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Christian nonviolent resistance as a response to violence in the D.R. Congo (Case of the
Beni-Butembo region facing an unnamed genocide)

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General Introduction

We live in a world where conflicts and violence are present. It is a world where both good/just people have to live together with bad/unjust people. The tension between the interests of the just people and the interests of the unjust people can result in hostility and violence. In this sense, the gospel of Matthew portrays Jesus inviting his followers to “love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them, so that they may be sons (daughters) of their Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust” (Matthew 5: 44-45).¹ Jesus’ message is an invitation to a fraternal world of sons and daughters of the heavenly Father. To be fraternal is to learn how to live peacefully among the good/just and the bad/ unjust. Being fraternal is to learn how to see human beings as God sees and blesses them with his sun and rain without discrimination. Echoing the above message of Jesus, Archbishop Munzihirwa asserts, “If you cannot be both good and strong, choose goodness. Leave strength to the foolish. The fool may triumph by force, but he/she can never build a village. The patience of the good man/woman who is patient can build a village. And that is Wisdom.”²

My interest in writing about violence and nonviolence stems from my childhood experience. As a primary school student, I witnessed violence from the war of liberation (1996-1997) that overthrew president Mobutu. In 1998, while I was completing primary school, I experienced another war through which one of my brothers was among the victims. From 1998 until date, the Eastern part of the D.R.C (from which I come) has been experiencing many wars and violence. Since 2014, I have met many victims of the ongoing massacre/genocide in the Beni

¹ English Standard Version.

² Father Metena M. Simon Pierre, SJ, Provincial of the Province of Central Africa, from his words of thanks on the celebration of the first anniversary of the death of Bishop Munzihirwa, Bukavu, 29 October 1997.

region. All these experiences have nurtured in me the desire to learn about nonviolence in response to violence.

I am dedicating this thesis to all the victims of violence in the Great Lakes Region, to the victims of the silent genocides in the DRC, particularly to the victims of the current hidden ongoing genocide in the Beni region. I also dedicate this work to people of goodwill who are ready to aloft the banner of nonviolence, justice, reconciliation, and peace. I hope that my current writing will contribute to bringing awareness about the silent genocide in Beni.

In order for human beings to flourish in community, peace and the mitigation of violence are requisite conditions because conflicts (interpersonal, between communities, economic, and political) that result in violence occur when human beings use unfair strategies to meet their interests to the detriment of other peoples and nations. This is the case for conflicts and violence being experienced in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (D.R.C). The colonizers from the Global North seek to meet their desire for economic power. To get the natural resources at zero or no price from the D.R.C, the conflict was caused at two levels: the encounter between the Global North and the D.R.C people; and then some divide and rule method. Pressured by conflicts, violence, and poverty, a small portion of the local population collaborates with the Global North to exploit the resources.

The Eastern part of the D.R.C has been the most affected because of its natural resources and the region's threat of land occupation (balkanization) so that the neighboring countries may continue helping the Global North to benefit from the area's resources. Notably, the recent

Yotama³ Report shows that the regions of Beni (in the North-Kivu Province) and Irumu (in Ituri Province) have lost about “7 500 people massacred between 2008 and 2021.”⁴ Beni alone lost 6000 out of 7500 people from 2014 to 2021. There have been attempts to resolve the conflict. These attempts do not succeed because they use violence to fight against violence. The army is not united; there are divisions. Each section of the army fights for its interests. As long as the Global North, the capitalists, and all the parties involved in the war continue fueling the conflict in order to benefit from the chaos at the expense of ordinary local people's lives, to win the fight, the victims can use the “power” of non-violence against violence.

The thesis of this paper suggests that Christian non-violent resistance remains a possible solution to violence in the D.R.C. To move toward a true and just peace, the people of the D.R.C in general, and those from Beni, in particular, have to engage in a conflict transformation process using nonviolence to challenge violence. In this regard, Parker J. Palmer suggests choosing “a path of seeking justice rather than making war that might have allowed us to create rather than destroy.”⁵

My current paper has three chapters following the see-judge-act method. In the first chapter, I examine the contours around violence in the Beni region, the reasons behind this violence, the perpetrators, and the systemic structure that motivates the perpetrators. In the second chapter, I assess reconciliation in the Beni region. The reconciliation process has the task of

³ Yotama is a family name of two brothers: Tembos and Benze. Tembos Yotama is a deputy in the National Assembly. His brother Benze Yotama is a deputy in the Provincial Assembly (Province of North Kivu). Together they produced an 800 pages rapport on the violence going on in Beni and Ituri.

⁴ Tembos Yotama and Benze Yotama, "Rapport Yotama sur les Massacres de Beni Et Irumu, Djihadisme Ou Génocide Nande?," *Radio Okapi*, no. November 9 (2021).
<https://www.radiookapi.net/2021/11/10/actualite/securite/rdc-pres-de-7-500-personnes-tuees-en-13-ans-beni-et-irumu-rapport> (accessed November 12, 2021)

⁵ Parker J. Palmer, "The Broken-Open Heart: Living with Faith and Hope in the Tragic Gap," *A Journal of the Christian Spiritual Life*, no. March/April (2009): 5.

providing the victims with safety to gain trust, confidence, and willingness to collaborate in the same process. Before considering reconciliation as a process, we need to understand the brokenness of human relationships. Asserting that evil affects human beings leads to the theological question of dealing with evil and liberating ourselves from it.

Concretely, justice, reconciliation, and forgiveness are the elements that can help us deal with the issue of violence caused by evil in the Beni region. To succeed, this reconciliation needs to draw from both the Christian perspective of reconciliation and the Beni people's cultural norms and values. In the third chapter, I present the Christian praxis of nonviolence as a response to start countering the atrocious ongoing violence. In this regard, Jesus Christ is the model of non-violent-resistance. Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Candice Mama are inspirational figures of survival. Archbishops Christophe Munzihirwa and Emmanuel Kataliko are inspirational exemplars of Christian non-violent-resistance.

Chapter I: The situation of violence in the Region of Beni-Butembo (D.R. Congo).

Conflict may be normal in human society. At times, humans create conflicts for the sake of economic, political, and cultural interests. This is the case for the conflict in the Beni⁶ region. Imperialist-colonizers, neocolonizers, DRC government, and accomplices created the Region. This complicity is derived from the selfishness of human beings working under this structure. The resulting conflict was an explosion of violence willed by the Global North's Structures who have decided to loot the Congo resources. This looting is accomplished to the detriment of the victims.

The conflict in the Eastern part of the Congo in general and the Beni region, in particular, is very complex and ambiguous. This complexity stems from the difficulty of apprehending the historical reality. It is ambiguous to understand why the perpetrators of the killings (ADF) are targeting more civilians than the national army. There is an ambiguity around the actors of the killings in Beni. As the government's opinion points to the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)⁷ responsible for the massacre, there is still the allusion to some troops from Rwanda and some Congolese proxies. In a secular state like the D.R.C, which respects freedom of religion, it is also ambiguous to support that the ADF perpetrate terrorist attacks for the sake of Islamization because they are free to proselytize. This ambiguity gives way to assert that there is the idea of Balkanization⁸ as the real cause of the ongoing genocide in Beni behind the idea of Islamization.

⁶ Beni is a city created by the Belgian colonial administration of King Leopold II in 1894. This city is located in North Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, specifically in the Province of North-Kivu, lying immediately west of the Virunga National Park and the Rwenzori Mountains, on the edge of the Ituri Forest.

⁷ The Allied Democratic Forces (ADF is largely Ugandan) is one of the two rebel movements who joined forces in Beni (and surrounding) to fight the regime of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni. They mixed with the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) in 1995. Their mixed group became ADF-NALU.

⁸ The term *balkanization* means a process of dividing an area, a country, or a region into several small hostile units. The name balkanization is derived from the region that comprises the southeastern part of Europe, the Balkan Peninsula that was divided into small states of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro. (<http://sociology.iresearchnet.com/sociology-of-race/balkanization/> Accessed August 31, 2021).

The truth about the ongoing conflict in the Beni region is difficult to apprehend because, behind the conflict, hidden national and international powers make this truth obscure and manipulate it. In the current unfortunate conflictual situation of the Beni region, there is the preeminence of a culture of dissimulation of truth, half-truth, complicity, and even “structural injustice and institutionalized violence.”⁹ Such a culture is sustained by the civilization that seeks to increase wealth to the detriment of human dignity. Many national and transnational organizations take advantage of the human dignity of the Beni people in order to accumulate their capital and maximize their economic interests. Many national and international corporations and governments plunder the minorities constituted by the Beni region. Such a complex situation conflict with a mixture of structures, corporations, and individuals involved in perpetrating violence, directly or indirectly, cannot be sufficiently clarified. And it isn't easy to identify all the actors. Despite this difficulty, in the current work, I am trying to bring my little contribution to attempt an apprehension of the violent situation in Beni. Since conflictual realities and situations are dynamic and subjected to change, I highlight that this is what is happening at this moment of my writing.

After an introductory story that presents a conflictual reality in this chapter, I will describe and name the problem of violence in the Beni Region as a hidden genocide of the Nande People. Then I will present the history of colonization and its legacy in D.R.C. Lastly; I will analyze the culture and structures that lead to the Cycle of violence in North Kivu.

⁹ Valiente Orfilio Ernesto, *Liberation through Reconciliation: Jon Sobrino's Christological Spirituality* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016), 164.

I.1. A story of a woman who escaped from a Massacre in Beni (August 13, 2016)

“That day, as I had nothing to give to my children for the evening meal, I took the risk of going to my field—an hour’s walk from my house - at the beginning of the afternoon of that terrible August 13, 2016. I left my 2-year-old daughter with her 4-year-old big sister and 7-year-old big brother playing in the backyard. The 7 -year-old called out to me, saying: "Mom, I hope you will not be like daddy and my big brother who went to the field and did not come back." Seven months ago, my husband and our 10-year-old son went missing, probably kidnapped and killed on the way. It was then that I realized that my children were unaware of the grave era in which we lived. They imagine that their father and brother will come back after their "country walk"! I do not dare tell them honestly what might have happened to their father and brother. I have no words to say. So I reassured my children by promising them that I would come back as soon as possible to prepare their dinner. Unfortunately, that proved not to be the case!

I found good company with the men and women who used to go to the fields. We traveled together, discussing the situation of fear and the risk we run by going to our fields. I hastened to collect what we needed for the following days. I was in a hurry to return home and see my children before dark when the lion men roar, thirsty to see blood flow. It was around 4:00 p.m. I was carrying cassava on my back and holding a walking stick in my hand. I was in the company of men and women returning from their fields. About 30 minutes before arriving in my neighborhood, we saw men in military uniforms. They told us in loud voices: “Don't take this path; it is perilous. Instead, go through the other one. You risk nothing.” Naive as we were, we took their advice, unaware that it was danger disguised as kindness. When we had advanced further, we fell into an ambush: men, women, and children returning from the fields had been arrested by men in military uniforms. They were waiting to be killed. I saw two or three of the assassins spray them with a

gun. The victims were falling one after another. Some were still conscious. It was so unexpected and quick that it is hard to describe this horrific scene. I still remember the men's cynical gaze with machetes and the desperate look of the victims who could not escape the awaiting tragedy. Their cries still echo in my ears.

"Beautiful escape ... the power of the cry."

If a cry saved me from this carnage, I also believe that my cry to you will save the survivors of the people of Beni. I did not scream for myself; I cried for my children who were left alone at home. I just had a moment to think about those who no longer had a father. I could envision them losing their mother, who had promised to come back home as soon as possible. I said to the young man who was preparing his machete to slash me: "Have mercy on my children. They are alone at home. They are still too tiny to be left alone." Suddenly, I saw a moment of compassion in the eyes of the young man. He said to me: "It's true, I too was tiny. I also needed someone to grow up with. Quick, run away and join your children. "

Yet everyone had good reasons to escape the machete. Why was I the only one to get out alive? Mystery? Fate? It escapes us. I arrived home distraught. I saw my children in the distance playing in the yard. I just had time to shout and tell the neighbors: the soldiers are cutting the throats of people! Let us leave this place! I took my children by the hand, and we ran to take refuge at their aunt's home in the city. I was afraid of what would happen at night if we remained in the village. I just had time to save my children and myself when a group of attackers broke into my neighborhood of Rwangoma to massacre people in their own homes before dark. They even cut open a pregnant woman's belly and removed the fetus.

"My seven-year-old son no longer believes in his future."

One evening, our aunty told my children that we would not eat all the food prepared that day. We would have to keep a quantity for the next day. My seven-year-old son reacted: “No, we’re not going to save it for tomorrow, eat it all because we do not even know if we will still be alive tomorrow. At least the attackers will come and cut our throats when we have eaten everything.” I was surprised by my son's reaction; I understood that he now realized the gravity of the situation.

I have observed that since the massacres of the 13th, nightfall has been dreadful for him. He had anxiety attacks. He told me the night was long. Barely after lying down, he longed to get out of bed. I even struggled to convince him that I was going to enroll him in school this year. He refused. He told me it was not worth going to school anymore. He gave me the names of his friends, most of whom were our neighbors. They were in school but died in the massacres even before finishing their studies and benefiting from education. It was excruciating for me to encourage my son with puzzling yet realistic thoughts. He finally agreed to go to school, until when? No one knows.

Misfortune upon misfortune for the victims: bodies thrown into the Semuliki River.

As if the massacre was not enough, some victims did not even have the right to be buried. Instead of a burial, it was a truck. Many dead bodies, especially children, were transported in four Fusso vehicles to be thrown into the Semuliki River from the bridge that Joseph Kabila (then President) had just visited four or five days before the massacres. These people disfigured by machetes still had to be crushed by the teeth of crocodiles. Was it to complete their demise? Or was it a human sacrifice?

To those who read my lament, I am not asking you to cry! I expect you to listen to my lament, form your own, and cry; The roar of all those people killed, slaughtered, disemboweled has not

been heard to this day in the courts of the nations, including in my country the Democratic Republic of the Congo.”¹⁰

At the end of this story, let us recall that according to the Conference of Bishops (CENCO), “the victims are more than 6,000 dead people in Beni since 2013. There are also at least 3 million displaced people and around 7,500 kidnapped in an ongoing genocide.”¹¹ As with the woman telling the above story, the victims of such atrocities are broken-hearted. They are helpless and, at times, hopeless. They suffered the loss of their loved ones. They sustained the denial of burying their loved ones. They need justice in order to be reconciled and to be healed. They need to be restored. We need to know the truth about this conflict, and justice needs to be done. In the following point, I will talk of the violence being experienced in the Beni-Butembo region as a hidden genocide of the Nande People.

I.2. Description of the conflict: the silent genocide of the Nande people

There is an ongoing genocide of the Nande¹² people in the Beni-Butembo Region in North-Kivu Province (Eastern Part of the DRC). For seven years now, instead of talking of a “genocide,” the government’s official version has been talking of a “massacre.”¹³ In April 2021, the UN forces

¹⁰ Beni-Lubero Online, "Un Mois Après, Une Maman, Témoin des Massacres de Rwangoma (Beni), Raconte!" <https://benilubero.com/un-mois-apres-une-maman-temoin-des-massacres-de-rwangoma-beni-raconte/> (accessed May 6, 2021). (The translation is of the student writing this thesis)

¹¹ CENCO, *Message du Comité Permanent de la Conférence Nationale Episcopale du Congo sur la Situation D'insécurité des Massacres à L'est de la R.D. Congo* (Kinshasa/ Gombé: January 2021), 2.

¹² The **Nande** of Congo and the Konjo **people** of Uganda are a single ethnic group, which they call Yira (Bayira). They trace their origins to the Ruwenzori Mountains between the two countries. They are part of the Bantu, Central-Lakes people cluster within the Sub-Saharan African affinity bloc. Globally, this group totals 2,244,000 in 2 countries. Their primary language is Nande.

¹³ The difference between genocide and massacre is that a *genocide* implies a systematic killing of substantial numbers of people on the basis of their ethnicity, religion, political beliefs, social status; whereas a *massacre* refers to an intentional killing of a considerable number of human beings (individuals belonging to different ethnic groups) under circumstances of atrocity or cruelty. (<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/03/whats-the-difference-between-crimes-against-humanity-and-genocide/274167/>, accessed August 24, 2021).

qualified the killings going on there as genocide.¹⁴ To understand better the motive behind this violence and its perpetrators, it is helpful to call to mind the history of the continuing war in the DRC.

It is mainly the provinces richest in gold (Oriental Province), copper (Katanga), and coltan (North and South-Kivu) that experienced violence in the country. The Global North¹⁵ is acutely interested in these minerals. It must be remembered that Mobutu when he was still the president of Zaire (now DR Congo), allowed these powers (USA, China, France, Belgium...) to get mineral resources. Mobutu was used in destabilizing the neighboring countries to satisfy the dictates of the Global North.¹⁶ For example, in 1988, the rebel group NALU National Army for the Liberation of Uganda was well established in the forest of the Eastern part of Congo on the border with Uganda.¹⁷ Mobutu worked in conjunction with the NALU in retaliation to the Ugandan president Museveni, who supported the Congolese rebels who were destabilizing the Eastern part of the Congo (Zaire). Therefore, whenever the Congolese rebels would attack Mobutu's army, Mobutu would also support the NALU to destabilize Uganda.

In 1995, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a radical-Islamist-based movement, was chased away from Uganda and joined the NALU in the DR.Congo.¹⁸ After Mobutu's rule, the

¹⁴ Aimé Kasereka, "Manifestations Anti-Monusco: La Monusco Crache des Vérités Et Parle de Génocide" <https://benilubero.com/manifestations-anti-monusco-la-monusco-crache-des-verites-et-parle-de-genocide/> (accessed April 18, 2021).

¹⁵ The Global North implies here the International Community, the UN forces MONUSCO and some great powers leading the world economy like USA, China, France, Belgium and other countries from the International community.

¹⁶ Mobutu seized power in a 1965 coup and ruled for some 32 years before being overthrown by Laurent Kabila in 1997.

¹⁷ Boniface Musavuli, *Rd Congo-Massacres : Qui Sont les Tueurs de Beni* (Agora Vox, 16 August, 2016), 2.

¹⁸ On 22 March 1991, Tabligh members clashed with members of the Ugandan Muslim Supreme Council (UMSC)20 in Kampala, leaving five dead, including four police officers. Following this violence, Tabligh leaders, including Jamil Mukulu, who was head of the youth movement, were imprisoned between 1991 and 1993. After their release, the group's members, led by Sheikh Sulaiman Kakeeto, established themselves in Hoima, western Uganda, where in 1994, they created the Movement of Ugandan Combatants for Freedom (Mouvement des combattants ougandais pour la liberté, UFFM), which immediately received support from Khartoum. Kampala reacted by destroying the movement's training camp in 1995. Following the destruction of their base, the members of the UFFM took refuge in the Congolese

Global North looked for another collaborator in the DRC's neighboring countries to serve their interest.¹⁹ The intention consisted of dividing the Kivu, Katanga, and Oriental Province from the rest of the country so that the neighboring countries (Rwanda and Uganda) would receive part of the resources or some money, political support from serving the interest of the Global North. They would have to extend their rule to the divided parts of the nation if the partition succeeded. Rwanda and Uganda are the neighbors who agreed to be the intermediaries between the Global North and the looting of the DRC resources. Rwanda has been ranked among the first African producer of coltan without any mining coltan within its national borders, as the coltan they 'produce' is mined in the former DRC provinces.²⁰

The invasion to occupy and partition a portion of the Congo for economic reasons is described as "balkanization." Father Vincent Machozi, a Catholic Priest from the Augustinian Assumptionist Religious Order who was the leader of the Association of the Nande people worldwide,²¹ a day before his assassination referred to "balkanization" in these terms:

Thus we understand the crucial danger of any extension of Joseph Kabila's²² ruling term. Any worthy Congolese must refuse any form of transition. We have seen what is happening in Kivu-Ituri; any transition beyond December 2016 would give time and means for the current Congolese

town of Bunia, near the Ugandan border, where they continued to receive support from Sudan, whereas the leaders of the Tabligh movement in Uganda, including Sheikh Sulaiman Kakeeto and Jamil Mukulu, fled to Kenya and Tanzania. In September 1995, Commander Ngaimoko, a NALU leader, and Yusuf Kabanda, a comrade of Jamil Mukulu, formed an alliance between their two movements, which they named the Allied Democratic Forces-National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU). The Muslim combatants stationed in Bunia were subsequently flown to Beni, where they joined the NALU personnel. They were received and trained by Colonel Ebamba and Major Mayala, (Cf; Crisis Group, *Eastern Congo: the ADF-NALU's Lost Rebellion*. Briefing N° 93, December 19, 2012, 4.)

¹⁹ The Global North uses the tactic of division and creates chaos in order to exploit people.

²⁰ Rwanda is the World's biggest tantalum producer, but it is associated with conflict minerals issues.

https://fr.mail.yahoo.com/d/folders/1?guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly9sb2dpbi55YWVby5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAHb-pdNDzIDcDcDY9FMqSBFxHr0WbbTN (Accessed August 31, 2021).

²¹ Vincent Machozi was assassinated in 2016 for his patriotic stand.

²² Joseph Kabila is the former President of the D.R.Congo who succeeded his late father Laurent Kabila in 2001. After the transition (2001-2006), he ruled the country for two subsequent terms, which ended in 2016, but he finally stepped out of power in 2019.

government, which is, evidently, complaisant in the ongoing Rwandan occupation of the Kivu-Ituri.²³

The idea behind the occupation of this region is firstly for the sake of expropriating minerals without any control of the Congo government and, secondly, creating space for some Rwandese population for their agricultural activities. Thirdly, the Kasindi port of Entry at the Beni Region and Uganda border contributes to the increase of violence (the rebel groups and their accomplices act violence around this port of entry to operate their border trade of mineral resources as they cross over to Uganda). Kasindi port is the third nationwide in importance after Matadi (in Matadi) and Kasumbalesa (in Lubumbashi). The perpetrators benefit from the chaos around the Beni Region because it is easier to loot the resources through Uganda.

The National Episcopal Conference of Congo describes the war in the DRC as asymmetrical, in which “the attackers use the weak points of the regular Armed Forces to achieve their political or religious goal: the occupation of land, the illegal exploitation of natural resources, the unjust enrichment, the Islamization of the region in defiance of religious freedom.”²⁴ Talking of the Islamization of the region, it is difficult to understand why in DRC, where religious freedom is respected, the Muslims should act violently to force people to adhere to their religion. It is possible that the ADF (radical muslims) oblige the combatant to convert to Islam. However, it remains not understandable why they would kill even innocent babies who cannot enroll in their group. The plausible reason could be that all who profit from the chaotic situation in the Beni region use the idea of radical Muslim terrorists to be the perpetrators of the killing.

²³ Beni-Lubero online, "Genocide de Beni: Militaires Patriotes Et Population, Tous Désormais Visés!" [Http://Benilubero.Com/un-Weekend-Sanglant-a-Kididiwe-Beni-le-Genocide-Continue](http://Benilubero.Com/un-Weekend-Sanglant-a-Kididiwe-Beni-le-Genocide-Continue) (accessed 18 April, 2021).

²⁴ CENCO, *Message du Comité Permanent de la Conférence Nationale Episcopale du Congo sur la Situation D'insécurité des Massacres à L'est de la R.D. Congo*, 2.

