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RECONCILIATION AFTER A CONFLICT - EXPLORING THE LINK
BETWEEN EDUCATION AND RECONCILIATION IN A
CONFLICT-AFFECTED SOCIETY

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<p>Throughout human history conflicts have always been present in societies, some of which are ongoing and some are transformed. Conflict has a major effect on all aspects of society and its people. The aim of the thesis is to seek answers on how people confront the dark past peacefully in terms of reconciliation after a conflict. The prevalence of conflict sparked the interest in understanding how a society manages to constantly rebuild its future despite its political hardships in its past. To answer this question, I decided to investigate the role of education.</p> <p>This thesis investigates the phenomenon of reconciliation and education in a conflict-affected society. The research questions concentrate on the definition and characteristics of reconciliation and explore validations of its importance. The link between reconciliation and education is investigated and later discussed whilst demonstrating an example of a reconciliation process and its educational characteristics in Northern Uganda. The research is conducted by using the method of descriptive literary overview, gathering information from various sources of books, declarations and publications. In addition to the literary data, critical discussion by the researcher is posited.</p> <p>The overall finding of the thesis was the emphasis on uniqueness of every conflict and the following reconciliation process. The research finds recurring themes in methods of reconciliation processes, e.g. ensuring the locality of the process and the presence of a third party. The research findings are somewhat adaptable to different settings, from large-scale to smaller-scale settings, such as schools. The thesis invites the reader to inspect these characteristics critically and consider their usefulness to one's own work as an educator when facing a conflict situation.</p>			
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1 INTRODUCTION

The topic of this Bachelor's thesis deals with approaches to reconciliation through education and discussion about its role in a conflict-affected society. The intention is to provide an insight to reconciliation and familiarize the reader to the concept of conflict and reconciliation through educational perspective. The intention is to inquire the reader to view the crucial relationship between education and reconciliation in a shaken society that has divided.

Each family, nation and society has a story. The various storylines throughout human history has shown the challenging nature of inter-group relationships. Conflicts and disputes have been present throughout human history, and have sometimes hardened life in various areas in terms of structure of society and its infrastructure. During the time of conflict, society confronts the difficulty in maintaining order and providing basic needs for its people.

Though the living circumstances vary throughout the world for all people, the article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states the right for everyone to acquire education. (United Nations General Assembly, 1948). In 2016, nearly 250 million children live in conflict-affected countries, (UNICEF, 2016) and 37 million children affected by conflict do not receive education. (UNESCO, 2015 in European Commission, 2016)

In 1990, UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF and The World Bank launched Education for All movement to promote quality basic education globally. (UNESCO, n.d) The second Education for All meeting produced Six Education for All goals that were agreed upon by 164 countries in Dakar in 2000. One of the six goals was to ensure the access of all children, in particular girls and children in difficult circumstances, compulsory education of good quality by 2015. (UNESCO, 2000)

One can therefore interpret that the commonly agreed declarations and goals showcase the universal appreciation for education and recognition of the positive power it has on societies. (Leach & Dunne, 2007, 11) Education has been stated to be an important humanitarian response by many international actors, such as Global Education Cluster. (Global Education Cluster, n.d.) However, the goals do not showcase the current reality, evident by the statistics by UNESCO.

The statistics present the reality in numbers. Throughout history, many regions, nations and societies have experienced conflicts as humanitarian emergencies, some of which are still ongoing and some have been thoroughly or partly transformed. My interest then summarized itself in one word; how. How have people managed to confront the past and its hardship, and still move on and commence rebuilding the future? The prevalence of conflict sparked my interest in understanding how a society manages to constantly rebuild its future despite its political hardships in its past. To answer this question, I decided to investigate the role of education.

The aforementioned issue then introduced me to an interconnected platform and field of study, and to the phenomenon of reconciliation. According to Huyse, reconciliation acts as a relatively new addition to the field of post-conflict studies, which causes severe imperfections in practice as well as in knowledge. (Huyse, 2005) The growing amount of research and literature thus show, that despite its characteristic as a new branch of research, it is viewed crucial and important. The importance of reconciliation in a post-conflict setting in its relatively new role as a field of study is what has inspired my research.

To demonstrate my interest in this particular field of research, I have gathered definitions of key concepts for the theoretical framework, summarized general observations of reconciliation through education. To justify my findings, I present an example of a Middle African state of Uganda that has benefited from reconciliation through education in the process of post-conflict healing. The example used herein is simplified, as no history can be interpreted simple if one wills to maintain the dignity of all actors of the story. The included examples of reconciliation processes were chosen merely to demonstrate the diverse nature of reconciliation; they were not chosen based on their physical location or other factor likewise.

This area of interest has therefore guided me throughout the research process of this thesis. On a personal note, the desire for research on the role of education before, during and after human conflict was inspired in 2010-2011, when my family and I lived in the United Arab Emirates. A serious of uprisings that are now commonly referred to as the Arab Spring commenced in North Africa in 2010 that shook the Arab regimes in the Middle East with its powerful protests, leading to some regimes' overthrows. (Wilson & Panara, 2013, ix)

My then school had a diverse body of Arab students, many of whom originated from countries that experienced civil uprisings that later escalated into conflicts and military

repression, such as in Syria. (Wilson & Panara, 2013, ix) The nature of school recess jokes and games took a turn to be more political and were overshadowed with constant worry. However, the everyday routine of coming to school guaranteed a normalcy and refuge from the thoughts about the areas of conflict. Education and school was a uniting factor for all pupils experiencing conflict mentally, and the school building and the lessons in it provided areas for discussions that were beneficial to all.

2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

This bachelor's thesis focuses on the following research question.

What does reconciliation mean in a conflict-affected society?

Why is reconciliation important and how can it be implemented through education?

The thesis is descriptive literary overview (Salminen, 2011, 6-9), in which the data used for the research consists of various appropriate books, books of electronical format, declarations and publications.

Due to my educational history and particular interest, the research question is emphasized on the use of education as a means of reconciliation in society. The research therefore concentrates on the topic on societal level, opposed to small-scale conflict resolution and transformation and reconciliation e.g. in a classroom. The internal conflicts of classroom may and very possibly result of situations in society outside the school building, and observing methods for conflict-resolution in a classroom offers a very fascinating possibility for research. However, in the latter part of the thesis, the research is tied to a school-context to respond to the interests of its readers.

