



NORWEGIAN
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Reconciliation and Identity In South Sudan

A theoretical analysis of the church's role in reconciliation processes
and the challenges reconciliation efforts face in South Sudan.

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“What makes South Sudan are the different ethnic groups, the different tribes and different regions; therefore we need to embrace the different cultures and the diversity in our communities for harmonious living”

- Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban upon being awarded the UN Peace Prize

“We ask forgiveness for anything we may have done to divide our nation, and for all the times we have failed to speak and act in love to heal our nation.”

-South Sudan Council of Churches

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Abbreviations

AU	African Union
CNHPR	Committee for National Healing Peace and Reconciliation
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
IGAD	Intergovernmental Agency for Development
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NCC	Norwegian Christian Council
NSCC	New Sudan Council of Churches
SSCC	South Sudan Council of Churches
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SPLM/A	South Sudan People Liberation Movement and Army
UN	United Nations
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Motivation

My motivation for choosing to study the situation in South Sudan is twofold. When I worked as a volunteer in Ecuador I was made aware of how influential the local churches were in neighbourhoods where the government was seemingly absent. As the state disappeared from people's lives the church appear to grow in importance. At the same time I had just finished a Bachelors in political science, which had peaked my interest in International Affairs and peace mediation, and especially reconciliation.

When choosing a country and situation to study I wanted to look at a situation in which the state had failed –for the lack of a better word – its people, and study how reconciliation could be implemented in that context. The natural choice for my study was the young country of South Sudan.

1.2 Presentation of Topic

In recent years modern peace-building theories have become increasingly aware of the need to improve relationships between past enemies after a conflict ends. To achieve this the concept of reconciliation, considered to have theological and religious connotations has taken on a broader meaning. After the apartheid regime fell in South Africa there was a widespread acknowledgement within the country that something would have to be done to enable the black and white population to co-exist. The answer came in the form of theoretical concepts known today as reconciliation theories. Since those early days reconciliation has become its own separate field of study, with several scholars having dedicated considerable time and effort into its development. Much of the challenges and discoveries of the South African truth-commissions make up the core of most theoretical approaches we have today. Far from being on the fringe of peace research however, reconciliation and the ideologically similar restorative justice has become a main topic of discussion in peace research and peace-building strategies.

While coexistence is almost expected in a post-conflict society, the idea of reconciliation takes it one step further. It proposes that people can live side by side in a positive relationship even when past actions have hurt them in horrible ways. While the concept itself has existed within religious philosophy for a long time, it is only recently that the concept has gained attention as a possible method to better post-conflict societies. The reason for the surge in popularity of reconciliation has much to do with South Africa and their use of it in the post-apartheid years. As the apartheid regime fell it was almost expected that the black population of South Africa would enact their revenge on the people that had suppressed and hurt them. The world looked on in surprise as South Africa, led by Nelson Mandela, chose forgiveness and mercy. In the aftermath of the South African reconciliation and truth commission processes, many scholars began to pay increasing attention to the concept. Slowly but surely theories and models were developed.

While there are a number of theoretical understandings of what reconciliation actually entails, common thread is having groups of people come together and learn to co-exist after having lived through a troubling and dramatic past. While reconciliation places a lot of emphasis on acknowledging the suffering of victims, it also highlights the importance of both victim and perpetrator needing to co-exist. When the horrors inflicted upon one or several groups is perpetrated by a system, or the product of all-consuming war it is vital for the people within that society to learn to co-exist and not burry in the past. The fine balance between acknowledging the horrors of the past while not letting it overwhelm you is at the center of reconciliation.

Sudan is the world's youngest country, having gained its independence as recently as in 2011. Throughout 2012 and 2013 the deteriorating relationships between the country's President Salva Kiir and its Vice President Riek Machar increased tensions dramatically. Resulting in the removal of Riek Machar from the office of Vice President, by President Salva Kiir in fall of 2013. After which the tensions between the their respective tribes; The Nuer and the Dinka, became highly volatile. On the 15th of December 2013, after a string of rumours within the military increased tensions between the various sections, Dinka battalions massacred Nuer soldiers and civilians in Juba.