Professor Brian Endless²⁵ points out the motives for the perpetrators of wars:

I think it was political cover for Rwanda, Uganda, and the D.R. Congo governments. They have been trying to legitimize the conflict for years now – really, since Rwanda and Uganda put the first Kabila in charge in DR. Congo, or what was then Zaïre, and turned into Congo again. Therefore, I think that they are just looking to pull attention away from the fact that all of the international reports have implicated Rwanda in particular, Uganda to the following extent and DR Congo government troops in a lot of the violence that is going on there, with Rwanda and Uganda pretty clearly driving the violence. That was not talked about at all in Addis Ababa.²⁶

This claim of Professor Endless points out the involvement of Rwanda and Uganda and even the complicity of the DRC government itself in the DRC conflict. Recently, we have been experiencing genocide in the North-Kivu region, specifically in Beni and the surrounding areas. Since October 2014, the population of this region has been undergoing killings with machetes. Who are the perpetrators of these killings? Daniel Fahey reports that the Allied Democratic Forces “appeared to be responsible for some of the massacres, but others seemed to have been carried out by government soldiers and other militias active in the Beni area.”²⁷ Additionally, Boniface Musavuli asserts that after the arrest and imprisonment of the ADF leader Jamil Mukulu in March 2015 in Tanzania, there exists three groups of killers: those coming from Rwanda, the coalition ADF (FARDC)²⁸, and the ancient members of the 23 March movement (M23) who probably come from Uganda and Rwanda.²⁹

²⁵ Professor Endless is an Advanced Lecturer, Director of African Studies and African Diaspora program at the Loyola University Chicago. His teaching and research interests focus on the United Nations and the Great Lakes Region of Africa. This includes a broad range of international peace, security and humanitarian issues, as well as international development. He has specialized in the UN Security Council, in particular actions toward Iraq and other areas in the Middle East. His current focus is primarily on politics and conflict in Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes Region of Africa. He teaches classes on International Law, International Organizations, and International Political Economy, among others. Endless is the founder and Executive Director of American Model United Nations International, based in Chicago. In addition, he serves as the Senior Advisor to the Hotel Rwanda Rusesabagina Foundation. (<https://www.luc.edu/politicalscience/brianendless.shtml>; Accessed August 24, 2021).

²⁶ Ann Garrison, "Congo Peace Treaty or Roadmap to Balkanization" <http://sfbayview.com/2013/03/congo-peace-treaty-or-roadmap-to-balkanization/> (accessed April 18, 2021).

²⁷ Daniel Fahey, "Congo's « Mr. X »: The Man Who Fooled the UN," *World Policy Journal*, (Summer 2016): 99.

²⁸ This group implies a mixture of some ADF and some soldiers from the National Army (FARDC) who connive with ADF. They pretend to belong to the loyal Army, whereas they serve the interest of the ADF.

²⁹ Boniface Musavuli, *RD Congo-massacres : Qui sont les tueurs de Beni*, Agora Vox, mardi 16 Août 2016, 2.

In the midst of all this, the UN forces have bought into the Congolese government's idea. They defend the official version of government.³⁰ The UN forces act this way because they have their jobs and benefit from natural resources as long as the conflict continues. Thus, the multinationals, the direct neighbors of the Eastern part, namely Rwanda and Uganda, and the Congolese government itself are involved in the complexity of the DRC conflict. Even though people on the ground have high expectations for the UN forces because of their mission,³¹ the UN forces cannot protect civilians. The Congolese Army forces (FARDC) fail their mission.

Among the UN forces/MONUSCO (United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo = Mission des Nations-Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo: MONUSCO), there is a contradiction between what is prescribed as their job description in the DRC and what they are doing. The new mandate of the MONUSCO, among other things, is to protect civilians, humanitarian personnel, and human rights defenders under imminent threat of physical violence and to support the Government of the DRC in its stabilization and peace consolidation efforts.³² In this regard, it is worth quoting Vincent Machozi's interview with the students of Winsor School in Boston, MA:

The only advocate country, but indirectly so, for the Congo for genocide and the crimes against Humanity committed by the Rwandan Tutsi in Rwanda and the Congo is Spain. A month ago, a Spanish general who was to be in charge of the MONUC in the Congo resigned two weeks after

³⁰ The Government's version is that the ADF (rebel group linked to terrorists) is responsible for the killings. However, Boniface Musavuli in his book *Congo's Beni Massacres: Fake Islamists Rwandan Unending Occupation* has demonstrated that the current ADF are not Islamists. But there are three groups of killers who seek to partition the country: the group of those coming from Rwanda, the coalition ADF (FARDC), and the ancient members of M23 who probably come from Uganda and Rwanda.

³¹ MONUSCO, "Protecting Civilians and Consolidating Peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo" <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/monusco> (accessed April 18, 2021). MONUSCO took over from an earlier UN peacekeeping operation – the United Nations Organization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) – on 1 July 2010. It was done in accordance with Security Council [resolution 1925](#) of 28 May to reflect the new phase reached in the country.

The new mission has been authorized to use all necessary means to carry out its mandate relating, among other things, to the protection of civilians, humanitarian personnel and human rights defenders under imminent threat of physical violence and to support the Government of the DRC in its stabilization and peace consolidation efforts.

³² MONUSCO, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/mission/monusco> (accessed August 31, 2021).

coming to the Congo since he said there were several contradictions between the work to be done in the land and the contradictory orders given; by the UN hierarchy.”³³

This comment from Machozi demonstrates that very few nations in the Global North/UN coalition recognize the genocide that is being perpetrated against the Nande people. On April 5, 2021, the people of the Beni Region called for a strike for 20 days to force the departure of the UN forces, MONUSCO.³⁴ Under this pressure, the MONUSCO leaders finally named the perpetrators of the killings, in which they acknowledge for the first time the genocide in these terms: “In all the countries where we go on a mission, and where the population is killed, governments organize days of national mourning and actions of solidarity with the victims. Do you know why your government (of DRC) is not doing it? What is happening in Beni is pure genocide. It is the work of the old power and its legacy, and it continues to this day. Things may even get worse.”³⁵

This is evidence, as Ann Garrison notes, “The Democratic Republic of the Congo’s peace treaty may result in the balkanization of its eastern provinces, Katanga, North, and South Kivu, and the easternmost part of Orientale could be balkanized into separated states of even free trade zones.”³⁶ Unfortunately, the sinful structures influence the commission of killings and violence in order to frustrate people from the region of Beni. How did we get to hear? What happened in this beautiful nation that we are contemplating? What happened?

I.3. DR.C: a colonial history (The history of colonization and its legacy)

The chaotic situation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is traced back to the year 1885, when a Belgian Royal decree created the Congo Free State (E.I.C) on May 29. Controlled

³³ Beni-Lubero online, "P. Machozi, R" <http://benilubero.com/p-machozi-r> (accessed April 18, 2021).

³⁴ The UN forces are problematic because they do not apply their mandate to intervene in the reestablishment of Peace. From various testimonies on ground, when they are called by the population in danger either they do not intervene or they come to the place of massacre very late. Their attitude is guilty.

³⁵ Kasereka, *Manifestation Anti-MONUSCO: La Monusco crache des vérités et parle de Genocide*.

³⁶ Ann Garrison <http://sfbayview.com/2013/03/congo-peace-treaty-or-roadmap-to-balkanization/> (accessed 18/11/21).

by King Leopold II through a non-governmental organization, the International Association of the Congo, the Congo Free State operated as a corporate state privately. In the book, *Congo's Beni Massacres: Fake Islamists, Rwandan Unending Occupation*, Boniface Musavuli asserts that,

In 1894, the Beni territory was created by the Belgian colonial administration of King Leopold II. And in 1908, the Congo Free State was ceded to the Belgian State. It took the name of Belgian Congo (Congo-Belge). On June 30, 1960, Congo gained independence, and Patrice Lumumba became the first Prime minister. He was assassinated on January 17, 1961, in Katanga Province. On November 24, 1965, there was a Coup of General Mobutu sponsored by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).³⁷

The very long legacy of colonization of the Belgian Congo (1885-1960) has negatively affected the current D.R.C, and the consequences are manifested in the unending violence experienced in its Eastern part. The long colonial legacy needs to be assumed. To assume does not mean to forget. To assume does not mean to legitimize. To assume does not mean to justify. To assume implies a solid rootedness in the present with a vivid consciousness of the past. To assume means recognizing and accepting that crimes were committed, that resources were looted during colonization, and that resources are still being looted: this has to stop. To assume is to say that there were horrible situations. To assume is to be able to say that on June 30, 1960, the Congolese people fought for their independence. Assuming means taking into account the entire history of the DRC. Assuming the legacy of colonization implies accepting to talk of it and drawing some lessons from it. In this perspective, violence in Beni is one of the consequences of the colonizer's refusal to assume the legacy of colonization and its corollaries.

In his thoughtful analysis of the horrible situation going on in Beni (as one of the consequences of unassumed colonization), Boniface Musavuli quotes Albert Einstein to explain why things are getting worse: "The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people

³⁷ Boniface Musavuli, *Congo's Beni Massacres: Fake Islamists, Rwandan Unending Occupation* (USA: Monee, IL, 2021), 8.

who are evil, but because of the people who do not do anything about it.”³⁸ From this quotation, we can say that the D.R.C suffers because the colonizers and their proxies have refused to do anything about its horrible situation. The colonizers have refused to assume the legacy of colonization, and they have refused to draw suitable lessons from it for the good of D.R.C.

In African folklore, there is a saying that the *Kingdom's most beautiful girl/lady was sacrificed like an innocent scapegoat because she was a source of many fights among young men of the village (including the King himself)* who competed and fought to get her as his friend or wife. Once she disappeared, peace returned in the village. Similarly, the D.R. Congo is like the most beautiful woman of a village (our planet), coveted by many countries in addition to the Global North. The way of killing her is to create interminable wars that result in the killing of her people and looting of her resources.

An essential summary of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's history from 1885 to 2018 is well articulated as follows: Belgian Royal decree created the Congo Free State (Etat Indépendant du Congo) on May 29, 1885. The Congo Free State was then a corporate state privately controlled by Leopold II through a non-governmental organization, the International Association of the Congo. In 1908, Leopold II conceded the Congo Free State to the Belgian State and became Belgian Congo (Congo-Belge). On June 30, 1960, the Belgian Congo gained independence, and Patrice Lumumba became the first Prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo. One year after, he was assassinated on January 17, 1961, in Katanga Province.

On November 24, 1965, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) sponsored a Coup of General Mobutu. He became the President and changed the name of Congo to Zaïre. In September 1995,

³⁸ Musavuli, *Congo's Beni Massacres: Fake Islamists, Rwandan Unending Occupation*, 14.

two rebel movements joined ADF-NALU, namely the Allied Democratic Force (ADF) and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) in Beni to fight the regime of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni. . In October 1996, the Eastern Congo was invaded by the armies of Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi under the banner of AFDL (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo- Zaïre) led by Laurent-Desiré Kabila.

On May 17, 1997, the AFDL toppled President Mobutu and took over Kinshasa. On April 14, 1998, soldiers from Rwandan Patriotic Army (APR) massacred people in Butembo-Beni under cover of AFDL. On August 2, 1998, there was an outbreak of the Second Congo War by the Rwandan and Ugandan armies and military re-occupation of Eastern Congo under cover of RCD (Congolese Rally for Democracy). In December 1999, the RCD movement split into three factions: RCD-Goma, RCD-National, and RCD-Kisangani. On January 16, 2001, President Laurent-Desiré Kabila was assassinated in his palace in Kinshasa.

On January 26, 2001, Joseph Kabila succeeded his father by becoming a President at 29 years old. On April 1st, 2003, the Inclusive Agreement between the belligerent forces was adopted in Sun City. Then followed the creation of a new Congolese army, the FARDC (The armed forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo). In June 2004, there was a Mutiny of Tutsi soldiers in Bukavu led by Laurent Nkunda and Jules Mutebutsi. On July 26, 2006, the CNDP (National Congress for the Defense of the People) was created in Masisi by the Tutsi leader Laurent Nkunda. On March 23, 2009, there was a signing of the Goma Peace agreement and integration of CNDP members in the Congolese government army, FARDC. In April 2012, the March 23 (M23) war was launched by CNDP soldiers after a failed attempt to arrest Bosco Ntaganda, wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes committed in the Ituri province.

In November 2013, the M23 members fled to Uganda and Rwanda, and the FARDC-MONUSCO military campaign ended. On January 2, 2014, the FARDC Colonel Mamadou Ndala, who defeated the M23 in Goma, was assassinated. In April 2014, the campaign against the ADF was victorious under the command of General Jean-Lucien Bahuma, and peace returned in Beni territory. On August 31, 2014, General Jean-Lucien Bahuma faced a sudden death while working on a mission to Uganda after his first victorious campaign against the ADF. In September 2014, General Mundos replaced General Bahuma as head of operation Sukola I. Massacres in Beni territory began on October 2, 2014. The National Intelligence Agency carried out a brutal chase against Nande traders and local notables in November 2014.

On May 11, 2015, politician Franklin Tshamala launched an Anti-Nande campaign. On January 7, 2016, two Nande customary chiefs' families were massacred in Miriki, South Lubero. On March 20, 2016, Father Vincent Machozi was assassinated in Vitungwe-Isale, near Butembo. On August 13, 2016, took place the massacre of Rwangoma and international outrage. On June 11, 2017, Beni's Kangbayi prison was attacked by a heavily armed commando. 935 detainees out of 966 prisoners escaped. On April 17, 2018, President Joseph Kabila met with the Presidential Majority MPs at the African Union Palace in Kinshasa. During the meeting, "he accused the Nande (as an ethnic community) of attacks on his personal property in Kabasha (Beni) and Musienene (Lubero) during the previous quarter. Kabila promised reprisals."³⁹ For many Nande people, this promised reprisal is effected in the ongoing massacres and the denial of their right to vote in the 2019 presidential election.

³⁹ Musavuli, *Congo's Beni Massacres: Fake Islamists, Rwandan Unending Occupation*, 13.

Many countries, if not all from the Global North, lust for Congo's resources. Slavery, colonization, neo-colonization, capitalism, and imperialism are cultural elements of structures of sin that create the culture of violence among people. The cultural and structural factors that created the cycle of violence in the D.R.C derive from imperialism, which engenders colonialism and neo-colonialism under capitalism's umbrella. The imperial culture⁴⁰ and structure exercised its power of domination over the local cultures and structures. It created the notion "of 'high culture' that distinguished the 'cultured' or 'civilized' person or society from the 'uncivilized' or 'barbaric'" cultures.⁴¹ The colonizers considered themselves as cultured. They possessed the structural power to "civilize the culture" of the indigenous peoples, whom they considered uncultured. Some were praised as hard-working and meant for administration, whereas others were deemed suitable for low jobs. The Belgians, who colonized the DRC, Rwanda, and Burundi, intended to continue benefiting from the resources without any cost. Thus, between

1937-1956, the colonizers transplanted some Tutsis and Hutus from Rwanda to Masisi Territory to work in the farms. Then, the autochthones of Masisi found themselves being marginalized because the colonizers donated significant portions of land to the transplanted immigrant and considered the autochthones as simple users of the land. In 1941, the colonizers gave the Gishari chieftaincy to the Tutsi. This donation did not please the autochthones Hunde because they lost a big part of their territory. In 1957, the colonizers suppressed the Gishari chieftaincy, but the transplanted Tutsis and Hutus remained loaning farms. In 1960, the transplanted immigrants (Tutsi and Hutu) obtained their nationalities and could therefore own land.⁴²

This quotation shows the disruption the colonizers created among people from different kingdoms, cultures, and ethnic groups. The land is an essential element of one's identity. Without land, one feels uprooted. When the colonizers gave the Gishari chieftaincy to the transplanted Tutsis, it was the starting point of creating enmity and instilling the culture of violence among the indigenous and the transplanted people. In the customs of the indigenous people from the North-

⁴⁰ This culture is the general pattern observable in all instances of colonization.

⁴¹ Matthew Shaddle, "Culture," in *Moral Agency within Social Structures and Culture*, 43.

⁴² Stanislas Bucyalimwe Mararo, "Les Enjeux de la Guerre de Masisi," *Dialogue*, no. 192 (August-September 1996): 87-88.

Kivu region, “there was nowhere a land which was vacant. Any space, even apparently free, was, in reality, the property of a given community which used it as a hunting and gathering ground, but also as a reserved space in the practice of shifting slash-and-burn agriculture.”⁴³ The colonizers introduced a North American or Australian idea of the distinction between “indigenous land and vacant lands.”⁴⁴ Since Gishari was considered vacant by the colonizers, they gave it to the people from Rwanda. Similarly, they wanted to create another territory for the transplanted people between Ituri and Beni (one of the causes of violence in Ituri and Beni).

At the same time, when violence is created between the indigenous people of this region and the transplanted people or the perpetrators from armed groups, there is a free way to transport cacao and mineral resources through Kasindi to Uganda and abroad. By needing land for the transplanted people, the colonizers waved away the cultural practice of community land ownership. In the culture of indigenous people from this region (Beni-Ituri-Masisi-North Kivu), any communitarian land could be given to foreigners, not for ownership, but only for the right of usufruct and paying some money to the landowner. But when Gishari was given to foreigners, the indigenous populations had to fight to keep their land as a source of their identity, and the transplanted people had to fight in order to hold on to it.

Professor Isidore Ndaywell situates the issue of the transplantation of the population from Rwanda since 1927 with the creation of a specific structure called the Rwandese workforce (Main d’Œuvre Rwandaise) or MOR. This structure had the duty of “promoting the nascent colonial industry: the migrant labor was dumped in mining centers in Ituri (Kilo-Moto Mining Company,

⁴³ Isidore Ndaywell, "Le Congo dans L’afrique des Grands Lacs : Lecture D’une Trajectoire Postcoloniale à L’épreuve de Multiples Tragédies," *Congo Afrique*, no. 548 (2020): 3.

⁴⁴ Ndaywell, "Le Congo dans L’Afrique des Grands Lacs : Lecture D’une Trajectoire Postcoloniale à L’épreuve de Multiples Tragédies," 3.

Société des Mines de Kilo-Moto) Maniema (African Great Lakes Mining Company, Compagnie Minière des Grands Lacs Africains) and Katanga (Mining Union of Upper Katanga, Union Minière du Haut-Katanga). Another part was used in agricultural and livestock settlements in Masisi and Rutshuru territories.”⁴⁵ In this environment, enmity was created between the ethnic groups. The colonizers also made the Tutsis believe that pastoralists (Tutsis) were superior to farmers (Hutu and local people in the Masisi region). While the ethnic groups were busy fighting, they could no longer notice how the colonizers exploited them and extracted their mineral resources. The transplanted groups had the privilege of moving back and forth between their country Rwanda and Congo. The colonizers instilled in them a mentality of double belonging as if they were superior. This would result later in the issue of nationality. Concretely, in Rwanda, dual nationality is allowed, whereas it is not permitted in Congo.

The colonizers and the Global North, by fueling this conflict, want to continue extracting the minerals while the ethnic groups are fighting, some to conquer and occupy their new land and others to protect their land from occupation and grabbing. The vicious cycle of violence will continue unless the culture of nonviolence is instilled among the young generation. When children are born and grow up, they inherit a cultural background that their ethnic group is a friend with that one and enemy with that other one for the reasons of land or war. Therefore, the young perpetuate the inherited legacy and tradition of division, animosity, and hatred with their “enemies” and the desire to avenge. They also perpetuate the inherited friendly relationships with the ethnic groups they have been told by their parents/community members that they are friendly.

⁴⁵ Ndaywell, "Le Congo dans L’afrique des Grands Lacs : Lecture D’une Trajectoire Postcoloniale à L’épreuve de Multiples Tragédies," 4.

As with wars, massacres, and genocides, the spirit of avenging their parents or beloved community members who were killed will continue as a presence among the younger generation.

The younger generation is readily enrolled in a militia group to protect the land belonging to an ethnic group. These groups are quickly passed as groups for self-defense. Whenever another ethnic group dares to claim lost ground, the militias from the ethnic groups engage in avenging fights. In general, the local people feel abandoned and unprotected by the official ruling power. They trust the militias composed of their sons and daughters to reclaim justice.

Democracy (“copied” from the West and “pasted” in the DRC) is another tool used by the Global North to distract the Congolese people from focusing on their development's real issues. After more than 60 years of oppression, suppression, and bullying from the colonizers, the Congolese people have internalized what they are told: you cannot develop yourself without aid from the Global North. But how can we have solid democratic institutions when the Global North legitimizes an elected president depending on his agreement to continue protecting their interests and unfair economic contracts to exploit mineral resources? When a government tries to gain economic independence, the Global North donates money to support the opposition leaders to destabilize the regime and disrupt even the little positive accomplishment of the government.

The Global North finances some militia groups (through proxies: Rwanda and Uganda) to continue destabilizing the areas rich in mineral resources. Talking about this financial support is like tracking a mafia network because we know the proxies (actors) and the crimes. Still, it is difficult to find evidence that confirms the financial link: the financial support is indirect, hidden, and dissimulated. Despite this difficulty, Judi Rever gives a clue of the Global North's support to Rwanda as she asserts:

Canada has given roughly 550 million USD in aid to Rwanda since 1994, including 30 million in 2016. Why does Canada keep sending money to a government that is strongly suspected of murdering two Canadian citizens? The former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair has been described as Kagame's cheer leader-in-chief and has been crucial to turning on the taps of aid and then keeping the flow of money going. When Blair was in power from 1997 to 2007, Great Britain became the second-biggest bilateral donor to Rwanda, after the United States.⁴⁶

From this quotation, a crucial question arises: *What are these western allies supporting?*

Answering this question and because of the relationship between the Global North and Rwanda and Uganda in the trade of mineral resources, I think any financial support from the Global North to Rwanda and Uganda serves to some extent to finance the militia groups who control mining centers like ADF (Allied Democratic Forces that is largely Ugandan), NDCR (Nduma Defense of Congo-Renové that is Rwandan mainly) and the FDLR (Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda) and the Allied Congolese Nyatura groups. These groups and others more operate criminal acts to destabilize the DRC. For instance, the ADF run the "trade of timber, coltan and other resources through border crossings—Kasindi-Mpondwe and Kamango-Bundibugyo."⁴⁷ And the Global North would take the timber and mineral resources from Kampala to factories of transformation. The same trade happens with the rebels of Rwandan origin.

Also, there has been a discovery of oil from Rumangabo to Kasenyi in the Beni-Butembo territory. It is around this area that militia groups operate, obliging people to leave. As people are running away from wars, the resources are being looted. People are distracted because it is the same Global North that suggests artificial and deceitful forums for reconciliation. After many years of slavery, colonialism, neocolonialism, and imperialism, democracy should not be a "copy and

⁴⁶ Judi Rever, *In Prise of Blood: The Crimes of the Rwandan Patriotic Front* (Penguin: Random House Canada, 2018), 150-151.

⁴⁷ Lindsay Scorgie-Porter, "Economic Survival and Borderland Rebellion: The Case of the Allied Democratic Forces on the Uganda-Congo Border," *Journal of the Middle East and Africa* Routledge:Taylor and Francis Group, no. LLC © 2015 (2015): 206.

paste” exercise for African countries, specifically the DRC. There is a need for a legitimate leader who is given the power to set and steer the nation's vision and who can start the courageous decisions of engaging in a struggle for economic freedom.