Therefore, the thesis is dedicated into research and observation of the possibilities of education as a phenomenon to mold itself to meet the needs of a conflict-affected community as a mean of reconciliation. For building peace through reconciliation, education (in this context) will be comprehended by all of its aspects, including the informal, non-formal and

formal education as well as its content, teaching methods and the adult and child-centeredness. (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, 23)

3 DEFINING THE TERMINOLOGY

This theoretical framework seeks clarification of the terms that are vital in order to gain an insight of education in a conflict-affected society. The terms and theory by Muzafer Sherif create a context in which the latter parts of the thesis are looked through with.

The research carried out by Sherif is included in the theoretical framework to observe the psychological human behavior tendencies in inter-group relations and to demonstrate the definitions of conflict presented by Wallensteen and Bartos & Wehr.

The second part of the theoretical framework focuses on the term reconciliation and its simplified definition.

3.1 Defining Human Conflict

The term conflict is rooted to the everyday language and its use can be visible in various occasions. Conflict, as a term and concept, has many meanings on various theoretical platforms due to the varying natures of science. (Bartos & Wehr, 2002, 13)

A definition presented by Peter Wallensteen states that a conflict consists of three components. In order for conflict to exist, there has to be action, since it comprises the conflict. Second, there has to be incompatibility. A stern disagreement has to exist between at least two actors, in which their appeals cannot be accommodated by the same resources at the same time. Therefore, conflict can be defined as a social situation that comprises of two actors or more striving to obtain an available set of insufficient resources at the same time. The third component of a conflict is the actors or parties. (Wallensteen, 2011, 15)

The definition by Wallensteen supports the definition by Bartos & Wehr, which states the conflict as a situation in which the behavior of actors is used against each other to reach incompatible goals and/or to express hostility. (Bartos & Wehr, 2002) As Galtung words it, “something is standing in the way of something else.” The conflict as a dispute consists of

two actors pursuing the same, scarce goal, and very easily leads to harming the other. (Galtung, 1995)

To be noted is the definitions of Wallensteen and Bartos & Wehr attempt to simplify and demonstrate a complex phenomenon caused by humans with many causes and consequences. Conflicts are products of their environment and each therefore unique. Galtung, in his book, *Peace by Peaceful Means* (1995), observes the conflict and its nature from many different cultural viewpoints more closely.

The definitions drawn to exemplify the nature of human conflict were chosen in mind of support the general conception of conflict as a humanitarian emergency. The definitions by various researches were well explained and academically researched and one can compare the definitions to the characteristics of existing conflicts. An overarching definitions of conflict that kept recurring in various literature were chosen for this thesis. However, conflict as a term is very versatile and can vary in meaning depending on the context it is being handled and discussed in. The definitions were reached to familiarize reader to the academically researched concept of conflict, as it is a 'state' that community has experienced and reconciliation is usually sought in post-conflict state of the community. Reconciliation addresses the past; in this case, the conflict is an essential part of the past and conflict acts as a precondition for reconciliation.

3.2 Reconciliation

As conflict, the concept of reconciliation has been rooted into our everyday language, yet in the rhetoric reconciliation as a term can vary in meaning. According to Cambridge English Dictionary, reconciliation is "a situation in which two people or groups of people become friendly again after they have argued and the process of making two opposite beliefs, ideas or situations agree." (Cambridge English Dictionary, n.d.) It is to be considered of what constitutes the previously mentioned word of friendly and how it will be measured if this definition is reached. Will the term *friendly* portray socializing between the actors, or the actors just "refraining from killing each other"? (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, cop. 2007, 22)

Generally, reconciliation as a term is used to describe a community's or groups of people engaging in the act of post-conflict resolution. Reconciliation is when the conflict actors

learn to see the humanity of the other, accept it and identify the opportunity of a constructive relationship. (Staub, Pearlman, & Bilali, 2010 in Frydman, 2013, 102). Therefore reconciliation can portray the act of coming together; it is the opposite of growing apart. Reconciliation is also, at least in part, how to handle and what to do with the past. (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, cop. 2007, 22) This argument is also supported by Hamber & wan der Merve, who claim the term reconciliation hold in positive connotation, meaning healing the past conflicts and coming together. (Hamer & wan der Merve, 1998)

The definitions may represent the rhetoric, but a general agreement on what reconciliation means in practice can prove to be unclear. According to Huyse, there are still large gaps in our knowledge concerning reconciliation. (Huyse, 2005, 7)

3.2.1 Explaining human tendency for conflict – Preconditions for reconciliation

To demonstrate the definitions of conflict, an example of research committed by social psychologist Muzafer Sherif was chosen. The experiment of *Robbens Cave* introduces the reader to the human tendency for conflict and the magnitude of power circumstances have on human behavior.

In 1954, a Turkish-American social psychologist Muzafer Sherif engaged in research when observing a boys' summer camp in the United States. The camp commenced by welcoming the participants with a hostile atmosphere and dividing them into two groups the participants named *The Eagles* and *The Rattlers*. Athletic competitions were set in order to create a sense of unity among the groups and encourage rivalry. Throughout the camp, the camp personnel as researchers created situations in which the other group was treated preferentially; for a party, the other group was advised to arrive earlier than the other. The earlier arrival time allowed the group to enjoy the most appealing refreshments and leaving the most undesirable spread for the latter group. Once groups realized the polarization, the situation escalated from name-calling to a food fight and a riot. Attempts to abolish the general hostility between groups by organizing common activities turned out to be ineffective. However, facilitating joint situations for all participants to work co-operatively in order to achieve a goal that was valued by all diminished the hostile feelings and increased positive feelings. (Hamburg & Hamburg, 2004, 31-32)

From Muzafer's study one can observe how quickly hostility can form, and how inequality can aggravate inter-group resentment. It can be also observed, that the inter-group hostility and resentment can possibly be overcome by facilitating collaboration between groups. (Hamburg & Hamburg, 2004, 32) This can be interpreted as a very strong argument for inter-group collaboration through education. Having a common goal, valued by all the parties and having them interact with a common task, according to the study, is vital in the transformation of conflict. Muzafer's study is presented to clarify the possible setting for the preconditions before the reconciliation takes place.

