

**A Contextual Theological Approach to New Testament Interpretation: The
Relevance of 2 Corinthians 5: 18-21 to Reconciliation in Post-Genocide Rwanda
Through Church Mediation.**

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ABSTRACT

This research pays attention firstly to the text of 2 Corinthians within the historical context from which it was produced and secondly within the context of the Rwandan genocide. This research outlines the background of Paul's discussion of reconciliation in his letter, showing how reconciliation was dealt with in Corinth and pointing out that in order to deal with issues pertaining to reconciliation one needs to consider the context and then appropriate the text in a given context. It then goes on to do an exegesis of the selected text, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, to show that the Bible has resources to offer for reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda. The socio-historical, economic and political background to Rwanda is analyzed. In addition, it investigates the Rwandan understanding of reconciliation, highlighting traditional and socio-political reconciliation and how Paul's philosophy of reconciliation can be relevant in this context. It first explores the role of the church in genocide before suggesting how the church can be effective in bringing about reconciliation after genocide, in the light of Paul's understanding of reconciliation.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this whole Masters dissertation is my own work and it has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of tertiary education. I have not plagiarized from any source that I have not quoted or referenced. I have fully referenced my research using the Harvard system.



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As supervisor, I agree to the submission of the dissertation.

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I thank my God Almighty who has offered me ability and courage to tackle this sensitive issue. I acknowledge all those who have contributed to make this happen: "I am because you are"!

DEDICATION

I dedicate this to all those who lost their beloved ones in Rwanda and more particularly to all my family, parents, brothers and sisters who died in these atrocities.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AACC:	All Africa Conference of Churches
AMECEA:	Association Member Episcopal Conferences of East Africa
BC:	Before Christ
CWAR:	Church World Action Rwanda
DRC :	République Démocratique du Congo
FARG:	Assistance Aux Rescapé du Génocide
ICTR:	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
LWF:	Lutheran World Federation
MRND :	Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement
NRCV:	New Revised Standard Version
NURC:	National unity and Reconciliation Commission
PARMEHUTU :	Partie du Mouvement de l' Emancipation des Hutu
RAF:	Forces Armée Rwandais
RPA:	Rwandese Patriotic Army
RPF:	Rwanda Patriotic Front
SACC:	South Africa Council of Church
TOB:	Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible
TRC:	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UN:	United Nations
WCC:	World Council of Churches
CAURWA:	Communauté des Autochthones Rwandais

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Reconciliation is a key theme in 2 Corinthians and in this particular passage (5:18-21) Paul emphasizes reconciliation as his primary concern for the Corinthians. Paul's philosophy of reconciliation should bring people into relationship with God through the mediation of Jesus Christ, and into relationship with one another. The main aim of this dissertation is whether this could provide a model for reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda. This chapter discusses the background to the topic, the reason for choosing this particular topic, the problems that the researcher intends to explore, the theory that the research is built on and the outline of the research.

1.1 Aim of and Motivation for the Research

The background and motivation for choosing this topic comes from the tragedy Rwanda experienced beginning in 1990, from my study in biblical hermeneutics and from the recent South African church initiative to restore reconciliation in Rwanda. The Rwandan catastrophe reached its climax in 1994. This period was a time of war between the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) of the Tutsi rebels and the Rwandese Armed Forces (RAF) of the former regime led by a Hutu President, Juvenal Habyarimana. On 6 April 1994 this president, together with other officials such as President Cyprian Ntaryamira of Burundi, died when his plane was shot down at Kanombe airport. Although Hutu and Tutsi had previously had what seemed to be a good relationship in general, this incident resulted in hatred and civil war between the two ethnic groups. More than eight hundred thousand Hutu and Tutsi victims were killed. Tensions still exist between the two ethnic groups and there is an urgent need for reconciliation.

How to restore unity between these two ethnic groups is a problem both nationally and internationally. There have been a number of government initiatives: Hutu, who were considered perpetrators were imprisoned. Others were held under house-arrest in villages. The government also used the *Gacaca* system¹ to speed up justice and the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission introduced "civic re-education," *Ingando*, for those Hutu repatriated from the Congo². But none of these initiatives has yet been able to achieve reconciliation. The South Africa Council of Churches (SACC) is trying to intervene in Rwanda. Towards the end of 2005 a delegation of the SACC went to Rwanda to encourage the country's faith communities to stand up and participate visibly in the current reconciliation initiatives and to share South African stories with a view to journeying together in the process of healing and reconciliation. The question is how can the church achieve reconciliation when it was also implicated in the genocide.

Though Eugenia Zorbas argues that national reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda is a vague and messy process because of difficulties stemming from the particular nature of the Rwandan crisis and the popular participation that characterized the Rwandan atrocities,³ I argue that reconciliation is possible through the mediation of the church, using God's word and encouraging repentance and forgiveness. A victim usually waits for the perpetrator to initiate reconciliation. But Paul suggests that Christ (and Paul himself) took the initiative to reach out to the perpetrator to ask for reconciliation and forgiveness. I suggest that this could be a model to Rwanda, since 80% of the population

¹ The *Gacaca* system is a traditional system used in rural areas or villages where it deals with family matters or conflict such as when someone oversteps the plot edges while ploughing or when domestic animals have gone in another's plantation. The penalty imposed by this *Gacaca* was formerly not more than a jar of beer. But here it has been given power or responsibility which is beyond its capacity. It has not taken the country further in the goal of reconciliation because the system was controlled by the government which was (and still is) made up of one ethnic group (the Tutsi)

² It also tried to promote reconciliation by addressing the poverty of the victims; it attempted to answer the type of question posed by one widowed woman who asked, "How can I forgive, when my livelihood was destroyed and I cannot even pay for the schooling of my children?" This program has not accomplished anything so far in bringing reconciliation, because the Rwandan economy which is based on agriculture will take time to develop.

³ Eugenia Zorbas is a Doctoral Candidate at the Development Studies Institute, London School of Economics and political Science. Her research focuses on post-conflict reconstruction, reconciliation debates and the role of nationalism and ethnicity. In 2003/3, she worked for the United Nation High Commission for Refugees in Rwanda. See www.africalawinstitute.org/ajls/vol1/no1/zorbas.pdf (accessed on 23 February 2006).

claims to be Christian and still attend church services every Sunday. The church could perhaps follow the example of Germans in terms of church confession after World War 2:

We accuse ourselves for not witnessing more courageously, for not praying more faithfully, for not believing more joyously and for not loving more ardently. Now a new beginning is to be made in our churches. (Beckmann in De Gruchy 2002:109).

The aim of this research is to see how Paul's treatment of reconciliation in this particular text can be used to promote forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation in a country where 80% of the population claims to be Christians. My research outlines the background of Paul's discussion of reconciliation in his letter, highlighting the socio-economic and political aspects of the text. It then goes on to do an exegesis of the selected text to show that the bible has resources to offer for reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda. The socio-historical, economic and political background to Rwanda will be analyzed. In addition, I will investigate the Rwandan understanding of reconciliation and how Paul's philosophy of reconciliation can be appropriated in this context.

1.2 Preliminary Study and Location for the Research within the Existing Literature

As a Hutu refugee from Rwanda, I have been outside of my own country for twelve years. I have chosen this topic because I am one of the people who would like to see reconciliation happening in Rwanda. Though this research is on Rwanda, it can perhaps help other countries that experience hatred and atrocities and need future reconciliation. In this research many theologians and secular writers of books, articles and websites will help in understanding a crucial topic that is relevant in many countries today.

The literature used in this study is divided into four categories. The first category consists of literature on the understanding reconciliation. The second category is of literature on understanding Paul's view of reconciliation in 2 Corinthians. The third category is of literature on the Rwandan context, and the fourth category is of literature on understanding reconciliation in a given context, namely in South Africa.

1.2.1 Literature on the Understanding of Reconciliation

Reconciliation cannot be separated from the attendant issues of justice, reparation, forgiveness, vengeance, hope and despair. The understanding of these issues, involve reconciliation, will require theological resources. There are many resources on reconciliation but I have not seen much literature on theological resources for reconciliation that focus on post-genocide Rwanda, apart from that of Anne Kubai (2005). Kubai addresses the challenges of forgiveness and reconciliation that face the church in post-genocide Rwanda and argues that the most important issue in Rwanda is the creation of a sustainable peace.

A number of chapters in a recent book edited by Gopin and Volf (2006), from their different religious traditions offer resources for reconciliation. In attempting to provide resources to achieve reconciliation, Miroslav Volf offers a theological framework of how to achieve a political and social reconciliation through God's embrace as revealed on the cross. Volf provides many examples of the way the world excludes people and argues that we do exclude others in many ways: killing and driving them out; assigning others the status of inferior beings and exclusion through abandonment, for instance in the way suburbs relate to inner cities (2006:25). He proposes a vision of embrace in response to the practice of exclusion (2006:30). He does not suggest that perpetrators should not be stopped, but recommends that the best way (the Christian way) to respond to iron and blood is not with iron and blood; rather it is to invite the perpetrator for a cup of coffee and enquire of him or her, as the human being, what has brought him or her to do such a thing (2006:31).

In the same volume, Liechty, Isasi-Diaz and Tombs (2006) focus on the dynamics of reconciliation and Christian theology from various contexts apart from the Rwandan context. They emphasize different aspects of Christian forgiveness, the emergence of contextual political theologies and the challenges of political reconciliation which I intend to elaborate on in this research. Drawing on his long experience of reconciliation in Northern Ireland and his theological understanding of reconciliation, Liechty (2006:59-68) puts forgiveness in its place because he notices that often in the

reconciliation process there are unhelpful general debates, for instance whether repentance must precede forgiveness or vice-versa. But for him, forgiveness or repentance do not have to occur in a certain order. Nevertheless, one needs to distinguish between forgiving as an absolution which requires repentance and forgiving as letting-go which does not require repentance before it can be given and involves the risk that there will be no response. He says that, in practice, repentance and forgiving need justice seeking and truth seeking to keep them honest. For people to choose meaningful change they need a certain level of confidence, otherwise they will not change without truth and hope (2006:67).

In the same volume, Wilhelm Verwoerd, Cecilia Clegg and Geraldine Smyth offer some challenges of reconciliation from different contexts. Wilhelm Verwoerd has experienced reconciliation in South Africa and elsewhere outside of Africa. He deals with practical challenges that the churches and society face to bring reconciliation alive. He addresses religious questions the issues that arise from reconciliation based on religious identity. He suggests remembering the hurt and harming on all sides for reconciliation (2006:106). He then argues that we need to remember the horrible, the human (*Ubuntu*) and the heroic of the past for building the future, something which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission promoted, that is, to speak unspeakable deeds of the horrible and face them, to remember that the one who committed inhuman acts is one of us, a "fellow human being," and to remember those who struggled to unite and build relationships, those who were able to forgive and to take risks to meet the gaze of a stranger (2006:106-122). He says, "We are reminded of the horrible, but also of truly admirable deeds; we are prompted to recognize the human potential to commit horrible deeds, but while doing so, to hold on to our potential to transcend the horrible" (2006:110). He finally suggests the ways of reconciliation used by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; the telling, translation and recording of many stories and accounts of those termed "perpetrators" and "victims" of gross violations of human rights.

Cecilia Clegg, a psychologist and therapist, as Liechty does, draws on the experience of religious conflict in Northern Ireland to offer a pastoral challenge to the churches and

other faith communities because, for example, the church concentrates on the personal dimension rather than the social dimension of a theology of reconciliation which entails a holistic understanding of human beings as conscious and unconscious. Clegg's view on reconciliation is that, according to her experience, theory should meet practice. She also presents reconciliation as a "process of salvation" which is not yet achieved and which is achieved but not yet fulfilled. Because of their experience together, Clegg and Liechty have moved beyond sectarianism and advise us to embrace one another in a sustained way (2006:135).

Finally, Geraldine Smyth (2006: 137-138) discusses Brian Keenan's argument about the connotations of crossing Jordan and argues that because of Jesus' example in crossing the Jordan, by a crossing and re-crossing of boundaries, people need to create and maintain right relationships.

1.2.2 Literature on Reconciliation in South Africa

Much has also been written on reconciliation in South Africa: Nürnberger and Tooke (1988), drawing from the National Initiative for Reconciliation, deal with the concept of reconciliation. I think Klaus Nürnberger and John Tooke (1988:12) rightly point out that

There can be no true reconciliation and no genuine peace without justice; any form of peace or reconciliation that allows the sin of injustice and oppression to continue is a false peace and counterfeit reconciliation. This kind of reconciliation has nothing whatsoever to do with the Christian faith.

Hay (1998) and de Gruchy (2002), drawing from the experience of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, attempt to clarify the meaning of the concept of reconciliation and uncover the dynamics of social reconciliation in South Africa. Drawing from Christian faith and tradition, de Gruchy makes a connection between God's gift of reconciliation in Christ and political struggles for justice and peace. Using the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa as his case study, de Gruchy cautions against cheap alternatives to reconciliation. He argues that reconciliation is about the restoration of justice, whether that has to do with our justification by God, the renewal of interpersonal relations, or the transformation of society (2002:55)

1.2.3 Literature on the Pauline Understanding of Reconciliation

My research is focusing on a particular biblical passage dealing with reconciliation, that is 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. I need to understand what this text meant in its own context before I can appropriate it in my context. Many books and articles analyze this Pauline passage. Young and Ford (1987) help us to understand Paul's view of God as a God who works through the church to mediate reconciliation. Young and Ford are biblical scholars and systematic theologians. Their approaches to the text of 2 Corinthians come from both theological and exegetical perspectives. According to Young and Ford (1987:236), God is seen as "living, knowing, encouraging, promising, providing, raising the dead, speaking and acting in various other ways. He is also affirmed to be holy, powerful, faithful, glorious, righteous, merciful and a God of peace."

With regard to God's attributes and reconciliation, Plummer (1999), an expert in Biblical languages, provides helpful insights by pointing to the difference between Greek and Jewish thought. He states,

Greeks thought of God as estranged from men and it was He who needed to be won over. Jews thought rather that it was men who by their sins were estranged from God, and the sin needs to be cleansed or purged or covered in order to bring about reconciliation. Paul follows Jewish rather than Hellenic thought. He argues that it is man who is reconciled to God, rather than God to man (1999:181).

In his commentary on 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 he tries to show that God did all that was necessary on His side by sending His Son to reconcile human beings to Himself, while human beings do not do what is necessary from their side.

O'Connor (1983), Thrall (2004), Plummer (1999) and Furnish (1968) will help in understanding 2 Corinthians theologically, socially and politically, while Martin (1981) identifies and discusses the different ways reconciliation is understood by Paul and his followers.

Others have appropriated this text in different contexts and their insight will be helpful. Schreier (1989) analyses reconciliation as spirituality and offers some elements of a strategy for reconciliation, while Chetty (2001) takes the work of Paul in reconciliation

and applies it to the trauma of rape victims in developing the notion of forgiveness; Kubai (2005) also uses Paul's work in this way. Chetty (2001) argues that the survivor, like God, could take the initiative and reach out for reconciliation with the perpetrator. He says, "If the victim does not take the initiative to forgive and reconcile but rather leaves this possibility in the hands of the offender, then the offender will still dominate the psychological well-being of the survivor" (2001:84).

1.2.4 Literature on the Context of Rwanda

The Rwandan socio-historical and political contexts need to be understood. Gourevitch (1998) and McCullum (1995) deal with the history, politics and social situation in Rwanda before and after genocide. Gourevitch (1998) tells the story of the Rwandan population from the settlement of the country until the genocide and gives many examples of genocides. To explain what has happened in Rwanda he says, "Rwandan history is dangerous. Like all of history, it is a record of successive struggles for power, and to a very large extent power consists in the ability to make others inhabit your story of their reality even when that story is written in their blood" (1998:48). Zorbas (2004), from a legal perspective, offers helpful insights into reconciliation in Rwanda. She analyses reconciliation politically in post-genocide Rwanda and she argues that national reconciliation presents special difficulties that stem from the particular nature of the Rwandan crisis and the popular participation that characterized the Rwandan atrocities.⁴ Rutayisire (1995) collects many stories of Christian bravery to show the role of the church during genocide.

Although reconciliation is a trajectory that is found in the whole Bible, building on the above literatures, I limit myself to Paul's philosophy of reconciliation and its application to post-genocide Rwanda. This research will not include an in-depth political analysis of the Rwandan situation because it seems to me to be beyond the scope of this dissertation.

⁴ For more information see www.africalawinstitute.org/ajls/vol1/no1/zorbas.pdf (accessed on 23 February 2006).

1.3 Research Problems and Objectives: Key Questions to be Asked

Despite the urgent necessity of reconciliation, it is difficult to define the concept. It is also a problem to attain reconciliation in our world today. Many Christians take it for granted that reconciliation is a central concern of the biblical faith (Nürnberger and Tooke 1988:4) and consequently they apply this metaphor in different contexts. In spite of everything, it is a subject that should be considered in relation to our social and political lives. Furthermore, for the church today it should be the first priority because the gospel we preach is about building bridges between God and people, between us and others and between us and creation. Unfortunately today many who claim to be Christians are alienated from God and hate one another. The question is how can this gap be bridged?

This research is all about making Paul's philosophy of reconciliation relevant in post-genocide Rwanda. It argues that the church, as a mediator, should promote repentance and forgiveness against retaliation. The church has been silent on the issue of reconciliation because it has been accused of participating in the genocide.⁵ But the biblical model, more particularly in Paul's epistles, should be advocated to help the people of Rwanda in bringing together the two ethnic groups. Is the Bible alone sufficient? What are other psychological interventions that can help? Can the South African model of reconciliation help to bring about reconciliation in Rwanda?

This research becomes very important in looking at the influence of religion and its scriptures as one of the few remaining options left after those that have been tried by politicians in this shattered country of poverty, oppression and hatred. Even though we may speak about introducing systems and programs, I agree with de Gruchy, it is only God who brings reconciliation. He says that reconciliation is "a work in progress, a dynamic set of processes into which we are drawn and in which we participate" (2002:28).

⁵ Kubai (2006), Zorbas (2004), Gourevitch (1998) and Rutayisire (1995) give details of the church's participation in genocide. They also give some examples of names and places.

Christians believe that, although God could have punished the whole world for its sin, God did not solve the problem of humanity through vengeance. God has forgiven the sins of humanity and made a bridge for all through Christ's death. The reconciliation that is needed in Rwanda is that relationship between genocide victim and perpetrator. The main problem of this research is on how can national reconciliation be possible after genocide? In order to consider this, the research will attempt to address the following:

- (1) What is reconciliation and what are the issues involved in it?
- (2) What are previous initiatives that have failed to bring reconciliation in Rwanda?
- (3) What is Paul's understanding of reconciliation and what potential might it have for reconciliation in Rwanda?
- (4) Is forgiveness through the "instrument of religion" something possible in a country that is marred by hatred and violence?
- (5) If church mediation has the potential to bring about reconciliation, is the biblical teaching or are the biblical tools enough on their own?
- (6) Are there any insights that we can draw from South African church involvement in reconciliation in order to apply them to Rwanda's problem of tribal hatred?

1.4 Principal Theories upon which the Research Project will be Constructed

The word "reconciliation" means "reunion," therefore social reconciliation will mean to draw victim and offender together. Reconciliation implies forgiveness, repentance and healing. Reconciliation and forgiveness must include a change of heart towards one's offender or victim. This means that where there was hatred, revenge, maliciousness and bitterness this must be replaced by goodwill, respect, tolerance and love (Chetty 2001:17).

Paul understands that reconciliation between humankind (or the world) and God is vital because humanity is guilty of estrangement from God and alienation from other human beings. Instead of people having to approach God to plead for forgiveness, God came to make expiation through Christ's death (Martin 1981:93:110). This becomes very important in the situation in Rwanda because it is different from our usual philosophy

where the victim waits for offender to repent, and then s/he may or may not receive forgiveness. I argue that, theologically speaking, forgiveness should precede repentance (Liechty 2006:60-61) as God exemplified for us. Paul's use of reconciliation refers to different issues and needs in the varied contexts to which his correspondence is addressed. For example in 2 Corinthians he presents reconciliation by using the new creation in Christ, the righteousness of God and the mission of the church.⁶

This dissertation elaborates and applies Paul's philosophy to the context of Rwanda. It will be a non-empirical study that will use Draper's tri-polar model for contextual exegesis in the new South Africa (Draper 2002). It will deal with contextual theology and the politics of reconciliation connecting God's gift of reconciliation in Christ and political struggles for peace and justice. In this research, I will argue that politicians try to bring about reconciliation, but only God can give genuine reconciliation. Rwandans need to see God's presence in the political world and to try to understand the situation from a faith perceptive of justice, peace and reconciliation.⁷ Paul's philosophy of reconciliation and the South African example of reconciliation suggest that through the church's involvement in reconciliation, using the biblical tools (like that of Paul's philosophy in reconciliation) forgiveness, repentance, truth and justice can be promoted.

1.5 Structure of Dissertation

The dissertation will have six chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and the background to the whole study. It also discusses the literature used in the study, the theory that it is built on, together with the problems of the research. Chapter two explains the contextual methodology used in this research and the use of Draper's tri-polar model of exegesis. It also explains the rhetorical critical tools that will be applied in the textual exegesis. Chapter three explores Paul's understanding of reconciliation. This chapter highlights Paul's background and that of his letter and contains the exegesis of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 and the relevance of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 to reconciliation in the

⁶ This research will also refer to the use of reconciliation in Colossians, Romans and other books of the New Testament.

⁷ Bevans (2003) proposes a way in which to think more clearly about the interaction of the Gospel message and culture. Moreover Tombs (2006: 85-99) explains a theology of reconciliation and political theology.

time of Paul. Chapter four explores the context of Rwanda, highlighting its socio-economic, political, and religious context before and after the genocide. This chapter also provides an overview of reconciliation in the context of Rwanda and discusses social and political reconciliation before and after the genocide. Chapter five focuses on the relevance of Paul's philosophy of reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda. It also highlights the matters pertaining to the role of the church and its shortcomings in reconciliation. Chapter six is a summary of all the work covered. It comments on the issues that have come out of the dissertation and thereafter gives recommendations based on the research.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY USED IN THIS RESEARCH

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explains my methodology and attempts to define the meaning of contextual analysis of the New Testament. To achieve the thesis' goal, it highlights the "tri-polar" exegetical model in biblical scholarship as proposed by Draper (2001) and discusses rhetorical criticism which I shall use in my exegesis of the text.

