Re-imagining a new social contract to address exclusion and marginalisation in Africa

Insights from the "Golden Rule and Ubuntu" as value frameworks

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Abstract

The question should be asked whether the glaring failures of countries in the African continent to realise constitutions' social contracts of those countries is related to a lack of moral intelligence and competence in Africa and the presence of devasting moral viruses. The failures of these countries to realise their social contracts manifest themselves, among other things, through entrenched multi-dimensional exclusion and marginalisation of the masses as far as wealth and exercise of power are concerned. To curb or address exclusion and marginalisation, the author in this article explored how missiology could contribute towards mobilising the Church and its ministries and members to nurture and embrace value frameworks which would help to build moral competence and identity, as well as to identify and end moral viruses. In this contribution, the author delved into two value frameworks namely, "The Golden Rule and Ubuntu" that embrace both religion and culture and their implications for the Church in mission with God in the public sphere to demonstrate value-based responses to address exclusion and marginalisation. Insights shared in this contribution would contribute towards reimagining a new social contract in the African public space from a Missiological perspective.

1. Introduction

"The gospel is not about …pie-in-the-sky when they die… It is imperative that the up and coming generation recognize that the biblical Jesus was committed to the realization of a new social order in this world….Becoming a Christian, therefore, is a call to social action", said Campolo,[2] in the sense that it is about people com-

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2   Anthony Campolo (born February 25, 1935) is an American sociologist, pastor, author, public speaker and former spiritual advisor to U.S. President Bill Clinton.[1] Campolo is known as one of the most influential leaders in the evangelical left and has been a major proponent of progressive thought and reform within the evangelical community. He has also become a leader of the Red-Letter Christian movement, which aims to put emphasis on the teachings of Jesus. This quote comes from his book entitled, "The Kingdom of God is a party: God's radical plan for his family." Available from: https://www.azquotes.com/author/2397-TonyCampolo (Accessed 22 February 2022).

ing together to help improve their lives and solve the problems that are important in their communities. Therefore, social action happens within a particular social order, which is "the connection between people and institutions that maintain a stable society" (Campolo, 2003. Verbatim 11 July 2003).

This new social order, I submit, should inevitably play itself out through types of social contracts in society at large, including Africa. Therefore, followers of Jesus Christ are to live out visibly through concrete programmes or in subtle ways the values embodied in this social order in that it refers to a particular system of social structures and institutions.

In a sense, agents of the Christian mission have an inescapable responsibility to live out the values and ethos of the biblical message and that of Jesus in ways that curb or address social ills such as exclusion and marginalisation as observed in many parts of Africa. Hence, the question at the heart of this research is, "How could missiology contribute towards addressing glaring failures of countries in the African continent to realise constitutions' social contracts of those countries?" Unfortunately, for many, who still see the gospel and theology as pie-in-the-sky when they die, it is a bother to consider such a question in relation to mission or even the science of mission. This article argues that mission work and missiology are by nature and implications rooted to drive transformation in given contexts to contribute towards the realisation of communities of faith's calling, which is to "show concern for the building of a better world" (Pope Francis, 2013:146). Thus, I concur with how the University of South Africa has come to understand mission as the "cutting edge of the Christian movement."[3] The failures of these countries to harmoniously realise their social contracts, which manifest themselves, among other things, through entrenched multidimensional exclusion and marginalisation of the masses as far as wealth and exercise of power are concerned, should therefore preoccupy missiologists and mission practitioners.

In this contribution, I argue that missiology and mission praxis preoccupation towards curbing or addressing exclusion and marginalisation could contribute towards mobilising the church, its ministries, and members to nurture and embrace value frameworks, which would help to build moral competence and identity, as well as to identify and combat moral viruses which breed these failures.

Insights from two value frameworks, namely "*The Golden Rule* and *Ubuntu*", which embrace both religion and culture and their implications for the church in

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[3] Definition of missiology by Unisa faculty. Available from: https://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Colleges/Human-Sciences/Schools,-departments,-centres,-institutes-&-units/School-of-Humanities/Department-of-Christian-Spirituality-Church-History-and-Missiology/Discipline-of-Missiology.

mission with God in the public sphere, will be presented to demonstrate how value-based responses could mitigate against exclusion and marginalisation.

