a Marx-socialist society since it was essentially capitalist. The economic failure can be attributed to him in as much as it can be attributed to the World Bank and IMF but he had to pay the price, which made

¹⁸ This quotation is in Verstraelen's book entitled *Zimbabwean Realities and Christian Responses*, which he took from the interview script.

¹⁹ This is the failure to spearhead a socialist ideology in a capitalist/democratic oriented state.

him more desperate. To compensate for this failure and maintain popularity he took advantage of the resources of the country in order to maintain his powerful position. This is evident in his use of all sorts of violent means to deter his opponents from disempowering him.

It is important to note that there is an ideological difference in operation between the former oppressor and Mugabe. The colonial master pushed for a democratic-capitalist policy and the Nationalist leader Mugabe is out for a one party state with a socialist/communist agenda. Possibly Mugabe's secret agenda might have had the conviction that true liberation was to be achieved if the oppressor's form of government is replaced by a different ideology all together. Moeletsi Mbeki pointed out the following ideological differences and economic policies of the new independent States from those of the colonial master when he expressed the dilemma faced by the Nationalist leaders concerning which policy to follow for the new independent states as follows:

Two primary factors drove many of these post-independence conflicts. The first was disagreement among the African nationalists over what economic and social policies to pursue. Many favoured continuing with the old colonial models minus the racial discrimination factor but some, among them Odinga and Nkrumah, described such policies as neo-colonialism and saw them as representing continued collaboration with the former Western colonial powers (Mbeki 2009:4).

It seems that Mugabe might possibly have treated with suspicion all the ideologies which the colonial power proposed for the independent State, for he might have seen these ideologies as tools which facilitate continuing subjugation of the former colonies. It is not a question of whether Mugabe wanted to serve the people or not but it is a question of Mugabe's misjudgment, miscalculation and failure to use the present remnants of the colonialist to the advantage of Zimbabwean people.

Another important element to note is that Mugabe in this present day is a vicious critic of the West and finds pleasure in pointing out their contribution to the underdevelopment of Africa through colonialism. In spite of the fact that what Mugabe says about the West is true most people do not take him seriously. People do not take him seriously because he speaks the truth about others as a way of justifying his actions. He diverts attention from his bad governance by blaming the West for all Zimbabwean problems. Can one then disregard what he says on the basis of what he

has done? No. or this reason, I argue that the Church's theological reflection on the political state of Zimbabwe should analyze both the irresponsibility of Mugabe as a power hungry leader, his positive intentions and the factors which might have formed the character of Mugabe's calibre. A critical look at the history of Africa might give one an idea of the factors which constituted the failure of African leaders like Mugabe. This venture is only successful if one looks at the history of Africa on structural, ideological and psychological level.

3.3) An Analysis of the African Colonial History

In this section, I will reflect on African colonial history as a starting point in order to evaluate whether colonialism was beneficial to Africa or it was a hindrance to Africa's development, I will then highlight the nature of the African crisis and how it relate to the colonial history. I will further look at the rationale of colonialism and how colonialism is intimately connected to democratic governmental models of most African states. In the conclusion, I will concentrate on the psychological effects of colonialism.

3.3.1) A Brief Analysis of the African Colonial History

Instead of presenting a detailed history of African colonialism, I will give a reflection based on different perspective of looking at this history. These perspectives will help one to see why colonialism needs to be reviewed in relation to the present African crisis. I will start by presenting a very brief overview of the African colonial history

The 19th Century witnessed British, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Belgium powers greedily dividing African into numerous colonial boundaries due to its rich resources. These political boundaries were officially blessed by the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 and only Liberia and Ethiopia were spared.

By the 1960s African countries began to be independent through bloodshed and negotiations. Despite these efforts, Africa was never the same again because 'the "ghost" of colonialism lived on. Post-colonialization bred an era of a new "scramble of Africa" led by Africans themselves' (Wiseman 2007:2). Wiseman (2007) is convinced that Africans learnt the art and values of colonialization from colonial powers. These values explain the failure of most African governments today.

Wiseman in his article 'The Long Term Consequences of Colonialization of African' beautifully summarizes the plight of Africa as follows:

The crazy era of African colonialization by European powers in the latter 19th Century bred almost 100 years of intrusive European political, cultural and economic rule. In the year after the 1960s, when many African countries became free of colonial rule, headaches and heartaches lingered and still linger in 2007. An old Africa was gone, and what was this new world? The consequences of European colonial rule are still active (2007:1).

I now turn to look at different perspectives of looking at the Colonial history of Africa.

There are two schools of thought among African historians with contrasting views concerning the effects of colonialism on Africa. The most prevalent one insists that European colonialism was a major turning point for Africa; this school consists of both Liberal and Marxist historians in Africa (Mazrui & Tidy 1984: xi). The other school of thought is led by a Nigerian Historian Jacob Ajayi of the University of Ibadan. This school claims that colonial rule was just an interlude compared to millennium of African history and heritage (:ix). The former seem to regard colonialism as a positive force which incorporated Africa into the global and international world where it was able to be involved in capitalist investment, technology/modern science and international exchange. The latter stands to disagree because the school is convinced that if Africa was not colonized it would have entered the global world at its own matured pace. Mazrui & Tidy (1984:xii) bring the argument of Walter Rodney who said European's impact on Africa retarded rather than facilitated development. The shallowness of the colonial impact can be seen in the way Europe made Africa and its people depend on it instead of empowering them (Mazrui & Tidy:xii). In brief, Africa was disenfranchised of its pride and potentiality by colonialism. The study will expand my explanation on colonialism under the section 3.2.3 on the Rationale of colonialism

In as much as one appreciates the technological advancements, I argue that Africa lost more than what it gained. A reference to colonialism for most of Africans' failure is not an excuse but a substantial claim. I therefore would not hesitate to point out that this section is based on the idea advocated by Jacob Ajayi. Moreover the

irresponsibility of African leaders in some instance is equally blameworthy. In the next section I will look at the nature of the African crisis.

3.3.2) What Distinguishes the African Crisis?

The crisis which Africa finds itself is not a natural phenomena but it is human-made, a product of social and political problems. These social problems are threatening the very foundation of human existence of ordinary citizens. Onwutalobi Anthony-Claret, in his article 'The after Effects of European Colonialism' said, the modern African states are European, not African because the means which contributed to their present being was European driven. It is in this context that the Church in Africa has to do its ministry. Being in solidarity with the people, demands an understanding of the socio-political environment which determines the people's everyday lives. Moreover any effort made to dialogue with the State should be informed by the context in which people live. I will therefore look at some important factors which the Church should consider in its dialogue with the State.

The question which is fundamental in this section is to ask why Africa has been a home of poverty and a breeding place for bad leadership. Are Africans a mass of pathetic victims? If Africans are just like any other human race then there should be an explanation why things are the way they are now.

There is a need to explain why African problems are complex and distinct from the rest of the world. Dube tries to enlighten us on the possible source of the complexity of African situation as follows:

What distinguishes African problem from the rest of the world is Africa's status of marginality and exclusion. Africa exists at the periphery of the world in both economic and political sense. Africa is a dominated continent. In some cases it is dominated by those who once colonized it while in others the domination is by its new African rulers. In short, Africa continues to be in a state of subordination in comparison to other regions of the world. Africa is indeed unglobalized. This scenario complicates the search for possible solutions, but they nevertheless needs to be formulated (Dube 2006:79).

What is interesting about Dube's explanation is that he seeks not only to blame colonial domination for African problems; but also puts the blame on the nationalist leaders. The domination of the African leaders is as a result of the psychological

adaptation of their oppressor's method of rule; and secondly the level of domination, which is psychological in nature, is not only to be blamed on the colonizer but on the leaders for pretending to be psychologically unaffected by the trauma associated with colonial oppression. This possibly might explain why Mugabe oppresses the people of Zimbabwe, while convincing himself that his rule is the best any liberated African country needs.

