



Abstract.

Striving to contribute to research on child- and youth spirituality and African theology with a contextually grounded, non-western, qualitative youth perspective, the aim of this study is to seek an understanding of the spirituality of male youth that live on the streets in Nairobi. To fulfil this aim, the research task carried out is an analysis of the source material from six focus group interviews with 27 research participants (14-34 years old). Given instructions, the research participants painted drawings that were used as base for discussions, thus drawings and transcribed speech constitute the source material. This is analysed with a model for picture analysis based on semiotics, tools for text analysis by Norman Fairclough and content analysis, and reflected in a theological, philosophical, and contextual theoretical framework, that perceives 'the good life', elaborated by Tanzanian theologian Laurenti Magesa, as the centre of African spirituality.

The research participants' spirituality is found to be relational, with an ethical focus, connected to material aspects, and with a holistic spectrum of time. The source material relates strongly to the understanding of 'the good life' in African spirituality and connects to characteristics of Christianity and Rastafarianism. 'The good life' is created in relationships to friends, parents, organizations, and churches where community is experienced through good actions of generosity, self-sacrifice, and sharing. Prayer sometimes characterizes the relationship to God, while on other occasions, God, church, and organization staff encourage a change of character. Material aspects create 'the good life', in practical mutual dependence among friends, and from organizations and churches, and in wishes for future improved material and social conditions; including a home for comfort. The wish for mobility and financial success portrayed by a car reflects the surrounding Nairobi context, rather than 'the good life' in African spirituality. The aim of the majority of wishes for the future is creation of 'the good life' in communities of friends or family. Remembering 'the good life' with parents in the past, living 'the good life' in the present despite difficulties, and hoping for 'the good life' in the future, are all identified as currently important, and the research participants' strong focus on the future arguments for its importance in their spirituality.

Keywords: the good life, spirituality, theology, street, youth, Kenya.

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1. Introduction.

My days of field study in Nairobi often started with a *matatu*¹ ride to the nearby informal settlement area, slum, where focus group interviews and participant observation were conducted at a CBO² from June to August 2015. I often arrived with Jayden, my research assistant, and with Hope, a CBO staff member, whom I was staying with. July is the coldest month in Kenya with night and morning temperatures of around 10 degrees Celsius. After getting off the *matatu*, we continued our way to the CBO by foot. Lined up along a downhill road are vending stalls made of wood and plastics. The research participants³, male⁴ youth⁵ that live on the streets, refer to the stalls and the surrounding area as the ‘base’, where they often hang out and where some sleep. During the walks we often met with RPs outside the stalls where shopkeepers had arrived to open up their businesses, or by a small breakfast restaurant. We talked and asked if they would join an interview or the drug rehabilitation program that the CBO runs.⁶ These are ordinary moments in daily life, and daily life on the streets in Nairobi is this study’s focus context.

In this context this thesis looks at what is experienced as important and good in the lives of youth that live on the streets. This may seem provoking since the youth live vulnerable economic and social lives. However, ‘the good life’ is the core of the larger, main issue of this study: spirituality⁷. Tanzanian theologian Laurenti Magesa writes:

¹ A van. The major public transportation mode in Nairobi.

² The CBO, short for ‘community based organization’, is registered in Kenya since 2010 and as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in the US since 2012. It is based in an informal settlement area in Nairobi. It focuses on youth that live on the streets, working with prevention and rehabilitation. It offers individuals to start or continue school by providing scholarships, runs a Sunday fellowship, and a drug rehabilitation program twice per week. The name of the CBO, the slum area and other local places, and names of persons in the study (except for mine) are removed to protect the confidentiality of the research participants.

³ Research participants are henceforth referred to as RP in singular and RPs in plural.

⁴ The majority of youth living on the streets in Kenya are male, as are all the RPs in this study, due to the lack of female participants at the CBO.

⁵ The concept ‘youth’ is used for the RPs (see section 1.2). The majority are below 18 years (mostly in the ages 16-17), but a significant number in their early or mid twenties. Research often employs the concept ‘street children’, referring to individuals under 18. I use these references to refer also to individuals of age, as I see them sharing similar life conditions.

⁶ Research journal, July 6, 8, and 9, 2015: 7-9.

⁷ The understanding of spirituality applied is explained in Chapter 1 and 2. ‘The good life’ with quotation marks refers to the understanding of this concept as elaborated by Magesa, see Chapter 1 and 2. Though quotation marks may be used for ‘the good life’ in reference to a literature source, it is not necessarily a quote. If so, it is stated specifically.

African spirituality does not hold as its primary objective the achievement of a specific goal among other goals, such as piety, meekness, or fear of God. If there is a goal in the perception of African spirituality, it is to totally experience the ‘good life’ and to completely avoid the ‘bad life’.⁸ (Quotation marks in original)

Thus, to speak of ‘the good life’ in the African⁹ context means, according to Magesa, to speak of the aim and essential dimensions of spirituality.

As a guest to the CBO in 2014, I was overwhelmed by the poor and dangerous conditions that young persons lived in, often discriminated and treated badly, and observed organizations’ and faith communities’ commitment to help them to leave the streets. Youth that live on the streets are highly visible in the Kenyan capital and part of Kenyan cities since independence in 1963. The restriction against migration to urban areas was then lifted, causing rapid urbanization. Un- or under-employment in combination with high rent prices contributed to the creation of slums that have continued to grow. Small housing, often one room for a family, is common, along with lack of water and sanitation facilities. Children in slums take to the streets as consequence of economical scarcity and the physical and social situation at home. Some are expected to contribute financially to their families.¹⁰ Statistics are difficult to find. In 2000, Philip Kilbride, Collette Suda, and Enos Njeru appreciated the number of ‘street children’ to between 10,000 and 30,000 in Nairobi.¹¹ A report from 2007 estimated the number to 250,000 – 300,000 in Kenya and 60,000 in Nairobi.¹²

Although the physical and social life conditions were evidently difficult, at the same time, from a theological perspective I found interesting the youths’ expressed views about faith, ethics, joys, and worries during discussions at the CBO, and started to wonder how they are subjects in their own lives. This perspective, of children and youth as subjects, is

⁸ Magesa 2013, 32.

⁹ The term ‘African’ is used throughout this thesis. In reference to persons, groups, and institutions, I understand it to encompass that they originate from the geographical context of Africa south of Sahara. For ‘African spirituality’ I rely on Magesa’s understanding of the term, see Chapter 2. In relation to Magesa is discussed the political and research context in which he is placed, and how I relate to his understanding in the analysis chapters. ‘African theology’ is explained in Chapter 1 and 2, and I rely on its understanding. I am aware of the weakness of the term ‘African’ as it is generalizing and has loaded political and historical connotations.

¹⁰ Kilbride, Suda, and Njeru 2000, 5-6, Shorter and Onyanacha 1999, 17-18.

¹¹ Ibid, 4. Research give disparate numbers for statistics and lack explanations of counting methods. Statistics are often based on generalizing definitions.

¹² IRIN In-Depth 2007, 52.

increasingly complementing the stress on care and help for them. In society and research, the attention to children and youth increased during the 20th century,¹³ and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 stressed not only protection and provision for children but also their participation, which, according to Myra Bluebond-Langer and Jill E. Korbin, ‘has stimulated a research and policy agenda that includes children’s views and perspectives’.¹⁴

Furthermore, research on child spirituality and African spirituality encourage making spirituality the focus of a study with youth living on the streets in Nairobi. David Hay and Rebecca Nye argue that spirituality, in general and for children, implies a holistic scope where all parts of life are potentially integrated.¹⁵ Magesa perceives African spirituality as holistic. The sacred and the material and mundane life are not divided but merged together. The supernatural is constantly present and finds expression in relationships between human beings and with the creation at large.¹⁶ Understandings of spirituality as influential in African life and in children’s lives suggest that studying spirituality of African youth may facilitate a holistic perspective of how they understand their lives. Thus, this qualitative study strives to pay attention to the perspectives of youth that live on the streets in Nairobi with the help of a contextually grounded, non-western theological and philosophical perspective of ‘the good life’ as the centre of African spirituality.

1.1. Aim and research task.

The aim of this study is to *seek an understanding of the spirituality of male youth that live on the streets in Nairobi*. Donald Ratcliff and Scottie May state that there is no universally accepted definition of children’s spirituality but stress the importance of clarifying how it is understood in a research project.¹⁷ During the field study I used a definition of children’s spirituality from psychologist Rebecca Nye: ‘relational consciousness’.¹⁸ It refers to passages where English children (ages 6-7 and 10-11)¹⁹ in interviews showed ‘[a]n unusual level of consciousness or perceptiveness, relative to other passages of conversation spoken by that child’ and ‘[c]onversation expressed in a context of how the child related to things, other

¹³ Clarke 2010, 11; Bunge 2001, 1-3.

¹⁴ Bluebond-Langer and Korbin 2007, 241; United Nations 1989.

¹⁵ Hay and Nye 2006, 21-23, 63-64, 109.

¹⁶ Magesa 2013, 23-25.

¹⁷ Ratcliff and May 2004, 9-10.

¹⁸ Hay and Nye 2006, 109.

¹⁹ Ibid, 86-87.

people, him/herself, and God'.²⁰ Consciousness refers to a "meta-cognition", moments where the informant reflects upon his own thoughts and feelings in specific situations. Relational is the child's reference to relationships, 'not only "I-Others" but also "I-Self", "I-World" and "I-God"'.²¹ When attempting an analysis of the source material, consisting of drawings and transcribed interviews, I noticed that it connected to everyday life and visions about life, in accordance with Nye. However, there was not clearly present a heightened awareness, an 'objective insight into [a] subjective response'.²² The definition 'relational consciousness' would assist me to draw a line between spiritual and non-spiritual in the source material but I sensed it would not help to explore in depth the material in relation to the cultural and social context.

To look for another definition of spirituality, I turned to literature on African spirituality. In the interviews analysed in this thesis, the RPs were asked to make drawings and speak about important persons and places in their lives. They talked mainly about what they consider significant and good. As stated above, Magesa argues that 'the good life' is the centre and objective of African spirituality. Human life is holistic and in everything spiritual. 'The good life' is experienced and enhanced by following the ethical values instituted by God, promoted by the ancestors, and found in tradition.²³ Magesa refers to, among others, Mogobe B. Ramose and Vincent Mulago who argue that central values in Africa stress that to be a human, a person, is to live in relationships. Mulago stresses that the community also includes the invisible world of the ancestors. The individual is an inseparable part of his community that it is his duty to enhance.²⁴ I decided to apply the concept of 'the good life' as the definition of spirituality in the analysis since I perceived Magesa's perspective as echoed in the source material and the focus on the African context to be helpful.

To conclude, with the aim of *seeking an understanding of the spirituality of male youth that live on the streets in Nairobi*, the research task for the present study is to *analyse the RPs' views expressed in drawings and discussions in a theological, philosophical, and contextual framework that perceives 'the good life' as the centre of African spirituality*. This framework is based on Magesa and scholars that he refers to in his argumentation, among them Placide Tempels and Mulago.

²⁰ Ibid, 108-109.

²¹ Ibid, 109.

²² Ibid, 109.

²³ Magesa 2013, 24-26, 32; Magesa 2008, 41-42, 77.

²⁴ Ramose 2002a, 231; Mulago 1969, 139-140.

1.2. Defining the group ‘male youth that live on the streets’.

The surrounding community refers to the RPs as ‘street children/youth’ (*watoto/vijana wa mtaani*), ‘street kids’, ‘street boys’, and ‘chokora’²⁵. ‘Street children/youth’ is mainly used in academic texts, often with a discussion on the term’s weakness. In this section I relate the RPs’ situation to relevant concepts and explain the definition that I have concluded to use, ‘male youth that live on the streets’. Unfortunately, when initiating the field study I took for granted that the street was a major self-identity marker for the RPs, and did not discuss this with them, which would have been preferred.

The ‘street children’ concept lacks an adequate and internationally accepted definition.²⁶ Benno Glauser argues that the concept of ‘street children’ arises ‘in response to the desire to speak about children who fall outside of what is considered “normal”/---/...when the situation departs from current social norms’.²⁷ Shorter and Onyancha state that ‘many members of the public fear street children and regard them as abnormal. /---/... we do not share the popular view of them. On the contrary, we came to see them as part of a growing community of street people, and, on a wider plane, as simply a section of Africa’s youth’.²⁸ By ‘street people’, Shorter and Onyancha refer to adults who spend a lot of time on the street and live under scarce economic conditions.²⁹ Sara Thomas de Benítez states that among researchers there is a widening agreement that the term refers to individuals that lack mutual homogeneity.³⁰ Several documents use a United Nations definition from the 1980s, stating that ‘street children are those for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, i.e. unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.) more than their family has become their real home, a situation in which there is no protection, supervision or direction from responsible adults’.³¹ The subdivisions ‘children of the street’, and ‘children in the street’ are often applied, relating to the street and the child’s relationship to home and family. Children *of* the street work and sleep on the street separated from their families, while children *in* the street work on the street

²⁵ *Chokora* is Swahili. As a verb, *chokora* means, ‘to pick’/‘to poke’. When referring to a person that lives on the street as *Chokora*, it stresses that he looks for food in dustbins and dumps (Kilbride, Suda, and Njeru 2000, 2).

²⁶ Thomas de Benítez 2007, 65.

²⁷ Glauser 1997, 152.

²⁸ Shorter and Onyancha 1999, 8.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 23.

³⁰ Thomas de Benítez 2007, 65.

³¹ Though this quote is often used and referred to as coming from an INTER-NGO or Unicef document, I have failed to access it. For quotation see for example Thomas de Benítez 2007, 2 and Unicef 1986, 15.

but sleep in the family home.³² These divisions simplify life situations. Individuals living on the street often change their living situation, moving between home, friends, street, and centres. The concepts are used worldwide but local contexts are different, and thus so also the situation of individuals referred to as ‘street children’.³³ Furthermore, the words ‘family’, ‘child’, ‘home’, and ‘street’ can have different meanings,³⁴ and it is often difficult to distinguish between children and adults on the street.³⁵

I had planned to interview youth *of* the street, but it became challenging. The living situations of the participants of the CBO program are different and change frequently. It was important to promote an including environment, thus all program participants were invited to participate. While concept ‘street children/youth’ may communicate that the street defines their identity, by using ‘male youth that live on the streets’, I wish to stress that the RPs are first young male individuals. Living on the street forms their lives but is not the only thing that defines them. A Unicef report refers to ‘children living and/or working on the street’,³⁶ seemingly equivalent to the concepts ‘children of the street’ and ‘children in the street’. Like this report, I use ‘live on the streets’ to refer to the RPs and include in this definition sleeping, working, and spending the majority or all of one’s time. Some RPs fulfil all of these while others some.

Ranging from 14 to 34 years, the RPs can be defined as children, youth, and young adults, of which I have concluded to use youth. It is difficult to determine where youth begins and ends in terms of self-understanding, age, and social position. In Kenya, a person is considered a youth from adolescence, and being a youth, someone one the way towards adulthood, is confirmed by circumcision around the ages 15-17. Marriage and having children generally puts an end to the youth period. Though there are differences in age between the RPs, and responsibilities and possibilities on the street are different, they share the condition of spending their life mainly on the streets, earning their income there.

To conclude, in this study the group ‘male youth that live on the streets’ is understood as *male individuals who in their geographical and social context are considered as youth. They spend the majority or their time on the streets, obtaining their livelihood there. While all work on the street, the time on the street at night differs from not at all to always.*

³² Glauser 1997, 146.

³³ Ibid, 147-150.

³⁴ Ibid, 146.

³⁵ Thomas de Benítez 2007, 65-66.

³⁶ Unicef 2012, 30, 32-33.

1.3. Previous research and contribution of the present study.

This section positions the study in relation to existing research and explains how it contributes to four areas of study: spirituality in Africa, child- and youth spirituality globally and specifically in Africa, and research with youth living on the streets in this context, that which lacks and that which includes focus on spirituality. The concept of ‘the good life’ includes religiosity and ethics in spirituality, thus studies with these concepts are relevant.

First, this study contributes to research on spirituality in the African context, mainly African theology: ‘Christian thought that concerns itself fundamentally with the relationship of Christian theology to African culture’, where ‘West African Protestants and ... Catholic theologians of French-speaking Africa’³⁷, are influential, among them Protestants Methodist Bolaji Idowu, Anglican Harry Sawyerr, and Anglican John S. Mbiti and Roman Catholics Placide Tempels, Alexis Kagame, and Vincent Mulago.³⁸ This study contributes with an empirical youth perspective, drawing on Magesa’s publications that are contributions to African theology. Other research on spirituality in Africa focuses on Pentecostal and African independent churches. Also, ethnographical studies are numerous.³⁹

Secondly, this study relates to research on spirituality of children and youth globally where an interdisciplinary attitude between religious studies and social sciences is frequent.⁴⁰ Recent theological and social science research stress the importance of studying children and youth in relation to religion and their own religiosity and spirituality. It is a field of study perceived as historically marginal yet increasingly noticed.⁴¹ In the theological field, various studies are produced in Practical theology, and Religious education,⁴² and numerous studies in the field of psychology focus on child- and youth spirituality.⁴³ The overall emphasis in various research fields is Western however non-Western perspectives and contexts are also present.⁴⁴ Some volumes include different perspectives on child- and youth spirituality, parting from Christian perspectives or a variety of religious traditions and

³⁷ Parratt 1995, 25.

³⁸ Ibid, 10-12.

³⁹ See for example Kalu 2008, and Kitshoff 1996. For ethnographical works that focus on youth, see for example Turner 1967. I leave out research relating to Islam in Africa.

⁴⁰ See for example Collins-Mayo and Dandelion 2010.

⁴¹ Collins-Mayo 2010, 1; Yust et al. 2006a, 2-5; Bunge 2001, 3-7; Hay and Nye 2006, 49-62.

⁴² See for example Mercer 2008 and Tamminen 1983.

⁴³ See for example Hay and Nye 2006 and Coles 1990.

⁴⁴ Roehlkepartain 2014, 9. For examples on child and youth spirituality that deal with non-western contexts, see for example Coles 1990; Gottlieb 2006, and Mattis et al. 2006.

geographical contexts.⁴⁵ This study contributes to research on child- and youth spirituality with a qualitative study that stresses the inclusion of non-Western perspectives.

The majority of research including perspectives on child- and youth spirituality in Africa is from South Africa, followed by Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria. Some studies focus specifically on spirituality while others identify it as an influential factor in the lives of youth. Studies are conducted in various fields where developmental studies, psychology, health studies, and theology and religious studies are frequent. Groups represented in research include secondary school and university students, orphans, youth members of different churches, Muslim youth, and youth living in slums or areas with a high violence or HIV frequency. In a majority of studies the RPs are adolescents, often 13-19 years, or slightly older, 17-25 years. Studies that relate sexual behaviour and/or HIV/AIDS to spirituality are most numerous,⁴⁶ and several studies deal with how youth relate to spirituality in difficult situations.⁴⁷ Studies on youth morality are dominated by the South African context.⁴⁸

For African youth that live on the streets, research mainly focuses on South Africa, Ghana, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Kenya. Compared to the age groups in the previous section, research here has a slightly younger focus. In many studies the RPs are approximately 12-18 years, while others include the ages 6-10. The majority of RPs are male. The field of psychology is dominating, with a strong stress on resilience.⁴⁹ The main focus of research is on living conditions and causes for turning to the street. Judith Ennew and Jill Swart-Kruger write in 2003 that '[s]treet children and street youth have been the focus of intense academic interest and welfare concern for over two decades'. During this period, they argue, there has been a 'paradigm shift' in the views on children and youth that live on the street, 'from considering individual children as the site of problems- either as victims or as delinquents- to the conception of children interacting with a variety of environments, including modern, urban thoroughfares of all kinds'.⁵⁰ The view of children and youth as subjects is reflected in some literature and underlined by Phil Mizen and Yaw Ofosu-Kusi

⁴⁵ See Ratcliff et al. 2004, and Yust et al. 2006b. For different perspectives in social sciences, see Roehlkepartain et al. 2006.

⁴⁶ See for example Miller, Ngula, and Musambira 2012.

⁴⁷ See for example Gunnestad and Thwala 2011.

⁴⁸ See for example Swartz 2009.

⁴⁹ See for example Malindi 2014.

⁵⁰ Ennew and Swart-Kruger 2003, 81-82.

who stress carrying out research ‘*with and for*’ children (italics in original), and make RPs agents through using photo-elicitation in their study with street children in Accra.⁵¹

While studies on youth that live on the streets in Africa are numerous, attention to spirituality is scarce. Psychological studies identify spirituality and religious beliefs as a factor that help children and youth to cope with difficulties, for example Julie Orme and Michael Seipel’s study with children ages 12-18 years in Accra,⁵² that identifies ‘spirituality and hope’ as one of several categories of coping strategies.⁵³ Eileen Moyer’s study ‘examines the increasing popularity of Rastafari-inspired discourses among young men living and working in the streets of Dar es Salaam, demonstrating how they contribute to social order and understandings of power structures’.⁵⁴ Spirituality is not the focus but Moyer describes how moral values connected to Rastafarianism are central for the RPs. A tendency in research is to view spirituality or religiosity as a separate section of life, while the present study perceives the spiritual as integrated in all life-spheres. Therefore, studies on life experiences or coping strategies often relate to this study, but they do not apply a theoretical framework that includes such parts of life in spirituality. Especially relevant are studies focusing on relationships, for example Mizen and Ofosu-Kusi’s article on friendship in children’s lives on the streets in Accra.⁵⁵ The present study aims to contribute to these studies, arguing that spiritual and secular need not be separated. Since ‘street children/youth’ is a generalizing definition and the RPs in this study share life conditions with other African youth, this study also aims to contribute to research on African youth spirituality in general.

Finally, the present study relates most directly to the three studies I have found that focus specifically on spirituality of African youth that live on the streets. Two studies concentrate on witchcraft. Samson Mhiza studies the ‘Religious-Spiritual Self-Image’⁵⁶ of children, ages 12-18, living on the streets in Harare, and results show that evil spirits are present in the RPs’ lives.⁵⁷ Emily Margaretten’s study with youth on the streets in Durban, discusses beliefs in witchcraft and how it impacts the RPs.⁵⁸ The present study complements the concentration on witchcraft with a holistic focus.

⁵¹ Mizen and Ofosu-Kusi 2007, 58-59.

⁵² Orme and Seipel 2007, 491-492.