To influence a fundamental structural change, the Global North should agree to discuss with the Congo as an equal partner who sets the prices of its resources.⁴⁸ However, in the DRC, all the multinationals are willing to donate money to finance elections, as if Congo cannot find the means. The one who donates also dictates the rule. These rules are designed to create chaos out of violence in order to continue looting resources. Thus there is a need to break the chain of violence so that new structures may arise.

I.3.1. Relationship of Structures with the ongoing violence

In international political and economic gatherings, what is often heard is how capitalism works. Capitalism is based on large multinational companies; it is based on private profits, a low measure of international transfers to help poor people. However, as it has unfolded in most of Africa, capitalism is a radical denial of the rights of poor people. It is based on the extreme irresponsibility of powerful countries regarding poor and weak nations. Interestingly, to the political authorities of the D.R. Congo, the Global North (and their proxies) tends to ask, “What is wrong with your country for you not to develop with all your natural resources?”

Instead of this last question, it would be better to start by saying: The king of Belgium created the slave colony for 30 years, the government of Belgium ran the slave colony for another 40 years, the CIA assassinated your popular and patriotic leader Prime Minister Lumumba and

⁴⁸ The late Tanzanian President, John Pombe Magufuli, is a poignant example of a courageous and visionary leader who was able to bring structural change in his country from 2015 to 2021. He obligated the Chinese contractors to review the unfair contracts of extracting the resources, sign fair contracts, and pay back fines for money lost during the unfair contracts. Using this money, Tanzania's government started improvement of the citizens' lives and the infrastructures. Only after five years of Magufuli's rule, Tanzania became one of Africa's top 10 wealthiest countries.

then installed another dictatorship for another 32 years, your other patriotic leader Laurent Kabila was assassinated and his Son Joseph Kabila took over him as a cover-up (at the age of 29) and then, some other people from the powerful countries suck out your cobalt, coltan, gold ... without giving you tax income. We do not reflect on that. Instead, we always ask, “What’s wrong with you”? We have a system, we have a structure, but we need another system, we need another structure. The new system has to be based on the principle of human dignity, the principle of sovereignty, the principle of economic rights. These are not pleasant things to do.

In the DRC, structures are responsible for either complicity, hypocrisy, collaboration, or silence in the face of evil. Among those included in the cooperation against the interests of the Congo is the International Community through the MONUSCO,⁴⁹ the Congolese government, the armed forces, and the citizens on the ground.

I.3.2. The responsibility of the International Community through MONUSCO

In December 2020, the mandate of MONUSCO had been extended for one year, i.e., until 20 December 2021. This mandate authorizes MONUSCO to keep “a maximum of 14,000 military personnel, 660 military observers and staff officers, 591 police officers and 1,050 members of the formed police units.”⁵⁰ Looking at this large number of military personnel, plus the national army (FARDC), police, and sophisticated arms, it is impossible to understand the failure to stabilize the Eastern region. There must be certain negative complicity behind the process that concretely weighs upon citizens searching for Peace.

⁴⁹ United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Mission des Nations-Unies pour la Stabilisation du Congo: MONUSCO).

⁵⁰ MONUSCO, "The UN Security Council Adopted, on December 18, 2020, the Resolution 2556 Renewing Monusco's Mandate for a Year and, Including, on an Exceptional Basis, Its Intervention Brigade." <https://monusco.unmissions.org/en/mandate> (accessed April 18, 2021). <https://monusco.unmissions.org/en/mandate>, accessed April 10, 2021.

As soon as the slightest self-help initiative is initiated, the army and the police unleash on the initiators' shocking violence while MONUSCO observes idly. At the same time, they stand idly by when other cutthroats⁵¹ operate. Faced with this helpless situation, the local youth have organized some movements of resistance and local pressure like Veranda Mutsanga and LUCHA. In April 2021, a group of young people from the “Veranda Mutsanga” traveled more than 45 km searching for the famous "ADF" on the Beni-Lume axis. Unfortunately, these young people from the “Véranda Mutsanga” movement, a local pressure group from the Beni-Butembo Region, were arrested; the Beni military prosecutor's office issued a warrant. There are also many cases of the LUCHA militants, a non-violent and non-partisan youth civil society movement founded in June 2012 in Goma, the Capital of the North Kivu Province,⁵² who are regularly thrown in prison for only organizing peaceful demonstrations.

The young people who take arms (under local groups of pressure and resistance) are systematically considered "ADF" and murdered without any due process. In Beni, the resistance should only be conceived as a war between the population on one side and MONUSCO and the FARDC on the other side. Given the above argument, the local people remain with the unanswered question: “Why does the army (FARDC + MONUSCO) act promptly to repress the local groups of pressure and fail to act similarly when it comes to fighting the real enemies who are the “ADF” and the like? The CENCO⁵³ estimates that 6,000 have died in Beni alone since 2013, and 3 million have been displaced in Beni and Ituri. At the pace things are going, we will soon reach 10,000 dead in Beni alone.

⁵¹ The word is used by the Beni people to signify the ADF and all those who are killing with knives, machetes ...

⁵² LUCHA supports the non-violent struggle for change.

⁵³ CENCO means Conférence Episcopale Nationale du Congo (Episcopal Conference of the Democratic Republic of the Congo).

There is much anger against the FARDC and MONUSCO. A confrontation seems to be inevitable. In April 2021, the Beni-Butembo people called for an 18 days strike and some peaceful protest to force the MONUSCO to depart for failing their mission. Unfortunately, many people were being arrested during the protest, and the MONUSCO remained in its usual position even after the 18 complete days of strike. Under this hopeless and helpless reality, the local population thinks of tight complicity between the Congo political authorities, the national army (FARDC), and the police. The people of Beni-Butembo believe that the national military (FARDC) and the police are guilty of complicity or double-dealing. When the citizens start a non-violent protest to reclaim their right to peace, the army represses them to the point of death. Such an attitude is interpreted by the Beni-Butembo people (Nande) as complicity from FARDC and the Police. Only when the FARDC, the police, and MONUSCO will do well their work of protecting the civilians will confidence be restored among the people of the Beni Region.

The government is an accomplice for its silence, for underpaying the soldiers in combat zones, collaborating with the international community, and not telling the international community to remove the UN forces that have failed to establish peace and support the national army.

I.4. Relationship between culture, structures, and the cycle of violence in North Kivu

I.4.1. Regarding Culture and structure

On the one hand, I refer to “culture as a set of ideas, beliefs, symbols, and objects humanly constructed that become a way of life of a given social group. A structure implies social life features that condition and constrain human behavior characterized by primary dependence upon material and human resources.”⁵⁴ In this definition, there is an emphasis on an interaction between

⁵⁴ Matthew Shaddle, "Culture," in *Moral Agency within Social Structures and Culture*, ed. Daniel Finn (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 46-47.

culture and structure. People live in a given way according to common beliefs and ideas. They are constrained to behave accordingly to foster a dignified social community where human and material resources are distributed and shared. If an unfair structure constrains the actions of human beings, their actions are likely to be unfair.⁵⁵ And if a fair social structure encourages members to act according to communal beliefs, their actions are probably fair. The notion of culture in relation to structure implies relationality among people from a given culture and structure.

On the other hand, I refer to Douglas Porpora, who defines a social structure as “systems of human relations among social positions.”⁵⁶ This definition follows that people who occupy positions in imperialism and indigenous people from the DRC hold specific social arrangements and relations. The structures constrain them to act in one way or another. The structures of imperialism-slavery-colonialism- neocolonialism interact with the cultures of indigenous people in the North Kivu Region. From this encounter, the indigenous cultures, with their ideas and beliefs about land ownership, were starting to act violently against the transplanted ethnic groups (Tutsis and Hutus) brought and cherished by the colonizers.

The violence of the indigenous was motivated by a search for justice to repossess the land granted by the colonizers to the transplanted people. The violence takes an ethnic appearance⁵⁷, whereas it is willed by the colonizers to distract the people from averting the exploitation of their mineral resources. This violence continues from generation to generation with ramifications to the Beni and Ituri Regions. The transplanted ethnic groups reclaim the portions of land allocated to

⁵⁵ For instance, the Structure of “imperialists-colonizers-neocolonizers-DRC government and allies” is unfair as it places the economic interests of the Global North before human dignity of the indigenous people of Beni (Nande). Any action that such a structure command in the DRC is likely to be unfair because there is always an interest to protect. Such a structure encourages self-interest and accumulation of wealth by a few elites.

⁵⁶ Daniel Finn, ""What Is Critical Realism" and "Social Structure"," in *Moral Agency within Social Structures and Culture*, ed. Daniel Finn(New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 30.

⁵⁷ The ethnical appearance of violence is manifested in the violence between indigenous (autochthone) ethnic groups and the transplanted ethnic groups.

them by the colonizers and neocolonizers. The structures of colonialism and neocolonialism⁵⁸ benefited (and continue to benefit) from the violence between the indigenous people and the transplanted ethnic groups.

Under conflictual circumstances, it is easier to loot mineral resources without being noticed. In this perspective, Séverine Autessere asserts, “the illegal exploitation of Congolese mineral resources is the primary motivation for violence waged by regional and national actors.”⁵⁹ The looting of mineral resources is made possible with local actors who are proxies. The local proxies obey the supervision and the manipulation of regional (Rwanda, Uganda, and their foreign allies) and national elites. When Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers occupied the Eastern part of the DR.Congo (since 1996), they were responsible for looting the Congo resources: “they established a monopoly on trade in the zones they controlled. From highest authorities including Presidents Kagame and Museveni to the lowest rank soldiers, both benefited from the trafficking.”⁶⁰ This illegal trafficking of mineral resources benefited Uganda and Rwanda to the extent that they set up a system of perpetuating the looting even after their troops could withdraw from the Congolese

⁵⁸ Colonialism is a direct control over a subjugated nation whereas neocolonialism is an indirect involvement. Colonialism implies invasion into a foreign land (colonization), settlement and exercise of power upon the citizens of the invaded territory. Under colonialism, one stronger nation acquires power and authority over a weaker nation and the dominions expand and establish their command throughout the dominated region. Neocolonialism implies that stronger countries involve in the economic, political, social and cultural aspects in former colonized and under developed countries. In other words, Neocolonialism is a process by which multinational and transnational corporations, with or without the aid of rich and powerful western states and/or super-governmental organizations, use direct or indirect means to dominate non-western states culturally, politically, socially, economically and technologically.

(https://www.google.com/search?q=difference+between+colonialism+and+neo+colonialism&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&fir=a2FEOgbSq66DJM%252CnIVIsRVDVA65eM%252C_&vet=1&usg=AI4_-kSigZMVw21pRA3ENR1AvuK5nqQO_g&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjziKTXhs7yAhXcSjABHXe4AvIQ9QF6BAGREAE&biw=1366&bih=568#imgsrc=a2FEOgbSq66DJM, Accessed August 24, 2021).

⁵⁹ Séverine Autessere, *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding* (Cambridge: University Press, 2010), 62.

⁶⁰ Autessere, *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*, 64.

land. Nowadays, the number of foreign soldiers is not as much as they were between 1996 and 2000. However, the militia groups still have a mixture of foreigners and local soldiers.

Currently, the exploitation of resources continues with Congolese proxies in partnership with complicit administrative local officials. This partnership under the supervision and support of regional actors perpetuates the culture of violence based on looting resources. In summary, according to Séverine, the culture of violence in the Eastern part of the Congo derives from “national and foreign actors as well as their local proxies, the illicit exploitation of resources and the armed groups.”⁶¹ Violence results from the competition between national and foreign actors over the control and monopoly of important mining sites. Violence results from armed groups who exploit resources illegally to finance and sustain their war efforts. Violence results from armed groups who provoke mass displacement of the population through torture, rape, and arbitrary arrests to control rich mining centers. Behind Uganda and Rwanda, there is a hidden hand of the neo-colonizers (the Global North led by the USA, China, France, Belgium...) who benefit from the looted resources.

The violence in North Kivu is direct (physical), economic, political, and cultural. Explicit violence is experienced by “the victims who are massacred.”⁶² Economic violence derives from the pattern the colonizers set to “determine that the few elites who collaborate with them get richer and the majority of people remains poor.”⁶³ Political violence is experienced in the Beni Region through “repression, and the deprivation of people’s freedom to express their basic human rights through peaceful protest.”⁶⁴ Cultural violence is experienced by the behavior of the colonizers,

⁶¹ Autessere, *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*, 65.

⁶² Jacquineau Azetsop, *Structural Violence, Population Health and Health Equity: Preferential Option for the Poor and the Bioethics Health Equity in Sub-Saharan Africa* (U.S.A: VDM Verlag Dr. Muller, 2010), 15.

⁶³ Azetsop, *Structural Violence, Population Health and Health Equity*, 15.

⁶⁴ Azetsop, *Structural Violence, Population Health and Health Equity*, 16.

neo-colonizers, and accomplices “to legitimize and justify”⁶⁵ the superiority or privileges of the transplanted ethnic groups over the indigenous ethnic groups.

I.4.2. The cycle of violence in North-Kivu in relation to a cultural encounter

As noted earlier, violence has cost significant losses in the DRC population. Recently, the National Episcopal Conference of the Congo (CENCO) and the Association of Episcopal Conferences of Central Africa (ACEAC) conducted a pastoral visit in Goma, Butembo-Beni, and Bunia (on 14-26 January 2021). Their visit resulted in the announcement that “the victims are more than 6,000 dead people in Beni since 2013 and more than 2,000 in Bunia in 2020 alone. There are also at least 3 million displaced people and around 7,500 kidnapped.”⁶⁶ Until 2009, the number of people who have been killed in the numerous wars was “more than 6 million Congolese.”⁶⁷ From 2009 on, the number must be significantly higher. People are tired of counting because it is very depressing. Paradoxically, there has been considerable worldwide media reportage of the “800 000 Tutsis who died during the Rwandan Genocide,”⁶⁸ but a comparatively deep silence about the Congolese who have lost their lives during the unending wars. In this perspective, the historian Isidore Ndaywell asks profound questions: “Why do the Congolese cries of suffering not arouse, on a global level, an echo as significant as those of Rwandans? Why do the disastrous consequences of their wars in Congo continue to be invisible, with a few exceptions?”⁶⁹ The silence on this structural sin (fueling war that exterminates people for economic purposes) is explainable because the Global North’s structures have decided to use Congo as the source of their

⁶⁵ Azetsop, *Structural Violence, Population Health and Health Equity*, 16.

⁶⁶ CENCO, *Message du Comité Permanent de la Conférence Episcopale du Congo Sur la Situation d’Insécurité et des Massacres à l’Est de la R.D.Congo*, 2.

⁶⁷ Charles Onana, *Ces Tueurs Tutsi: au Cœur de la Tragédie Congolaise* (Paris: Ed. Duboiris, 2009), 19.

⁶⁸ Onana, *Ces Tueurs Tutsi*, 19.

⁶⁹ Ndaywell, “*Le Congo dans L’afrique des Grands Lacs : Lecture D’une Trajectoire Postcoloniale à L’épreuve de Multiples Tragédies*,” 1.

resources. These structures perpetuate the culture of violence, using local cultures to implement it and benefit from the chaos. The first chain of structural sin started with slavery and colonization.

Conclusion

Starting with a story of lament from a woman who escaped a massacre, this chapter presented the issues of violence in the Beni Region (North-Kivu): 6000 people have been killed in an unnamed Genocide. The root causes of violence are more economical than ethnic. The structures of the Global North used and are still using a tactic of division and disinformation in order to rule. They want to exploit the mineral resources at a cheap cost. Thus, they provoked the culture of hostility between the indigenous people and the transplanted Tutsis and Hutus from Rwanda. The indigenous people see the Tutsis and Hutus as threats to their land property from generation to generation. The violence goes on. But another idea behind the current killings in the Beni region is the materialization of the partition of the North-Kivu Province so that the transplanted people can get their own territory between Ituri and Beni.

Unfortunately, the violence is causing much loss and the enmity between the indigenous and the transplanted people to grow. The chain of violence may continue as long as the young generations from the indigenous people and the transplanted ethnic groups cultivate enmity and a desire for revenge. The willingness to avenge can make some young people enroll in militias groups. Another crucial element is the hopelessness that nudges the young generation to cultivate selfishness and to collaborate with the Global North for the sake of their own interest and survival. The situation described in this chapter gives enough reason for the necessity of reconciliation to rebuild the Beni Region's society. In the second chapter, we will analyze the process of reconciliation.

Chapter II: Reconciliation in the Beni Region plagued by violence.

Introduction

On listening to the lament of the woman who narrowly escaped from the massacre, on seeing the violence described in the first chapter, and on using the lenses of two principles from the Catholic Social Teaching: Solidarity⁷⁰ and Human dignity⁷¹, it is clear that the ongoing genocide of the Nande People (located in the Beni Region) and the violence around it is a social sin,⁷² one to be condemned and eradicated. With 6000 people massacred, it is evident that human life and human dignity are not respected. The ongoing killings in Beni (North-Kivu/Eastern part of DR Congo) constitute a “crime against humanity.”⁷³ This crime involves the violation of the rights of the victims to life. It is a crime breaking the relationships between the victims (and the members of the Nande Community) and the perpetrators (and sponsors and accomplices) of the killings. The Nande people are forced to leave their land (which is a common good) under the

⁷⁰ Pope John Paul II defines Solidarity as follow: “The exercise of solidarity within each society is valid when its members recognize one another as persons. Those who are more influential, because they have a greater share of goods and common services, should feel responsible for the weaker and be ready to share with them all they possess. Those who are weaker, for their part, in the same spirit of solidarity, should not adopt a purely passive attitude or one that is destructive of the social fabric, but, while claiming their legitimate rights, should do what they can for the good of all. The intermediate groups, in their turn, should not selfishly insist on their particular interests, but respect the interests of others.” (John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1987), 39.)

⁷¹ The Catholic social teaching principle of human dignity “understands each of us as made in God's image. Every person has an innate human dignity no one can take away. Human dignity is given freely to all human beings; whether saint or sinner, imprisoned or freed, powerful or marginalized.” (Catholic Social Teaching, *Human Dignity*.)

⁷² Social sin entails the direct mistreatment of others, in opposition to Jesus' command to neighbor love. Social sin applies to 'every sin against justice in interpersonal relationships, committed by the individual against the community or by the community against the individual'.

<https://www.google.com/search?q=what+is+social+sin%3A+catholic+Teaching&oq=what+is+social+sin%3A+catholic+Teaching&aqs=chrome..69i57j0j7&sourceid=chrom> (Accessed May 27, 2021). The ongoing killings in Beni constitute a social sin as they violate the rights of the victims to life and they break the relationships between the victims (and the members of the Nande Community) and the perpetrators of the Killings.

⁷³ According to the UN, the word crime against humanity is a technical term. In Article 7 of the 1998 Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court, a crime against humanity refer to a physical element, a contextual element and a mental element. A physical element of a crime against humanity includes the following acts: murder, enslavement, deportation or forcible transfer of population; imprisonment; torture, grave forms of sexual violence, persecution, enforced disappearance of persons; crime of apartheid; and other inhumane acts. A contextual element of a crime against humanity implies a committed act as part of a wide spread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population. A mental element of a crime against humanity implies the awareness or knowledge of the attack (<https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/crimes-against-humanity.shtml>, accessed October 6, 2021).

control of the perpetrators. In addition to the ongoing killings, the people of the Beni Region were denied their right to participate in the 2019 presidential elections.⁷⁴ Money, wealth, self-interest, mineral resources, and thirst for land grabbing have blinded and hardened the hearts of the Global North,⁷⁵ the Congo government, the rebels⁷⁶, and their accomplices.

The above social sin derives from evil as a privation of good. The perpetrators of killings act under the pressure of evil as it exercises a privative influence on the good in their beings. Under the influence of evil, the perpetrators are perverted humans who still have their free will. This perversion causes the perpetrators of killings to break their relationship with the victims and the rest of the community. This perversion is social and structural. Individuals actualizing perverted structures become agents of sin. It can be rightly said that in the DR. Congo, the “unjust state of affairs is contrary to God’s will of shalom must be condemned, and our attention should be drawn to the plight of the victims by stressing that their victimization is not a matter of fate but structural sin because of perpetrators who use social structures for personal benefits are accomplices.”⁷⁷

In the case of Beni, the perpetrators act violently because evil has corrupted their reason. In the perpetrators' innermost self, evil has destroyed the original order intended by God: Human nature is created good, and human beings should do good. The perpetrators dispose of the capacity to use their free will. They are responsible for the wrong committed. We can only follow the path

⁷⁴ In 2019 the Beni region experienced the “ebola” disease.” Since the region was in support of the candidate of the opposition, the former regime influenced the electoral commission to use the “Ebola” disease as a reason for denying the Nande from Beni-Butembo to vote. As matter of fact, on the same day of elections, the people from Beni organized their own elections to demonstrate that the “ebola” disease was not a sufficient reason to prevent people from voting.

⁷⁵ The Global North implies here the International Community, the UN forces MONUSCO and some great powers leading the world economy like USA, China, France, Belgium and other countries from the International community.

⁷⁶ There exists three groups of killers: those coming from Rwanda, the coalition ADF (FARDC accomplices), and the ancient members of M23 who probably come from Uganda and Rwanda (Cf., Boniface Musavuli, *RD Congo-massacres : Qui sont les tueurs de Beni*, Agora Vox, mardi 16 Août 2016, p.2.)

⁷⁷ Connor M. Kelly, "The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology," *Theological Studies* 80, no. 2 (2019): 325.

of willingness to reconcile the perpetrators of the massacres in Beni and the victims when we understand that the corrupted perpetrators need to be purified from their corruption and integrated anew into the community. The reconciliation process has the task of providing the victims with safety to gain trust, confidence, and willingness to collaborate in the same process. Before considering reconciliation as a process, we have to understand the brokenness of human relationships.

Asserting that evil affects human beings leads to the theological question of how to deal with evil and how we can liberate ourselves from it. This is the whole notion of salvation linked to reconciliation present in the Scriptures. Reconciliation is a way of dealing with evil in the world and human actions. Concretely, justice, reconciliation, and restoration are the elements that can help deal with the issue of violence caused by evil in the Beni Region. Reconciliation can be described as a process that includes seeking the truth, pursuing justice for the victims, and extending forgiveness. Restoration is often included as part of justice. This chapter examines evil as a privation of good that causes the perpetrator to act violently. Evil as a privation of good leads to structures of sin.⁷⁸ Structural sin is an obstacle to harmonious human relationality. Only after understanding evil as a privation of good can we assert the importance of reconciliation as a process through which the evildoer can be restored to his substantial goodness. Reconciliation can deal with the question of truth, justice, and forgiveness.

⁷⁸ The connection between Evil as privation of good and structures of sin can be explained in two ways. Firstly, the perpetrator is deprived of good by evil. He/She acts out of selfishness and pride in opposition to common good. Secondly, Daniel Finn point is important as he argues that critical realist sociology provides the necessary insights to move beyond the general assertions of Berger and Luckman in order to explain how “social structures emerge from the actions of individuals and require the participation of individuals for their continued existence”(Cf. Connor M. Kelly. *The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology*, in *Theological Studies*, Vol 80 (2), 2019, 299.)