When the conflict between Salva and Riek came to a head their two respective tribes The Dinka and Nuer clashed in an all-out war. Since then numerous cease-fires have been agreed to, but very little has resulted from them. Inter-community fighting is on the rise, and the war took on an ethnic proportion. There have been many attempts to reconcile the two sides. Numerous cease-fires have been implemented – yet none have been kept. Numerous attempts have been made in an attempt to reconcile the two tribes and the two political leaders, but so far none have been successful. There can be little doubt that reconciliation is necessary between the various tribes, yet the question is how to achieve this and why it is so difficult.

1.3 Research Questions

Main Question

To what degree can reconciliation be implemented in South Sudan?

Sub-questions

What causes the animosity between South Sudanese, what has made reconciliation efforts so difficult?

To what degree can the church be involved in reconciliation?

1.4 Materials and Methods

To study this subject I plan to use qualitative document analysis and interview sources. The documents I plan to use will mostly come from third-party sources such as the Norwegian Church Aid, various research institutes and books on the subject. This means that it might become challenging to find relevant documents to use as sources of data for the research. However there are a few key-sources I have found that I will use extensively throughout the book. The two books that will feature heavily both in terms of establishing background and providing an enriching addition to the empirical data are “The Voice of The Voiceless” and “A Long Road to Peace” by John Ashworth and Horjen respectively.

In terms of the interview process I hope to be able to interview people either directly tied to the reconciliation efforts in South Sudan, or various organisations working indirectly with these people. It would be ideal to speak to leaders of the South Sudanese reconciliation efforts directly. However, the current security situation in the country as well as the difficulty of gaining access means that this may prove difficult and perhaps too dangerous to do. While it would be ideal to have interviews with people in South Sudan I will have to do a risk and benefit analysis before making a decision. The extent of which methods are employed, as well as the reasoning behind methodological choices can be found in Chapter 4 - Methodology.

The theoretical aspect of this thesis will be based on a handful of key theoretical works. I will join these together to create a theoretical tool to confidently be able to analyse several aspects of the situation in South Sudan. To accomplish this I will primarily use three books on reconciliation. The first is “Peace and Reconciliation: In Search of Shared Identity” edited by Kim, Kollontai and Hoyland, from which I will be concentrating on Cecilia Clegg’s theory on reconciliation and the societal peace. The second source is another compilation of different articles, namely “Restorative Justice, Reconciliation and Peacebuilding” edited by Llewellyn and Philpott. In this work we find a number highly influential theoretical scholars contributing with chapters and articles.

From this book I will be using a number of pieces written by various scholars. I will look to Llewellyn and Philpott’s theoretical framework of restorative justice to use as a theoretical framework in examining to which degree reconciliation can be implemented in South Sudan as outlined by these theoretical models. When looking at how to understand accountability in a restorative justice context I will be leaning on the work of Van Ness. To explain and understand the cultural peculiarities the theoretical work of Braithwaite. Finally from this particular book I will be taking a look at the Louise Mallinder’s thoughts on Amnesty and its application in restorative justice and reconciliation.

When it comes to structuring the various actors within South Sudan and their areas of impact in as simple and clear way I will be using the work of the highly influential reconciliation and peacebuilding scholar John Paul Lederach. His pyramid of actors will serve as the base in understanding how various actors influence society and what areas they will be most influential in. Providing a structured view of society to add perspective to the analysis.

Another source I will be using particularly as a source for the empirical data is a leaked draft of the original African Union report on South Sudan. The report was leaked to Reuters on the 5th of March. I received the report from a reliable source shortly after and had its authenticity verified by individuals working closely with South Sudan. It caused a stir among the political leadership in South Sudan, further emphasizing the authenticity of the report and its source. Small parts of the contents of the report was also featured in the reputable UK newspaper The Guardian's website. (The Guardian, 2015)

1.5 Outline of thesis

In this thesis I will answer the Research Questions posed in section 1.3. I will begin by using Chapter 2 to present South Sudan as a country, the situation it is currently in, and how it has gotten there. Due to the rapid and constant developments of the situation I have set an end-date for the background chapter to late June 2015. While no background chapter could be extensive enough to cover all that has happened, I am confident that I have provided a clear overview of the situation as well as key-events that are relevant for war South Sudan finds itself in.