The *Robbens Cave* experiment demonstrates the escalation of small-scale fights to a bigger conflict. However, to be noted is the context the research was implemented in. The camp participants were presumably underage and to critically read the study, one has to take into account the participants' possible physical and psychological development stage. Also, the research was executed in a summer camp, presumably in a remote location, which can affect the behavior of the participants since they are not in a familiar context. However, the experiment showcases the human fragility and tendency for conflict; the participants were clearly not determined to fight with each other during the camp if the conditions did not provide circumstances for conflict eruption.

4 RECONCILIATION AFTER A CONFLICT

"Reconciliation is the most natural thing in the world. But it is also a complicated thing. And it gets more complicated when we are talking not about a husband and wife, but about a nation, with a long history of oppression and abuse and violence. How can we expect victims to forgive their torturers? How much truth is enough?"

(Desmond Tutu in Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, 2007, x)

According to the Archbishop Desmond, reconciliation is natural. Reconciliation is complicated. Yet it is in our instinct to reach for reconciliation and in our hearts how to

reconcile. (Tutu in Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, 2007, x) But what is reconciliation after a conflict– that is what the following chapters attempt to clarify.

Conflict shakes society. Conflict complicates relationships within society, creates fractures to inter-group relationships. Society that has experienced conflict or is still in midst of a conflict is vulnerable, justice and general agreement of what to do with the past and the actors of the conflict is sought. The main focus of the research of this thesis is put on a post-conflict situation in which a group of people have faced injustice and violence.

As a concept reconciliation is not new. Its legacy in post-World War II Europe can still be witnessed as e.g. *Austrian Fund for Reconciliation, Peace and Cooperation*. It has been recognized to be a central component for the restoration of relationships between peoples in post-war Europe. (Smith, 2005, 385) According to Daly and Sarkin-Hughes, the individuals of war-worn societies eventually decide to take upon reconciliation instead of the continued hostility, frustration and anger, no matter how difficult the reconciliation can prove to be. (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, 2007)

According to Smith, reconciliation may be executed on different levels as it is necessary. (Smith, 2005, 385) As the individuals, as earlier stated, embark on their personal seek for reconciliation, the reconciliation process can be and is beneficial to higher organizations. It can be generally stated that reconciliation is pursued by governments for several reasons. Reconciliation can be understood to promote restorative justice, it may improve the value of deterrence and upholds intrinsic value for having peace as well as promotes the respect for law. Programs of reconciliation may also “consolidate democracy.” (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, 2007, 12-13) Also, reconciliation can also improve the state’s economic situation in the state’s favor; once conflict and violence have been eradicated, the country attracts more investors from outside. (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, 2007, 12-13)

The previously mentioned reasons give understanding of the framework of reasons in which governments and states pursue reconciliation in addition the individuals’ seek for reconciliation. Theory speaks for itself, and actions operated by various governments across the world have proved to recognize reconciliation as an important process of building a more peaceful future. Therefore, reconciliation is something that is endeavored in order to community to function in a just and beneficial manner to all.

To present an example of the previously stated, to uncover the state’s violent apartheid past, Nelson Mandela signed a legislation *Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation act* in

1995 that gave birth to operation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission operated from 1996 to 1998 with haste due to the short time span it has been granted to complete its operation. The commission was conducted through three committees; *human rights violations, amnesty, and rehabilitation and reparation*, and mostly operated public hearings and investigations. (Balai, 2005, 295) Daly & Sarkin-Hughes raise the question about the TRC's transformative potential, as the most successful cases of reconciliation through the TRC involved people who were predisposed to forgive. (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, 2007, 73-74) However, it has been argued that since the TRC in South Africa, more reference to reconciliation as a peace-building component in the time after conflict has gained more prominence. (Smith, 2005, 385) The recognition given to reconciliation as a means of post-conflict healing by highly structured organizations, such as the state of South Africa, has very probably improved reconciliation's status as a possible way of post-conflict reconstruction and conflict transformation. There are many examples of TRC's around the world, and that can be a suggestion for further research.

Reconciliation can be stated to be a goal (as something to achieve) as well as a process (a means to achieve the goal). (Huyse, 2005) Huyse summarizes the main points of the handbook *Reconciliation After Violent Conflict* (ed. Bloomfield & Barnes & Huyse, 2003) in 5 points, that provide an insight of principles of reconciliation after a conflict can hold in as a phenomenon.

"Reconciliation is a long-term process." (Huyse, 2005, 8) Ideally, reconciliation holistically would prevent the past to turn into a seed for a new conflict. However, this can prove to be difficult. Reconciliation is not an event or an isolated act; instead, it is a nonlinear and unpredictable process with various stages. The acts of reconciliation process call for changes; in conduct, in attitudes and in the institutional environment. According to Huyse, the first step towards more peaceful living circumstances is achieving non-violent coexistence, thus abolishing hostility in society. The second step holds in building of trust and confidence. During this stage of the process, each person gains confidence in her/himself and each other and recognize the humanity of all actors. This is claimed to hopefully lead recognizing the guilt of the past perpetrator and thus create of empathy and forgiveness among the victims as well as the perpetrators. (Huyse, 2005, 8-9) Somewhat similar pattern, that Huyse introduced, can be observed in the Indonesian program of *Empowering for Reconciliation*. The program is recognized to pursue reconciliation in three steps. The acknowledgment of the injustice as an experience to the other (victim) by the perpetrator

acts as the first stage. The second stage aims to enbettering the relationship of the victim and the perpetrator to the most possible extent. The third stage focuses on obtaining clarity about the future and its actions. (Daly & Sarking-Hughes, 76)