2. Africa: Glaring failures of countries in realising constitutions' social contracts of those countries

A brief overview of Africa's geography, people, economy, politics and religion is important to set the scene and contextualise my input in this article. Nevertheless, I admit that Africa is not a homogenous continent because its socioeconomic and political context varies from region to region. However, most of its countries were under colonial rule for centuries. Further, I highlight the current failures of the continent in general terms, not insinuating that life in Africa under colonialism was better than it is today. Hence, this overview speaks generally about Africa not to undermine significant socioeconomic and political advances realised by many countries since independence.

Africa is made up of 54 countries, with a geographical area of 30,244,000 sq km, making up 20.3% of the world's surface area.

It is home to as many as 3000 distinct ethnic groups (Obadina, 2014:30). "As of May 2021, the total population of Africa amounted to over 1.37 billion" (Saleh, May 26, 2021)[4] and is therefore "the second-largest and second most populous continent on earth."[5] Further, "The population in Africa has grown rapidly over the last 40 years, and it has a relatively young population, with more than half of the population under 25 in some states." On the other hand, "There is a high proportion of younger people within the Africa population as a whole, with reports that 41% of the African population is under the age of 15", highlights World Population Review (2022). As of March 2022, the most populous countries include Nigeria (183,523,432), Ethiopia (98,942,102), Egypt (84,705,681), the Democratic Republic of Congo (71,246,355), and South Africa (53,491,333).

Notably, one of the common things in these populous countries is the exclusion and marginalisation of ordinary masses of their population regarding resources and power. The elite, especially the governing class, feasts on the table of excess and bounty while the majority languishes in abject poverty as they remain excluded. Therefore, a new social contract has to be reimagined, which should force the elite and governance structure towards the realisation of inclusion of the masses for a fair share at the table.

With reference to the economy, in nearly 60 years since visible colonial control of most African countries has ended, "The economic conditions of the continent have

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4   Saleh, M. 2021. Total population of Africa 2000 – 2021. Available from: Statista.com (Accessed 19 March 2022).

5   See Africa Population 2022 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs) (worldpopulationreview.com) (Accessed 19 March 2022).

largely worsened, a few have seen progress" (Mandryk, 2010:30). However, Africa retains a vast wealth of natural resources. As for the causes of this continental economic misfortune, Mandryk (2010: 31-32) names factors such as uncontrolled population growth, unsustainable demand on the land, low investment in agriculture, foreign debt, the complex dynamics of foreign aid and investment, lack of infrastructure, lack of an educated middle class/business class, corruption and graft by rulers and officials who enrich themselves or their ethnic group, and disease – the high prevalence of malaria, AIDS and other diseases such as tuberculosis and military conflict. I contend that all these causes together lead to further exclusion and marginalisation of the ordinary citizens of Africa. Reimagining a new social contract is, therefore, imperative going forward.

These economic causes are unfortunately intertwined with politics, still embedded and rooted in the colonial legacy in Africa. Regarding political progress, multiparty politics and democracy are taking shape and form in the continent. There is increasingly a good turnout for elections, and a considerable number of women are more actively involved in politics than in past decades, highlights the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2021). Yet, "kleptocracy, poor economic policies, tribal favouritism and general ineptitude" (Mandryk, 2010:32) hinder the realisation of concrete political stability. Thus, many countries in the continent could be categorised as 'failed states' – states whose political or economic systems have become so weak that their governments are no longer in control (Oxford Dictionary). African countries such as Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, the Central African Republic, Zimbabwe, and Guinea are among the failed states listed in the Failed State Index 2022 (World Population Review, 2022).

