

The Relationship between Christianity, Education, Culture and Religion in Kenya since Political Independence in 1963

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Abstract

The bible in the book of Leviticus tells that a nation should and ought to find its place in every fifty years, the jubilee/or the year of the Lord's favour. This article is an analysis of the role played by education, religion and culture in molding the people of Kenya since her political independence in 1963. It will evaluate and assess the contribution made in liberating the people of Kenya from colonialism or European domination. The article shows how formal education in Kenya has contributed to political liberation and cultural disadvantages. The themes within this article are treated in four sections: (1) the place of African culture and religion in Kenya (2) the influence of Christianity on the Kenyan people; (3) the place of education and national integration of a people; (4) The liberated Kenyan and the beyond. The dialectic between the liberating and the imitative consequences of education in Kenya is one of the central themes which drive the African people to claim their identity in the contemporary world of democratic principles and practices. The author traces the influence of missionary education and secular colonial training on the assimilated class. Also the characteristics of the African cultures are analyzed in light of religion and development. Hence this article provides an insight into the state of educational development in Kenya and the role of Christianity, religion and culture in narrowing the knowledge divide. It documents the progress made in educational development, while revealing the challenges faced. The article further provides an overview of the historical and economic context, social factors, and the organization and state of education. Critically discussed are the interplay aspects that exist between Christianity, Education, Culture and Religion in Kenya since Independence in 1963. While the context is Kenyan, the strategies discussed are applicable to other African countries with similar challenges.

Keywords: Christianity, Education for development, Religion and Culture.

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1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The modern idea of developing Africa essentially dates to the years after most states had been colonized by some European nations in the nineteenth century. From the start, ideas about development generally overlooked the role of religion, or assumed that religion would be relegated to a matter of private belief in Africa as secular states gained strength and confidence, or even saw religion as an obstacle to development. Yet it is now apparent that religion is a growing force in public life in Africa, as in many other parts of the world; it has had great influence on the entire human race. Hence spirituality and development are intertwined and they both contribute to all levels of human development. The gods whether from a Christian perspective or from other religions, are part and parcel of human existence without which development in any part of the globe would have been a metaphysical term. The spiritual world cannot be conceived independently of the material world.

Those of us who are well trained in systematic theology can attest to the fact that the vertical dimension of any religion would be void if the horizontal level is not brought into play. Hence one cannot divorce religion from all levels of human development. With the largest world's population professing religious beliefs in Africa, holding such belief must be considered as a common human characteristic that influences and affects most of the human activities. Moreover, religious belief is relevant to both social and private realms and has had great impact on human development since time immemorial. Religious belief systems provide a meaning for human existence through which adherents interpret their own circumstances and make decisions on how to act and interact in wider society. The values and attitudes associated with religious beliefs within different nations of the world, therefore, affect both public policy settings as well as social behaviors. These values and attitudes make development to have realistic and modern meaning otherwise religion would have been meaningless or as Karl Marx the father of communism put it "an opiate of the masses" or even "hope for the hopeless" and "heart of the heartless" (See Karl Marx Manifesto).

Throughout its early years of independence, Africa's concept of development was largely conceived of in economic terms primarily, in other words as economic development. It is only recently that the concept has come into its real meaning thus incorporating and emphasizing all aspects of people's lives that go beyond the

economic dimension, such as health, environment and education (Ela, 1989). Though a foreign concept to the people of Africa, Christianity has had great influence on the people's belief system, education and culture. Together with other religions, Christianity has therefore molded the way the African people think and reason. This has been as a result of the impact these religions have had on education, lifestyle as well as in areas of human development.

In this article, human development should be understood as including the spiritual dimension of life that covers the entire human person. Yet in many plans human development remains essentially an adjunct to the central aim of generating economic growth and the distribution of wealth. In short, policy makers, religious leaders as well as development workers need to make the idea of human development a reality; it is a holistic and basic reality and without it there cannot be any peace among the people of Africa and Kenya in particular: peace is a prerequisite to the development of any nation.

Further the article aims at providing a brief analysis of the role of religion in Kenya's development. It warns of the difficulties in attempting to add religion to a list of instruments that can be used in development policy; several factors lead to the conclusion that some fundamentally new approaches are necessary on the part of donors themselves. Additionally, the article mentions sectors in which religion may play a positive role in development in Kenya such as measures to stimulate economic growth, management of natural resources, conflict prevention and peace building, health and education, and accountable governance. How would these elements translate into specific policy ideas at different levels of government? Would they be achieved through the introduction of the country's Vision 2030?