2.2 A Contextual Approach: Exegetical Method in the New Testament Interpretation

A contextual approach is defined by Maluleke (2001:397) as approaching the text from the context of life situation or experience. The contextual approach to the New Testament text recognizes that the text and its author have a social and political context different to that of the reader. Blount (1995:4) argues that "the social and political ramifications are as critical as the religious". It is likely that people in different social contexts often operate with different linguistic forms, since language is a frame-work in which we communicate. This means that the interaction between sociolinguistic perspectives and the language of a text results in a unique understanding about the power and meaning of that text (Blount 1995:5). Speckman and Kaufmann (2001:2) note, "The social context is always the determination of the kind of questions posed to the text". Draper (2001:149-150) points out that the reason why there is emphasis on the context of both reader and audience in biblical interpretation "rests upon the fundamental understanding that there is no neutral or absolute meaning of a text or, for the matter, of any human communication... we can only understand a written or spoken statement because we know what is going on".

At this stage we will not only be dealing with the text of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, its author Paul, and its reception by the Corinthian Christian audience, but also with the social linguistics of the letter's later recipients, such as the Rwandan community. It requires us to do an exegesis of both in order for us to understand the text better. Hayes and Halladay (1987:23) note that "doing exegesis requires us to know first of all, that there are different kinds of questions we can put to a text, and second, which kind of questions to ask for different purposes". For that reason, several methods will be employed to expose the meaning of the text and its context.

2.3 Methodological Procedure: Draper's Tri-Polar Exegetical Model

My task in this research is to elaborate on Paul's understanding of reconciliation and how it can be relevant in post-genocide Rwanda. It calls for interaction between the biblical text and the context of Rwanda, with the goal of contributing towards the solution of a contemporary Rwandan problem of reconciliation. Contextual exegesis for the Rwandan faith community is applied therefore by adopting and expanding three steps outlined by Draper (2002). These are firstly, distantiation (letting the text speak for itself); secondly, contextualization (knowing one's context and how one relates to the communication offered by the text); thirdly and finally, appropriation (accepting the meaning and implication of the text for one's self and one's community).

2.3.1 Distantiation

In the present study I will consider "distantiation" in the first stage. The goal of this stage is "the reconstruction of the text in its own right in opposition to us in our context and need" (Draper 2001:156). This stage allows the Pauline text to be alien and intended for others. Thus, I allow the text to speak for itself (Young and Ford 1987:127, Draper 2001:155). I will listen to the text of 2 Corinthians rather than to my own echo (2001:156). This is the moment of exegesis. According to Friedl and Friedl (2002:443-471), "exegetical methodology of the Bible" is a means serving the understanding that a community of faith has of its Scripture (the sacred writings of the Christian religion). Both point out that a text (an object of research) "has an intrinsic [sic] meaning, which

only needs to be discovered by an exegete (the subject of the research) through his scientific activities” (1999:445). The description of the meaning “intrinsic’ is problematical but the quote does point to what Young and Ford say (1987:127). They view this moment of exegesis as having the purpose of gaining the meaning of words and sentences, unpacking the reference of the text and providing information which assists understanding, whether of sequence of thought or the unexpressed presuppositions.

Consequently, I agree with Draper (2001:155), that the Pauline text is rooted in an historical, social, cultural and economic context different to our own and needs to be analyzed. The reason why reconciliation is needed and the precise reason by which it will be achieved in Paul’s context differs from my context.⁸ As Speckman and Kaufman (2001:4) note, the social context of the text helps one determine the kind of questions one must pose to the text. It necessitates knowing the context of Paul and the Corinthian community as implied readers. I will do a close and critical reading using scientific tools such as rhetorical criticism in order to understand the context of Paul’s text. Therefore, I will apply two approaches in this regard: synchronic which involves trusting that the text has a basic meaning and not regarding oneself as being the factor or person who imparts meaning to the text and diachronic which unnaturally investigates the biblical text to affect the interpretation of the present and open other possible interpretations (Friedl and Friedl 2002:445, 465).

2.3.2 Contextualization

In this stage of exegesis, according to Draper (2001:156), the exegete acknowledges that “there is no absolute meaning for a text”. This stage considers that the context of the first readers is different from that of the current reader’s faith community. There is a gap in its meaning, since the meaning will be determined by the readers. Draper believes that “we must insist that the goal of the whole process of exegesis is the meaning of the text as sacred text for the faith community in its own context” (2001:154). This necessitates a critical analysis of the Rwandan historical, social, cultural and economic context. I will

⁸ The article by Draper (2001: 148-168) will help to make the text meaningful for the community according to their context. His theory is important because I will take the text and interpret it critically in the context of the post-genocide Rwandan situation.

do this because the context of Paul's text is different from that of the Rwandan context and as Draper says, "Our context is not the same as that of the first readers/hearers (since the great majority of ancient believers *heard* the Biblical text and were not able to read it) of the text... It is the context of the reader, as well as the signals enclosed in the text and its context, which determines that meaning" (2001: 156-157). Bevans (2002:5) also argues that "context includes the experiences of a person's or group's personal life: the experiences of success, failure, births, deaths, relationships and so forth that allow persons to or prevent persons from experiencing God in their lives". The analysis of the Rwandan context follows the procedure applied in the distantiation stage.

2.3.3 Appropriation

The final stage in this research will examine the meaning and implications of the text for the community of Rwanda. This is what Draper calls *appropriation*, that is, the interpretation of the text in this case in the context of post-genocide Rwanda. It will bring together analysis of the text and the context of Rwanda to examine whether there is any way the text can be relevant to the context of Rwanda after the genocide. It will test whether the text can be a tool of the church for Rwanda's reconciliation. To explain this process, Draper (2001:158) states, "Interpretation brings together the horizon of the text and its community and the horizon of the reader and her community, and mediates a new consciousness leading to a new praxis." I am aware that this stage of analysis is a difficult one because its main aim is to be true to both text and context (Bachelor 2003:10). But it is also important because what "a community of faith believes affects what it does" (Draper 2001:158).

In analyzing the biblical text in the distantiation phase of this tri-polar exegetical model, I will endeavor to employ the rhetorical criticism approach. The next section briefly explains this tool for biblical interpretation.

2.4 Rhetorical Criticism Methodology

This section provides various understandings of rhetorical approach, how it has developed and which understanding I would like to follow. Majercik (1992:710) defines

rhetoric as “the art of composition by which language is made descriptive, interpretive, or persuasive”. Rhetoric is concerned with the text’s environment, the audience’s situation, the text’s interaction with audience or reader, and the author’s situation. Rhetorical criticism has been a complex critical tool in biblical interpretation for over twenty years (Fiorenza 1999:107).

According to Tull (1999:156-157) rhetoric has a historical development and I need to elaborate on its history. Tull points out that “from classical times until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries rhetoric was considered the foundation of the Western education. Among ancient Greeks, rhetoric was the art of effective communication, often particularized as persuasive public speech” (1999:156). But in the medieval period, rhetoric died because of “the rise of scientific inquiry and the consequent drive to view knowledge as founded upon observable fact rather than upon logic or persuasion” (1999:157). While ancient rhetoric was concerned with the prescriptions of effective speaking, the “new rhetoric”, in the twentieth century, was concerned specifically with “theories of discourse and epistemology, investigating the relationship among language, persuasion, knowledge and social control” (1999:157). This new rhetoric is also more concerned with the contexts. For instance, when the contexts of the interpreter change, then the interpretation also changes.

In this dissertation an attempt is made to work on the basis of the “new rhetoric” that Fiorenza (1999:106) views as “one of the oldest forms of both literary and political criticism that explores the particular historical uses of language in specific social political situations”. She argues that the ancient texts, such as the letter to the Corinthians, are rhetorical in that the language they use is a form of power that affects people and situations and constructs reality rather than merely reflecting it. She seems to be right in line with the scope of this dissertation when she says, “Rhetorical criticism focuses on the persuasive power and literary strategies of a text that have a communicative function in a concrete historical situation...The situation controls the rhetorical response in the same sense that the question controls the answer” (1999:108). The author of 2 Corinthians wrote to persuade the readers on the basis of arguments in a specific situation.

According to Fiorenza (1999:109), rhetorical analysis should have to move through four levels: (1) identifying the rhetorical interests, interpretive models, and the social locations of contemporary interpretation; (2) defining the rhetorical arrangement, interests, and modifications introduced by the author; (3) establishing the rhetorical situation of the letter; and (4) reconstructing the historical situation and symbolic universe of the Pauline letter. For example, Fiorenza (1999:122), in her analysis of 1 Corinthians, reconstructs the historical and rhetorical situation as being one where the Corinthians were trying to work out the implications of their baptismal formula, which was handed on to them by Paul, who had high social and educational status and experienced powerlessness, suffering and hardship in becoming a follower of Jesus Christ. She states that Paul's situation was quite different from that of the majority of the Corinthians and that is why they understood the baptismal formula differently as making them wise, strong, wealthy and esteemed spiritually, instead of understanding it the same way as Paul, as entailing suffering, hardships, and the cross.

After Paul had written 1 Corinthians to effect reconciliation among the Corinthians, his relationship with them deteriorated. Hence, Paul wrote 2 Corinthians to defend his behavior against attacks made with regard to his own ministry to the Corinthians. He addressed and attempted to overcome specific obstacles in the way of full reconciliation with his spiritual converts (Witherington III 1995:328). He believed that failure to achieve this reconciliation would endanger the very Christian identity of the Corinthian church. Scott (1998:4) asserts, "Taken as whole, the literary form of 2 Corinthians can be described as an appeal for concord, which seeks to calm the outbreak of faction by dissuading from strife and exhorting to harmony".

My agenda in using rhetorical criticism is to show how the word "reconciliation" should be understood in its rhetorical situation, the author's intention and then to suggest how I would wish the Rwandans to respond to the passage and my interpretation. Fiorenza (1999:87) argues that scholars engage in rhetoric and shape reality because in interpreting biblical texts they use argument, persuasion and present perspectives. I agree with

Fiorenza (1999:108) that "rhetoric seeks to instigate a change of attitudes and motivations, and it strives to persuade, to teach, and to engage the hearer/reader by eliciting reactions, emotions, convictions, and identifications". In view of the fact that the central focus for the church in Rwanda should be on the bible, the divided community of Rwanda needs a continuous interaction with the Spirit of God in biblical texts to achieve reconciliation, and looks for a way that has the power to evoke Rwandans' feelings in relation to reconciliation after the genocide. I am not so much concerned here about the rhetorical arrangements of 2 Corinthians, but my goal in interpretation of the text is however grounded in the three aspects of rhetoric that Mouton (2001:121-123) focuses on: *logos*, *ethos* and *pathos*.

To make the above terms more clear, in dealing with the situation in the church in post apartheid in South Africa, Mouton (2001:119-123) focuses on what she terms the "rhetoric of orientation and integration" and its implications. She uses three focal points (*logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*) in terms of a "rhetoric of theological vision". She argues that "reconciliation" is a central image for the church's *logos* and suggested "that the authority of scripture be re-focused and restructured within the dynamic site of continuous *interaction* between the Spirit of God, contemporary faith communities, and the biblical texts" (2001:122). She envisages biblical authority as liberating and healing *ethos*. What the interpretation of texts can do to people lies in how the interpreter approaches the texts, not changing the texts but approaching it from different angles (2001:123). She argues that this interpretation "wishes to explore the meaning of biblical texts in terms of strategies of persuasion which these texts advocate." In her own context she suggests that the lament and praise in liturgy should stir people's *pathos*, providing an environment in which people can explore their identity as the "household of God" (2001:123) and open themselves to change (2001:124). She asserts,

We learn to see our past, our personal and collective scar and guilt of sin committed and omitted for what they are, but also to revisit our own and others' stories through the lens of God's forgiving and healing love, and God's great deeds in history. In this way the Spirit teaches us to think, speak and act from a new collective identity, and accept the life stories of others as if were our own (2001:125).

CHAPTER THREE

DISTANTIATION: PAUL'S UNDERSTANDING OF RECONCILIATION

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I explored the methodology of this dissertation and pointed out that this dissertation is based on contextual exegesis as a methodological framework. I pointed out that this dissertation is built upon three stages: distantiation, contextualization, and appropriation. In other words, it follows the *tri-polar* exegetical model developed by Draper (2001:153).

This chapter endeavors to explore Paul's understanding of reconciliation, as the first stage of the methodology in this tri-polar exegetical model. The *distantiation* moment aims to allow the text to speak as it was intended for others, for the Corinthians in this context, not to us today though it can be easier said than done. It necessitates achieving "...critical distance from the text to suspend what the reader previously understood the text to mean, to open her/himself up to new understandings which may contradict her/his pre-suppositions" (Draper in Bachelor 2003:20). Paul, in this text, addresses the situation in Corinth after one and a half years of teaching to the Corinthians (Acts 18:11). Thus, the bulk of this chapter is devoted to considering the text, and the context of the Corinthian church.

As it is the center of attention of this first stage in contextual exegesis, the study of this particular passage should permit the text to have its authority over the reader. Since the goal of this stage is to reconstruct the text in its own context in opposition to our own context and needs, "We recognize that we come to the text with our presuppositions and prejudices and try to foreground these, but our work of reconstruction seeks to create

sufficient distance for us to hear the voice of the text rather than our own echo” (Draper 2001:156).⁹

I am aware that each text has its own socio-historical and cultural context in which it came into being, in which it manipulates the reader and gives meaning synchronically (textually immanent) and diachronically (historically). In this dissertation, one of the approaches will be to attempt to find out how the Corinthians perceived the text in their context. To do this, this study endeavors to use rhetorical criticism. It will primarily have historical interests, with an ultimate concern of reconstructing the structures, conflicts and development of the Corinthian community (Martin 1999:124).

Therefore, this chapter will establish the rhetorical situation of the letter and reconstruct the historical situation and symbolic universe of 2 Corinthians. It will define the rhetorical arrangement of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, Paul’s interest in reconciliation, and modifications introduced by the author in the same passage. Firstly, it will describe the socio-economic, political and religious context of the Corinthians; secondly, it will discuss Paul’s context, highlighting his life and his relationship to the Corinthian church; thirdly, it will analyze his letter to the Corinthians stressing reconciliation as the area under discussion and finally, the chapter will conclude with Paul’s philosophy of reconciliation.

3.2. Paul’s Audience: Corinthian Context in the Time of Paul

This section focuses on the socio-economic, political, religious and cultural factors at Corinth during Paul’s time since these provide some insight into the reconciliation that Paul deals with in 2 Corinthians, especially about the allegations that he was facing concerning the Jerusalem collection and his conflicts with other Jewish Christians.

⁹ In this dissertation I will be using both “I” and “We” to mean the readers of today’s world. This also might be used to refer to the Christian or non-Christian community in Rwanda.

Paul's audience consists of those whom he has converted in Corinth on his missionary journey and the Christians throughout Achaia (2 Corinthians 1:1). Hawkins says that though we have Paul's book and his story in Acts, in studying Paul one needs to be sceptical, bearing in mind that "no analysis of such a complex body of material as our Pauline canon can hope to be final" (1943:19). In other words, he is cautious of what we read about Paul because different people have different understandings of Paul's writings such as 2 Corinthians.

3.2.1 Setting of Corinth

Corinth is situated near the Isthmus, which links the rest of Greece with the Peloponnese (Szesnat 1987:58, Barrett 1973:1, Furnish 1984:2-7). The city of Corinth was north of the mountain citadel, which in the classical and Hellenistic period, though the region was not fertile, formed the centre of an important economy because of its commerce. After being destroyed by Rome in 146 BC, the city was rebuilt by Caesar in 46 BC. The word "reconciliation" had been in the minds of the Corinthian community, since Caesar's reconstruction of Corinth. Raharilalo comments,

Lors de la reconstruction de la ville de Corinthe en 44 avant Jésus Christ, César avait proclamé une réconciliation général, accueillant de la Grèce et tout l'Empire, des gens au passé compromis qui bénéficiaient d'une amnistie; les habitants de Corinthe constituaient ainsi une population cosmopolite (1991: 22-23).

At the time of Paul, Corinth had about seventy to eighty thousands inhabitants. Meinardus, points out that Corinth during Paul's time was not a Greek provincial town but the capital of a Roman province, a busy metropolis that flourished as a commercial center because of its advantageous geographical location (1993:61, cf. Theissen 1982:100-102).

3.2.2 Social and Economic Context of Corinth

In the time of the Roman Empire, society was highly diverse. The society in the Roman Empire can be divided into three classes: the propertied class (e.g. Emperor, officials, etc.), non-propertied class (e.g. peasants) and a negligible "middle class" (e.g. artisans). Nevertheless, Szesnat points out, "Though some of these people managed to accumulate a certain wealth, their status cannot be compared with the middle class of a modern

capitalist society” (1992:48). Furthermore, the urban group had more opportunities than the rural non-propertied class. In cities and towns more people were able to exercise citizen rights and there were great opportunities upward for social mobility, but in rural areas they had almost nothing (Szesnat 1992: 41-5). In his conclusion on the social context of the Roman Empire, Szesnat says, “The propertied class therefore strongly tended to be closed off to the non-propertied class” (1992:44). Corinth’s culture, though it was not like Athens, was characterized by typical Greek culture because people mostly were interested in Greek philosophy and placed a high value on wisdom.

The economy during the Roman Empire was mainly based on land and agriculture in the surrounding areas of the city at Corinth and on trade and commerce (Garnsey & Saller 1987: 44-50). The city of Corinth derived much of its wealth from the work of the slaves of the propertied class (landowners). It also had a group of workers including artisans, small traders, slaves, day laborers, small farmers and shopkeepers whose work produced subsistence-level earnings. Szesnat (1992:39-41) says that the economy of the Empire can be described as underdeveloped because there seems to have been no developed industry; rather there were skilled artisans working on their own or in small groups rather than large scale industries.

Barrett, referring to the economic situation at the time of Paul’s writing to Corinthians, says, “Economic and military advantages combined in favour of Corinth, and it is not surprising that it reached a position of eminence in the ancient world; it is perhaps surprising that it never achieved preeminence” (1973:1). Murphy O’Connor (1983:68), Furnish (1984:7-8), and Barrett (1973:1-2) are in agreement that because of its location near the Isthmus, Corinth controlled the various main roads and sea routes between East and West, the main trade route linking Italy and Asia and also the southern part of Greece and Peloponnese. This means they could gain revenue through the levies or taxes from the merchandise transported through its territory. There was not only income from commerce, trade, and levies, but there were also income from the artisans, banking and traders (Theissen 1982: 101).¹⁰

¹⁰ Paul and his companions seem to have been among the artisans of this time, tent-makers.

3.2.3 Religious Context of Corinth

Furnish (1984:15-22) points out four kinds of religious life during Roman Corinth, through the archeological evidence and documents, namely the deities and cults of Greece, the Roman imperial cult, Egyptian cults and Judaism. Corinth contained at least 12 temples and one of the famous was the temple dedicated to Aphrodite, the goddess of love, beauty, and fertility whose worshipers practiced religious prostitution (Witherington III 1995:12-13).

The immoral reputation of the Corinthians in the time of Paul was most likely "little better and little worse than any other great sea port and commercial centre of the age" (Barrett 1973:2). Corinth was a center for open and unbridled or ungoverned immorality. In the time of Paul people were still worshiping Aphrodite in Corinth. Corinth was still a centre of sexual immorality because the worship of Aphrodite fostered prostitution. From this, the Greek verb "*to corinthianise*" implied as "to practice sexual immorality". In the above setting, it is not surprising that the Corinthian church always had numerous problems, including divisions in the church, false teachers who were challenging both Paul's integrity and authority as an apostle, sexual immorality and the need for reconciliation that Paul talks about in relation to the Corinthians (cf. Georgi 1986:16).

3.3 Paul and the Corinthian Correspondence

According to the Acts of the Apostles, Paul visited Corinth for the first time in the final phase of his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1-17).¹¹ There he met a Jewish couple, Aquila and Priscilla (v.2), refugees from Rome. He joined them in tent making (v.3) but every Sabbath he would go to the synagogue to argue and persuade the Jews and Greeks (v.4). Nevertheless, some time later, the Jews hated his message and he decided to shift his focus to the Gentiles. Luke presents Paul as afraid, " One night the Lord said to Paul in a vision, 'Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no one will lay a hand on you to harm you, for there are many in this city who are my

¹¹ Furnish (1984:22), drawing from Murphy-O'Connor (1983:139-50) says that there is probability that Paul visited Corinth in early 50 C.E.

people'" (Acts 18:9-10). The Jews tried to attack Paul by accusing him of teaching worship contrary to the Jewish law, but the judge Gallio refused to judge the case, regarding it as an internal Jewish matter. This gave Paul the opportunity to stay longer in Corinth teaching the gospel. He ended his first visit to Corinth by sailing for Syria, promising that he would come back if God willed (18:19-21).

During his third missionary journey he had many different contacts with the Corinthian church over several years (AD 50-57), whether through letters or visits.¹² Meinardus (1973:94-95) argues that Paul sent his first letter in the year AD 55. This letter is the one mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5:9. Further Meinardus seems to be in agreement with Kruse (1987:20). He says that after a short time Paul received a reply, which is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 7:1; after this he commissioned Timothy to take his second letter to the Corinthians, which is now known as 1 Corinthians. According to Kruse (1987:17, cf. Barrett 1973:1-29) this relationship with the Corinthians was a "complex affair". Kruse (1987:20-25) systematically lists different contacts during this period of Paul's ministry at Ephesus and even when he was in Macedonia. Since this provides a background to the 2 Corinthians, I would like to summarize his suggested list of events, because it is a clear example of the work of those scholars who hold to the view that 2 Corinthians is a composite letter.

- (i) Paul's 'previous' letter urged the Corinthians 'not to associate with immoral men'. The recipients did not understand this letter because in the Corinthians' understanding they had to cut off any relationship with the non-Christian world (1Corinthians 5:9).
- (ii) Paul learned through *visitors from Corinth* such as Stephanas, Fortunatus, Achaicus (1Cor.16:15-18), and those referred to as Chloe's people, that the letter had caused quarrels and division in the Corinthian church (1 Cor.1:11-12).
- (iii) The Corinthians responded to the letter while Paul was still at Ephesus, but they raised other issues that needed clarity, such as marriage (1Cor.7:1, 25),

¹² Through the information available to us, both primary (letters of Paul) and secondary document (Acts of the Apostles) we cannot confirm this date with certainty.

food offered to idols (1Cor.8:1), spiritual gifts (1Cor.12:1) and the collection (16:1, 12).