“Reconciliation is broad and extensive.” (Huyse, 2005, 9) Reconciliation as a phenomenon holds in different levels; e.g. inter-personal reconciliation as well as collective reconciliation (to note is that reconciliation can be also individual, with one reconciling with oneself about one’s past). (Huyse, 2005, 9, Smith, 2005, 385) The approach to reconciliation, according to Huyse, must be “bottom up”. (Huyse, 2005, 9) The decisions towards reconciliation from the upper hand imposed to individuals may lead to frustration and have no impact whatsoever. According to Huyse, no religious or political authorities can forgive or reconcile on behalf of the victims. Also is the relationship of victim and the offender delicate in terminology. The whole reconciliation process not only includes the possible perpetrator and the victim, but also the second-generation victims, the bystanders just to name few. Reconciliation thus has to address the causes of the eruption of conflict; without change in patterns that contributed to the birth of conflict, they will generate the same consequences. Thus it is claimed, that foundation for long-lasting reconciliation is social, political and economic justice. (Huyse, 2005, 9-10)

“Lasting reconciliation home-grown.” (Huyse, 2005, 10) Reconciliation process, if imported from another context, cannot be successful. The reconciliation process methods need to respond to the needs and experiences of the people involved in the conflict. (Huyse, 2005, 10) This statement is supported by one of Smith. Smith argues, that since conflict is one of a kind and each conflict have varying factors, question of what is realistic and reasonable in terms of expectations to the reconciliation process can vary. (Smith, 2005, 385) Galtung introduces peace studies with a close comparison to health studies, stating that in each field of study the research consists of same components. In an example presented by Galtung, state can be ill or well (as the word-pair health/disease responds to the peace study word-pair of peace/violence), and if for some reasons the system ceases to be ‘well’, a question arises if the system is capable of adequate *self-restoration* to reachie the wellness or if interventions from the outside are needed. Galtung claims that the system itself can provide adequate therapy for recovery, and the *other-intervention* should not be interpreted to be therapy and can even worsen the system. The *self-restoration* does not have to be a conscious choice; instead, just like our bodies, it can recover by itself. However, positive conditions that enable the recovery of the restorative functions need to be created. (Galtung,

1995) However, there are tools and ideas presented by researchers for reconciliation that have proved to be efficient somewhere, and adaptation of these concepts is possible to another context. (Huyse, 2005, 10)

“There is no one road to reconciliation.” (Huyse, 2005, 10) A single tool cannot solve a problem. Instead, reconciliation consists of many initiatives and approaches to the problem. (Huyse, 2005, 10)

“It is one of many challenges.” (Huyse, 2005, 10-11) After a conflict, society confronts a set of societal challenges e.g. concerning safety, economics and politics. Quite often reconciliation efforts are postponed due to short-term economic or political interests, and then given a rushed approach by international peace makers and facilitators. This can be explained with their short-term interest in the reconciliation process of a given society, or unfounded belief that success of the transition from conflict to peace is measured by the rapid move towards national unity. The book of *Reconciliation after Violent Conflict* argues otherwise. Reconciliation process needs time, and if the pain and hurt has not been addressed properly, it will only grow and not diminish. (Huyse, 2005, 10-11) According to Minow, if collective response to a collective injustice is absent, individuals are left with something that is of “too much forgetting or too much memory.” (Minow, 2002) If collective response is absent, the inhumane violence is left uncorrected. (Minow, 2002)

As Huyse (2005) claimed that no head of any institution cannot forgive or reconcile behalf of victims, and instead reconciliation happens from *bottom-up* direction. However, reconciliation is sometimes understood as a political process (Paulson, 2011, 4), in which the rhetoric of reconciliation in politics can be researched. The rhetoric of reconciliation can be unintentionally black and white, as the terms of victim and perpetrator are emotionally charged. According to Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, the first instinct leads towards division of populace into perpetrators and to victims. The legislation is also understood to be polarized when seeking to promote reconciliation; victims being the creditors and perpetrators the debtors. However, the reality is more complex and nuanced. (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, 2007, 77) Not only the question of who takes the ‘blame’ of the actions of the past, but also to be questioned is the responsibilities and rights of by-standers, second-generation victims and such.

Reconciliation can thus be interpreted as confrontation of past in order to look forward, to future. Ostensibly, education is interpreted to be an investment for future; “education is a

futuristic activity in every society.” (Keasley, DeLuca, & Maphosa, 2014 253-254) Reconciliation, as noted in the earlier mentioned literature, is seen as a process or a goal (as Huyse has presented) which aims in the rebuilding of just and peaceful tomorrow’s society. Both of the processes, both reconciliation’s and education’s, characteristics can be deduced to be rather similar. This has been pointed out by many scholars, saying the relationship is crucial. (Paulson, 2011, 2-3) Seek for justice and truth after a violent period of time or human rights abuses is expected by international norms (Kelsall, 2005 in Paulson, 2011, 2). In addition to the declarations stated by UNESCO and EFA, United Nations General Assembly declared the right to emergency situations resolution. (United Nations General Assembly, 2010) According to Paulson, reconciliation is the link that connects these two priorities, and a growing concern takes place when handling conflict-affected situations by international actors for “linking reconciliation and education”. (Parmar et al, 2010, xxiii, Paulson, 2011, 2)

4.1 The relationship between justice and reconciliation

As one familiarizes the topic of reconciliation to oneself, the phenomenon of justice undoubtedly plays an important role in the research of reconciliation. In the following paragraphs one has sought explanations of justice and how the phenomenon is linked to reconciliation. The definitions mentioned seek to deepen the understanding of reconciliation and why it is a human tendency to pursue it.

Once an individual or group of people have experienced something that according to them an act of injustice, justice is most commonly pursued. Capacity to feel injustice and understand it marks moral maturity. (Rosenblum, 2002) According to criminologist Howard Zehr, this is a human need. If one does not experience justice, reconciliation and healing are even impossible to achieve. Thus, Zehr claims, precondition for closure is justice. (Zehr, 1990, 188)

Zehr presents two sub-interpretations of justice. According to *retributive justice*, ‘wrongdoing’ is understood as violation of rules, as in *restorative justice*, the emphasis on the definition of wrongdoing by the harm it has caused to people and relationships. (Zehr, 1990, 184)

Throughout the research and literature written about reconciliation, one faces the term *restorative justice* constantly. Reflecting to one definition of reconciliation, as “people coming together” (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, cop. 2007, 22), a clear connection between restorative justice and reconciliation can be detected. Both of these concepts/phenomena focus on the relationship of the parties involved in the wrongdoing and the past is confronted to create a direction towards future.