1.2 CULTURE AND RELIGION

Religion and more specifically Christianity have been growing faster than one would have expected in its fifty years of political independence. This growth challenges Kenyans to work hard to access the deeper understanding of early missionaries' faith, courage, tenacity, and remarkable intellectual strength. This is because; each religion including the global Christian faith has been formed out of a specific history and cultural values and not out of bare theoretical ideas like the early missionaries would have liked Kenyans to believe. For it to have any effect on the people of Kenya and their urge for an accountable and transparent development free from all forms of corruption, religion must imbued itself on the peoples' way of life (culture) and their belief of the supernatural order (religious belief system). This is in spite of the early missionaries perceived mistakes based on unfounded anthropological believe that Africans were backwards and without any knowledge of religious beliefs (See Ela above).

It should be noted that the early missionaries generally brainwashed the African persons to an extent of making them creatures of inferior or less gods. This trend was basically common during the colonial time which started with the commencement of the Berlin Conference of 1895. Some missionaries and Arab traders went to the extent of engaging themselves in trading of the African people as slaves; a bitter history that the people of Kenya still harbor in their mind. Enslaving Africans and forcefully occupying their land, led to the Mau Mau revolt without which the country would have continued to suffer under the hands of the Europeans far much longer. As this was happening in Kenya the Maji Maji and the Hehe rebellions were also taking place in the then Tanganyika and today's Tanzania. One can easily observe that, the fifty years of independence are therefore a product of great struggle by the people of Kenya whose freedom was a result of bloodshed and should be celebrated with joy. The fifty years are therefore a form of co memorization of the bitter history that the people of Kenya experienced. Any element of neocolonialism should therefore be resisted by all means the Kenyan people can apply.

The bible in the book of Leviticus tells that a nation should and ought to find its place in every fifty years, the jubilee/or the year of Lord's favour: *And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land and to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee year for you; it shall be the holy year from which men and women will sow and it is from what they have worked for* (Leviticus 25: 1-54).. This is a religious call which Kenyans should embrace as they celebrate the fifty years of independence. Kenya has had its independence since 1963, a remarkable fifty years of progress and political maturity. But as Kenyans celebrate the year of jubilee, what can one say about the progress being made on the people? Have these years been years of growth and have they been years of nation al integration or barely years of bigotry and ethnic hatred? Has development been realized in all parts of Kenya and at what level can one ascertain transformational change among the people of Kenya?

This article shall therefore evaluate and assess the influence of religion, culture and Christianity and the role of education on the Kenyan people. The purpose is to show that there exist some religious fundamental factors influencing development among the people of Kenya. The objective is to evaluate the impact and effects of religion on human development in all dimensions. The positive development that has resulted on the Kenyan people and their inclination to Christian faith and practice or any other religious creeds will therefore be

evaluated in light of the Year of Jubilee. It is important to note that the Biblical meaning of the Jubilee has everything to do with human venture and development. These are years of prosperity, peace, restoration and God's favour on the land; they are years of freedom that is governed by the spirit of accountability, responsibility and transparent existence among the people.

Since Kenya gained its independence from the British religion and more specifically Christianity has had its share in people development. Many schools, hospitals and other institutions that exist are as a result of Christianity's and other religion's influence. An increasing number of organizations and programs are grappling with problems at the intersection of religion and development. Yet religion's public role can no longer be ignored as a. most people engage in some form of religious practice from time to time, and many profess membership of some formal religious organization, traditional, Muslim, Christian or otherwise.

1.2.1 Development: A Controversial and Ambiguous Notion

The concept "development" is rather controversial and different scholars use it to mean different things. For instance one can talk of economic or spiritual-moral development. One can also talk of political, psychological and evolutionary development. Hence the term is at times ambiguous and can mean many forms of development at the same time thus lacking a consensus meaning across the board. The concept is variedly used in almost every field and disciplines: zoology, botany, economics, sociology, and anthropology, religion as well as in philosophy and in a technological world. Hence with all these different meaning of the term "development" one needs the etymological meaning of the same particularly in discussing religion in relation to education and culture in Kenya.

The term "development" is derived from the English term "develop" but its etymological meaning can be understood well from its opposite and linguistically aligned term "to envelop". To "envelop" owes its original meaning from the old medieval French stem "to wrap" to cover something or someone of somebody with a garment (in flames), in clouds or even in mystery. Subsequently the verb "develop" originally meant the opposite: "the process of uncovering, unfolding and revealing" or a process of taking away the persona or the covering veil thereby revealing that which had been hidden or concealed. Specifically the term seems to mean and point to a process or movement from a latent or hidden state to a state more visible, more explicit and more elaborate.

It is interesting to note that a term which has a negative prefix "de" is thought of in a positive manner that is, a movement towards a positive direction –actualization of what is hidden, a revealing of that which appeared concealed and mysterious. Thus the term has development meaning to different people and occasions. For the purpose of this article, the author deals with both the economic, cultural and spiritual meaning of the term development.