- (iv) "But some of you, thinking that I am not coming to you, have become arrogant. But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power" (1Cor 4:18-19). "This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to our food and drink" (1Cor.9:3-4)? "Anyone who claims to be a prophet, or to have spiritual powers, must acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. Anyone who does not recognize this is not to be recognized" (1Cor.14:37-38). These three statements reveal to us the beginning of the tension in the relationship between Paul and the Corinthians which is reflected in 2 Corinthians 10-13.
- (v) From Ephesus Paul had to respond to the news from Corinth to answer the enquiries made in the Corinthians' letter, to clarify "the previous letter", and to deal with some criticisms about his person and his ministry. He, from Ephesus, wrote 1 Corinthians giving some instructions about the collection for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. He promised to pay them a visit on his way to Jerusalem through Macedonia, when the bearers of the collection would accompany him (1 Cor.16:1-9; cf. Acts 19:21-22).
- (vi) 1 Corinthians 4:17 and 16:10-11 tell us that Paul sent Timothy to Corinth. Paul was eagerly awaiting his return (1 Cor.16:11). Towards the time of writing 2 Corinthians, Timothy had already returned from Corinth (2 Corinthians 1:1) and Paul's relationship with Corinthians had survived a difficult period.
- (vii) The news that Timothy received from Corinth so disturbed Paul that he had to change the planned visit outlined in 1 Cor.16:5-9: instead of passing through Macedonia, he sailed directly across to Corinth because he wanted to give the Corinthians a 'double pleasure' (2 Cor.1:15-16). Nevertheless, at Corinth he found himself the object of a hurtful attack (2 Cor.2:5; 7:12) made by an individual without any support from the congregation (2 Cor.2:3). This is what he calls a "painful visit" that he did not want to repeat. Consequently, he

changed his plan; instead of returning to Corinth after Macedonia, he went straight back to Ephesus (2 Cor.1:23; 2:1). He hoped to meet Titus at Troas who would bring a positive response.

- (viii) At Macedonia, Paul found the Churches were experiencing persecution (2 Corinthians 7:5; 8:1-2). When Titus arrived there, he delivered good news that they had punished the one who had caused him the pain. Paul wrote a letter called a letter of 'relief' in response to this news (2 Corinthians 1-7). He explained how glad he was (7:4, 14, 16), explained the changes to his travel plans (2:15-2:1), why he had written the "severe letter" (2:3-4; 7:8-12); he urged them to forgive and restore the one who had caused him pain (2:5-11). The main part of this letter is the explanation of the hardship of Paul's ministry in Asia (1:3-11, 2:12-7:4) and the issue of the contribution to the saints (2 Cor.8-9).
- (ix) After this "letter of relief", Paul sent Titus with some other officials to finalize the matter of collection before Paul himself arrived. He also gave them some instructions (chapter 8-9). When Titus arrived at Corinth, he found what Paul calls 'false Apostles' who had convinced the Corinthians with all sort of accusations against Paul and his ambassadors (11:1-4; 11:16-20). Thus, Titus had to come back to report this terrible situation in Corinth to Paul, who was still in Macedonia.
- (x) In response to this major crisis, Paul wrote his last and most severe letter to the Corinthians to refute these "false Apostles" (2 Corinthians 10 -13). In this severe letter, Paul warned them of his planned third visit when he would show his authority (12:14; 13:1-4, 10). Barrett (1973:6, 28) notes that these "Apostles" were not missionaries who would win the non-Christians to faith in Christ; rather they seemed to be agents of those who commissioned them, the church at Jerusalem. In other words, they were the people charged with persuading the Gentile Christians to obey the church of Jerusalem. To achieve that, they demanded circumcision and despised Paul's apostolic status. Nevertheless, Barrett (1973:10) concludes, "The Corinthians had evolved their

own criteria for testing the validity of apostolic claims and these criteria the false apostles had been able to satisfy.”

- (xi) Some time after this letter, Paul left Macedonia for Corinth for his third visit lasting three months. Romans 15:25-26 shows that the situation was calm because they managed to contribute for the poor in Jerusalem.¹³

While 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 needs to be understood alongside the overall context of Paul's correspondence to the Corinthians, the above notes form a summary of the state of affairs behind 1 & 2 Corinthians. Paul's second letter to the Corinthians reflects what happened in Corinth after the writing of 1 Corinthians: how Paul responded to the situation, what kind of letters he wrote, what visits Paul and his colleagues made to Corinth and what Paul thought of them (Barrett 1973:5). Barrett (1973:21) is one of the scholars mentioned above who maintain that 2 Corinthians is composed of two letters, but in reverse order: “the later letter” (2 Corinthians 1-9) and “the earlier” (2 Corinthians 10-13). He bases his argument on the difference in tone.

Nevertheless, although there are many arguments about whether chapters 1-9 were or were not written before chapters 10-13, and although I have outlined Kruse's view, in my opinion the argument for the unity of the text also has a great deal of merit. Scott is a scholar who argues for the unity of the text saying that “we must try to make sense of the final form of the letter as we now have it” (1998:4). He suggests that the three sections of the letter (1-7, 7-8, and 10-13) relate to each other in the following way: The first part (chs.1-7) is Paul's defense concerning the legitimacy of his apostleship, which was attacked by his opponents. In the second section (8-9) Paul revives his plan for the Jerusalem collection. In the last part (chs. 10-13), Paul prepares for his imminent third visit to Corinth by handling the problems of the opponents in a more direct way than he has in the first part. He finished the defense of his apostleship, now he enforces it by warning the Corinthians of what he will do when he is present (Scott 1998:5-6).

¹³ Notice that this is a general background of the 1 & 2 Corinthians. In the analysis of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, I will give a background of that passage. However, for a fuller discussion of Paul's different letters and his opponents, see Plummer (1999: xxxi-xli), Thrall (2004:49-77), Barrett (1973:21-36).

3.4 Paul's Theology of Reconciliation¹⁴

The concept of "reconciliation" had been current in Corinth as early as the destruction of the city of Corinth in 44 BC when Caesar declared an amnesty and reconciled it to the Greek Empire (Reharilalao 1991:22). It was used therefore in the sense of making peace between hostile cities and nations. In Hellenistic Judaism, which is part of the Jewish tradition, the metaphor of reconciliation was transferred from non-religious terminology to a relationship between enemies in a religious domain (as Paul used it in Romans 5:10-11 and 1 Corinthians 7:11). Breytenbach (2005:277) puts it as follows "Hellenistic Judaism forms part of this tradition by transferring the terminology of reconciliation to the relationship between the only God and the Jewish people." Scott (1998:137) says, "In Hellenistic Jewish texts, it is hoped and prayed that God will turn away his wrath and reconcile himself either with individual people or with Israel as a whole (cf. 2 Macc. 1:4; 7:33; 8:29; Philo, *On the Life of Moses* 2.166, Josephus, *Ant.* 3.315)".

According to Breytenbach (2005:277) these parallel stylistic phenomena in 2nd Maccabees, and in the writings of Philo and Josephus are very different from Paul's metaphorical use. While they use the terminology to refer to a change on the side of God, namely that *God* changes to reconcile himself to the people (or Jews here), in Paul God does not change: "For Paul, God is not the object of change, he actively reconciles humankind to himself (2 Cor 5:19; cf. 2 Cor 5:18; Rom 5:10)."

According to Scott (1998:137) Paul might have used the "reconciliation" that Isaiah talks about in the chapter 53:5. He says, "The "peace" of Isaiah 53:5 is the same as the "reconciliation" of which Paul speaks in 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. The atoning, substitutionary death of Christ for sinners effects "peace with God" and "reconciliation" (Rom. 5:1-10)."

¹⁴ Martin (1981:72) views reconciliation as a doctrine, but Käsemann (in Martin 1981:72) disagrees stating that in his reading of the lexicon evidences of the whole New Testament there is "no such doctrine of reconciliation". However, this thesis disagrees with Käsemann and considers "reconciliation" as one of the doctrines of Paul applied to solve his problems, more especially in Gentile world.

Therefore, according to Paul, reconciliation is about the significance of Christ's death for making peace with God. It is an aspect of humanity's enmity to God and God's provision of peace; an aspect of humanity's bondage to the *kosmos* in their flesh and the divine offer of release and liberation; and an aspect of humanity's estrangement and the pardon God has provided enabling us to be welcomed into God's family. We find all of these aspects in "reconciliation". I agree with Martin (1981:81) who says that reconciliation is a ruling idea in the Christian understanding of God, though Thrall suggests that reconciliation and justification describe the "same fact."¹⁵

Paul not only uses reconciliation metaphor to note the relationship between humanity and God but also gives it an eschatological form. Ridderbos (1977:185) says that Paul's reconciliation also has an eschatological sense, which has the objective of restoring what has been damaged, namely the relationship to God. Colossians 1:20 clarifies this when it says, "And through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross." In this verse Christ appears as the reconciler of the Jew and the Gentiles. Paul's use of this metaphor of reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5 shows that all that stands in the way of a right relationship between God and the world is taken away through Christ's blood on the cross a new creation has come (2 Cor.5:17, 18). This reconciliation refers to the removal of the enmity of "the mind of the flesh against God" (cf. Rom.8:8). This idea of restoration serves in the understanding of healing the broken hearts of Rwandans.

In conclusion, Paul's understanding of God is that God is righteous and needs His people to be holy as He is holy. His righteousness is given to us through the mediator, Christ, the one who come to reconcile us to God, the righteous one. It is God Himself who reconciles us to Himself through Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). Humanity was reconciled to God through faith in the fact that Christ died and put the world right with God.

¹⁵ For this view that reconciliation and justification refers to the same fact, see Ridderbos (1977:283), who says that "reconciliation" appears in more than one place as corresponding and equal to "justification".

3.4.1 Reconciliation at Corinth

Reconciliation seems to be the main theme in 2 Corinthians, more precisely in 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. Its scope was consciously or unconsciously in the author's intention. We do not hear the Corinthian's voice; Martin (1981:90) says that several commentators such as Bruce, illustrate our situation in these terms, "We are like those in the position of people listening into one end of a telephone conversation and 'trying, not very successfully, to reconstruct what is being said at the other end.'" Despite the above, Paul is the pivot of the kind of reconciliation that relates God's reconciliation of the world through or in Christ to a variety of contexts and issues (Martin in de Gruchy 2002:51, cf. Breytenbach 1990:65)¹⁶

3.4.2 Setting 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 in Its Context

We have seen that when Titus returned and met Paul in Macedonia, his report was a happier one (7:6) because Paul thought that the Corinthian church had returned to their previous sympathetic acceptance of him and his gospel. This is because there were some people who had rejected him and rejected his message (the word of God) after his departure from Corinth. Nevertheless, he writes, "We are the aroma of Christ" (2:15) and since our persons and ministry are God's, then "God is making his appeal" (5:20) to you. In addition, in his "tearful letter" he promised reconciliation if the church dealt with the complainers (2:1-11). His earlier appeal seems not to have been understood as he wanted it to be. Now accordingly, "The plea is a renewed call to them to leave their hostile dispositions and suspicions of both his message and his ministry and accept his proffered reconciliation (2:5-11; 7:12)" (Martin 1981:92). It is against this background that Paul wrote this passage trying to reinforce the previous message.

Furthermore, 2 Corinthians 2:14-7:4, as detailed above, has two objectives: to explain Paul's teaching and Paul's person. People were familiar with Moses' teaching and his

¹⁶ Paul talks about this reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5, Romans 5, and in the deuteron-Pauline letters (Ephesians 2 and Colossians 1).

person that he was a “divine man”, “law giver”. In 3:1-18 Paul expresses Moses’ traditional teaching in a different way. Paul identifies himself “as a minister of the new covenant” (vv.4-6), his mediatory work among the Corinthians demonstrates that the eschatological new age of the Spirit (Ezekiel 11:19, 36:26) has now arrived. He mediates the eschatological gift of Spirit just as Moses once mediated the law (Scott 1998: 69). Paul’s teaching was not welcomed and created misunderstanding (5:13), but he could refer to Christ’s love for him (5:14-15) which was the driving force for his ministry. After he has forgiven his enemies (2:10), he now wants to extend to others who are “still recalcitrant” the same reconciliation. Therefore, drawing to the church’s teaching of reconciliation of the world through Christ, he wrote 5:18-21 as his appeal to the Corinthians (Martin 1981:92).

3.4.3 Paul’s Opponents in 2 Corinthians

Scholars often do not give much attention to Paul’s opponents in 2 Corinthians because they are sometimes viewed as a minority in relation to the opposition in other letters, such as 1 Corinthians, Galatians, and Philippians. He does not name his opponents as he did in other letters, such as Galatians (Georgi 1986:1-2). However, Paul takes his opponents into account because they seem to be an obstacle for the reconciliation of the Corinthians to Paul and thus to God.

Paul had three types of authority in terms of leadership and influence over the community: he was an authoritative figure in the wider Christian movement; he had authority that came with various forms of status; and the authority that came with gifts of the Spirit among which apostleship was included. His opponents attacked all these three (Young and Ford 1987:211-213).

Scott (1998:11) is in agreement with Georgi (1986:316) and Witherington (1986:346) that Paul’s opponents, whether from inside or outside the Corinthian church, challenged his apostolic authority and his function as a missionary. The question is who these intruders were. Scott argues that they were a minority from the church and Jewish

Christians, "Judaizers" (cf. 2 Cor. 11:22), who also introduced themselves as apostles, probably from the Jerusalem church. Paul calls them "false apostles, deceitful workmen masquerading as apostles of Christ" (11:13).

Since Paul did not accept financial support from Corinthians as others (the false apostles) had done, this became an issue. They seem to have made a number of accusations against Paul. They said that Paul was not a true agent of God. The lack of a letter of recommendation intensified the charge that Paul was not a true apostle. The explanation behind this seems to have been that after the incident in Jerusalem, arising from misunderstanding about circumcision (Acts 15), Antioch was no longer Paul's home base and did not provide him with a letter of recommendation. Paul argues that he does not need any letter of recommendation because the Corinthian Christians are his letters, both to the world and to God, for he had performed his duty well as an apostle. The false apostles also accused him of not having personal contact with Jesus "according to the flesh" (5:16), that is, during his earthly ministry.

Finally, it seems clear that Paul's opponents were sophists in accepting support for their work (2:17) and in presenting their arguments to oppose Paul. Witherington III (1995:339) says that because of this, Paul pulls out all the rhetorical stops in this letter, seeking to win favor and striving to be "a model of reconciling grace". He adds that Paul's need of reconciliation is clear in 2 Corinthians:

In 2 Corinthians, then, Paul seeks to reestablish positive contact and healthy a relationship with his Corinthian converts. It was important to do so, as we have seen, because he regarded them as his coworkers in the ministry of reconciliation (1:11, 24; 2:5ff; 6:1). They will have received "God's grace in vain" if they are estranged from Paul, the one who first mediated that grace to them. They cannot fully be reconcilers unless they are first fully reconciled. (1995:339)

3.4.4 The Rhetorical Arrangement and the Literary Structure of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

The structure of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 could be viewed within the structure of the whole 2 Corinthians and within 5:11-6:2 as a small section of one argument. However, I do not

intend to do this so as not to overstep the scope of this dissertation. I would like to adopt the structure given by Martin (1981:93-94) because it seems to fit well into the aims of this section.

- 5:18 All this is from God,
- 1a who *reconciled* us to himself through Christ,
- 1b and has given us the **ministry** of *reconciliation*; 5:19 that is,
- 2a in Christ God was *reconciling* the world to himself,
[not counting their trespasses against them],
- 2b and entrusting the **message** of *reconciliation* to us.
- 3b 5:20 So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; [we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be *reconciled* to God.]
- 3a 5:21 For our sake (B)
he made him to be (D)
sin (C)
who knew no sin, (A)
so that we (A')
in him (B')
might become (D')
the righteousness of God. (C')

This section's literary structure clarifies the message that Paul wanted to bring about to the Corinthians. Paul, in these verses, systematically presents his arguments to convince the Corinthians that they need reconciliation with God (3b) and that reconciliation could be realized as they reconciled to one another and then to Paul (2:10). Martin (1981:94-97) identifies three grounds on which Paul's teaching on reconciliation seems to have included and modified traditional material already in existence, such as preaching forms. First, he identifies the *kerygmatic idioms*, in verse 20 (for example, the call "be reconciled to God" is a language of an evangelist used to unbelievers outside of the church) that Paul has used to enforce his concern for the Corinthian believers to be restored to good relations with himself as an apostolic leader.

Second, verses 18 and 19 are dependent on each other. The second explains the first. The line 1a (God reconciled us) is repeated with modification in line 2a (God or God-in-Christ reconciled the world). The same applies to line 1b and line 2b, which are parallel in terms of “service” (ministry) and “message”, which seem to go together.

Third, verse 19 and 20 “were added by Paul’s hand”. At the same time as Paul added verse 19 to make it clear that the ‘reconciliation of the world’ (2a) was accomplished by what God did by not holding trespasses against humankind and so he cleared them of guilt, he acts as Christ’s ambassador and softens his tender call, “we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be *reconciled* to God [3b].”

Martin (1981:94-95) says that the literary structure of verses 20-21 presents repeated thoughts that are important in Paul’s teaching of reconciliation, though they do not follow the sequence of the verses (ibid. 94). Verse 20 (3b) has three verbs that have great importance in this section: acting as ambassador, entreat and be reconciled. I will come back to these verbs later because they are important to the goal of this thesis (see chapter 5.5). In verse 21 it is easy to see how the different lines are matched to form a series of contrasts. This follows a trace of word-order chiasmus. The first part refers to the redeemer’s work (ABCD); and the second half (A’B’C’D’) applies the benefits to the redeemed people (ibid. 94).

3.4.5 A Rhetorical Exegetical Examination of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

Breytenbach notes that “The task of exegesis is to create an interpretation, in other words, to use the linguistic evidence to supply a literal interpretation of the semantic meaning and the pragmatic intention of the text. The text is the remains of what is left from the original act of communication.”¹⁷ He further convincingly explains, “Exegesis aims to reconstruct the *intentio operis*. The hypothesis of the exegete is his or her (re)construction

¹⁷ This paper was read at the School of Religion and Theology, The University of KwaZulu Natal, 11th September 2000 and also was read at Department of Religion, University of the Western Cape, 4th October 2000 and the Faculty of Theology, University of Stellenbosch, 5th April 2001, 2.

of the text, and also claims it to be [sic] an interpretation of the text." With this in mind that exegesis forms the foundation for New Testament Studies and ventures to interpret the text, I attempt to formulate and to make explicit my interpretation. In my creation of an interpretation, I will mainly make use of the work of Thrall (2004), Plummer (1999) and Barrett (1973).

Exegesis, as Breytenbach asserts, aims to appreciate the biblical text in its historical context and its aim is either to reconstruct the author's or the implied author's intention. Furnish (1984:4), Gundry (1970), Ridderbos (1977), Barrett (1981) Kruse (1987), Plummer (1999: xx), Thrall (2004:77), et al. treat Paul as the author and argues that the letter was written from Macedonia (AD 50-53). I will interpret Paul's deliberative text (in arguing his authentic ministry) and assess whether it is valid for contextualizing Paul's use of reconciliation (*katallagē*) for personal and social reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda.

The following is the translation of the Greek text into English and French.

5:18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; 5:19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. 5:20 So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (NRSV)

2 Co 5,18-21 :

Tout vient de Dieu, qui nous a réconciliés avec lui par le Christ et nous a confié le ministère de la réconciliation. Car de toutes façons, c'était Dieu qui en Christ réconciliait le monde avec lui-même, ne mettant pas leurs fautes au compte des homes, et mettant en nous la parole de réconciliation. C'est au nom du Christ que nous sommes en ambassade, et par nous, c'est Dieu lui-même qui, en fait, vous adresse un appel. Au nom du Christ, nous vous en supplions, laissez-vous réconcilier avec Dieu. Celui qui n'avait pas connu le péche, il l'a, pour nous, identifié au péche, afin que, par lui, nous devenions justice de Dieu ». (TOB)

5.18 Τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς. 5.19 ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς. 5.20 ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν: δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ. 5.21 τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.

It is very interesting for the purpose of our dissertation to note that in this text Paul uses and describes reconciliation as the center of his ministry and affirms that only Christ can bring reconciliation. He presents “reconciliation” as the goal of God realized in Christ. In fact, in this passage of five verses Paul employs the term “to *reconcile*” three times and “reconciliation” twice and works them out to fit the context of 2 Corinthians, though they occur in Romans, Ephesians and Colossians.¹⁸ The verb “to reconcile” and its substantive “*reconciliation*” are rare in Paul’s writings. In thirteen occurrences in the New Testament, five are in the above text (Raharilalao: 1991:21-22).

3.4.5.1 καταλλαγή, ἀλλάσσω, διαλλάσσω, καταλλάσσω, ἀποκαταλλάσσω

In our study of Paul’s use of “reconciliation”, we face the challenge of many derivative words, or phrases related to the same metaphor, “reconciliation with God” (καταλλαγή Rom.5:11, 2 Cor.5:18, 19; καταλλάσσω: Rom.5:10, 2 Cor.5:18, 19, 20; ἀποκαταλλάσσω: Eph.2:16, Col.1:20, 22).

Vine (1975:260-262) says that the verb καταλλάσσω means “to change from enmity to friendship”, “to reconcile”. The word καταλλαγή means “a change on the part of one party”, induced by “an action on the part of another”¹⁹. Büchsel (1964:254) says that the verb ἀλλάσσω means “to make otherwise”. According to I. H. Marshall (quoted by Thrall 2004: 429), καταλλάσσω is used in four ways and is found in secular Greek. In the active, it is used in the sense of mediating between two hostile groups; in a deponent sense, of persuading someone else to relinquish hostility toward himself; in the passive, of an offended person who is persuaded to relinquish his hostility; and finally, with a direct object with reference to the offences, which have necessitated reconciliation.

¹⁸ It is debatable whether Ephesians and Colossians are written by Paul. This is why I will not refer much to these letters.

¹⁹ In the context of the reconciliation that we have in 2 Cor. 5:18-21, this change is first only on the side of God. Breytenbach (quoted in Chetty 2001:80) refutes Domeris who views “change” as a precondition for reconciliation. Breytenbach argues that if “reconciliation requires a complete change on the basis of the nature of the person involved”, then this results in changing the meaning of Rom.5:8-10 and 2 Cor.5:14-21.

Breytenbach says that Paul takes the verb καταλλάσσω and its derivatives such as καταλλαγή and transfers this new relationship between previously hostile parties (nations, cities, etc) into the new relationship between God and humanity, the world in 2 Cor.5:18-21.²⁰ He asserts, “It is in this context that he depicts himself as acting as God’s ambassador (πρεσβεύομεν), who offers reconciliatory change in the relationship between humankind and God” (2005:271). Paul took up the role of Christ in reconciliation between humanity and God.