II.1. Evil as a privation of good is the cause of violence and the need for justice and forgiveness.

Life experiences of the Beni people who have suffered from violence inflicted upon them offer a proper perspective to understand how evil and privation are connected. This connection also explains why truth, justice, forgiveness, and restoration are essential elements of reconciliation. My current work follows Aquinas' ethics regarding evil and privation. 'Privation' is an important concept. When someone does good, we call that person a good person. And when someone does evil (performs an immoral action), we are tempted to call that person evil or bad.

The massacre/genocide (as distinguished in our first chapter) occurring in Beni is a sign of evil operating in the world. For a perpetrator to perform inhuman actions such as cutting the victim's neck or belly, he/she is deprived of good. Under this privation, firstly, "the perpetrators take pleasure in seeing people suffering. They desire a deficient good because they perceive it as good; they choose the deficient good over correctly oriented good."⁷⁹ In this case, the perpetrators act like sadists who take pleasure and delight in other people's suffering and pain. Also, their joy might come from the money they receive from their masters for killing people.

Secondly, the perpetrators can choose an evil act even when it is deficient. This deficiency implies that the human "will" in the perpetrators influenced by evil is a simple negation of good, not a moral fault or punishment. This act of the "will" incurs the nature of moral wrong. It undertakes the evil deed in the state of such negation, since in launching the very act, the good that is lacking becomes requisite, namely, actually attending to the rule of reason and God's law.⁸⁰ Since evil is in an existing thing as "the thing is *deficient*, deficiency becomes the nature of evil

⁷⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *De Malo*, 71. A correctly oriented good does not stem from a disorderly self-interest, but rather follows the pattern of the Principles of human dignity, solidarity, friendship and common good.

⁸⁰ Aquinas, *De Malo*, 73.

whereas perfection belongs to the nature of good;”⁸¹ therefore, evil is naturally *deficient*⁸², and it has the potential to corrupt or injure the human will. Once injured, the will becomes “deficient.” It leads a human being to choose evil and desire what in normal circumstances would be considered undesirable.

Human beings are responsible for their actions. Justice, reconciliation, and forgiveness (each of these three concepts will be later defined and analyzed in a particular section) can help the perpetrators correct their “deficient” will because, as Thomas Aquinas asserts, we are all capable of doing good because “we have a will functioning well. Also, our nature was created good; it cannot be altered by accident. Humans commit moral evil because they mistakenly perceive it to be a part of some good.”⁸³ It is human egoism and selfishness that lead to the perception of evil as having some good. Evil-doers are responsible for their evil actions. They choose to do evil as immoral actions that deprive someone/something of his/its good.

There are mixed privations concerning violence⁸⁴ expressed in killings (as immoral actions). This notion of mixed privations suggests that actions can be called “evil” compared to good actions. And at times, people can be called “evil” when defined (described) according to their evil actions. As the notion of mixed privations relates to moral imputability.

⁸¹ Aquinas, *De Malo*, 72-73.

⁸² Evil is naturally deficient implies that Evil is considered as a *nonbeing* that accidentally graft or hang up to good which is *being*. Evil is an accident that manifests only through Good, which is substance.

⁸³ Josh Shrader-Perry, "Evil as Privation Justifying Restorative Justice," *Say Something Theological: The Student Journal of Theological Studies* 2, no. 2 (2020): 6.

⁸⁴ Violence is defined as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation (Cf. World report on violence and health, https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/summary_en.pdf, accessed October 7, 2021).

The perpetrators of evil action remain good in nature because that evil happens accidentally. The person acting as a perpetrator today might do good another day. In this section, I am still using Thomistic categories and terms. An accident cannot alter the substance⁸⁵ (good is inside any human person, and evil is an accident). In this perspective, the need for Justice, Reconciliation, and forgiveness are grounded on the assumption that a person cannot be depicted as radically “evil” because he/she still has a good nature (substance), which opens him to the possibility of conversion and recovering of his/her substantial goodness. Since “evil” is a parasite of good, then human beings live in tension as they experience the accident of mixed privations. The perpetrators doing evil must not be reduced to their evil actions because their nature is good. As the perpetrators are doing evil, they lack a will enabling them to do good. Put differently, we can say that doing evil implies that someone lacks good, but he/she is more than what he/she lacks and cannot be reduced to his/her deprivation. The deprivation of good internal to the perpetrators leads them to structural sin.

II.2. A view of a structure of sin and structural sin (social sin)

In the twenty-first century, we hear the notion of structural sin and structure of sin as inherited from humanity's history. What do these notions imply? By way of definition,

A structure of sin is envisioned as an institution or collective practice that either socially idealizes or economically incentivizes actions seeking exclusive self-interest(s) at the expense of the common good. Each part of this definition has a theological rationale, and the definition as a whole emphasizes the distinctive characteristics of those social structures that have become structures of sin.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ In Thomas Aquinas' understanding, “substance” refer to a particular existing thing or to the substantial form of a particular existing thing whereas “accident” implies features or traits of substances such as the weight, or color or actions of a thing. Simply put, accident necessarily relies on substance.

⁸⁶ Kelly, “The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology,” 301.

This definition puts a stress on the idea of an institution or collective practice in the sense given by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in precise terms of understanding structures as “the sets of *institutions and practices* which people find already existing or which they create, on the national and international level, and which orientate or organize economic, social, and political life.”⁸⁷ Structural sin derives from the Structure of sin within institutions, and their origin goes back to personal sins: these laws, institutions, structures were initially designed and implemented by particular subjects. In this sense, these institutions or practices need Christian freedom and liberation from structural sin in order to become structures able to mediate grace.

Living in social institutions with social practices, human beings have to abide by the rules and norms. It is in the institutions that humans are connected in order to form social groups and communities. There can be a group more powerfully organized than others. And the mutual accountability among members of the same institutions is to be observed regarding rules and norms to avoid disorder and disorganization. There are relations between various institutions. Some institutions appear more robust than others.

Collaborative practices are a helpful and necessary complement to the identification of institutions as social structures. They derive from virtue ethics. Thus, there is a value in defining structures regarding both “institutions and practices, because any description of structures regarding institutions alone would fail to capture the causal power of specific social groups fully.”⁸⁸ Structures of sin can influence human conscience. An influenced conscience struggles in maintaining the perspective of doing what is right and wrong in an individual. Any conscience

⁸⁷Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1986), 74.

⁸⁸ Kelly, “The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology,” 303.

negatively impacted will ignore the immoral consequences of human actions. Structures of sin look for the fulfillment of disordered self-interests of the capitalists, imperialists, and colonialists to the detriment of the common good. Hence, structures of sins that seek disordered self-interest tend to negate the common good. The purpose of these structures is to accumulate wealth through plunder. In this perspective, the chain: imperialism-colonialism-neocolonialism, D.R. Congo government and their accomplices constitute a Structure of sin because their self-interest prioritizes human dignity and the sacredness of human life.

When we look at the consequences or manifestations of structural sin in the world, we realize, as Rauschenbusch said, that it seeks “‘self-interest,’ which has some effects at the structural level. Super-personal forces of evil are to be condemned.”⁸⁹ As I mentioned in the first chapter, these super-personal forces of evil refer to structures of colonization and its legacy in D.R. Congo and other structures that lead to the cycle of violence in North Kivu. It is worth mentioning that for Karl Marx, the concept “superstructure”⁹⁰ refers to structures that hold the economy and control the ideology, law, institutions, and Religion (Church) to serve the purpose of perpetuating the oppressing culture of dominant classes seeking to justify oppression and disordered self-interest. Self-interest goes against solidarity. When solidarity is hindered by self-interest, the common good is not respected.

In reality, from the perspective of structures of sin, Rauschenbusch asserts that sin lodges in social customs and institutions. He explains that socialization occurs when individuals adopt the

⁸⁹ Kelly, “The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology,” 307.

⁹⁰In Marxist theory, society consists of two parts: the **base** (or **substructure**) and **superstructure**. The base comprises the forces and relations of production (e.g. employer–employee work conditions, the technical division of labour, and property relations) into which people enter to produce the necessities and amenities of life. The superstructure determines society's other relationships and ideas to comprise its superstructure, including its culture, institutions, political power structures, roles, rituals, and state, (<https://www.thoughtco.com/definition-of-base-and-superstructure-3026372>, Accessed October 21, 2021).

“‘moral judgments and valuations’ of the society around them.”⁹¹ When we experience structural sin in a given society, it denotes the weaknesses of moral judgments and valuations in that society. More critically, the *willingness to excuse or idealize* a particular malicious behavior (derives from shortcomings in passing moral judgment about social life) is a way in which sin is socialized. When disordered self-interest is idealized and idolized within a given institution, it results in structural sin. It is difficult to overcome the protection of “the profitability of the income that structural sin generates.”⁹²

Pope John Paul II’s post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* opposes social sin to “love of neighbor, and he describes the opposition between a moral responsibility that includes everything from justice in interpersonal relationships to preserving the rights of the human person and ensuring the common good.”⁹³ For him, selfishness is a way of operating structural sin at the expense of love for the neighbor. In this sense, self-interest is an essential feature “of sin and pride the root of sin.”⁹⁴ Selfishness blinds human consciousness from seeing the other person as deserving equal treatment. In order to eradicate the sinfulness of structural evil, we have to fight against “self-interest opposed to the common good.”⁹⁵ Structural sin, when it seeks the satisfaction of selfish interests, is committed by inaction or omission. This inaction or omission implies that instead of promoting the common good, some influential minorities cease working for the just treatment of all society members.

⁹¹ Kelly, “The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology,” 308.

⁹² Kelly, “The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology,” 308.

⁹³ John Paul II, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Reconciliation and Penance, Reconciliatio Et Paenitentia* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1984), 16.

⁹⁴ Kelly, “The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology,” 310.

⁹⁵ Kelly, “The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology,” 310.

The Nande people are the victims of what Cynthia Moe-Lobeda calls a “culture of exploitation enabling extravagant acquisition and consumption.”⁹⁶ The privileged people (sinful structures and the global North), those with the economic, political and cultural power, exploit the weak (Nande people) to gain and accumulate too much wealth. There is no equal access to wealth for the Nande People. In the Beni Region, inaction or omission is shown in the lack of structures and Congolese individuals of good will who persevere in the right fight of denouncing the Congo totalitarian / anarchical regime and action that “deny the participation of the individual in political life and disempowers the individual by taking away fundamental rights in the interests of absolute centralized control of all aspects of social and political life.”⁹⁷ The Nande people shoulder the weight of economic violence. Structures of sin (from the global North with their Rwandese, Ugandan, and Congolese proxies) exploit the Nande people to death and deadly poverty as the massacre is a vivid witness. When structural sin and structures of sin prevent the promotion of the common good and the harmonious communities of people, human social relations are distorted.

II.3. Structural sin and structures of sin are obstacles to human relationality

Human beings are naturally relational. Relationality leads human beings to build human communities and societies and live in them. At times, this relationship between individuals and communities is good when the human dignity of all is respected. At other times, this relation may be conflictual. The relationship may imply the presence of structural sin (social sin). Also, there are instances where personal conflict causes community conflict (such as rivalry between tribes) without resulting in structural sin. In this sense, social sin or structural sin implies “the relationships between the various human communities. These relationships are not always in

⁹⁶ Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda, *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation* (1517 Media; Fortress Press), 2.

⁹⁷ Michelle Evans, "The Principle of Subsidiarity as a Social and Political Principle," *Solidarity: The Journal of Catholic Social Thought and Secular Ethics* 3, no. 1 (1969): 14.

accordance with the plan of God, who intends that there be justice in the world and freedom and peace between individuals, groups, and peoples.”⁹⁸ To recover the order intended by God: the harmonious relationship between humanity-divinity and humanity-humanity; relational human beings have to live in love and solidarity with others. In this solidarity, they must pursue justice as a common good. At the same time, relational human beings share the same substance of life to which they all tend ultimately to cling. Life in common is what makes people recognize the other person as human as we are. Life must be respected and protected. With the current genocide in Beni, there is no respect for life as a common good.

Suppose the people of Beni apply the notion of “Ubuntu,” which implies community spirit whereby one defines his/her being in relation to other community members and live by it. In that case, it will be possible to protect human lives, respect human dignity, and create healthy social relationships in communities and societies. Based on this, we can observe human solidarity and love as a way to protect and save the lives of the victims of catastrophes and cruelty because victims believe that

The primacy of life can help focus on the basics, life, and solidarity; it helps to unmask the superfluous, unnecessary, and even dehumanizing elements that a certain civilization and concept of progress have introduced into normal life. And it helps to denounce the inhumanity and injustice that result when people gain access to superfluous things at the cost of basic needs for others.⁹⁹

Life must be given its priority when it comes to respect, care, and protection. As the victims of genocide express their will to survive even under much suffering, they deserve a guaranteed safe space and conditions for living. This happens only when human beings respect the sacredness and holiness of life.

⁹⁸ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (United States of Catholic Bishops Washington, D.C: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006), 118.

⁹⁹ Jon Sobrino, *"Primordial Saintliness," Where Is God? Earthquake, Terrorism, Barbarity and Hope* (New York: Orbis, 2004), 72.

In daily life, killings, massacres, and genocide constitute a sign of the desacralization of human life. If human beings are naturally relational beings sharing in the same substance of sacred life, why are there these dehumanizing phenomena? In the case of the ongoing genocide of the Nande people in the Beni Region, the reason for the killings is not only the obsessive search of selfish interests but also a lack of love and solidarity towards human beings and lack of respect for the sacredness of human life. Human life is worth nothing for the sake of the selfish interest of the chain “imperialists-colonialists-neocolonialists- DR.Congo government-and accomplices.” The victims do not feel safe because their lives are not protected.

The mystery of iniquity overcomes the victims of the Beni genocide. This mystery of iniquity leaves them without words. These victims fleeing from death are left with nothing under incredible cruelty and abandonment. Moreover, this mystery of iniquity in the Beni Region is traced in experiences of the indifference of political authorities and people of good will, many miseries, injustice, killings, refugees, women raped, and villages looted, all set on the background of colonialism/neo-colonialism, which is still supplying the weapons of death.¹⁰⁰

Paluku Sikuli Melchisedech, Bishop of the diocese of Butembo-Beni, highlights the child-soldiers drama resulting from the chaotic situation. He quotes Kouroma’s book *Allah Is Not Happy*, in search of words for a tragedy that seems to allow only silence, “When you have no one in the world, no father, no mother, no sister, and you are still a child in a ruined and barbarous country where everyone is killing everyone else, what do you do? You become a child-soldier to eat and kill; that is all we can do.”¹⁰¹ The child-soldier phenomenon is a potential for the proliferation of militia groups. Such groups constitute a source of insecurity and violence. Insecurity increases

¹⁰⁰ Sobrino, “Primordial Saintliness,” *Where is God? Earthquake, Terrorism, Barbarity and Hope*, 75.

¹⁰¹ Sobrino, “Primordial Saintliness,” *Where is God? Earthquake, Terrorism, Barbarity and Hope*, 75.

violence. Combatting the root causes of the child-soldier phenomenon may contribute to reducing the cycle of violence. The perpetrators of killing manipulate militias for the sake of their leaders' economic interests.

For instance, in the name of a hegemonic system, some countries from the Global North inflict harm/abuse on people from the Global South, such as the DR. Congo. The Global North creates deadly conflicts in the Eastern Congo so that mineral resources like “columbo-tantalite (an essential material for most electronic equipment), gold, silver, cadmium, copper, and zinc, and rare minerals such as cobalt, nickel, niobium, tantalum, beryl, cassiterite, and wolfram (used in high-technology industries)”¹⁰² can be cheaply accessed through their regional proxies Rwanda and Uganda, and national elites and local actors. That is where the Global North makes economic arrangements to control the market of mineral resources. In the places in D.R. Congo, where resources come from, there are dehumanizing treatments, namely, indecent salaries, child labor in mining areas, rapes, and massacres. This hegemonic system (China and all other corporations with the cooperation of local proxies in mining sectors) implies a culture that “restricts the full dignity of lives”¹⁰³ of the people from the Beni Region. This system goes against the reason for being fully human, which is to reflect the fully divine as Jesus did. In the hegemonic system, socialization is based on the Nande people, who are viewed as simply weak and lesser human beings who can be killed for the economic interests of a few from the Global North and their accomplices.

Additionally, due to the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities, the people of the Beni Region are made poor and lesser human beings because the government remains

¹⁰² Autessere, *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*, 62.

¹⁰³ Lap Yan Kung, *Human Dignity as a Right and Virtue in Practice: A Socio-Theological Reflection from and on the Cross Removal Incidents in China* (Published on April 24, 2018), <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/9/5/138/htm> (Accessed October 09, 2021).

indifferent and accomplice of the situation. The unjust exploitation of mineral resources and the pursuit of selfish interests have put the Nande people in a long-term situation of conflicts and extermination (genocide). Since human dignity is not respected, the people of Beni are suffering marginalization. In the name of economic power, the structure “imperialism-colonialism-neocolonialism- DR.Congo Government and accomplices” creates poverty and dehumanization among the Nande people.

In the name of political power, the Government of the DR Congo and accomplices are creating unending conflicts and wars. Also, there is a manipulation of the just war theory in supporting the Congolese army to defend its territory and the citizen against an ambiguous enemy or an infested enemy amid the army itself. The political powers justify their interference in some conflicts. But war, as it involves violence, will rarely be justified. I will engage further in the theory of non-violence in the third chapter. Now, I am just mentioning that the functional self-defense theory is countered by Jesus' position when he was slapped. He who had said earlier to his disciples that when one is bitten on one cheek, he has to give the other cheek; at the time of his passion, he is slapped, but instead of turning the other cheek, he said to the man, “if what I said is right, why do you strike me?”(John 18, 23). These words of Jesus are key to understanding the accurate attitude to take when faced with injustices and violence. Jesus did not turn the other cheek; instead, he challenged the unjust structures. Walter Wink interprets Jesus turning the cheek also as an act of defiance because the Master would want a meek acquiescence. In this regard, Wink asserts, “by turning the cheek; then, the ‘inferior’ is saying: ‘I am a human being, just like you. I refuse to be humiliated any longer. I am your equal. I am a child of God. I won’t take it anymore.’”¹⁰⁴ By asking the one who struck him, ‘Why do you strike me if I have spoken well?’ Jesus challenged him. In

¹⁰⁴ Walter Wink, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 98-111.

the current chaotic situation in Beni, the correct attitude is to challenge the evil structures that cause war and violence, resulting in genocide. Any form of self-defense against unjust war should aim to bring together the individual's sacral reconstitution through sanctification, forgiveness, and virtues and the oppressive institution's transformation.

Human beings participate actively (action) or passively (inaction) in sinful structures. As Connor Kelly has noted, "Inaction is also a potential source of sin, as the classic distinction between sins of commission and sins of omission highlights. One can still treat sins of omission as an action, however, because the failure to act is itself an action—at least insofar as it has moral weight, for the moral judgment presumes that one could have acted otherwise and did not do so."

¹⁰⁵ In the face of the ongoing genocide in Beni, there is indifference, silence, and complicity of the Congolese government, the international community, and Congolese people of goodwill. Indifference, silence, and complicity fail to denounce the crime as a structural sin. This failure to denounce is sin by omission. Also, the refusal to take the side with justice is a sin of omission. When the perpetrator massacres people, he/she commits sin by his/her action. Concerning the situation in Beni, there is an urgent need for a positive change.

In real life, human beings are resistant to change. Personal change is difficult. Despite this difficulty, social change can occur when political authorities and people of goodwill from society decide to take an action of "challenging structural sin by overcoming inertia."¹⁰⁶ To overcome inertia implies forming human consciences to make human beings real agents for justice in the world. Combating the power of structural sin can begin at the local level. Small-scale communities

¹⁰⁵ Kelly, "The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology," 312.

¹⁰⁶ Kelly, "The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology," 314.

can counteract the influence of perverse social ideals and economic incentives by projecting collective support for the common good instead of self-interest. This will create a social group with a different set of values, which, in turn, can shape the moral intuitions of the individuals within the community. This makes it easier for them to resist the detrimental values projected by the sinful institutions and the practices around them.¹⁰⁷

Once the community begins to combat structures of sin, by that same fact, the community is combatting structural sin. The community can use collective action to challenge problematic social ideals and economic incentives. Alternatively, the community has to create alternative “structures of grace” that economically incentivize activities that serve the common good.¹⁰⁸ In a society of people from Beni characterized by structures of sin that cause the desacralization of life, dignity, human relationality, and the common good, there is a severe need for reconciliation to make right what went wrong.

II.4. Reconciliation as a process in a region disturbed by violence

II.4.1. Introduction

In the Bible, “Reconciliation occurs very sparingly. Only in Matthew 5:24 and 1 Corinthians 7:11 is the term used for relations between people; in all other references, the Greek noun *katallagé* and the verb *katallasso* are used exclusively for God’s supreme act of reconciling human kind or the *kosmos* to God’s self.”¹⁰⁹ Reconciliation implies forgiveness, but one can forgive without being reconciled. Reconciliation encompasses peace and harmony. The word

¹⁰⁷ Kelly, “The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology,” 323.

¹⁰⁸ Kelly, “The Nature and Operation of Structural Sin: Additional Insights from Theology and Moral Psychology,” 323.

¹⁰⁹ Geiko Muller-Fahrenholz, *The Art of Forgiveness: Theological Reflection on Healing and Reconciliation* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1997), 4.

Reconciliation comes from the Latin root “*Concilium*, which suggests a deliberative process in which the conflicting partners meet each other ‘in council’ to work out their differing views and to arrive at some common agreement.”¹¹⁰ When different parties at conflicts come to a common agreement, the restoration of social harmony and peace takes off.

There are two ways of understanding reconciliation: political realism to understand Reconciliation and the Christian perspective of Reconciliation (teleological). For the liberal skeptics, political reconciliation envisions “rights, the rule of law, democratic procedure, deliberation, reciprocity, and trust, all of which are features of liberal democratic orders.”¹¹¹ The stand of political realism works to make little improvement to the Truth Reconciliation Commission, criminal courts, etc. The political realism approach of Reconciliation has serious doubt about the possibility of effecting repentance, forgiveness, and healing. Expanding on Philpott’s description of liberal skeptics regarding political Reconciliation, Ernesto Valiente asserts that liberal skeptics recognize “the central role that the distribution of power plays in both enabling and limiting the pursuit of justice. Liberal skeptics emphasize the rule of law, human rights, and punishment of human rights violators. In supporting political realism, liberal skeptics defend pluralism.”¹¹² It follows that political reconciliation does not see the transformation of the hearts of human rights violators as part of their task. Hence, Christian understanding of Reconciliation considers Reconciliation as teleological and eschatological that needs to be anticipated. Christian approach to Reconciliation also “emphasizes justice and the ethical

¹¹⁰ Muller-Fahrenholz, *The Art of Forgiveness: Theological Reflection on Healing and Reconciliation*, 3.

¹¹¹ Daniel Philpott, *Just and Unjust Peace: An Ethic of Political Reconciliation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 79.