The old evolutionary schools regarded and connected economic and cultural developments to material and physical development. In fact the words "civilization" "civil" and "city" not only have a common root but they also have the some connection in term of what was perceived to be "developed" or "civilized" by some westerners. The city people were considered to be civilized, developed and more complicated than the rural folks who were perceived to be coarse, uneducated and limited in knowledge. All of this is nothing else but the material meaning of the term development.

Development, however, is a very human concept because human beings develop physically, academically, socially, culturally, economically and in other varied ways. Hence this article's consideration of development in relation to religion in Kenya can only be limited to economic or material development.

1.2.2 The Relationship between Religion and Development

Religion is a human phenomenon and the quest for meaning at the dimension of a higher power, is a human need even for those whose religious inclination is almost zero; what they turn to in their limitedness as human beings is an indication of their religious sense and desire. For instance, religious ideas of various provenance indigenous religions as well as world religions - play an important role in legitimizing or discouraging violence in society. One does not need to belief in God to discourage ill doing in society or even to enhance the positive levels of human development. This is because; development is not only an economic term rather it is the inner quest in human beings to unveil what is enveloped, latent – a process towards progress. Human beings in different spheres and dimensions of life ascribe to it. Hence the two terms namely religion and development converge as human as human concepts and also as part of cultural endeavors.

Theuri (2001:189) concludes that in any development human beings are not wholly earth-bound; they need to look outside and beyond their ordinary daily existence. The transcendent is required for life to be meaningful and for development to be properly assessed. Mugambi (1996:5-6) adds to this element of transcendence by observing that religion as an aspect of human life is indispensable as a pointer to individual and communal self understanding and self orientations which include development. Self understanding and self orientations are important aspects of being human and of being developed. Hence religion and development are connected and possess interplay of a kind in human life.

1.2.3 Religion and Development the Cultural Pillars

Since culture is a way of life which incorporates a society's quest for meaning in its symbols, values and in fact their whole way of life, it is not surprising that "religion and development" are important components or pillars of any culture in Kenya and beyond. As indicated earlier these two concepts are important pillars of culture alongside others like politics, ethics, aesthetics, and kinship and ethnic affiliations.

In both the traditional and contemporary Kenya there exist an inseparable connectivity between religion and human development. In traditional Africa, religion permeated every aspect of an individual's life; it gave a sense of meaning to all and each and everything in existence. For the African, religion was and is really a system of thought and action shared by the community but which also caters for the individual by giving out a frame of orientation and an object of devotion. As much as it provided for the meaning of life, that is, frame of orientation, even an atheist has to contend with this human need and cannot therefore do without it. One could objectify wealth, pleasure and fame as the key idols of religion but cannot be void of a religious dimension in development.

Positively religion as a pillar of culture makes societies productive in terms of trying to restrain its adherents from destructive tendencies and actions. Even traditional African religion played this same role; one would easily keep away from any negative tendencies and was able to engage oneself in positive development oriented spirit for the sake of society (Mbiti, 1969).

Development is also a pillar of culture like religion; it is normally listed among the pillars of culture and portrays itself as an economic aspect that is inviting to every individual regardless of their religious or spiritual background. Each culture has its ways in which it thrives in terms of means of sustenance; it also has its own indicators of material progress and development both in the individual and the society at large.

Theuri (Ibid) concludes that there is a need for religion to bring some sort of legitimization in the world and to give some explanation for the very small and those enclosed in poverty thus lacking basic need of food, shelter and clothing. This assertion leads one to conclude that religion has been and continues to be an agent of development to the extent of provision of basic human needs; it has enabled many Kenyans to acquire skills and means in which they are able to actualize themselves thus becoming self-sustaining and sufficient human beings. In Kenya religious groups, organizations and institutions have become partners with the government to provided education, health, shelter, food and almost everything that has the possibility of improving human life. In the following sections, the article dwells on the value of Christianity in the development of the people of Kenya since independence while the last section will deal with the impact that religion has had on the Kenyan society as it strives to shed off the chains associated with colonial and neo-colonialism: the decolonized and the liberated Kenya.

1.3 CHRISTIANITY AND DELVELOPMENT

1.3.1 Conceptualization of the Old Testament

Even as African countries struggle to attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), religion and its institutions will have to play its pivotal role because of its place and many adherents in the continent. These goals included: poverty eradication, alleviation of hunger and illiteracy, promotion of gender equality and women empowerment, alleviate child-mortality rate, improve maternal health, combat HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases ensure environmental protection, and ensure a global partnership in development.