Therefore, καταλλάσσειν and διαλλάσσειν could indicate the establishment of friendship between two previously unfriendly parties. On behalf of the one party, a person is sent to ask for reconciliation, to end enmity and bring about friendship. Then when the process is completed, the past is forgotten, the past does not have any legal consequences in the present (Zuern 1998:3).

3.4.5.2 Corinthians 5: 18-21

Vs. 18 *“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation”*

Vs. 18 τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς

According to Paul, the reconciliation process is something that God initiates, “τὰ δὲ πάντα²¹ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ” (“All this is from God”). This explains that everything that mentioned from verse 14-17 is from God (Breytenbach 2005:282). Breytenbach (2005:282) stresses that 5:18 refers primarily to the way God reconciled Paul to Himself

²⁰ For more details about the use of its derivatives and its use outside the New Testament, see Büchsel (1964, 1:254).

²¹ See Thrall (2004: 429-31); For Barrett (1973: 175), ‘all’ refers to verses 16 and 17, the new knowledge, the new creation (cf. Rom.11:36).

by changing Paul.²² Hence, verse 18 gets its background from verse 14-15a in which Paul explains how the reconciliation came about (Breytenbach 2005:280, Martin 1981:109). He introduces the notion of change from enmity to friendship (reconciliation). Breytenbach (2005:280), in his comments on verse 18, says that God is the one who reconciled Paul, the hostile persecutor of his church to himself. The action is completed; God changed the relationship between Paul and himself by changing Paul. He did it through Christ. How this reconciliation came about “is outside of us”, it is “the work of God” (Martin 1981:104). This process of reconciliation was possible through (διὰ) a mediator, Christ (Χριστοῦ) who takes our place (personal) and of the world (universal) as a condition for personal and universal reconciliation with God (Zuern 1998:4). Breytenbach (2005:280) thinks that it is more likely that διὰ Χριστοῦ refers more likely to the role of the risen Christ who appeared to Paul on the Damascus Road when he was called to be an apostle (cf. 1 Cor 15:8). Martin (1981:105) however comments, “It is God who has acted to reconcile men and women to himself ... through Christ (*dia christou*, v.18) includes his cross and resurrection.” He continues to observe that God “is always the subject and never the direct object of the verb”.

Through God's reconciliation through Christ, Paul receives τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς. Breytenbach (2005:282) explains that God changed Paul into a friend at Damascus (Acts 9) and entrusted him with the mediation of the reconciliation. God appointed Paul to convey what God did to him, Paul. Thus, Paul elaborates on his mediating role in verse 20. Although the text does not tell us whether this ministry of reconciliation is between one person and another or between humanity and God, what seems clear is that God gave Paul the ministry of preaching reconciliation,²³ which was

²² According to Breytenbach (2005:282) and Thrall (2004:429), *katallagē* is the change from enmity to friendship and God initiates this in verse 18. This is a new understanding in comparison to the contemporary use of *καταλλαγῆ*. Breytenbach (2005:276) says, “The notion of reconciliation is used to describe the actions of a deity or the relationship between gods. They are then depicted in terms of human action. The relationship between the parties changes from enmity to friendship.” It was always that a person (perpetrator) appeals to a deity or offended person that he/she may set aside his/her enmity or anger (Martin 1981:105).

²³ While the text does not tell us whether Paul had a dialogue with the world, I would like to put forward the ministry of preaching reconciliation as the ministry of the church engaged in dialogue. The world includes all things and all people, including Rwanda.

Paul's focus during his ministry. It seems probable that Paul's ministry was also both personal and social. Chetty supports Paul's theology that "all things are from God." He views that if people can reconcile to God, they will be able to reconcile to each other (2001:69).

Vs. 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.

Vs. 19 ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς.

God not only reconciled Paul διὰ Χριστοῦ, but He was also reconciling the world (κόσμος)²⁴ to himself ἐν Χριστῷ (v.19). In this verse 19, unlike verse 18, the participle (reconciling) is used with ἐν Χριστῷ which raises the question of whether reconciliation implies a process or an incomplete action which continues until today and which God allows people to accept or reject. Nevertheless, the imperfect stresses the duration of the action that during that time God was reconciling the world to Himself (Martin 1981:105). In verse 18, Paul uses διὰ Χριστοῦ but now in this verse he uses a different prepositional phrase, ἐν Χριστῷ. Chetty (2001:70) explains, "The combination builds up and points out that God did not act through the medium of Christ but was also in some qualitative sense "in" Christ, the mediator. So "all things" being of God (verse 18), even includes the mediator being from God." Witherington III (1995:396) argues, "Paul was appointed to make known all of this, not because it was his design but it was God's purpose". καταλλάσσων in this sentence indicates that reconciliation is still effective to those who allow God to reconcile them to himself, so that their unlawful activities might no more be recounted or remembered, as Paul states, "μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν" (v.19b). Zuern (1998: 5)

²⁴ I do not need to discuss again the meaning of the "world" because I have dealt with this in the previous pages. For information, see point 3.4 under the discussion of Paul's theology. Furthermore we need to notice the change of "world" to "us" which seems to deal with people, as notes Furnish (1984:336).

says, "God refrains from justifiably punishing the world". However, it is important to realize in this turn of phrase that God reconciles the world to himself, but he does not reconcile himself to the world (v.19a).

The first participle "reconciling" is integral to the second "entrusting". According to Breytenbach (2005:283) there is no doubt that ἐν ἡμῖν refers to Paul and Scott (1998:139) affirms that Paul's apostolic ministry to the world is essential to God's reconciliation of the world. Scott says that in this second part of the part of the verse, "Paul completely dismisses the opposition to his apostleship and appeals once again to the divine commission upon which his ministry is solidly based" (1998:139).

Vs. 20 "So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat [you] on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God".

Vs. 20 ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν: δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ.

Is Paul here replacing Christ in this verse? Does he represent Christ? Reconciliation has been a divine act, but now there is Paul who seems to be another mediator for reconciliation. Paul uses the formal language of ambassador (v.20) implicitly making clear his authority. Martin (1981:106) says that Paul's anthropological understanding of the human condition, in relation to God in this verse, is that of "enmity", "hostility", "bondage", "fear" and "despair". Paul has been saying (cf.v18-19) that the basis of God's appeal for reconciliation of the world to God is "God's decisive act in the person of Christ". Nevertheless, in this verse 20, God is making his appeal to the world (v.19) through Paul the "ambassador of the exalted Christ" for eliminating that enmity or hostility and bringing friendship "between people or groups of people" (Zuern 1998:5). Paul is a personal representative of Christ on earth. He (in our text) is an ambassador for reconciliation with a mediating task on behalf of Christ (Breytenbach 2005:284).²⁵

²⁵ For Thrall (2004: 438), Paul should be understood in the context of his troubled relationship with his readers, the Corinthians in 2:14-7:4 because he seeks reconciliation on condition that they recognize his

“Paul’s gospel message is an exhortation (cf. 5:11) to desist from rebellion against God and to appropriate by faith the reconciliation that God has accomplished in Christ” (Scott 1998:141).

The verb παρακαλοῦντος is a frequent term in Paul, more especially in 2 Corinthians where Paul for instance says, “We appeal to you not to receive God’s grace in vain” (6:1). Paul, as an apostle is representing the one who sent him, Christ, to “appeal” to Corinthians in this verse 20. Christ sent Paul on his behalf to ask the Corinthians to “be reconciled to God”. For Chetty (2001:71), the Passive voice here means that God has done everything and it is up to Corinthians to accept what Christ has done for them, again presumably on the cross though Paul does not mention that fact explicitly. For Martin (1981:108), “Humankind plays a passive role as those who are ‘acted upon’ by being ‘reconciled’ and then ‘appealed to’”. Thus, in this reconciliation both parties must have the will to bring about reconciliation so that the process can have its completion. God is the source of everything, including the power in the equation of reconciliation. He “puts in all the effort short of human acceptance”. It is important to note that from this verse, Paul is mere instrument of God and Christ. He says, “God is making his appeal through us” and “we entreat you on behalf of Christ”.²⁶

Vs. 21 “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”

Vs. 21 τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ

ministry of reconciliation as God-given. Collange (cited in Thrall 2004:438 and in Furnish 1984:335) suggests that, though it is not what Paul argues, to reconcile with God and to reconcile with Paul are the same. In other words, it is not enough to reconcile to God but also with Paul. This explains the argument of this thesis that reconciliation with God requires reconciliation to one another. Though Paul advances reconciliation with God, his primary concern is his reconciliation with his opponents and the Corinthians who disregarded his message.

²⁶ I do not agree with some scholars who regard verse 20 as non-Pauline because its claim is that apostles replace Christ and God himself acts through their work of preaching, See Thrall (2004:447).

Thrall (2004:439) says that this verse seems to be an explanation or expansion of v.19a. It explains Christ's work. But, Scott (2001:141) argues that this verse is a continuation of verse 20 though there is no transition between verses 20 and 21. He continues to argue that this verse substantiates for the exhortation to be reconciled with God and it conforms to a traditional expectation about the Messiah, as well as to the statement about the Suffering Servant of the Lord (cf. Isa.53:9).

Thrall (2004:439) argues that Paul's idea of "Christ made sin" is similar to the thought he expresses in Rom 8:3: God sent his Son 'in the likeness of sinful flesh'. This means that Christ, being in the world of sin, became himself vulnerable to be tempted by sin. For Thrall "To say that Christ was made 'sin' means that 'he came to stand in that relationship with God which is normally the result of sin, estranged from God and the object of his wrath" (2004:442). Kruse (1987:129) argues that there are three suggestions about "Christ was made sin": first, "Christ was made a sinner"; second, "Christ was made a sin offering"; and finally, Christ was made to bear the consequences of our sins. He, as I do, prefers the third one on the ground that it is supported by Galatians 3:13.

As we have seen, as the requirement to reconcile humanity to God, Christ had to become sin (not to be sinner) for us (ὕπερ ἡμῶν), though he knew no sin. This means that on our behalf the sin was transferred to Christ. This understanding of "Christ made sin for us" has a parallel construction. God made Christ (who knew no sin) to be sin for us (who knew no righteousness) that humankind (we) might become the righteousness of God, δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ (v.21c).²⁷ Scott (2001:142) concludes, "It is clear that the righteousness of God comes from him and is conferred on believers who are in Christ".

Therefore, Martin (1981:108) argues that in v. 19 Paul introduced the framework of justification, ensuring that "the double imputation" in v. 21 "is understood in categories Paul's teaching regarded as central" in the following categories:

²⁷ There is no need to repeat what I have discussed in the previous pages concerning righteousness of God and justification by faith. However, according to Thrall (2004 442), "becoming the righteousness of God" has its traditional meaning, which is "to be justified by God". For more information on this subject, refer to 3.4 of this chapter.

(a) God has reconciled the cosmos made up of sinful men and women; (b) He has taken action to deal with their sins in Christ; (c) reconciliation is intimately related to personal and moral concerns to do with his apostolic responsibility at Corinth; and (d) 'righteousness' is both God setting humanity right with himself, and justifying himself: in so doing Paul's own gospel is 'justified', i.e. vindicated.

3.4.6 Paul's Understanding of Reconciliation for Personal and Social Reconciliation

Paul's persuasive rhetoric in this passage (2 Cor. 5:18-21) helps to foreground the process of reconciliation between God and the world and between Paul and the Corinthians. This is also the main objective of this section of the letter (2:14-7:4) whereby Paul, through his rhetoric, uses a form of power that affects the Corinthians and their situation and constructs reality rather than merely reflecting it. Fiorenza (1999:107) argues that "Paul's rhetoric does not aim at fostering independence, freedom, and consensus, but stresses dependence on his model, order and decency".

Although the reconciliation metaphor stresses the contrast between "enmity" and "peace", "hate" and "love" (2 Cor. 5:14-21), I noticed that transferring Paul's thought of God's reconciliation to the world to a context of human conflict has problems. One cannot take God on the one hand, to be a victim and humankind on another hand to be the perpetrator as an exact parallel to a social context. This seems to be inadequate and a mixing of the pictures.²⁸ Human emotions and feelings are different from divine ones. God can empower humans to act and forgive for example, but humans cannot be like God. Raharillao (1991:100) asserts that through the gospel, Paul and the Corinthians are to reconcile themselves so that they can have faith in God's act of reconciliation. The community that has this faith should be grasped by the power of God's healing, love and compassion, through the scripture which has a persuasive power.

²⁸ Though Paul has a certain emphasis on the implication for ethical and social reconciliation, he is very concerned with the spiritual aspects. Nevertheless, for Mosala (1987:19-25) refutes this and says that Paul does not spiritualize reconciliation but he has an ethical focus. That is why, in his contextualization of 2 Cor.5:18-21, Mosala takes God to represent 'peasants' producers whose property has been alienated, the whole world to represent the lost property of God, and through Jesus' mediation the peasant producers reconcile his alienated property.

Paul's teaching on reconciliation is vital and useful today. Scholars can learn from how Paul persuaded the Corinthians in their situation on the basis of argument concerning reconciliation. Confirming an appropriation of both divine and human reconciliation, de Gruchy (2002: 53), says, "The need for the dynamic of reconciliation between Paul and the Corinthian church becomes the reason as well as the basis for Paul's rhetoric about God's reconciliation". For Zuern (1998:7), Paul uses the diplomatic language of his time to explain his thoughts without insisting on complete equivalence. As it was approached differently in different situations, it should be the same today.

"Those who seek to interpret Paul's understanding of reconciliation in Christ for today must of necessity go with but also beyond Paul, not staying in Corinth ... in seeking to interpret the heart of the gospel in the contemporary world" (de Gruchy 2002:56). We cannot assert that what Paul says about reconciliation is a model to follow in a given social context which is different from that of the Corinthian church. But it could be an example or illustration in a different context. The Rwandan context is not the same as that of the Corinthians, that is why, as Mouton (2001:122) says,

Every church, every preacher and religious leader has to account for the moral choices they make for the *ethos*, the integrity of their reading and interpretation of the Bible, as well as the context of the audiences, and how they relate the continuing presence of God to contemporary societal needs.

Paul's philosophy however has a certain potential in the Rwandan context, which I now proceed to discuss.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTEXTUALIZATION: RECONCILIATION AND THE RWANDAN CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explores Paul's understanding of reconciliation and challenges us to understand Paul's philosophy of reconciliation at Corinth against its own background. An analysis of the implied author's context, the text's context and the Corinthians' context, as implied readers, enables us to understand the text in its time. The writing of scripture, the content, the practices and the tradition are products of human beings and their contexts. Different people in different circumstances and with different ideologies from this age have written this biblical text in a different time. From the study of this Pauline text now, I notice that if one takes Paul's metaphor of reconciliation and transfers it to a given different social context, one will end up by missing the point that Paul wanted to make at Corinth. The previous chapter is the first moment (*distantiation*) of our methodology in tri-polar of exegetical model. This text needs to dialogue with the situation in Rwanda, which is the main focus of this thesis. This chapter therefore deals with contextualization.

Contextualization is here based on an analysis of the state of affairs in Rwanda before and after the genocide. Draper (2002:17) states, "Contextualization involves spending time analysing who we are and what our location in society and history is." Draper explains that any exegesis "...stands in continuity with the whole 'reservoir of meaning' (Ricoeur; Croatto) which is filled up by the whole long process of interpreting the Bible over two thousand years in general ..." (2002:16). Although most Rwandan people consider the Bible as a special book, "Igitabo cy'Imana" (the Book of God), it is important to consider various issues that result in different interpretations of the Bible. The process of exegesis "... rests upon the fundamental understanding that there is no

neutral or absolute meaning of a text or, for that matter, of any human communication” (Draper 2001:149). Consequently, in this chapter, I will construct another context, which is the Rwandan context. My task is extremely difficult because of my previous personal experience of genocide and because of differing historical interpretations. There are many special situations that one could talk about in the current Rwandan context, but I would like to limit myself to matters related to reconciliation, for the purpose of this thesis.

My study considers the present context in which the text is being read instead of the past context, which I did in *distantiation* stage. This present experience includes personal and/or communal experience, cultural identity, social location and social change (Bevans 2002: 7). This brings up many questions concerning Rwandan life experience which consist of ethnic identities and present conflicts.

In an attempt to address the above questions, this section will stress the following issues: (1) Rwanda and its position; (2) its social, cultural, and political background; (3) the state of affairs in the church before, during and after the genocide; (4) and what has been done to bring about reconciliation. I will conclude by highlighting current debates on reconciliation in Rwanda.

4. 2 Rwanda's Setting

Rwanda is a landlocked country popularly known as the “land of a thousands hills”, in central Africa east of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Rwanda is bordered by Uganda to the North, Tanzania to the east, Burundi to the south, and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the west. The country is divided into twelve provinces that are further divided into one hundred and sixteen districts and municipalities. It is a small country that can fit into the Democratic Republic of Congo 89 times. ²⁹

²⁹ To give the full geographical understanding of Rwanda is not the scope of this thesis. However, its location gives certain ideas on the country and place on the African continent. For more details on this topic, see Fegley (1993: 11-16).

4.3 Historical Overview of Rwanda: Socio-economic, Political and Religious Context

The account of Rwandan history varies from one author to another and has varied from century to century. Although most specialists in Rwandan history differ substantially on the pre-genocide version (Longman and Rutagengwa 2004:168), and also on current historiography, in this section I attempt to outline different views concerning the Rwandan background from the pre-colonial Hutu settlement to the present post-genocide period. The historical background will include the settlement of both the Hutu and Tutsi throughout history.³⁰

4.3.1 Settlement of the Hutu, Twa and Tutsi³¹ (11th century to 18th century)

4.3.1.1 A Brief History of the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa

Oral tradition notes that in the 15th century Tutsi from the "Hamitic race" (Mamdani 2001:34) settled in Rwanda in East Africa (McCullum 1995:2)³², but it does not tell us when the Hutu arrived in Rwanda. Théo Tschuy (1997:43) asserts that although no written records are available, the Hutu, who are African Bantu people, came from the Cameroonian savannahs to what is today Rwanda and Burundi during the 11th century, while the Tutsi, a Nilo-Hamite tribe from the Ethiopian highlands, migrated to Rwanda

³⁰ In this research the third ethnic group, the *Twa* or *Batwa*, will not be considered in detail. They constitute an insignificant number in the Rwandan population. The *Batwa* were living on the margins of Rwanda society before the 1994 violence erupted. The *Batwa* are famous as musicians and dancers, and used to form the majority of the Rwanda national dance group. They are among the "Pygmy" peoples of central Africa. They are the minority and they seem not have participated in genocide, but they were victimised. The *Twa* were looked down on by both Hutu and Tutsi. The discrimination took many forms; access to public wells was forbidden, and a cup from which a *Twa* had drunk might be broken to avoid reusing it. In the desperation and bitterness following the genocide, many *Twa* as well as others, have been imprisoned or killed without evidence of guilt. As violence escalates again, the *Twa* are still victims. However, one cause for optimism is that they have re-established their organisations under the umbrella group "Communauté des Autochtones Rwandais" (CAURWA). Although the Rwandan government does not give the group any official recognition, the *Twa* are working hard to heal the wounds of their people.

³¹ With reference to the origins of Hutu and Tutsi, in answering the question; "Who is Hutu and who is Tutsi", Mamdani (1999:15) says that the Belgian reform (1920s to the mid-1930s) constructed Hutu as *indigenous* Bantu and Tutsi as *alien* Hamites. Belgians also *racialized* the Hutu and Tutsi rather than *ethnicing* them. For more information about the history of Hutu and Tutsi racialization under the colonialism, see Mamdani (1999:76-102), Longman, and Rutagengwa, (2004: 168-169); Human Rights Watch (1999: 31-37); Destexhe (1995: 36-47).

³² Hugh McCullum is a Canadian journalist and author with wide experience covering Africa since 1968. He made a dozen visits to Rwanda after the war of 1994. He also works for the All Africa Conference of Churches.

and Burundi in search of grazing grounds for their cattle in the 15th century (cf. Fegley 1993: xix-xx, 25-39). However, according to Melson (2001:327), Hutu peasants arrived after the Twa hunters and gatherers (cf. Tschuy 1997:42), pygmies, a marginalized and disenfranchised people group that accounts for less than one percent of the population (Gourevitch 1998:47). The Tutsi herdsman settled in the country from the North and from East of Karagwe (one of the territories in Tanzania).

Dorsey (1994:6) says that when the Hutu entered Rwanda in the 15th century and the Tutsi later came and settled near Lake Muhazi in the east. From the 16th century, they increased the size of their kingdom territory, centered in Kigali through various invasions against “formerly independent Hutu areas in the west and north”. During the reign of Ruganzu Ndori, Rwanda, which was known before as *Gasabo* (small), expanded in all directions and the subsequent kings (Tutsi) continued this expansion by military conquest or migration as the population spread Rwandan agricultural techniques and social organization. This was also an extension of a Mwami's political power in the country's control (Wikipedia 2006). By 19th century *Umwami* (king) Kigeri Rwabugiri, greatly expanded the power of the Rwandan central court and implemented political reforms and consolidation (Dorsey 1994:6).

The economic imbalance between the Hutu and the Tutsi resulted in a complex political imbalance whereby the Tutsi eventually achieved domination over the socioeconomic and political system and formed a hierarchy dominated by a *Mwami*. The *Mwami* introduced the forced submission of the Hutu inhabitants which resulted in a “Tutsi monarchy” headed by a *mwami* and a “feudal hierarchy” or a “federal institution”³³ of Tutsi nobles and gentry, called *ubuhake* (Newbury 1988:136-140, The Government of Rwanda (2006) and the Rwanda gate way [2005]). A king was treated as a semi-divine being, responsible for making the country prosper. According to Dorsey (1994:7), King

³³ According to Historical Dictionary of Rwanda, “*Ubuake*” was a cattle contract or lease, in which a powerful person, or patron, provided protection for a weaker individual, who could be either a peasant or a noble herder. In Rwanda *Ubuake* was abolished in April 1954 by *umwami* Mutara Rudahigwa on the advice of the Belgian Resident, in a three-stage process: 1) the consent of both parties in the first year, 2) permission of the unilateral dissolution of the contract, and 3) termination of all other contracts (Dorsey 1994:387).