However, Pan-African governance and relations have become helpful to some extent; the African Union now seems to articulate continent-wide development plans and put pro-active policing and peace-making strategies in place. To these, Mandryk (2010:32) adds "the adoption of peer review processes of members states democratic and observation of human rights." Other elements relative to African politics include foreign interest, involvement and investment, which in many countries is no longer solely under power blocks such as the European Union and the United States of America, but also in China and the Arab World in terms of competing for resources, trade and investment opportunities.

Additionally, in the political scene of the continent are secessionist movements and wars in Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Cameroon on the one hand. On the other, violent Islamist movements in North and East Africa, and ethnic cleansing in the nine-nation Great Lakes region. Political interests and crises, I contend, have led to the emergence of greed and extreme exclusion and marginalisation of ordinary citizens of Africa. Therefore, a new value-based social contract is needed to address exclusion and marginalisation.

With reference to religion, it is worth noting that religious freedom has increased in most parts of the continent except North Africa. Persecution of various forms and shapes is endemic in some regions where violent forms of Islam are emerging. Nevertheless, Christianity remains the religion of the majority, with 48.77% of the population in 2010. Thirty-one of 54 countries in Africa have Christianity as the largest religion (Oishimaya Sen Nag, 2019). I will return to religion later in this article when I discuss how religious insight, in this case, the Golden Rule, could inform a value framework necessary to curb exclusion and marginalisation.

The failures and challenges highlighted in the foregoing paint a gloomy sketch of the continent. In many ways, there are consequences emanating from a broken social contract where societal institutions, including the church have failed in their mission. The brokenness of this contract is most palpable in the socioeconomic and political spheres.

This is apparent because most African countries' socioeconomic and political projects have failed to foster peace and hope for their inhabitants. Various African development agendas and plans fail to realise their purposes and goals towards collective well-being, especially regarding eradicating extreme poverty. These failures are now seen as threats to global peace and stability. "The world has achieved tremendous declines in poverty in recent decades" (Turner et al., 2014:3) with the exception of Latin America and Africa.

> Latin America and Africa have done least well in the last 20 years, with rates of absolute poverty declining quite slowly if at all (…). Latin America and Africa have, on average, experienced slower rates of economic growth and shown higher levels of inequality than other regions (Turner et al., 2014:4).

Against this backdrop, Africa is restlessly mobilising all its resources, including the private sector, to change its fate. In the same vein, Ford (2014:1) contends:

> The potential is untapped for governments and donors to explore scaling up their engagement with the business community in the pursuit of more peaceful, just and inclusive societies. Recent high-level summitry has given new impetus to engage business in shaping and delivering the development agenda.

Regardless of these numerous high-power summits and continental plans of various shapes and sorts in Africa, the realisation of peaceful, just, and inclusive societies has remained elusive. The spark the African pan-Africanists, such as Leopold Senghor, Aime Cesaire, Jomo Kenyatta, and Kwame Nkrumah, has died out. Their vision of promoting the "social, political and economic integration of Africa" (Kuryla, 2020:1) is no longer pursued with vigour and determination. One of the predomi-

nant reasons for this vision's death could be the failure to embrace and apply ethical value frameworks which should, among other things, usher in inclusivity and end marginalisation. Universal Culturo-religious value frameworks such *Ubuntu* and the *Golden Rule,* which could enable Africans, in particular, to enhance values of common humanity and collective wellbeing, have been abandoned.

Consequently, the continent's reality is such that there is brokenness in every sphere of African society. Human safety, peace, abuse of human rights, multidimensional poverty, exclusion, and marginalisation are a daily reality. Therefore, there is a need for ongoing reflections on how we got to this reality in a continent that claims to be the majority Christian. I argue reasons for the existence and persistence of this reality could be located in the "spiritual distancing" of the church regarding matters relative to socioeconomic, historical, and political spheres of life in the continent.

3. Missio Ecclesia, value frameworks and moral competence in the "Christian" Africa

The contextual picture described in the foregoing substantiates, in the main, the sad reality that the current system, including its social contract, is dysfunctional or non-existent in many parts of the continent. Hence, I argue that institutions such as the church whose aims and purpose of existence are to give and maintain life for all, should take the lead in reimagining a new social contract. Mobilisation of the church, its ministries, and members is required to nurture and embrace ethical value frameworks, which will help to build moral competence and identity, as well as to identify and combat moral viruses in the process of this reimagination.