5 EXPLORING THE LINK BETWEEN RECONCILIATION AND EDUCATION

A broad insight of how education can contribute to reconciliation, according to Smith, is still evolving and developing. (Smith, 2005, 385) The following is a brief overview of the statements and research done by various scholars on education for reconciliation to discuss with aforementioned statement.

To argue why reconciliation can be dissolved to education, one must observe the definitions and justifications for traditional education in order to acquire a wide perspective of why traditional education is viewed important by governments. One aspect states that the sociological task of schools is to socialize the child in order to become a critical but an obedient citizen to society. Schools prepare children for their future lives in their very country. Thus “the reigning image is schools are designed and managed within a national context for the specific needs and goals of a particular nation.” (Baker & Letendre, 2012, 456) Children are educated to acquire values of culture of home and society and are prepared for a productive life, including work-related skills and co-operation. (Keasley et al., 2014, 253-254) From the liberal view of the world, education results in a society of tolerance and respect for difference. The primary goal of public education traditionally is to create harmony within society, and is viewed as an investment not only to an individual but also to the wider society. (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000, 6)

However, though usually positive light is cast upon education, schools have turned out to be settings of repression of minorities throughout the course of history. Educational institutions may provide a place for exacerbating tensions, encourage repression and provide sites for

“social, ethnic and gender violence”. (Leach & Dunne, 2007) A case in point from the 20th century Europe is the Nazi regime of Germany. However, education also is recognized to have the power to eradicate deep-rooted schemas and prejudices of society. (Leach & Dunne, 2007, 11) The statement presented about education’s power is very essential when discussing the education in a post-conflict setting. The claim by Leach & Dunne can be interpreted to be the overarching ‘theme’ in research of education in post-conflict settings.

Deducing from the statements made by the researchers mentioned in the paragraphs above, education is seen crucial to future, is under the influence of the state but can also contribute to the harmony of society. Researches across as well as political leaders in their rhetoric have pointed out the crucial relationship between reconciliation and education. Education has been suggested as a one answer to the question of the methods of after-conflict reconciliation and rebuilding, especially for the sake of healing and rehabilitation the children. (Machel, 2010, xiii)

After a conflict, societies are to face the atrocities of the past. Truth is said to lead to reconciliation. However, what constitutes the truth is to be determined. It has been argued that the truth may impede reconciliation, since the nature of the truth can be atrocious that empathy and forgiveness are not possible. (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, cop. 2007, p. 5-6) Coherently in the introduction of the section of the thesis, Desmond Tutu phrases the question of how much truth is enough. This is where one gazes at the forms of history teaching in schools; how is it implemented and what kind of truths does the teaching hold in.

Whatever the truth may be in varying cases, according to Ahonen, the confrontation of historical facts and their clarification plays an important role towards reconciliation. Clarifying the historical facts in education is presented as two distinctively different alternatives. A usual method is to count on the unifying power of the stories of remote past and cut off the difficulties of recent past in the syllabus. This method was applied e.g. in South Africa in the 1980s where the state due to its apartheid policy prohibited the Black schools to include post 1948 national history in their teaching. The history syllabus is arranged to end in 1970 in Afghanistan in 2012 and the Bosnian schools were requested not to teach the wars of the 1990s in Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Ahonen, 2012, 25) The other option is presented to teach the history multiperspectively. According to Ahonen, this way a chance for a healing dialogue about the past can take place in a classroom. It is also stated

that for “reconciliation of minds, the contribution of both public memory and school education is necessary.” (Ahonen, 2012, 74)

The knowledge about the past can therefore be interpreted to be the first thing when building the future. As the living conditions of society change and generations grow up in vastly different historical periods, the children and youth need education that constructively addresses the past and its violence. Simultaneously education should prepare the younger generation to transform the current conditions for a violent tomorrow. (Crawford & Gil, 2013, 71) Ways of implementation are sought to find out in the following chapters.

As confronting historical facts and providing classrooms as arenas for healing dialogue, other educational initiatives such as peace education, human rights education and bringing together children from different groups of conflict promote reconciliation within classrooms. Some of the aims of these initiatives is to teach peaceful attitudes and values, and world history so that can give birth to “culture of peace”. However, rarely do the initiatives consider the legacy and the dynamics of the conflict experienced. (Paulson, 2011, 1-2)

Various educational initiatives are important in the educational process of reconciliation, but as Smiths claims, none of them individually offer any instant solution. The initiatives combined together form a “matrix of education”, as Smith words it that can only as entity have preventative effects to it in the long run. (Smith, 2005, 385-386) Paulson mentions several scholars’ research of how reconciliation is implemented among formerly conflicting groups.

For the reconciliation methods to be successful, the receivers of education need to be active and engage in the reconciliation efforts. However, the attendance in education and therefore participation in the reconciliation process can prove to be problematic due to the obstacles set by conflict-affected society. Also, the reconciliation educational initiative needs to address the local culture and context; sometimes it may fail speak to the stake-holders, which are the attendees. (Hart, 2011, 23-24) Paulson supports the finding of Harte, as earlier stated, that educational initiatives do not always consider the legacy of the conflict. (Paulson, 2011, 2)

A concern about the facilitator, the teacher, is also valid. It can be claimed that everyone in a society that has experienced conflict has also experienced the conflict individually, also if not very directly involved (more as e.g. a bystander). For example, human rights councils in Peru expected the facilitators of peace education are by standard neutral and have no flaws

in their human rights records, as in reality many of them were involved in the conflict in some role. (Paulson, 2011, 2)

Reconciliation for education, as reconciliation itself, is a field what holds in large gaps of knowledge, but the current research has pointed out its crucial relationship. The practical matters of how education for reconciliation can be executed in a post-conflict setting can be thoroughly perceived very vague, and the previous paragraphs have gathered research and some points of consideration of education for reconciliation from different researchers. Reconciliation is a rhetoric words that holds in positive connotation; thus very effective in political rhetoric, but what reconciliation means in practice is seldom clear. (Hamber & Kelly, 2009 in Paulson, 2011, 3) For one to perceive a concrete example of reconciliation, one context with which reconciliation and forgiveness have been key components in conflict transformation is presented in the following chapter.