In Chapter 3 - Theory, I will present the various theories that will be used to analyse the empirical data. In this chapter I will discuss a number of different theoretical approaches to reconciliation and restorative justice. These will be used in the next chapter to gain a more holistic view of reconciliation in South Sudan, and highlight various elements of the situation.

I will proceed in Chapter 4 - Methodology by outlining the various methods that will be used. I will also discuss why these methods rather than others have been chosen, and its effect on the thesis. Here I will also present an outline of the limitations of these methods, ethical considerations unique to the situation, as well as experiences I made while working on the thesis and this particular subject.

Chapter 5 - Findings will present the data uncovered in interviews, documents and reports in a thematic and structured way. The basis of the empirical findings will be based on documents, reports and books, while interviews will be used to provide a broader and more detailed insight into the various themes and issues.

The themes presented in Chapter 5 will be further explored and analysed in Chapter 6 – Analysis. In this chapter I will use the theoretical insights gained in chapter 3 to analyse the empirical data. Providing a detailed discussion of each theme as they are presented. Where appropriate various thematic subjects may be merged for convenience.

Finally in Chapter 7 – Conclusion; I will summarise the contents of the thesis. Here I will revisit the research questions posed in this chapter and summarise what the analysis has uncovered. At the end of the chapter I will present some of the limitations of the thesis as well as some thoughts on further research.

Chapter 2 - Background

2.1 Preface

It should be noted that while South Sudan is a young state, its people, the cultures and religious history within the region and the historical accounts of the civil war periods are highly chaotic and disjointed. There are a number of tribes within South Sudan, each with their own hierarchy, their own culture, their own history and their own religious beliefs. These tribes have in various degrees lived under widespread oppression from colonial masters, slavers, bandits, trade empires and theocratic governing for centuries. Each tribe has its own uniquely different experiences and culture. The history of the region is so vast and complex that giving a thorough overview far exceeds the scope of this paper, even with a narrow focus on modern times. I have therefore focused on providing an historical overview of the region we now know as South Sudan, and how it came to be. I will also present how the last few centuries have shaped the young country, and some of the key political issues it has faced.

2.2 South Sudan in Ancient Times

South Sudan is the youngest state in the world. Having seceded from Sudan only four years ago. Splitting from Sudan and its Khartoum controlled government in 2011 after prolonged civil war. The history of Sudan, and consequently South Sudan, dates as far back as 3800BC. With the Egyptians referencing a kingdom to the south of people known today as the *A-Group*. Their territory stretched from the borders of the Egyptian Kingdom, down along the Nile and all the way down to modern day Khartoum. The earliest written references to this kingdom dates back to 2300BC, where Egyptian trade records mention trade with and through the kingdom of *Nubia*. As time went on the Egyptians and Nubians wrestled for control of the region, several kingdoms arose within Sudan. Some of which significantly influenced the ancient world.

One such kingdom was *kush*. Hebrew scripture from around 750BC speak *kush* as the land south of Egypt, mentioned specifically by Ezekiel. This kingdom later developed into the Meroitic Empire (Ca 700BC to 300AD). The empire mixed the religious traditions of both Egypt and African ancestral tradition. As the Meroitic Empire disappeared it was replaced by three Nubian states; Nobatia, Makuria and Alodia. Christianity is believed to have made its introduction to Nubia in and around the 5th century, influenced from Egypt, Axam (modern day Ethiopia) and the Byzantine Empire. The dominance of Christianity was however significantly reduced by the advent of Islam in the region, and today Sudan can safely be considered a Muslim state. (Werner, Anderson, & Wheeler, 2000, pp. 22-27)