One of the goals of the church's missions, *missio ecclesia,* relative to contemporary Africa has to do with teaching, demonstrating, and promoting ethical value-based behaviours in society. To prevent HIV/AIDS, for example, it has been established that "faith communities are in a unique position to *sustain* positive Christian lifestyles in their members or to assist in *changing behaviour* that may be destructive" (Dill, 2006:54). *Missio Ecclesia*, properly understood, is not only limited to fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-40). However, ensuring signs of the kingdom of God, such as peace and safety, joy and living life to the fullest, become real in society. This is referred to in Human Development Reports of the United Nations as human security. Thus, the call for the church is to enhance its mission towards realising holistic human security, including the proclamation and demonstration of Jesus' gospel in Africa.

In the same vein, I concur with Kaunda speaking of Zambia, that the role of religion in promoting holistic human security has to be critically interrogated. "Missiological reflections on how religion can become a critical resource in enhancing

human security in Zambia'' (Kaunda, 2019:14) should be carried out. Gomez and Gasper (2013:1-3) explicate:

> Human security relates to much more than security from violence and crime. (…). Human security can also be used to look into personal, community and po- litical security. (…). The 1994 HDR was more specific, listing seven essential di- mensions of human security: 1) Economic; 2) Food; 3) Health; 4) Environmental; 5) Personal; 6) Community; and 7) Political.

An in-depth analysis of contextual realities described in the previous sections points to the conclusion that breaking the social contract in Africa has had serious implications for human security. I contend that *missio Ecclesia* should tackle this by opting for a holistic approach that includes, as Kritzinger, Meiring and Saayman (1994:36) put it, kerygmatic, diaconal, fellowship and liturgical dimensions. This holistic or compre- hensive approach to mission, whose basic point of departure could be traced back to Hoekendijk, who, in 1966, at the United States Conference for the World Council of Churches, explicated the meaning of mission and the comprehensive approach as appropriate to realise the goal of mission. In the same year, more than a thousand evangelical Christians from over 100 countries gathered in Berlin[6] to reflect on how to implement this comprehensive approach which was referred to as 'integral mission'.

Missio Ecclesia is *ipso facto* integral mission. Hence, I contend that if the church's mission in Africa had indeed been grounded in an integral mission ap- proach in these nearly six decades, the continent could not have been experiencing the current human security crisis. Thus, it is imperative for the church to critically rethink its role regarding mission in the continent. One of the ways I argue is to promote the reimagination of a new social contract rooted in religious and cultural value frameworks, which will mitigate against the lived reality of lack of human se- curity and curb poverty, exclusion and marginalisation of the majority of the African population. It is an ethical value-based response that I propose.

4. Towards a public missional ecclesiology embedded in the "Golden Rule and Ubuntu" to fight exclusion and marginalisation in Africa

"The Golden Rule and Ubuntu" embrace both religion and culture and have implica- tions for the church's mission with God in the public sphere. These two value frame-

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6   For a fuller telling of the story of evangelical re-engagement with integral mission see Tim Chester, Awakening to the World of Need: The Recovery of Evangelical Social Concern (IVP, 1993) and C. René Padilla, 'Integral Mission and its Historical Development' in Justice, Mercy and Humility: Integral Mis- sion and the Poor, ed. Tim Chester (Paternoster, 2002).

works promote ethical values such as respect, responsibility, integrity, fairness, love and service needed to execute the social contract for the good of all in society. An African society (i.e., individuals, families, institutions and communities) who live ethically value-based lives will foster an atmosphere of care and concern for those living on the margins. It should be obvious that religious or faith-based communities must play a key role in an ethical and value-based lifestyle drive in Africa towards moral regeneration because in relation to HIV/AIDS prevention, "questions of right and wrong, good and evil – questions of ethical behaviours and moral values – are pertinent for national [and continental] survival" (Dill & De la Porte, 2006:5).