5.1 Reconciliation through traditions

The case of child soldiers of Uganda was chosen for this thesis to demonstrate the relationship of forgiveness and reconciliation, and to demonstrate the earlier parts of the study. This part defines the crucial relationship between reconciliation and forgiveness by their definitions and then observes the case of child soldiers in Uganda. It also presents an example that meets the characteristics discussed earlier in the thesis, such as taking into account the legacy of the conflict and the reconciliation process methods meeting the needs and background of the people.

The recurring theme of reconciliation after a conflict around the world give it a lot of universally recognized value. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South mentioned earlier in the thesis Africa is just one example. The situation of reconciliation of Northern Uganda acts as a second in the thesis. These examples are chosen to demonstrate the reconciliation process and reconciliation's diversity yet similar, universal characteristics, and invite the reader to acknowledge the alternatives used for reconciliation. The examples were not investigated due to their location on the same continent, but instead were chosen for this thesis due to their characteristics as reconciliation processes.

When reconciliation is discussed, the phenomenon of forgiveness generally plays an important part in the discussion as well. One might argue that forgiveness is a central component in reconciliation. In general definitions of forgiveness, feelings towards the “wrongdoer” develop towards more positive direction when forgiving (McCullough, Fincham, & Tsang, 2003). Comparing definitions of reconciliation and forgiveness a connection is observed. (Staub et al, 2005) Forgiveness by all the actors of a conflict can be understood as “a necessary prerequisite for reconciliation.” (Enright et al., 1998 in Frydman, 2013, 109). However, it has been claimed that the roots of reconciliation are in the Judeo-Christian tradition, which is irrelevant to some contexts the conflict have hailed from. (Wilson, 2001 in Paulson, 2011, 3)

In Northern Uganda, the civil war with time span of over two decades between the Lord’s Resistance Army and the Government of Uganda has ended close to 200,000 lives. (Opongo 2013) The Government of Uganda addresses LRA as a disorganized group of rebels with no agenda, whilst LRA itself claims to fight against the marginalization of Northern Uganda, particularly the Acholi people. (Finnström, 2008 in Opongo, 2013) The LRA is known for its brutal actions, including the forced recruitment of Acholi people, many of them children. (Branch, 2007, 180 in Opongo, 2013)

In 2007 a report published by the World Bank it was stated that at least 66,000 youth have thought to be recruited to the Lord’s Resistance Army against own will. The duration of the abduction can vary from one day to ten years, and nearly fifth of the recruited are forced to kill. (The World Bank, 2007, 182)

The child soldiers have come to face at the atrocities of war due to forcibly recruitment at an early age and the experiences have an impact on their development as human beings. Former child soldiers are very likely to experience loss on almost every dimension of well-being; e.g. psychological trauma and sexual abuse. The abducted are two times more likely to have reported difficulties in relationships within their family. (The World Bank, 2007, 182)

The Amnesty Act of 2000 signed by the Ugandan government gave amnesty for all involved in the army’s operation except for the ‘exalted’ military crew. The act, since 2000, has led to over 11,000 ex-soldiers return to their communities. (Frydman, 2013, 105, 108) Upon return, needless to state after the brutality of the actions committed, the youth are in need of rehabilitation and support when defragmenting an individual. Many international operators, such as World Vision, have set up rehabilitation centres for returning ex-soldiers.

(Templeton & Esaku, 2012) Coming to terms with the past may prove to be challenging on an individual level, but also very much in communal level. As Frydman claims, the communities do not welcome the returning ex-soldiers with warm heart, but instead with fear and suspicion. (Frydman, 2013, 102) Return to a community where the returning youth have no network proves to be hard and difficult. According to Obonyo Tom Fred, who is the director of Agoro Community Development association, a NGO that works in the Northern Ugandan community of Agoro, in which the many residents are Acholi (ACDA, 2003) states that “I have heard some [youth] they were better off in the war zone.” (Obonyo, 2009 in WHO, 2009)

However, the importance of the ex-child soldiers return to the communities is recognized as an act to break the cycle of violence. Despite this, some communities have felt incapable of welcoming the children back without a “third party” disarming and debriefing them. Reconciliation, and therefore healing, cannot occur in such an instance without an outside agency. (Frydman, 2013, 108)

The presence of a third party can prove to be very beneficial. In the very early phases of the East and West Germany reunification, hundreds of thousands of people came to find out they had been spied upon by the state security system and had the possibility to confront the people who had spied on them. The reconciliation was largely based on an individual’s initiative, as the government did not involve itself in the process of reconciliation. However, according to, Germany could have benefited from outside agencies, as Germans were in loss of words when confronting the representative of the other side. (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, 2007, 70-71, 75-76)

In harmony to the latter statement, a NGO called *The Justice and Reconciliation Project* was founded by University of British Columbia, Gulu District NGO Forum and the Liu Institute for Global Issues Uganda in 2005 to promote the reconciliation process in Northern Uganda. (The Justice and Reconciliation Project, 2016) In the official website of the project, the mission is stated to be the empowerment of the conflict-affected communities “to participate in processes of justice, healing and reconciliation.” (The Justice and Reconciliation Project, 2016) The NGO states its objectives as

1. “TJ policies and processes are informed by the experiences and needs of conflict-affected populations in Uganda and the Great Lakes region.

2. “Local initiatives for redress, healing and reconciliation are supported for conflict-affected communities in Uganda and the Great Lakes region.
3. Gender- and age-inclusive Transitional Justice programme development and service delivery are promoted.
4. The institutional capacity of JRP is enhanced to maximise programme delivery and promote sustainability.”