⁵³ Ibid, 494.

⁵⁴ Moyer 2005, 32.

⁵⁵ Mizen and Ofosu-Kusi 2010.

⁵⁶ Mhiza 2015, 187, 189.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 192-193, 195-197.

⁵⁸ Margaretten 2011.

Third is Melissa Browning's study with children, ages 7-16, in Nairobi and parents who also live on the street. Browning conducts observation and qualitative interviews⁵⁹ 'about God, prayer, morality, the afterlife, sacred stories, and rites of passage, with questions drawn either from African traditional religions, Christianity, or both'⁶⁰, with the objective of finding common denominators 'between the beliefs and practices of street children and the beliefs and practices central to Christianity or African traditional religions'.⁶¹ Like the present study, Browning uses the concept of 'life force' in African theology, along with 'blessing',⁶² and asks if children on the streets 'are behaving in life-sustaining or life-destroying ways'.⁶³ There are similarities between Browning's and the present study. Both are conducted in Nairobi, based on observations and interviews, though this study applied the methodology of focus groups and drawings. There is an age difference as Browning has interviewed mainly younger children than the perspective of older RPs given in this study. Among the ages of the parents on the street in Browning's study only that of one person is mentioned, 18 years old. At least one RP in the present study is a parent, but his child does not live with him. Only males are included in this study, while Browning includes both sexes, however for interviewed parents she refers only to women. As will be shown, some of Browning's results concur while others disagree with the present study.

Research on youth spirituality in Africa often aims to contribute to beneficial outcomes, for example through relating spirituality to sexual practices and HIV/AIDS or resilience for youth in difficult situations. For youth that live on the street, improved resources by authorities and NGOs, poverty alleviation, and helping them to improve feelings of self-worth, are stressed.⁶⁴ Browning hopes that her research will facilitate ways for street children to be included into society. Reaching the conclusion that RPs attempt to sustain their lives but fail due to stealing, she argues that society must provide them with methods to perform life sustaining actions and find ways to ease the culture shock of becoming part of mainstream society.⁶⁵ This study does not attempt to answer to a need or request for youth that live on the street to change their lives, but perceives the RPs' thoughts as valuable and essential in themselves and as contributions to theology. But, it is imperative that I as a

⁵⁹ Browning 2011, 149, 153.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 153.

⁶¹ Ibid, 149.

⁶² Ibid, 147.

⁶³ Ibid, 158.

⁶⁴ Orme and Seipel 2007, 497-498; Mhizha 2015, 198.

⁶⁵ Browning 2011, 149, 158-159.

researcher do not put myself in an imagined position of objectively carrying the voice of the RPs, an approach that James Clifford argues is perceived as impossible in ethnography today.⁶⁶ The results obtained in this study are interpretations of the drawings and discussions together with the RPs, affected by the theoretical framework and my subjective position.

1.5. Thesis outline.

In this introductory chapter, I present the study's aim and research task and explain how I define the group of the RPs in relation to their context and concepts in literature. I relate the study to existing research and describe how it strives to make a contribution. In Chapter 2, I discuss understandings of spirituality and the process that led to applying the concept of 'the good life' as theoretical framework for the study. I also situate the concept in the context of religion and spirituality in African theology. Chapter 3 focuses on methods and sources. I explain the research process, ethical considerations, and the analysis tools applied. I present the CBO and the RPs, to help the reader become acquainted with the RPs and the context. Chapter 4 to 6 are analysis chapters, focusing on good relationships, aspects of life on the street, and wishes for the future, respectively. Chapter 7 is a discussion chapter, concentrating on the time perspective that I perceive as important throughout the analysis. In Chapter 8 I present the conclusions of the study and suggestions for further research.

⁶⁶ Clifford 1986, 9-10.

2. Theoretical framework.

As mentioned, the focus on spirituality initiated a search for an understanding of it that would assist an analysis of the source material. The concept of ‘the good life’ as described by Magesa was most helpful. Below I describe the process towards this concept, position understandings of spirituality in research with children and youth and in African theology in their contexts, and explain ‘the good life’ and how it is applied in the analysis.

2.1. Research process and identifying a theoretical framework.

My research started with pilot study interviews in Nairobi in 2014 with youth that live on the streets, where I used questions on religious themes. They seemed problematic, probably due to being theoretical and narrow. I sensed that questions connecting to daily life would be better. I turned to the area of child- and youth spirituality that offered a holistic context in which religious confessional faith and practices could be included.

This research field is problematic in itself due to a lack of consensus as to how spirituality should be defined.⁶⁷ Prevailing understandings are found in social sciences, psychology, and theology or religious studies. Eugene Roehlkepartain gives definitions for social sciences and religious studies and underline that they both stress ‘that there is an intrinsic human capacity for spirituality, or transcendence of self toward “something greater.” This impulse gives rise to such phenomena as seeking meaning and purpose, the pursuit of the sacred, and embedding one’s identity within a tradition, community, or stream of thought’.⁶⁸ Hay and Nye are often referred to in research on child spirituality. In three frequent understandings of spirituality, ‘religious devotion; being fully aware of one’s “species being”; and being aesthetically or ethically aware’, Hay identifies ‘a heightening of awareness or attentiveness’, that for him captures the essence of spirituality.⁶⁹ In Nye’s qualitative study,

⁶⁷ Roehlkepartain 2014, 2. Like ‘spirituality’, ‘religion’ is a contested term. It may refer exclusively to thoughts and practices in a confessional context or tradition, but can also be defined more broadly. In the present sub-section of this chapter, religion is understood in the more narrow sense, while in relation to Magesa in the next sub-section, and in the analysis, a difference is not made between spirituality and religion. This is explained further in the next section.

⁶⁸ Roehlkepartain 2004, 122.

⁶⁹ Hay and Nye 2006, 21-22.

‘relational consciousness’ defines children’s spirituality.⁷⁰ Roehlkepartain’s mentioning of ‘transcendence of self toward “something greater”’ possibly relates to Hay’s ‘awareness’ and Nye’s ‘consciousness’. They stress that this state of being may take expression in the religious or sacred, but not necessarily as purpose and other relationships are included in the context of spirituality. Hay and Nye’s stress on spirituality as potentially present in all areas of life convinced me to use their framework for the field study.

Hay, Nye, and Roehlkepartain are positioned in European and North American cultural and socio-political contexts. Hay stresses the contextual character of spirituality but also argues that independently of context, spirituality as a heightened awareness is a state that exists in all persons.⁷¹ I second Hay’s view of spirituality as contextually conditioned but find a European and Western cultural understanding in itself to influence the division that he and Nye make between daily and spiritual awareness and that they perceive to be universal.

Jacqueline Mattis et al. point out the difference ‘between sacred and secular domains of life’ in the West. Western studies of spirituality focus on religious dogma and praxis, in contrast with non-western cultures, where spirituality is deeply integrated with life as a whole. While Western psychologists focus on the individual, viewed as ‘separable, and that can be imagined outside of the context of community or relationship’, other cultures stress that ‘beingness/selfhood cannot exist outside of the context of community’.⁷² A study on religiosity or spirituality, argue Mattis et al., must take culture and ethnicity into consideration.⁷³ Roehlkepartain’s and Hay and Nye’s stress on spirituality as potentially present everywhere in life disagrees with Mattis et al.’s description of Western research. Also, the perspective of relationships is central in Nye’s study, although the person is perceived as an individual self. However, stressing a special awareness or transcendence of self to identify spirituality seems to make a distinction between spiritual and non-spiritual moments, between sacred and secular, different from Mattis et al.’s mentioning of non-western cultures.

Though Nye’s stress on relationships and Roehlkepartain’s emphasis on meaning and purpose are reflected in the source material, as explained above I found Nye’s definition problematic and decided to use the concept of ‘the good life’, explained by Magesa, as theoretical framework for the analysis.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 109.

⁷¹ Ibid, 25-27.

⁷² Mattis et al. 2006, 284.

⁷³ Ibid, 293.

2.2. African religion and spirituality – the context of ‘the good life’.

Magesa explains ‘the good life’ in the context of African religion and African spirituality.⁷⁴ In AR, he criticises the lack of dialogue between Western forms of Christianity and African religion, which has not been allowed to speak from its own perspective. A deeper understanding of African religion is necessary to create a fruitful religious dialogue since African Christians are conditioned by African religion in interpretation and practice.⁷⁵ In AS, Magesa addresses ‘the worldview or spirituality of the peoples of Africa *south* of the Sahara desert’ (italics in original).⁷⁶ Although diversity exists, Magesa argues that there is uniformity in the expressions of culture and religion,⁷⁷ regardless of and together with different religious affiliations. Still, he also notes that groups form their own spirituality in connection to their context, within larger communities.⁷⁸

Magesa’s holistic view of religion and spirituality is clear as he describes religion as “a way of life” or life itself, where a distinction is not made between religion and other areas of human existence.⁷⁹ In AS, he places spirituality on an equal footing with worldview.⁸⁰ Due to the view of life as holistic and a constant merge of the sacred with the material and mundane, Magesa states that the difference between religion and spirituality is ‘practically non-existent’.⁸¹ The stress on relationships and ethics is central. In AR he states that he perceives morality and ethics as the essence of religion,⁸² and refers to Clifford Geertz who argues that there is a strong connection between ethics and religion. The divine is perceived in religious thought as that which asks for both devotion and ethical conduct.⁸³ In AS, Magesa stresses spirituality as expressed in action: ‘[i]n the African worldview, spirituality is more of an activity than a passive quality. Rather than a “state of being”, it is a way of behaving or, rather, relating. It involves dynamic relationships between visible and

⁷⁴ I use two of Magesa’s publications: *African Religion. The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (1998) (originally published 1997) (henceforth referred to as AR) and *What is not sacred? African Spirituality* (2013) (referred to as AS).

⁷⁵ Magesa 1998, 16-20, 23.

⁷⁶ Magesa 2013, 3. By ‘African’ Magesa refers to the Sub-Saharan black population, with a worldview not singularly Christian or Muslim (3).

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 4.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 6, 15.

⁷⁹ Magesa 1998, 33.

⁸⁰ Magesa 2013, 3.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 21.

⁸² Magesa 1998, 13-14.

⁸³ Geertz 1968, 302-303.

invisible powers. Better yet, it entails the mutual exchanges of energies among all beings'.⁸⁴ There is little difference, if any, in Magesa's descriptions of spirituality and religion, and he does not consider the difference relevant. Like Magesa, I do not differentiate between the two concepts in the analysis of the source material and since Magesa describes spirituality and religion so similarly, I use his references to both concepts to understand his view of spirituality. My decision to use spirituality, rather than religion, is due to other literature on spirituality, for example Hay and Nye, and Roehlkepartain, that equally to Magesa perceive it as potentially including all life spheres.

While Roehlkepartain, Hay, and Nye argue that all humans share a core spirituality although it is shaped by the cultural context, Magesa underlines the distinctiveness of the African worldview and perceives spirituality not as a transcendental state but as life itself and actions in it.⁸⁵ Like other scholars, Magesa is influenced by his context. His stress on the lack of dialogue between Western Christianity and African religion relates to the, by John Parratt noted, tendency among African theologians, influenced by independence struggles and nationalism, to be critical towards European 'missionaries' involvement in colonial rule, denigration of traditional rites and customs, attitudes of racial superiority and of paternalism, and an unhappy desire to keep the African church for as long as possible under European control'.⁸⁶ For African theologians, a sensed disconnection between Western Christian faith and the African traditions and context, according to Parratt resulted in strive for integration of 'the traditional worldview into Christian theology'.⁸⁷ The influence of independence struggles in theology also relates to Magesa's understanding of the concepts 'African', 'religion' and 'spirituality', and his use of them in singular form. David Westerlund argues that referring to 'African religion' in singular is a characteristic of the aim to compare the traditional religion with Christianity and that it testifies to nationalism and favours Pan-Africanization.⁸⁸ While the tendency in the West has been to view religion and spirituality as having marginal influence on life, Westerlund underlines how African scholars see religion as

⁸⁴ Magesa 2013, 26.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 23-25.

⁸⁶ Parratt 1995, 7-8.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 14.

⁸⁸ Westerlund 1985, 48-49. Pan-Africanism was a 20th century political movement that argued the right to independence for African countries against European colonialism. Their ideology perceives Africans residing in Africa and elsewhere as sharing a common political and cultural identity (*Nationalencyklopedin online*, s.v. 'panafrikanism') and unity among African states, political and economical, was a central aim (Welch 1966, 14).

highly influential in society and culture, possible to use to explain and understand other factors.⁸⁹

Roehlkepartain, Hay, Nye, and Magesa stress the importance of relationships and that spirituality is essential in all aspects of life. The difference seems to lay in that while Magesa views life as spiritual in its essence, and that it is impossible to separate the spiritual from non-spiritual, the others perceive spirituality as a state of being that the individual reaches, reflecting on his relationships to others, possibly the sacred, as well as the meaning and purpose in life. All definitions are affected by and created in their cultural and ideological context. Methodological factors way in on that Magesa's understanding of spirituality best reflects the RPs' expressions. Answers are dependent on questions. The questions for the interviews encouraged answers on what is important and good in life, which opened up for using the concept of 'the good life' in African spirituality. Had we made individual interviews, detailed questions could have been made, possibly leading into discussions to favour moments of relational consciousness. By applying 'the good life' in this study I do not argue that the RPs have a unique 'African' spirituality that European youth lack, or vice versa, but merely intend to interpret the source material to understand the RPs' expressions best possible.

2.2. 'The good life'.

As mentioned, 'the good life' is the centre of African spirituality according to Magesa. Following the quote in the introduction, he continues:

Indeed, formal associations, societies, or sodalities similar to spiritual groups in other religious traditions can be found, but the purpose of each is to integrate the life forces for greater, better, and more abundant life in this world achieved through the constant interaction between faith, environment, and society.⁹⁰

Throughout AR and AS, Magesa refers, besides for 'the good life' to 'harmony',⁹¹ 'life in its fullness',⁹² 'fullness of life',⁹³ 'fulfilling life',⁹⁴ 'abundant life',⁹⁵ and 'abundance of life',⁹⁶

⁸⁹ Westerlund, 26.

⁹⁰ Magesa 2013, 32. Good life also mentioned in 2013, 46, 62, 74, 197.

⁹¹ Magesa 1998, 73; 2013, 46.

⁹² Magesa 1998, 77.

⁹³ Ibid, 249.

and other similar expressions. I perceive his descriptions of them to concur, thus I understand it as one concept and I use mainly ‘the good life’. Magesa bases his elaboration mainly on the closely connected concepts ‘vital force’ and ‘ubuntu’, and as mentioned above he refers in his argumentation to other scholars, among them Mulago, Ramose, and Tempels. Thus, when explaining vital force and ubuntu I refer to these scholars, and also to Alexis Kagame (through Janheinz Jahn), that I perceive as helping to explain the concepts. In the analysis, the concept of ‘the good life’ is applied to interpret the RPs’ expressed thoughts, to see how they relate and where understandings may divert.

2.2.1. Vital force.

Magesa notes that the concept of vital force in the African context was first explained by Placide Tempels, Belgian missionary in Congo during middle 20th century.⁹⁷ Vital force, argues Tempels, is the central value for the Bantu.⁹⁸ It is also referred to as ‘life’, ‘force’ and ‘to live strongly’.⁹⁹ In actions the goal is to strengthen life and prevent its’ weakening. When a person is content with life the vital force is strong while suffering is sign of the opposite.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ Magesa 2013, 47.

⁹⁵ Magesa 1998, 77; 2013, 32.

⁹⁶ Magesa 1998, 81, 250.

⁹⁷ Magesa 2013, 26. Tempels is often considered the initiator and characteristic representative of ‘ethnophilosophy’ (Deacon 2002, 99; Le Grange 2011, 69). It is represented by scholars perceiving African philosophy as ‘thoughts and beliefs’ produced in a ‘unique way of thinking’ that is different from other, especially Western and European, philosophy. Ethnophilosophy stresses communality in opposition to individuality, perceived as central in European philosophy. It is based on the thoughts prevailing in society, perceiving everyone as participating in philosophy (Oruka 2002, 120-121). Ethnophilosophy, in which also Mulago, Magesa and other scholars in African theology may be included, is extensively discussed in relation to other strands of philosophy; see for example Oruka 2002, and Le Grange 2011, for arguments and explanations that position the debate as ideological and contextually grounded. Also, Tempels’ aim is often discussed. Arguments mainly centre on whether he wished to assist European colonials and portray Africans as different (Hountondji 1970, 112-113, 116-117) or if he wanted to achieve a holistic conversion of the Bantu to Christianity by arguing that they had a coherent worldview (Deacon 2002, 103-105).

⁹⁸ Tempels 1959, 44. The Bantu are ethnic groups inhabiting large areas of Sub-Saharan Africa, that belong to the same language family (*Nationalencyklopedin online* s.v. ‘bantu’). Though the title *Bantu Philosophy*, and Tempels himself, refer to Bantu in general and sometimes to Africans (Tempels 1959, 17-18, 25-26), his observations were limited to the BaLuba community in Congo (Deacon 2002, 99-101).

⁹⁹ Tempels 1959, 44.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 44-47.

All actions are connected to this principle and therefore influential.¹⁰¹ Every living creature, humans, animals, and plants have a force, given to them by God, without which life is non-existent. Invisible beings, i.e. the first ancestors and other deceased family members, also possess vital force.¹⁰² Tempels stresses that the concept of ‘force’ is comparable to the European conception of ‘being’. Thus, it is not only that a being receives a force, rather ‘force is being, being is force’.¹⁰³ Jahn refers to Kagame who writes about the philosophy of being for a Bantu community in Rwanda through linguistic analysis. All that exists is divided into the classes *Muntu*, *Kintu*, *Hantu*, and *Kuntu*. The stem –ntu- refers to being in its abstract form, or rather the force, which all beings make up together.¹⁰⁴ The *muntu* is the human being, or rather a person, “a force with intelligence”.¹⁰⁵

The concept of vital force is based on interrelatedness and hierarchy of which the centre is the living human being. A person is not an independent individual but part of a community, the clan, influencing and being influenced.¹⁰⁶ Magesa quotes Vincent Mulago who argues that ‘[t]he life of the individual [among the Bantu] is grasped as it is shared. The member of the tribe, the clan, the family, knows that he does not live to himself, but within the community. He knows that apart from the community he would no longer have the means of existence. In particular, he knows that his life is a participation in his forefathers’ life, and that its preservation and strengthening depend continually on them’.¹⁰⁷ Thus, ‘the good life’ is created in and for the community.

The top of the hierarchy of interacting forces is God the creator, the original source of force. Below God, connecting living humans to the divine, are clan founders. Following them are other deceased relatives, ancestors. Both clan founders and ancestors influence their living descendants. When ancestors lose contact with living human beings, thus unable to influence their living forces, they are considered dead. Following the deceased are living human beings that, based on order of birth, have different positions in the hierarchy. The connection to the ancestors goes through the oldest member of the community. Below humans beings in the hierarchy are the forces of animals and plants.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 90-91.

¹⁰² Ibid, 46.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 50-51.

¹⁰⁴ Jahn 1960, 96-99. See Kagame 1956 to read him directly.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 99, 103-104. ‘En kraft utrustad med intelligens’ (99).

¹⁰⁶ Tempels 1959, 58-60, 64, 103, 108.

¹⁰⁷ Mulago 1969, 139.

¹⁰⁸ Tempels 1959, 61-68.

From the understanding of life as interacting forces follows a stress on action in relationships in all spheres of life. Human beings perform moral actions to work towards unity, a sense of harmony. The opposite, immorality, may cause suffering and imbalance in the universe.¹⁰⁹ Harmony or suffering may be signs of how content the ancestors are with the conduct of their descendants. God is the founder of the right values, the tradition, and passes them on through the ancestors, who are responsible for guiding the living members of the clan to an ethical living and are asked for assistance in times of distress. If the ancestors do not provide relief of suffering, living humans may turn directly to God for help. Leaders are responsible for enhancing the life of the community by promoting ethical guidelines, and maintaining the contact with the invisible world where ancestors and God reside.¹¹⁰

Traditions that must be preserved to enhance ‘the good life’ in the present and the beyond are centralized around birth, initiation, marriage and having children, and death’.¹¹¹ A birth manifests the ongoing of life for coming generations, contentment of the ancestors, confirmation of marriage, parents’ ethical life, and guarantee to become ancestors after their earthly life. Having children is thus the most important aspect of a marriage since the couple in this way fulfils the purpose of being human. During puberty, the individual goes through an initiation process that symbolizes the integration into the adult sphere and the confirmation of belonging to a clan. It involves receiving information about rights, obligations, and the relationship to the visible and invisible world. Death in old age is proof of an ethically well-lived life while death at a young age gives testimony to the opposite.¹¹² Magesa quotes Elom Dovlo who argues that: ‘[t]o join the ancestors at death, especially to become one of them, is the goal of Ghanaian and most African peoples’.¹¹³ As an ancestor, the individual will continue to enforce the life of the living humans.¹¹⁴

Suffering is not necessarily caused only by disobedience towards the tradition, provoking the ancestors. While the ancestors influence the force of living human beings to strengthen the life of the community, other human spirits, and occasionally non-human spirits, are feared due to being perceived as causing harm.¹¹⁵ In addition to spirits, witchcraft,

¹⁰⁹ Magesa 2013, 26-29.

¹¹⁰ Magesa 1998, 41, 52, 67-70, 80-81. Speaking of God as the founder of values and tradition, Magesa refers to, among others, Mbiti, see Mbiti 1970, 51-52.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 81, 92, 110, 112, 144.

¹¹² Ibid, 82, 92-94, 98, 119, 121, 144.

¹¹³ Dovlo 1993, 50.