The region of today's modern Southern Sudan however is interestingly not included in the aforementioned Kingdoms, rather the areas are largely referred to in Egyptian trade documents as areas dominated by several tribal cattle-oriented societies. While one could make an argument for the regions in Northern Sudan having a fairly co-joined historical background, it is very difficult to claim that this applies to South Sudan. While we see the kingdoms of Kush, Nubia, the Egyptian empires, the kingdom of Sennar, and the Ottoman Empire all play a large part in the development of the regions in North Sudan, this is simply not the case for South Sudan. While it is clearly important to note the historical development of all of Sudan, as its influence on modern history is unquestionable, it is equally important to make a sharp distinction between the two regions history.

For centuries, dating as far back as Nero's Rome, European powers have attempted to traverse the swamp-areas in today's southern Sudan, just north of South Sudan's capital Juba. These swamp areas are notorious for being the location of the Blue Nile. It is known as one of the main water-sources for the river Nile. *Sudd*, which means barrier in Arabic, proved impossible to traverse up until 1821. An Ottoman delegation acting on behalf of viceroy Muhammed Ali managed to penetrate the swamp and for the first time in known history connected the two *Sudans* together. This highly effective barrier between the two regions ensured that the peoples in modern day South Sudan have a very different historical background than the North. (Horjen, 2014, pp. 17-18)

As the Turks opened the White Nile they did so primarily to create profitable trade. It was, as Werner, Anderson and Wheeler put it, no intention of creating a stable government to govern its people and create stability. Rather the opposite was true. The original trade mission began with the intent to create a profitable trade route for ivory. Yet with time it developed into a trade route for slavery. There was no willingness from the Turks nor the Egyptians to ensure a stable government in Southern Sudan and its people quickly became commodities to be sold and traded. (Werner, Anderson, & Wheeler, 2000, pp. 135-137)

Slavery has played a large and important role in the development of South Sudan. While Egypt and the Turks mostly controlled the North, while the Southern parts of the country was dominated by merchant kings. Many slaving raids were even authorised by the Turkish government, or on behest of Cairo. Slavery became the norm in then southern areas and had a significant impact on the region. To this day Sudanese sometimes refer to Southerners as *abid*, which literally means *slave* in Arabic. So complete was the process, and so pervasive was the perception of the South as a source of slaves that it to this day remains part of Sudanese vocabulary. (Horjen, 2014, p. 18)

The slavery industry also largely shaped the landscape of the region. Several South Sudanese towns - such as the former capital of Rumbek - began as *Zaribars*; large encampments for slavers to conduct raids from, where slaves could be kept while awaiting transportation to Khartoum and Cairo to be sold. It is worth noting that almost all black soldiers in the Egyptian Army were the healthiest and strongest of captured male slaves; the black guard. (Werner, Anderson, & Wheeler, 2000, p. 166)

2.3 Christianity's influence on South Sudan

Christianity first came to the region of modern South Sudan through missionaries during the late 1800s and early 1900s. After Muhammad Ali opened the path to the region a series of missionaries flocked to the area to convert its people to Christianity.

However it wasn't until under British colonial rule that the regions of South Sudan saw the first large-scale missionary projects come to fruition. Missionary work then began in earnest within the areas around modern day Juba and along the White Nile. (Werner, Anderson, & Wheeler, 2000, pp. 215-218)

While Christianity has certainly grown in South Sudan since Muhammed Ali's delegation joined the two Sudans together it is not entirely Christian. Figures presented by the United Nations and the Pew Research centre on religion estimates that 60% of South Sudanese are Christian. (Pew Research Center, 2012) Their cultural background is heavily influenced by African tribal and ancestral religion. Animist beliefs still play an important role in cultural and religious life. This was made clear during people to people conference between the Dinka and Nuer peoples that was held in Wunlit. Here the slaughter of a white bull played an important part in joining together the two tribes, a central component in both Dinka and Nuer animist beliefs. (Ashworth, 2014, pp. 155-156)

2.4 Colonial Times

The joining of the two Sudans to the larger state of Sudan was a result of a power play between the major European powers and their wrestle for control over Africa. The British Empire in particular had considerable vested interest in ensuring control of the Nile and Egypt. They effectively put Sudan and modern day South Sudan under their control through a series of purchases and small conflicts to ensure control over the Blue and the White Nile.