Rwabugiri implemented and consolidated political reforms. He also refined the patron-client relationship that would be a prominent feature in Tutsi exploitation of the Hutu and lesser nobility. To be sure of his controlling power as a king (Umwami), he appointed the chiefs (army chiefs, land chiefs and cattle chiefs) who ruled over the Hutu in all regions (provinces and districts) and collected tithes for the kingdom. All the people of Rwanda were expected to pay tribute to the Mwami, and this tribute was collected in turn by a Tutsi administrative hierarchy. This system continued until the time of the Bahutu manifesto of March 1957. Socially, Rwanda was classified according to various criteria into successive levels or layers and the king or his subordinates could assign to each individual a specific "social status or position" based on class and each caste a specific rank (1994:8).³⁴

4.3.1.2 Anatomy of Hutu and Tutsi

How do I know a Tutsi or a Hutu when their language and culture are similar? It is difficult, but some of the general physical criteria between genuine Hutu and genuine Tutsi (without intermarriage) can be pointed out: (1) a Hutu is shorter than a Tutsi (by approximately 12 centimeters), physically strong, with dark hair and flat nose. (2) a Tutsi is thin and taller than Hutu, darker than the Hutu in skin color, with thicker lips and hair almost spiraled. Another difference is supposed to be that Tutsi have dark oral mucosa (gums) while Hutu have lighter colored oral mucosa. While many do fit the stereotype, many Rwandans and Burundians do not really fit either description.³⁵

Mamdani (2001: 41-59) wonders whether the Hutu and Tutsi are the same people as Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) is now prone to insist or are distinct ethnic groups, as the Hutu claim. In his visit to Rwanda after the genocide, Mamdani provided the following summary: "The "no difference" point of view holds the Hutu/Tutsi difference to be social economic, either a class difference or a division of labor. At the other extreme is the "distinct difference" point of view, which holds the Hutu/Tutsi difference to be one between sociobiological groups." Both views need to be taken seriously because they

³⁴ A Hutu could be given the status of Tutsi if he managed to be successful in terms of wealth or favor to the authority. In this situation Hutu also could be tax collectors and servants for the elite.

³⁵ For more information see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rwanda#History>

exist in the current and historical political situation. He rightly continues to say that the social demographer Dominic Franche thinks that Hutu and Tutsi are two different communities united by their hatred and fear of each other and thirst for revenge, that is what is going on now, a civil war between elites who are fighting for power (ibid 58-59). This means that the war is between the old and new elites, not between the peasants.

Mamdani notes that a historical overview leads to three conclusions: the first point is that the search in migration in dim history for the origins of Hutu and Tutsi is likely to be fruitless since Hutu and Tutsi are political, not cultural identities. The second is that the predecessors of today's Hutu and Tutsi indeed created a single cultural community of Kinyarwanda speakers, through centuries of cohabitation, intermarriage and cultural exchange. That cultural community is to be found within the borders of Rwanda and outside of it. The third is that Hutu and Tutsi emerged as state-enforced political identities. The context of that development is the emergence of the state of Rwanda. It is the history of that state that ultimately resulted in the bipolar political identity of Hutu and Tutsi (ibid. 73-74). In my opinion, I give less weight to this argument because though one may not see the clear physical differences among the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa ethnic groups there are certain criteria that they use for determining a person's ethnic group (see page 68).

4.3.2 The Colonial Period (1896-1962)³⁶

The 1890 conference in Brussels gave Rwanda and Burundi to the German Empire as colonial spheres. With the help of a British offensive from Uganda, the Belgians forced the Germans out of the region after World War I. Dorsey (1984:9-10) says that the period of colonialism was characterized by the rule of kings and Europeans. Three kings came to power from the time of the arrival of the first European (a German Count Von Goetzen who arrived in 1894), until the time of independence (1962). The king Yuhi Musinga (1886-1931), his son Mutara Rudahigwa (1931-1959), and Rudahigwa's brother Kigeri

³⁶ This section will not deal with in details with colonialist policy towards their protectorate because I believe it is not within the scope of this thesis.

Ndahindurwa (1959-1962) ruled during German (1898-1916) and Belgian colonial rule (1916-1962).

According to Dorsey, Musinga took advantage of the German forces to extend Tutsi domination towards the north and, in return, gave them his loyalty. When the Belgians took over, like the Germans before them, they decided to rule through the Tutsi and pledged to offer them all possible help. Primary and secondary education was in the hands of Belgian priests who favored the Tutsi. Melson (2001:329) says that the Hutu, "pauperized" and "deprived" of all political power by the Belgian authorities, came to hate the Tutsi as racial enemies and foreign interlopers. Sadly, later in 1931, during Belgian rule, Musinga was removed from office because the Belgians thought that he might be an obstacle to their economic transformation and as a result replaced him with his eighteen-year-old son, Rudahigwa, who had an exciting reign on the economic, social and political level.³⁷ However, "Reforms instituted by the Belgians in the 1950s encouraged the growth of democratic political institutions but were resisted by the Tutsi traditionalists who saw in them a threat to Tutsi rule" (The Government of Rwanda (2006) and the Rwanda gate way [2005]). These Belgian policies helped the Hutu to change their perception of themselves and they were allowed to go to school if they complied with the Belgians and their policies. This led to Hutu political movements demanding an end to Hutu subordination and the overthrow of Tutsi hegemony.

Dorsey (1994:9) further points out, "Those Hutu who had access to educational opportunities and jobs became more assertive and began to participate in pre-independence politics and protests, exercising leadership at the national level". The Hutu were following the movements for independence which began in Algeria and Egypt in the 1950s (Tschuy 1997: 43). A manifesto drafted in 1957 claimed that "the Hutu were

³⁷ During the rule of the Belgians, there were many changes. The Belgians started protecting the Hutu from the arbitrary powers of the oligarchy so that they could win the majority (Hutu). In this they succeeded. Musinga lost the power of life and death over his subjects; Hutu could do only two days of customary work (uburetwa) instead of the three or more frequently demanded by the notables; the Resident limited the *shebuja's* (or patron) right to recall cattle from the *abagaragu* (his client); Musinga was ordered to implement a decree which doubled the amount of land Hutu farmers were then cultivating; etc. (Dorsey 1994:13). "Because of Belgian development policy, Hutu became both the impetus and the central components for the formation of the development capital" (Dorsey 1994:19).

Rwanda's true nationals and that the Tutsi were outsiders and foreigners". In November 1959, an increasing restive Hutu population, encouraged by the Belgian military, sparked a revolt, which resulted in the overthrow of the Tutsi monarchy. Hutu subchiefs and leaders of the Party of the Hutu Emancipation Movement (PARMEHUTU) also retaliated against Tutsi (1994:10).³⁸ Tschuy (1997:45) writes, "In November 1959 the crisis worsened when Tutsi youths attacked a Hutu leader".³⁹ King Mutara Rudahigwa III died in July 1959 (Dorsey 1994:27) and his brother Kigeri Ndahindurwa replaced him.

Some scholars argue that the Belgians did much to create the enmity between Hutu and Tutsi through their policies of indirect rule. Colonel Guy Logiest, commander of the Belgian troops, explained the Belgian support for the Hutu as follows: "It was without doubt the will to give the people back their dignity. And it was probably just as much the desire to put down the arrogance and expose the duplicity of basically oppressive and unjust aristocracy" (quoted in Gourevitch 1998:60). Another thing is that they organized an election (in 1960) which the Hutu majority won and the Tutsi objected by taking refuge in neighboring countries.

The death of Rudahigwa and his brother's enthronement on the one hand resulted in suspicions from the Belgians (1994:10). On the other hand, it encouraged the Hutu to rebel and demand that the Tutsi share power. Regrettably the Tutsi rejected this, arguing that "the Tutsi had assumed power in Rwanda by right of conquest" and that the Belgians should leave so that they could run Rwanda "without having to share with anyone" (Tschuy 1997:43). Dorsey points out, "The Party of the Hutu Emancipation Movement (PARMEHUTU) won the victory in a UN-supervised referendum" (1994: 27-28; see also *The Government of Rwanda* (2006) and *the Rwanda gate way* [2005]). Then in January 1961, the Hutu political elite declared a republic, chose a legislative assembly and forced the king into exile. The PARMEHUTU government was granted internal autonomy by Belgium on January 1, 1962 under the leadership and presidency of Grégoir Kayibanda,

³⁸ Tschuy (1997:46) reveals that a large number (more than 160,000) Tutsi fled to neighboring countries, such as Uganda and D R Congo. This includes those who left in 1959 and 1961, in 1963 and 1964, and in 1973.

³⁹ This Hutu leader was Dominique Mbonyumutwa.

the leader of PARMEHUTU (1994:28).⁴⁰ On July 1, 1962 the Belgian trusteeship was terminated by the UN General Assembly and full independence was granted to Rwanda and Burundi (The Government of Rwanda (2006) and the Rwanda gate way [2005]).

4.3.3 The Postcolonial Period (1962-1994)

According to Dorsey (1994:28) independence did not guarantee peace and tranquility in Rwanda. Despite the United Nation's efforts to persuade Rwanda and Burundi to remain as one political unified whole, in 1963 both countries decided to separate and the Tutsi who fled Rwanda before independence (1959) invaded from Burundi. This resulted in an unfriendly relationship between the two governments until the establishment of the Republic of Burundi in 1966. More than 10,000 Tutsi were arrested and others were forced to flee the country into exile between 1963 and 1966.

In July 1973, a coup d'état led by a former minister of defense and head of the National Guard, Major General Juvénal Habyarimana, a northern Hutu from Gisenyi, ended the government of Kayibanda.⁴¹ Habyarimana granted security to the Tutsi refugees and promised security on the borders. The northern Hutu, Habyarimana, who had felt alienated before, assumed power and suspended the constitution of 1962 to introduce a more centralized system in the country and merged the army and police to form the National Defense. In July 1975, Habyarimana formed a new party: Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement (MRND). It is said that "The government was organized from the 'hillside'⁴² to the national level and included elected and appointed officials" (The Government of Rwanda (2006) and the Rwanda gate way

⁴⁰ Here I need to note that though sometimes generalizations are made about the power of Hutu or Tutsi, on both sides there are still Tutsi or Hutu who are poor and do not have the same privileges as the group in power.

⁴¹ One needs to note that the northern population dominated Habyarimana's government and that the favor shifted from the south (Kayibanda's native area) to the north (Habyarimana's native area). This also increased hatred between Rwandans, not on the basis of their ethnic groups, but their regions. This system continued until the year of genocide and even until now between the refugees from Uganda and other refugees from other countries. Tschuy (1997:42) explains that the bitterness in the northern Hutu was the result of Umwami Musinga who used the Tutsi and the Hutu warriors of the south to fight the Hutu.

⁴² The term "hillside" refers to a small local group (as small as ten houses). Such group also came within the scope of government organization, making the government stronger.

[2005]). Habyarimana was confirmed as president in 1978, and he was re-elected in 1983, and in 1988. In 1978 a new constitution was introduced to permit limited suffrage and judicial reforms.

However, pressing concerns such as relations with Uganda continued to threaten the stability and viability of the state. The borders were frequently closed and this resulted in economic instability due to the fact that Rwanda is landlocked (Dorsey 1994:27-28). Further, in 1992 Kenya imposed a 20% tariff on all goods to Rwanda through its port at Mombasa in retaliation for the Rwandan policy of charging Kenya 60% on Kenyan goods coming to Rwanda. This affected the Rwandan economy in the 1990s and forced the country to appeal to the international community for assistance. During this time Habyarimana also faced public pressure for political reform to which he responded with an announcement of a multi-party democracy in July 1990, despite citizens' disagreement (Melson 2003:332, The Government of Rwanda (2006) and the Rwanda gate way [2005]).

On October 1, 1990 Rwanda was invaded by the troops of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), made up of about 7,000 exiles, from their base in Uganda led by a Tutsi, Major Fred Rwigema, who was later assassinated by his own confederates (The Government of Rwanda (2006) and the Rwanda gate way (2005) and Dorsey 1994:31). Major General Paul Kagame assumed the command of the RPF. The motive for their invasion was to fight the failure of Habyarimana's government to democratize the country and resolve the problems of some 500,000 Tutsi refugees living around the world.

In one year, 1991, more than twelve political parties were formed, the 1978 constitution was changed and many new newspapers were started. "As new political parties emerged, new journals with an extremely critical voice entered the political fray and not without consequences" (Dorsey 1994:32). This in my opinion was the start of political, socio-economic and religious emancipation. However, even if there were negotiations between the political parties and the opposition, "The country continued to be plagued by ethnic and inter-party political violence and conflict between Rwandan Forces and the RPF from

mid-May to the end of the year” (1994:34). Conflict with Uganda grew; war with the RPF increased the instability among the population which reduced agricultural production. Political rallies and demonstrations against the government often resulted in violence and the Protestant church and Seventh Day Adventists joined the opposition in calling on the RPF and the refugees to negotiate a settlement in the war (Dorsey 1994:34). It was only on July 31, 1992 that a cease-fire took effect in Arusha, Tanzania and in June 1992 mediation centered on the integration of the RPF into the Rwandan army and political guarantee for refugees.⁴³

Despite various attempts by African leaders, European nations, America and the OAU to get parties to comply with the terms of the ceasefire, the war accelerated and exacerbated ethnic cleavages which precipitated many attacks against Tutsi in different regions and caused an internal refugee problem in Byumba Province (Dorsey 1994:31-32). After the signing of the peace accord between RPF and the government at Arusha, Tanzania (on April 6, 1994), the airplane carrying President Habyarimana and the President of Burundi, Cyprian Ntaryamira, was shot down as it prepared to land at Kigali airport. Both Presidents were killed when the plane crashed and more than 800,000 victims,⁴⁴ mostly from the Tutsi minority, were murdered in the subsequent three month period, after being held responsible for the death of both Presidents. Between the day of the plane crash (April 1994) and the capture of the country (July 1994), the shooting of the plane led to an awakening of what had been historically hidden in the hearts of Rwandans, the “massacre” or “genocide” in modern term, between two ethnic groups (Hutu and Tutsi).⁴⁵

⁴³ According to Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, the cease-fire fixed a timetable for an end to the fighting and political talks leading to a peace accord and power-sharing, and authorized a neutral military observer group under the auspices of the Organization for African Unity

(http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/history_of_Rwanda, accessed on July 24, 2006)

⁴⁴ Although many people do not agree on the above number, my opinion is that this is an underestimation if one considers those killed by the RPF in the country from 1990 to 1997 and considers the attack of refugees in Congo and in different refugee camps all over the world, more especially in Burundi. Even Mamdani (1999:5) argues that no one can be certain of how many Tutsi were killed between March and July.

Nevertheless, this discussion is not the scope of this thesis. What we need to point out is that the Tutsi were killed as a group, while Hutu were killed as individuals, except in the Congo invasion where about 30,000 refugee victims were killed and in Kibeho more than 8,000 were killed en masse (Zorbas 2005:32).

⁴⁵ Here we must note that the media presented a one-sided story that Hutu killed the Tutsi and the Tutsi did not kill, but according to Human Right Watch report, before and after the genocide, the RPF killed many innocent Hutu civilians in revenge as RPF soldiers sought to establish their control over the local population, they also killed civilians in numerous summary executions and in massacres (HRW, 2003).

Due to the plane crash and RPF's rise to power, many areas of Rwanda experienced revenge killings and violence by both Hutu and Tutsi.⁴⁶ This seems to explain why "During the genocide, they were both victims and killers" (Stover and Weinstein 2004:9). As we have seen, during the reign of the Tutsi the Hutu were oppressed and when the Hutu came to power they took revenge on the Tutsi. This resulted in ongoing conflict, mistrust, hatred, and enmity.

During this period of the tragedy, many people lost their lives, became refugees and experienced trauma through the murders. Entire families were hunted down, women raped, children and babies stabbed to death. Parents saw their children killed and children their parents. Neighbours were forced to kill neighbours, relatives their kin. People with academic training were especially targeted. Church buildings seem to have been favoured centres for mass slaughter.

4.3.4 Rwandan Economy: Overview

According to the Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia (2006, 6th edition), the economy of Rwanda is agricultural, and is dominated by peasant farming. Economic development in Rwanda is hindered by the needs of its large population and by its lack of easy access to the sea (and thus to foreign markets). McCullum (1995:7) shows that Rwanda has one of the highest female fertility rates in the world: "The population increased from 2.8 million at independence to more than 7.5 million in 1990, with a density of 285 people per square kilometre", yet 57 percent of farmers own less than a hectare. Food must be imported, as domestic production has fallen below subsistence levels. Food shortages were sharply

Human Rights Watch notes, "Disappearances, arbitrary arrests, unlawful detentions and torture and ill-treatment of detainees were reported. At least 40 individuals were sentenced to death for crimes committed during the 1994 genocide; no executions took place. There were approximately 112,000 individuals in detention at the end of 2002; about 100,000 were suspected of participation in the 1994 genocide." The Human Rights Watch visited Rwanda in 2002 and found that "Many had been held for prolonged periods without charge or trial, in conditions amounting to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. Trials of genocide suspects continue at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha, Tanzania. In eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwandese military and allied forces were responsible for the deaths of civilians, torture, rape, "disappearances" and the systematic harassment of human rights defenders" (The Rwandan Patriotic Front, HRW Report - Leave None to Tell the Story Genocide in Rwanda, March 1999). Several people were detained for their alleged connections with political opposition figures. I am not saying that the Hutu did not kill; rather they killed, raped, and committed other sort of offenses.

⁴⁶ Most of the media convey how events unfolded but rarely explain why. I argue that the why arises out of the historical problems of the Hutu and the Tutsi that I attempted to explain such as land, leadership and identity.

exacerbated by the civil strife and the severe refugee problems of the early 1990s. Rwanda annually imports more than it exports; its chief trading partners are Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, and Kenya. Rwanda depends on outside aid to balance its national budget, to finance foreign purchases and to fund development projects (the Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia 2006, 6th edition). However, government information states that by the late 1990s the economy appeared to be reviving slowly.

4.4 An Overview of Church Setting

McCullum (1995:4) shows that when the Germans left Rwanda, the Belgians took over and the Hutu who were often pressed by the Tutsi into forced labour found that the Roman Catholic Church identified with Tutsi leadership. McCullum says, "From the beginning the Catholic Church enjoyed a cosy relationship with the Belgian colonizers and the Tutsi royal court, quickly becoming the second most powerful institution in the country" (1995:4). This not only divided the Hutu and the Tutsi, but also propagated ethnic superiority whereby the "church ensured that some Tutsi at least had enough education to become administrators and to consolidate power and gain wealth" (1995: 4). Although, Hutu could be members of the church, they had no responsibility at all. It was only after 1950 that the church switched from the Tutsi to the Hutu and admitted the accusation of ethnic favouritism.

According to Wikipedia (information accessed on July 2006) King Mutara Rudahigwa replaced his father, King Yuhi Musinga, because he had refused to be baptised or to convert to the Roman Catholic Church. Rudahigwa sought to bring about political changes by allowing Hutu greater access to positions of authority. He chose Catholics (Hutu and Tutsi) for his appointments. The Tutsi did not like the position of the king. Some sought refuge in the neighbouring countries and others sought to change the situation. But it was too late because in the following years Hutu brought about change in the political arena.

To be converted to Christianity during this time had advantages such as learning European culture through the missionaries, mostly Roman Catholic, and studying in the Catholic schools. Tschuy (1997:45) says that the church in Rwanda "played with fire". The church first backed the ruling Tutsi without any critical distance but suddenly switched to the Hutu. The Catholic Church, without knowing that they were playing with fire, declared the social revolution of the Hutu in 1959. One of the policies of the Roman

Catholic Church was to allow more Hutu to study in their schools with other Tutsi. Wikipedia notes, "The Catholic church was closely intertwined with PARMEHUTU. They shared local resources and on the ground networks, and through the church the government maintained links and support with those in Belgium and Germany. The country's two newspapers, both strongly in favour of the government, were both staunchly Catholic Publications."

This position of both Belgium and the Catholic Church, as noted by Tschuy (1997:45), was taken by the radical Hutu as the decisive political support to overcome all Tutsi power. Despite the stand of the Protestants (Anglicans and Presbyterian) who were "less" ruined by ethnicity, though even they did not speak out against the situation, the independence of 1961 showed that the Catholic Church was behind the majority Hutu.⁴⁷ The first President, Grégoire Kayibanda had been a personal secretary of the Roman Catholic Archbishop André Perraudin and editor of a Catholic newspaper (McCullum 1995: 4).

4.4. 1 Role of the Church in Rwandan Genocide

The question is what went wrong in the country that was generally known as "the Eastern African Revival Centre" (between 1927 and 1942)? In 1994, Christians numbered more than 80 percent of the population⁴⁸ and more than half of these were Roman Catholics. Rutayisire (1998:112), who draws from the census of 1991, states that 89.6% of the population were Christian, with 62 percent being Roman Catholics and the rest Protestants. The Hutu made up more than 35 percent of the Roman Catholic Church. This significant number of Roman Catholics has led the media and critics such as Tom Ndahiro (2005)⁴⁹ to use "Roman Catholic Church" to mean the whole church in Rwanda. Thus the majority is often considered and the minority neglected. When Ndahiro highlights the role of the church in the genocide, he takes the role of the Roman Catholic Church during the genocide and generalises it as having included all churches in Rwanda. Ndahiro argues that he emphasises the Roman Catholic more than Protestants because he believes the Catholic Church was "the only institution involved in all the stages of

⁴⁷ The shift of the Catholic Church towards the Hutu was because of Belgium's pressure not because they liked or were interested in the Hutu.

⁴⁸ McCullum (1995:65) says that more than 90 percent of the population were baptized Christians (65 percent Catholic, 20 percent Protestants or Anglican, about 5 percent Adventists).

⁴⁹ Tom Ndahiro is a Rwandan human rights commissioner and he has written on the Rwandan genocide, more especially on justice issues. See <http://www.pambazuka.org>

genocide" so he does not talk about other denominations (Ndahiro [2005]). For Ndahiro, not only did the Roman Catholic Church participate in the genocide, but it played a central role from the 1950s in the creation and furtherance of a racist ideology and fostered a system whereby Europeans were viewed as superior. Consequently, Ndahiro's accusation must be understood historically not just in relation to the genocide. In my judgment, this would explain why during the genocide, RPF primarily targeted priests, fathers and bishops from the Roman Catholic Church.