¹¹⁴ Magesa 1998, 146.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 56-59.

described by Magesa as “*the enemy of life*” (italics in original),¹¹⁶ is a possible cause of suffering.¹¹⁷ Magesa refers to Cosmas Haule who writes that witchcraft is ‘the mysterious power inherent in man that, used badly, causes injury and harm ... to others. It is part of an individual being.’¹¹⁸ As witchcraft exists in all persons, ‘every human being is potentially a witch’, but in most people the power is inactive.¹¹⁹ Magesa also quotes Lucy Mair who argues that witches are identified as unsocial and arrogant.¹²⁰ Thus, while participation in community is imperative to strengthen the vital force, through hurting others and behaving contrary to the ethical codes, the witch weakens the vital force of persons and the community.¹²¹ The responsibility to fight witchcraft falls on the elders. Magesa writes that the reasons for suffering and life weakening acts often are interconnected, and that anything destructive that happens often can be connected to witchcraft.¹²²

Mulago stresses the relationship that the individual has to the family and community property. Community members are united through blood and common possessions, that have a connection to the owner. Although the community of the extended family, including the clan, is essential, Mulago argues that a community can also be perceived in a wider sense. Individuals are included through marriage, as blood brothers, by receiving livelihood from the same source and as members below one authority.¹²³

Until now, the vertical relationships of the community have been in focus. ‘The good life’ is enhanced through actions in accordance with divine values preserved in traditions. The values relate also to everyday ethics, given that the vital force of all beings is constantly enhanced or diminished. I will now move on to explain this through the concept of ubuntu.

2.2.2. Ubuntu.

To be a human being, a person, can only be understood as being in relation to someone else, a force in relation to other forces. To recognize the dependence on the community and to live accordingly is to obtain ‘full humanity’ or ‘humanness’, translated in Zulu and Xhosa to

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 170.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 165-174.

¹¹⁸ Haule 1969, 25.

¹¹⁹ Magesa 1998, 167.

¹²⁰ Mair 1969, 43.

¹²¹ Magesa 1998, 169-171.

¹²² Ibid, 69, 149, 167.

¹²³ Mulago 1969, 138-140, 142-144.

ubuntu.¹²⁴ To have ubuntu is to have qualities that agree with the definitions of what it means to be a human.¹²⁵ Enhanced as in accordance with ‘humanness’ and being human is ‘to affirm one’s humanity by recognizing the humanity of others and, on that basis, establish humane relations with them’.¹²⁶ Thus, it implies a perception of the other as valuable and necessary, and actions in line with this awareness. Such are respect towards all other human beings, a willingness to build and participate in community with others, and solidarity and generosity with those in need to enhance the life of the community.¹²⁷ Magesa argues in reference to Munyaka and Motlhabi, that the stress on expressing humanness in relationships to others reflects the perception of ethics as central in African spirituality.¹²⁸ In accordance with their stress on generosity and participation in community, Magesa writes that the poles of hospitality and greed capture the perception of the ultimate good versus the ultimate evil from an African perspective. Good company and the building of community enhance human life.¹²⁹ The concepts of vital force and ubuntu are related as shown in Jahn’s explanation above. Shutte connects the two concepts, arguing that the perception of human beings as forces in constant contact with each other and mutually dependent to be enhanced and to enhance the community is in agreement with the understanding that to be a human it is necessary to live in relationship to others.¹³⁰ Mulago’s conclusion also unites the two concepts: ‘the keystone of Bantu society appears to be a single principle, that of participation. This participation seems to fulfil the function of integrating particular beings, and placing them within the whole plan of the visible and invisible world, so that each reality finds its place and its truth in its connection and relationship with the whole’.¹³¹

To conclude, I present a summary of the concept of ‘the good life’, drawing on the explanations presented in this chapter. ‘The good life’ is the life of the individual and of the community, impossible to separate from each other. An individual is linked to the

¹²⁴ Magesa 2013, 12-13. Magesa refers in his explanation of ubuntu to, among others, Ramose 2002a; Ramose 2002b; Shutte 2009, and Munyaka and Motlhabi 2009.

¹²⁵ Munyaka and Motlhabi 2009, 65. While Zulu and Xhosa use *ubuntu*, other Bantu-languages have their own translation. In Swahili, Magesa translates it to *utu* (Magesa 2013, 13) (The Swahili word for a person is *mtu*). In Bantu languages nouns and adjectives are placed in classes. In Swahili, *utu* is in the U-class to which abstract nouns belong (Parrott 2010, x-xiv).

¹²⁶ Ramose, 2002b, 231.

¹²⁷ Munyaka and Motlhabi 2009, 66, 68, 71, 75.

¹²⁸ Magesa 2013, 43-44.

¹²⁹ Magesa 1998, 64.

¹³⁰ Shutte 2009, 89-91.

¹³¹ Mulago 1969, 145.

community due to his vital force that is present in all individuals, in this world and the invisible, and that originates from God. 'The good life' is an ethically good life lived in agreement with the values that originate from God, promoted by ancestors and through generations as traditions. The values identify what it means to be a human being, to have ubuntu. They stress the enhancement of the community through participation of all individuals according to their duty. Respect, generosity, hospitality, a willingness to live together with others, and adherence to the obligation of safeguarding the continuance of the clan through marriage and procreation are imperative. 'The good life' is life experienced now by the individual and the community in this world and the invisible world, including hope and constant work towards its continuance. Following from the understanding of living forces originating from God as constantly interacting in all actions and the divine values taking expression in ethical deeds, is the perception that 'the good life' is one, holistic.

3. Methods and sources.

Presented in this chapter are the methods applied for carrying out interviews and the phase of analysis. I discuss ethical considerations and introduce the reader to the CBO where the study was carried out as well as the RPs' life conditions as described during interviews.

3.1. Interviews with drawings.

Six interviews with six focus groups¹³², in total 27 participating RPs, are analysed in this study. The RPs range in ages 14 to 34. The medium age is 18, the median age 17. 16 RPs are under 18 years while 11 are 18 years or older. The most frequent ages are 16 (six persons) and 17 (six persons). The interviews are part of a larger collection of 26 interviews with 37 individuals. In the course of interviews with each group, the interview analysed here was realized in the middle, thus the focus groups had met together earlier. I decided to use only one interview from each group to be able to analyse the information thoroughly and due to the limited size of a master's thesis. I opted for the interview with drawings from each group since I perceived the amount of information suitable. To use other or more interviews would probably have provided other and more extensive information.

The decision to conduct group interviews was due to observations during pilot study interviews at the CBO in 2014, where the RPs seemed more comfortable to speak freely during group discussions at the CBO than during individual interviews. The need for group-oriented interviews was clear and the method of focus groups was applied for this study. Victoria Wibeck suggests having four to six individuals in a group to enable everyone's participation and prevent division into sub-groups.¹³³ In the study the number of RPs varied. In three groups we started with six RPs. Sometimes one or two were absent. In two groups we started with five persons but three to four RPs usually came. In the last group ten individuals joined the first meeting but for the interview with drawings six RPs participated. Jayden, a staff member at the CBO who knows nearly all the RPs well, was hired as an interview moderator due to the cultural barrier between myself and the RPs and my lacking language skills to conduct interviews alone. Jayden and I were both present during interviews and during those analysed in this study we both participated moderating.

¹³² A focus group is a unit of individuals that gathers with a moderator to discuss a specific theme that the researcher has chosen and prepared (Wibeck 2000, 9, 23).

¹³³ Wibeck 2000, 50-51.

To use drawings in the interviews was not initially planned. The majority of the interviews carried out during the field study consisted of discussion using Nye's interview guide¹³⁴ that she applied during individual interviews on spirituality with school children.¹³⁵ The guide was slightly adapted to fit the context of the study and used due to its broad coverage. Still, for the interview with each group analysed in this thesis Nye's guide was not applied. Instead the interview was conducted using drawings made by the RPs. I had planned to conduct individual interviews, in case that the focus group interviews would not work well, using photo-elicitation. Each RP would receive a disposable camera to take pictures and then the interview would be a conversation about the photos.¹³⁶ When testing a camera, the pictures turned out to be of bad quality and Jayden suggested that we instead could use drawings. We decided to do so, and continued working in groups.

For the interviews with drawings we gathered around a table and started with a snack during which Jayden gave instructions for the interview. When giving instructions to RPs who would participate in interviews with photo-elicitation, Nancy Ammerman and Rowan Williams encouraged them to take photographs mainly of important places but also of persons.¹³⁷ I decided to use these instructions, although adjusted. Each informant was encouraged to draw, individually, 1) an important person in your life (*mtu muhimu katika maisha yako*), 2) an important place in your life (*mahali muhimu katika maisha yako*) and 3) anything that you would like to draw (*kitu chochote ambacho unataka*)/Often described as 'freestyle'. We explained that after drawing the RPs would show and describe their drawings to everyone in the group. Each individual was given a colouring book with plain pages. Besides for the drawings made during the interview that were taken out, the RPs were given the rest of the book to take with them or, if they wished, it could be kept at the CBO and they could come and paint when they wanted. Crayons and felt pens were laid out on the table. The RPs were left to draw and I put on music on my phone for them to listen, mainly songs from the Kenyan hip hop group Sauti Sol, Tanzanian hip hop artist Diamond, and some reggae music by Bob Marley. Marley and Diamond were especially popular. The drawing session lasted for around 20 minutes after which we gathered again. Each RP described his drawings to the others, showing them so that everyone could see. Jayden and I made follow-up

¹³⁴ See Nye 1998.

¹³⁵ Hay and Nye 2006, 86-87.

¹³⁶ Ammerman and Williams 2012, 124-125; Rose 2012, 304.

¹³⁷ Ibid 2012, 124.

questions based on the explanations and interesting motives in the drawings before moving on to the next person. Sometimes a RP commented on the drawings of a friend.

3.2. Participant observation, the CBO, and life conditions of the RPs.

The interviews have been carried out in a process of participant observation. Karen O'Reilly argues that participant observation is not only to participate in contextual life, but also to observe in the sense of paying attention, thinking, analysing occurrences, and noting down. This combination leads to an inevitable tension of subjectivity and objectivity that is to be balanced, not resolved, to learn about a context. The relationship between participation and observation is determined through identification by the researcher of her objective for participation and by practical factors.¹³⁸ The objective for participation in this study was to establish confidence between myself and the RPs, and to gain a wider understanding for their life conditions. This objective encourages participation in as many areas possible, however, several factors prevented participation. First, my appearance makes it difficult for me to take part in public life without being noticed. Second, the RPs are subject to dangers when working in dustbins and youth living on the street often work in different places during the day and gather together late in the evening. To participate in the daily life of the RPs was not safe. Still, I tried to participate in the following situations.

Mainly, participant observation happened during the drug rehabilitation program of the CBO twice a week. The program participants come in the morning to wash their clothes and shower. At noon the staff holds a discussion session that concentrates on drug prevention, Bible stories with parallels to the participants' lives or occurrences in the surrounding society, where after lunch is served. I usually arrived to the church compound where the CBO operates in the morning when the youth were washing their clothes. We hanged out and talked. I cooked lunch and listened to the discussions led by the CBO staff after which we ate together.¹³⁹ I tried not to speak in the CBO program discussions but preferred to listen in order not to take on the role of teacher. A few times I reminded after discussions about which group was meeting next since it was the only time when everyone gathered. The time spent hanging around at the CBO included a constant process of obtaining access, which O'Reilly mentions as part of participant observation.¹⁴⁰ This included answering questions about myself for the

¹³⁸ O'Reilly 2012, 97, 106, 112.

¹³⁹ Research journal, June 13: 1-2; June 19: 2-3; June 23, 4; June 30: 5-6; July 10 2015, 10-11.

¹⁴⁰ O'Reilly 2012, 86.

RPs to feel comfortable about me being there. The question of access also relates to that of participant observation as an embodied exercise. To be in a context involves being judged and given positions by people that will affect their actions.¹⁴¹

Relating to the issue of context and being given positions is the context of the CBO and the drug rehabilitation program where the interviews were carried out. As will be mentioned in Chapter 6, the RPs stressed that they wanted to stop using drugs and to change their lives and that they were encouraged by the CBO staff and other church staff to do so. The context of the CBO and the drug rehabilitation program, that Jayden who was an interview moderator works at the CBO, and that I had been visiting the CBO earlier, possibly influenced the RPs to stress the aspect of letting go of drugs during the interviews.

Individuals that participate in the program range in ages 6 to 35 with the majority around 10-17 years old. Normally, only boys participate. Their living situations differ with the common denominator of spending the majority of their time on the street. Some live with parents or another guardian and spend their days on the street. Some help to provide for their families. Others sleep in small groups directly on the street, in vending stalls, or in small rooms that they rent by themselves or with help from others. The majority of the program participants use some or several types of drugs among the most frequent are inhalers, such as glue and marijuana. The frequency of use differs. They mainly provide for themselves through collecting and selling plastic and metal waste. Nearly all of the RPs of the study are frequent participants in the program. A few attend occasionally.

The living conditions of the RPs are diverse and sometimes change. During the period of interviews, 11 RPs lived exclusively on the streets, often referred to as 'the base'. Sometimes the base is identified with an open area between houses where youth gather to play soccer and hang out together. On other occasions it refers to the area of vending stalls along a street mentioned in Chapter 1. Sleeping at the base or the street often implies a vending stall, or lack of shelter. Most RPs that sleep on the street stay together with friends and take care of each other. To be cold at night, using drugs to manage the cold and be able to sleep, to be afraid of and beaten by the police and to be called bad names are mentioned as challenges due to sleeping on the street.

Three RPs alter sleeping at a parents' home with sleeping on the street. Five RPs stay together with friends. They do not pay the rent but receive help from someone that they know or a Pentecostal congregation. One RP lives in a room with his brother, also a frequent

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 99-100.

participant at the program. Four RPs live alone, one in a room where the CBO pays the rent. Two RPs live permanently at home, one with his mother and one with two parents. The RP that lives with his mother comes sometimes to the program. The RP who lives with both parents have a different life situation than the other RPs. He has received support from the CBO and, from what I have understood, does not spend time on the street. He was at the program the day that one of the groups was gathering for the first time and he wished to join. I did not want to exclude him. Almost all RPs live in the area where the CBO works. A few live a few kilometres away and come to the area to work. The extension of time that the RPs have lived on the streets varies, from around a year for some of the younger RPs while several years for others. The reasons for coming to live on the streets are different; economical scarcity, disagreements with parents, parents fighting and drug addiction. Most of the RPs work collecting plastic and metal scraps that they sell. Some carry goods at the market. The income of one day varies greatly, with a normal amount of 80-100 shillings (around 1 US dollar).¹⁴²

One RP is a Muslim¹⁴³ while many are Christians. Many attend the youth service of a local Pentecostal congregation on Sundays that holds a youth service after which food is served. The church works throughout the week to help youth on the street. After being invited by several RPs, I attended the Pentecostal service.¹⁴⁴ A few times, several RPs and other youth from the program came to attend a Monday fellowship service held at the church premises where the CBO operates. Participating in service together gave me the opportunity to listen to prayers by the youth, thoughts during moments of sharing and observe the roles that they take on in church.¹⁴⁵ Several older RPs said during the study that they believe in Jah, or that they sympathize with Rastafarianism.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Gr 2, June 30, 2015: 2-4, 6, 8-9; Gr 3, July 7, 2015: 4, 6, 8; Gr 4, July 14, 2015: 1-4, 7; Gr 5, July 20, 2015: 3-4, 23; Gr 6: July 31, 2015: 3-7; Gr 1, June 23, 2015: 3; Research journal, July 6: 8; July 8: 9; July 21: 12; July 28 2015: 14. (These references are for all life conditions of the RPs presented in this section. I avoid names for explicit RPs to guarantee confidentiality).

¹⁴³ I have decided to not include literature on Islam or research on Muslim youth in Africa in the analysis. I do not perceive the information provided by the Muslim RP as being very different from other RPs' information, and analysing his drawings and accompanying discussion in relation to literature on Islam would have adventured his confidentiality.

¹⁴⁴ Research journal, July 12, 2015: 10.

¹⁴⁵ Research journal, August 3, 2015: 15-16.

¹⁴⁶ See for example Gr 6, 6th of August 2015: 7-8, Gr 1, June 23, 2015: 12, 15.

I often met with the youth during mornings and evenings as I was walking to the CBO or returning home¹⁴⁷, or when visiting the market. One evening Jayden and I visited some of the youth at an empty open area surrounded by buildings where they often hang around.¹⁴⁸ After asking for permission, we also visited rooms where some RPs stay.¹⁴⁹ I then bought small plastic buckets with me as gifts, as it is customary in Kenya to bring something when visiting someone's home. Meeting with the RPs and other youth outside the CBO gave me a better understanding of their daily life, although limited. The youth have formed a soccer team together and invited me to several games. I attended a game together with the CBO staff to show appreciation for their invitation.¹⁵⁰

The observations helped to create bonds of friendship between the RPs and myself that contributed to relaxed interviews. It has also helped me to a deepened understanding during the phase of analysis. An unexpected learning was a deeper knowledge and large confusion regarding the youths' life conditions. The observations and thoughts were gathered in a research journal. O'Reilley stresses taking notes frequently in order not to forget important details. She argues for the importance of noting down both observations and analytical thoughts and that the researcher should make a distinction between the two. This is the beginning of the analysis.¹⁵¹ I took notes regularly and mixed observation and thoughts. O'Reilley refers to Jean Jackson who underlines the tension between viewing notes as an objective record or as intertwined with the researcher's subjectivity,¹⁵² a viewpoint that I agree with. Still, I also find valuable the distinction that O'Reilley makes between the two since I was sometimes unaware that I had started my analysis when thinking I was only observing.

3.4. Ethical considerations.

Two factors are important for this study in relation to ethical issues. First, 16 of 27 RPs are minors, the youngest 14 years old and 15 individuals were in the ages 15-17. Second, the RPs' low status position in society makes them vulnerable to ill treatment from others. Below, I highlight these perspectives in relation to other relevant factors for ethical studies.

¹⁴⁷ Research journal, July 6: 8; July 8 and 9: 9; July 20, 2015: 11.

¹⁴⁸ Research journal, July 28, 2015: 13-14.

¹⁴⁹ Research journal, July 21: 11-12; July 28, 2015: 13-14.

¹⁵⁰ Research journal, June 25, 2015: 4.

¹⁵¹ O'Reilly 2012, 101-102, 104-105.

¹⁵² Jackson 1990, 20-22.

The CBO staff had the role of gatekeepers for the study, giving me access to their organization and advice on whom to interview.¹⁵³ To receive informed consent from the RPs is stressed by Kvale and Brinkmann. The RPs must be provided with information about the research aim, what it means to take part in the project, and that participation is voluntary.¹⁵⁴ I perceive this important also for the gatekeepers as they have an ethical responsibility when allowing research at the CBO. I presented my research idea to the CBO staff in September 2014 and received approval to conduct pilot study interviews with youth at the CBO. In June 2015 I had a meeting with the staff team to explain my plan for the main study. A staff member assisted me when introducing the study to the youth at the CBO.

Åsa Källström Cater stresses pedagogical explanations when interviewing minors to enable an informed consent. This has to be negotiated during the research process so that a minor, often expected to obey adults, does not feel forced to participate.¹⁵⁵ Since staff members are referred to as teachers at the CBO, we made this the example when presenting the study. I said that I would like to be a student and learn from the youth who I hoped would like to be teachers. It was emphasized that no one was forced to participate when introducing the study to the whole group, when asking individuals to participate, and when gathering in the focus groups. The RPs were informed that they could withdraw from participating at any time and that information expressed during interviews could be removed. The consent to participation was oral, not written. Regarding consent from minors, Källström Cater refers to the Swedish law of ethical examination that states that if a RP 'has turned 15 years, but not 18 years and understands what the research means for him- or herself' he is able to give consent.¹⁵⁶ I did not ask for guardian's consent since most RPs have fragile or no contact with guardians, but conducted the study at the CBO that works to help youth living on the streets.

When planning a research project, Kvale and Brinkmann argue for estimating possible negative and positive consequences for the RPs and others in a similar situation. The researcher must be prepared for that the interview might turn into a sensitive discussion and know how to handle such a situation.¹⁵⁷ It was important during the study that the RPs would not feel vulnerable but valued as individuals. The presence of Jayden as an interview

¹⁵³ Ryen 2004, 83.

¹⁵⁴ Kvale and Brinkmann 2012, 87.

¹⁵⁵ Källström Cater 2015, 72-73.

¹⁵⁶ Sveriges Riksdag 2003, paragraph 18: 'Om forskningspersonen har fyllt 15 år men inte 18 år och inser vad forskningen innebär för hans eller hennes del, skall han eller hon själv informeras om och samtycka till forskningen...'

¹⁵⁷ Kvale and Brinkmann 2012, 89-90.

moderator contributed to creating a relaxed atmosphere. We started each interview with a snack to appreciate the RPs' participation and since they were often hungry. During a few occasions the interview was delayed, which made the lunch at the CBO program to run out, or the RPs would risk going without any more food that day due to the interview taking so long. To compensate for this, we gave the RPs 20-30 shillings (approximately 20 cents of a US dollar) each to buy lunch. In the end of the field study the RPs each received a card with words of gratitude and appreciation for participating. Those who had not received their colouring books yet, took them then if they wanted to. A few RPs had then forgotten that I had taken out the drawings they had made, and I reminded about this. One RP seemed thoughtful about this, and I asked again if he agreed to this or if he wanted me to take away his drawings from my work.

To protect the RPs from harm, confidentiality is important.¹⁵⁸ When introducing the study to the RPs we guaranteed them confidentiality. After conducting interviews, Jayden and university students who do not know the RPs have transcribed them and have signed a contract of confidentiality and ethical conduct towards the RPs. The interviews were transcribed word by word after which I have changed or removed names and information to guarantee confidentiality. To protect the youth participating at the organization from harm we welcomed everyone to participate, favouring inclusivity over a restrictive age representation. Inclusivity also relates to the issue of drugs. If someone uses drugs in the church compound where the CBO operates, he is escorted outside. If arriving affected by any substance, he is not excluded unless interrupting the discussion. Similarly, during the interviews it was sometimes clear that a RP was affected by some substance. No one was excluded for having used drugs before the interview.

A dilemma that presented itself during the field study was that the youth that participate at the CBO program, including the RPs, often asked me for money if we met in the area around the CBO. I mostly said no but sometimes felt so extremely sorry for them, and gave approximately 10 shillings or bought tea and a snack for them. The RPs also often asked me and at the CBO for donations of clothes. To this I said no, however on one occasion an RP came to the CBO without shoes, and I gave Jayden 100 shillings to buy slippers for him. It is possible that giving snack during interviews, on a few occasions providing a contribution for lunch, or me answering to the youths' questions for money in the street, made the RPs more positive to attend the interviews and to adjust their answers to what they thought that Jayden

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, 88-89.

and I would like to hear. Well into an interview, a RP said that he and his friend had come to the interview because they were hungry. Had they expressed this before we started, I of course would have given them the snack I had prepared and stressed that they need not participate for this reason. However, regarding something small to eat and drink I consider this to be a proper way of thanking any person who participates in an interview. We also stressed on some occasions that no one should feel forced to remain in the interview just because he had received something to eat, but should feel free to leave at any time.