As Sudan was given its independence from Britain it became clear that even though the British largely recognised the differences between the South and the North they determined that it would be in Britain's best interest that Sudan remained a single country. Britain's politics towards Sudan was at the time overwhelmingly influenced by their political stance towards Egypt. Britain did not wish to see Egypt wholly control the Nile, and therefore saw a united Sudan as an efficient way of limiting Egypt's power.

In Sudan the British delegates made sure to weaken Egypt's position by quieting the voices of discontent that wished for Sudan to have a closer tie with Egypt, while simultaneously ensuring that they controlled all negotiations and decisions regarding Sudan's independence. (Horjen, 2014, pp. 23-24)

During a meeting with the British administration it was made clear that South Sudanese representatives were sceptical to a merging of the two regions into one united state. The northern delegates referred to these concerns as; insignificant, exaggerated, and trivial. Yet promised to consider a federal state run by South Sudanese to be part of Sudan. The British had made their position very clear had no interest or patient to discuss the matter. Many South Sudanese imagined that a possible self-governed federal state within Sudan could be a good solution, or even joining together with some of the East African colonies instead and separating from Sudan entirely. As independence was announced South Sudanese were left disappointed. Khartoum dismissed their wishes and requests out of hand; the very notion of a different solution for the South was dismissed outright. Many agreements, promises and deals made between the southern region and the Khartoum government, as well as the British, were never fulfilled. To this day it remains a symbol of the *betrayal* that many South Sudanese felt towards the Sudan independence process. (Horjen, 2014, p. 24)

Slavery continued in a reduced form and the relationship between the South and the North remained characterised by one-sided exploitation. The north would use their power to subdue the South and funnel all its resources up north. They frequently allowed for instability within the southern region, and forced South Sudanese men to be recruited into the Sudanese army. A process very similar to Egypt's enslaved black guard in ancient times. Large majorities of the military in Sudan were up until South Sudan's independence made up of poor South Sudanese men who had been forced into military service. The immense riches of the South, such as; oil, gold and ivory were routinely extracted, funneled north, traded and invested into the northern parts of the country. The South saw little to no benefit from any of these riches. (Horjen, 2014, p. 18)

2.5 Civil War, Turmoil and a Fractured Region

As the process of independence had failed the South, a civil war broke out soon after Sudanese independence. In 1956 a regiment of discontent soldiers rose up into a rebellion in the city of Torit, which launched the country into a long civil war. At the heart of the conflict was a South Sudanese desire to govern own lands and people. They wanted to be independent from Khartoum. The war officially ended with a peace agreement in Addis Ababa in 1972. In what could appear as an answer to the peace agreement the government in Khartoum, led by president Nimeiri, instituted Sharia law in all of Sudan. This was highly unpopular among the non-muslim population in the South. Resentment towards the government grew in the South, as the ideas, promises and compromises of the peace agreement were never met. As a result a new civil war broke out in 1983. (Horjen, 2014, p. 28)

This second war became known as *The Sudanese Civil War*. It was an intensely bloody, violent and chaotic affair wrought with brutality and terror. It remains the longest war fought on the African continent, and in its 22 years it claimed the lives of two million people, and displaced a further four million people. 1983 also marked the creation of the rebel force Sudan Peoples Liberation Army created by Sudanese military commander John Garang. Garang was sent to Bor as ordered by Khartoum to end the rebellion of a small local garrison. He went down to Bor, but instead of ending the rebellion he joined the rebels and founded the SPLA to fight against the government in Khartoum. His goal was to reform Sudan into a secular and democratic country, in which the South and southerners were no longer discriminated against. This began the long and violent conflict which we are very much still seeing the effects of today.