(The Justice and Reconciliation Project, 2016)

As one can observe, The JRP greatly emphasizes the locality of the project and how the project is tailored to the context it takes place in. In 2005, the JPR documented traditional Acholi justice practices to contribute to the global as well as national debates on reconciliation. The locality of the mechanisms for conflict-resolution and transformation was found important, and could play an important role in the restoration of social harmony and reconciliation in the Northern Ugandan conflict-affected communities. (The Justice and Reconciliation Project, 2016) The project aims in building just and peaceful communities. (Frydman, 2013, 119, The Justice and Reconciliation Project, 2016)

According to Frydman, in the project the local traditions taken into account are being re-instilled in the local population. (Frydman, 2013, 119) Around the world, as in parts of Uganda, the reconciliation rituals are local to the area and culture, and not always hold in reference to justice being done. (Daly & Sarkin-Hughes, 2007, 79) However, the statement by Daly & Sarkin-Hughes does not take into account the emotional experience of justice. Justice can be a very individual experience, and in one culture the experience of justice may be transmitted through a ritual, such as the traditional Acholi reconciliation ritual of *Mato Oput*. *Mato oput* stands for a ritual and a process that is used to seek for relationship restoration between the the conflict-affected parties who also have been affected by intentional or unintentional killing. (Frydman, 2013, 114) This is one example of many traditions local to the Acholi culture. (See Frydman, 2013, 114)

As troubled as the history of Uganda might be, the people have wrestled with the phenomenon of justice and its meaning. The previous’ governments’ inability to make proper legal responses to the injustices experienced has been a guide towards amnesty being the most effective way of separating the past from the present. (Afako, 2002) However, the Ugandan state has requested assistance from the International Criminal Court at the height of the war in arresting the rebels. The caught rebels are now to face penalties for the

committed war crimes and the crimes against humanity defined by the International Criminal Court. Due to the strong culture of reconciliation and forgiveness in the Acholi culture, the charges pressed have become sort of obstacles for the agreement of reconciliation and forgiveness processes (Pham et al. 2005 in Frydman, 2013, 106) Frydman states an agreement's nonexistence of to what extent can crimes be dealt with traditional justice mechanisms, but there seems to be a general agreement among the habitants of the area that these traditional justice methods are essential when pursuing reconciliation. (Frydman, 2013, 114) The traditional methods also speak to the locals in a way they can understand it, which enhances the local participation and dedication to the process; unlike formal reconciliation, which can be detached from the original context in which reconciliation is pursued. (Frydman, 2013, 114) This was also pointed by Hart earlier in the study in section 5.

As also stated by Ahonen (2012) recognizing the historical facts and origins of the conflict embarks the beginning of the reconciliation process. (Staub et al. 2005 in Frydman, 2013, 109) In order to accept the child soldiers back to their communities, education that involves all parties, the returning child and members of community, is needed. Once all parties, communities and the returning former child soldiers, recognize the fact that they all were under war's influence holistically, educational process can embark. Through such an educational process of peace, justice and forgiveness can be handled with empathy and compassion. (Keasley et al., 2014, 103) According to Afako, majority of the Acholi people recognize the forcible abduction of LRA soldiers and their status as also victims. The realization that anyone can, against their will, be submitted to the circumstances that produce the perpetrators of the conflict. (Afako, 2002) Also, the community in which reconciliation is pursued need to be committed to the process; the returning children also must be active agents in the process, not only passive victims. (Justice and Reconciliation Project 2012 in Frydman, 2013, 112)

The Justice and Reconciliation Project operates through various initiatives; some current initiatives include e.g. The Women's Advocacy Network (WAN) that advocates "justice, acknowledgement and accountability for sexual –and gender-based violations inflicted upon them in Northern Uganda" and The Right to Know with cooperation with "the families of the missing to document and promote awareness of the plight of the missing persons and the anguish of their families." The Right to Know initiative has provided arenas for dialogue between the families of the missing. (Justice and Reconciliation Project, 2016)

In addition the forgiveness practices instilled and the initiatives taken to promote reconciliation, the Justice and Reconciliation Project emphasizes education's importance as a key component to forgiveness. Attending educational activities, such as using drama, writing, debates, music and dance, give people abilities to express themselves and their feelings, and the activities also convey ways on how to take on active citizenship against violence and promote reconciliation. The educational activities also demonstrate the theory of peace and peace education in practice. An example of such activity facilitated by the JRP is the facilitation of debates with cooperation of Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, in which various themes, such as gender justice, reparations and truth telling, are handled. The debates are open for all to attend. (Frydman, 2013, 115-118)

The diverse nature of reconciliation process and its facilitators in Northern Uganda showcase the many paths of reconciliation.

6 DISCUSSION

Throughout the research process for this thesis, a question of how a society manages to rebuild itself despite the past and prevalent political hardships guided me through numerous amount of relevant published literature. Not only change is the only permanent thing in life, but also in the literature researched. This thesis concentrated on conflict-affected communities; communities that have or had experienced hardship and are rebuilding themselves in every way possible. In other words, they are changing and transforming.

Reconciliation can be interpreted as a futuristic action. During the process, transformation is sought in people's patterns of thought. In the section *Reconciliation through traditions*, pages 16 and 17, the close relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation is defined by the transformation of general feelings towards the perpetrator into more positive outlook and people come together through reconciliation process. (Enright et al., 1998 as cited in Frydman, 2013, 109) Thus, cohesion is pursued in order for community to function in a just and peaceful manner that is beneficial to all, as the Justice and Reconciliation Project in Uganda has demonstrated.

Education has been recognized various scholars, such as Bush & Saltarelli (2000), to have the power to plant in deep, schemas of ill nature, maintain social order and also eradicate the unwanted patterns of mind in society. Thus, it was stated that education is a futuristic activity in society. (Keasley et al., 2014) As education is understood in its versatile nature, non-formal, formal, informal and not as an institution that dominates the early part of one's life, education as an institution is a power that has the capability to reach out to many and possibly have a major impact on a large number of people in society. If a large group of people have been affected, it is essential to reach out for as many people as possible. The power of education should not be underrated; history has proved it can have a wide positive impact on society, but can also provide arenas for tactical repression of others and manipulation. However, as it was stated in the introduction, not all receive education. Despite this, the importance of receiving education is universally recognized as it can be deduced by the statements of EFA and UNESCO.

Reconciliation through education is therefore, as observed thoroughly in this thesis, an approachable phenomenon as opposed to the abstract theses stated by hierarchical governmental organizations. Education as an institution is tied to the local context to respond to the needs and values of the state and theoretically aims in building a sustaining and just future for all. Therefore, involving reconciliation in education can be seen as natural, as they both can be interpreted to hold in futuristic value. This is also possible to detect from the broad platform of conflict, reconciliation and forgiveness studies. The nature of these two phenomena, education and reconciliation, and their relationship to each other in terms of similar characteristics can potentially provide a fascinating topic for further research.