With reference to the moral regeneration movement in South Africa, Mkhatshwa (2000:8), for the goal of national survival, states, "It is for this reason that a democracy such as ours, which has emerged from the apartheid ashes, should be founded on sound moral values that will inculcate in each of us a sense of national pride, oneness and commitment to the common good." Thabo Mbeki expanded on this in his 2002 State of the Nation, adding, "The issue of the responsibility that each and all of us should take for our lives, moving from the understanding that, as we were our own liberators in resistance against apartheid, so too should we today act as our own liberators in dealing with its legacy."

Mkhatswa and Mbeki, although they spoke only with reference to South Africa, echoed the thought of the African pan-Africanists, such as Leopold Senghor, Aime Cesaire, Jomo Kenyatta, and Kwame Nkrumah, whose vision consisted of promoting social, political and economic integration of Africa at the time when many countries in the continent started to 'sever political ties' – or they thought so – with colonial powers. Mkhatswa (2000), like these African pan-Africanists, believes that "our people have high moral values which are evident in all our cultures", which should enable us to transform and mitigate against the anti-social acts that threaten our continent's human security and prosperous futures. Ubuntu/Botho is the cultural value framework best suited to provide us with moral insights and intelligence, which would help African citizens to lead ethical value-based lifestyles that oppose exclusion and marginalisation as currently being experienced by the majority.

Hence, I contend that Ubuntu, together with the Christian value framework known as the "Golden Rule", provide insights to ecclesial communities for public missional praxes.

4.1 Value frameworks[7]

Values are not simply loose and freestanding; they are instead clustered into value frameworks. De la Porte (2006:58) elucidates:

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[7]   I owe the insights regarding value frameworks and their implications for ethical value-based behaviour change to Hospivision when I participate in their training programme to prevent HIV/AIDS.

These frameworks are essentially an organised set of values that have an inner coherence – they fit together logically and meaningfully. Groups can have many different and unique value frameworks. The following broad categories can be identified:

- Religious (Christianity, Humanism, Islam, etc.)
- Philosophical (Pragmatist, Humanist, Existentialist, etc.)
- Cultural (Ubuntu, European, Eastern, etc.)

In this article, I want to explore two value frameworks, namely "the Golden Rule and Ubuntu", that embrace both religion and culture, and their implications for a collective ethical value-based conduct that could address exclusion and marginalisation in Africa. These two resonate with African wisdom and religiosity. Hence, I assume they would be acceptable across the continent.

4.2 The Golden Rule and missio ecclesia

The Golden Rule is found in Matthew 7:12, " So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets." This command is usually called the "Saviour 's golden rule", a name given to it because of its great value. "All that you 'expect' or 'desire' of others in similar circumstances, do to them. Act not from selfishness or injustice, but put yourself in the place of the other, and ask what you would expect of him" (Barnes, n.d.). This would make you impartial, candid, and just. It would destroy avarice, envy, treachery, unkindness, slander, theft, adultery, and murder. It is easily applied, its justice is seen by all people, and all must acknowledge its force and value.

Further, Jesus adds, "This is the law and the prophets." That is, this is the sum or substance of the Old Testament. It is nowhere found in so many words, but is a summary expression of all the Law required. The sentiment was in use among the Jews. Hillel, an ancient Rabbi, said to a man who wished to become a proselyte, and who asked him to teach him the whole law, "Whatever is hateful to you, do not do to another." Something of the same sentiment was found among the ancient Greeks and Romans, and is found in the writings of Confucius.

In a modern, self-centred society, many people have twisted this rule to mean, "Treat other people the way they treat you!" This is short sightedness. On this distortion, Mkize and De la Porte (2006:60) contend, "That places the burden on the other person. "If you are nice to me, I will be nice to you" (…) it also implies that if you treat me badly, I have the right to do the same to you. This is closer to the Old Testament principle of "an eye for an eye." Contrary to this Old Testament principle, Jesus pointed out here that it is not good enough for Christians not to do bad things. They should progressively "have greater ability for self-transcendence and self-donation in [their] relationship with others" (Shutte, 1993:10).