As the communist Ethiopia fell in 1991, the SPLA lost their safe base of operation and became much more prone to Khartoum's overwhelming military might. In addition a split within the rebel movement itself became disruptive for the rebel group. Riek Machar, Lam Akol and Gordon Kong attempted and failed to overthrow the SPLA's undisputed leader John Garang. Having failed at a coup they created a separate rebel faction, the SPLA Nasir; named after their capital city of Nasir.

The conflict between Machar and Garang was further intensified by their tribal connections, a pattern we see repeat itself two decades later. Machar is of the Nuer tribe, the second largest tribe in the South, while Garang was from the Dinka tribe, the largest of the tribes. In the midst of a civil war an internal war also broke out between the two sides, creating a precarious position for the civilian population. While Garang's SPLA remained the strongest militarily and had the most public support, Machar's SPLA signed a peace agreement on behalf of the two rebel groups with Khartoum in 1997. It was no surprise that this peace agreement was largely ignored. (Horjen, 2014, pp. 28-29)

The split significantly weakened the SPLA, and throughout the 1990s Garang's SPLA was largely preoccupied with getting back to strength. The war against the North quickly became an exercise in futility as neither Khartoum nor SPLA managed to gain any real advantage. Cities were conquered back and forth multiple times, but neither side managed to effectively gain military or political control of the South. Thus the war continued and neither side had much interest in ending the war. Khartoum fought a war outside their areas of primary interest in the North, and the soldiers lost were mostly forcibly recruited South Sudanese men. For them the war was costly, but manageable. For the rebels the progress they had made wasn't significant enough to give them any real bargaining power during negotiations with the North. In this climate the incentive to end the war simply wasn't present for either side. (Horjen, 2014, pp. 29-30)

2.6 Church Influence in times of trouble

The church and its leaders' role during the civil war conflicts can best be described as challenging. While NGO staff tends to be evacuated when the situation on the ground becomes too dangerous, church staff remains throughout. Both the rebel forces and the Khartoum government treated church leaders and bishops with intense skepticism in the early years of the war. This led to the capture and imprisonment of numerous bishops and priests by both sides. A central character and symbol of the Church's role in South Sudan at the time is Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban. Having been a prisoner of war on both sides of the conflict.

He was admired for showing forgiveness for the degrading treatment he was subject to. He emphasised the need to forgive and reconcile, and was instrumental in breaking SPLA blockades by providing relief support to besieged cities. Taban quickly became highly respected both by South Sudanese and the international community.

The New South Sudan Council of Churches was established by Bishop Paride Taban and Nathaniel Garang in 1989 as an organisation tasked with administering relief, aid and helping the peoples affected by the conflict. It was designed to provide a symbol of a unified church that cared for the people. With time the SPLA began to see the church as working for the people and began to work with the church. Together they were able to provide relief to people in the *liberated areas* of South Sudan, and ensure that basic needs were met. (Ashworth, 2014, p. 71)

Although the NSCC maintained close ties to the SPLA and its plight for South Sudan to be governed by South Sudanese, it was important for the NSCC to be independent of the rebel faction. It wanted to have its own moral and prophetic voice free of political intrigue. Despite great interest from the SPLA to incorporate the NSCC into the SPLM/A movement, the NSCC managed to maintain its independent position at the cost of some friction with the SPLM/A leadership. (Ashworth 2014:61-62) The neutral position of the NSCC was well articulated by Bishop Taban in a speech where he proclaimed; “As the witness of the coming of God, the church can not become a part of any political movements, however much it sympathises with its aims”. It was important that the NSCC remained neutral in the political conflict so that they could operate both in the South and in the North for the benefit of all Sudanese (Ashworth, 2014, p. 71)

Norwegian Church Aid has been present in the region for a long time in one capacity or another, but it wasn't until after 2000 that the international governments- such as Norway - got involved. Norway played a key role together with the United States of America and Great Britain in providing diplomatic contact between South Sudanese and the international community. Beginning the process known as the IGAD-negotiations. Norwegian minister of development; Hilde Frafjord Johnson was instrumental in Norway's increased and influential involvement.