Ndahiro's position towards the Roman Catholic Church seems to be different from Christophe Hakizabera, one of the first members of the RPF who fled the country because of insecurity in 1995. Hakizabera points out that RPF leaders decided to

make false accusation against the church because it preaches equality of all men and helps to educate the people; to eliminate Hutu priests, and then replace them with Tutsi priests; to terrorise missionaries and force them leave the country because they are uncomfortable witnesses and hinder the RPF's plans; to kill the older missionaries who know the history of Rwanda because they are responsible for what happened in 1959 when the Tutsi lost power to Hutu elite educated by missionaries in the minor seminaries. (Hakizabera 1999)

Ndahiro further states that the philosophy of "*rubanda nyamwishi* (majority or Hutu majority), that prevailed after the so-called social revolution of 1959 ignored the basic tenets of democracy. Ndahiro goes on to criticise the church leaders for not speaking out against racial discrimination or political and social injustices and for not condemning the first mass killings or those which followed. He states that leaders took the side of political regimes and consequently were unable to exercise the church's prophetic voice. McCullum rightly supports Ndahiro and says that "Rwanda's church leaders were cautious to the point of missing the prophetic and pastoral calling rooted in biblical and church imperatives to speak justice in all seasons" (1995:69). Rutayisire (1998:114-115) also criticises church leaders for keeping quiet when they were supposed to speak and for speaking out when they were not supposed to speak. The Christians who were born again (*Barokole*) were so heavenly minded that they forgot that Christianity has duties even here on earth.

McCullum (1995:65-66) condemns the international church's silence towards the Rwandan situation. He considers and gives credit to the example given by the church of South Africa during apartheid: "The Church internationally was unable or unwilling to provide anything like the unquestionable support and solidarity it gave for more than 25

years to the victims of apartheid in South Africa". He also urges the church to mourn and reflect on what happened before attempting any healing and reconciliation. There are also some assumptions that if there had been international support for the church, the genocide might not have occurred.

However, according to McCullum (1995:68), there were a few small voices one needs to point out. When Pope John Paul II demanded an end to the killing some weeks after April, 1994, the Catholic leaders and some priests with the Protestant leaders produced a "peace-making document", which blamed both RPF and Government for the massacres and called them to stop it. This document also expressed condolences to those who had lost their loved ones. It offered mediation to set up a transition and called all Christians to refuse to participate in massacres. Although some church leaders allegedly left their church members (for other countries such as Tanzania and Zaire), because of the militias and difficult times, others remained behind. Those who remained served thousands of people although they experienced torture, betrayal and the trauma of witnessing death.

McCullum goes on to show that the church in Rwanda could have been used to save many people who were killed during the genocide. The church knew of the impending disaster and could have stopped it: "Church pulpits could have provided an opportunity for almost the entire population to hear a strong message that could have prevented the genocide. Instead the leaders remained silent" (1995:68). A Hutu priest in Kigali says that the failure of the church to provide moral leadership is inexplicable (1995:68). McCullum points out that one of the problems was that the churches were just as divided as the country. He also emphasises that the leaders of the churches failed to criticise moral perversion or impairment of virtue and moral principles or to give up their status and the gifts some of them received (cars, televisions, schooling for their children and relatives) from the government.

Some brave men and women in the church confronted the killers, despite the fact that the "leadership had been co-opted" as shown in the case of Bishop Vincent Nsengiyumva, who was a key member and social affairs chair of the Central Committee of the MRND (Movement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement) for 14 years.

McCullum (1995:71) also describes the situation of the church after April based on one visit in Kigali. He went to the mass of St. Etienne in August 1994 where he saw people who were overwhelmed with feelings of wonder because of their survival. More than 500

people came, but they "were thin and hungry and sick, their houses destroyed or looted, their experiences haunting their hopes uncertain, ...It was the Church of the Survivors, still unsure of its future but for those few hours at least they were a community once again."

McCullum (1995:66) asserts that it is clear that the genocide shook the very foundations of the churches, because "none remained without blood on its hands".⁵⁰ Some people wish to remain Christians; others view the old churches as grave-sites rather than places of worship.

4.4.2 How to Understand the Churches' Failure?

According to McCullum before 1994 (in the upheavals of 1959, 1963, 1967, 1973 and 1990) religious workers, such as pastors and priests, Hutu and Tutsi, were superficially the good shepherds of the church because there were probably no well-known incidents to arouse their feelings against one another. The church provided sanctuary during the earlier upheavals. But each upheaval increased the tension. In 1994, some of them showed that they were bad shepherds of the flocks. One can argue on two counts: the first being that the church became too close to the government, though, as McCullum says, the Anglicans and Protestants were "less firmly tied to the presidency, except for Archbishop Nshamihigo" compared to the Catholics; and the second is that, though they could notice what was happening, there was a terrible fear among the church, knowing that anyone who voiced criticism would be a target of the killers. Nevertheless, it is very clear from history that the church also had "ethnic tensions" as is the case between the Roman Catholic and Anglican Church leadership (1995:77). Most Anglican leaders were Hutu while Roman Catholic leaders were Tutsi.

An instance of ethnic tension was seen in an episode in June 1994. Three Hutu Catholic bishops and ten priests were killed by RPF soldiers as they ate their dinner at Kabgayi diocese to which they had fled early in the war. Pope John Paul spoke publicly against this and RPF leaders admitted that they had no evidence that any of the bishops had participated in any killings (1995:78). I am of the opinion that before the 1994 genocide, the leadership of the church, as it is today after the genocide, follows ethnic lines. This is

⁵⁰ I do not agree with McCullum that all have killed or are supposed to be guilty of not stopping the killers, rather I am of the opinion that individuals should be blamed or congratulated for what has been done. There are various cases whereby individuals helped the hunted. A good example is Ilibagiza (2006:73-127) who talks about how she and another seven girls were saved by a local Pastor, Murinzi. See also Rutayisire (1998).

clear in terms of election or nomination to senior ecclesiastical positions. During Habyarimana's regime many Hutu were in high positions in the church leadership. Today, the situation is reversed. Many top church leaders are Tutsi. It is said that if a Hutu is qualified to be elected as a church leader and the ruling elite do not want the same person in leadership, it is easy to forge information alleging that the person participated in genocide and this leads to prison. At present 80 percent of church leaders in Rwanda are Tutsi, which is a reversal of the situation under Habyarimana's government. Note here that many pastors are the *returnees* of 1959, from Uganda, Burundi, Congo, and Tanzania.

Finally, although there could be some positive church initiatives towards the situation in Rwanda, little is done due to the church's relationship to the government. This relationship has led to them having the same position that they had towards the issue of genocide, namely not speaking out against the wrong done.

4.4.3 The Church's Response to the War and Genocide

Before the genocide of 1994, in 1992 during the war, Bishop Thaddée Nsengiyimva opposed the government's policies and was instrumental in establishing and chairing an ecumenical committee of Catholics and Protestants to work for peace and justice. Peter Lwaminda, General Secretary of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of East Africa (AMECEA), after a meeting of All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) on September 30, 1992 to bring together Protestants, Catholic, and evangelical leaders for healing and reconciliation, commanded the ceasefire and consolidation of church in Rwanda but pointed out that it would be a long term process:

People have to begin to understand the depth of their trauma if we are to have reconciliation. There must also be conditions inside the country to ensure the safe return of refugees. Churches must work with patience and encourage in the process of rebuilding trust and mutual acceptance, of moving from despair to hope, from misinformation to admitting the truth, from revenge and hatred towards forgiveness and reconciliation. (Lwaminda in McCullum 1995:83).

McCullum tells us that Church World Action-Rwanda was one of the church responses to the struggle of Rwanda before genocide. It was born after the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) visited Rwanda at the Arusha Peace Accord in November 1993. Both organisations, as McCullum (1995:86) explains, "Went beyond mere humanitarian aid to include spiritual and reconciliation

components and the need for improved communications." CWA-R (Church World Action – Rwanda) combined the professional operational experience of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the WCC's concern for justice, peace and reconciliation. To do that it drew together many partners from Africa and Europe to bring Non Governmental Organizations to help the refugees and other needs.

The church did not accomplish enough in response to the atrocities in Rwanda during and after genocide, but individual Christians made remarkable testimonies that were to prove helpful to the church in the future. Rutayisire (1998:9, 13), the Rwandan team leader for African Enterprise, points out that in Rwanda "not all the Christians turned to violence."⁵¹ He quotes Cassidy who cites Rev. Munyaneza, "...although the church as an institution failed, there are testimonies of individual Christians and Christian initiative groups that helped to save lives or even gave their lives for others ... they are the hope of the country, because those Christians overcame the barrier of hatred and ethnic divisions."

Pastor Matias Bimenyimana (in Rutayisire 1998:31-32) says that in his church there were some born again soldiers who rescued the people from the massacres. He notes:

Some gave money to secure safe passage, others used faked identity cards, and still others arrived escorted by born again Christian soldiers, members of our church. Up to the day the government army vacated the city, born again Christian soldiers were still bringing people they had rescued from the massacres. They would accompany them past the road blocks, presenting them to the militia as members of their own families...Some soldiers had gone as far as telling the militias that they would turn on them and kill them if anything happened in the church.

He also shows how the born again soldiers continued to help them in many ways like bringing food, fetching water, offering protection from militias up to the point of fighting against *Interahamwe*. He says that often the militia would come and then say to each other "These are Christians, leave them alone." He finally says that despite denominational differences, all these stayed together and no-body was killed in their church compound. I would like to end these testimonies by noting how people even hid their friends, brothers and sisters in the Lord. There seem to be many testimonies that show the brave Christian service offered throughout the massacres and war (cf. Rutayisire 1998:36ff).

⁵¹ For more information on the testimonies of the survivors, see Rutayisire (1998:17-67).

Many people sought refuge in the churches because, before the 1994 holocaust, the church was a safe, respected place and anyone who entered was safe. After the genocide, the church responded by offering re-burial for the victims. Rutayisire reflects on April, the month of taking time to remember the beginning of the genocide in Rwanda noting that the African Enterprise Rwanda (AER) decided to call all churches to fast and pray for the healing of the nation. He makes the following comment during this time of mourning based on his visit to an Anglican Church in Kigali; "We confessed and repented of ethnic selfishness, hatred and bitterness inherited from our fathers. We confessed the failure of our church in Rwanda, starting with the beginning until our own day. We pleaded for our religious and political leaders, we prayed for healing, restoration and reconciliation" (1998:99). He goes on to narrate about a trip with his family to collect the bones of his cousin who had been killed during the genocide to make proper burial. He thus concludes, "How can people cope with this anger without the grace of God?...Even today, though, some people are still afraid of a second genocide, against the *Bahutu* this time... but the masses depend on the leadership to act!" (1998:102).

4.4.4 The Church situation (1994-2006)

The church today attempts some initiatives, despite being haunted by its role in the genocide.⁵² According to the information accessed on September 2006, Mugabe (2006) says that recently the Anglican church of Rwanda has introduced a social therapy programme in Bicumbi District to foster unity and reconciliation among the residents. This was revealed on June 11, 2006 by Bishop Onesphore Rwaje, in an exclusive interview held at his office in the District. Mugabe says that according to Rwaje, the social therapy programme was launched in 2005 by the District in collaboration with the Anglican Church in Bicumbi as a measure to heal the wounds of the 1994 genocide as a result of a breakdown of the social bond that kept all Rwandans together.

He added, "The church is committed to working around the clock with the government for the good of the nation. We are expressing our total commitment to the development of the country through promotion of unity and reconciliation." He pointed out that the programme has reaped positive results in the community where a huge percentage of the population have met, discussed and come up with solutions. "I call this a good step and I want to assure Rwandans that the church will continue supporting reconciliation work for

⁵² There are many examples of Christians who participated in the genocide.

the sake of resolving and managing conflicts and a success story in Rwanda," he said. He urged Rwandans to reconcile and love one another and pledged to work hand in hand with the local district authorities for community development.

According to the International Religious Freedom Report 2005, released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, relations between the Government and the Catholic Church have continued to improve because of collaboration and dialogue in the areas of education and reconciliation. In March 2004, the Government participated in a conference with the Catholic Church on the 1994 Genocide.⁵³ But, in my view, it is clear that the church in general is hand in hand with the government, more especially the independent churches, and that this will lead to a repeat of the previous mistakes of the church, during the time of Habyarimana's government.

4. 5. Reconciliation in Rwanda

Dealing with reconciliation necessitates knowing *why* rather than *how* the genocide occurred. Many have analyzed the how part but few attempted to know why genocide took place. There are those who locate its causes in colonialism, others the shooting-down of the plane, while others attribute it to historical factors.⁵⁴ The genocide has many historical roots and took a long time to take place. These historical factors fostered the genocide that victimized more than a million innocent people. It affected a number of

⁵³ For more information see www.news.adventist.org and Frank.Imhoff@elca.org. The report released on November 8, 2005 points out that the church is also not free to argue against the government's policies. In 2004, two Jehovah's Witnesses' circuit overseers (church leaders) who travel to various congregations for ministerial activity were arrested. Police arrested Tharcisse Muhire in April 2004, at Ntongwe in Gitarama Province, on charges of "inciting school children to disrespect national symbols, and to oppose government policy on security." He was reportedly threatened and forced to walk for four hours under armed guard to the military prison in Nyamabuye-Gitarama; however, he was released in May 2004. The other circuit overseer was arrested on June 20, 2004, and released the next day after a Jehovah's Witness delegation met with the authorities. In January 2004, Pentecostal Pastor Majyambere was arrested in Kigali on charges of "preaching rebellion." On March 27, 2005, he was found guilty and sentenced to 6 months imprisonment. On May 8, 2005, 16 members of his congregation, including 5 women, were arrested and beaten at Kibagabaga, Kacyiru District, Kigali City. In March 2005, Pentecostal Pastors Stanislas Ntawurikura and Denis Serugendo were arrested in Kibungo Province on charges of rebellion. The 16 church members and both pastors remained in detention at the end of the period covered by this report

⁵⁴ The current Rwandan government views the root of genocide as colonialism, while the Hutu view it as historical. The RPF imposed this version of history inside Rwanda and internationally. For example, a famous song goes as follow: "It is the white man who has caused all that, children of Rwanda. He did it in order to find a way to pillage us. When they [the Europeans] arrived, we were living side by side in harmony. [...] They invented different origins for us, children of Rwanda ... but we have overcome the white man's trap [...] So, children of Rwanda, we are called upon to unite our strength to build Rwanda" (Des Forges in Zorbas 2004:42).

people of Rwanda whether Tutsi or Hutu who need reconciliation that will stop any vengeance and a renewed cycle of violence today.⁵⁵

There are many factors explaining the genocide, but the main and foremost cause of the genocide is the history of the political, social, and economic relationship between Hutu and Tutsi. From the above historical analysis, the Tutsi were comfortable with the life that existed before 1959, while the Hutu did not like the time before 1959. This seems to have been the main cause of the Rwandan genocide. But the question is whether they can stay together peacefully. There is a suggestion to separate them, from the Tutsi in Burundi and the Hutu in Rwanda because the problem seems to be similar in both countries.

Nevertheless, if we need to have reconciliation in Rwanda, it is also imperative to know who reconciles with whom. The denial of who we are will probably hinder our understanding of reconciliation. As we have seen, the majority Hutu were about 84% and the minority Tutsi 15% of the population before the 1994 genocide. Can one say that before reconciliation can happen one must eradicate the three ethnic groups' identity (Twa, Hutu and Tutsi) and then look for a solution? One cannot deny that there are three ethnic groups. It has been agreed that talking about *genocide* means that the actions were planned and executed to terminate a group of people, a nation or part of a nation, an ethnic and racial or religious group. Then if the Hutu planned to destroy the Tutsi, why do we need to take away the name Hutu and Tutsi as identity for reconciliation? I am of the opinion that the ethnic groups, "political identities" (Mamdani 2001:22) that are in Rwanda need to be recognized to achieve reconciliation between Hutu and Tutsi. Geraldine Smyth, a former leader of the Irish Dominicans and their international work, points out that the politics of identity in the context of ethnic conflict is a crucial point in the peace process. Before engaging in reconciliation the groups "must first identify a sense of their own identity" (2006:141).

Mamdani (2001:267-270) rightly, in my opinion, identifies a number of consequences of contextualizing the truth of genocide in Rwanda. He believes that it is not possible to think of reconciliation between Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda without a prior reconciliation with history because the identification of both perpetrator and survivor is contingent on

⁵⁵ See Des Forges (1999:180-301) for a detailed analysis of the Genocide at national level.

one's historical perspective.⁵⁶ In the first place he says that the problem of Rwanda is primarily one of political power. Consequently, "there can be no reconciliation without a reorganization of power." The second way to understand the civil war in Rwanda is to take it as the development of a regional dynamic because President Museveni of Uganda exported his internal crisis to Rwanda in 1990 and this should be a lesson for the current government. Thirdly the question of power should be looked at in the historical context. This is to understand the challenge of "both the Tutsi version of Rwandan history that Tutsi privilege was exclusively a colonial creation and the Hutu version that Tutsi privilege is as old as the presence of Tutsi on Rwandan soil." The fourth would be to reflect on the complicity between the imperial project in twentieth-century Rwanda and history writing about Rwanda. "Historians preoccupied with the search for origins read cultural differences from facts of migration and translated cultural into political difference." The fifth would be to "problematize both the 1959 Revolution and the Hutu power ideology born of it." The sixth is "to distinguish between Hutu power⁵⁷ and *genocidaire*, as ideology and as political tendency." The last advantage of contextualizing the truth would be to recognize that "Rwanda is once again at a historical crossroads where its political leadership is faced by two clear options": continuation of civil war or positioning to political reconciliation. There are some steps that are being attempted by the government to bring about reconciliation. I will come back to this after exploration of traditional reconciliation.

4.5.1 Traditional Meaning of Reconciliation

Before and after the colonial period, Rwanda had quarrels and misunderstandings within its population. Those who had disputes knew how to reconcile themselves using traditional means. Traditional conflict resolution was achieved through an informal judicial process of maintaining peace and reconciliation in the community known as *gacaca*.⁵⁸ It had community rather than individual concerns and thus dealt with local problems without going out of the community. Although the system looked like a

⁵⁶ One of the policies of the current Rwandan government aimed at bringing reconciliation is to stop teaching history (there are now two versions of historical formulation: the Hutu's and Tutsi's), changing some geographical issues (names and numbers of the districts and villages, national flag and re-dividing the country), eliminating the concept of Hutu or Tutsi as ethnic identities in the Rwandan language and education, and to replace Hutu and Tutsi with "*banyarwanda*." For information, see Mamdani (2001:267-268, Zorbas 2004: 43).

⁵⁷ According to Mamdani (2001:268), Hutu power can be identified with black empowerment in South Africa or Black Consciousness of United States of America.

⁵⁸ This *gacaca* is different to what is now existing because in 2001 the current Rwandan government adopted traditional courts but also assigned to them new responsibilities for the population. It is very far from the traditional *gacaca* that is known to have had limited responsibility.

traditional court, it could not deal with big cases such as murder, robbery and political issues. A traditional *gacaca* was thus limited to specific areas.

The procedure of traditional reconciliation is as follows: the victim is approached by a mediator and then both parties are called to meet the elders. They present their conflict and the elders judge. The wrongdoer, if any, is charged and warned in the council meeting to restore the dignity (honor) of the injured party. Sometimes the wrongdoer will not be able to pay the token of reparation at the time and so the community will help to provide it to achieve reconciliation.

The traditional *gacaca*, as described by Karekezi and et al (2004:73), "responded to problems that the official courts categorize as civil affairs, using reimbursement or compensation and accompanying them with a formal, public reconciliation." Reconciliation had no other goal, except the restoration of social harmony or resolving conflict within the community. This is why there was no compulsion that one should reconcile with another. Thus, there was no penalty as such, but the community was always there to offer support. For example, if they charged one a gallon of beer, the community might come and give more than a half so that one is reconciled with one's brother.

4.5.2 Efforts made by the Current Rwandan Government

Several overlapping, evolving and sometimes competing approaches are being used by the RPF in attempting to bring about reconciliation. Zorbas (2004:31ff) outlines the approaches adopted by the current Rwandan government. Firstly, it assisted the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)⁵⁹ which started working in 1995, though there is an allegation that Rwanda also benefits because it gets an annual amount of USD 2,200,000.00 to support the *Gacaca* (Zorbas 2004:34).

Secondly, the government introduced the *gacaca* in 2001 because the formal judicial system in Rwanda would require more than a century to judge the hundreds of thousands prisoners in custody. Its goal is "to promote reconciliation and healing by providing a

⁵⁹ The ICTR, as Zorbas says, is an international community which has the mandate to deal with the crimes committed between 1 January and 31 December 1994. This has three objectives: a) to help in the process of national reconciliation in Rwanda, b) to bring the (high-ranking) architects of the genocide to justice, and c) to contribute to preventing such atrocities from happening again. For more details about Rwanda and international legal response to genocide, see Des Forges and Longman, in Stover and Weinstein (2004:49-68).

platform for victims to express themselves, encouraging acknowledgement and apologies from the perpetrators and facilitating the coming together of both victims and perpetrator every week on the grass" (2004:36). This could resemble the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa if there was any jurisdiction to extend amnesties to those who confess.⁶⁰ Karekezi (2004:74) confirms that the *gacaca*, on the "grass root" justice has become a normal court with formal justice, "The trials are no longer voluntary but coercive under the authority of the state, the sanctions are punitive, the gravity of the crimes treated is much greater, the parties concerned are not always present (victims who have been killed, displaced people), there are a variety of fixed rules to follow and there is an attempt to create an impartial tribunal."

Thirdly, the government led by Paul Kagame views poverty as one of the barriers to national reconciliation. Kagame describes poverty as a matter of grave concern requiring urgent attention. He has called for the prioritization of poverty reduction in all government programs because there is a saying in current Rwanda, "You can't eat peace".

Fourthly, in 1999, the government initiated the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) for the *Interahamwe* and other groups that have been repatriated to Rwanda, mostly those who were forced to return from eastern Congo. In terms of this programme those who return undergo a "civic re-education" or "solidarity" (*ingando*). People stay at an *Ingando* for 6 to 8 weeks; this ends with "graduation ceremonies" at which officials are invited to make speeches. Here we need to remember that this process is also controlled and directed by the Tutsi government.

Last but not least, the current Rwandan government is concerned with memory, identity and culture. It is based on the collective memory of corpses and the collected bones of victims on tables and shelves, on monuments, memorials, museums, films on genocide, novels, churches turned into memorials and others. These memorials are seen everyday by the Rwandans of all ages and all visitors are expected to see them. To refresh and foster memory at the national level every year bodies are exhumed and given a formal burial and it is broadcast on television with a special program on genocide on television. The whole month of April is a month of mourning.⁶¹ It is important to note that all these

⁶⁰ See Karekezi, et al. (2004: 69-84) for how the *gacaca* court was like an emergence from hybrid system.