In the context of a broken social contract manifested through unpleasant exclusion and marginalisation of the other, *missio ecclesia* must emphasise that the Golden Rule looks out for the other person. At the core, "The Golden Rule has an emphatic heart and soul. It is based on the principle that I can place myself in the shoes of the other person and look at life and the situation from their perspective" (Mkize & De la Porte, 2006:60). Empathy, which is the emotional capacity to experience another person's pleasure or pain, which leads to acts of charity and other benevolent behaviour; is almost non-existent in the hearts of many of the elite and political leaders in Africa. Hence, the broken social contract.

Among other things, I contend that *missio Ecclesia* has a responsibility to teach and rekindle the application and implications of the Golden Rule to members of the church who happen to belong to various spheres of influence in society. This implies that the "Golden Rule and its emphatic heart and soul must be embraced, learned and developed through social experience. It has crucial practical value in building trust that is needed for all relationships" (Mkize & De la Porte, 2006:60).

4.3 The Golden Rule and reimagining the social contract

I envisage the application of the Golden Rule as one of the crucial elements towards reimagining the social contract. In the context of a broken social contract, the application of Golden Rule will enhance one's interests while serving those of the other. Further, applying the Golden Rule will hopefully generate an active intention based on conscious decision that seeks every person's benefit. Mkize and De la Porte (2006:60) add, "The Golden Rule cuts through a defensive and possible revengeful attitude of "me against you" or "us against them"." It rather opens one's eye and makes him conscious of the other in an emphatic manner. Thus, it has the potential to transform all of a person's relationships with family, friends, colleagues and community. Practically, this means one takes responsibility for oneself, his own behaviour and the other person's best interest. Selfishness and self-centredness are defeated when one starts to look for the other person's best interest. This, in turn, paves the way for inclusion and paralyses incentives that drive marginalisation.

4.4 Ubuntu and missio Ecclesia

African people are deeply rooted in their culture. Culture is the all-embracing force around which everything else revolves. Bonn (1996: 15) explicates, "Culture is not an independent thing, it is what we are as people. Our culture guides us in how to behave and it is the expression of our values and beliefs." Drinking from deep wells of our own culture should provide us clues to map the way towards a new social contract. This culture, well-lived and valued, should help sensitise people to the

good moral values of the community, which will lead to the thriving of the spirit of Ubuntu among the people.

There is emancipation at the core of Ubuntu. According to Mbigi (1997:110), "The emancipation concept of Ubuntu can only be of significance in the context of collective work and survival issues." It should be emphasised that Ubuntu values the good of the community above self-interest. If the community is well, an individual will also be well. When faced with multifaceted socioeconomic crises in the continent, Ubuntu could assist us in putting more emphasis on community interest above self-interest to eradicate exclusion and marginalisation.

Ubuntu is all about being humane, meaning being able to show human kindness to others. A person with Ubuntu puts the interest of his community or his nation above his own interests, which also means that the human security and well-being of the community and nation come first. Reembracing Ubuntu will definitely sensitise African people to the values of Ubuntu, that is, morality, humaneness, compassion, care and understanding. Ubuntu reinforces the notion that "we have to encounter the collective *We* before we encounter the collective *I*. I am only through others" (Mbigi, 1997:2).

Senghor (cited by Schutte, 1993:48) expands the Ubuntu concept by highlighting its communal aspect; we should admit that a community or nation is more than a mere collection of individuals. According to him, "We are concerned here, not with a mere collection of individuals, but with people conspiring together, *conspiring* in the basic Latin sense, united among themselves even to the very centre of their being." Hence, the crux of Ubuntu depicts the importance of group solidarity on issues that were pivotal to the survival of African communities. Conditions of poverty and deprivation, for example, should, in the spirit of Ubuntu, create a sense of interdependence among community members that they have to survive through group care and not only individual reliance. Thus, this highlights the central belief of Ubuntu, that is, a person can only be a person through the help of others. Yet, it must be understood that the group has priority over the individual without crushing him but allowing him to grow and blossom as a person (Schutte, 1993:49).