Dube uses Berkeley's research of Africa to show that the root of African problems can be traced to the African colonial history. This research further stipulates that African political leaders' tendency to oppress their own people is due to a century long legacy of the history of colonial tyranny where by the majority was dominated by the minority in a system of 'race based tyrannies which relied upon institutionalized mechanisms of coercion and co-option that were inherently divisive' (Dube 2006:81). Since the African crisis has a history which is unique to this continent, it will be reasonable to look further into the dynamics of colonialism and how it affected the way our African leaders rule.

3.3.3) The Rationale of Colonialism

Michael Crowder in his article *The impact of Colonialism* clearly disqualifies the claim by the European powers that 'their occupation of Africa (was) on the grounds that they were bringing order and civilization to a chaotic and barbarous continent... bring light in the heart of darkness' (Crowder 1970:237). He further argued that the scramble of Africa was not as a result of a rush on the part of European powers to secure territory in Africa in order to carry out charity work for Africans. Rather, it was the result of deep economic and political fears about one another's intention in Africa. They feared that one's place of interest might be occupied by a rival group, which might lead into conflicts which might upset their utilitarian venture. The development of railways and other useful infrastructure was nothing more than a means to facilitate their exploitative commercial activities. In order to further their exploitative activities they even divided the states in accordance to the location of potential resources possible to be utilized. Gordon (1996:55-56) further pointed out that Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe which were traditionally

used to grow food for subsistence were made to produce export such as palm oil, rubber, cotton, cocoa, peanuts and tobacco for European needs. Malawi and Mozambique which had very few material resources were reserved as labour reservoirs.

In order to disguise their²⁰ economic interests, Crowder pointed out that they ‘salved their consciences by introducing arguments about their own inherent moral and racial superiority to the Africans’ (1970:237). In their division of Africa into states they never bothered understanding the existing cultures and nations. Even if Africa had its own problems and conflicts like any other race of human society the demarcation created confusion because it united enemies and divided extended families. It was confusing because outsiders came and ordered a society to behave in whatever way without their consent.

The fact that the colonies were designed to benefit the West or minority white settlers will also automatically point to the fact that the political structures in place were also strategically designed to promote their economic and political interests. The question that must be answered is: what explanation can we give to the failing of Democracy in Africa?

3.3.4) Colonialism and African Politics

In this section I will argue that colonialism is responsible for the present architectural design of modern African politics and States. I will also share a general presentation of the dynamics of colonialism and its psychological effects.

3.3.4.1) Colonialism and Democratic Governmental Models

Peter Kanyandao in his article ‘Democracy in Africa: Challenge for the State and the Church’ expressed the fact that when dealing with the State, the Church should always remember that:

²⁰ ‘Their’, refers to Colonial powers

The misuse of power in Africa today, associated with nepotism and corruption, are not natural traits of Africans, as has been sometimes insinuated, with the suggestion that Africa is not capable of regulating its own affairs...The issues relating to undemocratic rule that was about to end, associated with colonialism and imperialism, and compensation for the looting of natural resources from colonies, were never discussed as issues to be addressed along with political independence and written constitutions. It is no wonder that many African leaders just took over and continued with systems of government which were not essentially intended for the good of the poor- a total contradiction of what democracy is (Kanyandao 2007:86)

A further analysis of what Kanyandao expressed about democracy in Africa is expounded by Gordon in his article 'African Politics'. Gordon is convinced that

The democratic governmental models developed by the French and British for their colonies were essentially alien structures hastily superimposed over the deeply ingrained political legacies of imperial rule. The real inheritance of African states at independence were the authoritarian structures of the colonial states, an accompanying political culture, an environment of political relevant circumstances tied heavily to the nature of colonial rule (1996:57)

These governmental models were not designed to serve the indigenous people, colonial powers created governmental principles which were intended to control the territorial population and use the population to help the coloniser utilise the resources for their benefit. According to Gordon, most European colonizers vested power 'in a colonial state that was, in essence, a centralised hierarchical bureaucracy... colonial rule was highly authoritarian and backed by police and colonial troops' (Gordon 1996:57). It is interesting to note that a close look at the way Mugabe intimidated the people in Zimbabwe towards his agenda of a one party state will make us realise that his methods were a reflection of the colonial system.

3.4.4.2) The Psychological Effects of Colonialism

Mugabe's rule of Zimbabwe reflects Ian Smith's rule of domination and absolute control. What is frustrating is that he seems to perceive himself as the leader whose leadership is impeccably designed to put the needs of the people as priority. Apart from the pain and suffering he causes on the people of Zimbabwe he does not admit failure but self-righteously condemns the former colonisers. Why does Mugabe, who is so educated fail totally to realise that what he is doing is exactly what the West did to African people? To answer this question we need to understand the psychological effect of colonialism, not only on Mugabe but on many African leaders.

Muendane (2006) pointed out that, the Westerners, of all the people, have a tendency of asserting that the era of colonialism died and no longer has a connection with the present quality of life of Africans of today. In this sense all the action associated to the failure of African leaders proceed from their incapability to rule, hence they should take the responsibility for their actions (Muendane 2006:11). In as much as this statement is partly true, it is still not the whole truth. The issue one is dealing with has psychological as well as political and economic dimensions. This psychological dimension makes it understandable that even if the direct political Western control is over, its psychological influence is still strongly felt. Muendane (2006) argues that, ‘unlike statutory laws which can be changed overnight, mindsets are more intractable in response to change and subtle in the way they work. To understand how the mind works in producing behaviour and therefore a lifestyle or experience we have to go to the source’ (:11). The source is the environment and conditions which originally defined the experiences. Muendane has rightly pointed out that:

There is no specific experience or destiny without character driving the person to it. There is no character without behaviour. There is no behaviour without action. There is no action without an attitude driving it. There is no attitude without an association between the object and the situation or circumstance at hand. Association is the meaning the mind gives to the object, situation or circumstances. Meaning is the outcome of thinking processes, which involves question, which have the function of opening mental files containing references. References are prior knowledge, value, rules and beliefs (schemas). Remember, beliefs are meanings that were constructed in the past and stored in the mental files (Muendane 2006:20)

The last part of this quotation is interesting because it stipulates that beliefs consequently determine our characters, these beliefs are derived from meanings which were constructed in the past and stored in the mental files. Since the way we acquire some beliefs is not always done consciously these beliefs also unconsciously define our characters. This understanding is well put by Paulo Freire in relation to the oppressed, the oppressor and oppression itself.

Paulo Freire highlights that if the struggle of the oppressed to give up the attitude indoctrinated in him/her by the oppression is prematurely completed, the oppressed instead of striving for liberation s/he actually tend to become the oppressor. This digression is due to the fact that the structure of their thought has been conditioned ‘by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were

shaped' (1996:27). Their biased ideals are based on the understanding that to be fully human is to adopt the image of their oppressor. In this sense their oppressor becomes the model of what it means to be human. This state makes the oppressed fail to see the oppressor as an entity outside of themselves. Even if the oppressed are aware of the fact that they are downtrodden, they do nothing about it because their perception 'is impaired by their submission in the reality of oppression' (Freire 1996:27).

Once the oppressed adopts the personality of the oppressor he cannot see a liberated person as a symbol meant to contradict the oppressor but to be an oppressor. Their vision of a free person is individualistic because of their identification with the oppressor; they have no consciousness of themselves as members of the oppressed class. Since his/her model of being free is derived from the image of the oppressor, once such a person is given a leadership role s/he uses this position to subjugate and oppress those whom he is leading (Freire 1996: 28).