There is no religious denomination and especially in the mainstream religions that are not concerned with the issues affecting the African person among them the Millennium Development Goals. Okumu-Bigambo (2006:267-268) observed that since the Church in Africa is the amphitheatre of challenges, Christians like any other citizens should be concerned in ways and means that the MDGs are achievable. Kenya is part and parcel of this large continent and her religious institutions should be among the first to develop the nation. This requirement is even more appealing now that Kenya is celebrating fifty years of independence. In actual fact, it is appropriately demanding and tied to the country's Vision 2030.

Most Christians believe that it was God's will that human beings were created thus humanity represent God's image and likeness (Gen: 1:26). It is from this conviction that Christians believe that they have the divine mandate to develop, steward, prosper and conquer the world.

Accordingly and going by the Biblical teaching, it was God who gave Adam (Man) and Eve (woman) the mandate to subdue the earth and fill it with seeds of prosperity (Gen: 1:28). In Gen: 3:19 which is immediately after the fall of Adam and Eve, God informs them that if they were to live better life; they had to sweat in order to get their basic needs and that of their family.

It is therefore mandatory that the human person ought to be in-charge of the earth and specifically so through developing it. Hence human beings are co-workers and co-creators with God; they are partners in development. Even after the biblical floods, the same mandate is repeated and expanded in Gen: 9:1-3, where human beings are given everything in order to develop it. Prosperity, both at the individual and communal levels, belongs to

God's blessing.

The Psalmist did emphasize on prosperity and that the earth is full of God's blessing and goodness from which human beings should thrive from. Prophet Isaiah points out to the fact that development is part and parcel of God's plan and which would be realized and witnessed during the messianic era (Isaiah 25:6-7). The post exilic prophets, priests and builders like Nehemiah, Haggai and others urged the people to develop their country which had been devastated in their absence. Hence the Old Testament encourages human prosperity and development which in itself is a form of God's blessing. This is not far from what is required in the Kenyan situation; Kenyans should develop their country in order to reign in God's favour.

1.3.2 The New Testament and Development

Since Christianity attempts to imitate the life of Jesus Christ, it must therefore be ready to live by that very teaching. It is from the New Testament that Christ's followers are taught that he came so that they may have life and have it to the fullest (Jn: 3:16). As a son of a carpenter, Jesus met his basic needs by labouring and eventually showing by examples that, men and women ought to work; he healed the sick, fed the hungry, and comforted those who were agonizing. Further and as noted in his teaching, eternal life is only achievable when the material life has been conquered. Luke: 4:17-19 has been taken by most Christians to be "Christ mission statement" on development agenda. Samita (2003:119) noted that, this verse should be realized as person centered and totally liberating thus calling all believers to commit themselves to change with social structures that are life-threatening, dehumanizing and oppressive to the people of God. Hence Christian churches in Kenya should not only enhance the prophetic call on development but they are also duty-bound to fulfill the mandate of Jesus Christ; their spirituality should be glued to the level of development they have for the people of Kenya.

Longley and Kiggins (1974:14) observed that any teaching promising the futuristic heavenly pie without involving itself with the current development agenda of any nation is therefore false and should be ignored. Why would the poor Christians be looking for a heavenly banquet if they have nowhere to lay their heads in this world? Should Christians in Kenya engage in all levels of human development they would eventually be far from Emperor Napoleon sarcasms that it was religion which led the poor man to accept death from starvation while the tables of the rich were laden with food (Ibid. 14).

Scriptures therefore, portray religion as a development oriented reality that human life should be engulfed in; it is the life which belongs to the age to come, a foretaste in the present world of the new heavens and new earth in which righteousness dwells (2Peter 3:13). Through the Church, the kingdom or the rule of God is realized as his followers become the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt: 3:13-16), a reality that is yet to be realized in Kenya after fifty years of her independence. Yet in Christianity it is believed that quality life in this world and the effort to strive for it can be perceived as a preparation for the ideal life with God. Christians have the noble duty of improving not only their quality of life but also that of other people through enterprises and engagement in all forms of human development in Kenya.

Langley and Kiggins further observed that a human being is made of body and soul and hence Christianity should enhance and perfect the entire and wholistic person. The Christian gospel is concern with the whole person; it brings good news for the salvation of body and soul. Consequently, Christianity must aim at transforming both the character and the environment or circumstances of each and every individual regardless of their anthropological background. It must be noted that Kenyans are still struggling with the daunting issue of poverty yet Christianity has been practiced in this country well beyond the fifty years of independence.