It is, therefore, apparent that the concept stands for personhood and morality. Ubuntu's main important values are "group solidarity, conformity, compassion, respect, human dignity and collective dignity. Ubuntu requires one to respect others if one is to respect oneself" (Mkize & De la Porte, 2006:63).

The mission of the church in the context of the lack of human security currently being experienced in Africa has to be an embodiment of Ubuntu by seeking to stand in solidarity with the excluded and the marginalised. Through its emancipatory compassionate ministries, it has to work towards restoring respect, human dignity and collective dignity of the masses. This also implies standing in critical solidarity with the elite while advocating for inclusion and ending marginalisation.

4.5 *Ubuntu and reimagining the social contract*

According to Mbigi (1997:64) and regarding African solidarity, communities and institutions, learning is a collective social process facilitated by collective rituals and ceremonies, as well as collective dancing and singing. Mkize and De la Porte (2006:63) elucidate, "The spirit of collective learning creates the spirit of uniformity and oneness among people of the same culture." Collective learning embedded in the spirit of Ubuntu restores pride to an individual belonging to a particular African culture and being identified as a member of the African people's group. This collective learning is embedded in school processes or collective learning moments such as initiation schools and celebrations of various forms and types, including certain community rituals. These collective learning moments are facilitated in multiple ways in African society. Mbigi (2005:26-27) has identified the following African collective learning systems: 1) Learning by doing, that is, reflective action learning; 2) Learning as collective effort; 3) Teach one and learn one; and 4) Learning as a social process.

These collective learning systems are also cultural assets useful for progress, stability and cohesion in many communities. In the spirit of Ubuntu, the mission of the Church in Africa should tap into these collective learning systems to facilitate the emergence of a new social contract. One which would banish exclusion and marginalisation. In the spirit of Ubuntu, the church in Africa has to model how communal life and the emancipation of various people should be done. This way mission will facilitate self-realisation and self-actualisation of individuals and whole communities.

5. The Golden Rule and Ubuntu as relevant tools to fight exclusion and marginalisation

I have thus far argued that the brokenness of the social contract in the continent, manifested in human security crises, is due to moral and ethical deficiencies on the part of the governed and governors of the social structures of African society. Further, I contend that the Golden Rule and Ubuntu give us essential insights which could assist towards reversing these deficiencies.

Now, I propose that the Golden Rule and Ubuntu applied together are relevant tools to fight exclusion and marginalisation experienced by most individuals and communities in the continent. Essential to our understanding is both the Golden Rule and Ubuntu subscription, and promoting universal values aimed at building communal life, cohesion, interdependence and emancipation for collective wellbeing. Many religious persuasions also accept these values in Africa, including Christianity.

5.1 Six universal values promoted by both the Golden Rule and Ubuntu

Six values will be presented in terms of their practical application and the impact they have regarding addressing issues of exclusion and marginalisation, namely respect, responsibility, integrity, fairness, love, and service. The table on the following page provides a summary of what the essence of these values is in relation to the Golden Rule and Ubuntu.

This table depicts, among other things, that:

- Respect, in short, means treating others how you want to be treated, which is in line with the Golden Rule.
- Responsibility enhances respect for rules in the community and is therefore in line with the spirit of Ubuntu.
- Integrity cuts across the Golden Rule and Ubuntu in promoting loyalty on the one hand, and on the other, banish misuse, abuse, stealing or dealing in untruths.
- Fairness is heavily based on the Golden Rule, "Do unto others what you want them to do to you." It means you only have one set of rules that equally apply to yourself and others.
- Love is often thought of as the principal universal value. Jesus Christ summarised the Law by saying the greatest commandments are to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind, and to love your neighbour as yourself" (Matthew 22:37, 39). Real love includes caring, respect, and trust and excludes selfishness. This caring love is in line with the Golden Rule. Real love is more than an attitude or feelings; it is action (see I John 3:18 and 1 Corinthians 13:4-7).
- Service is particularly important and powerful for those in leadership and authority. Thus, servant leadership, as portrayed by Jesus, focuses on the development and goals of those in the leader's sphere of influence and is necessary in the struggle against exclusion and marginalisation. However, service as value should be unconditional; the life of Jesus is an example of this (see John 13). Compassion is the true motivation for all service, not with ulterior motives like recognition and the expectation of reward.