Generally, Freire calls the above description the initial stage of the struggle of the oppressor and highlights its complexities. I chose to call it a premature struggle for self-realisation because when referring to Mugabe, this initial stage is final and he is convinced that he has completely emancipated himself from the chain of mental slavery. Unfortunately his character betrays him for it shows clear signs of an unfinished decolonisation of the mind. He actually has superseded the image of the oppressor. This could be the type of a person the Church is attempting to dialogue with.

Bill Berkeley, an American freelance newspaper correspondent who covered African conflicts as journalist from 1983 until 1990s compiled his research into a book entitled *The Graves are not yet full* which was extensively used by Dube (2003). Due to his extensive research in Africa, Berkeley came up with a very useful conclusion which can be instrumental in our analysis of Mugabe's psychological state. Berkeley tries to show that the failure of people like Mugabe does not necessarily mean that they are 'inevitable products of primordial, immutable hatreds' (Berkeley 2001:10). There is a method in this madness he resorted; the handmaid of this method is colonialism. He is convinced that all people are vulnerable to evil

deeds, but the potential of evil is magnified in the arena in which they operate. He further explained that

Each (of these leaders like Mugabe) embodies a history, a culture, a symbiosis of interests, calculations, and assumptions which, taken together, adds up to a catalogue of essential elements that can transform latent evil into reality. And each has been a survivor, a well-adapted creature of a malignant environment (Berkeley 2001:11).

3.4) Conclusion

This chapter presented Mugabe on both political and psychological levels and related the Zimbabwean story to that of Africa. Apart from the economic, political and structural injustice which are attributed to colonialism, I strongly argue that the psychological dimension remains the most important dimension because its implicit manifestation is very difficult to dictate and its ‘after-effects’ lasts forever if the victims do not realise their²¹ existence. The analysis of Mugabe on a psycho-political level is very helpful in finding a way to dialogue with him. Every form of dialogue is conditioned by the other person’s circumstances or context. The context helps us to understand the situation in which the person is coming from and the factors which influence his/her behaviour.

Since my argument is centred on an Empathetic dialogical method, I am convinced that if the Church is to effectively engage with the State in dialogue it has to understand the complications associated with politics, these complications in most cases kills the best in people and produces the worst in them.

²¹ ‘Their’, refers to the after-effects

Chapter Four

The Nature of the Catholic Church's Dialogical Method

4.0) Introduction

The Catholic Church has journeyed with the people of Zimbabwe from the colonial days up to the present day. It is also an undeniable fact that the Catholic Church has taken the side of the oppressed and marginalised and its contribution towards the Zimbabwean independence cannot be underestimated. The participation of the Catholic Church in the struggle shows that the Christian Church has in most cases availed itself to cater for the needs of the people. One of the main objectives of the Christian Church has been to safeguard the dignity of every human being. In the process of defending the weak, the Church is forced to confront structures which oppress the weak and vulnerable. It is in this sense that the Church inevitably has to dialogue with political structures or other social structures which provide essential services to the people. This chapter serves to analyse the nature of the Catholic Church's dialogical approach.

To highlight some dialogical efforts made by the Catholic Church I will present the Pastoral letters which were written by the Catholic Bishops' Conference in Zimbabwe responding to the crisis in the country. In order to show that these letters are not just based on mere biblical speculation, I will highlight some salient points about the Justice and Peace Commission which is the watchdog of the Bishops' Conference and serves as the social analytical arm of the Catholic Church.

Apart from these Pastoral letters I will also use an ecumenical document entitled *The Zimbabwe We Want*, which expresses the Ecumenical concern over the Zimbabwean situation. The Catholic Church was one of the major participants in the formulation of this document. Before focusing on the dialogue I will highlight the contributions of the Catholic Church before independence. I am highlighting the pre-independence activities in order to show that the Catholic Church's contribution to justice in Zimbabwe began before 1980.

4.1) The Catholic Church and the Rhodesian Government after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence 1965 (UDI).

4.1.1) Background of the UDI

During the sixties and the seventies, winds of change were witnessed towards the end of the Cold War and most African countries were independent except for Zimbabwe. In spite of the fact that Britain was prepared to give up its colonies, Zimbabwe remained under the racist white rule. The Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) of 1965 explains the reason why Zimbabwe's independence was delayed. The UDI was designed to safeguard and maintain white rule for all time (Astrow 1983:15). Ian Smith was the leader of the minority white settlers who defied British's preference for gradual transition to majority rule as proclaimed by the 1961 constitution (Astrow 1983:15). Smith wanted to be granted independence from Britain without conditions attached so that he could introduce measures to further suppress the majority black populace while protecting the rights of the white minority. Hence, Smith declared the UDI. To safeguard the living conditions of the white minority through the UDI, Smith reinforced media censorship and the already-existing state of emergency and other strict regulations (Good 1973: 16).

4.1.2) The Response of the Catholic Church to Smith's UDI

Before the UDI, in 1959, the Catholic Church was aware of Smith's intentions. It (Catholic Church) issued a pastoral letter which set the tone of the Church's political role in the 1960s. Bishop Donal Lamont of Umutali (the present Mutare), who was one of those who spearheaded the objectives of the pastoral letter, was arrested and deported (Phiri 2001:76). By 1965 the Catholic Church was increasingly vocal and clearly opposed to Smith. When the UDI was announced the Zimbabwean²² Catholic bishops who were in Rome attending the Second Vatican II Council were asked to go home because the situation in Zimbabwe was declared 'grave' and in need of immediate attention (:76).

After the Unilateral Declaration of Independence, the Catholic Church condemned the government through its Magazine called *Moto* for the use of emergency powers to censor the media. Due to the *Moto*'s critical stance against Smith's government at that

²² We are using the word Zimbabwe just for continuity but the most appropriate word is Rhodesia because it was before independence.

time, its editor Father Mike Traber was declared a prohibited immigrant and was deported (Frederikse 1982:27). The Catholic publishing house *Mambo Press* was charged under the State of Emergency Act. This charge was dropped two weeks later as a sign, according to Phiri (2001:76), that State was reluctant to appear as if it was persecuting the Church. All the voices which opposed the regime were banned and silenced, so the Catholic Church and the Rhodesian Council of Churches (RCC) were the major religious groups which spoke on behalf of the black majority.

The analysis of the UDI presents some of the effort of the Catholic Church to oppose the oppressive Smith regime. The Catholic Church has remained critical of oppressive governments up to this day. One way to show the continued work of the Church in relation or in dialogue with the State is through the Pastoral letters written by the bishops. In order to show that the facts in these letters are based on the real situation of Zimbabwean people, a brief background of the Justice and Peace Commission is necessary. The commission was formed in 1971 by the Rhodesian Bishop's Conference (Auret 1992:24).

4.2) The Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) a Social Analytical Arm of the Zimbabwean Bishops' Conference

What is central in this section is to highlight the objectives of the Justice and Peace Commission and its function in relation to the Bishops' Conference. According to Auret (1992:29), the Justice and Peace Commission aims at creating awareness of the social teaching of the Church. The second objective is to gather as much information as possible concerning present social issues and problems and publicise them. The third objective is to research and investigate allegations of injustice and to take necessary action to correct such violation of human rights. All these activities are conducted within the light of the Gospel (:29).

The Commission's duty in relation to the Bishops' conference is to inform them 'of the "state of the nation" and acts as a "buffer" for the Church in Church-State relations' (Auret 1992:104-105). The Commission seeks legal advice on legislation and advises the Bishops' Conference accordingly. It is also the channel of communication between the Bishops and the faithful, keeping the Bishops informed

of the suffering and complaints of the people. Actually the commission recommends to the Bishops to 'speak out' through Pastoral letters. 'On many occasions these letters and statements were drafted with the assistance of JPC members' (Auret 1992:105).