⁶¹ Many people differ on this collective memory, especially on memorial and national mourning because it seems to be an obstacle to national unity as it only remembers the Tutsi who died not the Hutu. This is why

initiatives were adopted by the UN and other international communities to help deal with the 'legacy of genocide'.⁶²

4.5.3 Some Obstacles to Reconciliation

Despite the above attempts, there are many obstacles to reconciliation. Zorbas notes that "the failure to investigate other, non-genocidal atrocities, such as the alleged RPF war crimes during 1994 in particular, as well as the alleged massacres in eastern-Zaire/DRC is imperative not only on moral grounds but on pragmatic grounds as well" (2004:41). The most voiced issue in today's Hutu community is about the massacre of refugees in eastern Congo in 1996 and 1997. This raises the question of ethnic consciousness and the denial of the act of genocide against Tutsi because no one is charged on the side of the Tutsi.⁶³ Zorbas also argues that the Tutsi/Hutu distinction is more rigid than before because of the genocide. She points to another problem: "Rwandan political power is in the hands of a few key men, *les Ougandais*, members of RPF who grew up as refugees in Uganda." Pasteur Bizimungu, former Président said "tout les segments de la population ne participent pas a l'exercice du pouvoir" (quoted in Zorbas 2004:45) and he later said that he was a "Hutu de service" and that he served "encadrés par les fidèles de Kagame."⁶⁴ Here I want to point out that although the government has made "great efforts", it also raises other factors that hinder reconciliation and criticisms of leadership that seem to hold back the reconciliation process.

Zorbas further summarises Mamdani's work that critically re-examines Rwandan history and how the current government interprets itself as a vehicle to propagate collective Hutu guilt. Zorbas notes that Mamdani "speaks of the dropping of the ethnic labels in favour of a 'genocide framework from which an alternate, equally damaging categorisation of the population emerges" (2004:46). Thus the following five categories of Rwandan identity have been created in Rwanda.

some Hutu view this as the business of the Tutsi victims where they do not have anything to do (Zorbas 2004:40).

⁶² For more detail on this subject, see Rongman and Rutagengwa (2004:162-182). They discuss in detail the government's implementation of several policies including commemoration and say, "The government has used trials, public addresses, commemorations and memorialisation, school programs, re-education camps and new national symbols to shape the collective memory of Rwandan history" (2004:164).

⁶³ While I was writing this thesis, President Kagame was accused by France of shooting down the airplane which was one of the causes of the genocide.

⁶⁴ President Bizimungu wanted to say: "all the rest of the populations do not take part in the leadership of the country" though he was a Hutu president, he was under supervision of Tutsi, Kagame's people. President Bizimungu was forced to resign and President Kagame took over the presidency during the transition.

1. The *returnees*, mainly Tutsi exiles who returned to Rwanda after the RPF came to power in July 1994. They are the Tutsi who did not experience the civil war or genocide and their English or Swahili is frequently better than their mother tongue, Kinyarwanda.
2. The *refugees* can either be Tutsi who fled before the genocide or Hutu who are post genocide refugees.
3. The *victims* are both Tutsi and moderate Hutu. However Hutu victims are often not entitled to assistance for the construction of homes.
4. The *survivors* are only Tutsi and moderate Hutu. A "survivor" is a Tutsi who was in Rwanda at the time of genocide and who is alive today." The word is not used for any Hutu who was in the country during the same period. The assumption is that the genocide was aimed only at the Tutsi and any Hutu who opposed it was killed by the Hutu.
5. The *perpetrator* is any Hutu who is still alive. Quoting Mamdani, Zorbas says, "...every living Hutu was either an active participant or a passive onlooker in the genocide. Morally, if not legally, both are culpable. The dilemma is that to be a Hutu in contemporary Rwanda is to be presumed a perpetrator."

The above terms are used today to raise funds for any particular category of people on behalf of the government. By way of example, in 1998 the Fond National pour l'Assistance aux Rescapé du Génocide (FARG) was created. Zorbas tells us that this is a national fund for the most destitute genocide survivors into which all Rwandans must pay a percentage of their wages. However, this financial assistance has been going to Tutsi only because no one else is considered a "survivor", in spite of the fact that Mamdani includes moderate Hutu in this category.

Finally, it seems hard to bring about reconciliation if the perpetrators and the victims are not willing to make a personal effort. The country is still in the denial stage and not fully committed to reconciliation. The Hutu blame the Tutsi and the Tutsi blame the Hutu for not initiating reconciliation. Reconciliation takes time before it can be realised. Other things that might hinder reconciliation, according to Amnesty International (2003), are that Rwanda lacks freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly and freedom of religion. It is also criticised for its abuses in the DRC. ⁶⁵ If Rwanda and

⁶⁵ According to Amnesty's report of 2003, on line, (<http://web.amnesty.org/report2003/rwa-summary> accessed on August 2006) members of the press, the political opposition and elements within civil society not aligned with the government, or critical of it, faced continuing infringements of their freedom of

international community do not change their perceptions on the issue of reconciliation there is a possibility of a repeat of the situation of 1994. It is clear from the current situation that the Rwandan government (mainly RPF members) is increasing the hatred in the population by creating certain division such as those I mentioned above.

4.6 Conclusion of the Chapter

In this chapter, I have explored the Rwandan context in relation to reconciliation (ref. page15-16). The Rwandan state of affairs is one of tension between Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups. Both hate each other as a result of historical circumstances in Rwanda. The history of Rwanda before, during and after the 1994 genocide shows that Hutu and Tutsi fought mainly over power, economic issues pertaining to land, oppression of clientship and personal dignity. While before, during and after colonialism, both ethnic groups had different levels of life and power (a Tutsi king over the Hutu), independence and democracy in the 1960s brought a reversal of power relations (Hutu were able to rule over the Tutsi). The Hutu felt important while the Tutsi felt they were losing their dignity. The Hutu threatened and killed many Tutsi which resulted in refugees fleeing into neighbour countries.

The 1994 genocide was marked by mass atrocities against the Tutsi and by the individual killing of certain Hutu. I attempted to show that on a number of occasions the church and individual Christians participated in the genocide. On the other hand, some believers (including certain soldiers and brave individuals) saved many people (mainly Tutsi). It has become very clear that the church, as people set apart for God, should show a

expression. Self-censorship was rife with individuals, particularly journalists, unable to cover certain subjects. During the year, journalists were imprisoned, deported and driven into exile. The Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) remained the only political party allowed to organize. All other political party activity remained banned. The situation with regard to religious freedom deteriorated. Local authorities harassed churches or religious organizations regarding requirements to acquire legal status that they hold their services in established places of worship and that they receive permission to hold evening services or meetings. There were also reports that local officials denied the rights of assembly and worship to Jehovah's Witnesses and detained them. The Rwandese Patriotic Army (RPA) and their troops, RCD-Goma, continued to control large areas of the eastern DRC in opposition to the DRC government and armed political groups which included Rwandese insurgents. The Rwandese forces and their allies were responsible for arbitrary arrests, unlawful detentions. Unlawful killings of civilians, "disappearances" and torture, including rape. There were numerous reports that the RPA and the Rwandese-backed RCD-Goma forces targeted Roman Catholic clergy for abuse. Abuses reported included arbitrary arrests, unlawful detentions, killings and "disappearances". There were also reports of death threats against religious leaders, pillaging and destruction of church property and the use of armed soldiers to forcibly disperse religious services. Human rights defenders and civil society activists were also subjected to harassment, detention and ill-treatment (see Nest et al 2006:.22-24, 51).

different character, that of God's people. But due to fear, incompetence, and the political involvement of some denominations, the church could not do much to stop it or to stand firm. After genocide, the church formed some organised structures and participated in a number of non-governmental organisations for reconciliation between Tutsi and Hutu.

Nevertheless, it is clear that though there are church organisations for peace and reconciliation, they still lack resources because most of them follow the political governmental way of dealing with reconciliation. The Christian church should follow biblical guidance in reconciliation, seeing God in every circumstance. I have outlined some of the current governmental initiatives to bring about reconciliation and I showed that ignoring history and denying our identity are not the solution to bringing about reconciliation. Traditionally, reconciliation's goal is to bring social harmony, not to increase hostility or antagonism, as seems to be the case in Rwanda currently. Traditional *Gacaca* courts, adopted by the current government, now have another meaning because they have other responsibilities, capacities and capabilities. The understanding of reconciliation is no longer what Rwandans knew before genocide because it has now been politicised.

CHAPTER FIVE

APPROPRIATION:

THE RELEVANCE OF PAUL'S PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS RECONCILIATION IN POST-GENOCIDE RWANDA

5.1 Introduction

In my methodological chapter I noted that appropriation is a final stage of my interpretation. This moment is a climax stage in this exegetical model for our analytical method because it has to be true to both the text and the reader's context. It combines the insights gained in the distantiating chapter and the contextualization chapter. As I noted in chapter 2, this stage is important but it is also difficult. Its process will be extremely complex as it was for other sections, for no interpretation of a text (especially a biblical text) is done within a vacuum. As a student in biblical studies, I must be very careful in making any conclusions (Draper 2001:153-154).

At this stage, I attempt to argue that the church has much to offer, though it also has some challenges in the debate about personal and social reconciliation. I will highlight its role in reconciliation, understanding reconciliation in the Christian tradition, and some examples of where the church played a role in reconciliation (pp 60-64). Secondly, I will establish some challenges, difficulties and shortcomings of reconciliation in general and in Rwanda in particular; and lastly, I hope to point out the relevance of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 for reconciliation through church mediation.

5.2 The Church as Reconciling Community and institution

One of the main arguments of this research is about mediation of which Jesus and Paul are examples in our text of 2 Corinthians 5. The mediation is between hostile people in the Rwandan population and its assumption is that reconciliation should be the first priority for the church because the church's gospel is about building bridges between

God and people, between us and others and between us and creation (see chapter 1).⁶⁶ Unfortunately today Christians are alienated from God and hate one another. I have already shown from my contextualization chapter (chapter 4.3) that Hutu and Tutsi had developed a relationship of ethnic conflict, division, hatred, revenge and selfishness due to political, social, economic and religious factors throughout their history. This is despite the fact that according to the biblical text God never intended us to all be the same, or to be from the one ethnic group, living in the same part of the world, but wants the people from every tribe, ethnic group, language and nation to reconcile to Himself (Psalms 22:27-28; Acts 10:34-35; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19). As I noted in chapter 3.2, the apostle Paul had some conflicts with his opponents. He describes a new creation and new world through divine reconciliation and sees it as his apostolic duty to appeal to the world to be reconciled to God (Scott 1998:136). He was first reconciled and wants the Corinthians also to reconcile to one another. I am of the opinion that Paul did not theologize the concept of reconciliation to the extent that it lost its concrete relevance for inter-human relationships. Rather through the cross, God created a new humanity which is one true church (cf. Lloyd 1998:9 and Breytenbach 1986:4).

The text of 2 Corinthians shows that the Corinthian church was a congregation of the followers of Christ or Christians. But this did not stop the tensions between Paul and the Corinthian believers. Even though the bible says that when one is in Christ everything becomes new and one become a new creation (2 Cor. 17), yet there were tensions between Paul and the Corinthians. These tensions are also still in Rwandans today, although eighty percent of the population claim to be Christians. In chapter 4 I discussed how the majority of the Rwandans claimed to be Christians, yet they killed one another.

As was clear from the description and analysis of the Rwandan churches (chapter 4.4), before 1994 the church (both Roman Catholic and Protestant) was generally attached to

⁶⁶ Chapman and Spong (2003: 270) view reconciliation as a religious calling and they argue that the term reconciliation is a Christian term. Therefore the church should take the initiative in impacting reconciliation. Clegg (2006:132) views reconciliation as the mission of the church and argues, "If reconciliation has inherent personal and social dimensions, then churches are called to live, worship, socialise and evangelise in ways that promote positive human relationships, individually and corporately and to promote ecologically sound living, not just outside the boundaries of their congregation but also within them."

the country's leadership during the monarchy and after Rwanda became a republic. The church followed the government's ways of dealing with the situation of refugees, ethnic conflict, and reconciliation. The church was not able to challenge the government on different policies.⁶⁷ I argue that in Rwanda, on the one hand, it failed to speak out against the wrongdoing of the leaders of the country. On the other hand, the church lost a good opportunity to win trust and convince the state to change their policies that led to the genocide. Instead the church participated in the genocide. Consequently, as Kubai (2005:98) says, "Today the church in Rwanda is haunted by its role in genocide". It seems clear from chapter 4.4.3 that even after 1994, the church has still not yet fully broken its close association with the government.

In chapter 1.2 and chapter 3.4.6, I have argued that the church should be a messenger of God to promote forgiveness and reconciliation. It should follow Paul who was given the same message to the Corinthians, despite his relationship with the Corinthians and other apostles: "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18). Paul highlights for us that he was changed by God (as I have noted on page 40). Christians are changed also by God through Christ's death and are entrusted with the mediation of reconciliation to the world. Paul said that he was appointed by God to take the message of what God did to him. God gave Paul the ministry of preaching reconciliation and this was Paul's focus during his ministry.

Christians likewise should be actively engaged as mediators of reconciliation, as God's helpers, as Christ's representatives and as participants in the work of furthering God's reconciliation in the world. God acts, chooses and predestines (Ephesians 1:4-5) but human beings react, respond and reconcile to God (2 Corinthians 5: 20). Paul's ministry in Corinth was both personal and social. As Jesus' appointed ambassador (Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν), Paul had to reconcile to the Corinthians and become part of their reconciliation to God (2 Corinthians 5:18). I have referred to Chetty who argues that if

⁶⁷ I assume here that those who were against Paul were from the Jerusalem Church and criticized his ministry and his person.

people are able to reconcile to God, they will be able also to reconcile to each other (2001:69), Rwandans first need a complete turn to God.

This does not mean that Rwandans must first be made acceptable to God, as Domeris (1987:79) argues in the context of South Africa, before they can have relationship with one another. It is not even that one has to reconcile with one another to have relationship with God. Reconciliation should require no condition at all (chapter 3.4). It is not conditional. God reconciled us to Himself while we were still his enemies (Rom 5:10). God reconciled people to himself without counting their trespasses (2 Corinthians 5:19). I am in agreement with Breytenbach (1990:67),

That God recreated the sinner and changed the enemy into a friend is the consequence of reconciliation, not the precondition... *katallassō* refers to the termination of the hostilities, *katallagai* to the new peace relationship between the former enemies. The relationship between the parties has been changed, not the parties themselves. Usually *katallagē* "reconciliation" meant that the fighting parties forgive each other and that amnesty is granted.

In the context for Rwanda, there is a need of forgiveness, but once again it does not seem to be an easy thing to achieve because Rwandans follow the opposite method of forgiveness, which starts from the perpetrator's repentance. The question is whether forgiveness should come before or after reconciliation. I have argued that according to Paul in 2 Corinthians 5, there is no condition for reconciliation in this text of 2 Corinthians (cf. Isasi-Díaz 2006:76). But, as Paul says, "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them" (2 Cor. 5:19). Before I look at the dilemma of forgiveness in the Rwandan context, I would like to establish an understanding of reconciliation from a Christian perspective, which I believe can provide a way forward in the situation of Rwanda if the church is willing to participate in the reconciliation process.

5.3 Christian Understanding of Reconciliation as an Expression of Faith and of Hope

The main understanding of reconciliation for Christians, which Isasi Diaz (2006:75) terms "the sacrament of reconciliation" is rooted in the Bible. Christian reconciliation is God's gift to the World (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21) because God gives love and peace, Jesus Christ, life and salvation and forgiveness and mercy (Raharilalao 1991:311-317, cf. de Gruchy 2002:28). Hay (1998:119) rightly says that "in Christianity, the notion of reconciliation ...is key to the understanding of the ministry and mission of Jesus and therefore, of the ministry of the church". In the distantiation stage (chapter 3.4.6), I argued that the Pauline understanding of reconciliation is that reconciliation involves divine participation and also human participation. It has individual and social dimensions. In the same way, Hay (1998:92-93) defines reconciliation as follows: "reconciliation is not simply being rid of sin, or being forgiven, but of becoming one with God and with others. It is God who reconciles us to himself, although it is never against our will, therefore, our co-operation and acceptance of unconditional love and forgiveness are necessary." Hay (1989:121) further says that "social reconciliation involves not just the individual but the whole of the community or society, where the psyche and memory of the nation need to be healed through the recovery of human dignity and honour, repairing relationships, meeting the demands of justice and human rights."

Schreiter adds that the Christian understanding of reconciliation has had many different meanings and outlines these meanings:

- For Protestants, reconciliation is the result of Christ's atonement through death and justification by faith (Rom. 5:6-11)
- For Roman Catholics, reconciliation is a result of God's love poured out upon us in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17-20).

Schreiter (1998:14-20) continues to argue that the emphasis of Christian reconciliation favours the Catholics' views and points to five aspects of Paul's teaching on reconciliation:

1. Reconciliation is the work of God who initiates and completes in us reconciliation through Christ. God initiates the work of Christ in the lives of the victims. Schreiter says that usually we would expect reconciliation to begin with the repentance of the wrongdoers. But experience shows that wrongdoers are rarely willing to acknowledge what they have done or to come forward of their own accord. This is what is happening in Rwanda: victims wait for the perpetrators to take the initiative for reconciliation. Schreiter concludes, "If reconciliation depended entirely upon the wrongdoers' initiative, there would be next to no reconciliation at all" (1998:14). If reconciliation is the work of God, this does not mean that the victim or perpetrator will wait for God to move so that s/he can forgive or repent. But God's action moves the victim and community unconsciously to reconciliation through His Spirit.
2. Reconciliation is more spiritual than a strategy. It is in God working through us that reconciliation is to be found (2 Cor.5:20). But once more, a spiritual reconciliation that does not lead to a strategy does not fulfill its goal. A strategy that is not based on the spiritual will fall short of the mark.
3. The experience of reconciliation makes of both victim and wrongdoer a new creation (2 Cor.5:17). Reconciliation is restoration in the sense that God gives us back the humanity that was wrested from us, but it is a humanity that now includes the experience of reconciliation. This new creation of both victim and wrongdoer is a sign of God's presence.
4. The process of reconciliation that creates the new humanity is to be found in the story of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ's passion and death are recounted, not for the gruesome and unjust treatment they were, but as a dangerous memory of how God subverted the power that was used for perpetrating injustice. The resurrection confirms and manifests God's power over evil, which is why we are able to read the resurrection stories as stories of God's healing and forgiving power in the world.
5. The process of reconciliation will be fulfilled only with the complete consummation of the world by God in Christ. It becomes more evident that reconciliation is God's work with our cooperation. Reconciliation can only be

grasped as involving “all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of the cross” (Col.1:20).

Breytenbach (in Nolte-Schamm 2006: 176-177) points out four lessons from the biblical tradition of reconciliation and I believe these are in line with the traditional Christian understanding of reconciliation:

1. reconciliation is God's deed through the cross of Christ;
2. reconciliation to God entails the creation of a new humanity within the church through the renewing and unifying power of the death of Jesus Christ;
3. reconciliation is not confined to the church, but God reconciled the whole of humanity, the entire created order, to Godself (2 Corinthians 5:19);⁶⁸
4. the reconciliation of the cosmic and celestial forces is tied to an anticipated eschatological reality (Colossians 1:20).

The motivation for engaging in reconciliation is the eschatological reign of God. Nolte-Schamm (2006: 176-177) says that Christians “base their reconciliation endeavours on an eschatological vision of comprehensive well-being”. She adds that reconciliation is not only in the eschatological vision, but also in the theological vision. She argues in line with Kaizer, that Christian reconciliation must involve a Christological starting point. I believe that it is because of the cross that Christians are obliged to be people of reconciliation. Furthermore, she says that reconciliation is also to involve the whole of the cosmos and points to the primary story of the cross and resurrection. The same view is shared by de Gruchy (2002:55-56), namely that the better understanding of reconciliation is in the eschatological vision. He says, “The gospel of reconciliation thus leads directly to defining the mission of the church in the world, namely to proclaim the gospel of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:11-20) and eschatological hope of God's restoration and renewal of the whole creation”.

⁶⁸ For more and detailed discussion of reconciliation in the line of God's relation to the world in both creation and salvation, see Clegg (2006:127-130).

In the distantiation chapter 3.4, I have argued that Paul also presents reconciliation from an eschatological point of view. God is reconciling his people to himself until today and this has a future impact in the people's life, despite the fact that people have liberty to accept or reject the call for reconciliation (see page 41-42). I am in agreement with Isasi-Diaz (2006:76):

Reconciliation must be considered an element in the justice-seeking process that focuses on the future – a future that starts with the present and takes into consideration the past. In this sense reconciliation is a prophetic action: it has to do with healing people who suffer brokenness and divisions and it looks for ways to make their hopes and expectations a reality in our world. Reconciliation is a prophetic action because it is a preferred future of justice for all.

If the above Christian traditional understanding of reconciliation provides light on empowering the church, then the situation in Rwanda needs Christian reconciliation, "seeing God in the political world and a willingness to think through the implications of this from a faith perspective and for a faith perspective" (Tombs 2006:85). I argue that this is because, as I have noted in distantiation chapter 3.5.4, Christians should view the Bible as the central guide of faith and life. Mouton (2001:119) explains that the biblical image, for example, reconciliation, has to do with everything that God is and that human beings are not. But as I have pointed out in the contextualization in chapter 4.4.2, the church in Rwanda could not see this because of its relation to the ruling government.

Schreiter (1998:63-4) proposes for the church two alternatives for reconciliation: on the one hand Schreiter differs from Paul and says that there must be repentance first from the wrongdoer so that the victim can forgive. But according to Paul's view of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:20), there is no condition for reconciliation. Schreiter argues that after times of strife and conflict, people require the wrongdoer to apologize for his/her sin, and then be punished as part of the reconciliation process. On the other hand, Schreiter says that instead of repentance, forgiveness, and then reconciliation, there could be reconciliation, forgiveness, and then repentance. This latter process, in my opinion, is more applicable to the Christian understanding of reconciliation: God works through the victim to bring about healing and restoration of what has been damaged. Paul's reconciliation is theological act which puts mankind in good relationship with God, in a perspective of

love and peace, of sorrowful and forgiveness, of life and salvation. As I have noted before, one has to be conscious and avoid a misuse of the concept of forgiveness and repentance. Forgiveness seems not to be an easy thing to engage in, more especially in the Rwandan context where it seems all parties are claiming to be victims and there is denial on both sides. It is furthermore a challenge because, as I pointed out in the contextualization chapter 4.5.5.3, the policies of the new government favour one side (returnees from Uganda) and discriminate against others (returnees from other countries and Hutu). Nevertheless, as Staub and Pearlman (2001:217) point out, "healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation can only be facilitated but not created or imposed by others."