Relating to possible consequences, Sonja Grover argues that including and giving children power in research projects may contribute to ‘social policy which more accurately and compassionately reflects the concerns of children ... since social policy-makers have come increasingly to rationalize their decisions and priorities with reference to social science data’.¹⁵⁹ Children’s perspectives are thus important since it can create solutions and interventions that correspond to their needs. Furthermore, Grover argues that an ethically sensitive research project includes children as RPs in order to prevent them from being portrayed in ways that favour interests of ‘the power elite’.¹⁶⁰ Cater argues that for qualitative studies it is not always possible to determine if and how it will benefit the RPs and if it will cause them more harm than good, and thus be unethical.¹⁶¹ The Swedish research council (Vetenskapsrådet) argues that if the same results can be achieved in other ways, by interviewing less vulnerable groups than children, the vulnerable group should not be part of research.¹⁶² I strongly agree with the need to protect children. The RPs have a vulnerable position in society. It is however impossible to know the thoughts of another person, relating to Grover’s view of stressing children’s perspectives. Thus, the same results cannot be achieved from talking to others. After the study, several RPs wanted to meet again in the focus group, something that relates to the responsibility of the researcher to be attentive to the RPs’ reactions. We encouraged them to come and talk to us when they wanted.

Finally, the role of the researcher is important. Kvale and Brinkmann stress that the researcher should produce material of good quality and remain independent from external influence.¹⁶³ I strive to present the research transparently. Prior to the field study I obtained research authorization from the *Kenyan National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation*. I have received scholarships from *Lunds missionssällskap* and *Nathan*

¹⁵⁹ Grover 2004, 83.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 83.

¹⁶¹ Källström Cater 2015, 71.

¹⁶² CODEX 2016.

¹⁶³ Kvale and Brinkmann 2012, 90-92.

Söderbloms minnesfond to realize the study and the CBO staff has provided me with valuable advice. No one has tried to influence the research results. Considering my role as a researcher it has also been important to remember that me being a white woman from Europe creates a big gap between myself and the RPs' and their context and that my knowledge of its social, spiritual, and cultural aspects is limited. My life is also different from the RPs' in that their social status in their surrounding community is low.

3.5. Methods of analysis.

Due to the material consisting of drawings and transcribed speech, several tools were used for analysis. To analyse the drawings I applied a model for picture analysis by Hasse Hansson, Sten-Gösta Karlsson, and Gert Nordström (HKN). For the transcribed material I used tools for text analysis by Norman Fairclough, after which I made a content analysis as described by Robert Weber.

3.5.1. Analysis of drawings.

HKN provide an analysis schedule of ten stages for interpretation of pictures and possible accompanying text and speech.¹⁶⁴ They use semiotics as the base for interpretation of pictures,¹⁶⁵ which studies signs, human meaning making and communication along with its rules. Ferdinand de Saussure, central in the development of semiotics, perceived signs, consisting of expression and content, as creating a system that makes up language.¹⁶⁶ This logic may be applied also to images. A sign is created or recognized when the expression, the lines and colours, creates something that relates to a content that can be recognized by the eye.¹⁶⁷ A drawing can consist of several smaller signs that together make up one holistic sign. The analyst identifies expressions and content creating signs.¹⁶⁸ The first five stages of the schedule concern mainly methodological choices for the study and relate also to the transcribed material. Therefore, I first relate the initial half of the analysis schedule to the source material. Presented further below are the later stages of the schedule, where the detailed stages applied for the analysis of pictures are in focus.

¹⁶⁴ Hansson, Karlsson, and Nordström 2006, 167-168.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 7.

¹⁶⁶ Hansson, Karlsson, and Nordström 2006, 9-11; Saussure 2015, 31-34, 38-41, 95-98.

¹⁶⁷ Hansson, Karlsson, and Nordström 2006, 9-11.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 14-15.

The investigation object of this study consists of the body of drawings and transcribed speech. Distinguishing the specific objects of analysis needs consideration for which HKN recommend using Fairclough's model for critical discourse analysis that concentrates on how discourses are created in the interplay between three interdependent layers.¹⁶⁹ The centre is the text (or picture). The middle layer is the discourse practice, concerned with the conditions of how the text is produced, distributed, and received. The final step is the social practice, where discourses expressed in text and produced in discursive practice are related to ideologies and power in society.¹⁷⁰

Each drawing and its unit of transcribed speech constitute a joint analysis unit, produced in different levels of Fairclough's model. They are first treated separately. Each drawing is the initial analysis object, the 'inner context' that constitutes the core element of the investigation. The transcribed speech from the interview is the 'outer context', the signs immediately affecting the inner context, and part of the discursive practice, the model's middle layer. In the discursive practice is also included the 'sending context', including factors contributing to the creation of the message, and the 'receiving context', referring to in what situation and forum the message is received.¹⁷¹ The sending context in the study includes the situation and the focus groups in which the interview was conducted as well as the instructions for drawings.

The receiving context has three layers, related to how the transcribed speech should be perceived in the analysis as a whole. The first receiver, and interpreter, of the drawing is the RP himself when explaining his work in the group.¹⁷² The second layer, interrelated with the first, is our reception of the drawings and explanations during the interview, along with comments and follow-up questions. How many follow-up questions Jayden and I made depended on how extensive the RP's explanation was and whether everyone seemed tired or full of energy around the table. The discussions led to a deeper understanding of the drawings in the moment of reception. The third layer is the situation of interpretation conducted in this thesis. Time has passed and I have access to analysis tools. Since the drawings and the transcribed speech are interdependent and clarify each other, the transcribed speech is also treated as an analysis object but analysed with other methods. After initial separate analyses they are viewed jointly.

¹⁶⁹ Fairclough 1992, 4.

¹⁷⁰ Hansson, Karlsson, and Nordström 2006, 37; Fairclough 1992, 71-96.

¹⁷¹ Hansson, Karlsson, and Nordström 2006, 38-39. 'Inre context', 'Yttre kontext', 'Sändarkontext', and 'Mottagarkontext' in the original.

¹⁷² Ibid, 14.

Along with defining the analysis objects is the perspective or perspectives from which the analysis is to be conducted, focusing on intention, reception or the message itself.¹⁷³ These perspectives have been integrated during the analysis and I perceive them as complementing each other. The main aim is however to understand what the RPs wish to communicate, the reason why discussions were conducted and have a central place in the analysis.

After establishing the analysis object, HKN suggest describing the denotative and connotative levels of the object. The former is the manifest or basic meaning, immediately evident to the human perception, while the later is a deeper, latent understanding connected to culture. The next step is to join these observations to questions of form and substance in order to find the core of the different signs in the message. Form refers to those components that give the sign its identity and can therefore not be substituted while the substance can be changed without changing the meaning.¹⁷⁴ The differentiation between form and substance needs to be identified both in the expression and the content since the two tend to influence each other. After this stage it is time to identify rhetoric, metaphors and metonymies in the object. Metaphors and metonymies are figures of speech. They are created when a sign is transformed from a literal to a figurative sphere. A metaphor is based on similarity between the two spheres.¹⁷⁵ Metonymy means, ‘change of name’ (namnbyte).¹⁷⁶ The change from literal to figurative sign is due to proximity, a close relationship that connects them. A smaller sign can be used to symbolize a larger sign, for example a facial portrait to refer to a whole person. HKN argue that the metonymy is characteristic of images, since the meaning of the motive is more than the literal sign.¹⁷⁷ I have gone through the steps described in each drawing, but they have different relevance from case to case.

The schedule’s last stage encourages a summary of the observations from the analysis and possibly integration into a discourse, which HKN describe as using a specific perspective, guided by norms and values, to describe and interpret issues. In a context there are rules for discourses that persons are lead and controlled by when expressing themselves.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷³ Ibid, 167.

¹⁷⁴ HKN’s use of the term substance and its relationship to the form is different than in philosophy, see for example Lübcke 2003, 530-532.

¹⁷⁵ Hansson, Karlsson, and Nordström 2006, 28-29, 33-35, 168. Regarding metonymies and metaphors, see also Nordström 1984, 52-53.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, 35.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 35-37.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, 18-19, 167-168.

Although I agree with the view of speech, writing, and pictures as being part of discourses, I do not identify the RPs' contributions as belonging to specific discourses.

3.5.2. Analysis of transcribed text.

To analyse the transcribed material, Fairclough's tools for linguistic text analysis were first applied and helped to obtain a detailed analysis of the RPs' expressions and the group dynamic. I decided not to perform a full discourse analysis and turned next to Weber's description of content analysis to divide the transcribed material and the drawings belonging to each explanation into thematic categories.

From Fairclough's tools I have, firstly, paid attention to interactional control, where the analyst looks at how the discussion develops and is determined by its participants. It can reveal balance or inequality of power.¹⁷⁹ Secondly, I have looked at transitivity in sentences, how the different parts of clauses (subject, verb, and object) are combined.¹⁸⁰ I have observed action, mental, and relational processes to pay attention to the meaning and function of the verb in a sentence. In directed action process, the pattern subject-verb-object is standard while a non-directed lacks the object, concentrating specifically on the agent and the action committed. A relational process has verbs relating to relationships between elements in a clause, such as 'being, having, becoming'.¹⁸¹ 'Mental processes include cognition (verbs such as "know", "think"), perception ("hear", "notice"), and affection ("like", "fear").'¹⁸² I have paid attention to who is the agent, the person that acts in a sentence,¹⁸³ and causality, how action and result are connected.¹⁸⁴ I have looked at cohesion, where 'the objective is to show how clauses and sentences are connected together in a text', relating to its rhetoric.¹⁸⁵ Finally, I have paid attention to words that occur many times in an explanation or those words that seem important. I have looked at these factors consistently, but those aspects mentioned in the analysis chapters are most salient for the specific text.

When doing content analysis, texts are divided into categories based on the perception that those put into the same category share meaning. A text unit may consist of a single word, a phrase, a paragraph or a whole text, and Weber recommends that the analyst

¹⁷⁹ Fairclough 1992, 152-157.

¹⁸⁰ Fairclough 1992, 235-236; Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 1999, 87.

¹⁸¹ Fairclough 1992, 178-180.

¹⁸² Ibid, 180.

¹⁸³ Ibid, 178, 180.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, 236.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 235.

determine the size of units that will be divided into categories.¹⁸⁶ As explained above, a drawing and its respective discussion are connected. Since the discussions occasionally are long it sometimes becomes too generalizing to define the whole transcribed text belonging to a specific drawing as a text unit. Nevertheless, to perceive each sentence as a unit is problematic since the text is based on oral speech where separate phrases cannot be clearly identified. I therefore define the text units as paragraphs. The transcribed material that discusses one subject is defined as a paragraph. When someone moves on to discuss another subject, it is considered a new paragraph.

The categories used to classify the material can be either assumed, where the researcher chooses the categories, or produced by the text authors.¹⁸⁷ The later alternative is applied in the present study, with the categories being determined as the analysis goes on, but I have named them. The text authors are the RPs in dialogue with the moderators. Also, the categories applied are mutually exclusive, meaning that one unit is classified into only one category. A category can be broad, allowing for a wide range of meaning, or narrow, with restrictive definitions.¹⁸⁸ This question was solved during the analysis process. When a unit agreed with the core meaning of an existent category it was placed into it. If it presented a new issue, a new category was established. As the examples in a category become several, the category title sometimes was adjusted to include a wider meaning if I determined it to be necessary. In total the material was divided into 30 categories, of which the central are represented in the analysis chapters.

3.5.3. Conjoint analysis.

While the analysis of each drawing and explanation that belongs to it were dealt with separately, when analysing one the other was constantly present in mind. The analysis of the drawing has been influenced by how I remembered the discussion from the interview or from reading through the text before starting the analysis of the drawing. The impressions from the drawing often became clarified when reading the transcripts, or the drawing helped to clarify the text. Although the text was the primary object when dividing the material into categories, the drawings were thus also integrated into this stage of analysis. A joint reflection was written at the end of each combination of drawing and discussion, highlighting connections.

¹⁸⁶ Weber 1990, 12, 21-22.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, 37.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 23.

As explained in Chapter 1 and 2, a dialogue is attempted in the analysis chapters between the interview material and the theoretical framework, along with other literature I find relevant. This is done in order to position the RP's contributions in relation to an understanding of spirituality that deepens the analysis and relates them to the cultural context.

4. Good relationships.

This is the first of three analysis chapters. When asked to paint and speak about important persons and places in life, many RPs expressed views about essential aspects of relationships, what makes them good. Below are presented the categories ‘giving and receiving’, ‘closeness’, and ‘prayer’. The first two highlight relationships to friends and family, and the third the relationship to God.

4.1. Giving and receiving.

The main category when talking about important persons and good relationships is giving and receiving. In the perspective of giving generosity is central. The way to show someone love and care is to meet his needs. This is presented through Isaac’s example below. Also, many RPs stress the perspective of receiving and being the recipient of generosity. An important person is recognized by the possibility to receive something from him.¹⁸⁹

In one of his drawings and explanations, Isaac, 16 years old, stresses generosity and self-sacrifice. During the first interview he said that he since a few months back lives in a room together with friends. This has helped him to reduce his drug use compared to when living at the base. However, during the interview preceding the one analysed here, Isaac stated that he was back at the base. His landlord had kicked him and his friends out.¹⁹⁰ This incident is an example of how the living conditions for youth that live on the streets change rapidly.

The interview with drawings with Isaac’s group (and that of Benjamin in Group 4, presented below) was held on July 24, 2015, when U.S. president Barack Obama arrived for a visit to Nairobi. Prior to the visit, the police arrested families and youth living on the streets.¹⁹¹ There was worry among the RPs during this time. Along with the fear of being arrested, many received discriminating commentaries from the public, suggesting that they ought to be locked up. It is possible that this situation affected the RPs during the interviews.

¹⁸⁹ See William: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 15-17; Jonathan: Gr 3, July 10 2015: 7-8; Steven: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 11; Matthew: Gr 1, July 8, 2015: 13-14; Nicholas: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 9-10; Alexander: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 18; Caleb: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 11.

¹⁹⁰ Gr 5, July 20, 2015: 4-5; Gr 5, July 22, 2015: 16-17.

¹⁹¹ Daily Nation 2015.

In the interview with Isaac's group two days earlier, they expressed their worry.¹⁹² We decided to conduct the interviews in spite of this situation since the RPs wanted to and due to it possibly providing distraction from worry.



Isaac: This is love.

Sanna: This is love?

Isaac: This is love, love for every person, love. I love every person whom I see in front of me. All of my best friends and teachers, I love all people therefore I have painted this love for everyone.

Sanna: And when you feel, like the person for whom you feel love, what do you do together?

Isaac: You live together, you eat together, even if you go some place and there is food, and he is behind you tell him to come in front to eat first because you love him because he is your friend. Because even you eat together, you hang out together.

Sanna: Ohh... And is there another way of showing love for someone?

Isaac: Another way? Another way to show someone love if he has something, if he is sick or if he has dirty clothes you help him. Or if it happens that your friend is hungry and you have a little money you give to him the little that you have. That is love.¹⁹³

¹⁹² Research journal, July 21: 11; July 22: 13; July 24, 2015: 13; Gr 5, July 22, 2015: 14-18.

¹⁹³ Gr 5, July 24, 2015: 16-17.

Isaac's drawing is a heart painted in black lines. The message perceived on a connotative level, related to a deeper meaning, is that Isaac wants to express feelings of love towards someone. While the drawing is simple, the explanation is detailed. Isaac feels love for everyone.¹⁹⁴ My question is leading, asking Isaac what he does together with the persons he loves, thus focusing on participation in relationships, stressed by Mulago as the founding principle of Bantu communities.¹⁹⁵ To answer, Isaac focuses on giving to the other and sharing of livelihood, food, and clothes. It involves material and economical means, and willingness to help someone who is sick. Isaac also stresses self-sacrifice. The obligation to give is determined by the needs of the recipient, not by the economic situation of the giver. Isaac refers to a friendship relationship on the street and it is evident for many RPs that these are their closest current relationships.¹⁹⁶

Giving and receiving as essential factors in a relationship relate to the concept of 'the good life'. Isaac's focus on generosity and self-sacrifice agrees with the ethical actions in daily life that characterize ubuntu; solidarity, generosity, respect, and community building. Isaac's stress on meeting the needs of others gives preference to the well-being of the community, directing the focus away from himself. Or also, the well-being of Isaac is only possible if the community of friends on the street is sustained. It is not possible to live alone. At the same time, RPs that stress the perspective of receiving, that someone becomes important when providing what the RP needs, also can be perceived as actions in accordance to the values of ubuntu. Asking for assistance is a reminder to the potential giver of the importance of participation with others. 'The good life' is obtained for the RPs, as giver or

Isaac: Hii ni love.

Sanna: Hii ni love?

Isaac: Hii ni upendo, upendo kwa kila mtu, upendo. Mimi napendaga kila mtu mwenye naonanga mbele yangu. Mabeste wangu wote na waalimu, kila mtu nawapenda ndio kwa maana nimechora hii love kwa kila mtu.

Sanna: Na ukiskia kama yule mtu ambaye kwa yeye unaskia upendo, munafanya nini pamoja.

Isaac: Munakaa pamoja, munakula pamoja hata mukienda pahali ka chakula iko, nayeye ako nyuma unamwambia akuje mbele ukule kwanza juu unampenda juu yeye ni rafiki yako. Juu hata munakula pamoja munashinda pamoja.

Sanna: Ohh, aaa. Na kuna njia nyingine ya kumuonyesha mtu upendo?

Isaac: Njia ingine? Njia ingine ya kuonyesha mtu upendo akikuwa na kitu yake, kama yeye ni mgonjwa ama ako na nguo chafu unamsaidia. Ama ukipata kama rafiki yako ako na njaa na uko na pesa kidogo unampatia tu hiyo kidogo enye uko nayo. Hiyo ni upendo.

¹⁹⁴ The verb *kupenda* in Swahili includes the meanings love, like and to care for.

¹⁹⁵ Mulago 1969, 145.

¹⁹⁶ For expressions of important friendship relationships see examples referred to in footnote 189.

receiver, in the participation in relationships. The relationships in the category of giving and receiving focus mainly on daily life in the present.¹⁹⁷ Though life on the street is difficult,¹⁹⁸ it is clear that aspects of ‘the good life’ in accordance with the values enhanced in African spirituality are experienced daily on the street.

Who then constitute the community for the RPs? As explained, friendship is central. ‘The good life’ is enhanced in the community of friends on the street. Isaac also mentions ‘teachers’, probably referring to the staff at the CBO.¹⁹⁹ While Magesa and Tempels stress the community as encountered in the family and the clan,²⁰⁰ Mulago argues that the community can be perceived as extended. Individuals are united through sharing livelihood, authority, marriage or the created blood band community of brothers.²⁰¹ Magesa also mentions the importance of friendship in African society, arguing that the family community and its vital force can be enriched by friendships that provide trust and support.²⁰² The situation of the RPs raises questions about the function of the group on the street in the greater scheme of the family community that a RP has left or become excluded out of, and occasionally returns to.

Though the situation of the RPs is especially vulnerable, the reliance on relationships not based on family ties is frequent in urban Kenya, for example through fundraising among friends or in congregations to perform a wedding or pay medical bills. Mizen and Ofosu-Kusi, focusing on friendship among children that live on the streets in Accra, stress that it shares similarities with other urban poor who use friendship as a survival strategy due to lack of formal employment and governmental assistance. Friendships are created and sustained on the street through helping each other with food, sleeping arrangement, and in case of illness. In the relationships there is a constant pattern of ‘asking, giving, and receiving’, and they are characterized by reciprocity and solidarity.²⁰³ These characteristics of friendship relationships are very similar to those described by the RPs in this study. Mizen and Ofuso-Kusi argue that the reciprocity in the friendship relationships of youth that live on the street testify to that they wish to enhance another way of life than the

¹⁹⁷ Still, the past is also included in the category when referring to receiving in the relationship to a parent, and to the future as will be explained in Chapter 6.

¹⁹⁸ See category ‘struggle’, Chapter 5.

¹⁹⁹ This perspective is encountered more frequently in the categories ‘life sustaining help’ and ‘self-transformation’, Chapter 5 and 6.

²⁰⁰ Magesa 1998, 64; Tempels 1959, 108.

²⁰¹ Mulago 1969, 142-144.

²⁰² Magesa 2013, 97-98.

²⁰³ Mizen and Ofuso-Kusi 2010, 444-452. Quote on page 444 and 447.

ruthlessness and exclusion by the market.²⁰⁴ Is the friendship that the RPs in this study value a way of showing that they disapprove of the harshness of life on the street, a critique against society? Are the actions stressed due to African traditional values or are the values an outcome of actions and necessities? Possibly it is a combination of both. Since the RPs were asked to paint important persons and places, the questions encouraged positive answers. However, some RPs express criticism against individuals that have treated them badly or against people in their surroundings who perceive them as bad persons due to living on the street. An example is Jack who criticizes the selfishness of a former landlord who wanted a lot of money for the rent and locked the door to the house when being drunk so that Jack and his friends couldn't enter.²⁰⁵ As Magesa writes, the stress to 'enhance life' in the community through hospitality finds its counterpart in greed, the refusal to share with others.²⁰⁶ Jack's example is a contrast to the importance of giving and receiving in good relationships. It is not criticism against society structures per se but directed towards a person that does not comply with the hospitality and generosity enhanced in the traditional value system.

Like in Isaac's example, several RPs in this study speak of feelings of affection for their friends or a parent, a perspective that is not highlighted by Mizen and Ofuso-Kusi. Relationships are not based solely on practical necessity but also on feelings of care and affection.²⁰⁷ Isaac's statement that he loves everyone in front of him raises questions in relation to his difficult living situation at the time. A possible explanation is that Jayden, when hearing two days earlier about Isaac's difficulties, told him to stay together with another RP in the same focus group in his room. Possibly, this helped Isaac feel safe. Another possibility is the factor of interactional control, how the conversation develops between participants and what controls its course. Several members of Isaac's group know each other well and influenced one another while drawing and explaining. Before Isaac, Aaron presented his drawing of Bob Marley, saying that his messages of love calm him down and encourage him to love others.²⁰⁸ The context of the drawing session is also relevant. When I put on music for the RPs to listen while drawing, some requested reggae music or became happy when hearing a Bob Marley song. Isaac, Aaron, and others were possibly influenced by the music.