Integral development is not a mere accumulation of material wealth or riches as some western capitalistic model of development seem to emphasize. Rather development is of the whole person in all ways. It is the outlook of human individual as a physical, spiritual and psycho-emotional being; it comprises of cultural socio-economic, environmental and political realities (Samita: 120). If Christianity is to be of any value in Kenya Christians must develop and improve on their lives as those of others in a holistic way. Jesus proclaimed the gospel of truth and demanded a new life in each and every person; he challenged his followers that they will not only be judged because of their failure to adhere to his teaching but also on the way they had treated their fellow Christians (Matt: 25: 35,40f).

The proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ embraced both the change of heart (metanoia) or character and also puts a demand that Christians must make the world a new earth; change of the environment and circumstances people live in and for quality life. This is the challenge Kenyan are faced with as they celebrate the fifty years of independence. Christianity in Kenya ought to adhere to its master's teaching. As people wait for the new heaven and the new earth, they can only appreciate this dwelling by improving the world they already have; they should always aim at promoting the welfare of other Kenyans and more so going beyond the borders of discrimination and ethnic bias. This is what Jesus did to the people; he improved their lives and yet did not have paternalistic attitudes towards them. Like Byrne (1974:12) observes Jesus dedicated his life for everybody and gave all what he had including his own life to everyone. Those Christians and those who profess the life of Christ in Kenya should be ready to do like their master do; to show his deep faith by leading in the

area of development of the entire person. The communities of Christian or the Church of Christ have been and must continue being involved in the integral development of the people of Kenya.

Gudorf (1981) observed that Christianity appropriates a liberal orthodoxy which ensures that every human person has a right to work, to a chance to develop their qualities and personalities in exercise of their profession. Hence religion in Kenya has had great influence in liberating the citizens. It is religious leaders who in one way or other influence most of the African people in areas of education, agriculture, health as well as joining politics of prosperity that has brought about creativity and total involvement of the people of Kenya even in writing their own constitution.

1.4 EDUCATION AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION OF A PEOPLE

1.4.1 Education for Integration

Mbiti (1969) stated that Africans are 'notoriously religious' and many are the times that one cannot differentiate between the religious world as well as the physical world. Consequently, many Kenyans voluntarily associate themselves with religious networks, which they use for a variety of purposes - social, economic and even political - that go beyond the strictly religious aspect. In all parts of Kenya, mosques, churches and other religious sites are multiplying, and religious rituals are often to be seen in public space. As recent as 2013 Christian crusades and evangelicals rallies have been witnessed thus drawing mammoth crowds at national stadia. Some of these rallies occasionally featured some political leaders attending and making reconciliatory remarks. Many are the times that many great thinkers and scientists who contribute to development are formed and educated by the missionaries or through other religious organizations or churches. Religion whether Islam, Christianity, or African Tradition religion, continues to play pivotal role among the people of Kenya. The year of Jubilee should therefore be perceived as a time of reflection on what religion, education and culture have done on the people of this country.

What does 'religion' mean in the context of Kenya? The evidence suggests that most of the country's people are religious inasmuch as they believe in the existence of an invisible world, distinct but not separate from the visible world, that is inhabited by spiritual beings or forces with which they can communicate and which they perceive to have an influence on their daily lives. Religious ideas typically govern relationships of people with a perceived spirit world. In effect, this idiom can govern relations both of one person to another, or of one person to a community, but also of people to the land they cultivate. Religion therefore has a greater role to play among the people of Kenya, their politics, economics and development.

As noted in the preceding sections, religion therefore, plays great role in people's welfare; it helps or assists in eliminating dehumanizing human situation; popularly referred to as the sinful social structures. The role of the Church and in this case religion is to teach social principles that would bring about transformational change in society. This is because while industrialization increased economic development, it also brought with it class struggle which would easily treat the poor as machines of production in society.

Since development aims at eliminating poverty, ignorance and disease (Kenya **Session Paper no.10 of 1965** *African Socialism and Application to Planning in Kenya no.2*), the aim of this section is to assess how various religions have been involved in struggle against any element deterring development in Kenya. The first concentration will be on education and training.

1.4.2.1 Education and Training

Education and training feature prominently in development activities of a nation. Without proper education and training the people in their agenda, religious institutions become like any other social order of a people. Most religious institutions charge less school tuition than government and private training institutes in Kenya; they also provide students with required scholarships which would have taken years in the former institutions. A number of Kenyans have been the beneficiaries of this form of education and training which has also contributed greatly to the development of the people of this nation. In other instances, religious institutions have enhanced their education curriculum with moral and social issues which have had great impact on the character formation of many Kenyans since independence. The key that guide any education or training tools is for the purpose of capacity building and for a better type of leadership in any given nation. Education and proper training enable the citizens to participate in government's and civil society's activities.