¹¹² Ernesto, *Liberation through Reconciliation: Jon Sobrino's Christological Spirituality*, 39.

conditions necessary to arrive at a fully reconciled community.”¹¹³ With an emphasis on ethical conditions, Christian Reconciliation complements Political reconciliation.

Based on the introductory story and the number of victims from the Bishop’s report mentioned in our first chapter, there is no doubt that in the Beni Region, Reconciliation is necessary to bring both the victims of the ongoing violence and the perpetrators to build a new community and a new society. For the Beni Region, Reconciliation should address the issues of truth acknowledgment, remembrance of what injured the victims, justice, suitable reparation of the damages, repentance of the prosecutor, forgiveness, and the prosecutor's restoration to the community. Even if it may not be possible to bring the victims into a new community with their perpetrators, reconciliation is needed among the victims themselves so that they can assume their unfortunate history and look towards the future.

Reconciliation is a complex process. It takes a lot of time, depending on the magnitude and severity of the conflict. It requires three moments: knowing the truth, rendering justice, and forgiveness. Reconciliation implies recalling the past, safety for the present, and a vision for the future. In most cases, reconciliation processes stop at the stage of retributive justice. But retributive justice is rarely sufficient to bring about lasting reconciliation because after the perpetrators are tried, reparations are done for the victims. But reparations will rarely compensate for the harm done. For instance, the loss of loved ones. This is why even after retributive justice among victims, the wounds can still be fresh either because of the doubt about the truth-telling process from the side of the perpetrator or because of the unrepairable loss. It is thus important to think of another element that can support a reconciliation process after truth-telling and justice rendering.

¹¹³ Ernesto, *Liberation through Reconciliation: Jon Sobrino's Christological Spirituality*, 40.

II.4.2. Truth-telling in the process of Reconciliation

In our introductory story from the first chapter, the woman who escaped from the massacre tells the truth about what she suffered. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission identified four types of truths: “Forensic Truth, Personal truth, social truth, and Reconciliatory Truth. These truths help reduce the number of lies concerning any criminal case. Forensic Truth implies a collection of facts, objective information and evidence.”¹¹⁴ This truth based on facts can be called factual truth. Knowing and gathering facts and evidence contribute to reducing the portion of lies. Facts, information, and evidence have to come from a trustworthy Commission.

Social Truth implies dialogue. It is a truth that “helps in establishing experiences that derive from “interaction, discussion, and debate.”¹¹⁵ Social truth contributes to transparency in the process of reconciliation as various positions are assessed. Also, with the dialogue and discussion which social truth entails, political parties, NGOs, Universities, the Church, etc., are involved. At this level of social truth involving political parties and NGOs, transparency, democracy, and social participation become the means of a respectful dialogue that values human dignity and integrity.

Reconciliatory truth implies healing and restoration. It is a kind of truth that places “facts and what they mean within the context of human relationships – both amongst citizens and between the State and its citizens.”¹¹⁶ Since healing and restoration are essential in reconciliation, reconciliatory truth is central to the Commission of Reconciliation. Reconciliatory truth is a

¹¹⁴ Truth and Reconciliation Commission, "Excerpt from Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report," in *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*(South Africa: 1990), 110-117.

<https://mylearning.nps.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Excerpt-from-TRC-Report-Four-Truths.pdf>(Accessed October 22, 2021).

¹¹⁵ Truth and Reconciliation Commission, "Excerpt from Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report," 112.

¹¹⁶ Truth and Reconciliation Commission, "Excerpt from Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report," 114.

powerful means that enable all the stakeholders in the Process of reconciliation to look towards the future of society. Looking towards the future will imply the examination of possibilities of reparations for the inflicted damage and mostly the prevention of similar violence and abuses in the future.

Personal truth implies the “hearing of each person’s story of the truth.”¹¹⁷ Personal truth is a helpful insight in order to understand the suffering endured by the victims. Personal truth contributes to the creation of a truth narrative. In the perspective of our introductory story from our first chapter, the woman tells her personal truth as she experienced the violence. She laments to make known her atrocities, and she hopes for a bright future in case her lament is heard and listened to by people who can help in reconciliation. She appeals to people of goodwill to join in her lament so that her voice can be heard. Other victims are also encouraged to come out and tell their stories. As the victims tell their personal stories, the truth narrative starts taking shape.

In the Reconciliation process, the victims' needs should take priority before moving to the side of the perpetrators: the victims need safety and protection before any other thing. Without the victims' safety, the Reconciliation process will rarely succeed because they might be afraid to come out and cooperate with the Commission of Reconciliation. After guaranteeing safety to victims, the process of Reconciliation must address their past atrocities in a way that upholds transparency and accountability while remaining sensitive to the other needs and desires of victims in order that society might move forward constructively.

In our introductory story (first chapter), the woman gives a glimpse of the needs of all other victims (from Beni) who have not yet been heard. They are all broken-hearted and injured. They

¹¹⁷ Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Excerpt from Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report*, 111.

want to be heard and taken care of. Notably, the victims in the Beni region want reconciliation that puts an end to other similar atrocities. They want a reconciliation process that includes justice. In the process of telling the truth, there is a look at the past, present, and future times. The past implies the remembrance of what happened. It is imperative to call to mind all the suffered losses and atrocities as the woman does in her story. This duty of memories implies remembering and telling all the stories of other victims. The present time implies the way to deal with the remembered truth, the victims and the perpetrators. The future implies creating fitting conditions for a sincere and lasting reconciliation that derives from the truth, justice, and forgiveness.

In the process of reconciliation, there is a need to rebuild the broken relationships between victims and perpetrators. Thus, it is imperative to “address the past atrocities.”¹¹⁸ The Truth commission should be created based on a willingness to respect honesty, truth, justice, goodwill, anti-corruption. The truth commission is founded on saving the interconnectedness and healthy relations of interdependence among nations and among involved parties. This commission would include the international community, the representatives of the African Union, the representatives of the United Nations, representatives from the Congo government, various Churches, and civil society representatives. An essential criterion for membership is an explicit willingness to show independence and act without bias to be more objective and contribute to the transformation of the conflict at stake. All the members have to pledge that if they are found guilty of bias, lack of independence, fairness, and objectivity, they will be judged and sanctioned severely.

One of the primary tasks of the Truth Commission will be to bring the perpetrators to understand the usefulness of ceasing killings. The commission will identify the leaders of the

¹¹⁸ Priscilla B. Hayner, *Unspeakable Truths: Facing the Challenge of Truth Commissions* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), 161.

communities involved in the killings. If there are open leaders, contact the permissive leader, there can be a dialogue with him to get information from him. In the dialogue with the leaders who cooperate, we use the principle that “an admitted fault is half pardoned.” The commission would find a mechanism to tell the victims that those who killed are not the leaders. The perpetrators of killings should be told that they acted under pressure because they would have been killed if they did not act. After gaining the perpetrator’s confidence, the commission will collaborate with them to identify the leaders who gave orders of killings.

In this step, the truth commission creates a space for victims’ stories to be told and offers recommendations for further action. Safety for the victims is a prerequisite to the success of truth-telling. This truth-telling should be done with accountability and transparency. Story sharing is a starting point for victims to feel some relief and catharsis. Some victims can remain unrelieved, but truth-telling is like cleaning their wounds, making their wounds fresh for healing to start. Some will have to undergo therapy to overcome personal trauma, but in the end, sharing their truth will help them begin to heal. In this regard, Robert Schreiter asserts healing memory unfolds through three moments: “acknowledging loss, making connections and taking new actions.”¹¹⁹ Looking back at the past errors, remembering what injured the victims calls for reparations to contribute to healing memory and memory preservation.

In addition, by knowing the truth about past atrocities that are often shrouded in the unknown, some victims can make a bit more sense of trauma too significant for them – or anyone – to comprehend. Truths are often unknown because of cover-ups. In some cases, records of narrated truths can be a tool to hold perpetrators accountable and help victims heal. One thing to

¹¹⁹ Robert Schreiter, "Establishing a Shared Identity: The Role of the Healing of Memories and of Narratives," in *Peace and Reconciliation: In Search of Shared Identity*, ed. Sebastian C.H. Kim Pauline Kollontai, and Greg Holyland(Routledge, 2008), 13.

avoid is making victims feel like pawns in any game in order to gain their confidence and trust. For instance, influential politicians (involved in the atrocities) can influence the judiciary system to postpone the trial several times. As the waiting time gets longer, the victims who have shared their personal truths are discouraged, disappointed, and disrespected. In a situation like this, the victims lose their trust in the process of reconciliation.

However, the commission of reconciliation has to seek the victims' trust to be predisposed to open up and heal. Because of this, a reconciliation process has to thoroughly “address the full range of wounds that injustices and violence inflict: physical, psychological, social, and spiritual wounds.”¹²⁰ The Commission of Truth and Reconciliation has the task of setting circumstances that enable all the actors in the process of reconciliation about the massacre in the Beni region to be brought together, the victims, the perpetrators (and those on behalf of whom the perpetrators acted), the government, and the independent and trustworthy international jurisdictions. As the government is corrupt, it is difficult to set these conditions to bring the perpetrators and the victims to one table. For this to happen, there is a need to fight corruption in the government; otherwise, reconciliation will rarely succeed. The aim of bringing these actors together is to create a space of freedom where each can speak confidently to establish a coherent and truthful narrative, which counters the denial of the committed massacre. After completing a trustworthy truth narrative, justice needs to be done.

II.4.3. Justice in the process of Reconciliation.

According to Chris Marshall, most expressions of justice involve “distribution, power, equity, and rights.”¹²¹ There is justice in a given society when benefits and penalties are fairly

¹²⁰ Philpott, *Just and Unjust Peace: An Ethic of Political Reconciliation*, 93.

¹²¹ Chris Marshall, *The Little Book of Biblical Justice: A Fresh Approach to the Bible's Teachings on Justice*. (New York: Good Books, 2005), 6.

distributed so that every member of the society gets a deserved reward for doing great and a deserved punishment after doing morally wrong actions. In the case of the Beni people, there is an injustice because there is no fair sharing of society's goods and rewards. Apart from mineral resources, the people of this region have invested in cultivating cacao. The people of this region are being deprived of fair opportunities to enjoy a decent, peaceful life and the benefits of their natural and agricultural resources: because of the killings, people run away from their farms. Probably, the perpetrators of the massacre are the ones taking benefit of the abandoned farm resources.

In Beni, victims of many killings are suffering because of unfair political power, economic and judiciary powers. Justice about power would imply that power is rightly used for the benefit of the people of the Beni region instead of using power to “rob them of what they are rightly due.”

¹²² Unfortunately, the Congolese government and its Judiciary power are not yet able to guarantee the safety and security of the people suffering from the mass killings. One instance of justice about power would be that the judiciary system of the D.R.Congo to enforce legal obligations and impose suitable sanctions on the perpetrators be held accountable for their actions.

In this sense, in conflict situations, the legal systems¹²³ must enforce fairness and balance in dealing with issues of violence. This fairness implies doing justice equitably and not doing justice at the advantage of the influential people (president, ministers, senators, deputy, and the wealthy). Unfortunately, when fairness is not respected, only the case of the powerful is taken to

¹²² Marshall, *The Little Book of Biblical Justice: A Fresh Approach to the Bible's Teachings on Justice*, 6.

¹²³ There must be a connection between Legal justice and economic justice to transform institutions and structures. Legal justice implies fairness, moral rightness, and a scheme or system of law in which every person receives his/her/its due from the system, including all rights, both natural and legal. Economic justice is a set of moral and ethical principles for building economic institutions, where the ultimate goal is to create an opportunity for each person to establish a sufficient material foundation upon which to have a dignified, productive, and creative life (<https://www.google.com/search?q=legal+justice+definition&oq=legal+justice+&aqs=chrome>, and <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/economic-justice.asp>, accessed October 14, 2021).

court, and justice is rendered to the advantage of the powerful people. The majority of the suffering people (without political power and influence) do not experience justice because of cover-ups (in the case of the influential politicians who are among the sponsors of armed groups for the sake of selfish interest). The persistence of violence in the Beni Region shows that Justice has failed to give moral legitimacy to their rights to a decent life and human dignity. Therefore, practicing justice about power, equity and fairness would be a great factor for reconciliation to take place.

In the process of Reconciliation, different types of justice are needed: criminal justice,¹²⁴ retributive justice,¹²⁵ distributive justice¹²⁶, and restorative Justice.¹²⁷ Among these various aspects of justice, restorative justice is more relevant to our present work because it gives the best account of justice by going beyond the limits of contractual justice and seeks, even if in a provisional and limited way, the healing and transformation of people's heart and the nation's culture. For this reason, in the present work, by justice, we mean that the demands of the victims are to be fulfilled, the criminals are to be tried, and at the same time, the victims are to be refunded other things they have lost in the end. Put differently, restorative justice is more interesting because it tries to break the limits of justice as a contract embodied in criminal justice, retributive justice, and distributive justice. Also, even if Restorative justice goes further than Contractual Justice, there is still a need for forgiveness to support and complete restorative justice. Once restorative justice includes

¹²⁴ Criminal Justice can be defined as the system through which crimes and criminals are identified, apprehended, judged, and punished (<https://www.internationalstudent.com/study-criminal-and-forensic-science/what-is-criminal-justice/> accessed May 3, 2021)

¹²⁵ Retributive Justice is a matter of giving people their just deserts. The central idea is that the offender has gained unfair advantages through his or her behavior, and that punishment will set this imbalance straight. (<https://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/retributive.justice>, accessed May 3, 2021)

¹²⁶ Distributive justice implies securing equal opportunities for the disadvantaged; Equality is not possible without equalization. (Cf. Geiko Muller-Fahrenheit, *The Art of Forgiveness*, Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1997, 96)

¹²⁷ Restorative justice views crime as more than breaking the law – it also causes harm to people, relationships, and the community. Restorative Justice is **a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior** (<https://www.google.com/search?q=restorative+justice+definition+law&oq=Restorative+justice+de&aqs=chrome.5.0i433j69j57j0l8.20910j1j4&sourceid=chrom>, accessed May 3, 2021).

forgiveness, then the process of Reconciliation can be achieved. In this perspective, Daniel Philpott, recalling that political reconciliation aims at restoring human rights, argues that political reconciliation considers the practices of Christian reconciliation, namely “forgiveness, apology, restorative punishment, the transformations of emotion and judgment regarding the political order that they might elicit, to be integral in the restoration of human rights.”¹²⁸

The argument for forgiveness to support the Reconciliation process after rendering justice relies on the fact that “guilt” and “victimization” are experienced by human beings in a religious or secular framework. Put differently, the notion of forgiveness is necessary to go beyond justice when it comes to dealing with the issue of “guilt.” There is a relationship between forgiveness, “guilt,” and “victimization.” Generally speaking, the perpetrators who come back to their consciousness feel guilty about their bad actions. Guilt can make the perpetrators regret the wrong they inflicted upon the victims. Guilt can make the perpetrators wish if they could take back the perpetrated wrong. Guilt can make the perpetrators admit their fault and engage in the process of reparation for the wrong done. For the perpetrators to reach the point of engaging in the process of reparation, they need to first forgive themselves for what they did wrong. After self-forgiveness, the perpetrator can ask for forgiveness from the victims.

However, even if “guilt” is generally for the perpetrators of bad actions, there is a subtle way the victims can feel a sense of “guilt.” When victims feel disappointed, discouraged, and despised by corrupt justice and the crimes that caused them to lose self-esteem, they develop grudges, hatred, and anger against the perpetrators. In a case whereby victims feel guilty of anger against their perpetrators, there is a need for self-forgiveness. Once the victims forgive themselves,

¹²⁸ Philpott, *Just and Unjust Peace: An Ethic of Political Reconciliation*, 86.

they can engage in a reconciliation process with a willingness to embrace and forgive the perpetrators. In this sense, Miroslav Volf suggests that when conflict and exclusion happen, reconciliation should stem from the “persuasion that the ‘others’ need not be perceived as innocent to be loved, but ought to be embraced even when they are perceived as wrongdoers. The will to embrace is thus linked to the primacy of grace against the universality of sin.”¹²⁹ Frequently, human beings fail to embrace their perpetrators because they are already over abused, and they feel guilty of their sentiment of anger. But, for the victims to get healing, they need to forgive themselves in order to grant forgiveness to their perpetrators.

Geiko frames the limit to justice as linked to the “legal system designed to public interests such as the punishment and seclusion of criminal offenders and if possible their ‘resocialization,’ the compensation of the victim for incurred damage or loss.”¹³⁰ For Geiko, justice as a contract is concerned about punishing the offenders for their crimes and prescribing compensation to the victims. Punishing the offenders and compensating the victims is good, but justice has to go beyond because not only there are losses that cannot be compensated (lost lives) but also the perpetrator need to be restored into the community. The contractual judiciary system does not give a satisfactory account of guilt and victimization. It cannot provide equivalent compensation for crimes such as murders, holocausts, and rape. The judiciary is contractual. It is limited to inflicting corrective punishment on the perpetrator and asking him or her to provide compensation for the damage caused. The Judiciary system does not account for building social relationships between the perpetrator and the victim. The Judiciary does not give an account for the restoration and healing of both victims and perpetrators. After punishing the perpetrators and providing

¹²⁹ Volf Miroslav, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 81, Kindle version.

¹³⁰ Muller-Fahrenholz, *The Art of Forgiveness: Theological Reflection on Healing and Reconciliation*, 20.

compensation, the victims might still feel unsatisfied because, as you know, there are harms that cannot be compensated for – for instance, the life of a loved one.

On the one hand, it is also possible that even as the perpetrator serves his/her punishment, he/she can still feel the weight of his/her guilt. Therefore, there is a need for healing and restoration beyond contractual justice. On the other hand, without right compensation, reparation, or restitution, the victims may still struggle with the wounds and frustrations caused by the big loss. Restitutions or compensations can be symbolic, legal, or material. Since compensations or reparations will rarely be proportionate to the loss, there is also a need for healing and restoration on the side of the victims. Forgiveness can thus help in healing processes beyond the judiciary contract. While the judiciary deals with a small part of the guilt, forgiveness may deal more widely with guilt using the notion of love and trust to restore the humanness in the life of victims and perpetrators. In the following section, I am going to examine justice about evil as privation briefly. Then I will develop restorative justice because it gives the best account of justice beyond the contract and is more fruitful for the success of the process of Reconciliation. When we understand justice about privation, we appreciate the notion of restorative justice because it aims to restore the “good” in a human being distorted by evil.

II.4.3.1. Justice about evil as privation and Biblical justice

Taken in its privative sense, the concept of evil calls for a reassessment of what it means to be evil. However, a more pressing question would be what does it mean to do evil, how can one be responsible for his/her evil acts, and how can his/her actions be judged? In response to this question, it appears that a person cannot be evil, but a person can do evil actions.¹³¹ In this sense,

¹³¹ Dilman Ī. (1979) ‘No Man does Evil Willingly’. In: *Morality and the Inner Life*. Palgrave, London. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-04797-0_9 (accessed 15 December 2020).

a person doing evil remains open to change and could be restored to his/her capacity of doing good. When judging a person for his/her evil action, the aim is to tear down this evil before rehabilitating this person's moral goodness.¹³² Nevertheless, there are horrific evils that make us think that evildoers are monsters, recidivists, radically evil who cannot change and that for the sake of peace in the society or the community, they should just be cut off from society and remain in prisons. Even in that case, drawing from a human person's creational perspective, we still argue that those evildoers are open to the restoration (by God) of the substance of good in their nature.

As prescribed by criminal justice alone, punishment cannot bring about positive change in an evildoer. There is a need for a combination of restoration, punishment, and of course, the healing power of God's grace. In some cases, restoration precedes 'punishment,' and in some others, punishment can precede restoration depending on the crime and its consequences on the social sphere. Restoration could start with psychological counseling and reeducation. We should then follow other services that would enable incarcerated people to better themselves. We could provide access to education, career preparedness, courses, and potentially even some technical job training.¹³³ While the criminal must be punished for his/her crime, he/she also deserves to be restored in moral goodness. But before restoration, the evildoer has to sincerely acknowledge his/her evil action. These kinds of evildoers are the ones Jesus was talking to as they were biting him and crucifying him. He implored God's mercy, forgiveness, and salvation upon them. Father, Jesus said: "forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Many people act like those who crucified Jesus; they do evil, thinking they serve their institutions, structures, and deficient will. This is Paul's case, who believed he was serving a good cause before he knew Jesus.

¹³² Shrader-Perry, Josh. *Evil as Privation Justifying Restorative Justice*, 7.

¹³³ Shrader-Perry, Josh. *Evil as Privation Justifying Restorative Justice*, 8.

When a person has done evil actions, he needs to acknowledge its wrongness so that reconciliation and restoration can become possible.

Justice is important in the process of reconciliation because, from a biblical perspective, God's justice is revealed through the act of "liberating the Hebrew slaves from Egypt and their formation into a covenant community living under God's law. Also, God reveals his justice through the coming of Jesus Christ, who also brings deliverance from servitude and he renews the covenant."¹³⁴ Biblical justice (divine justice) is covenantal where as human justice is contractual. Biblical justice rests upon the notions of "shalom, covenant, Torah, Deed-Consequence, Atonement-Forgiveness."¹³⁵ Understood in the above terms, biblical justice encompasses many aspects of human life: political, economic, social, cultural, personal, religious, and private. Moreover, biblical justice is concerned with how to make right what went wrong with the aim of restoration.

With the word, "shalom" biblical justice seeks peace as "a positive presence of harmony and wholeness, health and prosperity, of integration and balance."¹³⁶ Harmony as aimed at by "shalom" is a sign of God's intention for humanity to live in righteousness. Thus, "shalom" is more than peace. Shalom implies justice and peace simultaneously because "there is no justice in war and justice is established by peaceful means and justice requires peacemaking (Isaiah 42)."¹³⁷ As the meeting point between peace and justice, Shalom derives from the covenant and the Torah because only when human beings are loyal to their relationship with God through obedience to his law can justice and peace kiss. The covenantal law states that human beings need to build healthy

¹³⁴ Marshall, *The Little Book of Biblical Justice: A Fresh Approach to the Bible's Teachings on Justice*, 7.

¹³⁵ Marshall, *The Little Book of Biblical Justice: A Fresh Approach to the Bible's Teachings on Justice*, 10.

¹³⁶ Marshall, *The Little Book of Biblical Justice: A Fresh Approach to the Bible's Teachings on Justice*, 12.

¹³⁷ Marshall, *The Little Book of Biblical Justice: A Fresh Approach to the Bible's Teachings on Justice*, 13.

relationships with God and neighbors. In the case of Beni, there is no harmony among people because the perpetrators break the covenantal law of no murder and no stealing. With the massacre, people are killed, and their resources are stolen when they look for safety.