4.3) A Presentation of the Pastoral Letters Written by the Bishops in Response to the present Zimbabwean Situation

The Catholic Church never changed its pursuit of justice even after independence. During the Rhodesian white rule as we have indicated above the Catholic Church was against the oppressive tendencies of Ian Smith and after independence it was against the new Mugabe regime which assumed the same dictatorial tendencies as those experienced during the colonial days. The Catholic Church had a clear programme of action that speaks against injustices of any kind irrespective of who the perpetrator is. Among the many ways which the Catholic Church expressed its dedication for justice was through the pastoral letters. Letters written after 2000 will be used because this is the time when Mugabe's administration was so desperate to keep power against the conscientised Zimbabwean people who openly expressed their dissatisfaction with the rule of Zanu PF through the Constitution referendum. Mugabe, in a bid to desperately gain the support of the people, embarked on the illegal and unplanned land redistribution. He even further terrorised anyone who opposed the programme of his dictatorial agenda. The pastoral letters stand as a response to the situation confronting Zimbabwe. I will look briefly at three letters by the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference (ZCBC) and then also draw attention to an ecumenical document entitled *The Zimbabwe We Want*, which was presented in 2006 to President Robert Mugabe.

4.3.1) ZCBC Pastoral Letter of June 17 2005

Background of the Pastoral letter entitled 'The Cry of the Poor': This is a letter written by the Bishops in response to the government cleaning-up operation called

*Operation Murambatsvina*²³. Barbara Slaughter's article (2005 on line) entitled 'Mugabe's *Operation Murambatsvina*' noted that this cleaning up operation conducted by Mugabe drove hundreds of families who were struggling to survive in the urban areas to the rural areas because he branded them as criminals. Most of these people who were made homeless and whose sources of livelihood were disrupted faced the possibility of starvation and death. 'President Mugabe claims that the operation was necessary because the cities were overrun with criminals and had become havens for illicit and criminal practices and activities which just could not be allowed to go on' (Slaughter 2005 online). Slaughter argues that Mugabe's argument was baseless because the intimidation targeted the urban population which did not vote for him in the previous election. To understand Slaughter's argument a reference to chapter three under the clause 3.1.4 (Constitution Referendum) will help one understand why Mugabe drove away these urban dwellers. The urban dwellers whose lives were disrupted were among the majority of urban people who voted against the government's proposed constitution in 2000.

The target audience of this letter are the faithful, which means all Catholics and political leaders included. It was written within the context of the plight of the victims of operation *Murambatsvina*. The letter condemns this operation as follows: 'any claims to justify this operation in view of a desired orderly end becomes totally grounded in view of the cruel and inhumane means that have been used' (ZCBC 2005:1). The second level of the letter targets the government for failing to recognise the basic dignity of people over its objectives. It further claims that the promotion of the dignity of humanity is a priority of the public policies not the fulfilment of the elitist wishes. This was expressed briefly as follow:

'Basic human rights are an offshoot of our God-given dignity. Every human being-man, woman child has the right to life, shelter, food, education, healthy care, employment, etc. These basic rights have been and are being violated. No secular authority, no group, or no individual should be allowed to violate such right (ZCBC 2005:1)

The last part of the letter talks of the fact that a country's failure on moral ground is determined by how it treats its poor and most vulnerable and points to the need for power to be derived from the grassroots not the central government.

²³ Murambatsina is a Shona word which means cleaning up trash or rubbish

4.3.2) ZCBC Pastoral Letter of 5 April 2007

This second letter entitled 'God Hears the Cry of the oppressed' is a reflection which was made by the bishops on the general crisis in Zimbabwe. It serves to highlight the specific crisis the country was going through in 2007. A report in the *New York Times* of 7th of February 2007 by Michael Wines, highlights the context in which this letter was written. Wines describes the situation of Zimbabwe briefly as follows:

In recent weeks, the national power authority has warned of a collapse of electrical service. A breakdown in water treatment has set off a new outbreak of cholera in the capital, Harare. All public services were cut off in Marondera, a regional capital of 50,000 in eastern Zimbabwe, after the city ran out of money to fix broken equipment. In Chitungwiza, just south of Harare, electricity is supplied only four days a week. The government awarded all civil servants a 300 percent raise two weeks ago but the increase is only a fraction of the inflation rate, so the nation's 110,000 teachers are staging a work slowdown for more money. Measured by the black-market value of Zimbabwe's ragtag currency, even their new salaries total less than 60 American dollars a month. Doctors and nurses have been on strike for five weeks, seeking a pay increase of nearly 9,000 percent, and health care is all but nonexistent. Harare's police chief warned in a recently leaked memo that if rank-and-file officers did not get a substantial raise, they might riot.

The bishop's letter is a comment on the deteriorating economy of Zimbabwe and its effects on the people's lives. The Catholic Church called for those responsible to repent and experience a change of heart so that they will heed the cry of the most affected as follows:

A crisis is an unstable situation of extreme danger and difficulty. Yet it can also be turned into a moment of grace and a new beginning, if those responsible for causing the crisis repent, heed the cry of the people and foster a change of heart and mind especially during the imminent Easter Season, so our Nation can rise to new life with the Risen Lord (ZCBC 2007 April).

This Pastoral Letter calls for repentance and change of heart because the Church is convinced that the people who are Christians are the ones who work for these oppressive political structures.

The letter specifically pointed at the crisis of governance which arises from the failure of the governing bodies to sustain the collapsing system due to mismanagement. The mismanagement also included the ordering of Operation *Murambatsvina* by the government and the failure of the land reform. The letter also points out that there is a

crisis of moral leadership; this leadership is associated with greed, disrespect of human value and unjust and dishonest norms. The Church is convinced that the personal sin of the individual contributes to the structural sin (governmental mismanagement).

The structures of sin are rooted in personal sin, and thus always linked to the concrete acts of individuals who introduce these structures, consolidate them and make them difficult to remove. And thus they grow stronger, spread, and become the source of other sins, and so influence people's behaviour (ZCBC 2007:3)

In this Pastoral letter, it was argued that the root of the crisis is in colonialism: the excesses of which persist amongst black revolutionary leaders. Since independence the oppressive structures like the constitution were not changed

4.3.3) ZCBC Pastoral Letter of 1 Oct 2009

This third and final Pastoral letter entitled 'On National Healing and Reconciliation' looks at the need for reconciliation in Zimbabwe. This letter is a reflection of everything which possibly might have contributed to the present Zimbabwean situation. It makes a reference to the 2007 Pastoral letter by saying that the Zimbabwean problems are not just economic and political but they are also spiritual and moral. This letter makes a psychological analysis but uses theological vocabulary like 'sin' and 'forgiveness'. It traces the problem of division and mismanagement of the country's resources to the evil memories which were never acknowledged. The Catholic Church is confident that there is a need to confess our sins, be forgiven and learn to fully accept one another. The letter explains that Zimbabwe needs healing because it has a pre-colonial history in which the Ndebele²⁴ used to raid the Shona²⁵ in nineteenth century; the hatred is still evident up to now. The second reason is that the colonial period was characterised by racial conflicts. The third reason is based on the post-colonial period which builds on the infrastructure which the colonial regime established, and moreover the colonial trauma was not resolved, but the Zimbabwean people pretended to start afresh.

²⁴ This is a minority tribe of about twenty percent of the Zimbabwean population. The group is originally a break away from Shaka and moved up north towards Limpopo and settled in Bulawayo.

²⁵ When the Ndebele came to Zimbabwe they found the Shona already well established. The Shona tribe constitutes the majority of the Zimbabwe population which is more than seventy percent.

This letter reiterates that Zimbabweans are haunted by the past as follows:

We all pretended that we will start afresh in a new Zimbabwe without dealing with our past or define collectively what future we desired for our nation. We pretended that the anger and hatred that had accumulated over many years could simply vanish with independence. This failure to deal with our past continues to haunt us. We now have, however, a second chance. We must use it (ZCBC 2009:3).