5.4 Some Challenges to Forgiveness and Reconciliation Facing the Church in Post-Genocide Rwanda

5.4.1 Forgiveness after Genocide and the Dilemma this Poses

My concern here is mainly about the issues that occur in the forgiving process to achieve reconciliation, whether the perpetrator is asked to repent or not. I believe that the Rwandan church must consider these issues as they engage in the reconciliation process. In my contextualization of reconciliation (chapter 4.5), I have noted that victims are still refusing to talk to perpetrators and the perpetrators do not accept the wrong done. There is denial of what happened and how and why it happened and anger on both sides. Thus, it is not easy to forgive or follow Paul's philosophy of reconciliation while the person is not ready to do so. People are still angry and blaming one another. Fanner (2004:27) outlines five stages in forgiveness, as follows:

1. The denial stage: the individual does not admit that they were ever hurt. The defense mechanisms such as denial, reaction formation and idealization come into play here.
2. The stage of anger: the individual blames the other for hurting and trying to destroy the self
3. The bargaining stage: conditions are set up to be fulfilled before the individual will forgive

4. The stage of depression: blame is turned inward towards the self for letting hurt destroy the self
5. The acceptance stage: the self is accepted and others are forgiven. Reconciliation occurs.

There are many problems in the forgiveness process that we need to point out. Although there is not space or time to do so because of the size of this dissertation, I would like to deal with the issue of divine and human forgiveness that Paul talks about in 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 and about conditional and unconditional forgiveness. I will go on to discuss where we might have problems if we need to deal with forgiveness in Rwanda.

The word "forgive" appears 46 times in the New Testament and 34 of them are in the Gospels. The word "forgiveness" appears 17 times in the New Testament and this shows that forgiveness is very significant and seems to be an issue in the New Testament. Jesus' teaching about forgiveness is well known from the Gospels. Throughout church history and today, the church has used these words in different ways; consequently they seem to abuse them (see page 86), which leads to "cheap grace" since they attempt to apply them religiously (Liechty 2006:59-66).⁶⁹ This cheap grace is explained by Brakenhielm who says,

Cheap grace means grace sold on the market like cheapjack's wares. The sacrament, the forgiveness of sin and the consolation of religion are thrown away at cut prices. Grace is presented as the church's inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessing with generous hands without asking or fixing limits. Grace without price; grace without cost (1993:9).

In this climate of forgiveness or grace without cost, the Bible says something and I believe it is relevant to social reconciliation in countries such as Rwanda where the people expect some guidance and help from the Bible.⁷⁰ In the Bible we have the meaning of divine and human forgiveness. Both of them can be illustrated from the Lord's Prayer. One of its parts tells us that humans must forgive other humans so that

⁶⁹ As I will explain more in the next discussion, the church puts pressure on the victim to forgive on the ground that the Bible or Jesus teaches forgiveness.

⁷⁰ In the contextualization chapter, I have pointed out that the Rwandan community still attend the church despite the relationship between Hutu and Tutsi and the memory that they share.

they can receive forgiveness from God. In Matthew 6:12, where it seems clearer than other places, it states, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us". In this prayer the forgiveness is started by human forgiveness and then divine forgiveness follows. The question is whether God will forgive humans if they do not forgive their fellow brothers and sisters. In Matthew, the point is made that God will only forgive humans when humans forgive each other. It states clearly that "For if you forgive others for their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:14-15). This shows that personal and social forgiveness complete each other. Furthermore, this also clarifies for us that divine forgiveness is linked to human forgiveness. In the same way in Paul spirituality is not divorced from how one lives in the world. Spiritual reconciliation and social reconciliation complement each other (2Co 5:18).

Nevertheless, when it comes to the practical application of human forgiveness, many problems arise. According to de Gruchy (2002:171) "Forgiveness is a word that easily trips off our tongues ... It is easy for us who are not victims to tell them to forgive their enemies". The Bible, particularly the New Testament texts, deals with human forgiveness. It tells us that we must forgive so that God also can forgive us our trespasses (Mat 6:14). If one gets hurt, one must also forgive. This obligation puts pressure on the victim who ends up by doing what the heart is not convinced to do. This also is very relevant in Rwanda where a person has been killed and the relatives are asked to forgive. Zuern argues, "The relatives cannot forgive on behalf of the killed person. They can forgive for the consequences the deed has caused for their lives, but not for the dead person" (2001:33). On the other hand, Pope John Paul II says,

The church...cannot held be responsible for the guilt of its members that have acted against the evangelic law; they will be called to render account of their own actions. All church members that have sinned during the genocide must have the courage to assume the consequences of their deeds they have done against God and fellow men (quoted in Kubai 2006:102).

The second problem of human forgiveness is that there is a victimization that takes place when the victim is asked to forgive immediately after being hurt. If the victim does not forgive, s/he will be accused of breaking the will of Jesus who teaches people to forgive

one another so that they can receive forgiveness from God. There must be some time for the victim to be ready to forgive or think about what forgiveness is all about. In the context of Rwanda (see page 60), I would suggest that, in the light of this dissertation, it will be the church's work to teach about how to forgive and the benefit of forgiveness using the bible, as "a large number continue to attend Mass in spite of trauma that still occupies their minds" (Kubai 2006:103).

Further, when the victim refuses or takes time to forgive the perpetrator after having been asked for forgiveness, there is a shift of focus from the perpetrator and her/his deed to the victim. While the victim is thinking about forgiveness, s/he is carrying the baggage of the responsibility of dealing with the demand to forgive. Thus the victim bears the consequences of the deed of the perpetrator while perpetrator is free because her/his task was only to ask for forgiveness. Zuern says, "To ask the victim to forgive, always means to ask the victim to release the perpetrator from the consequences of his/her deed" (2001:34). In the Rwandan context people are hurt, even twelve years after genocide. One of the church requirements for the process of forgiveness is to ask a perpetrator, Hutu or Tutsi, to have a deep regret for the deed and to promise not to do it again. But how can Tutsi or Hutu know whether there is a deep regret or whether there is serious repentance for what has been done on the side of perpetrator? The answer to this requires visiting the heart, something which is not possible for human beings and this becomes a dilemma for the reconciliation process because one side distrusts the other.

In the Christian notion of forgiveness process there is an ignorance of power relations. A rich perpetrator might ask for forgiveness and always expects the victim to forgive because the victim is poor. More often than not, this poverty might be a result of the perpetrator's deed since during the genocide in Rwanda people were deprived of their belongings. While the victim is still poor, s/he will always remember the cause of the poverty and its pain. The memory of the perpetrator's deed will therefore cause the victim not to forgive even if s/he is a Christian, unless there is retribution or reparation. Zuern (2001:35) expresses this in the South African context in the following words: "Poverty cannot be neglected if one speaks about forgiveness because poverty also

deprives people of their humanity. Thus, it will probably be difficult for poor people to forgive a perpetrator who is rich on [sic] the cost of their poverty while they are still struggling to survive." The power implications of the forgiveness process also require that the victim's dignity be restored in order to have equal power.

I have noted in the contextualization chapter 4.5.3 that Hutu killed Tutsi, but Tutsi also killed Hutu and the former are in power today. I pointed out again that the failure to prosecute the alleged RPF atrocities during genocide, delays the process of reconciliation. The Hutu wonder why the Tutsi are not brought to justice while the Hutu are prosecuted (page 72). The power dynamics need to be redressed to ensure forgiveness. The victim will always be afraid to expose the perpetrator fearing that s/he may be harmed in the future, even if in our text of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 God took the initiative to reconcile himself to the world and Paul also took the initiative to reconcile to the Corinthians. But failure to address the power dynamics involved in reconciliation creates pain as soon as there is contact with the wrongdoer, while Christian teaching puts pressure on the victim to forgive those who never even ask for forgiveness. If I have argued correctly that the Hutu killed the Tutsi collectively and the Tutsi killed the Hutu individually, though some scholars argue that even the Tutsi killed the Hutu collectively on occasions, the Hutu are victims as are the Tutsi.

Finally, in relation to forgiveness, there is a question of reconciliation to the person who does not acknowledge the wrong. This is the case where a perpetrator denies the wrong done and the church asks the victim to forgive. In this context the victim wonders what to do or what to forgive or with whom to reconcile. Such a question is also raised by a Human Rights activist in Schreier's book: "How do you seek reconciliation with someone who does not think he [sic] has done anything wrong" (1992:2). In this situation there will be no pleading for forgiveness and there will be no remorse for what the perpetrator has done, despite the pain and grief of the victim.

To conclude, forgiveness needs to be considered as something to be given, not deserved as some church people think. If a person does not feel able to forgive there should be no obligation. One needs to wait for the time and not pressure people to grant it.

5.4.2 Challenges of Reconciliation to the Church in Post-Genocide Rwanda

Apart from the above observations concerning forgiveness, I have noted that Rwandans need healing and reconciliation. The church at Corinth was in conflict with God and some were in conflict with Paul. God himself through Christ and Paul called them to reconcile to himself. Christ was the mediator and made Paul to be his ambassador for reconciliation. I suggested that it should be the task of the church after genocide to foster the reconciliation process. This is because, according to Paul, "we are given the ministry of reconciliation" and the church's mandate is to bring reconciliation and bring together those who are in conflict. The message should be accompanied with actions. The church in Rwanda faces the challenge of fostering forgiveness and reconciliation while being accused of being involved in the genocide. Now "the challenge is to look at the past honestly, face the painful truth, and to renounce revenge and violence" (Kubai 2006:100). Tschuy (1997: 154) adds that the church is challenged to reassess critically its own history and evaluate its own involvement in ethnic conflicts and nationalistic desires for power. He continues to argue that as the church listens to the Spirit of Christ, it will be challenged to abandon old ways and to move in new directions under the leadership of the Spirit, growing closer together with other members of its family.

The other challenge to the church today is that the church itself is not yet healed from the genocide. I suppose that if the Corinthian church had not been ready to deal with the pain caused to Paul by some Christians, it would not have been easy for Paul to call for reconciliation on behalf of Christ. But when Titus came back from Corinth he delivered good news that the church dealt with the differences and misunderstanding between Paul and other Christians (2 Corinthians 7:6-7). Kubai rightly points out that there is a challenge for forgiveness and reconciliation from within the church in Rwanda. She suggests, "Pastors, Priests, Religious and laity alike need to talk openly among

themselves as to what really happened in 1994 and discover what it means to confess the Church's own sin first" (2006:103). Kubai suggests this because she believes that there are some clergy who also need to reconcile with their colleagues.

Another challenge facing the church and its leaders is the current division among the congregations and denominations. In Rwanda, after 1994, many independent churches were established by the 1959 returnees because before 1994 there were no independent churches, but only main line churches. Many people are joining independent churches because many previous priests and pastors are accused of rape and other crimes of the genocide. People still have the memory of what happened in different congregations. This brings rivalry and challenges to the congregations, priests and pastors. To bring about reconciliation, the church should first face this obstacle among the leaders and congregations. Kubai interprets this and points out that since the congregations are divided, "preaching forgiveness to worshippers becomes an arduous task". Consequently, she says, "The Church has the responsibility to provide an environment that is conducive for the worshippers to pray in peace" (2006:104).⁷¹

5.5 Conclusion: The Relevance of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 for Reconciliation through Church Mediation

In this final section, the main concern is to point out some guidelines from Paul's theology of reconciliation that I regard as relevant to the church as a mediator of reconciliation in Rwanda after genocide.

1. In the exegesis of 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 (chapter 3.4), one of the points that emerges strongly is that Paul plays around with terms that are related to *καταλλαγή* and these are important in understanding the apostolic mission of Paul to the Corinthian church. The project of *καταλλαγή* is realized in and by the church activity of mission through

⁷¹ Mouton (2001:123-124), in the line on Calvin, views lament and praise as *pathos* and worship service in particular as the "the primary context where believers are *constituted* and *affirmed as a community of believers* to them, where they learn to know who they are and whose they are, and that they do not belong to themselves".

the ministers (5:18), the spokespersons (5:19), the ambassadors, the mediators and the messengers (5:20). God's mission is given to humanity and for humanity; it is basically a divine mission of reconciliation. It is this gospel of reconciliation that is God's reconciliation, first with the Israel, then to the people of Rwanda.

2. The Church is given one mission of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:20). As I have already mentioned, from the passage we notice that the church has one message: the message of reconciliation. I believe that if there was no separation between human and God there could be no congregation because of the above reconciling purpose. This unique Pauline metaphorical word is relevant for the Corinthians and for Rwandans; that is the "word of reconciliation" (λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς). Mouton (2001:122) proposes reconciliation as *logos* for the church in South Africa. The "word of reconciliation" is given to be proclaimed to the whole world (cf. Matthew 28:19) so that the world, including the Corinthian congregation and the church in Rwanda, might renew the relationship to God (2 Cor.5:18) through reconciliation to one another. This reconciliation is without any condition because Christ has paid the price on the cross. This does not negate justice; rather it means that the justice should reign. I however argue that the Corinthian experience of reconciliation is valid today in a different context, that of the Rwandan genocide. It plays a role in healing the wounds of ethnic conflict, promoting the understanding of God's forgiveness and reconciliation without any condition (Lloyd and Bresser 1998:21).

3. Reconciliation is "a co-operative Call" (v.20): As discussed above in Paul's teaching of reconciliation (chapter 3.4), the task of reconciliation is not only a human activity, but primarily it involves God (5:18-21): τα δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ (v.18), ὡς ὅτι Θεὸς ἦν... καταλλάσσων (v.19), ὡς τοῦ Θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος (v.20), and τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν (v.21). According to Paul, reconciliation is divine. It does not come from human power; human merit or any effort to set up this reconciliation. But it is realized by God through humans (here I am talking about genuine reconciliation that comes from God). Paul did not say that to bring reconciliation people must work on their own. Rather God through the Spirit

helps to bring reconciliation. The church is to rely on the power of God. It is to see God in the whole process, as Tombs (2006:85) points out: "Political theology emerges out of a readiness to see God's presence in the political world, and a willingness to think through the implications of this from a faith perspective and for a faith perspective". God initiated reconciliation and bestows or gives it as a gift to the church through Jesus Christ. Therefore, God is the author, the individual is a messenger, and the church (in Christ) is a mediator of reconciliation.

4. We, like Paul, are given the ministry of reconciliation (v.18, 19). As I have argued, the first priority of the church in Rwanda should be to bring the people to God and restore their relationship to one another. Therefore, reconciliation is through Jesus Christ to the church (the ministers, the spokespersons of Christ, ambassadors and mediators of reconciliation: 2 Corinthians 5:18-21). But as I have noted in the contextualization chapter the priests, the pastors and the Rwandans are in a situation that seems not to favour freedom to bring about reconciliation because they stand accused of participation in the genocide. Nevertheless, though the whole world, according to Paul's theology of reconciliation has sinned against God (chapter 3.4), I have argued that I do not want to generalize that all Hutu have killed or all Tutsi have killed. This is not totally relevant to Rwanda because according to Mamdani (2001:267) not all Hutu are guilty of genocide. Paul was already reconciled to God at Damascus. God gave him the ministry of reconciliation. He experienced reconciliation; he now passes it on to others (vv. 18-19). He knew the meaning of reconciliation; he was a testimony to it. At this point, Paul's view is very relevant to the situation of Rwanda, in a sense that there must be those who have experienced reconciliation and who should be the testimonies of it to others, as I have argued that the church needs first to repent as Germany's church repented after World War II, so those *small voices* can grow (chapter 4.4.1).

5. Paul's Reconciliation is the Reconciliation without Precondition (v.19)

Paul in 2 Corinthians presents reconciliation as all God's work (5:18). Reconciliation happens because God does not hold the faults of humanity against us (v.19). Nothing in this text says that humanity must change first for reconciliation to happen. But humanity

changes because of the reconciliation God freely bestows. The victim approaches reconciliation without any precondition. However, I have argued that the church cannot preach what it does not live. It has to reconcile to God and have that experience as Paul did. Isasi-Diaz (2006:77) asserts, "It is obvious, then, that reconciliation does not exist unless one is in the process of reconciling oneself to others, unless one is working to reconcile oneself and others with those from whom we are estranged". This means that, as Paul portrays it, this reconciliation offered to the perpetrator does not also negate justice. God reconciles and pays the price of his Son Jesus for the sin of the world. I have to note, as I did before, that Jesus did not go to the cross unwillingly, but by his free-will he accepted the offer of God the Father.

Therefore, the analogous sense of Paul's model of reconciliation here seems consistent to me with my argument of justice in the reconciliation process, though some people consider it necessary to have justice before reconciliation. But in the context that Rwandans lived before genocide and are living after genocide, as I pointed out in the contextualization chapter, I cannot claim a strong argument for relevance of the model of justice before reconciliation with the practical experience of this subject; because it seems to me that the situation repeats revenge whether through Hutu or Tutsi regimes. The Tutsi may exact revenge using the same justice, as has already happened with the capital punishment system.

6. In God we see a victim who does not live in denial (v.21)

As I have shown, in Rwanda the Hutu and Tutsi do not accept responsibility for the wrong done and their identity seems not to be acknowledged. Therefore, the ones who are supposed to reconcile are not identified. Each party condemns the other. The Hutu who live outside are hurt just like the Tutsi and Hutu in the country (chapter 4.5.5.3). There is still misunderstanding of what have happened in the genocide and after it.

In the analysis of Paul's reconciliation in Corinth, we see God's willingness to give up his Son for the sin of the world (chapter 3.4.6.2), to restore reconciliation. It was not an easy route, it was a painful route. He does not deny that there is estrangement between

Him and humanity. My argument here is that analogous to God, the victim will go through the pain of confrontation with what has happened in reality before, during and after genocide. Where there is no acceptance of the issue, there is no initiative to reconciliation. But if the victims can identify with the character of God and Christ's humiliation on the cross, then the state of denial will perhaps be overcome. Although the victim will not be able to forget the atrocity, this analogue of Paul's philosophy of reconciliation is a step to reconciliation.

5.6. Conclusion of the Chapter

This chapter has shown in summary that Paul's philosophy of reconciliation at Corinth can be relevant to the Rwandan context, though some of the analogies of his understanding seem not to be equivalent to the situation under scrutiny.

The church as a reconciling community and institution can take note of the argument of Kubai (2006:105-106) that "the church that failed in its God-given task to transform its people from ethnic hatred to Christ must now pray and work towards ending centuries of hatred and strife, and seek to recover from the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Christians and live according to the Christian teaching of love, forgiveness and reconciliation."

This task can be achieved if the church understands the biblical teaching of reconciliation in Paul's philosophy. Hay (1998:119) rightly points out that this understanding of reconciliation is a key to understanding the church's mission of reconciliation (see Matthew 28:18-19). Yet, there will be some challenges and difficulties, but the key to success seems to be God's model of reconciliation without preconditions and unconditional forgiveness. Thus, as Christ's ambassadors the church is the key to bringing about reconciliation in Rwanda despite being accused of participating in the genocide in one way or another.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the summary and conclusion of this dissertation and proposes some practical ways that could contribute to reconciliation in Rwanda.

This dissertation has dealt with reconciliation which is a key theme in 2 Corinthians. It has shown that Paul's philosophy in dealing with reconciliation in Corinth provides a way forward for dealing with reconciliation in Rwanda, though both contexts are different. The aim of this dissertation has been reached: this text can be used to promote forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation to help the church, and even more individuals, because the church is implicated in the genocide. This aim has been reached through different kinds of literature that shed light on the subject of this dissertation. I believe that Draper's tri-polar exegetical model, in conjunction with rhetorical criticism, have allowed stepping back from the text and separating out the different concepts and variables.

My methodology has allowed the conversation between the text and the Rwandan context, using Draper's tri-polar exegetical model, by focusing on reconciliation. I tried to keep the distantiation and contextualization sections separate prior to the appropriation section, in order to give credence to both text and context. During the exegetical process, in the distantiation chapter, through insights and new unexpected discoveries, I was drawn further and further into some more information that made it possible to understand Paul's philosophy of reconciliation. Despite the fact that Paul's philosophy of reconciliation is often understood spiritually, this dissertation concludes that it is of personal and social concern in the Rwandan situation. The Pauline text confronted the Rwandan state of affairs before and after genocide, which was characterized by hatred, revenge, bitterness and maliciousness. This study concludes, in line with Fiorenza (1999:108) that rhetoric seeks for change and motivation of the hearers, and that if the Rwandans read this text, even in the current context, they will be challenged, as I myself

have been challenged by the effectiveness of the biblical text in helping people in a different situation. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 has a transforming effect to replace hatred, revenge, bitterness and maliciousness with goodwill, respect, tolerance and love.

I have shown that in God there is a supreme example of forgiveness and love through Christ's death to bring reconciliation. Nevertheless, we cannot make human beings equal to God; rather God works through His people to bring reconciliation.

I must admit that I was not able to elaborate on the details of the South African church's involvement in the reconciliation during apartheid and after apartheid. But the South African church is a good example that the Rwandan church should draw on in dealing with reconciliation. Their strategies were effective, but once more I stress that it was in their own context, not in the context of Rwanda. The following are some of the strategies in the reconciliation process that were used to promote broader national and community reconciliation by the South African church. They were applied and were regarded effective. I believe they can be applied and be effective to Rwanda in bringing about reconciliation through church mediation (van der Merwe 2003:277-279).

1. There were sermons on reconciliation in regular services. In her article, Mouton (2001:123) suggests that in order to change attitudes and behaviour in South Africa, the church should focus on aspects of the New Testament's "rhetoric of theological vision". Reconciliation should be "the central image of the church's *logos*, biblical authority as liberating and healing practice (*ethos*), and liturgy as context for the development of personal integrity and social responsibility (*pathos*)" (2001:111). She explains that "the worship service as the central point of ecclesial activities and experience, is essentially rhetorical nature" (2001:123). Furthermore, Fiorenza (1999:110-111) points out that rhetoric operates at several levels, including in the interpretation of the text by scholars. I would hope that interpretations similar to mine could be of use in promoting the reconciliation that Mouton suggests should form the "central image of the church's *logos*."

2. Symbolic events were organized, such as mass gatherings, memorial services, marches and public celebrations to provide an opportunity to bring the message of reconciliation.
3. Counseling provided space for confession (cf. Mouton 2001:124).
4. Story telling allowed people to be open.
5. Victim-perpetrator mediation was used to promote individual and collective healing.

Van der Merwe (2003:279) argues that these strategies might have been used by the government in some way or another and by some NGOs, but the fact that they were done under church guidance adds a new dimension to the intervention and provides access to different types of groups and opportunities (see chapter 4.5.2).

I complete this discussion on reconciliation with the hope that the victims and perpetrators will find each other as they read the biblical text in the light of reconciliation.

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