Talking about biblical Justice, Richard Clifford offers a good account of the conception of judgment in the Bible. He stresses that the biblical word “judgment” differs from the modern understanding of judgment in four ways:

First, the Hebrew verb *šāpaṭ*, traditionally but unsatisfactorily translated by English “to judge,” is, unlike the English word, not limited to mental activity or legal usage. A more accurate translation is “to rule, govern” because the judicial function is subordinate to the ruling function. Second, biblical ruling aims to implement divine justice, that is, to establish the justice that God intends the world to have. In many cases, “to judge” in the Bible meant making an unjust situation just. As a result, judgment in the Bible often seems excessively negative in that it corrects or even ends an evil situation. Third, biblical judgment is not a theoretical pronouncement or impartial evaluation of a situation but is often an intervention into an unjust situation. In the Bible, to judge a situation was to rectify it, i.e., to bring it back into conformity to the divine will. Psalm 75:7-8 defines it well (author’s translation): For judgment comes not from the east or west, not from the wilderness or the mountains, But from God who judges (*šōpēṭ*, the present participle of *šāpaṭ*) who brings some low and raises others high. A common English translation of prophetic interventions is the verb “to visit” and the noun “visitation” (Heb. *pāqad*, Greek *episkeptomai*). A fourth difference between the modern and the biblical conception of judgment is that though divine judgment can take place at the end time of history, as, for example, in Michelangelo’s Last Judgment, divine judging or ruling may take place *within* history and employ human means to achieve it. Therefore, it is not surprising to learn that Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel saw the great empires of the day as instruments in Yahweh’s hands to effect judgment, i.e., to rectify an unjust situation.¹³⁸

From this quotation, it follows that God’s judgment as an act of making just an unjust situation could take place within history, not just at its end. God’s judgment implies human agency. That is how kings and prophets were involved, whether conscious or not, of their role. For instance, many prophets played a role in urging the faithful to change their behavior, turn their eyes toward the future, and seek their refuge in God’s act of salvation that drew near. God’s saving act implied the restoration of a broken relationship with humanity. Talking of humanity in the case of Beni, I assert the relationship between the victims of injustices and the perpetrators. Therefore, the broken

¹³⁸ Richard Clifford, *Thus Says the Lord: The Prophets in the Liturgy* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2021), 4-46.

covenant relationship can be restored in the process of reconciliation whereby the victims are listened to as well as the perpetrators. This hearing takes place in the moment of restorative justice.

II.4.3.2. Restorative Justice

In the perspective of Restorative justice, hearing from the victims is not about vindictiveness but reconciliation. According to Porter, reconciliation is made possible through the effort of the whole community: "People from the community help in providing a space safe enough where the victims and offenders can come together and tell their stories. They can help victims express their needs and offenders to meet their obligations, as well as work toward the healing and reintegration of both."¹³⁹ In the case of Beni, the community of the victims needs justice, healing, and reconciliation. The perpetrators need healing, reintegration, reconciliation, and restoration.

Restorative Justice is not necessarily the "opposite of retribution or an alternative to prison. Rather, it is concerned with the needs and roles of parties in a conflict. This concern passes through a collection of information about the crimes, truth-telling, empowerment, restitution or vindication."¹⁴⁰ Both the victims and the perpetrators need justice. The victims need the crimes to be recognized and admitted by the perpetrators. Any denial of the crime is a hinge to the wounds of the victims. This acknowledgment may require an apology from the perpetrators. The perpetrators need to be heard, listened to, to be held accountable for their wrongdoing, to be reconciled, and then restored. As the victims want justice to avenge on their behalf, they also await restitution for the losses. Unfortunately, this restitution will rarely be proportionate to the losses. The restitution can be symbolic, legal, or material in the reconciliation process.

¹³⁹ Thomas W. Porter, "Justice Matters! Theology and Relational Restorative Justice," in *Healing God's People: Theological and Pastoral Approaches*, ed. Thomas A. Kane (New York/Mahwah/N J: Paulist Press, 2013), 70.

¹⁴⁰ Howard Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice* (Canada: Good Books, 2015), 20-23.

When the needs of the victims are taken seriously into account, the offenders are held accountable for their wrongdoing. When the perpetrators admit their fault, the process of Reconciliation moves forward. Unfortunately, when the perpetrators know that their fate is to serve a severe and lengthy punishment, they may end up denying their responsibility for the crime. Restorative justice acknowledges the limits of criminal justice resulting from the fear of retribution. Alternatively, with Restorative justice, accountability goes beyond “punishment, and it seeks to encourage the perpetrators to face their wrong actions, understand the impact of their actions and take a step to put things right.”¹⁴¹ In this sense, accountability is better for the victims, perpetrators, and society as they all may need wrong things to be put right. Despite the corruption in the D.R. Congo, there is hope for goodwill from the judiciary system. On June 20, 2020, Mr. Vital Kamerhe, the former Chief of Staff to the Democratic Republic of the Congo President Felix Tshisekedi, was tried and sentenced for embezzlement of public funds. He was jailed for ten years. Currently, Mr. Matata Mponyo, the former Primer Minister under former President Kabila’s regime, is being taken to court for embezzlement of public funds. These two examples show that if the judiciary wills, it can try the perpetrators of war crimes in the D.R. Congo. Specifically, there would be a need for a special International Criminal Tribunal for the Congo. After holding the perpetrators accountable for their wrongdoing, restorative justice includes the victims and perpetrators in the process of healing and restoration. Forgiveness will thus be of help to Restorative Justice. I like much better the approach of Restorative Justice.

After the above account of the process of reconciliation based on Western theology, there is a need to include some cultural and cosmological components of the Nande people to address the conflict holistically. There are two crucial elements: the anthropological conception of

¹⁴¹ Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*, 24-25.

relationships in the Nande culture and the core of reconciliation called “*mbanulo*” (to signify compensations or reparations).

Anthropologically, the Nande ethnic group belongs to the Bantou people, characterized by a great love of life and work towards increasing life, protecting life, and fighting against everything that destroys life (death, diseases, evil forces). Social anthropology is marked by fraternity and clan solidarity. The clan leader has great authority. Through him, the clan members receive the vital force of the ancestors. When the relationship between the chief and the clan members is good, the strength of the clan increases, and if this relationship is distorted, serious problems can arise. People are invited to maintain and strengthen the vital force through obedience to God through hierarchy and clan brotherhood. Clan brotherhood includes justice, love, and respect for ancestral or customary laws. In the current situation of the Nande people, their vital force is decreasing because they are being massacred. Life is being weakened instead of being strengthened. What went wrong? There are broken relationships between the living and the ancestors. There is a need for cultural reconciliation that will consider the notion of “*mbanulo*,” a rite of reconciliation aiming at the rehabilitation of the culprit after the reparation of the fault. Simply put, “*mbanulo*” is a ceremonial of reconciliation through which forgiveness is granted to a member of the community: “it is a salutary, restorative and reconciling gesture chaired by the head of the family, of the village, of the clan, or even by a council of Elders, in the presence of the whole community and under the watchful eye of God-*Nyamuhanga* governing the social and cosmic order.”¹⁴² This topic needs to be considered for further research.

¹⁴² Emery-Justin Kakule Muvawa, *La Symbolique du “Mbanulo” chez les Nande*, <https://benilubero.com/la-symbolique-du-mbanulo-chez-les-nande/> (Accessed November 5, 2021).

Conclusion

In this second chapter, I advocated for the necessity of reconciliation in the Beni Region plagued by violence. Before engaging in this reconciliation process, it is better to understand the notions of evil as a privation of good that leads to structures of sin and structural sin. Evil as a privation of good can lead human beings members of social institutions to perform immoral actions. Evil is an accident that disturbs human nature. Nevertheless, since human beings are naturally good and evil does not take away their will to act, they are responsible for their actions. Evil as privation or negation of good breaks, human relationships, and social relationships.

In the Beni Region, where evil has led structures of sin and structural sin to disrupt harmonious human relationality, reconciliation is necessary. This reconciliation will include truth-telling, Justice (emphasizing justice about evil as privation, restorative justice, and forgiveness). Restorative justice is more relevant because it goes beyond the limits of contractual justice. Reconciliation will be successful if the government engages in a fight against corruption in its institutions (judiciary, executive, legislative institutions, and the army forces) because corruption can kill more people than war. Since the violence has caused many lost lives, reparations will rarely be satisfactory. For this reason, the success of the process of reconciliation in this region will depend on the hope in God's grace calling for forgiveness. Living by hope, all the stakeholders of the process of Reconciliation may need to foster the words of Albert Einstein: "The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything."¹⁴³

The salvific task from structural sin includes the following elements: love for the neighbor, fight against injustice, solidarity with the victims, fight against indifference, and silence ahead of

¹⁴³ Mostafiz Uddin, "For a Better Plane, We Must All Do Our Part," *The Daily Star* 12 October 2020.

injustice. This love is already embedded in Jesus teaching to combat their selfishness by love put in action to serve our fellow human beings as he taught us to do: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. Love your neighbor as yourself”(Mat.22, 36-40). True love shows in actions of solidarity, service, and even self-sacrifice for others. Therefore, in the third chapter, I shall examine Christian nonviolent praxis as a way of putting love into action in order to counter-violence. Then I shall present Archbishops Christophe Munzihirwa and Emmanuel Kataliko as models of discipleship or Christian nonviolent praxis in zones plagued by violence.

Chapter III: Christian Praxis of Non-violence in response to violence and injustice

Introduction

In Chapter One, I presented an overview of the ongoing violence of the Beni region that I witnessed firsthand. In Chapter Two, I went on to discuss the horrible situation of massacre/genocide of the Nande people in greater detail. In doing so, I highlighted the fact that the realities described constitute a social/structural sin that needs to be condemned, eradicated, and prevented. In this chapter, I now take up the question: How, in a world where violence is omnipresent, can we build a culture of peace?

There is a need for the people of D.R.C and their leaders to take action to put an end to the atrocious violence the Nande people are experiencing. The needed action must follow from God's words to Moses: "I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their groaning, and I have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt." (Exodus 3, 7; Acts 7, 34). Indeed, God has seen the suffering of the people from the Beni Region. In God's justice, God awaits the response of people of goodwill and structures to do the work as Moses did for the Israelites. The required action concerns breaking the chains of violence to enable the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to experience justice, reconciliation, and peace. The necessity of Reconciliation follows from the fact that people who suffer such violence need to be heard, healed, restored, and renewed in body and spirit. Reconciliation is the process that brings truth-telling and justice together so that, in the end, a prompt human response may bring a social and peaceful positive change in society.

I present Christian non-violence as a pathway towards countering and preventing violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But how, in a country where violence is chronic, as

described in the first chapter, can we build a culture of peace? Embracing a Commitment to Nonviolence is challenging and complex, especially when undertaken and lived out in an authoritarian regime. However, as Christians, we have to admit that in order to break the chains of violence that bind a society, our commitment to nonviolence must be our preferred option. In democratic societies, despite their imperfections, active nonviolence is our best hope for breaking the cycle of violence through dialogue, mutual understanding, and compromise. For active nonviolence to be fruitful, it must be practiced in ways that preserve “*fraternitas*,”¹⁴⁴ friendship, and “*ubuntu*.”¹⁴⁵ Nonviolence can be helpful in the D.R.C. because the country has an emerging democratic culture that, despite its imperfections, serves as a potentially good environment for nonviolent actions to contribute to social change.

Conscious of the socially transformative potential of active non-violence and as a witness to Christian leaders who have committed themselves to lives in this manner, I begin this third chapter with a brief presentation on the essential elements of Christian non-violence. After doing so, I discuss the legacy of Christian non-violent-resistance in the D.R.C as exemplified through the lives and witness of Archbishops Christophe Munzihirwa (1926-1996) and Emmanuel Kataliko (1932-2000). By their witness and example, these bishops inspired and encouraged their people to be united, courageous, and reliant upon themselves in the face of violent oppression as they engage in non-violent resistance against unjust structures.

III.1. Definition of Concepts

Non-violence is an alternative to and an action against violence. Non-violence supports, complements, and lays the groundwork for efforts that create the conditions for processes of

¹⁴⁴ Francis, *Encyclical Letter Fratelli-Tutti* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 03 October 2020), 2.

¹⁴⁵ Desmond Mpilo Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness* (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 45.

Reconciliation to occur. A sustainable Reconciliation can be achieved through non-violent-resistance relying on trust, conviction, and love. Active non-violence is different from passive non-violence, which can be akin to fatalism, cowardice, or a lack of courage to become actively involved in social change on behalf of justice. Those who embrace a commitment to Active nonviolence aspire to a lasting peace that can be accessed through nonviolent means. Therefore, human beings who seek to live lives of active non-violence do not act with violence, but neither do they remain silent in the face of the evil they denounce. Protagonists of active non-violence engage evil directly with the power of love. In this sense, a Catholic project of Pax Christi International defines active nonviolence as

A way of life, a positive and powerful force for social change, and a means of building a global community committed to the well-being of all. Active nonviolence is a virtue that recognizes the truth of our equal dignity and ultimate unity. It is a process for ending violence without violence or lethal force, transforming conflict, and protecting the vulnerable. Active nonviolence is a stand for justice and a method for helping to create it. It pursues this goal, not with passivity or violence, but with creative engagement and determined resistance. Mobilizing courageous and creative people-power, nonviolence does not escape conflict but actively and powerfully engages and transforms it. And essential practices of active nonviolence include conflict transformation, trauma healing, restorative justice, nonviolent resistance, unarmed civilian protection, nonviolent civilian-based defense.”¹⁴⁶

Understood as a way of life and virtue, active non-violence must be witnessed to be learned, internalized, lived out and communicated to others. Christian leaders and people of goodwill who consider other human beings to be their brothers, sisters, and friends have to be formed and transformed by their participation in conflict transformation. This work passes through the education of the Christian community for non-violent-resistance to violence and reconciliation in a most challenging time and dangerous circumstances, as seen in the case of Beni. With peacebuilding as the goal, Active nonviolence is the middle point between just war and pacifism.

¹⁴⁶ <file:///D:/second%20semester%20Boston/Thesis/chapter%203/active-nonviolence1.pdf> (Accessed October 26, 2021)

Pacifism is a way of approaching conflict in seeking peace with peaceful means. In other words, pacifism implies the “refusal to engage in violence and war or an outright opposition to war or violence whether in certain situations or all situations.”¹⁴⁷ Pacifism is not passive resistance or passivity. Pacifism can contribute to slowing down the cycle of violence, and it can help survive in some difficult situations. For instance, pacifism helped Mary, the mother of Jesus, to assume the suffering of her Son. She did not engage in any violence. Another aspect of Mary’s pacifism is present in the magnificat as she sang: “The Lord has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty” (Luke 1, 52-53). These verses are peaceful means Mary used for social change.

Active non-violence’s aim is not to negate all violence but to make the force of Love speak. In the situation of Beni, protagonists of passive non-violence would ask people not to engage in a struggle for the transformation of violence and even in self-defense in extreme conditions. In the same situation as Beni, protagonists of active non-violence would use the power of love for their families, neighbors, and friends to engage in a struggle to break the chain of violence and even take self-defense in extreme situations. This is a prevailing tension and at the heart of Christian martyrdom debates. In this sense, what is needed in the region of Beni is active non-violence as it implies peacebuilding. In advocating for active non-violence as an act of resistance to violence, I acknowledge that it might use pacifism and self-defense according to circumstances.

¹⁴⁷ What is Active Nonviolence? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QBoKKdfhnhY> (accessed October 26, 2021); and Gabriel Moran, ROMAN CATHOLIC TRADITION AND PASSIVE RESISTANCE <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.572.9459&rep=rep1&type=pdf> (accessed November 10, 2021).

Lisa Sowle Cahill gives a difference between Peacebuilders, pacifists, and just war theorists:

Peacebuilders give almost exclusive priority to the positive and nonviolent cultivation of peace rather than delineating exceptional situations where violence might be justified. Peacebuilders differ from pacifists in bringing together partners who disagree on whether some extreme violations of human dignity might make a killing to protect the innocent acceptable from a Christian point of view. The project of peacebuilders is to create, highlight, and implement concrete alternatives to violence, strategies that can transform conflict situations.¹⁴⁸

According to Lisa Sowle, just war theorists support the idea of using force when it is justified. Pacifists believe that it is morally wrong to engage in any form of violence that threatens life and well-being. Peacebuilders suggest active nonviolence as an alternative to violence. Active nonviolence is open to violence in extreme cases. In a social arena where evil is at work, peacebuilders support active nonviolence to reduce conflicts and build justice and peace in societies. For Christians, active nonviolence encompasses the love of enemies and brothers, sisters, and friends. This love is extended to imitating the attitude of God, the creator who supplies life to both sinners and the righteous.

God modeled active nonviolent resistance through his son Jesus Christ who lived nonviolently on earth. In Jesus' life, he used both pacifism and active nonviolent resistance. Jesus' passion and death mark the climax of his nonviolent resistance without using violence. Jesus' active nonviolence challenged injustice, oppression, violence, and discrimination. Christians are invited to emulate his nonviolent work for peace through "solidarity, activism, reconciliation, and hope for social renewal."¹⁴⁹ Love must be the foundation of any active nonviolence to address the root causes of conflicts and violence. Active non-violence is a virtue to acquire through socialization and mentorship, and passive non-violence is advisable in some circumstances. Active

¹⁴⁸ Lisa Sowle Cahill, "From Just War and Pacifism to Peacebuilding : An Introduction," in *Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Pacifism, Just War, and Peacebuilding* (Augsburg Fortress, 2019), 1-2.

¹⁴⁹ Cahill, "From Just War and Pacifism to Peacebuilding : An Introduction," 20.

non-violence implies the courage to be practically engaged in social change to achieve sustainable peace under which the lives of human beings are dignified.

Additionally, actions of non-violent resisters seek to denounce evil by speaking to the conscience of men or women so that they may return to reason, to common sense, or fellowship. It is from this perspective that Martin Luther King asserted that "to heal injustices, you must expose them to the light of human conscience, drag them to the bar of public opinion."¹⁵⁰ There is a necessary tension between "love as light" and "violence as the total absence of light." Active non-violence wants light to overcome darkness. New structures of justice, love, and peace rely on non-violent people who are visionaries. They denounce evil and demonstrate that loving and peaceful means are a way to peace. Visionary non-violent resisters prove that using clean means is possible to gain one's living. They find inspiration in non-violence as it means "Power of Love."

In this sense, the War Resisters League defines active nonviolence as an active form of resistance "to systems of privilege and domination, a philosophy for liberation, an approach to movement building, a tactic of non-cooperation, and a practice; we can employ to transform the world."¹⁵¹ Summarizing the above point, active nonviolence in the sense of peace building seeks peace actively, and if needed, it uses force in extreme cases. Pacifism seeks peace actively but rejects the use of force in any situation. Therefore, active nonviolence is opened to self-defense.

¹⁵⁰ Martin Luther King Junior, *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* (University of Pennsylvania: African Studies Center, 16 April 1963).

¹⁵¹ Maria Clara Bingemer Catholic Nonviolence Initiative Roundtable: MT Dávila, Luke Hansen, Ken Butigan, ed. *Toward a Foundational Theology of Non-Violence* (2020), 2.

III.2. Biblical Foundations of Non-Violence

III.2.1. New Testament and Non-violence

In the New Testament, Jesus is the model of non-violence through his life and teachings. Jesus' life of nonviolence starts with his incarnation, extending to his life, passion, and resurrection. It is through nonviolence that Jesus reconciles the world to his Father. God is incarnate in Jesus Christ. Jesus was born in a hostile and unwelcoming world: "there was no place for him in the inn" (Luke 2, 7). Also, Jesus was born in a violent and unjust world: Herod commanded the massacre of "all the male children who were two years old and under" (Matthew 2, 16). As Jesus takes on human flesh, he brings peace to the world. That is the first message we have from the Angels is "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased" (Luke 2, 14). The first people to whom this message of Peace is announced are the shepherds, the poor, the needy, the oppressed, and the excluded from society. God's peace does not imply the absence of war because it takes flesh in violence to confront it.

The incarnational perspective of God's nonviolence in Christ is linked to the good news of peace that Jesus used, focusing on crucial passages like "blessed are the peacemakers (Matthew 5, 9), Jesus as a wounded healer of peace; Jesus' way of reconciliation that breaks cycles of violence through solidarity and humanization, and Jesus' call to nonviolent discipleship."¹⁵² Peacemakers to whom Jesus refers are to engage in active nonviolence. They will often have to experience the cross as a symbol of human vulnerability in front of a violent world. Jesus' peacemakers have the task of embodying the spiritual healing that derives from his wounds and become signs of hope and reconciliation in a violent world. Jesus reassures his followers that in becoming peacemakers,

¹⁵²MT Dávila, Luke Hansen, Ken Butigan, ed. *Toward a Foundational Theology of Non-Violence* (2020), 22.

God's peace "which surpasses all understanding will guard their hearts and minds" (Philippians 4, 7). With a heart guarded by peace, peacemakers are equipped to challenge social violence.

In Galilee, Jesus proclaimed peace to the gentiles to make salvation universal. In this perspective, Virgilio Elizondo thinks that the vision of peace from the Prophet Isaiah incorporated into the Gospel of Matthew: the Prophet Isaiah refers to "Galilee of the Gentiles as a hallmark of universal salvation for all the nations, and the inauguration of a new era of peace and harmony"¹⁵³(Isaiah 9:1–2). This perspective resonates in the New Testament to point to Galilee as the symbol of the place where God restores the lost unity and harmony among human beings. Being a peacemaker in Jesus' sense implies engaging in peacebuilding counting of God's redemptive grace, which brings peace to people of all nations and all categories. Like Galilee, Beni needs restoration.

III.3. Christian non-violence

III.3.1. Christ as the Model of Non-violence: The Way(s) of Jesus

Born in a hostile and violent milieu where rivalry existed between the Galileans and the roman occupiers, Jesus' started a way of establishing nonviolence as a way of life. As a man of his time, Jesus witnessed the oppression of his people. According to the gospel of Luke, Jesus warned his people about the escalation of violence by "weeping over the city of Jerusalem saying: 'Oh, Jerusalem I wanted to take you under the wings as does a hen her chicks' (Luke 13:34) and 'Oh Jerusalem if only today you had known the ways of peace (Luke 19:42).'"¹⁵⁴ From this quotation, there is an attitude of prophetic lament and an imagination an alternative way. By weeping, Jesus acknowledges the hardness of hearts of the people of Jerusalem as they act violence. Jerusalem is

¹⁵³ Virgilio Elizondo, "Jesus the Galiléan Jew in Mestizo Theology," *Theological Studies*, no. 70 (2009): 271.

¹⁵⁴ Marie Dennis, ed. *Choosing Peace: The Catholic Church Returns to Gospel Nonviolence* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis books, 2018), 83.

a city that kills prophets. Therefore, he comes to bring an alternative consciousness to violence, which is embedded, in the ways of peace. Jesus' path to Jerusalem aims to relieve the causes of Jewish suffering to bring an alternative to the ongoing violence.

During Jesus' time, people could flee from violence, others could choose to fight back, and others could choose to accommodate themselves violence. Sometimes conflict arose from the issues of religious identity. As the Jerusalem Temple and the city were corrupt, Marie Dennis describes the "Essenes fleeing conflict, the Priests and the Herodians accommodating conflict; and the Pharisees resisting and fighting against the pagans to maintain their identity."¹⁵⁵ In this context, Jesus does not want people to hold others as their enemies.