²⁰⁴ Mizen and Ofuso-Kusi 2010, 453.

²⁰⁵ Jack: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 15.

²⁰⁶ Magesa 1998, 64-65. Quote on page 64.

²⁰⁷ See for example Samuel: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 5-6; Matthew: Gr 1: July 8, 2015: 13-14.

²⁰⁸ Aaron: Gr 5, July 24, 2015: 6-7.

It would be interesting to look further into if reggae music, popular among Rastafarians,²⁰⁹ so appreciated by the RPs has a further spiritual significance for them. Some RPs stated that they believe in Jah, the Rastafarian name of God,²¹⁰ but not in Isaac's group. Mattis et al. stress that it is important to consider the influence of pop culture, cultural icons, and music lyrics on the spirituality of youth.²¹¹ Neil J. Savishinsky argues in his study on Rastafarian movements among youth in West Africa that 'reggae music and the religious and socio-political messages embodied therein' has contributed to the spread of Rastafarian religion in the region,²¹² with Marley as especially important. Reggae music is accessible through media and on the street, and its influence on urban youth, along with the Rastafarian culture in general, is big.²¹³ Moyer shows in her study with youth in Dar es Salaam that Rastafari beliefs, often the message of 'peace and love' and the stress on social justice, are applied to negotiate and enhance peaceful life, socially and businesswise.²¹⁴ Marley's influence is big, and youth identify with his life story (a person of colour born poor in a third-world country, died young, and stressing social justice) and his lyrics that reflect their life conditions. Moyer's RPs have a more stable economic situation than the RPs in this study and operate small informal businesses on a street corner.²¹⁵ The message of love, partly associated to Marley, that Isaac and other RPs in his group underline, does not give much data to speak of views on Rastafarianism among the RPs. Still, what Isaac and Aaron say echo the tendencies noted by Savishinsky and Moyer. As they are the only studies that I have found on Rastafari inspired beliefs among youth in Africa, and since several RPs mentioned adhering to such beliefs, this would be an interesting subject for a future research project.

4.2. Closeness.

While friends are essential, several RPs stress the good relationship to parents, which are not well functioning. The descriptions relate to the past. The RP has not met his father or mother for a long time but says that he loves him or her or that they are important in his life. Affection is sometimes explained through the perspective of receiving²¹⁶ while on other

²⁰⁹ Savishinsky 1994, 20-21.

²¹⁰ Ibid, 20.

²¹¹ Mattis et al. 2006, 290-291, 294.

²¹² Savishinsky 1994, 21.

²¹³ Ibid, 23, 27, 44.

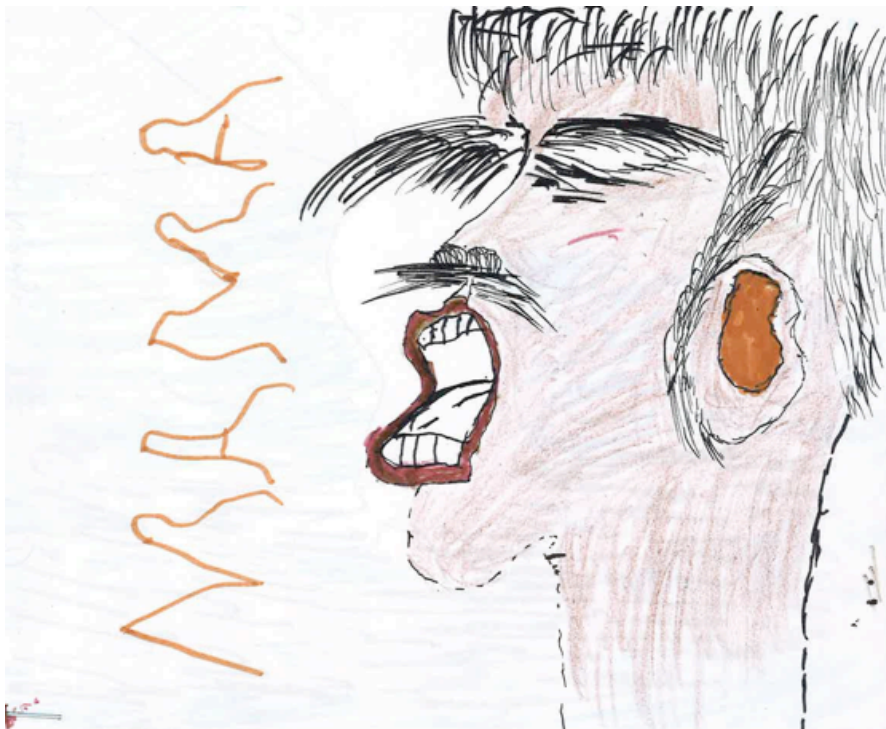
²¹⁴ Moyer 2005, 37-38, 49. Quote on pages 37-38.

²¹⁵ Ibid, 40, 46-47, 53.

²¹⁶ See Samuel: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 5-6.

occasions in closeness as the RP expresses being close physically or having a close relationship to a parent during upbringing or currently.²¹⁷ This will now be explained through Nathan's example.

Nathan is 19 years old. He and some friends hang out together and sleep at the same place.²¹⁸ Nathan's drawings and descriptions are an example of two factors evident for several RPs. First, they show how some RPs became emotional or shy when describing their drawings. Nathan's drawings are detailed, the result of thought and careful work. But when asked about his drawings, he became shy, laughed, and answered briefly. Despite of this, the words that he did say, in combination with his drawings, 'speak' a lot. Second, Nathan's drawings show how painting gave the RPs the liberty to move in space and time, presenting persons and places that they have not seen recently.



Nathan: This is my mother, my mother. I just painted, I don't know how to paint well.

Sanna: You've painted well. This is your mother?

Nathan: Mmm. Important.

Sanna: Explain to us why she is important.

²¹⁷ See Isaac: Gr 5, July 24, 2015: 13-15; Thomas: Gr 5, July 24, 2015: 17-19, Aaron: Gr 5, July 24, 2015: 8-9.

²¹⁸ Nathan: Gr 3, July 7, 2015: 6.

Nathan: Mmm. My mother is important because she listens to me, she is not like my father [laughing].

Sanna: She listens to you?

Nathan: Yes.

Sanna: If you... [Nathan turning the page to move on to the next drawing]... wait a minute. And now, do you stay with your mother?

Nathan: No.

Sanna: Where does she live?

Nathan: She is at home.

Sanna: And when did you see her?

Nathan: A long time ago.

Sanna: And if you would go to visit her, let's say today, what would you say to her.

Nathan: Nothing.

Sanna: Nothing. But your father doesn't listen to you?

*Nathan: Mmm.*²¹⁹

Differently from most other RPs, noticeable on the denotative level that refers to the basic meaning immediately visible to the viewer, Nathan has chosen to paint a person close up, showing the face in half profile. The majority of portraits are, as Christian's example below, in full figure. To the left of the face in the drawing, Nathan has written 'MAMA'. From the

²¹⁹ Gr 3, July 10, 2015: 10-11. Nathan: Huyu ni mama, mama yangu. Nimechora tu mimi sijui kuchora vizuri.

Sanna: Umechora poa. Huyu ni mama yako?

Nathan: Mhm. Muhimu.

Sanna: Tueleze kwa nini ni muhimu.

Nathan: Mhm. Mama yangu ni muhimu juu yeye ananisikizanga si kama baba yangu (*laughs*).

Sanna: Anakusikiliza?

Nathan: Ee.

Sanna: Uki...ngoja kidogo. Na sasa, mama yako unakaa naye?

Nathan: Hapana.

Sanna: Anakaa wapi?

Nathan: Si ako huko nyumbani.

Sanna: Na ulimwona lini?

Nathan: Kitambo.

Sanna: Na kama ungeenda kumtembelea, tuseme leo, ungemwambia nini?

Nathan: Hakuna kitu.

Sanna: Hakuna kitu. Lakini baba yako hakisikilizi?

Nathan: Mmm

beginning there is no doubt about her identity. The face has many details: brown skin, black short hair, big eyebrows and moustache hair. She has big ears, a wide-open mouth, and visible teeth. At the connotative level, the big letters in 'MAMA' indicate that she is important to Nathan. His affection for her also becomes clear through letting the viewer see his mother at a close range, indicating that this closeness characterises their relationship. The details indicate that he knows and remembers her well. The text and the face are both essential for the form of the sign, in expression as well as content. They together form the identity of the person important to Nathan, his mother that he cares for. As explained in Chapter 3, the form represents the part of the sign that gives it identity. The details in the face can be determined as substance in the expression since also without the moustache hair or brown skin the text helps to define the shape of the sign. However, in the content they are essential as they contribute to the perception of affection and closeness that Nathan and his mother share. Nathan's portrait of his mother, and other portraits painted by RPs, may be called metonymies since the portrait is a representation, a small part, of a bigger meaning.²²⁰ The persons on the drawings hold the stories of their relationships to the RPs and the feelings related to them.

When Nathan starts describing his drawing he becomes shy. The interactional control becomes essential and my questions steer our conversation. Nathan confirms, as written in the drawing, that the person painted is his mother. She is 'important' which after encouragement is explained as being due to her listening to Nathan. The act of listening is not explained further, however possibly refers to understanding and making Nathan feel valuable. Nathan contrasts his mother with his father, who does not share this quality. He thus gives his mother and father respectively positive and negative roles. When encouraged to speak about his father, Nathan becomes quiet. As is clear among several RPs, Nathan's relationships to his parents are not functioning on a daily basis.²²¹ They haven't met recently and he doesn't seem to want to talk about how it would be if he returns home. Going home is possibly a distant alternative, or being asked about it makes him emotional to explain. Despite the lack of regular contact, Nathan's mother is important to him. Her face details and Nathan's words about her give testimony to feelings of affection in a close relationship, where what she has done for him in the past makes her important. While the open mouth is a big detail in the drawing, Nathan makes no reference to it. It is noteworthy that Nathan describes his mother's listening in present tense, 'she listens to me', when after it becomes clear that they haven't

²²⁰ Hansson, Karlsson, and Nordström 2006, 35-37.

²²¹ For examples of how the relationships to parents are dysfunctional, see the examples presented in footnotes 216 and 217.

met for a long time. The tendency to use present tense when explaining feelings towards important persons who they haven't met for a long time is also present among other RPs. A functioning relationship is not necessary to have strong feelings for someone. The details of the portrait of Nathan's mother and his use of present tense when speaking about her are also in accordance with the values of ubuntu. Nathan shows clearly that he wishes to be in relationship to his mother. He considers it ongoing and possibly the details of her face in the painting constitute a wish for it to be a closer one.

Nathan's relationship to his mother relates to the discussion about the enhancement of 'the good life' in community and the centrality of friendship on the street. Nathan's example shows that the community of friends and the family community exist alongside each other and fulfil different purposes. The current lack of contact between Nathan and his mother does not remove the bond that they share. While Nathan's friends are important, the community that he is part of through the relationship with his mother is ongoing. Also, the contradiction between describing his mother as important and the reluctance of returning home possibly testifies to an attempt by Nathan to hold on to his family and be part of 'the good life' enhanced in that community.

4.3. Prayer.

Several RPs stress the relationship to God, characterized by prayer. For some, the communication with God in prayer is the aim of the relationship. Others describe it as a medium for healing or forgiveness.²²² For Christian, these perspectives are combined and God is central in the explanations to two of his drawings. Below I present the one most representative of the category of prayer. Christian is 16 years old. He loves to dance and pray to God and says that he would like to return to school. He sleeps at a base but due to the police and people calling him bad names he longs to live in another, nice, place where he can study and listen to the word of God.²²³

²²² See Isaac: Gr 5, July 24, 2015: 15-16 ; Noah. Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 5-7; Henry: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 8; William: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 13-14.

²²³ Christian: Gr 3, July 7, 2015: 6, 8.



Christian: This is my friend, I love him, his name is [name]. This is little [name], I love him.

Sanna: Why?

Christian: He is a very good friend, even God is my friend because I like to pray to him.

Jayden: Who did you say?

Christian: God. And I like to pray to him. You know, if you pray to God you can pray with words, I mean, you give words of something. Even if you apologize, God listens to you, I mean even if he is above, there is no way that God loves one person or the other. He loves everyone because he brought you into this world. God loves you.²²⁴

²²⁴ Christian: Gr 3, July 10, 2015: 9-10. Christian: Huyu ni rafiki yangu nampenda anaitwanga [name], huyu ndio [name] mdogo mi nampenda.

Sanna: Kwa nini?

Christian: Ni rafiki yangu sana, hata Mungu ni rafiki yangu kwa sababu nampenda kumwomba.

Jayden: Nani tena?

Christian: Mungu. Na mimi napenda kumwomba yaani. Unajua ukimwomba Mungu unaweza kumwomba maneno yaani umpatie maneno ya kitu yaani hata ukiapologize Mungu anakusikiliza yaani hata akiwa huko juu hakunanga ati Mungu anapenda huyu anapenda huyu, kila mtu anampenda sababu si ni yeye alikuleta duniani. Sasa Mungu anakupenda.

Different from Nathan, Christian has painted a less expressive drawing. The person is painted exclusively with brown lines. On a basic denotative level, it seems to be a man since he wears trousers and a tie. The RPs that paint women in full figure give them dresses. The person's shoes are funny looking, making the viewer wonder if they contribute to his identity. He is not surrounded by text or things that make it possible to know who he is and why he is important to Christian. For the connotative level, the viewer is left without clues to associate further. When starting to describe his drawing, Christian states that the person is his friend whom he loves or cares for. Then he diverts. Thinking about his friend makes him associate to God, describing him as a friend. Christian does not explain the causes for this association but from the positive connotations that friendship has to Christian and many RPs, it is possible that it provides the closest example of how to explain the relationship to God. As the category states, Christian expresses prayer as what defines the relationship. The dialogue is open to any subject of discussion where God is a faithful listener. The relationship does not depend upon Christian's good behaviour, but is based on God's affection for all humans since creation.

There seems to be both similarities and discontinuity between Christian's description and how God is perceived in African spirituality. Tempels confirms Christian's view of God as creator. God is the giver of the force that is the condition for life.²²⁵ Also, Jomo Kenyatta argues that the Gikuyu, a Kenyan ethnic community that has a large representation in the area around the CBO, perceive God as creator and believe that he resides in the sky.²²⁶ However, Christian's stress on God's love for everyone and that individuals can have a relationship to God through prayer is not the belief of the Kikuyu. Instead, human behaviour is the foundation for God's feelings, with bad actions weakening the love felt towards the creation. God is not concerned with the daily lives of individuals but with the sustainability of the tribe. At important times in a person's life, the family, not the individual, approaches God. In case of other difficulties in a person's life he consults a medicine man to enter into contact with ancestral spirits to obtain the reason and remedy for harmony to be re-established.²²⁷ Kenyatta's description is in accordance with Magesa's on the role of ancestors and God in African spirituality in general. However, even though Magesa stresses that the elders of the community have the responsibility to communicate with the ancestors and God, he does not mention that individuals may not direct prayers to God. Mbiti argues that

²²⁵ Tempels 1959, 46.

²²⁶ Kenyatta 1979, 233.

²²⁷ Ibid, 233-235.

Africans perceive it possible for the individual to pray to God; however, the help of intermediaries, among them priests, elders, and ancestors, is often stressed and used. The aim of prayer is not the communion with God but rather practical, to obtain what is needed.²²⁸

Scholars' view that the relationship between the individual and God occupies minor space in African spirituality and that it focuses mainly on practical necessities disagrees with Christian's stress on prayer and the contact with God as important in itself. Instead, these relate to influences from Christianity. George Kinoti argues that the influence of Christian missionaries on the Gikuyu society resulted in a transfer of the religious centre from the home to the church, leading to stress on the individual's choice and actions in religious life.²²⁹ Mbiti argues that the Akamba, an ethnic community traditionally living south east of Nairobi,²³⁰ through baptism are introduced to an 'I-THOU relationship between man and God', a dimension different from the traditional religiosity that does not perceive of the creator as included in the community of humans and older relatives that have passed.²³¹

Rather difficult, and not possible to solve on the basis of the sources, is the question of God as a loving creator despite wrong-doings that Christian communicates and if this is an influence from Christian faith in general. God has had a variety of characteristics throughout the history of Christianity and still so today. Those that a person perceives as central often depend on the message communicated by a preacher or guardian. Besides for an ongoing relationship with God where prayer is central, another important dimension for the RPs is God and attending church as central in the process of personal change.²³²

The relationship to God presented in the category of prayer relates to Browning's study on street children and parents in Nairobi. Browning argues that the RPs' focus on survival is closely related to their faith. God is a provider of life and material needs, and prayers, identified as important, mainly concern these issues.²³³ The centrality of prayer is thus clear in both studies. Browning's stress on survival is present among RPs in this study as the relationship to God often concerns change, letting go of drugs, and changed life conditions.²³⁴ During the rehabilitation program participants often thanked God for waking

²²⁸ Mbiti 1969, 64-65, 67-71, 74.

²²⁹ Kinoti 2010, 54-55.

²³⁰ Mbiti 1971, 4.

²³¹ Ibid, 122-123.

²³² This is discussed in the category self-transformation in Chapter 6.

²³³ Browning 2011, 149-152, 154-155.

²³⁴ See Chapter 6.

up,²³⁵ which may be due to it commonly being expressed in morning prayers. Another possibility is that the prayer is a response to the RPs' vulnerable situation during nights. However, survival is not stressed in the category of prayer. Rather, being in relationship to and praying to God and the themes of forgiveness and love are important. Browning writes that '[a]fter spending time with Rose I would argue that when you spend entire days and weeks sitting on a street corner and thinking of ways to obtain food or money it simply becomes what you ask your God and your friends to give you'.²³⁶ This might be true, however the RPs in this study show that the relationship to God also includes other perspectives.

Browning connects her findings to Christianity and African traditional religions. She mentions that Jesus cared for material needs and stresses that African traditional religions focus on the sustainability of life. What is life preserving is spiritual.²³⁷ While Browning stresses the close connection between the RPs' struggles for survival and religiosity, ambiguousness is present. She states that the RPs' 'view of God centered less on "spiritual" attributes and more on survival and protection',²³⁸ and concludes that '[d]espite the lack of participation in systems of community, children on the street have beliefs similar to those found within African traditional beliefs and Christianity. While those beliefs are present, they are often hidden or crippled by the daily demands of survival. The responses of street children in this study remind us that the physical and the spiritual cannot be separated. The two are intertwined.'²³⁹ These statements are contradictory. Possibly the "'spiritual" attributes' refers to abstract concerns and the 'demands or survival' that hide and cripple religious beliefs is a reference to stealing and sniffing glue that Browning refers to the RPs as doing and that she sees as not life sustaining.²⁴⁰ This is however difficult to know.

As mentioned, the temporal perspectives of past and present are found in the good relationships spoken of by the RPs. Like friendship in the category giving and receiving, the relationship to God characterized by prayer, stresses the present. The past, central in the category closeness, is however also present in Christian's relationship to God as he states that God loves everyone due to creating them, indicating that it is a since long ongoing relationship.

²³⁵ Research journal, June 12, 2015: 1-2.

²³⁶ Browning 2011, 150.

²³⁷ Ibid, 147-148, 150-151, 154-155.

²³⁸ Ibid, 149.

²³⁹ Ibid, 160.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, 157-158.

5. Struggling and enjoying in everyday life.

Although aspects of daily life are present in relationships referred to above, this chapter focuses on the overall life conditions, good and bad, of everyday life on the street. Life in general on the street is identified as difficult, characterized by ‘struggle’, however, many RPs speak of positive factors as important to them, expressed in the categories ‘enjoying life’ and ‘life sustaining help’. These seem to be attempts to resist suffering and exclusion and create ‘the good life’ in the midst of challenges.

5.1. Struggle.

Difficulties on the street are social and material. The category struggle, exemplified by Joe, is characterized by experiencing shortage of food, sleeping outside, suffering due to cold and dirt, and being excluded from mainstream society. Joe is 17 years old.²⁴¹ He alters between sleeping at home and on the street. The interview extract is in the middle of the conversation. Earlier he has stated that he perceives himself an artist and would like to become a famous or good singer, suggesting the styles of reggae and bongo (a music style from Tanzania, popular in Kenya).²⁴² Several of the youth seem to have artistic dreams, to sing, rap or paint. Joe wants to be an artist since they teach people through the message that they transmit. He says that he would sing about life on the street.²⁴³ After this, the passage below follows.

²⁴¹ Joe: Gr 2, June 30, 2015: 2.

²⁴² Joe: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 22-23.

²⁴³ Joe: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 22-24.



Jayden: What would your song be about?

Joe: Like, how we wake up in the morning, we suffer from the cold in the morning. Like how when we wake up people don't see us because we have woken up with a black face, we don't eat well, like we have become slim, we have become dirty, we don't shower. Like if you look at a person he looks at you, he thinks that you are a thief, he despises you. A life like this we have seen it. If you have a difficult life, in our lives like how you helped us to know about our problems and how we can get help. And to know how we should do, yes, things like those.

Sanna: Ok, we have understood.

Joe: Have you understood?

Sanna: I think I have understood. I hope I have understood.²⁴⁴

²⁴⁴ Joe: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 24.

Jayden: Ngoma yako ingeongea kuhusu nini?

Joe: Yani vile sisi wenyewe tunaamka asubuhi tunapigwa na baridi asubuhi. Yaani vile tukiamka watu hawatuoni juu tumekuwa uso black hatukuli mzuri yaani vile tumekionda tumechafuka hatuogi. Yaani vile ukiamangalia mtu anakuangalia anoana we ni mwizi anakudharau. Life kama hio tumeiona ukiwa ni life ngumu kwa maisha yetu yaani vile kama nyinyi mlitusaidia tujue mambo zetu na vile tunaweza kusaidiwa. Na tujue vile tutafanya eeh vitu kama hizo.

In the centre of the drawing is a smiling man painted in full figure in black lines. Next to him is written *msani mbaya*. Though *mbaya* in Swahili means ‘bad’, in Sheng²⁴⁵ it has the reversed meaning. *Msani mbaya* is a good or talented artist. Above the man are contours of hills. Below him to the right is a football field with players and a ball, seen from above. Under it is written *futa*, referring to football. Transferring from a denotative description to a connotative interpretation, the artist is probably Joe himself, symbolizing his aspiration for the future. Like for Isaac and Aaron, the music possibly influenced Joe while drawing. The football field probably describes a passion for football. The hills in the background remind the viewer of the Ngong Hills in the Nairobi area and help to connect the artist on the picture to the immediate context. In terms of form and substance, the artist and the words *msani mbaya* make the form, forming the central sign of the drawing. Its content is a dream of being an artist, or an aspect of himself that Joe wants to enhance. The football field and the text *futa* compose the form of a supplementary sign in the drawing, the passion for football. The landscape could be considered substance in expression and content that can be removed without changing the meaning of the central signs, however its contextual connection to Nairobi makes a contribution to the content of the form, connecting the artist to the context.