Throughout this thesis, a recommended tendency of 'facilitating' reconciliation is *bottom-up*, as worded by Huyse (2005) cited in the chapter *Reconciliation after a conflict*. The locality of reconciliation and education meeting the needs of the conflict-stricken population is greatly emphasized throughout literature. However, if an outside agency is responsible for the facilitation of reconciliation, how can locality be ensured? A way to implement the reconciliation facilitated by locals is to include the locals in the third party, as in the Justice and Reconciliation Project. The claim is supported by Sinclair's emphasis on the psychosocial benefit of community members organizing education and being a part of the process. (Sinclair, 2002, 51) After this, another question arises: an example of the reconciliation education problem presented by Julia Paulson demonstrates the fact, that the

people who hold some authority/responsibility in the facilitation of reconciliation (e.g. teachers, NGO workers) could have been part of the dark past.

The case pointed by Daly & Sarkin-Hughes is that eventually the members of the community grow out of hate and disappointment due to prolonged frustration. The evenly distributed power in organizing education and an outside agency providing the tools for the reconciliation process in education can prove to be beneficial and neutral. Handbooks, such as by Sinclair and Huyse et al argue that there are tools that can be adapted to the conflict-affected setting, but no durable education and reconciliation model can be imported, only tools for it can be adapted.

Descending from the societal, internal and inter-state level to grassroots, conflicts are experienced daily in minor-scale. Schools provide places for people of various ages and backgrounds to meet and learn together. Each school is a multicultural school in a sense that each child has their own personal background and each home has a unique culture. Thus clashes in behavior and action, or if in the setting incompetence comes up, are bound to occur.

Therefore, knowledge of the large-scale, governmental or organizational processes of reconciliation and examples of forgiveness in demanding situations can prove to be beneficial when handling with smaller-scale conflict resolution, e.g. in schools. As Frydman claims, teaching peace and conflict management is suggested by many commissions in order for children to acquire skills to work through problems. Staub posits “reconciliation projects aim not only at promoting knowledge but also creating experiential understanding, where individuals apply the information to one’s own experiences; following these procedure is more likely to lead to changes in overall behavior.” (Staub et al., 2010, in Frydman, 2013, 110). Thus, reconciliation is also an individual process that has great effect on one’s behavior. Knowledge of reconciliation and forgiveness can therefore prove their importance on a daily basis.

Studying the events of Ugandan history and the actions taken in order to build a cohesive society inspired me, and hopefully, the reader to reflect the events we face in schools. The schools are usually viewed as communities with a hierarchy. Each school then has its unique and local culture. In the Ugandan case, the Justice and Reconciliation Project emphasizes the locality of the justice traditions as means for forgiveness. If justice and reconciliation is sought in a way that is not valid, the parties of the conflict will feel disconnected from the

process of seeking reconciliation. Addressing the culture and the legacy of the context in which the conflict has hailed, the reconciliation process manages to speak to its stake-holders who have experienced the conflict.

In addition, the people involved in welcoming the returning former child soldiers in Uganda expressed their need for an outside agency. (Frydman, 2013) In a conflict-situation, a party involved in a conflict is more likely to seek a third, uninvolved actor when trying to reach for justice. The third actor/party offers an unbiased view of the conflict situation, at least on a theoretical level. The presence of an uninvolved party grants time and distance to the actors involved in the conflict, and can have a very empowering effect. Also, in the educational process towards reconciliation, all the parties accepted the fact they were all affected by war. (Keasley et al., 2014)

The common recognition of being affected by war by all parties can be viewed important in order to embark the reconciliation process and recognize the humanity of all parties. In a minor-scale conflict, such as the ones in schools and work places, with everyone accepting the fact that they were affected by the conflict, a common platform is reached. Conflicts can be understood to hold in power-relations within the actors or have in hierarchies only the public agreement has the power to destroy. This can and does embark the first phase of the reconciliation process after a conflict through education.

The importance of having third party involved in reconciliation process is thoroughly valid, and one must remember the context of the conflict and its actors (as the objectives in JRP had done). In a conflict, that has taken place over a period of time in school, one is not compelled to call out an unfamiliar actor to embark the reconciliation process. As one of the founders of JRP in Uganda was the Gulu National Forum NGO, the outside agency can hail from similar or the same setting as the conflict hailed in. Thus, the locality of the reconciliation is guaranteed; however, involving unfamiliar actors in the role of third, unbiased party in the reconciliation process creates challenges for the locality of the process. According to Hart (2011), education about peace needs to speak to its receivers and cannot be *precooked*: it cannot be prepared in a context that is disconnected to the context the education will be implemented in.

Throughout this research I found myself immersed in history, politics, educational dilemmas, justice and criminology. I gained the initiative for this research from my inspiring teachers and lecturers from my educational career. My major subject, education, according

to one interpretation is a societal institution whose positive power in building a more sustaining and better quality future has been universally recognized. Multiple sources I read the importance of knowledge about the current state of the world; millions of people are affected by conflicts worldwide, the most vulnerable target groups being children. The thought of why peace research and peace studies are not included in the Finnish teacher training was on my mind constantly. Through acquiring knowledge and insight into teacher education of foreign countries, especially which experiences conflict, the need for inclusion of the various mechanisms that a society experiences becomes vital. Therefore, I sincerely express my wish for the teacher education to include studies of processes and 'stages' that societies experience (that can be interpreted to belong in the field of social sciences, such as peace, conflict, reconciliation), as those have a major effect on the educational system of the states.

The research carried out by many noted international scholars have also pointed out the importance of education in conflict-torn areas. This includes conflict-resolution education, peace research and peace studies in the study programs offered by the educational faculties worldwide would provide a platform for future educational experts to continue research on this particular matter. Underlining the importance of peace research in the so-called "fourth humanitarian response" (Sinclair, 2002) would provide tools for future researches and develop the branch of science to great extent (as it is growing as observed in the literature). The aims of reconciliation can be understood to be justice and peace. Education is viewed to promote them. As these components are always needed, there is an endless amount of research to be done, and the importance of education in conflict-transformation and reconciliation can never be underestimated.

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