The letter describes in detail that the source of political conflict is due to the pursuit of power and the partisan use of state institutions as tools to support the ruling party. The source of social conflict is due to the lack of appreciation and respect of cultural, ethnic and religious differences. This intolerance was witnessed in *Murambatsvina*²⁶, *Gukurahundi*²⁷ and land redistribution only to mention a few. An economic conflict is a result of corruption, mismanagement by government officials, sanctions and structural adjustment programmes.

The letter calls the people of Zimbabwe to acknowledge their contribution to the present instabilities. Victims need to tell their stories and perpetrators to take responsibility. This letter also acknowledges the progress achieved in the agreement of ZANU PF and the MDC to form a coalition government. It also recommends that the role of the Catholic Church is to facilitate the process of healing. It gives the Church the credit as an institution whose great justice is beyond the law and transcends human justice. This letter concludes by recommending the need for national reconciliation and healing as follows:

For national reconciliation and healing to take place effectively, it is necessary that the entire nation participates in a comprehensive, all inclusive, holistic and clearly defined national process underpinned by strong political will and desire to reconcile and heal the nation. We envision National healing and Reconciliation as a home grown inclusive process that will lay foundations for a peaceful and non-coercive Zimbabwean society; where the security of individuals and communities is guaranteed; where the dignity of the individual is respected; where broken relationships are healed; where trust is restored, and where diversity is celebrated (ZCBC 2009 8-9).

²⁶ The cleaning up operation by Mugabe, which left thousands of families homeless and hungry and was the theme of the June 17th 2005 Pastoral letter entitled 'The Cry of the Poor'

²⁷ Gukurahundi, is the word which reflects the brutal killing of the Ndebele by the 5th Brigades commanded by Mugabe. Justice and Peace Commission produced a detailed report of these atrocities in a document entitled 'Breaking the Silence: Building True Peace (printed February 1997).

4.4) The Ecumenical Document of November 2006 Entitled 'The Zimbabwe We Want' (ZWW)

4.4.1) General Overview of the Document

This document was launched in November 2006 amidst growing political, social and economic crisis since 1999 and 2000. It claims to have possible solutions to the Zimbabwean crises. What makes this document important is that it was launched in the presence of President Mugabe by an umbrella body of leaders of Christian Churches in Zimbabwe, which comprised Zimbabwe Council of Churches, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe.

This is a detailed document of a total of fifty five pages and divided into seven sections. Section One (ZWW 2006:8) looks at the Zimbabwean situation in 2006 and examines where things went wrong. Section Two (:15) concentrates on the mandate of the Church²⁸ and its contribution towards the present crisis. Section three (:18) puts emphasis on values upon which the future Zimbabwe will be built. Section four (:31) takes a look at the constitution as irrelevant to the present situation. Section Five (:35) reflects on the social and economic transformation of Zimbabwe. Section Six (:40) looks at the question of the land. Finally section Seven (:51) puts emphasis on the need for reconciliation and forgiveness.

In order to engage with this document I will look at scholars who reflected on this document and made their verdict. On one hand, I will look at Peter Henriot²⁹ who sees the document as a prophetic call in his article 'The Zimbabwe We Want: A Powerful Prophetic Call'. The argument which I will use in this section is from an article he published in the newspaper *The Post* on the 7th of November 2006. On the other hand, I will examine the position of Alison Love and Vincent Vezha³⁰ in their article 'No way forward without consensus' in which they criticised the document

²⁸The word church refers to Christian churches which participated in the formulation and hand over of the document.

²⁹ Peter Henriot is a Jesuit priest and works at the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection in Lusaka.

³⁰ Alison Love is an associate Professor of English at the National University of Lesotho and Vincent Munyaradzi Vezha at the time this document was written was a PhD student in the Department of Linguistics and English at the University of Lancaster in England.

because they claim it ‘served to encourage a perpetuation of Mugabe and his party, and failed to engage critically with the experience of Zimbabweans’ (Love & Vezha 2009:433).

4.4.2) Henriot’s Argument

Henriot is impressed by the document because, firstly, he is convinced that the prophetic nature of the document lies in the fact that it is non-partisan because the document was written by different churches which constitute people who are both critical and favourable to the government. Secondly, though the document reflects different mindsets, fortunately all parties agree that Zimbabwe is in a crisis and there is a need to improve the state of affairs. Thirdly, Henriot believes that the document acknowledges the successes of the early years of independence but honestly recognises that there was a need for change due to the present predicament. Fourthly, he further points out that the document completely denies the present Zimbabwean Constitution, it looks at the land issue identifying both historical roots and contemporary causes and expresses its support of the land redistribution. The document also points out the irregularities in the land distribution process. The fifth point he made is that the Church accepts that it has failed the nation by not speaking with one voice. Henriot points out that the most foundational reason why the Church engages with the government is inspired by their founder Jesus who declared that he came that people may have life and have it to the full (John 10v 10).

Henriot as a priest is convinced that the Church has taken great strides breaking out of its spiritual realm to focus on the concrete issues which constitute the experiences of the ordinary individuals in the street. Hence the Church’s prophetic voice caters for both the body and spirit. What did Henriot fail to recognise, that Love and Vezha did?

4.4.3) Love and Vezha’s Argument

Love and Vezha argue that the document’s content has been watered down because the signatories argue about how the content had been toned down just before its launch. They further argue that ‘according to Catholic Church sources, the document was issued on the World Wide Web in September 2006, prior to the launch in the late

October. Yet the copies that were printed for the launch had been changed since the signing, according to (then) Archbishop Pius Ncube' (Love and Vezha 2009: 436). Zimbabwean Jesuits claim that the version of the document presented to Mugabe at the launch had been tampered with. Moreover 'several pages in the original document had been watered down, cut out or added to' (:437), in a bid to accommodate Mugabe.

The document emphasises the goodness of unity and the evil of division. In this sense 'overt political opposition is delegitimized, as it offers division' (Love and Vezha 2009:436). If the document was really meant for the good of country the launch would have also included the main opposition party because Mugabe was not the main governmental representation when we consider the fact that the MDC had almost half of the parliamentary seats. Actually the watering down of the document, more seemingly appeared to have been done to accommodate the President but not those who opposed him. Love and Vuzha went further and said it seems the document's task was widely meant to articulate criticism of the government while refraining from appearing supportive of the opposition positions. This diplomacy which compromises the truth serves to maintain non-partisanship and neutrality on the side of the Church. In this sense the Church is not as worried about the truth as it is about its integrity as an institution. Such an 'interpretation of the Zimbabwean situation perpetuates the status quo of unequal distribution of power by closing off other more vigorous channels of engaging with the government' (Love and Vezha 2009:440).

4.5) A Reflection on the non- Empathetic Dialogical Nature of the Catholic Church Based on the Pastoral Letters and the Ecumenical Document.

In this chapter I highlighted the efforts which the Catholic Church invested in challenging oppressive regimes both pre-independence and post-independence. I further substantiated the concreteness of the Pastoral letters by pointing out that the issues which the Bishop challenges are not speculative but based on empirical qualitative research conducted by the Justice and Peace Commission. I therefore argue that in as much as the Church is not a perfect institution, it has tried to show solidarity with the oppressed. Undermining the prophetic voice of the Catholic Church will not

only be unfair but unjust. Furthermore, I also looked further than just speaking the truth and genuinely challenge the oppressive structure of governments, but I attempt to analyse how the challenge offered by the Catholic Church can engage with the State. Engagement is necessary because the very institution which the Catholic Church challenges is the same institution that has the resources which can benefit the people. If the prophetic voice disengages and frustrates the State, then the State's officials will continue to oppress the people. The prophetic voice has to be engaging hence the need of empathy in dialogue.