She made use of both academia as well as Norwegian NGOs to help bring the parties to the table. (Horjen, 2014, pp. 130-131)

As the civil war raged on bombings of civilians became more widespread. The South Sudanese and people in the Nubian mountains claimed that the Sudanese government in Khartoum intentionally employed strategic bombing of civilians in the war. At the time there was a great deal of difficulty in ascertaining the validity of that claim. Documenting that the many bombings were targeting civilians, and that they weren't simply fallout from bomb strikes against SPLA targets, was very difficult. Due to the poor infrastructure, a lack of proper roads, no phone-lines and very little radio contact; the challenge for anyone to provide proper documentation was immense. The church and its grass-roots network played a crucial role in ensuring that all bombings were documented. Giving the international community proof of systematic bombing of civilians by the government in Khartoum. Highly detailed bombing lists were frequently updated to record every bombing event that. Sometimes in the midst of a raid through a satellite phone connection. Sometimes reports came from pastors who had walked for weeks to reach a larger city to report to such as Nairobi. In addition to documenting bombings, they also documented so called GOS Antanov bomb loitering; bombers who had flown low enough for people to see them without dropping any bombs. This was a type of psychological warfare, which resulted in civilian life being severely disrupted. (Ashworth, 2014, pp. 174-176)

2.7 Peace, Hope, and the emergence of more Civil War.

On July 9th 2005 the Comprehensive Peace Agreement Interim period began. SPLA leader John Garang was sworn in as first vice-president in a lavish ceremony in Khartoum. Only a mere 21 days later the euphoria and optimism from less than a month ago would be dramatically eradicated from the population. On the 30th of July South Sudanese received the news that first Vice-President Dr John Garang had been killed in a helicopter crash. Current president of South Sudan, Salva Kiir Mayardit, took over as leader of the SPLM and the post of first Vice-President.

According to Le Riche and Arnold this dramatic change in leadership resulted in the SPLM's focus shifted from revolutionising the Sudanese state as the CPA had intended, to focusing on ensuring secession and independence. Another perhaps unexpected consequence of Garang's death was that old frictions and disagreements once again resurfaced within the movement. Garang's strong leadership had quelled and laid to rest many debates in his time, particularly the debate on secession vs reformed unity of Sudan. Yet a number of leading SPLM leaders disagreed. While some shared Garang's vision, others including the new leader Salva Kiir did not. They were more inclined to push for secession from Sudan. While Garang had focused much of his planing to make reformed unity with Khartoum an attractive option, the new leadership saw this as counter-productive. Instead they encouraged polarisation of the relationship between the North and the South. A position that enjoyed a great deal of public support and arguably helped ensure a peaceful interim period in the absence of Garang's strong leadership. (LeRichie & Arnold, 2013, pp. 115-12)

In July 2011 South Sudan officially seceded from Sudan, and gained their independence. Through a process of heavy international backing and persistent mediation the 22-year-old civil war finally came to its conclusion. South Sudanese flocked to the referendum on independence in January of the same year. There 99% of all respondents voted for independence. The process for independence began in earnest and would be finalised that very summer with commander Salva Kiir as its first president. (LeRichie & Arnold, 2013, p. 238)

Since independence the issue of reconciliation and peaceful co-existence has been on the mind of the church and the many religious leaders in the country. Bishop Paride Taban retired in 2003 to build the *Holy Trinity Peace Village* to serve as a safe haven for peace and reconciliation talks. He wanted the village to serve as an example of a peaceful coexistence to the rest of the country. Taban specified that he believed strongly in a South Sudan where people of different ethnicities and religions could live side by side in peaceful harmony and hoped that Holy Trinity Peace Village could help achieve this. (Ashworth, 2014, pp. 212-214)