Besides for confirming his aspirations for becoming an artist, Joe mentions that another alternative would be to become a football player. The factor of interactional control, our questions, however leads the conversation into the subject of singing and this is what we come to discuss. When speaking about his message as an artist Joe takes on the role of spokesperson for a group, using the pronoun ‘we’ and thus makes the youth on the street the agent of sentences. The profession of singer implies transmitting a reality shared by many. Life on the street is characterized by struggle: feeling cold in the morning due to sleeping outside, lacking food, and a place to shower. Added to this is the behaviour of the public, ignoring and seeing through the youth sleeping on the street or looking at Joe and his friends with despise. Joe also states that ‘you’, possibly Jayden and the other CBO staff, advise him and others on the street. The inclusion of himself in a group of young men that live on the street possibly reflects the importance of participation in community that Magesa and Mulago

Sanna: Sawa tumeelewa.

Joe: Umeelewa?

Sanna: Nadhani nimeelewa, natumaini nimeelewa.

²⁴⁵ Sheng is an informal dialect that draws on Swahili, English and tribal languages, among them Kikuyu. It is spoken mainly by youth in urban Kenya. The RPs use Sheng expressions very frequently.

stress. 'The good life' is created through relationship but suffering in Joe's description is also endured together with friends. When it seems that Joe has finished his explanation, I intend to thank him by saying that we have understood. He then seems to become angry, looking at me asking, 'have you understood?' as if wanting to question my statement. His confrontation makes me insecure and I rephrase myself, saying that I 'think' and 'hope' so. Whether I have perceived Joe's question correctly or not it is an important one. It is difficult for me, if not impossible, to imagine the challenges that Joe and other youth pass through on the street. This is important to recognize when trying to understand what the RPs paint and describe.

As explained by Magesa, in African tradition the cause of suffering is sought in the human community. When a logical explanation is not found, the suffering person or community that he belongs to starts looking for other reasons. Disobedience towards the divine values is one explanation to the distress experienced. A spirit can cause unprovoked suffering or other human beings may use witchcraft that harms the suffering person.²⁴⁶ Joe and other RPs do not express articulate opinions about causes for the bad life on the street, however, some factors can be noted. As can be observed in Joe's example, when talking about bad conditions on the street, the RPs do not blame other people or God. Instead, in agreement with seeing disobedience towards the life enhancing traditions as the explanation for suffering, there is a stress on changing behaviour and stop doing drugs.²⁴⁷ To change their life situation, the RPs must change and transformation is desired by the RPs themselves and the public. In Joe's example this influence is evident in the public's despise. His description of the treatment that youth experience resonates with Glauser's description, of how youth that live on the street are perceived as outside of the norm of society.²⁴⁸ Joe's explanation relates to the discussion initiated in the previous chapter, whether the RPs through their way of life on the street criticize the society for being excluded out of it. Joe and other RPs do not blame others or a larger unjust system for being on the street, but Joe and Caleb mention that they are treated badly by others, and signal that they do not like this treatment.²⁴⁹

Not present in Joe's example but in a few other RPs' drawings and explanations is the tendency to perceive suffering or bad deeds as influenced by forces outside themselves, the devil or devils, relating to the issue of witchcraft and bad spirits described by Magesa. Mhizha's study with street children in Harare shows that the presence of evil spirits in the

²⁴⁶ Magesa 1998, 70, 159-160, 162, 165-168.

²⁴⁷ Explained in Chapter 6.

²⁴⁸ Glauser 1997, 152.

²⁴⁹ See Joe: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 27; Caleb: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 10-11, 13.

lives of street children and adolescents is central, a belief sometimes originated or confirmed by local African prophets from whom the children sought guidance and assistance in exorcism. The children considered themselves bewitched and often perceived relatives as the cause of being affected by evil spirits that caused immoral and criminal behaviour and prevented the re-establishment of family bonds. As a help to succeed in theft, several children reported using magic charms and herbs. Evil spirits, together with spirits of deceased individuals, were determined as more influential than God, but many RPs attend churches and pray with others.²⁵⁰

While the belief that bad spirits or witchcraft are related to bad life conditions and suffering is central in Mhizha's study, three RPs spoke during the interviews with drawings of bad spirits or the devil as influencing their lives negatively. William wants to become a pastor since it would protect him from being attacked by bad devils:

William: This Bible, when I am bored I read it.

Sanna: Mmh.

Jayden: When you read it how do you feel?

William: Like, like I feel I would like to become a pastor.

Sanna: Why would you like to be a pastor?

*William: I think that if I am a pastor even the devils can't come to me, even these bad things can't come.*²⁵¹

In addition to William can be noted Noah who painted the devil and argued that he tempts persons to do bad things,²⁵² and Sebastian²⁵³ who perceives the church as the place that influences him to do good things while if he keeps away from it he starts doing bad things.²⁵⁴ The bad external influence seems for the RPs to be overcome in a Christian church context,

²⁵⁰ Mhizha 2015, 193-197.

²⁵¹ William: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 13.

William: Hii Bible wakati nimeboweka naisoma.

Sanna: Mmh

Jayden: Ukisoma unafeel aje?

William: Yaani yaani nafeel naweza penda nikuwe pastor.

Sanna: Kwa nini ungependa kuwa pastor?

William: Naonanga enyewe nikiwa pastor hata mashetani haziwezi nikamia, hata hizi mavitu haziwezi kukujia.

²⁵² Noah: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 8.

²⁵³ Example presented in Chapter 6.

²⁵⁴ Sebastian: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 12-13.

not using methods of charms and herbs as in Mhizha's study. Relating to the issue of blame may be mentioned that even though William, Noah, and Sebastian perceive bad influences as causing them to suffer or commit bad actions, this does not remove the responsibility that the individual has for changing his life, as will be explained in Chapter 6. The fact that witchcraft and the devil receive little space in the interviews with drawings does not mean that this is characteristic in the RPs' lives. It may be, as mentioned earlier, due to the instructions encouraging positive answers. This is evident in William's example where he painted a Bible and associates to the office of pastor as what would protect him from the devil and other bad things. However, it is not possible to make conclusions about this based on the source material.

As shown, the general life conditions on the street are bad. In both Joe's and William's example is shown an aspiration for future professions that will help them. Though the RPs' hope for changed life conditions in the future,²⁵⁵ the categories enjoying life and life sustaining help, now to be explained, are ways to create 'the good life' in the present.

5.2. Enjoying life and searching for life sustaining help.

As explained in Chapter 4, life on the street holds 'the good life' that is enjoyed through sharing time and goods in relationships. Enjoying life is another way of sharing time and sustaining relationships. For a majority of the RPs, this takes place when playing soccer with friends, presented in Benjamin's example. Also, a few RPs stress churches and organization as places where life sustaining help, assistance with food and shower facilities, is found.

Benjamin is 17 years old. During our first interview, he said that he likes to cook and would like to become a chef. The cold is a big problem for him due to sleeping outside.²⁵⁶ Benjamin focuses on the future in his first two paintings and descriptions, where he would like to have a successful career and to have a house to be comfortable away from the cold.²⁵⁷ However, in the third he concentrates on football that gives him joy in everyday life.

²⁵⁵ Explained in Chapter 7.

²⁵⁶ Benjamin: Gr 4, July 14, 2015: 1.

²⁵⁷ Benjamin: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 8-9.



Benjamin: This third one, anything that you like, like playing ball you see.

Sanna: Why have you painted a ball?

Benjamin: Because that is the thing that I like in life.

Sanna: Playing ball. And if you play ball, whom do you play with?

Benjamin: Just my best friends.

Sanna: Ah! Do you go every day or?

Samuel: Today, we are going today.

Benjamin: Yes, like today.

Sanna: You are going today?

Benjamin: Yes, if you want to come to watch, you can come.

Sanna: And when you play ball how do you feel?

*Benjamin: I feel like, sometimes like it keeps me busy, it keeps me busy. You see like other times if I am at practice like I feel just fit, when I feel pressured I practice.*²⁵⁸

Benjamin has written *chochote nataka* above his drawing, ‘anything that I want’, in agreement with the instructions for drawing. Below is a person, painted in green lines, and a ball in front of his feet. There are no other details in the drawing, making the message of the drawing clear for an interpretation on a connotative level; Benjamin wants to express that he likes to play football. The combination of the person and the ball, gives the shape of the expression and content of the motive. Its identity is someone who enjoys playing. The interest for football of many RPs was often subject of discussion when we met. It is reflected in Kenyan society where English Premier league football and the Kenyan league are popular and people meet on weekends to watch games.

The love for football expressed in the drawing is confirmed as Benjamin says that to play ball is what he likes to do in life. That playing is a communal exercise, done together with friends, becomes clear through the interactional control in Benjamin’s explanation as Samuel becomes engaged and says that they will play the same day and Benjamin invites me to come and watch. To play football is a way to have fun together with friends. But as Benjamin explains, it also helps him to be busy and not feel stressed. The exercise of football is thus a remedy from negativity in everyday life, providing a positive effect for mind and body.²⁵⁹

Benjamin’s description of enjoying life through football together with friends relates to ‘the good life’ through the imperative of community and the attempt to strengthen

²⁵⁸ Benjamin: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 9. Benjamin: Hii ya tatu chochote ambacho unataka yani kucheza mpira hivi unaona.

Sanna: Kwa nini umechora mpira?

Benjamin: Sababu hiyo nido ile kitu napenda kwa maisha

Sanna: Kucheza mpira. Naa ukicheza mpira unacheza na nani?

Benjamin: Si mabeshte tu

Sanna: Ah! Unaenda kila siku au?

Samuel: Leo tunaenda leo

Benjamin: Eh kama leo

Sanna: Unaenda leo?

Benjamin: Eeh hata ukitaka kuja kuangalia unaweza kuja

Sanna: Na ukicheza mpira ni kama una unajiskiaje?

Benjamin: Najiskia yani saa zingine huwa inanikeep busy inanikipingi busy unaona kama saa zengine kaa niko zoezi yaani uwa nafeel tu fiti wakati niko na pressure napiga nayo zoezi.

²⁵⁹ See also Nicholas: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 11-12; Tyler: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 28-29; Cameron: Gr 5: July 24, 2015: 9-10.

life, to live strongly. While sharing food and clothes is one dimension of community, Benjamin and other RPs also stress sharing life by having fun together, in accordance with the stress on participating in relationships that is central to the understandings of vital force and ubuntu. Besides for strengthening their community by spending time together and playing football, the stress on benefits for the body and mind that it causes possibly indicates an attempt to live a strong life. Thus, enjoying life together with friends on the street is possible to interpret as a way of creating 'the good life'. Doing so in response to bad conditions, it shows similarities to the creation of friendships on the street as a complement or substitute to a weakened family contact. There is a constant search for and valuing of living in community.

Besides for mental and physical well-being, the perspective of life sustaining help that the CBO and other organizations provide is mentioned as a positive factor in daily life by a few RPs, possible to relate to 'the good life'. The beneficiary organization seems to receive the same function that the giving friend in the category of giving and receiving, providing the RP with the possibility to strengthen his life. Having painted either an organization facility or a church (connecting the CBO to the church premises where it operates), the RPs stress that these are places where it is possible to receive food as well as the opportunity to shower and wash clothes.²⁶⁰ The difference from the category of giving and receiving is that in life sustaining help the RPs do not perceive it as reciprocal, the giving is on the side of the organization. As mentioned in the previous section, the categories enjoying life and life sustaining help focus on the present and how 'the good life' is created in the middle of struggle on the street. Past and future perspectives are thus not included.

²⁶⁰ See Samuel: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 6-7; Steven: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 10-11; Eric: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 19-20.

6. Wishes for change.

It is clear that life on the street holds factors that create ‘the good life’ and others that diminish it. This chapter focuses on wishes for change. Many RPs hope for life conditions contrasting to those on the street, presented in the categories ‘comfort’, ‘established life’, ‘financial stability and success’, and ‘freedom of movement’, and several RPs express a wish to change their own behaviour, explained in the category ‘self-transformation’.

6.1. Self-transformation.

As explained in the category of prayer, the dialogue in the relationship to God is essential for some RPs. Others, when speaking about God and church in combination, focus on the process of self-transformation: to change as a person. The dimensions of this category are presented in two examples, starting with Sebastian, 15 years old.²⁶¹



Sebastian: And this is a church and this is a car. [Turning pages from one drawing to the next]

Sanna: So this church, why have you painted a church?

²⁶¹ Sebastian: Gr 6, July 31, 2015: 2.

Sebastian: Because... Church helps, it, church helps me to know God, and this car...

[Turning to the drawing with the car again]

Sanna: Hahaha, wait a minute, how does the church helps you to know God?

Sebastian: Because when I go to church I stop doing bad things, I do good things, but if I don't go to church, I do bad things.²⁶²

Sebastian has painted a building in pink lines, identified as a church due to the cross on the roof. On a connotative level, it is difficult to determine what Sebastian wants to express by painting a church, as there are no persons or nature around it to situate it in a context. The doubts are however cleared as Sebastian explains. For him, church is a place to know God. When asked to explain further, he focuses on behaviour. Going to church makes him do good things while the opposite makes him do bad things. Sebastian's statements relate to the question of causality, how action and result are connected. Church is an agent in the sentence, helping Sebastian to know God and influencing him to do good things. What 'church' refers to is not entirely clear. It is a physical place that Sebastian accesses by going there. It is possible that the mere being in church has a transforming effect on him while it may also be that attendance in service influences his actions. Another meaning of 'church' might be that it is due to knowing God there that he changes his behaviour. It is the context where God influences him. This interpretation makes God's agency more salient. Sebastian's own role is somewhere in between. His presence in church is necessary, but after arriving he is passive while the church and God transform him.

The factor of interactional control is evident in the excerpt. It is difficult to know why Sebastian was quick to turn the pages. Possibly he was shy, tired, or lacking concentration due to having a cold at the time of the interview, or he just didn't understand that we were interested in knowing more about his drawing. I tried to go back to the drawing to ask more and understand his motives for painting a church. If Sebastian was feeling shy and didn't want to develop his thoughts further, my continued asking was wrong. On the other hand, it is also possible to perceive the flipping between the pages as a testimony to that for

²⁶² Sebastian: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 12-13.

Sebastian: Na hii ni church na hii ni gari.

Sanna: Kwa hiyo hii church, kwa nini umechora church?

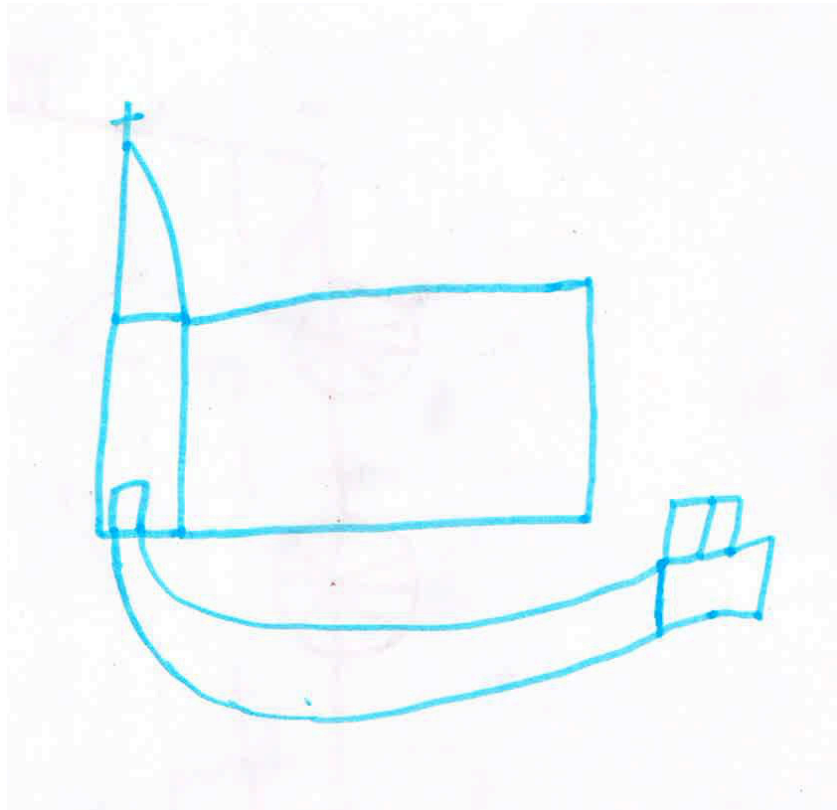
Sebastian: Juu...Church inasaidianga, inaaaa, church inanisaidianga kujua Mungu, na hii gari...

Sanna: Hahaha, wacha tu kidogo, vipi kanisa inakusaidia kumjua Mungu?

Sebastian: Kwa sababu nikienda kanisa naacha kutenda mambo mabaya, nafanya mambo mazuri, lakini kama siendi kanisa, nafanya mambo mabaya.

Sebastian, attending church and dreaming of a car²⁶³ exist alongside each other, and do not belong to separate parts of life.

The bond between church and behaviour is present for several RPs.²⁶⁴ For Sebastian, there seems to be an almost automatic change of behaviour from attending church. However, as shown in William's example, the church context sometimes leaves the individual with much responsibility:



William: Because if you don't go to church, I mean, you sleep. But if you go to church, even that that thing that you read it goes into your head. Or you go and receive prayer. You were doing drugs and then you find yourself, I mean you are in school, like you are at home.

Sanna: And in church, when you are there, what things do they say that you like and what things that you don't like?

William: I mean...

Sanna: Mmh.

William: I mean, they tell you, I mean, let go of those things [drugs].

²⁶³ See section 6.3.

²⁶⁴ See Tyler: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 28; Dominic: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 14-15; Jonathan: Gr 3, July 10, 2015: 6-7.

Sanna: Ooh...

William: They tell you, change because that thing will kill you.

Sanna: And when they say that, do you like it or do you not like it if they tell you that?

William: You know, this I don't like about you, you know, if you say that today you are stopping [doing drugs], tomorrow you find yourself with it. Even this, even the church elder, even you yourself think that taking drugs in church is bad, let me just come outside, to come, I can take [drugs] outside.²⁶⁵

Like Sebastian, William is 15 years old,²⁶⁶ and their drawings are similar. The cross on the roof and the shape of the building makes it easy to identify as a church. On a connotative level, the stretched body and tower remind the viewer of a traditional Catholic or Protestant European architecture. There is a path leading up to the church door at the end of the building, however no persons are present. As in Sebastian's case, the drawing alone does not reveal to the viewer in what way William perceives church to be important, but when explaining, William stresses the transformative power that attending church, according to him, has on a person. Going to church makes persons understand what they read, 'it goes into your head', he says. It makes a person attentive and with a mind ready to receive information. The prayer received in church has the ability to transfer persons from one position to another; from drug addiction to school or home. William's perspective has similarities to Sebastian's since also he talks of church attendance as a place where self-transformation is possible.

²⁶⁵ William: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 14-15.

William: Juu usipoenda church, yaani, unashindaga ukilala. Lakini ukienda church, eeh enyewe enyewe hata hiyo hiyo kitu unasomea inakuingia kwa kichwa ee. Ama unaenda unaombewa. Si ulikua unavuta gum eh unajikuta, yaani uko kwa shule hivi uko nyumbani.

Sanna: Na kanisani ukiwa hapo wanasema vitu gani ambayo unavipenda na vitu gani ambavyo hupendi?

William: Yaani...

Sanna: Mmh

William: Yaani si wanakuambianga, yaani, uache hizo mavitu.

Sanna: Ooh

William: Wanakuambiagaje, badilika juu nii kitu itakuua, eeh

Sanna: Na hio wakisema hiyo unaipenda au hauipendi wakikuambia hiyo

William: Unajua hiyo sikupenda kwako, unajua ukisema leo unaacha kesho unajikuta na, nayo. Hata hiyo hata hiyo mzee kwa kanisa hii, hata wewe enyewe unaonga enyewe kuvuta gum kwa church ni mbaya, acha tu nikaache nje nicome nikitoka nikavutie nje.

²⁶⁶ William: Gr 2, June 30, 2015: 3.

It is made clear by some RPs that they receive encouragement in church to change,²⁶⁷ but as William explains, the responsibility depends on the individual. Although encouraged by churchgoers to stop using drugs, William explains how he struggles to do so. When he needs to sniff glue he goes outside of the church compound. It seems that bad things must stay out of the church. It is a building that causes good behaviour but also does not tolerate bad behaviour within its compound. William's explanation raises the question of what role God and church have in the individual's many attempts to stop using drugs and failing. To attend church and receive prayer performs miraculous transformation, but when expressing his difficulties to let go of drugs, William does not criticize God, a tendency also evident in Chapter 5 as the RPs do not blame others for their hard life on the street. The agency in William's sentences suggests that trying to let go of drugs is the most pressing issue for him, being the only time that he makes himself an agent, speaking in first person singular. Earlier he has used second person singular with a generalizing effect, making the transformation in church and the encouragement to let go of drugs apply also to others.

As mentioned in relation to life sustaining help, several RPs associate the CBO and other organizations with church through their drawings. Besides for providing food and shower facilities, there is an emphasis at the CBO and other organizations on the process of change; to stop doing drugs, return to school or obtain a job, to leave the life on the street, and if possible return back home. The encouragement to change was frequent at the CBO program that I attended, where the teachers used Bible stories that speak of change, healing and forgiveness, such as the prodigal son (Luke 15: 11-32), as examples. This relates to William's description.²⁶⁸ Several RPs state that the church, the CBO, and other organizations are important due to the encouragement to stop with drugs and change, although it is difficult. As mentioned in Chapter 3, it is possible that the RPs in their stress on change were influenced by the interviews being conducted at the CBO and that Jayden is one of its teachers.

Although the RPs' references to God and church are diverse, prayer and self-transformation present the central characteristics. While prayer stresses the 'I-Thou-relationship' between the believer and God who is forgiving, listening, and loving, in self-transformation the RPs underline how God, church members, staff at organizations and themselves want them to let go of drugs, and change their lives. In prayer, the dialogue and relationship to God is the aim, while in self-transformation, God and the church community emphasise change.