Empathy is a code word for engagement; it encourages the Church to look at the perspective of the other party in dialogue and the other party's point of view. The other party's point of view will inform the nature of the challenge necessary to make the other party not just change but realise the need for change. Even if this study refers to the dialogue in Zimbabwe it does not necessarily refer to Mugabe because in some instance he has shown that even empathy might not convince him. It is difficult to deal with leaders like Mugabe especially when he expresses the need for power as against the wishes of the people especially when he said 'we shed a lot of blood for this country. We are not going to give up for a mere X on a ballot' (ZCBC 2008 June). He said this statement just before the presidential election in 2008. This method might be useful in the Church's future engagement or dialogue possibly after Mugabe. It is important also for the Catholic Church to reflect on its dialogical method even within Mugabe's rule because this will enhance its effectiveness in future dialogues, as will be shown in the next section.

4.5.1) Non-Empathetic Dialogical Nature of the Catholic Church

The Pastoral letters examined in this chapter have a certain format in which they are written because they appear more like they have a precise skeletal structure within which the contextual flesh is added such that it differentiates one letter from another. The first structural characteristic is a reference to the social teaching of the church. All letters refer to the social teaching which acts as a universal standard upon which all social activities are evaluated. This is not strange because any organisation or

institution should have principles or policies to safeguard the character of the organisation lest the institution loses its identity.

The second structural characteristic involves a strict distinction between the Bishop and the people whom they address. This distinction is clearly hierarchical, when the Bishops speak; their language is prescriptive and vested with authority and a certain sense of finality. There is truth in what is said but the way this truth is said is in the form of a monologue. This nature of expression characterises all three letters. For instance, the ZCBC Pastoral letter of 17 June 2005 starts by saying ‘we the members of the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops’ Conference...we wish to offer a pastoral reflection on recent events based on scripture and the social teachings of the Church’. This Pastoral letter concludes by these words:

Finally we repeat what we have said on the previous occasion... we call upon all those who hold special responsibilities in society, be it government, the business community or other sphere of influence to exercise your duties according to the social teaching of the Church...We cannot lead a double way of life, one for Sunday service in Church and the other for public task, be it political, economic, social or other kind. We are always called to be guided by our conscience and to live our faith as an integral part of our lives (ZCBC 2005:2).

Another ZCBC Pastoral letter of 5th of April 2007 also follows the same formula, it begins by saying ‘as your shepherds we have reflected on our nation’s situation and in the light of the word of God and the Christian social teachings, have discerned what we now share with you, in the hope of offering guidance, light and hope in these difficult times’ (ZCBC 2007:1). The same Pastoral letter finished with the following words:

We conclude our pastoral letter by affirming with a clear unambiguous *Yes* to our support of morally legitimate political authority. At the same time we say an equally clear and unambiguously *No* to power through violence, oppression and intimidation. We call on those who are responsible for the current crisis in our country to repent and listen to the cry of their citizen (ZCBC 2007:5).

The third Pastoral Letter of 1st October 2009 follows the same sequence; it starts by saying ‘we your Bishops said.....’ It also concludes by saying:

The Church aspires for greater justice of the kingdom, which goes beyond law, it is a virtue. It does not deny human justice, but integrates it and transcends it. In this way, justice becomes a path leading to forgiveness a true reconciliation, and thereby restoring communion. We urge Government to show political willingness by creating a conducive environment for healing, reconciliation and integration (ZCBC 2009:7)

There is nothing wrong with what the Catholic Church prescribes especially when you look at the perspective of the Catholic Church, because the truth which is being told by the Catholic Church is beneficial to the people.

Nevertheless let us look at the same point from the perspective of the one who is being told what to do. The other party's view is not considered, when your views are not considered sometimes advice can appear as condemnation. Bearing in mind that the State which is being told what to do has authority in its domain and the Church's prescriptive voice seems not to respect that. The Catholic Church is concerned with its position and influence as if it is the only player that can bring changes in Zimbabwe but it forgot that the State controls the resources of the country. There is a high possibility that the State will ignore the voice of the Church and continue with whatever it is doing. Empathy engages the State, what it does not do is to compromise or distort the truth but it considers the other party's view as the basis of its critique.

I now turn to another dimension of a non-empathetic dialogical method of the Church which is not prescriptive but which compromises with the State. This perspective is highlighted in the Ecumenical Document 'The Zimbabwe Which We Want'.

Love and Vezha analysed the ecumenical document 'The Zimbabwe We Want' not only on the basis of what the document says but on the basis of people who participated in the formulation of the document and also how the document was treated in different moments of its existence. The issue which surrounds the document says a lot about the document than its content. My identification of the non-dialogical nature of the Church will be based on these findings.

Under Henriot's argument (4.4.2), He points out that there were two different camps of church leaders, one camp favoured Mugabe and the other camp comprised of Mugabe's critics. Due to the division within the Church, it (the Church) fails to speak with one voice. The failure to speak with one voice resulted in (one part of) the Church compromising with the state instead of empathetically engaging the state in dialogue. This is a non-empathetic dialogical perspective of the Church because (part of) the church compromised with the state instead of empathising with it

4.6) Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown that the Catholic's dialogical method is predominantly non-empathetic. Out of this non-empathetic dialogical method one discovers two trajectories: one points to the nature of the Catholic Church as a prescriptive and non-consultative institution in its dialogue and the other trajectory lies in its (Catholic Church) failing to speak with one voice, which resulted in compromising with the State instead of empathising. These two trajectories will be further explored in the next chapter.

Chapter Five

An Analysis of the Ineffectiveness of the Church-State Dialogue in Zimbabwe

5.0) Introduction

In chapter four I pointed out two trajectories which underlie the non-empathetic dialogical nature of the Catholic Church. The first non-empathetic trajectory of the Catholic Church's dialogue points to the way it expresses itself through the Pastoral letters. By analysing the pastoral letters I argued that the Church speaks with an authority imbued with finality which is prescriptive and non-consultative. The second non-empathetic trajectory of the Catholic Church's dialogue is the one which is in the 'Zimbabwe We Want' (ZWW) document, where I pointed out that the ecumenical Church did not speak with one voice, since some were favourable to Mugabe and others were critics of Mugabe as Henriot's argument expressed. Following the argument of Love and Vezha it was noted that the division within the voice of the Church resulted in compromising the contents of the document to suit Mugabe. Instead of being empathetic, the Church compromised with Mugabe, and Love and Vezha commented that such a compromise 'serves to encourage a perpetuation of the Mugabe and his party, and failed to engage critically with the experience of Zimbabweans' (2009:433). This chapter's objective is to further explore these two trajectories.

5.1) First Trajectory of the non-Empathetic Nature of the Catholic Church's Dialogical Method

In my analysis of the Pastoral letters, I pointed out that the Catholic bishops expressed themselves as people vested with the authority to speak with finality. The tone which one can deduce from the way the letters are structured carries with it a conviction of certainty which surpasses human imperfection. Such an authoritative tone undermines the other party for it is more prescriptive than consultative for instance let us highlight what one of the letters expressed itself in its conclusion. This is a pastoral letter which was written on the 1st October 2009 and its conclusion is as follows:

The Church aspires for greater justice of the kingdom, which goes beyond law, it is a virtue. It does not deny human justice, but integrates it and transcends it. In this way, justice becomes a path leading to forgiveness a true reconciliation, and thereby

restoring communion. We urge Government to show political willingness by creating a conducive environment for healing, reconciliation and integration (ZCBC 2009:7)

The above statement gives an impression of a father telling a son or daughter the best thing which the child needs for a better life. What we are worried about is not the truth of the statement but what the statement implies and the dual hierarchical distinction which it imposes. Within a dialogical environment you need mutual participation not a monologue. In this section I examine the nature of the Catholic Church on a universal level in order to understand what is behind the Catholic Church's authoritative and prescriptive voice. In order to examine the Church's authoritative and prescriptive voice it becomes necessary to look at what model does the Catholic Church uses in its dialogue with the State. I will also look at the political and religious aspects of the Catholic Church as an Institution. This will be followed by a proposal of an alternative Church-state model which can better facilitate an empathetically driven dialogue. Such a Church-State model should not be prescriptive or non-consultative.