By the very nature of their work most religions concentrate on education and training of the local people in various skills. Majority of religion start by teaching new converts their scriptures or religious manuals which are the basis of their doctrines and practices. This is what led Islam for example to introduce the *madrassa* schools along the East Coast of Africa from where young followers would be taught the faith which included the learning of basic Arabic to enable them understand the Quran. Bray et al (1986:79) have observed that Islam has had a long history in Africa and its education system has operated much longer than the Western Christianity. One example is the establishment of Al-Azhar University in Cairo founded in AD 996. Today Kenya is the home of thousands of Muslims whose role in development is basically in education, culture and social integration.

Christianity has had a great role in education and training of the people of Kenya. For example, formal education in Kenya was introduced by Christian missionaries with the establishment of slave settlement along the East Coast and similar mission stations in the hinterland. Training was about skills in trade, agriculture, healthcare, information technology, marketing, cookery, language, woodwork and tailoring. Besides the general instructions in the new methods of cultivation, brick making and tailoring, there was also some book learning from which the people were taught how to read and write either in their mother tongue, Kiswahili, English and French. The Christian Church continued to be involved in establishing the so called bush schools, catechetical centers and teacher training colleges which ended up producing productive managers; cooperation first with the colonial and the subsequent governments, Christian Churches have gone ahead to establish advanced schools and universities which again boost capacity building and human resources for the advancement of Kenya. It is the missionaries' zeal for education that today Kenya can claim to have the best educational institutions within and beyond East and Central Africa regions. Many skills training centers have also been started to train school leavers in mason, carpentry and joinery, painting as well as tailoring and design (Barret et al, 1973: 265. See also Langley and Kiggins, 119).

Many of the political leaders were also educated and molded in missionary oriented schools such as Mangu, Kambaa, Alliance, Nyeri, Nyahururu, Maseno, Precious Blood, Alliance, Bishop Gatimu and Kagumo High Schools to mention but a few missionary oriented school. Starting with the first President and now the fourth leader of Kenya, one would easily observe that they all had Christianity influencing either their education or the style of leadership that they followed. For instance President Jomo Kenyatta himself had termed Christianity and its teaching as the 'conscience' of society while Daniel Moi went as far as creating what one would call state Christianity to enable him rule Kenya. Indeed, Christianity has really changed the life of the African person. Great Muslim leaders such as Ali Mazrui are products of religion which forms the basis of form education in Kenya.

1.4.2.2 Agriculture

Like in many other African countries, Kenyan agriculture over-emphasized capital market over the actual food-oriented product. For the last fifty years the emphasis has been on cash crop such coffee, tea and pyrethrum as opposed to food-oriented farming. The question of food must be at the center of daily life, starting with what Ela (1989:92) calls the "ministry of granary" and in relation again to the biblical teaching (Cf.Gen.42:1-2, 43:1-2; Matt.25:35-42).

Christianity as a religion has continued to play an important role in promoting agriculture in Kenya. Even among the freed slaves in the early years of slavery and colonialism, it was mandatory that every adult couple had their own farm despite the fact that they had to work for their masters (Langley and Kiggins, 52). Even today missionaries and the local clergy continue to own big farms as a way of sustaining their evangelization process among the people of Kenya. The Archdioceses of Nairobi, Nyeri and Kisumu of the Catholic Church for example, own tracks of land meant for agriculture. The Anglican as well as the Presbyterian churches of Africa possess large pieces of land from where either their educational or agricultural activities are carried out. Most of the cash crops such as tea and coffee which were introduced by the missionaries have continued to bring development to the people of Kenya and beyond. Many agricultural training institutes were also as a result of the Church's activities (Barret, 1973).

It is paramount that as Kenya celebrate fifty years of independence; other religious institutions should come on board particularly in areas of agriculture and food programmes that would be appropriate in feeding and sustaining the people. Foreign borrowing especially on food should be discouraged through the introduction of new farming techniques.

1.4.1.3 Health

Generally speaking, health and education constitute a field in which the role of religious institutions has been realized and more so in the development of a people. This is in line with the teaching of Jesus who came to redeem human beings from all forms of oppression, diseases, poverty and all types of ailments that affect and demean human beings in their struggle to improve themselves as well as the entire world (Matt: 8:16-17, Mk: 1:32-34; 16:15-18. Cf. Isaiah 53:4). Hence those practicing Christian ministry in Kenya are duty bound to do so intensively as its coming from their master Jesus Christ. This intensity extends beyond spiritual healing and transforms the physical lives of the believers. This then is the foundation of the healing ministry of the Church in Kenya and goes beyond the fifty years of independence. It has been noted that most of the good hospitals in Kenya are basically missionary-oriented. In their urge to develop the entire human person, these missionaries apply the holistic approach – physical, spiritual and even psychological approach in order to offer better medical services just as they were the pioneers of better education in Kenya (Langley and Kiggins: 145; cf. Adrien Atman:141-144 and Barret: 265-287).