Jesus brings a fourth way (after flight, fight, and accommodation in front of conflict), which is the way of nonviolence ahead of conflict. Jesus' fourth way seeks inclusivity in communities. Jesus' nonviolence goes against the Jews' practice of resentment and bitterness against each other. At the core of Jesus' nonviolence, love nurtures the will to risk suffering like the suffering upon the cross. As a Good Shepherd, Jesus "risked his life for the sheep."¹⁵⁶ A non-violent-resister must sacrifice for others. Jesus' nonviolence speaks directly to "love of enemies and prayer for the persecutors" (Mat.5: 44). Only love can break the chain of violence acted by the eye-for an eye law. Only non-violence can transform and defeat its opposite (violence) because non-violence resists evil.

The strength of Christian non-violence lies in its inner aim to win the friendship and understanding of the violent ones, rather than perpetuating rivalry and dispute. The proponents of

¹⁵⁵ Marie Dennis, ed. *Choosing Peace: The Catholic Church Returns to Gospel Nonviolence*, 84.

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.psephizo.com/biblical-studies/jesus-the-good-shepherd-leads-his-sheep-in-john-10/> (accessed November 11, 2021).

non-violence use non-cooperation as a ladder to awaken the shame in the opponent. For instance, Maria Clara Bingemer would suggest that the proponents' nonviolence pursue a positive change by resisting "systems of privilege and domination as a way of non-cooperation with evil structures and a practice we can employ to transform the world."¹⁵⁷ After tedious and demanding work, the opponent can recapture his/her moral consciousness, reconciliation can gradually occur, and slowly, a new community based on mutual love and trust can be created. Christian non-violence is advisable because it seeks to uproot the forces of evil instead of attacking the evildoer. Non-violence prevents both physical and spiritual violence. For instance, a true non-violent resister would resist violence consisting of retaliation or killing the opponent. At the same time, a true non-violent resister will fight against hating the opponent because hatred harms the spirit of the one cultivating it.

During his passion, Jesus put back Malchus' ear that Peter had cut off: "Then Simon Peter drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Put your sword back in its sheath, Jesus said to Peter. Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?" (John 18, 10-11). In this passage, Jesus' gesture is a way of acting when faced with violence. He shows love to those who come to arrest him. He restores his enemy to wholeness. He fights violence through non-violence. In this sense, Walter Wink asserts that Jesus' teachings about "non-violent direct action and love of enemies have emerged as the tests of true Christianity. Just as in the lore of exorcism, the devil cannot bear to utter the name of God, so our false prophets today cannot tolerate mentioning the love of enemies."¹⁵⁸ Loving our enemies can be challenging when our wounds are not yet healed. In that case, the least to do is to pray for them.

¹⁵⁷ MT Dávila, Luke Hansen, Ken Butigan, ed. *Toward a Foundational Theology of Non-Violence* (2020), 2.

¹⁵⁸ Wink, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium*, 162.

Jesus' non-violent resistance is also in his challenging words to the one who strikes him: "If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong; but if what I said is right, why do you strike me" (John 18: 23). Jesus challenges injustice and lies through truth-telling. This is an instance of how fitting justice is to speak out and denounce injustice instead of keeping silent or acting as a passive resistant. Moreover, upon his cross, Jesus carries his non-violence endeavor to the end as he asks his Father to forgive those who crucified him: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Forgiving or asking for forgiveness on behalf of someone is a great sign of love.

Indeed, forgiveness is a risky task because it can be offered or denied. But, "when offered freely, Christian forgiveness is a radically generous praxis that facilitates the sinner's conversion and makes us images of God."¹⁵⁹ Forgiveness willingly granted by the victim to the perpetrator who truthfully acknowledged his guilt and has responded to justice is a source of liberation for both the victim and the perpetrator. And at times, even when the victim is unknown, the victim may get liberated by forgiving the unknown perpetrator. However, forgiving the unknown perpetrator is easier after truth-telling and justice than forgiving the unknown perpetrator. Forgiveness is a tool for non-violence to facilitate the healing process of the victims. Forgiveness is a sign of the "power" of love. This power is the power to forgive and evoke in others the tenacity to respond to darkness with light and hatred with love.

Love and non-violence are the means available to the oppressed. Love and non-violence are the means the oppressed have to use in their struggle for freedom. Christian non-violence enables non-violent resisters to "use the power of love to overcome hatred and bring about

¹⁵⁹ Ernesto, *Liberation through Reconciliation: Jon Sobrino's Christological Spirituality*, 173.

transformation.”¹⁶⁰ What inspired Martin Luther King and Coretta Scott King in their commitment to the values of non-violence was “the teaching on love from the Sermon on the Mount.”¹⁶¹ Thus, love and non-violent resistance are considered the best elements to counter violence if they progress from being methods of resisting to becoming “a practical way of life.”¹⁶² As a way of life, non-violence is a virtue to be slowly acquired and practiced. Nick Gier thinks that non-violence is a civic virtue. He argues that non-violence as a virtue goes along with patience and fortitude. Therefore, “non-violence is to be taught as a central virtue in any character education program.”¹⁶³

In reality, non-violence as a virtue can help human beings start deconstructing and unlearning the vice of violence. In this perspective, it is worth asserting that:

Non-violence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of our very being. The acquisition of the spirit of non-resistance is a matter of extended training in self-denial and appreciation of the hidden forces within ourselves. It changes one's outlook on life. It is a tremendous force because it is the highest expression of the soul. If one is to combat the fetish of force, it will only be by means different from those in vogue among the pure worshippers of brute force.”¹⁶⁴

The above quotation can be helpful when we consider John Sobrino’s issue of the crucified people who can be called “primary saints”¹⁶⁵ because they are unjustly and defenselessly deprived of life or murdered without involving in any violence. In front of such violence against the innocents, non-violence would be more fruits when practiced from the depth of people’s hearts and out of deep conviction. It is not to be imposed by anyone on anyone. Non-violence has to be an expression of a soul searching to combat violence. As a virtue, non-violence is “a quality of heart which

¹⁶⁰ King, *Stride toward Freedom*, 84.

¹⁶¹ King, *Stride toward Freedom*, 85.

¹⁶² King, *Stride toward Freedom*, 85.

¹⁶³ Nick Gier, “Non-Violence as a Civic Virtue,” *Ikeda Center: for Peace, Learning, and Dialogue*, (2004).(<https://www.ikedacenter.org/thinkers-themes/themes/peace-cultures/gier-civic-virtue>, Accessed May 9, 2021)

¹⁶⁴ Merton, *Gandhi on Non-Violence: Selected Texts from Gandhi’s Non-violence in Peace and war*, 36.

¹⁶⁵ Sobrino, “Primordial Saintliness,” *Where is God? Earthquake, Terrorism, Barbarity and Hope*, 80.

cannot come by the appeal to the brain.”¹⁶⁶ Non-violence builds the heart that the vice of violence has destroyed. But we have to make the right choice to learn and experiment with non-violence out of love and conviction to get a healthy heart and spirit.

Out of compassion, for millions of people enduring suffering, a non-violent resister might endure suffering in the struggle for justice when he/she believes that love can transform the violent one is there a reason for insisting on the language of evil-doer inflicting unjust suffering: “suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears which are otherwise shut to the voice of reason.”¹⁶⁷ As it remains difficult to understand why the oppressors act violence, we tend to think that with a heart moved by love and pity for the suffering innocent, non-violent resisters would try to resist the desire to retaliate because, in retaliation, the cycle of violence continues viciously as the oppressed might become the oppressor. The chain of hate can be attended to by the “projection of love at the center of our lives.”¹⁶⁸

A convinced human being can refuse to cooperate with structures of vice and act accordingly to acquired virtues “that enable him/her to love God and who and what God loves. As a result of virtues, he/she can recognize the value of the other and consistently move towards union with the other.”¹⁶⁹ Violence brings division, but non-violence brings love by building and restoring relationships and overcoming divisions with others. In addition to Jesus as a model of nonviolence, the figures of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Candice Mama are helpful for victims, survivors, and protagonists of non-violence in the face of violence, terror, and trauma.

¹⁶⁶ Merton, *Gandhi on Non-Violence: Selected Texts from Gandhi's Non-violence in Peace and war*, 39.

¹⁶⁷ King, *Stride toward Freedom*, 92.

¹⁶⁸ King, *Stride toward Freedom*, 92.

¹⁶⁹ Daniel J. Daly, *The Structures of Virtue and Vice* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2021), 162.

III.3.2. Inspirational figures in the aftermath of terror and violence: Mary, mother of Jesus, and Candice Mama.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, suffered silently while bringing up her Son and primarily witnessing her son's passion and death. Mary can inspire how to pay attention to the suffering of other people. Paying attention to someone's suffering is a sign of solidarity. According to John's gospel, Mary interceded for the first miracle to take place at Cana in Galilee: "They have no more wine. And Jesus said to her, Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come" (John 2,3-4). And When Jesus' hour came, he addressed Mary her mother: "Woman, behold your son! Then he said to the disciple, behold your mother! And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home" (John 19, 26-27). This passage from John's Gospel is very crucial. We imagine Mary suffering as she witnesses the suffering of her Son. She knows the innocence of her Son.

In the "Testament of Mary," Colm Toibin portrays Mary as an "ordinary mother who struggles and watches with care in order to make sense of and come to terms with the tragic death of her Son."¹⁷⁰ She watches him being flagged, mocked and nailed upon the cross. Inside her heart, she feels and shares the unbearable suffering of her Son. Like her Son, she is a victim of injustice in the world. But life has to continue for her.¹⁷¹ She is entrusted to the beloved disciple. In this mutual entrustment that Jesus creates between her mother and the beloved disciple, there is a foundational sign of an ecclesiological starting of a Church because the beloved disciple symbolizes every believer as John McHugh asserts: "many exegetes think that the disciple who

¹⁷⁰ Colm Toibin, *Audiobook the Testament of Mary by Colm Toibin* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDxO5ehXGQ0>, January 20, 2020), (accessed November 11, 2021).

¹⁷¹ Mary is a survivor and a protagonist.

was at the foot of the cross represents all who love Jesus.”¹⁷² And Saint John Paul II stresses the same point as he concludes that “John at the foot of the cross represents us.”¹⁷³

The massacre/genocide among the people of Beni is beyond mere suffering. It is what Simone Weil would call “malheur” rendered in English as misfortune” in the sense of “suffering that seizes a life, uproot it and affects it directly or indirectly in all its parts, social, psychological and physical.”¹⁷⁴ In this misfortune, the people of Beni can find inspiration from the mutual entrustment Jesus established between his mother and the beloved disciple. The people of Beni are victims like Mary was as she witnessed the power of evil and injustice, crucifying her Son. Those who lost their children can identify with Mary in her grief. The people of Beni have to take Mary to their homes and hearts. And with her, learn to become survivors and protagonists. The Church should provide the victim with community support. The attitude of Mary can inspire how to pay attention to their suffering in order to move from the state of looking at themselves as victims to the state of becoming a survivor. Therefore, for Mary (as an ordinary human being) to witness the joy of the resurrection of her Son, she had to assume her suffering and then undertake the way of non-violent resistance during the passion and death of her Son, and her stay at Jesus' beloved disciple place. We imagine that for Mary to reach the state of survival, she probably had to forgive those who crucified her Son as he asked his Father to forgive them.

The image of Mary, mother of Jesus as the ‘New Eve’ in the New Testament, is also helpful to understand the inspiration she can give to the people of Beni. As, the New Eve, “Mary is the mother of all in the new creation. When Jesus appointed Mary as the mother of the beloved

¹⁷² John McHugh, *The Mother of Jesus in the New Testament* (Doubleday, 1975), 376-377.

¹⁷³ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Mater, Mary: God's Yes to Man* (1987), 23.

¹⁷⁴ Joël Janiaud, "Simone Weil, Le Malheur Et L'invisible," *Revue Esprit*, no. 8-9 (August/September) (2012). (<https://esprit.presse.fr/article/joel-janiaud/simone-weil-le-malheur-et-l-invisible-37135>, accessed November 8, 2021).

disciple, she became the mother of all the disciples of the Savior.”¹⁷⁵ Mary is a source of life and hope for the people of Beni who identify as her children who follow Jesus the crucified but who brings life and liberation through his resurrection. As Mary endured the suffering of her Son’s passion and death, she survived and later on found peace and joy that comes from the resurrection.

The early Christian Community (later became the Church) provided Mary with community support. Drawing from her experience, the inspirational attitude Mary leaves for the people to find a way out of suffering is “to see that suffering, take it the way it is, and grieve the loss of loved ones to trust the goodness of God even in suffering.”¹⁷⁶ To engage in a nonviolent way of dealing with suffering, people from Beni have to *see* their suffering, hold still and let that suffering be what it is. Then they have to grieve and remember the loss of their loved ones to be in the disposition of receiving God’s grace of assuming suffering to live beyond sorrow and bitterness. For instance, the community would construct a symbolic monument in memory of all the victims. Then, there will be a way of grieving and remembering the victims through a day of collective memory when the processions are organized to the mass graves. This day would also be arranged in every family that has had victims.

The Church can help the victims in becoming the voice of the voiceless and an advocate of the human dignity of every individual so that people become the center of government programs. In this regard, the Church can challenge the consciences of the Heads of States and all public authorities to guarantee their citizens' true liberation and development. The Church must denounce and fight all the elements that degrade and destroy the person. Through prophetic evangelization,

¹⁷⁵ René Laurentin, *A Short Treatise on the Virgin Mary* (Ami Intl Pr, 1991), 40.

¹⁷⁶ Stephanie Gehring, *Attention to Suffering in the Work of Simone Weil and Käthe Kollwitz* (Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate Program in Religion of Duke University) (Duke University, 2018), 115-117.

the Church condemns all evils and injustices in the social arena to restore harmony between God and humanity and among people themselves. The Church in DRC should empower (through sessions, workshops on Non-violence, and love for neighbor) the lay faithful to work to re-establish the value of human dignity by breaking the bonds of ethnocentrism, particularism, hatred, violence, conflicts, wars, post-colonial misrule.

Candice Mama is a second example. Candice Mama lost her father, who was murdered during the South African Apartheid. She suffered that loss, and she is capable of empathy with other people who suffer like her. Therefore, people who have lost their mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, and friends can identify with Candice's suffering and imitate how she got liberation from it. True liberation from Candice's suffering and the like is not found in rational and logical constructions of human thoughts. True liberation is not found in the logic of the proud. True liberation is located in the realm of the humble-hearted who choose to respond with compassion to sinful reality.

The liberation through forgiveness experienced by Candice Mama in South Africa could be inspirational to the victims of the Beni massacre. After meeting, forgiving, and hugging the killer of her Father, Candice Mama expressed her relief and liberation as she asserted, "I was just like, 'Wow I can feel light, I can feel joy, I can be happy.' Those were things that I would never even entertain at some point, and the irony is until I got to a point where I forgave Eugene, I did not think I needed those things."¹⁷⁷ Indeed, before reaching this final stage of forgiveness, Candice Mama went through many doubts and resistances. She struggled to get liberation. Only after understanding the perpetrator as part of a broken reality did she forgive and get liberated. Her

¹⁷⁷ Online Etymology Dictionary, <https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-52539314> (accessed May 6, 2021).

forgiveness may appear to some people as foolishness. But it is through genuine forgiveness that true liberation follows. It is worthy to note here that justice can be pursued with the willingness to embrace or with the principle of compassion.

Finally, true liberation is a grace to ask for because the victim who has already suffered humiliation from the nakedness imposed on him/her by the brutal violence that killed his/her beloved accepts once more to be naked as he/she forgives the perpetrator out of love and not merit. Candice's perpetrator did not even ask for forgiveness. He probably knew that he deserved punishment for his wrongdoing. But as Candice needed liberation, she had to forgive the one who did not ask forgiveness. This liberation enabled Candice to enter communion with God and cultivate new hope relationships with the perpetrator and the reality around her. She contributed to building the Kingdom of God (this is not the only way to contribute to God's reign). True liberation in the way of Candice Mama is a grace. The victims of the Beni massacre can get inspiration from Candice.

III.3. The Capacity to forgive is an aspect of non-violence

The capacity to forgive is an aspect of nonviolence. But advising the victims to forgive places too much weight on their shoulders because they still suffer from unhealed injuries and trauma. Only God can ask a victim to forgive and supply the necessary grace. The first thing to do is to pay attention and attend to the victims' suffering. While the suffering of the victims is being paid attention to, we have to acknowledge that in situations whereby the victims have not forgiven, there has been a spiral of violence. Even when Desmond Tutu knew how difficult it is for victims to forgive, he asserted still that there is no future without forgiveness (but this forgiveness must begin collectively with a group before an individual has reconstituted the self-destroyed and torn asunder by violence) because "to forgive is indeed the best form of self-interest since anger,

resentment, and revenge are corrosive of that *summum bonum*, that greatest good, communal harmony that enhances the humanity and personhood of all in the community.”¹⁷⁸ To be fair with the victim, as suggested by Desmond Tutu, forgiveness can be presented to the victims after justice has been done and after all the reparations (material or symbolical) have taken place. Even after reparations and justice, forgiveness will hardly be presented as a norm. It can only be offered as an alternative for those who exceptionally make it to forgive at their pace. Those who will get the possibility and the power to forgive may reach liberation because by forgiving, they “abandon their right to pay back the perpetrator in their coin.”¹⁷⁹ But what is forgiveness?

The biblical understanding of forgiveness is understood as a process, includes both the perpetrator, the victim, and witnesses. Forgiveness can occur “when the perpetrator asks for it and the victim grants it.”¹⁸⁰ It can also happen when the victim unilaterally decides to forgive the perpetrator. Geiko Muller-Fahrenholz asserts, “forgiveness is a genuine process of encounter, of healing, of the releasing of new options for the future.”¹⁸¹ Even as appealing as it appears, forgiveness is advisable to the victims only when they have reconstituted themselves from atrocities and moved from victim to survivor. This tedious process can be a lifelong experience for some people. What are some limits of forgiveness?

First, forgiveness cannot be taken as a general rule to impose on the victims. Secondly, forgiveness is not forgetting. To go beyond this limit, forgiveness must be taken in the sense of remembering injustices differently. Remembrance enables redemption, whereas forgetting maintains bondage. Thirdly, forgiveness must not focus only on one side. To preserve its true

¹⁷⁸ Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu, *Understanding Forgiveness : The Book of Forgiving* (New York: Harper Collins, 2014), 35.

¹⁷⁹ Tutu, *Understanding Forgiveness : The Book of Forgiving*, 272.

¹⁸⁰ Muller-Fahrenholz, *The Art of Forgiveness: Theological Reflection on Healing and Reconciliation*, 4.

¹⁸¹ Muller-Fahrenholz, *The Art of Forgiveness: Theological Reflection on Healing and Reconciliation*, 5.

sense, forgiveness has to consider both the sinner and the sinned against to reconstruct and restore the value of life. Geiko asserts, “Forgiveness of sins is a manifestation of liberation from oppression, healing of pain and critique of self-righteous power, and pacification of destroyed relationships.”¹⁸² Both victims and perpetrators need to rebuild broken social relationships.

The major strength of forgiveness is that it constitutes a source of healing and liberation. In this sense, Hannah Arendt asserts, “forgiveness makes it possible for life to go on by constantly releasing men and women from what they have done unknowingly. Only through this constant mutual release from what they do can men/women remain free agents.”¹⁸³ For Hannah Arendt, forgiveness is a tool of human liberty. It frees the victim from the weight of the spirit of seeking retaliation. It liberates the sinful reality. From a sinful reality that crucifies and kills, at least a few among victims of the Beni massacre can use forgiveness as a powerful tool to make the future bright and possible. Forgiveness can help the victim become a survivor who has hope and sees a variety of horizons in the future. Forgiveness is foundational to building new relationships among victims-survivors-perpetrators-sinful reality. Forgiveness grounded in the love of enemies is the weapon to help the victims of the Beni massacre win the fight against sin. Forgiveness destroys sin and builds a community with many possibilities of new relationships. Forgiveness can contribute to “destroying the idols of death, structures of oppression and violence to build new structures of justice.”¹⁸⁴

III.3.1. Victims and forgiveness.

Forgiveness is a complex demand to place on victims who are already crushed. To be beneficial to the victims, processes leading to the possibility of forgiveness have to pay attention

¹⁸² Muller-Fahrenholz, *The Art of Forgiveness: Theological Reflection on Healing and Reconciliation*, 15.

¹⁸³ Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958, 240.

¹⁸⁴ Sobrino, *Principle of Mercy*, 61.

to the feelings and needs of the victims. For the victims to grant pardon, their safety must take priority (a process of healing may be required for the traumatized); then, justice is to follow. Once the victims live safely and the injustices are being addressed, they can awaken the love in their hearts out of compassion for the sinful reality. Once love is awakened, we can see the inner suffering of the brokenness of the perpetrator.

The awakening of love within us engages us in the process of “conversion leading to resisting the anti-kingdom, injustices, oppression, selfishness, and death. This resistance enables the one who forgives out of much love to keep hope in the utopia of God’s Kingdom.”¹⁸⁵ Love is not limited to forgiveness. Love enables us to engage in the struggle for justice. In letting ourselves be moved by love and compassion for the sinful reality, we make ourselves vulnerable enough to understand the perpetrators’ brokenness as Jesus did through his incarnation. By sharing the weakness of the perpetrator and putting on its weight, we experience the difficulty of the incarnation. Still, it constitutes a “conversion which leads to solidarity and to overcoming the mechanisms we use to defend ourselves from reality.”¹⁸⁶ The victims get strength from God’s grace embedded in his gratuitous love. If the victims have experienced God’s love, they can extend it to their perpetrators. Forgiveness destroys oppressors and restores them as beings with a future of new relationships. Since forgiveness seeks the destruction of sin and not the sinner, the victims and the perpetrators can build new relationships.

Forgiveness is part of the process of Reconciliation. But forgiveness is not a replacement for justice. Instead, forgiveness completes Reconciliation. In this sense, Ernesto Valiente quotes Pope John Paul II, who “identifies justice and forgiveness as the two necessary pillars for

¹⁸⁵ Sobrino, *Principle of Mercy*, 61.

¹⁸⁶ Sobrino, *Principle of Mercy*, 61.

reconciliation.”¹⁸⁷ Any attempt to substitute justice by forgiveness curtails Reconciliation. Forgiveness “goes beyond justice. While legal systems and procedures provide societies with reliable structures of punishment and protection, forgiveness strives to heal the grief and re-establish the deepest qualities of humanity.”¹⁸⁸ This conception gives forgiveness the power to enable the victims to accept the perpetrators as human beings capable of new relationships. By being forgiven, the humanness of the perpetrators can be restored. Another powerful way to make forgiveness more appealing is to stress the good it does to the victims who can forgive at their own time. In the following point, I will talk of Christophe Munzihirwa and Emmanuel Kataliko as inspirational examples of non-violent-resistance.

III.4. The Legacy of Christian non-violent-resistance in DR. Congo: Archbishop

Christophe Munzihirwa and Emmanuel Kataliko

III.4.1. Munzihirwa¹⁸⁹: non-violent-resistance as a commitment to face persecution for the sake of truth, justice, peace, and the rights of those without voice.

In a context characterized by injustices, hostility, and atrocious violence, it is hard to engage in the noble struggle of non-violent-resistance to avoid being the first target of the perpetrators of violence. Despite this difficulty, the Church calls for theology and praxis of nonviolence as the fair fight for Justice, Reconciliation, and Peace.¹⁹⁰ As noble as the commitment to nonviolence remains, I highlight that non-violent-resisters are exposed to persecution for their

¹⁸⁷ John Paul II, *No Peace without Justice. No Justice without Forgiveness, Message for the World Day of Peace*, vol. n° 2 (https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_20011211_xxxv-world-day-for-peace.html, January 1, 2002), accessed November 15, 2021.