5.1.1) The Catholic Church's Church-State Model

When we reflect on the format of the pastoral letters we will realise that these letters are guided by this Church-State model as discussed in chapter one and chapter two, in which the Catholic Church explicitly expresses its superiority over the State in relation to human welfare. The bishops' approach to dialogue with the State has already an assumption that their purpose for humanity is higher than the State. Since the Catholic Church believes it has a higher purpose for humanity it can decide for the State and the State has to follow what the Catholic Church has to say. How can the State dialogue with a Church which assumes control over it.

5.1.2) The Religious and Political Structure of the Catholic Church

The Vatican City which houses the headquarters of the Catholic Church is a city-state, which is also a sovereign state. The Pope is its absolute Monarch. The Church has also extra-territorial jurisdiction over certain buildings in Rome (Manuel, Reardon &

Wilcox 2006: 34). Bishops, who are the overseers of the Church, meet regularly for national and regional Episcopal conferences (:34).

According to the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Right and Duties of states, the legal definition of statehood is that it must have a permanent population, a territorial government and the capacity to interact with other nations. The Vatican city-state has no permanent citizens but virtually all Catholics claim citizenship of Vatican, will never set foot on the State. The Church's ability to interact is not always a State function. Foreign diplomats are accredited to the Holy See not to the government of the Vatican. About 175 countries have formal diplomatic ties with the Pope (Manuel, Reardon & Wilcox 2006:40). The Papal Nuncios³¹ have the same privileges as secular diplomats. The Church also shares a permanent observer status at the United Nations (:41). The Catholic Church also acts as an International Governmental Organisation as well as an International Non-governmental Organisation. The Bishops and the Pope are custodians and managers of both the political and religious life of the Church.

The political structure of the Catholic Church is subordinate to the religious institution because the Pope is not a political leader but a religious leader. The legitimacy of the Pope as a leader with divine powers is claimed to be derived from the apostolic succession and founded by Jesus as expressed by Canon 331 under the title *The Roman Pontiff and the College* says:

The Bishops of Roman Catholic Church, in whom continues the office given by the Lord uniquely to Peter, the first of the Apostles, and to be transmitted to his successors, is the head of the college of Bishops, the Vicar of Christ, and pastors of the universal Church on earth. By virtue of his office he possesses supreme, full immediate, and universal ordinary power in the Church, which he is always able to exercise freely (Walf 2004:431).

As indicated by the quotation the Pope is the head of the Church, like Peter, he is the representative of Christ and the Bishops are successor of the apostles. It now becomes necessary to examine the nature of the office of Bishops so that one can understand why the Bishops in Zimbabwe speak with such an authority.

³¹ A permanent diplomatic representative of the Holy See accredited to a civil government and often of ambassadorial status (:969).

Canon 375 under the title *Legates of the Roman Pontiff* says:

Bishops whom by divine institution succeed to the place of the Apostle through the Holy Spirit who has been given to them, are constituted pastors in the Church, so they are teachers of Doctrine, priests of the sacred worship, and ministers of governance. Through Episcopal consecration itself, receives with the function of sanctifying also the function of teaching and governing; by their nature, however, these can only be exercised in hierarchical communion with the head and members of the college (Balvo 2004: 490).

The logic here is as follows, a Bishop in a remote part of Zimbabwe is not just a pastor of his particular diocese, he represents the universal Church and this universal Church is represented by the Pope who in turn represents Christ on earth. In other words, the authority vested in the Bishop comes from Christ and is administered through a hierarchical structure. It is not surprising that the Pastoral letters were authoritative and non-consultative because their content is divinely inspired such that it cannot err or compromise the truth. When the Bishops speak on behalf of the church it is Christ who is speaking to the people. The whole political structure and property of the Church finds its ultimate meaning in the divine for it express the divine through the apostolic succession. This is the Catholic Church in brief.

Notwithstanding the apostolic succession, some Catholic clergy questioned the influence of the Church and its hierarchical structure which the Catholic Church's documents legitimate in the light of the divine as expressed above. Among the Clergy who questioned the Church was Leonardo Boff.

5.1.3) A Brief Critique of the Church's Hierarchical Nature by Leonardo Boff

It is difficult to see the Catholic Church as an institution imbued with divine authority without realising that its present institutional empire is derived from ancient, secular and oppressive structures and customs, Boff explain this connection as follows:

The power structure in the Church today is indebted to centuries-old patterns, and two patterns are worthy noting in particular: the experiences with Roman power and Feudal structure. The Church assumed customs, titles, expressions, and symbols from them. Hierarchy, as a term and as a concept, is a result of this process (Boff 1985:40).

Kee (1986: 79), explains that the criticism of Boff is not that the Catholic Church is itself a class society neither does it co-exist with the class society but it replicate the

class society. He further explained that Boff is not saying the Church fails to criticise the values on which society is founded, but that the Church exists on the same basis. In order to maintain its monarchic absolute control Boff further tries to explain how the Catholic Church developed theologically justified excuses to avoid criticism and being questioned. He relates this as follows:

The rejection of Protestantism was a historical mistake not only because Luther was excommunicated but because any possibility of true criticism or questioning of the system in the name of the gospel was also expelled. Catholicism became a total, reactionary, violent and repressive ideology. There is nothing further from evangelical spirit than a catholicistic system's pretension to unlimited infallibility, to questionability, to absolute certainty' (Boff 1985:86).

A Church which assumes such power and divine status is convinced that it has a higher role in the welfare of people and it inevitably assumes that it knows better than the State. The dialogue of 'unequals' normally expects the presupposed weaker party to follow the stronger party in dialogue. It is my argument in this study that an effective dialogue is only possible if both parties in dialogue contribute equally to the welfare of the people as proposed by Bonhoeffer. If the Catholic Church decides to come down from its holy throne of apostolic succession to the round table for a while, then its dialogical method might be empathetic and engaging.

5.1.4) Bonhoeffer's Church-State Model: An Empathetic Dialogical Model

As shown in chapter two, Bonhoeffer gives the State the same significance as the Church towards the welfare of humanity. He offers an alternative relational basis of the Church and the State which this study is convinced will promote dialogue and empathy as compared to the Catholic Church model. Bonhoeffer's Church-State model encourages both the Church and the State to respect each other's unique contribution. Respect of the one whom an institute dialogues with is normally based on understanding the other's position or perspective before you judge or unfairly treat him/her. The study chose to use Bonhoeffer's Church-State model because it brings the Church and government/State on the same level and make them instruments of service to the people on behalf of the Christ who is the master of both institutions. Being an instrument means that if the State fails the people, the Church has an obligation to confront the State but before confronting the State, the Church should also evaluate

the possible factors which might have caused this failure as reflected in Chapter three. If the Church chooses to come into a domain which is not its specialty it is supposed to respect the conditions given by that particular domain, without compromising the truth.

Bonhoeffer's model accommodates dialogue in which the perspective of the 'other' is empathetically discerned before a prophetic confrontation; in this sense Bonhoeffer creates a conducive ground for an Empathetic dialogue between the Church and State in Zimbabwe.