Other religious organizations have also contributed immensely to the improvement of human health. Hinduism and Islam have had great impact on human medicine in Kenya (Cf. Visa Oshwal Education and Relief

foundation and optical healing among the people). Hence besides the Church other religions have involved themselves in the healing ministry thus eliminating diseases and any other illness that might have appeared as enemies of development.

The role of religious institutions in welfare provision could be considerably expanded, however, notably in view of the rapid expansion of the activity of Islamic non-governmental organizations (NGOs) throughout Africa and the occasionally progressive role played by Imams, such as in Mombasa and elsewhere in Kenya, where even conservative clerics have been prominent in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

It must be said that the rise of Islamic NGOs often causes nervousness among many governments due to the suspicion that any form of Muslim proselytization may be tainted by association with terrorism. Development officials need to discriminate clearly between Islamic NGOs or other organizations that can play a constructive role in development and the small number that are inclined towards violence. A good way of doing this is by working with Islamic NGOs whenever this is possible, learning what they do, and gaining an ability to distinguish between those that are useful for development purposes from those that are not. The closeness of Kenya to Somalia has had negative impact on the role of Islam as a religion or a terrorist organization. The deployment of the Kenya Defense Forces into Somalia has also been perceived a war on terrorism rather than on Islamic religion which has contributed immensely to various development projects in Kenya since independence. Ela (Ibid. 67) observed that, any steps taken in the area of health care always serve a social and economic system that remains their point of reference. He went further to state that, before the independence movement in Africa, medical care was inseparable from the colonial policy of the European powers. Following this line of thought and having reached the Jubilee Year, Kenya needs to reflect on the number of hospitals, clinics, hygiene and vaccination programmes initiated by religious institutions for the people of Kenya. Unlike in the colonial period where the provision of health services was for the sake of keeping African strong for the controlled labour (Ibid., 68), today, and though citizens continue wallowing in poverty and lack of health facilities, religious institution encourage their adherents to stick to health living for the development of the people of Kenya.

1.4.1.4 Religion and Politics

Since the colonizers handed over power to the African leaders, religion has been playing a great role in molding, nurturing and developing the political mind of the people of Kenya; religion has created political awareness on its adherents all over the country. This has occurred as both Christian churches and other religious institutions have continued stressing on people's rights and their need to engage in politics.

As in earlier years where the issue of land, human rights, fairness in the labour market, cultural values dominated the nation, Kenyans and particularly now after the proclamation of their 2010 Constitution continued to play their role in nation building (Wamue and Theuri 2003: 95-112). This is line with what the mainstream churches and their Islamic counterpart did prior to 1963. Religion has been a force to reckon with in Kenya's politics.

During the time of the fight for the multiparty politics, religious leaders in almost all religious denominations including Muslims, Hindus and others, played an important role in the quest for implementation of political liberalism, the second liberation and democracy in the country. The role played by the clergy (Cf. the Ufungumano and Bomas initiatives) and many other religious leaders, was a common feature in the initiative to come up with the current Constitution (Wamue and Theuri above: 125-138). Apart from participating and encouraging political activism, the institutions that implement policy in mainstream churches have engaged in organizing studies and activities for justice and peace in Kenya (Cf. the NCKK and the KEC). The ecumenical movers were especially during the political instigated land and tribal crashes of yester-years.

Currently there are church leaders elected as legislatures while others have been appointed in political positions thus shaping and molding the politics of this country. Hence the role of religion in the development of the Kenyan nation has been vital. This role is based on Christ's demand that his followers should be carriers of peace (Cf. Matt: 5:9) – peace is both a political and religious process without which development cannot be accomplished. In Islam the name of religion itself denotes peace while in Hinduism "ahimsa" is a call for peace thus for the Church and other religious institutions, peace is paramount element in the realization of development. These religious institutions have actively participated in electoral process since 1963 and have given credit where it deserves. Islam on the other hand has been seeking justice especially where their followers have been discriminated against because of their faith which has nothing to do with terrorism in the contemporary world.

In terms of development, religion has had great impact on the people of Kenya. The government of Kenya cannot therefore ignore this important institution particularly in education, agriculture, health and politics. This is because faith touches on the totality of human existence and all its challenges. Thus, when faith seeks to understand itself, to verify itself and to account for itself in Kenya, it must bring with it the people's struggle to escape from the hellish circle in which they risk being permanently imprisoned. This religion must take care on all the socio-economic and political problems affecting the people of Kenya since independence.