²⁶⁷ See Christian: Gr 3, July 10, 2015: 8; Samuel: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 7.

²⁶⁸ Research journal, June 19: 2-3; July 3: 7; July 10, 2015: 9-10.

Sebastian's and William's examples and the category of life sustaining help relate to the discussion in Chapter 5 on causes for suffering. Magesa explains how African community leaders have the responsibility to guide the community to live strongly. They help the suffering person return into balance with the God-given values promoted by the ancestors.²⁶⁹ For the RPs, it is possible to draw a parallel between the community leaders' responsibility and the role of the pastor, church members, and organization staff. The role of God in the African worldview, as creator and provider of values to follow for the enhancement of life,²⁷⁰ is reflected in the RPs' connection between God and good behaviour. This also determines the role of God in the struggle to let go of drugs. Churches and organizations that work with youth that live on the streets provide a substitute for the contact with God that the family community would traditionally take on. The moral values and rules of the Christian congregation are important as they enhance 'the good life'. The big responsibility placed on the individual to change and let go of his drug addiction possibly reflects the belief in African spirituality that suffering is caused by disobedience. The individual must return to the life enhancing values.

The wishes for self-transformation and an improved life situation are often connected to a church and Christian belief context that relate to the teachings at the CBO. The RPs' stress on moral behaviour as enhanced by churches and organizations relate to the place of morality in church in general. This is discussed by Auli Vähäkangas who argues in her study with HIV+ individuals in Arusha, Tanzania, that churches (here especially Lutheran and Catholic) in many instances fails to act as a 'healing community' as the attitude towards HIV+ members is one of blame. HIV+ persons may be put under church discipline and being infected is connected to sexual immorality.²⁷¹ The focus on moral behaviour that Vähäkangas observes in Tanzania relates to the RPs' stress on change. The perspective of self-transformation leaves out a structural approach where youth on the street would be considered victims of poverty and discrimination. Regarding compassion, the constant pressure on self-transformation sometimes seems harsh. However, the CBO and other organizations have a forgiving and accepting role in that individuals are welcome regardless if they change or not. Thus, their function is a contrast to the public behaviour towards the RPs. In Chapter 7 is presented yet another view of the issue of self-transformation.

²⁶⁹ Magesa 1998, 67-70.

²⁷⁰ Ibid, 41.

²⁷¹ Vähäkangas 2005, 53-55 (Quote on page 53).

While, Vähäkangas' RPs express correct moral behaviour as stressed in Lutheran and Catholic churches, it is not possible to confirm that the views of the RPs in this study are taught in a specific congregation or denomination, as they do not during these interviews specify 'church' more closely. As mentioned, many RPs attend a Pentecostal youth service. I only visited the service of this church once and therefore lack knowledge of its theology. Also, as the service is partly directed towards youth on the street, its theology is most likely adjusted to their situation. It is however worth mentioning that the issue of morality is echoed in literature on Pentecostal theology, African and worldwide. Joel Robbins states that '[m]orality is ... of evident importance in Pentecostal daily life. Pentecostals often experience their daily lives as arenas of struggle between good and evil, or God and the devil, and they see the cultivation of Spiritually enhanced self-control as an important personal project'.²⁷² The struggle for moral improvement in the church context, influenced by God and other forces, and encouraged by church visitors is clear for Sebastian and William as well as in the examples presented in Chapter 5.

Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi argues that there are similarities between the traditional understanding of salvation in the Akan community of Ghana and that of Pentecostal theology. The Akan concept of salvation means to be rescued, led, protected, and preserved to the abundant life. The abundant life is experienced in the reality of daily life now and includes health, material well-being, to be safe, and to live in peace. There is no belief in eternal life.²⁷³ In Pentecostal theology, Larbi suggests, there is a 'dual faceted conception of salvation'²⁷⁴ that embraces both the salvation of souls to eternal life as well as God's concern for favourable conditions now in terms of economy, family, and health. The centre of Pentecostalism in Ghana is Christ as the liberator and on the believer's side in the struggle against everything that wants to weaken life.²⁷⁵ The description of the Akan community agrees with the definition of 'the good life' as explained in the theoretical framework. The stress on self-transformation among the RPs is thus possibly seen as part of what it means to be a person following the will of God. Improved moral behaviour, according to the values of the mainstream community, is a testimony to being a good Christian.

Relating to the perspective of survival and asking God for material needs, as mentioned earlier central in Browning's study, this perspective is partly found in the category

²⁷² Robbins 2010, 166.

²⁷³ Larbi 2002, 94-95, 104.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, 104.

²⁷⁵ Ibid, 96-97, 103-104.

of life-sustaining help as the RPs associate the church with a place where they receive help. However, a difference is that God is not directly mentioned; instead the stress is on the church. In the category self-transformation, the focus is on a changed life through quitting drugs and leading a moral life, not necessarily survival in terms of food and physical protection. As described in the following sections, the RPs wish for changed material life conditions, however the stress is not on survival, but on a comfortable and successful life.

6.2. Comfort and established life.

In addition to changed behaviour it is clear that to think, paint, and talk about that which is important in life, involves a hope, longing for, and imagining of other material life conditions. While memories of good relationships to parents are sought in the past, in the wishes for an improved material standard the RPs move to the future. Through Matthew's example I will account for two categories related to future life conditions: comfort and established life. Some RPs stress that they long for the comfort of living at home or in a house. Besides for the perspective presented by Matthew below, it involves sleeping warm in a bed instead of suffering from the cold on the street, of having food and the ability to play with friends.²⁷⁶ An established life in the sense of being married, having a wife and children is a future aspiration for several RPs.²⁷⁷

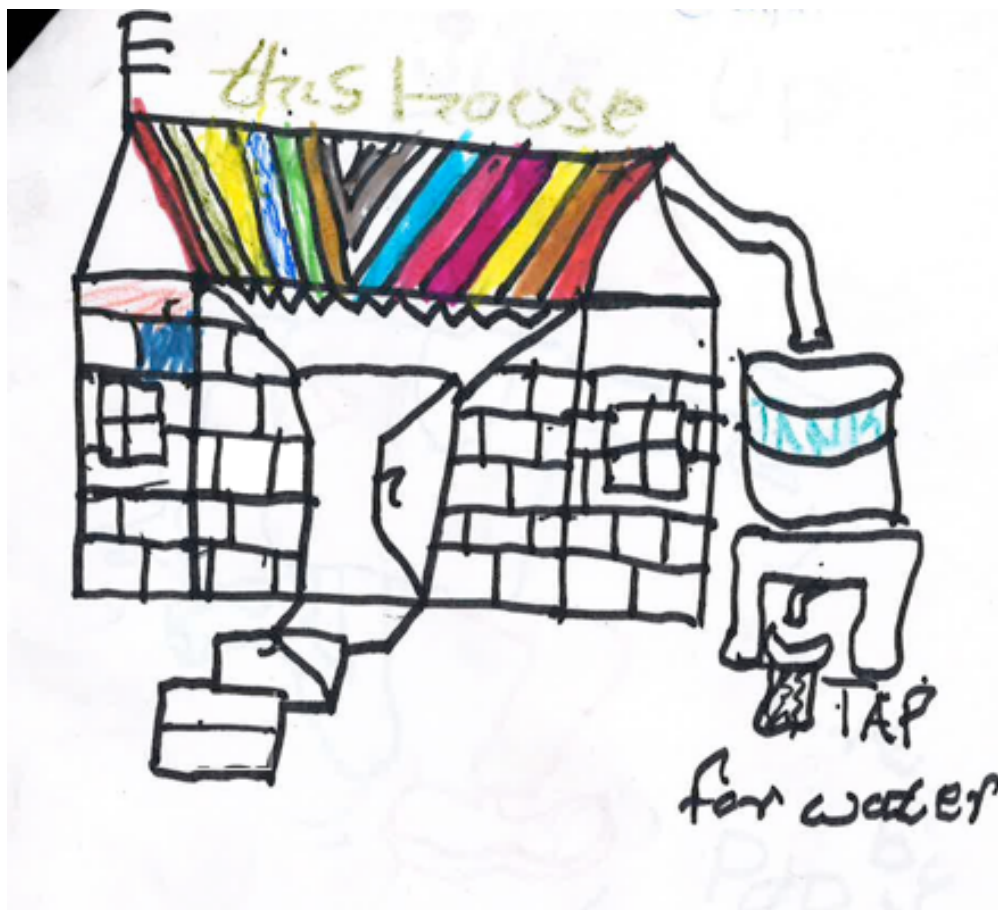
Matthew is 27 years old,²⁷⁸ and a frequent participant at the CBO program. He works daily collecting plastics and scraps that he sells. When we met for the interview with drawings three RPs from Matthew's group came. They know each other well and live together with three other young men in a small room in the area. The atmosphere during our gathering was thus relaxed. The RPs enjoyed the exercise and sung along to music while drawing.²⁷⁹ The mutual influence mentioned previously is present here, as dreams for the future, concentrating on a stable life, were a recurrent theme.

²⁷⁶ See Noah: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 6-7; Benjamin: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 8-9.

²⁷⁷ See Alexander: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 21-22; Michael: Gr 1, July 8, 2015: 17-19; Caleb: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 13.

²⁷⁸ Matthew: Gr 1, June 23, 2015: 3-4.

²⁷⁹ Research journal, July 8, 2015: 9.



Matthew: This is the house where my grandmother lives. Here, there it is close to [name of area], you see? Now, I think if I continue like this, even I can get my own [house] of bricks like this. And I will have my own family, you see? I will have one [house] like this, you see?

Sanna: Hmm.

Matthew: Even if it is a small plot like this, with two or three houses. I will have one like this you see. And I will have a water tank there. For those at the same plot, I don't charge them money, but for those from far away, 5 shillings. ... You know now, like my grandmother here she gets water because this is a plot, you see. This is a plot and this is her house and the water is right here on the side, you see? She gets it for free.

Sanna: And when you come to this house how do you feel?

Matthew: Ah wow wow! I would feel very good. You know, I have not yet been used to live in a mud house. A house like this would make me very happy. If I get a house like this one.²⁸⁰

²⁸⁰ Matthew: Gr 1, July 8, 2015: 16.

Matthew: Hii ni nyumba shosho yangu anakaanga. Hapa, hapo ni karibu na huko kwa [name] unaona? Sasa mimi nafikirianga bado nikizidi hivyo eh? Nikizidi hivyo hata mimi naweza pata yangu ya mawe kama hii. Na nikuwe na family yangu unaona? Nikuwe na kama hii

On a denotative level, Matthew's drawing has many details to pay attention to. A house, made of brick, takes up a lot of space. Above it is written *this house*. It has two windows and a door in the middle. A small staircase below the door, painted in a diagonal angle, gives life to the motive. The roof is made of steel, and painted in various colours the house receives a happy look. On the roof is an antenna, letting the viewer know that there is a television inside. On the right side of the house is a tank for water and a pipe leading the rainwater from the roof down into it. Under it is written, *TAP for water*. The size of it and the details are possibly due to its importance for Matthew, or he enjoyed drawing them.

On a connotative, associative level, the words *this house* make the viewer ask what kind of house it is and what it means to Matthew. The windows and the door together with the antenna give the feeling that it is a private house, perhaps a house that Matthew wants. The house and the water tank give the impression of a stable economy and comfort since in the area where the interviews were conducted many houses lack water supply. People buy their water in buckets and carry them home. The sign of the drawing is a good and comfortable house. The house together with the water tank makes up the form of expression and content. Due to the tank's size and richness of details, it is important and necessary for the perception of the house as a place that gives comfort.

Matthew's explanation establishes the house's identity as diverse. It is where his grandmother lives and the model for the house he wishes for. Before the quote above he has also referred to it as *kwetu*, the family home. The house relates to past, present and future by its identity as the family home where Matthew grew up, as his grandmother's home that he visits and as a model for the house where he hopes to live. Connected to the houses are people. In the present his grandmother is its central character. In the future, Matthew aspires for an established life, of being content together with his own family. The wish to be a father and a husband seems to be mentioned by Matthew as a self-evident fact, and his future family

unaona?

Sanna: Hmm

Matthew: Hata kama ni kaplot hivo kadogo, kama nyumba mbili tatu. Nikuwe na kaa hii unaona. Na nikuwe hapo na tanki ya maji. Kama ni kwa plot siwalipishi maji, lakini wa kutoka mbali kobole-kobole. (laughter) ... Unaona saa hii, kama shosho yangu hapa anachota maji kwa sababu hii ni plot unaona? Hii ni plot na hii ni nyumba yake na maji iko hapo hapo kando unaona? Nikuchota anachota bure.

Sanna: Na ukifika kwa hii nyumba unajisikiaje?

Matthew: A iya iya! Naweza kujiskia vizuri sana. Unajua mimi sijazoea kukaa nyumba ya matope. Nyumba kaa hii naweza furahia sana. Nikipata nyumba kaa hii.

is not pictured in the drawing. Matthew then moves on to talk about the water tank. He wishes to have a tank like his grandmothers' next to his house. As discussed above, the longing that Matthew expresses can be described as for comfort due to his stress on how his grandmother gets water right next to her house and that it is free. This factor, together with charging others for the water, also presents an economical dimension. The comfort stressed when talking about having a water tank is possibly made in contrast to Matthew's present life where obtaining clean water is difficult.

The wish for a comfortable life as a family father in a house that is connected to Matthew's childhood and older relatives is a longing for 'the good life' in accordance with the traditional values. Tempels describes how the vital force connects to the line of generations. To be part of a community involves a connection with and being influenced by the past generation as well as enhancing the life of the clan and the individual into the life of coming generations. Since God is the creator and originator of the vital force,²⁸¹ and traditions that the community needs to keep to enhance life,²⁸² Matthew's aspirations are not separated from a spiritual perspective. The house including several generations seems to reflect a longing to carry on the family traditions and symbolizes how the family sphere is the centre of traditions. Matthew also refers to the importance of marriage and birth as having a family would imply fulfilling the purpose of life, to make possible the continued 'good life' of his family. Possibly this is why Matthew mentions his role as a husband and father in by-passing, they are automatically included in the understanding of having a home as an adult man. Matthew's wishes agree with the central life obligations of African spirituality and with Magesa who argues that when affliction is experienced, the longing for life becomes stronger.²⁸³ It also shows a longing to become reintegrated into the public community where marriage, children, and building a home are essential.

Along with the stress on marriage and child bearing that Matthew and other RPs mention, the importance of central traditions that enhance 'the good life' is also present in Browning's study. Her interviewees marry on the street to other children and help each other to go through circumcision.²⁸⁴ Related to the issue of marriage and an established life as a family father, there is however a difference in perspective of time between the RPs in the two studies. While Browning stresses how marriage and child bearing happens on the street, the

²⁸¹ Tempels 1959, 61-68.

²⁸² Magesa 1998, 41, 72.

²⁸³ Magesa 2013, 29.

²⁸⁴ Browning 2011, 155-156.

RPs in during the interviews with drawings describe settling down as an aspiration for the future, in agreement with the values enhanced to live ‘the good life’.

Finally is the issue of material wishes and if the RPs perceive them as connected to God. Larbi’s mentioning that salvation encompasses health and financial stability in Pentecostal theology connects to Matthew’s longing for a materially prosperous life and having a family. Matthew does not mention God in his explanation and it is not certain why. Possibly he does not see God as the provider of material gifts. However, from the perspective of African spirituality, there are no differences between a secular and spiritual life. It is then self-evident that God is the provider and not necessary for Matthew to stress.

6.3. Financial stability and success.

Related to comfort and established life is the category financial stability and success. Many RPs long for a life that is a contrast to the scarcity they experience. The most frequent motive in this category is a car. Some long for financial stability through creating a business with a car, driving taxi or carrying goods.²⁸⁵ This dream reflects the surrounding context. In Nairobi cars are everywhere, used for transportation of goods and people. To own a car is a sign of moving towards, or having reached, economical stability. The stress on mobility and advancing is different to that on belonging and safety evident in Matthew’s description of the house. The symbolic meaning of a car relates to Jonathan’s drawing and explanation, where he connects the wish to have a car to finishing university:



²⁸⁵ See Michael: Gr 1, July 8, 2015: 17-19; Logan: Gr 3, July 10, 2015: 14-15; Eric: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 20.

Jonathan: I like a car because, you know I see people with cars and also I would like to have one.

Sanna: You would like to have a car?

Jonathan: Yes.

Sanna: If you had a car, where would you go?

Jonathan: First I would go to school, finish school, I go where, what is it called...

Logan: Driving?

Jonathan: No, I go first to... university... Now, I go to university, when I finish university God can help me so that I can have a car.

Sanna: Ok.

Jayden: Who can you carry inside your car?

Jonathan: My mother, my sisters, our children and my friends also.

Sanna: Where would you bring them?

Jonathan: If they are children, even me, I tell them, I studied. I bring them back to school. And if it is my mother, I help her, I can even build her a house, you see.²⁸⁶

Jonathan is 16 years old. He enjoys playing soccer and his work collecting plastic and metal scraps.²⁸⁷ Jonathan's private car is painted in brown lines and filled in with red. The presence of cars in the area where Jonathan lives is a possible parallel to make on a connotative level. The shape of the drawing, providing it with identity, is the car that probably symbolises a hope to own one. This meaning is not fixed from looking at the drawing, but affirmed in Jonathan's explanation. Seeing others having a car has inspired him. Jonathan then puts stress

²⁸⁶ Jonathan: Gr 3, July 10, 2015: 7-8. Jonathan: Mimi napenda gari kwa sababu, eh, unajua mi naonanga huku watu na gari na hata mimi ningependa kuwa nayo.

Sanna: Ungependa kuwa na gari?

Jonathan: Ee.

Sanna: Kama ungekuwa na gari ungeenda wapi?

Jonathan: Kwanza ningenda shule nimalize shule, niende nini, inaitwa aje....

Logan: Driving?

Jonathan: Hapana, niende kwanza... university... Sasa, niende university nikimaliza university, Mungu anaweza nisaidia nikuwe na gari.

Sanna: Sawa.

Jayden: Nani unaweza beba ndani ya gari yako?

/---/

Jonathan: Mama yangu, sister zangu, watoto wetu sa na marafiki zangu pia.

Sanna: Ungewapeleka wapi?

Jonathan: Kama ni watoto, eh, hata mimi nawaambia nilisoma nawarudisha shule. Na kama ni mama yangu ee, namsaidia naweza hata mjengea nyumba unaona.

²⁸⁷ Jonathan: Gr 3, July 7, 2015: 3-4.

on moving forward, finishing school and university, after which he hopes that God will help him to get a car. The car is a symbol for movement towards improved life conditions and the proof of succeeding after finishing his education.

Jonathan continues to associate the car with a life journey. Stating that he wishes to build a house for his mother and bring children to school, Jonathan presents a perspective that is evident among several RPs: obtaining 'the good life' requires helping others. These are ethical statements about how to treat others in agreement with the imperative of generosity to live as a person with ubuntu. 'The good life' comes with obligations. Due to the stress on giving, this part of the quote belongs in the category giving and receiving. Good relationships and generosity are thus part also of the RPs' wishes for the future. Jonathan's example resonates clearly with the principles of economy in African society, by Magesa defined as 'eating together'. Resources obtained are shared in solidarity for the creation of community. The objective of production and success is not 'the good life' of the individual, but of the community. Rather than focusing on accumulating capital for the future, the emphasis is on obtaining a good life for everyone in the present.²⁸⁸ A successful individual is someone who shares in order to strengthen the vital force of the community, rather than having obtained a certain economical level.

Regarding hope for changed life conditions, the question of who to share them with is relevant and relates to the discussion about community in Chapter 4 and 5. As mentioned by Matthew, having a family is one alternative. Others, like Jonathan, want to build a house for a parent and bring 'our children' (possibly his own together with his wife) back to school.²⁸⁹ Sharing with parents seems to recognize, like Nathan in the category closeness, receiving the gift of life and is a way to respect older generations. Thus, difficult family conditions have not created reluctance towards helping parents.

There is also a strong representation among the RPs of seeing current friends on the street as important in an improved life. As in the category giving and receiving, this gives testimony to how the closest relationships for many RPs are friends on the street. Benjamin states that he would live with his friends in the house that he longs for.²⁹⁰ In the category freedom of movement, the drawing of a car symbolizes the wish to own one and being able to move freely, short and long distances. Sebastian wants a car to take his friends to Mombasa

²⁸⁸ Magesa 2013, 147, 150. Quote of 'eating together' on page 147 and 150, of 'the good life' on page 150.

²⁸⁹ See also Dominic: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 15.

²⁹⁰ Benjamin: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 9.

and have fun.²⁹¹ Steven describes how he wants to be rich, symbolized by a car, to help his friends. He wants to go to Europe and would bring his two best friends.²⁹² Friends that are important on the street are brought into the new life conditions and are rarely defined negatively. There is a clear distinction between what is bad on the street and what is good. While drugs, cold, harassment and the difficulty to find food are bad aspects; friends, church, organizations, and God are defined as important and life promoting.

The cars function as metonymies. For some, it is the sign that success has been achieved while for others it is a longing for freedom to move where one wishes. The car as a sign of success and mobility partly disagrees with the concept of ‘the good life’. As mentioned above, the mobility of the car is in contrast to the stress on life in the home community. The reference to cars is instead testifying to success and material wealth in the present Nairobi context. However, as mentioned above and is continuously to be emphasized, the aim of owning a car seems to testify for some RPs to a desire to create ‘the good life’ in accordance with the values of African spirituality. In Jonathan’s case it seems that the car is first to be defined as a metonym, a small part that gives testimony to his success. However, as he moves on to perceive himself travelling in it, helping his mother to build a house and children to go back to school, the car instead receives the role of a metaphor, a figure of speech based on similarity.²⁹³ The connection is the movement of the car: transporting persons between geographical positions. In Jonathan’s explanation the car is the metaphor for helping others to reach to a better place in life, not in terms of physical distance. Differently from most RPs who wish for improved material life conditions, Jonathan gives God a clear role as he states that when he finishes university God can help him to get a car. As for Matthew, it is not possible to know exactly how most RPs perceive the connection between material well-being and God. However, in Jonathan’s explanation the material well-being stressed by Larbi in Pentecostal theology is clearly present. Also, Jonathan’s explanation echoes a perspective of prosperity theology, explained by Ogbu Kalu as based on the conviction that God promises a life of prosperity to all believers. While some focus on prayer as the instrument to reach prosperity, others stress the importance of giving and investing to be able to reap an abundant harvest,²⁹⁴ and this latter perspective seems to agree with Jonathan’s thought of how if he

²⁹¹ See Sebastian: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 13. For other examples from this category, see also Nicholas: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 12; Caleb: Gr 4, July 24, 2015: 11-13; Alexander: Gr 2, July 9, 2015: 21.