5.2) The Second Trajectory of the Catholic Church's Non-Empathetic Dialogue

The second non-empathetic trajectory of the Catholic Church's dialogue is the one which is highlighted in the 'Zimbabwe We Want' (ZWW) document, where I pointed out in Chapter four that the Church did not speak with one voice and as result the Church compromised with State, and Love and Vezha commented that such a compromise 'serves to encourage a perpetuation of the Mugabe and his party, and failed to engage critically with the experience of Zimbabweans' (2009:433).

5.2.1) The Failure of the Catholic Church to Speak with One Voice

The ZCBC Pastoral letter of the 1st of October 2009 entitled 'National Healing and Reconciliation' in its attempt to explain the history behind the present situation in Zimbabwe highlighted the history which led to the division between the Ndebele and the Shona. It traced the history from pre-colonial times, when the Ndebele used to raid the Shona and the Shona had cultivated negative feeling towards Ndebele groups. The feeling of rivalry between the groups was evident during the liberation struggle as it was expressed in sport, culture and political activities (ZCBC 2009:2).

The relationship between the Shona and Ndebele was made worse during the *Gukurahundi* in 1983 when Mugabe ordered the 5th Brigade to kill and search for dissidents and the mission resulted in mass murdering of innocent people. I have mentioned more details about the *Gukurahundi* in Chapter three. As a result of this

sad history the relation between the Shona and the Ndebele is characterised with tribal tension up to this day. This tension between the tribal affiliations overflowed into the clergy's dealing with the State's injustices.

5.2.2) The Failure of the Catholic Church to Speak with One Voice on Abuses of Human Rights

Dorman (2003:1), in her article 'Rocking the Boat: Church-NGOs and Democratisation in Zimbabwe' recognised that the relationship between the Church and the State in Zimbabwe has tended to be co-operative and non-confrontational. She looked back and admired the literature which expressed the way the Catholic Church and other organisations united against the oppressive white settlers in the Rhodesian State. She also recognised that little has been written in the post-independence era, which reflects the pre-colonial spirit of the Catholic Church. Phiri (2003:3) in an article entitled 'Zim Clergy Split on Mugabe' also affirmed the point by Dorman when he wrote that many observers have been puzzled at the silence of the clergy and bishops in Zimbabwe in the face of human rights violations and have questioned if it was the same Catholic Church which courageously stood against the government of Smith.

The question which inevitably follows is to ask why the Zimbabwean Clergy chooses not to speak against the Zimbabwean unjust regime except for one outspoken archbishop. The other bishops never spoke against Mugabe they just participated in writing Pastoral letters. Part of the response to the silence of the Church leaders is expressed in an ecumenical document prepared by ZCBC and other Church leaders.

The document expressed that some member of the Clergy

have fallen into the pit of political appeasement at the expense of maintaining the integrity of the Church. This traditional aloofness and metaphysical disengagement have made the Church an officious bystander caught between the anguish of its members and the spiritual interpretation of its mandate' (ZWW 2006:13).

The other reason for the Clergy's failure to speak out lies in the divisions which are based on political and ethnic affiliation and sympathies have hindered the Catholic Church from providing a more coherent and unified voice of leadership to the nation

of Zimbabwe (ZWW 2006:13). These Church leaders have further exploited this division for their own purposes. The same leadership has tried to mitigate the gravity of the current hardships (:13). I will therefore highlight some specific scenario concerning these Catholic Church Clergy.

Bergin (2003:1) in his article 'Zimbabwe: Catholic Bishops Condemn Mugabe Government' related a story in which one archbishop suppressed a report by the Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe on the massacre of 10 000 civilians in the Western provinces of Matabeleland in the early 1980s. When this bishop died the government declared him a national hero even if other bishops were against the idea. At the funeral of the archbishop the president mentioned that he had supported the farm seizures from white farmers.

Another scenario which reflects the division on the clergy's failure to speak with one voice was highlighted by Phiri (2003:1) in his article 'Zim Clergy Spit on Mugabe' in which he related an incident which happened when religious leaders issued a statement early in 2003 criticising the violence that had accompanied the March 2002 presidential poll. Some local priests gave a counter statement and distanced themselves from the expressed sentiments. In another incident at the height of the farm invasions, a local Jesuit priest tried to mediate between the government and the white farmers. The results of his effort were found to be preoccupied with the race debate because he appeared to be trying to justify the legitimacy of land occupation with difficulty. It is alleged that he was a staunch supporter of Mugabe (:1).

The voice of the Church was not effective because the majority of the clergy shares Mugabe's ethnic group and minority of the Clergy, especially the outspoken bishop, belong to another minority ethnic group. The study is not absolutely asserting that the ethnic group was the only reason for the ineffective of this dialogue but I argue that it played a pivotal role.

5.3) Conclusion

In this chapter I pursued two trajectories which show that the Catholic Church's dialogical method is non-empathetic. One trajectory looked at the Catholic Church's

authoritative voice in dialogue which is prescriptive and non-consultative. The other trajectory focused on the failure of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe to speak with one voice, since one faction of the clergy compromised with the State instead of empathising with it. Both trajectories fail to effectively engage in dialogue with the State.

Chapter Six

Conclusion and Some points to Note

6.1) Conclusion

In this study I have evaluated the effectiveness of the Catholic Church's prophetic voice in the post independence Zimbabwe. I have shown that being prophetic is not enough unless this prophesy engages with the one to whom it is directed to. I proposed a dialogical prophetic voice, which is both prophetic and engaging. For the prophetic voice to be dialogical it has to be empathetic. Being empathetic means context does not mean to sympathise or compromise but to be able to see through the eyes of the other party in dialogue in a bid to constructively challenge or criticize the other. Hence, I suggested an Empathetic Dialogical method as central and foundational to an effective dialogical process. I also proposed Bonhoeffer's Church-State model as a conducive ground for an Empathetic dialogue.

6.2) Some Points to Note: Difficulties in the Zimbabwean Church-State Dialogue

Concerning the prescriptive and non-consultative nature of the Catholic Church, the local Church should partially dissociate itself from idea that the Catholic Church is the custodian of the truth and try to work in consultation with the government. If the Catholic Church is the one that initiates a dialogue it should also forfeit some of its privileges and give priority to the perspective of the government without compromising with the State or the truth but be in a position of giving up its pride and let the situation inform its decisions. In August 20th 2010, I asked one of the Priest Fr Albert Nolan whether the Catholic Church ever consulted the government before commenting on issues, he told me that the Catholic Church only consults within itself when giving a statement and in most cases its decisions are not informed by the perspective of the State. This research's main objective is to make the Church aware that dialogue is a learning experience not a platform for prescription of unfounded convictions. The Church should realise that its ministry can be richer if it decide to learn from the State which handle day to day problems of the people.

The voice of the Catholic Church can never be one soon because Zimbabwe is deeply divided into two main tribes with a very painful history, and this history is passed from one generation to another. The Catholic Church cannot be excused because the majority of the clergy are from these two main tribes. This problem cannot be solved by the Catholic Church because the leaders who constitute the Catholic Church are coming already with tribal preconceptions. Possibly the Catholic Church can help by bringing someone who neither belong to both groups to convince the ruling party to accept responsibility of the killings of the 1980s. The Catholic Church appointed a Ndebele Bishop to be an archbishop of a Shona dominated area but it seems to be no solution because the Shona clergy can still choose not to support him. Once Mugabe accepts responsibility for the Matebeleland massacre, a cleansing ceremony can be done but it seems this tribal conflict will persist for few more generations. Possibly after a few generations there will be a united Zimbabwe because at present the Catholic Church is controlled by tribal conflicts.

I propose Bonhoeffer's Church-State model as a suitable dialogical model and I tried to highlight its merits, unfortunately this model cannot take root in a Church which is divided like in Zimbabwe. In as much as the Empathetic Dialogical Method has something to offer to the Church, the Church cannot benefit as long as its house is not in order. First the Church has to be one before it can decide what sort of a model is relevant for dialogue.

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