1.5 THE JUBILEE YEAR.

The fifty years of Kenya's independence has had both achievement and failures in areas of development. Therefore they have been years of fear, political intimidation, complicity, and timidity. At times, Christianity and other religions backed away from the forces of oppression, yet they were far much better placed to cry out against unfairness and injustice and corrupt leadership in Kenya. In some cases, Kenyans have questioned the authenticity of religion in the midst of all kinds of abuses and oppression of the citizens particularly in the hands of the police, military as well as the illegal sects that used to terrorize people during and after the one party state. The unsatisfactory condition of the Kenyan people still exists despite the presence of religion and Christianity at large. Yet Hollenbeck (1994) one time observed that in emphasizing the congruity of Christian perspectives on justice with what can be expected from all people, as expected by natural law, the Church has methodically minimized conflicts and marginalization in society.

The year of Jubilee challenges Kenyans to liberate and release themselves from all chains of oppression; corruption and marginalization of any kind; it is a year of freedom, accountability and responsible citizenship (Ela, 137ff). These calls to question the role of religion in Kenya: What are the priorities of both Christianity and other religious institutions in developing the people of Kenya? What can be expected from these religions as they begin to examine themselves and attempt to define themselves in light of the major issues that affect the people of Kenya in their celebration of the Jubilee year? Is the spiritual world more important than the temporal reality? The encounter that people have had with God in their respective faith demands that citizens take their spiritual and social responsibility of bringing development to the people (Baum, 19984). This also applies to the citizens of Kenya. The reading of the Biblical and Quran teaching should be perceived in light of peoples' liberation; the encounter with these religious sources challenges Kenyans to be the first anchors of a wholistic human development.

In celebrating the fifty years of independence, Kenyans should realize that religion, Christianity and education have had great influence in development. Each citizen must be given the responsibility for their growth; their own way of implementing liberation among the people of Kenya. Education has been the source of freedom and self actualization for the people of Kenya such that the citizens of this nation can no longer be taken for granted; they can no longer keep on relying on foreign aids for their development. Though religion and cultural integration with other nations and having survived for the last fifty years of independence, Kenyans are ready to own development through their own spirit of accountability as they pay their taxes so as to minimize excessive borrowing from other nations.

1.6 CONCLUSION AND THE WAY FORWARD

This article has addressed the role of education, religion and people culture and religion in the development of Kenya in fifty years period of development. It has also been noted that Kenya is an important country that plays a great role in the development of her citizens.

Two important remarks can be deduced from the above observations and which must be utilized by scholars articulating the place of religion, education and culture in areas of development in Kenya: **Firstly**, neither economic growth nor even state-building should be thought of as goals in themselves, although both are crucial aspects of a better future for Kenyans. Any development enterprise must begin by considering how people full range of resources, including their spiritual or religious resources, can be utilized for their general well-being which including attaining their basic needs. Religious resources do not consist only of networks of people who relate to each other through religious practice or adherence. It is quite feasible to think of development in the future in terms of spiritual empowerment, in a similar sense as has been considered in regard, for example, to women's and youth's empowerment.

Secondly, it has become clear that much development thinking has been far too short-term. Projects are often intended to last for a short period, and judged to be successes or failures after that time. It has become apparent that in many cases a much longer timeframe is needed, and that a specific development project may need more years for its realization. Considered in their short-term, medium or long terms, projects could easily yield better results. Development planning is generally oriented towards specific outcomes, and individual projects are judged by their success in producing results, obscuring the fact that in many cases the process of development is at least as important as the end-product of a particular scheme or operation.

As Kenya pride herself in these fifty years, she must also prepare herself for greater attainment and be the amphitheatre of development of her people. Kenya should struggle to attain self actualization within the next few years. Hence the Jubilee year must touch on the core issues that affect and influence the development of the human person; it must touch on the core essence of what is considered as integral and wholistic development which all religions should be engaged in. On the other hand, religions must diagnose the situation and needs of their members and even encourage them to fully engage themselves in areas of development; they must therefore encourage dialogue and become partners with the government and with other agencies of development in Kenya. In its quest for development in Kenya, religion must also become the voice of the voiceless, the poor and the

marginalized particularly, women and children; it must challenge any type of ideology, political systems and programmes that are pretentious and deceiving in their advocate of human life while in actual fact they are after exploitation of the people of Kenya. Further, religion should be ready to resist any socio-economic system that uses human beings as an end to acquire economic benefits and wealthy for a few corrupt individuals. This is a great challenge but real development has a cost that every religion should be willing to pay. This was the challenge the writer of the Book of Leviticus addressed and in which Kenya is now celebrating in its fiftieth year of the Lord's favour or the Year of Jubilee.

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