²⁹² See Steven: Gr 6, August 6, 2015: 11.

²⁹³ Hansson, Karlsson, and Nordström 2006, 35-36.

²⁹⁴ Kalu 2008, 255-256.

manages to finish university God will give him a car, multiplying the effort that he has put into his studies. It would be a proof of success that other people can see. The question of sharing that Jonathan and other RPs stress and the principle of 'eating together' for the wellbeing of the community that is central in the understanding of 'the good life' is interesting to relate to the question of salvation for the individual in Christian and Pentecostal theology. How is the duty to strengthen the life of the community combinable with the stress on the individual's salvation and relationship to God? The RPs do not bring up the combination of the material well-being of an individual and the will, or duty, to share as a problem. It seems that for some the reason for wishing to be rich is so that they can share with others, as is evident in the example of Steven mentioned above. Possibly, the stress on a peaceful existence in community is larger than the economic status. To be economically empowered is a method to provide the community with 'the good life'. Finally, relating to the perspective of survival in Browning's study, it is clear that the RPs in this study focus on the future in their aspirations. In addition to immediate life-sustaining help, a comfortable, established life, with financial stability is central.

7. Time and Hope.

This discussion chapter focuses on time perspectives that have been emphasized in all analysis chapters. They are related to the discussion on time in African theology and to the issue of hope.

Magesa writes that '[f]or a good number of years, there has been an interesting scholarly debate about the African understanding of time'.²⁹⁵ He refers to several authors, of which I will present two to portrait the dominating views. Mbiti argues that time, in African traditional life,

is simply a composition of events which have occurred, those which are taking place now and those which are immediately to occur. What has not taken place or what has no likelihood of an immediate occurrence falls into the category of 'No-time'. What is certain to occur, or what falls within the rhythm of natural phenomena, is in the category of inevitable or *potential time*. /---/ [T]ime is a two-dimensional phenomenon, with a long *past*, a *present* and virtually *no future*. The linear concept of time in western thought, with an indefinite past, present and infinite future, is practically foreign to African thinking. The future is virtually absent because events which lie in it have not taken place, they have not been realized and cannot, therefore, constitute time (italics in original).²⁹⁶

Thus, time does not exist in itself but is based on occurrences.²⁹⁷ There is no word to speak of 'a distant future'.²⁹⁸ Time moves towards the past as a realized event moves into the past where everything is collected. The past is the guide of the future; the key to understanding the present and the rhythm along which it should move.²⁹⁹

The past as point of direction resonates with the view of the vital force as strengthened through generations by following the traditions promoted by the ancestors, and the centrality of the present is visible in the stress on participation with others for the sustenance of the community, essential to ubuntu. Relationships are created, nurtured, and experienced in the present. However, a future perspective is also identifiable in the theoretical framework. The community is strengthened with the aim of its continuance through new generations and the stress on marriage and procreation can be perceived as emphasizing a

²⁹⁵ Magesa 2013, 52.

²⁹⁶ Mbiti 1969, 17.

²⁹⁷ Ibid, 19.

²⁹⁸ Ibid, 17.

²⁹⁹ Ibid, 17-18, 22-24.

person's future. Also, while participation in the present is imperative for a relationship, it does not impede aspirations for its future continuance.

The present is stressed in the categories giving and receiving, prayer, enjoying life, and life-sustaining help. In the category closeness, the RPs value relationships to parents that are not currently functioning and integrate the past into the present through remembering. In the categories comfort, established life, financial stability and success, and freedom of movement the stress on the future, immanent as well as distant, is strong. The hope for the future is in accordance with the values of the past: to create a family, have children, and to make money to enhance the life of the community. In Matthew's explanation, his plans for the future are based on memories from the past. The stage of dreams and hopes relating to a distant future lacks space in Mbiti's explanation. According to him, marriage and procreation seem to be happening naturally in the rhythm of life, not planned or longed for.

John A. A. Ayode disagrees with Mbiti. Basing his argumentation on the speakers of the Yoruba language, living mainly in Nigeria, he argues for their conception of future, stretching into the afterlife. There is a difference, for the Yoruba, between the times of the individual and the community, perceived as linear, and those of the environment and the cosmos, which are circular. Ayode considers incorrect the view that African peoples base their time on events. He argues that the Yoruba perceive time, existing prior to events, as moving forward, impossible to stop. As traditional African society lacked a numerical system, the future is abstract.³⁰⁰ Ayode refers to Charles D. Broad who states that there are differences in humans' perceptions of past, present, and future occurrences. Certainty about the existence of a happening is only possible in relation to past and present events. The uncertainty about the future does however not eliminate it from time.³⁰¹ The perception of future for the Yoruba is present in proverbs that mention distant future occurrences, in planning for coming seasons, and in divination. The present holds the future, which is a continuance and consequence of the present. The awareness of the uncertainty of the future makes it possible to handle.³⁰²

Magesa perceives time in Africa as 'a wheel running along a road. The wheel revolves around itself but also runs forward along the road. The road, on the other hand, is a constituent component of the wheel's capacity to perform, for it enables the wheel to

³⁰⁰ Ayode 1984, 93, 95-106.

³⁰¹ Broad 1921, 336-337.

³⁰² Ayode 1984, 105-106.

advance'.³⁰³ In this thought, the cyclical characteristic of the wheel is represented by the traditions of birth, marriage, and death, seasonal changes like planting and harvest, and recurring happenings such as market day and keeping of animals. In this sense, time is created as human beings move in the cycle that has existed through generations.³⁰⁴ The linear characteristic of the road implies that the community, through cyclical repetition, moves forward 'toward a goal, a future greatness. The greatness is already present in the experience of the good life made possible by faithfulness to ancestral tradition, yet it is not complete... The "future" consists of the human attempt to adhere completely to the tradition and eventually make the whole community ancestral'.³⁰⁵ 'The good life' of the present is life in accordance with the past, thus including the past into the present. The present 'good life' is the basis for the continued 'good life' of the community into 'the "future"', that is, to a fuller experience of the good life. /---/ The future is integrated in the desire to maintain, prolong and perpetuate life'.³⁰⁶

The views of Mbiti and Ayoada are present in Magesa's. In accordance with Mbiti, Magesa stresses that events create time and movement. Like Ayoade, he perceives the cyclical and linear time as existing together and moving in the direction of the future. The recognition of the existence of a future and the wish for 'the good life' to be experienced in it that Magesa perceives in African conception of time seems to present both aspects in agreement and disagreement with the wishes of the RPs. The stress on the present as the prerequisite of the future and 'the good life' happening in the present as being extended into the future, only partly harmonize with the RPs' wishes for the future. While they hope for 'the good life' in accordance with the community values, the fact that 'the good life' in the future demands 'the good life' in the family community in the present would seem to make this impossible for some RPs who wish for a material and social life in the future that is very different from what they experience now. Possibly, the stress on how functioning relationships to parents in the past are important in the present is a way for the RPs to keep 'the good life' in the past alive in the present. Also, Magesa's perspective raises doubts about what happens to the person who does not experience 'the good life' in the eyes of the community. It seems that he would be left behind on the road, outside of the wheel that moves forward. There is future for others but not for him. In relation to the perspective of 'the good

³⁰³ Magesa 2013, 57.

³⁰⁴ Ibid, 55.

³⁰⁵ Ibid, 57.

³⁰⁶ Ibid, 57-58 (Quote of the good life on page 58).

life' and the future, the RPs complement Magesa's view with two perspectives. First, they stress the importance of actions in accordance with ubuntu, and these values are the aim for the hope for success in the future. Thus, the RPs' actions create the motion towards the future, although 'the good life' materially and in the family sphere as it is promoted by the traditions is not currently experienced. Second, some RPs express the hope that the community created on the street will be enhanced to a better life in the future. This gives testimony to how 'the good life' of the present can be enhanced in the future. This perspective however lacks the fulfilment of the community of ancestors through procreation.

To these perspectives is added a third that is complementary to the discussion of the African understanding of time and spirituality as a whole: hope. As noted above, the perspective of hope seems to be missing in Mbiti's view of time where what is prescribed by tradition merely happens. In Ayoade's and Magesa's view, the future is the longed for extension of the good in the present. The RPs remember the good from the past and integrates it into the present, experience 'the good life' in the present through performing and receiving actions in accordance with ubuntu, yet hope for a future social and material reality that is different from their present. It is possible to relate the RPs' attitude to 'the good life' to hope as stressed by Hirokazu Miyazaki and Ernst Bloch. Miyazaki looks at hope 'as a method of knowledge'³⁰⁷ (italics removed) that 'invites one to hope'³⁰⁸. He is influenced by and bases his argumentation on, among others, German philosopher Ernst Bloch. Bloch stresses the inclusion of hope, identified as the 'Not-Yet-Conscious' and essential to what it means to be human, into philosophy, as he argues that philosophy has consistently focused on the past, on what already exists.³⁰⁹ To be, argues Bloch, is not a static concept defined by what already is and has become, but also by that which is to come.³¹⁰

Miyazaki has done ethnographic work with the Sovavou people of Fiji, 'the descendants of the original landowners of the Suva Peninsula, ... [who] have sought proper compensation from the government for the loss of their ancestral land', '[s]ince the late nineteenth century'.³¹¹ In their petitions to the government, traditional and Christian rituals, and business³¹², he observes hope as 'a method of knowledge. More concretely ... a method

³⁰⁷ Miyazaki 2004, 2.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, 5.

³⁰⁹ Bloch 1986, 5-8. Quote on page 6.

³¹⁰ Ibid, 18.

³¹¹ Miyazaki 2004, 2.

³¹² Ibid, 3.

of self-knowledge, that is, knowledge about who they are'.³¹³ The method of hope is for the Sovavou people characterized by indeterminacy,³¹⁴ abeyance and recovery of agency in relationships,³¹⁵ repetition,³¹⁶ and with a combination of retrospectivity and prospectivity that produces new hope³¹⁷ with a 'future-oriented openness and anticipation of a moment of ultimate fulfilment'.³¹⁸

In reference to Miyazaki and Bloch I want to suggest that the RPs in this study in their hope for a fuller experience of 'the good life', materially and socially, in the future perform a search of self-knowledge, for the truth about who they are. Miyazaki writes that for the Suvavou people 'the moment in which they finally obtained the promised money [for the lost land] would be the moment in which, in their own words, "the truth manifests itself"'.³¹⁹ Similarly, for the RPs, the fulfilment of that which they hope for would confirm the truth about who they are: according to the expressed wishes explained in Chapter 6 this seems to be as recognized members of 'the good life' in the larger community. Thus, the future is essential in the RPs' spirituality as their self-understanding is part of the hope for that which is not yet fulfilled.

Furthermore, Miyazaki describes rituals of gift-giving and in church that the Sovavou people perform and argues that 'the ritual experience of hope and its fulfilment was instrumental in the production of hope'.³²⁰ Relating to the RPs lives, I perceive it possible to interpret 'the good life' created in the daily-life of the RPs and the encouragement to 'the good life' by God, church and organization staff, as rituals that constantly replicate hope that is instrumental to the sustenance of the larger hope for the future.

The Sovavou people's gift-giving ritual consists of one side presenting gifts, speaking over them with excuses of their insufficiency and then waiting for the response of the gift-receivers. The representative of the gift-receivers then speaks, accepts the gifts, states that they were unnecessary, yet expresses thanks. He then offers them to God, expresses hope for divine blessing for all and confirms the mutual bond of love between gift-givers and gift-receivers.³²¹ In Methodist sermons the preacher stresses past and present as he lifts a problem

³¹³ Ibid, 26.

³¹⁴ Ibid, 84-85.

³¹⁵ Ibid, 104-107.

³¹⁶ Ibid, 106-110, 127-129.

³¹⁷ Ibid, 108-110.

³¹⁸ Ibid, 110.

³¹⁹ Ibid, 49.

³²⁰ Ibid, 86.

³²¹ Ibid, 100-103.

in the current Fiji way of life and presents a solution in returning to the worship of the early Fijian Christians. In the Adventist church, the preacher focuses instead on present and future, stressing that persons are sinful and that they in the word of God and due to the approach of the end of the world are challenged to change and lead proper lives and worship accordingly.³²² In the rituals presented, Miyazaki argues that there are similarities that produce hope. In the first step the attendants attempt to comply with an ideal, the presentation of gifts or the proper manner of worship. Then, the spokesperson for the gift-givers and the preacher introduce a problem, the insufficiency of gifts and lack of proper conduct. The effect of this stage is abeyance of agency, of the gift-givers and the church attendants, where they wait for the solution of the gift-receivers and the preacher. In this moment are present insecurity and a possibility of rejection, since the gifts and the church attendants' effort might be rejected. Yet, argues Miyazaki, both sides have a commitment to closure and fulfilment of the ritual. This comes in the third stage as the spokesman for the gift-receivers accepts the gifts and the preacher suggests commitment to the ideal towards which the church attendants strive. Thus, hope is fulfilled. In each ritual there is a combination of prospective and retrospective orientations. The preacher applied a retrospective orientation in his criticism of the prospective attempt of the congregation and the gift-receivers in their confirmation and evaluation of the gifts, in which the gift-givers had a prospective orientation. This clash of orientations, 'the moment of temporal incongruity ... resulted in a renewed moment of prospectivity' as a new solution was given for the church attendants and the dedication to God of gifts. Concluding, both rituals produce yet another hopeful moment, placing the agency of all in abeyance as there is an expression of hope for God's response to those gathered.³²³ Miyazaki argues 'that Fijian ritual participants experienced the fulfilment of their hope as the capacity repeatedly to place their own agency in abeyance. Thus, the hope produced in this process surfaced as the replication of a hope ritually fulfilled.'³²⁴

Applying these stages of rituals first to 'the good life' searched for in daily life, expressed in the categories giving and receiving and life-sustaining help, similarities are detectable. Similarly to the gift-giving ritual, an RP presents his necessity to a friend, a parent, or the CBO or church staff, or sometimes his necessity speaks for itself. His agency then falls into abeyance as he waits for the other's response. This is a moment of uncertainty, and it is repeatedly present for youth that live on the street as they are often denied help. Yet, when the

³²² Ibid, 93-96.

³²³ Ibid, 103-106, 108-110. Quote on page 109.

³²⁴ Ibid, 106.

potential giver recognizes the need of the RP and provides help, hope is fulfilled and his agency is recuperated. I suggest that these moments of hope and fulfilment replicate new moments of hope, for the present daily life and ‘the good life’ hoped for in the future. As the RPs, in the ritual in the category giving and receiving, constantly change places, this is possible to interpret as that they give each other hope.

Comparing the church rituals to the category of self-transformation also assists an interpretation that makes it possible to perceive them as instrumental for the future hope. The RPs come to church and the CBO in search for ‘the good life’; the relationship to God, good character, material wishes, and encouragement. Once there, their agency falls into abeyance as they wait for the response from God and the staff. The reason for coming is recognized by God, church- and CBO staff in the stress on change of character. Then fulfilment occurs as new encouragement to change and try again is given and the RPs’ agency is reinstated. A new moment of hope is then produced, for the present and daily, but also for a more distant future. Regarding the perspective of ‘the good life’ in the past, expressed by some RPs in the form of closeness, a possible interpretation is that it has given the RPs hope for that which is now the present. With the perspective of hope, the RPs complement Mageša’s view of the future as ‘a fuller experience of the good life’, an extension into the future of ‘the good life’ now. The hope constantly produced in daily life is the engine that moves the RPs towards ‘the good life’ in the future, towards a moment where their view of themselves will be manifested as truthful. In this sense, the focus is not on whether ‘the good life’ produced in the present is realized in the socially accepted, or ultimately wished for, community, rather on the reproduction of hope that guides towards fulfilment.

8. Conclusion.

Seeking an understanding of the spirituality of male youth that live on the streets in Nairobi, this study has analyzed drawings and discussions with 27 RPs in dialogue with the concept of ‘the good life’ in African spirituality as described by Magesa, and with other research that has been found relevant. Based on the results obtained throughout the analysis chapters, I draw the conclusion that the thoughts and views expressed by the RPs indicate a strong accordance with the understanding of African spirituality described by Magesa in the research context of African theology. They also give testimony to Western Christian and Rastafarian influences.

First, the RPs’ spirituality is *relational*. Relationships; to friends, parents, God, organizations and churches, are central to them, with feelings of affection intertwined with practical aspects. Generosity, self-sacrifice, and sharing, in accordance with the values of ‘the good life’, expressed through ubuntu and the community imperative in African spirituality, are important in relationships to friends and organizations, currently ongoing on the street. Many identify friends as the essential relationships on the street and having fun together creates ‘the good life’ in the middle of bad life conditions. Though not currently well-functioning, the relationships to parents are identified as important and memories of close relationships give testimony to a transferring of ‘the good life’ from the past to the present and a self-identification by the RPs as members of two communities simultaneously: the group of friends on the street and the biological family. While the family is of primary importance in African spirituality, its community is also understood as extendible to include friends. The relationship to God has various dimensions of which prayer stresses the communication in an ‘I-Thou’ relationship with God who is a faithful listener and close to forgiveness. The individual’s relationship to God is not stressed in African spirituality where intermediaries are frequently used for communication. Instead, this feature is indicative of influence from Christianity where the relationship to God is characterized by the direct communication between the believer and the divine.

Second, the RPs’ spirituality has an *ethical* focus. Ethical actions are necessary to create and experience ‘the good life’. Reflected in the stress on generosity, self-sacrifice, and sharing, the RPs emphasise good actions in relationships. In addition to an ‘I-Thou’ relationship, the wish and pressure for self-transformation is central for several RPs in their relationship to God in combination with a church context, where they are encouraged by God, CBO staff, the pastor, and congregation members to change and stop using drugs. From the

perspective of African spirituality, they take on the responsibility of traditional community leaders who guide towards ‘the good life’ and channel the individual’s contact to God. The big responsibility placed on the RP to change, and the lack of blame that RPs put on others for the bad situation on the street, reflect the belief in African spirituality that suffering may be caused by diverting from life enhancing values which the individual must return to. While good influence and encouragement is found in the relationship to God, church, and the CBO, the devil and other bad things have a negative influence on the individual. The RPs’ stress on change testifies to influence from the interview context at the CBO, and reflect the tendency of morality within Christian churches in East Africa, for example Pentecostalism where good behaviour testifies to being saved, or being a good Christian.

Third, the RPs’ spirituality is connected to the *material*. ‘The good life’ is created in mutual material dependence among friends and through obtaining life-sustaining help with food from organizations and churches, in accordance with the importance of strengthening the community in African spirituality. The relational, ethical, and material are intertwined for the RPs, and create the holistic ‘good life’. Besides for the day-to-day material aspect, the RPs long for changed material and social conditions in the near and distant future. These involve living comfortably in a home, with friends found on the street or a future family, or owning a car, a sign of a financial stability, success, or freedom of movement. The wish for a stable life in a home with a family relate to the obligations of marriage and childbearing to enhance the life of the community in African spirituality while the mobility coming with a car is not found in its understanding of ‘the good life’, however, it reflects the Nairobi context. The RPs connect financial stability to generosity; towards parents, a future family, or friends on the street. The final aim is not success, but to strengthen the community of which the RP is part to create ‘the good life’. Individual salvation in Christianity and the community imperative in African spirituality are not contradictory to the RPs. A minority of the RPs directly connect God to receiving a materially improved life, relating to the view of Christian salvation as including economic stability. The majority do not make this connection explicitly, but in African spirituality their material wishes are part of a holistic view of life where contentment is sign of a strong vital force. In relation to Browning’s study on spirituality among children and adults that live on the streets in Nairobi that showed survival as characterizing faith, this perspective is partly present in the RPs stress on material aspects in daily life, however, the hopes for change of behaviour for ‘the good life’ in the future, and the relationship to a loving and forgiving God, are complementary to these findings.

Forth, and last, the RP's spirituality involves a holistic *spectrum of time*. The relational, ethical, and material aspects of the RPs' spirituality expressed include references to past, present, and future. 'The good life' in the past, memories of a relationship to a parent, is integrated into the present through identifying the person as important now. Through relationships in everyday life on the street, the RPs create and search for 'the good life' in the middle of struggle and harassment on the street. Wishes for changed life conditions in near or distant future stress 'the good life' not yet achieved and that it is important in the present. The strong focus on the future that the RPs have encourages including it in the overall discussion on time in African theology. While the future is either denied or seen as an extension of 'the good life' in the present in African theology, the RPs have a strong focus on the future that is different from their present material and social conditions. Their 'good life' in the present is based on ethical actions of generosity and receiving. These values in good relationship is also the objective for why many RPs wish for materially improved life conditions in the future. The RPs' focus on the future is possible to interpret as hope, a 'method of self-knowledge', where part of the RPs' understanding of who they are will be made effective and demonstrated as true in the future. This hope is replicated and sustained through the hope for and fulfillment of 'the good life' in daily life, in giving and receiving between friends, through receiving help from churches and organizations, as well from encouragement from God, church- and organization staff to create a change of lifestyle. The replication of hope moves the community forward towards the fuller 'good life', independently of the context in which the hope is produced.

In relation to earlier research, I perceive, first, the present study to contribute with a holistic view of spirituality of youth that live on the streets, as several earlier studies have focused on witchcraft. Second, the present study complements the perspective of survival in Browning's study with a stress on the more distant future and feelings of affection in the relationship to God. Third, the RPs' stress on the future and the perspective of hope presented in relation to Miyazaki makes a contribution to the discussion on time in African theology as well as to the view of how 'the good life' is created throughout life.

Finally, during the field study, some RPs expressed beliefs in Jah, or sympathy for Rastafarianism. During the interviews analyzed in this thesis some RPs painted and spoke of Bob Marley, the message of love, and that they appreciate reggae music. Though this was not a focus among all RPs, but since studies on Rastafarian beliefs among youth in Africa are few, a future research focus that could contribute to a deepening of understanding the spirituality of youth in Africa as a whole, and specifically youth that live on the street, is to

look at how Rastafarianism is present among African youth that live on the streets and among African youth in general.

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