

*NAIROBI EVANGELICAL GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY*

*Influence of Socialization on Conflict Generation and
Breakdown of Social Order in Burundi*

*BY
DISMAS NZEYIMANA*

*A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master
of Divinity in Mission Studies*

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July, 2006

Student's Declaration

**INFLUENCE OF SOCIALIZATION ON CONFLICT
GENERATION AND BREAKDOWN OF
SOCIAL ORDER IN BURUNDI**

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other College or University for Academic credit.

The views presented herein are not necessary those of the Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology or the Examiners.

(Signed) 
Dismas Nzeyimana

July, 2006

ABSTRACT

Although there must be a number of factors that influenced Burundians in breaking down social order, the researcher concentrated on socialization as one major variable linked to conflicts. Basically, the researcher's focus was to find whether there could be relationships between socialization and conflict generation in Burundi. The purpose of the study was to equip the church by availing tools that would sensitize it to resume the noble task of reconciliation. Before the research went on, biases were exposed. Nevertheless, such claims were to be tested by using both the library and field research. The first step was to list research questions which led to formulate hypotheses. In total, seventeen hypotheses were enumerated as attempts to respond to research questions. After a brief definition of terms, the researcher visited literatures that are related to the major variables that comprise the topic. Firstly, the purpose was to check findings that would support the researcher's assumptions, and then secondly, library research aimed at helping the researcher formulate relevantly the questions and guide for data collection. Before the field research started, the methodological approach was put in place so that the researcher would know which research method to rely on.

As far as the topic and the demand of data gathering are concerned, the qualitative research method leading to focus group discussions was adopted. Data collection took place in one province of Gitega in Burundi where the researcher spent two weeks interacting with young people, parents and church leaders; that was in December 2005. In consideration of the purpose of the study, the researcher managed to test his assumptions by integrating operational questions/responses to the three research questions.

The findings showed that parents imparted to their children values and prejudices that led them into a breakdown of social order. Again, findings revealed that, socialization which is enhanced with biblical principles is a great tool that any community can hold and utilize for the sake of maintaining social order. Anthropologists say that the manner people think and act is relatively influenced by their original customs rather than what they are taught (Smalley and Nida 1967, 261). Therefore in order to let Burundian tribes be reconciled, young generations need to accumulate a lot of socialization in order to annihilate the previous teachings. Moreover, discussing the factors that led to conflicts generation ought to be the first step in conflict resolution.

Recommendations were made for the church of Burundi. The first focuses on equipping parents in ways of socialization; the second stresses the advocacy role of the church that needs to be preserved while the third suggests a holistic ministry towards victims of ethnic violence.

To

My wife Rachel Muhorakeye

**And our children Juste Abel Nzeyimana, Levi Morell Nzeyimana and Beraka
Ishimwe.**

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Burundi is a country situated in the Eastern part of Africa with a population estimated at 7 million. Three ethnic groups comprise that highest demographic density. Hutus (84%) are the major ethnic group and Tutsis are estimated at 14% while Twa community (the third ethnic group which is estimated at less than 1% of the population) and foreigners occupy nearly 2% of the population residing in Burundi. Since the tragic social revolution, which occurred in Rwanda in 1959, Tutsis from Burundi became worried about their security and decided to rule the country in order to overcome oppression from the majority as it had occurred in Rwanda. Several Hutus attempts to destabilize the minority ruling class failed and provoked civil wars. The worse ethnic crash of 1972 reinforced hatred between Hutus and Tutsis. According to Johnstone, many people were massacred in 1972. "It is reckoned that 200,000 died in the 1972 revolt and following reprisals" (Johnstone 1978, 164).

Hatred between the two ethnic groups reinforced tensions until the recent wave of democracy. Democratic elections were organized in Burundi but the climate of ethnic antagonism was developed to the degree to which people were convinced to elect their fellow ethnic candidate(s). Thus Tutsi soldiers massacred the President Melchior Ndadaye, the former refugee candidate who won elections in October 1993. After his death Hutus, accusing Tutsis that they killed their