¹⁸⁸ Muller-Fahrenholz, *The Art of Forgiveness: Theological Reflection on Healing and Reconciliation*, iX

¹⁸⁹ Christophe Munzihirwa is a Jesuit, born in Burhale (Bukavu) on December 31, 1926. After serving as Bishop of the Diocese of Kasongo for 8 years, he became Archbishop of Bukavu in 1994. He defended the voiceless including the refugees Tutsi and Hutu. Prophetically, he denounced evil, announced the misfortune and invited people to conversion. He was sadly assassinated on October 29, 1996.

¹⁹⁰ The use of violent force for humanitarian purposes—in cases of horrific threats to human life, human security and social order—is still acknowledged by Catholic teaching (<https://nonviolencejustpeace.net/church-documents-on-nonviolence/>, accessed November 15, 2021).

actions. To carry on this noble work of non-violent-resistance, non-violent-resisters must find inner freedom that makes them choose to pursue the greater good despite opposition and persecution. This inner freedom enables a non-violent-resister to endure persecution for the sake of truth, justice, reconciliation, and peace. This inner freedom comes from Jesus Christ, the master of nonviolence. Archbishop Christophe Munzihirwa had the inner freedom to engage in non-violent resistance as he was well aware and used to say that the struggle for justice, reconciliation, peace, and freedom has a price to pay that can go to “the price of blood because from the hearth of a life offered, fire is taken, not ashes.”¹⁹¹ Without advocating for the fabrication of many martyrs, it is worth saying that martyrdom is a risk of Christian nonviolence. But we do not engage in nonviolence in order to die but to live more fully. Instead, we employ nonviolence to advance the Reign of God – the Reign of truth, justice, reconciliation, and peace.

Realistically, under violence and oppression, Christophe Munzihirwa used the Swahili word ‘*ujitegemee*,’ “inviting people for self-care, self-reliance and the possibility of defending oneself, of counting on one's strengths, the strengths that come from God.”¹⁹² This invitation stands the way of nonviolence because if everybody is exterminated, then no one will be there to act nonviolence to win justice or peace. In this sense, the Church condemns “institutionalized violence, repressive violence by governments, terrorist violence, and any form of violence that is likely to provoke further violence in legitimate self-defense.”¹⁹³ It is challenging in revolutionary situations to determine the best path –taking up weapons in self-defense or to go the way of non-violence –thereby putting more people potentially –at risk of injury and death.

¹⁹¹ Dieudonné Mbiribindi Bahati, *Un Chemin des Béatitudes: Méditations sur la Vie de Monseigneur Christophe Munzihirwa, Jésuite, Evêque Et Martyr de la Paix* (Kinshasa: Editions Loyola, 2017), 5.

¹⁹² Bahati, *Un Chemin des Béatitudes*, 134.

¹⁹³ Romero, *Voice of the Voiceless: The Four Pastoral Letters and Other Statements*, 108.

The condemnation of violence places the responsibility to promote peace and nonviolence on the existing systems of power. Hence any given government should use all “its moral and coercive power to guarantee a truly democratic state, one based on a just democratic order, in which justice, peace, and the exercise of every citizen’s fundamental rights are defended.”¹⁹⁴ Those with the least amount of power¹⁹⁵ in a given interaction are granted the most leniency. The context within, which Munzehirwa ministered, was dictatorial and chaotic to defend the fundamental rights of citizens. For this reason, Munzehirwa denounced the deafness of the civil and military authorities. Then he invited “the population to be more united themselves without wanting to respond to evil with evil, but fully aware that violence and plunder have the effect of destruction, never construction. Only top-down solidarity is capable of constructive action.”¹⁹⁶ Hence, the role of a non-violent-resister is to denounce evil, tell the truth, and call for unity of the oppressed and marginalized because, in unity, there is strength. Also, there is strength in pursuing actively and non-violently the ways of justice. Non-violent actions bear more fruits in unity than in division. Division fuels violence, discrimination, and oppression. Hence, the Church encourages recourse to unity and non-violent options because non-violence has a “great moral strength.”¹⁹⁷

However, how does self-defense stand in front of the non-violent teaching of Jesus and the Church? The teaching of Jesus is one thing –the teachings of the Church are another when it comes to using violence in self-defense. Unlike Quakers or Mennonites, the Catholic Church is not a pacifist community of faith when it comes to situations of conflict. For instance, during Jesus’ Passion, he challenged the aggressor and the whole system of injustices when he was struck. Jesus advises us to challenge our enemies with the truth and be ready to die for it. Munzehirwa died

¹⁹⁴ Romero, *Voice of the Voiceless: The Four Pastoral Letters and Other Statements*, 109.

¹⁹⁵ <https://www.takimag.com/article/the-gay-mafia-claims-another-scalp/>, October 20, 2021.

¹⁹⁶ Bahati, *Un Chemin des Béatitudes*, 135.

¹⁹⁷ Romero, *Voice of the Voiceless: The Four Pastoral Letters and Other Statements*, 118.

because of courage and audacity to face the enemy and challenge their consciousness without hypocrisy. We would have wanted him to live longer, but he could not because: “those who are pure in a heart incapable of hypocrisy do what they think, say what they think, say what they do and think about what they say. They can kill a non-violent-resister, but they can’t kill the truth.”¹⁹⁸ Non-violent-resisters with courage and audacity may not live long on the earth, but the truth for which they committed their lives continues to enlighten the remnant. What legacy did Munzihirwa leave behind?

Munzihirwa left behind the legacy of non-violence as a commitment to advocate for the rights of the poor, the excluded, those wounded in life, and the little ones. Munzihirwa’s struggle promoted “the common good, the concern for the poorest, and the struggle for peace, dialogue, harmony, and concord.”¹⁹⁹ Unfortunately, such values are foreign to this world. If anyone sets out to defend them, he/she experiences opposition and perhaps even death like Christ. In his struggle for a just world, Munzihirwa was inviting the leaders of DR. Congo and the rebels to prioritize negotiation as a peaceful means to transform conflict. In negotiation, we avoid violence and the outbreak of refugees and many victims. He advocated for the protection of the refugees and the victims of injustices. Hence, he ceaselessly and fearlessly denounced “the malevolence and injustices, the complicity and the wars which sacrifice the human for the benefit of selfish interests and greedy for domination, sacrificing the well-being of the poor, the unhappy and the helpless.”²⁰⁰ By acting so, he showed that nonviolence implies making the truth heard and being ready to face the consequences of truth-telling to challenge the instigators of injustices and violence. By

¹⁹⁸ Christophe Munzihirwa, *Carnet des Notes (Quelques Mois Avant Son Assassinat)* (11 June 1996).

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Simon-Pierre Metena, “Mass in homage to Monsignor Christophe Munzihirwa” in *Memoriam, Servant and Witness*, 15. Simon-Pierre Metena is a Jesuit from the DRC, member of the province of Central Africa. He was Provincial of the Jesuits 1995-2001, during which time Monsignor Christophe Munzihirwa was assassinated. He gave on the occasion of a mass in his memory a testimony to which we refer here.

²⁰⁰ Bahati, *Un Chemin des Béatitudes*, 126-127.

standing for truth, Munzihirwa became a source of hope for his people, who were like sheep without shepherds.

As a servant leader, Munzihirwa became the city's sentry as the rebels invaded the region. He kept urging the people as well as the priests “not to leave their homes, without forgetting to encourage the military to keep the patriotic spirit.”²⁰¹ By doing so, he was against the land occupation. As a Good Shepherd, Munzihirwa knew his flock, listened to his community, and foresaw the dangers after listening to the healthy, the young and the old, citizens and foreigners, the powerful and the marginalized. He “proposed peace and reconciliation as a way out of the crisis.”²⁰² He left the legacy of awareness that peace and reconciliation are non-violent means to transform conflict with courage, tell the truth, and challenge violence and injustices. He was assassinated for a just cause, but his legacy is still alive according to the saying from the “*bushi*” culture (Munzihirwa’s culture), “the vigor of a Tree is measured by the solidity and depth of its roots.”²⁰³ As his pastoral letters testify, many people have followed the legacy of a nonviolent servant and good shepherd who gave his life for love, truth, justice, and peace. Archbishop Emmanuel Kataliko is one of those who keep this legacy alive and fresh in our memories.

III.4. 2. Monsignor Emmanuel Kataliko: nonviolence as a commitment to justice, reconciliation, and peace.

Living nonviolent resistance is a vocation. Monsignor Emmanuel Kataliko²⁰⁴ had a vocation of becoming a nonviolent activist. As Jeremiah would put it, “before God formed

²⁰¹ Bahati, *Un Chemin des Béatitudes*, 135.

²⁰² Rigobert Kyungu Musenge, *La Liberté Intérieure Comme Fruit du Discernement Spirituel: Tentative D'un Portrait du Serviteur de Dieu Monseigneur Christophe Munzihirwa, S.J., Archevêque de Bukavu (1926-1996)*. (Kinshasa: Editions Loyola, 2020), 154-155.

²⁰³ Bahati, *Un Chemin des Béatitudes*, 144.

²⁰⁴ Born in 1932 in Lukole, Mgr. Emmanuel Kataliko was ordained a diocesan priest on December 20, 1958, in Rome. He defended his doctoral dissertation in theology from the University of Lateran and his master’s degree in sociology on July 20, 1963, from the Gregorian University. Kataliko was solidly rooted in inculturation and interested in helping

Kataliko in the womb, God knew him before he was born God set him apart; God appointed him as a prophet to the nations” (Jeremiah 1, 5). Emmanuel Kataliko’s vocation to nonviolence begins with the circumstances of his birth and his name before his lifelong commitment to nonviolent resistance.

It is told that on the day Kataliko was born, “a dove stood on the roof of his paternal house until the day his navel dried up. It was a sign of a birth of an exceptional man (in kinande: *omutikwa*), a messenger, and a herald of peace following biblical tradition.”²⁰⁵ A dove symbolizes the “peace and security” (Gn8, 10-11). After the flood, Noah waited another seven days and, again, he released the dove out of the ark. The dove came back to him at the hour of the evening, and here it was holding in her beak a small branch of a fresh olive tree. From the sign of a dove, Noah understood that the waters had gone down on Earth. Even when Jesus was presented to the Temple, his parents gave God two doves according to Jewish customs.

For the people of Butembo-Beni, the dove resting upon Kataliko’s paternal house was a sign that a mysterious person was born. Then at baptism, he was given the name “Emmanuel,” meaning God with us (a God who brings peace to the world). This name is not a simple coincidence because a name is a permanent word in Kataliko’s culture (and many African cultures). When some faithful professed the creed at Mass, they pronounced “*Ecclesia Kataliko*” instead of

people overcome social issues. He came back “from Rome in 1963, worked as an assistant parish priest before being appointed Bishop of the Diocese of Butembo-Beni in 1966. His episcopal ministry lasted from 1966 to 2000.” Mgr. Kataliko used to say about the Church's prophetic mission that “the Church cannot lose interest in peace; it must help on the path of development, justice, and harmony ... It must have concern for the common good. The Church must intervene; the bishops cannot be silent. They should not be afraid to speak; they have to talk to politicians, administrators, everyone.” Mgr Kataliko took charge of the “Archdiocese of Bukavu on May 18, 1997.” (Cf., Ya Nacironge N.R., *Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko, Un ministre de Dieu au service de la vérité et de la paix, 1*; and Matthieu Subao Sitone a.a., *Hommage à Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko Archevêque de Bukavu (17 Mai 1997- 11 Octobre 2000*, 9-15)

²⁰⁵ Matthieu Subao Sitone a.a., *Hommage à Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko Archevêque de Bukavu (17 Mai 1997- 11 Octobre 2000)* (Butembo/Nord-Kivu: Presses Universitaires du Graben (PUG-CRIG), 2010), 9.

“*Ecclesia Katolika*” to mean universal church. This anecdote implies that the name “Kataliko” prefigured the quality of a nonviolent person as a “universalist” person who carries people along around the common goal of justice and Peace. From his birth circumstances, names, and later his commitment to nonviolent resistance, Kataliko can be part of the most outstanding men in history “who have sensed, like prophets, the authentic aspirations of people of which they are in solidarity. Most often overlooked, even rejected and persecuted, they draw their strength of resistance in sharing the condition of the poor. And it is only after their death that history recognizes in these non-violent ones the real winners.”²⁰⁶

Katalilo became Archbishop of Bukavu after “the Rwandan genocide in 1994 which sent a lot of refugees into Bukavu and the surrounding areas, the assassination of his predecessor Munzihirwa, and the two subsequent wars in 1996 with the AFDL (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo) and another which started on August 02, 1998, by the RCD (Rally for Congolese Democracy).”²⁰⁷ Kataliko was the vice president of the episcopal conference of the bishops of the Kivu region. He wrote the following message to people of the Zairian Church: “Concerning the Church of Zaire, and in particular our ecclesiastical province of Kivu, we, unfortunately, note that the situation is worrying: everywhere reigns insecurity, the brothers and sisters formerly living in harmony are today victims of tribalistic ideologies and geopolitical, fed and maintained by enemies of peace, who push for exclusions and fratricidal wars.”²⁰⁸

In insecurity and turmoil, Kataliko “made speeches, often at odds with general opinion. He pleaded for the creation of an atmosphere favorable to life, friendliness, peace, harmony, and

²⁰⁶ Sitone, *Hommage à Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko Archevêque de Bukavu*, 8.

²⁰⁷ Ya Nacironge N.R., *Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko, Un ministre de Dieu au service de la vérité et de la paix*, 41-44.

²⁰⁸ Evêques Catholiques du Kivu, *Message des Evêques Catholiques du Kivu aux Chrétiens Et aux Hommes de Bonne Volonté de la Provinces Ecclésiastique du Kivu, Goma (Maria Mama de Buhimba)* (02 May 1996), §5.

peaceful coexistence between different groups and ethnicities.”²⁰⁹ He called for solidarity; he encouraged brotherhood and togetherness from the Bukavu people towards the refugees.

Kataliko never feared to proclaim evangelical values. Quoting Fr. Kitumaini, Deogratias Mirindi highlights the message of Mgr François Xavier Mitima to Kataliko as he was taking over the leadership of the Archdiocese in these terms:

You arrive in Bukavu at a time when serious challenges stand in the way of your apostolic activity. The countries of the Great Lakes are living in the turmoil of tribal and ethnic wars. Africa is the continent where there are the most refugees in the world. Your evangelization will aim to touch hearts so that tribalism, ethnocentrism, egocentrism, and discrimination can end so that the spirit of reconciliation, mutual respect, mutual aid, and fraternity reigns.²¹⁰

As Kataliko started calling for reconciliation, mutual respect, and fraternity, the rebels (of RCD) and their allies considered him an enemy of their project of division as another Munzihirwa. Kataliko was forced into exile from December 02, 1999, to September 14, 2000, for denouncing “the injustice of the great powers (global north), the crushing of the small, and condemning war and its corollaries. He defended national unity, saying that ‘even an inch of national territory will not be lost.’ He thus became the enemy of the balkanizers.”²¹¹ For Kataliko, nonviolent resistance also implied the defense of the land against balkanization, as explained in chapter one. The rebels exiled him into his diocese of origin, Butembo-Beni. He was ready to give up his life for his sheep, for the sake of the truth and justice like Munzihirwa. We recall that Munzihirwa, while alive, also denounced “the complicity of world leaders for the balkanization of eastern Congo.”²¹² While Munzihirwa was assassinated, Kataliko, his successor, was relegated far from his episcopal seat for their positions in favor of evangelization and protecting the poor victims of unnecessary wars.

²⁰⁹ Bahati, *Un Chemin des béatitudes*, 129.

²¹⁰ Ya Nacironge N.R., *Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko, Un ministre de Dieu au service de la vérité et de la paix*, 45.

²¹¹ Ya Nacironge N.R., *Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko, Un ministre de Dieu au service de la vérité et de la paix*, 47-48.

²¹² Musenge, *La Liberté Intérieure Comme Fruit du Discernement Spirituel*, 158.

Munzihirwa and Kataliko were non-violent-resisters with the audacity and courage to denounce injustice, to proclaim the truth as Jesus did to the one who strikes him: “if what I said is right, why do you strike me?” (John 18, 23). Like Jesus, both of them were persecuted for the sake of justice and the truth. They were responsible pastors, conscious of their mission. Kataliko was a sign of hope for the people of his archdiocese. While he was still in exile, the people of Bukavu went on a strike for “seven weeks to force the political leaders to allow him to come back. But the authorities hardened their hearts. So, from his exile, Kataliko wrote a consoling letter to his people encouraging them to restart Sunday worship and their activities so that their suffering and their distress may be alleviated.”²¹³

Kataliko believed that “the fight for peace, justice, love, and respect for the human person was a source of exile for him.”²¹⁴ This had indeed been the fight of Munzihirwa, for which he was assassinated. Kataliko was relegated far from his faithful for the same battle. On October 4, 2000, he died of a sudden heart failure in Rome a few weeks after returning from exile. This fight made of Munzihirwa and Kataliko, “peacemakers, men of reconciliation and interethnic conciliators.”²¹⁵ Deogratias Mirindi would say that this fight made them the “voice of the voiceless”²¹⁶ because their preaching, speeches, pastoral letters, and various writings challenged the leaders at the national and international levels. They hoped that the people's suffering and cries would move at least Christian leaders with a positive attitude. They were hopeful of the conversion of the leaders from selfishness to charity. In other words, they hope for the political leaders' transformation from pursuing political interests to respecting the common good.

²¹³ Sitone, *Hommage à Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko, Archevêque de Bukavu*, 21-22.

²¹⁴ Sitone, *Hommage à Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko, Archevêque de Bukavu*, 35.

²¹⁵ Sitone, *Hommage à Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko, Archevêque de Bukavu*, 35.

²¹⁶ Ya Nacironge N.R., *Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko, Un ministre de Dieu au service de la vérité et de la paix*, 57.

His faith in God's presence and power gave him the strength to assert: "We commit ourselves with courage, with a firm spirit, with an unshakeable faith, to be on the side of all the oppressed and, if necessary, to shed our blood as Monsignor Munzihirwa, Fr Georges Kakuja have already done, and so many other Christians."²¹⁷ Kataliko was an activist of truth, peace, and justice, and freedom of his people. He invited his people to non-violent resistance in these terms: "Do not allow your enemies to swallow you; if they do, prevent them from digesting you; either you die with them, or they spit you out."²¹⁸ The force of love leading to non-violent-resistance is something that violent people cannot digest. Love is against keeping silent in the face of injustices and violence.

Conclusion

In this chapter, Christian non-violence based on love for neighbor has been described as a Christian praxis that can constitute a pathway towards stopping the chain of violence in the Beni region and a way forward to new structures of peace and justice. After giving a biblical background of non-violence, I considered Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Candice Mama as inspirational survival figures. I also pointed to forgiveness as part of non-violent resistance. Then, I concluded with Christophe Munzihirwa and Emmanuel Kataliko as witnesses of non-violent resistance. Their faith witnessing can be an inspiring model of Christian praxis of non-violence. Their non-violent resistance also implied the defense of their land. From their ministries, we understand that non-violent resistance against structural sin comprises many risks. They died before time, but lives fully lived with Christ produce fruits from their deep qualities than lengths.

²¹⁷ Emmanuel Kataliko, "Lettre de Noël "Consolez, Consolez Mon Peuple" (Is 40, 1) 'L'espérance Ne Trompe Jamais' (Rm 5, 5)," *Lettres pastorales et messages de Monseigneur Emmanuel Kataliko* (Editions Archevêché, Bukavu), (24 December 1999): 82.

²¹⁸ Sitone, *Hommage à Mgr Emmanuel Kataliko, Archevêque de Bukavu*, 49.

Munzihirwa and Kataliko fought for the cause of the poor, the voiceless, the oppressed, for peace, justice, truth, and reconciliation. They all suffered persecution. They all supported the value of nonviolence. They are blessed, and children of God who struggled for peacemaking, and they suffered persecution for the sake of justice. It is left for us to continue. They all encouraged the oppressed for self-reliance: “*kujitegemea*” and for Christian non-violent resistance. Christian non-violent-resistance challenges injustice and violence until the end.

General Conclusion

In conclusion, I have learned a lot from the wisdom and patience of my mentors Professor Ernesto Valiente and Professor Margaret Guider. The advice and encouragements of Fr. Michael Boughton, SJ., Fr. Richard Clifford, SJ, Fr. James Stormes, SJ, Professor Dan Daly, and Felix Palazzi were insightful. I have also learned that the current conflict is very complex. I realized that this conflict is an opportunity for the Nande people to unite so that the perpetrators do not find local proxies to instrumentalize. This experience made me understand that active nonviolence is open to using force in extreme cases. The complexity of the conflict (economic, political, and cultural) requires a multidimensional approach in order to attend to violence. However, I have advocated for Christian nonviolence as a possible response to violence in regions plagued by violence: nonviolence is advisable as the only viable and less costly way. The Church can help train nonviolent practitioners. I developed three chapters.

The first chapter constituted a general assessment of the ongoing killings in the Beni region. The high rate of killings indicates that the killers in Beni do not value human life. At least 6000 people have been killed. The assessment showed how this is a horrible situation. The violence going on in Beni is a silent genocide. It is a complex conflict because it has international stakeholders, regional, national, and local proxies. The conflict and violence mainly stem from the indigenous people's colonial, neocolonial, and imperialist relationships. Then cultural and structural factors help the imperialist to scapegoat ethnicity instead of pointing to the economic power as the leading cause of the violence in Beni.

The second chapter primarily discussed the possibility of reconciliation in the Beni region. This reconciliation is to be understood as a process and not as an end in itself. The process of reconciliation takes into account the fact that the evil committed derives from the deprivation of

good. The good deprived could be restored through truth-telling, justice, and forgiveness. After presenting a western Christian-based way of reconciliation, we highlighted that there is a need to integrate the resources from the Nande culture. For instance, the particular cultural cosmogony of the Nande people and the notion of “*mbanulo*” are crucial in a reconciliation ritual among the Nande people. This specific part of the cultural conception of the Nande people needs further development.

In the third chapter, the praxis of nonviolence is presented as an alternative to violence. It is to be learned and practiced. One way of learning the Christian praxis of nonviolence is to draw inspiration from Jesus Christ. Mary, his mother, Candice Mama, Christophe Munzihirwa, and Emmanuel Kataliko, among many others, are examples of non-violence. Love is at the heart of any nonviolence praxis. Also, the capacity to forgive is an aspect of nonviolence. I think that my conclusion could be a point of departure for further research and reflections according to the Nande proverb, which states, “*Ekyaghanda sikihold*”: “The common home does not die. There are always discussions to be decided, which never end.” Indeed, my thesis fits the realm of a common home of the Nande people, and many contributions will be helpful to transform the conflict going on. And there is another proverb that says: “*Okuvoko kuliho kokukambala miseghe*,” translated as “the arm that remains alive will wear the leader's bracelet.” The one who remains after the fight to obtain power will be the leader. Indeed, the arms that will remain alive will lead the research about the current conflict.

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