From the foregoing, I deduce that Ubuntu and the Golden Rule, as well as the values they embody, provide us with an impetus to dream and reimagine a new, better social contract for the people of Africa. Mission and missiology in Africa should drink from these deep value framework wells to be part of this process of reimagination, which would lead to inclusion and end marginalisation. The missiological concepts of *"church-with-others"* and *"church-for-others"* epitomise Ubuntu, the Golden Rule, and values essential for *missio Ecclesia*. A new social contract will not be realised without commitment to service. Service embodies both the spirit and the practice of the Golden Rule and Ubuntu.

Value framework	Moral competence
The Golden Rule	• Do unto others what you want them to do unto you • Empathy: understand the other point of view • Seek the benefit of every person • Value the dignity of another • Treat them with respect
Ubuntu	• Being a person through others • Being humane • Value the good of the community • Group solidarity

Values for life	Moral competence
Respect	• Respect the dignity and worth of others • Acknowledge and respect boundaries • Acknowledge the right of people to live their lives in the way they choose • Not to manipulate, exploit and/or abuse
Responsibility	• Taking responsibility for personal choices and actions • Admitting mistakes and failures • Embracing responsibility to serve others
Integrity	• Act consistently with principles, values and beliefs • Tell the truth • Standing up for what is right • Keeping promises
Fairness	• To value and seek balance in all things • Value and promote equal opportunity • Stand against exclusion, discrimination and marginalisation
Love	• Unconditional • Caring and compassion • A choice and action, not an emotion • Trust and be trustworthy
Service	• Servant leadership • Actively caring for and about others • Involvement in meaningful activities

Table 1: Summary of the six values in relation to the Golden Rule and Ubuntu

Jesus emphasised caring, love, and *missio eeclesia*. This attitude is explained in Matthew 20:28, "…the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve…." There is a close relationship between Ubuntu and caring love. De la Porte and Mailula (2006:73) highlight the commonality between both Ubuntu and caring love; they mention that both "value the good of the community above self-interest and strive to help others in a spirit of service." Thus, Socrates captured this thought when he said, "The perfect human being is all human beings put together, it is a collective, it is all of us together that make perfection." *Missio eclessia* grounded in

Ubuntu and the Golden Rule should work towards the realisation of inclusion and collective wellbeing in Africa. This work should enhance the church's prophetic voice, including advocacy, and ensuring the excluded and marginalised have preferential seats at the table. In the spirit of Ubuntu and the Golden Rule, the prophetic voice would insist on naming, shaming, and calling for the death of any practices that seek to cultivate exclusion and marginalisation. This implies having 'concrete solidarity' and 'critical solidarity' with every member of the African society.

6. Conclusion

This contribution has argued the glaring failures of countries in the African continent in realising their constitutions' social contracts to the abandonment of ethical values. In turn, this results in a lack of moral intelligence and competence in Africa. The failures are manifested through entrenched multi-dimensional exclusion and marginalisation of the masses regarding wealth and the exercise of power. To curb or address exclusion and marginalisation, I have explored how the missiology or science of missions could contribute towards mobilising the church and its ministries and members to nurture and embrace value frameworks which would help build moral competence and identity, and identify and combat moral viruses.

In this contribution, I used insights from two value frameworks, namely "The Golden Rule and Ubuntu" that embrace both religion and culture, and their implications for the church in mission with God in the public sphere to argue that value-based responses are needed to address exclusion and marginalisation. Insights from the Golden Rule and Ubuntu, and the values they promote would contribute towards reimagining a new social contract in the African public space from a missiological perspective.

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