Simultaneously there were concrete efforts into providing a two-track process for reconciliation; one involving the political elite and the military, as well as a second aimed at the grassroots. They wanted to change people's perceptions of each other as several tribes and ethnic groups had been and prone to fight each other. This process was continued in early 2013 as the government implemented a National Peace and Reconciliation process, led by then Vice President Riek Machar. In April the same year Vice President Riek Machar was replaced by Arch Bishop Daniel Deng Bul and Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban as his co-chair. There was a clear concern with the need to unify the peoples of the region into this new nation state. The CNHPR was envisaged to help with the reconciliation process and ensure peaceful interaction between the peoples of South Sudan. (Ashworth, 2014, pp. 222, 230)

In July of 2013 President Salva Kiir sacked his cabinet and removed then vice president Riek Machar from his position following a power-struggle between the two men. The two had been locked in a power struggle against each other many times before. The two have been locking horns ever since the SPLA split in the 1990s. In December later that year President Salva Kiir accused Riek Machar and other supporters of a coup d'état. Machar on his side claims that Kiir was developing dictatorship-like tendencies and had blocked the SPLM from having a party-meeting. While Machar managed to escape up the Nile, the president had his men storm Machar's residence in Juba. Then they murdered Machar's guards and staff, then razed his residence to the ground. This prompted infighting within the presidential guard between Nuer and Dinka. (Horjen, 2014, p. 197)

In the days that followed the clash between the two groups Dinka elements of the Tiger Battalion carried out systematic executions of young Nuer men in the capital. It remains unknown who ordered the execution, as well as the exact circumstances for the horrors that followed. Having successfully disarmed the Nuer element after a period of infighting, the Dinka element roamed the city in search of Nuer. To identify their victims they stopped people on the streets and knocked on their doors, asking a single question; *Incholdi - what is your name*. Nuer were taken away and brutally murdered. Some who survived these horrible executions describes a gruesome systematic eradication of Nuer.

They were taken by soldiers and stowed into a room with other Nuer the soldiers had captured. With the room filled with young Nuer men the Dinka soldiers put guns through the windows and proceeded to fire indiscriminately at anything that moved. They would continue this process for two days, returning in intervals to shoot anything that moved. A young Nuer man told the guardian that he had been inside such a room together with 252 men, all Nuer. He survived by covering himself with the bodies of other dead men. The exact numbers people killed that day has to this day not been confirmed. When news of the horrors in Juba reached the rest of the country it led to a number of revenge killings, sending the country into a vicious revenge-killing circle. The few Nuer who remained alive in Juba in late December evacuated the city or escaped to UN bases within Juba. (Howden, 2013)

On the 7th of August 2014 a damning report released by the Human Rights Watch showed documented incidents of serious human rights abuses. Government and rebel attacks on the civilian population were believed to be frequent, and employed as a strategy of war. Their attacks on the civilian population were labeled as “extraordinary acts of cruelty that amount to war crimes and in some cases potential crimes against humanity” (Human Rights Watch, 2014, p. 1). The warring sides have ruthlessly attacked civilians on the basis of ethnicity, and have through this strategy created a situation in which Dinka and Nuer peoples have been whipped into frenzy. It has thrown the two into a severe ethnic conflict and a state of lawlessness that has a severe impact on personal and national security. The report outlines in graphic detail the numerous horrors the civilian population has been subject to.

“Many communities believe that leaders, soldiers or armed civilians from the other ethnic group will continue to target and physically undermine them. “ (Human Rights Watch, 2014)

Large groups of both opposition forces and government associated forces have ruthlessly and mercilessly cut down civilians, conducting detainments, mass executions, brutalisation and purposefully terrorised the civilian population.

According to the HRW's report there has been no willingness from government or opposition forces to hold anyone accountable for crimes committed in their service. This has effectively condoned these gangs' actions against the population, where groups representing the two sides are committing horrific crimes without accountability, repercussions or condemnation. (Human Rights Watch, 2014)

The severity of the situation was further emphasised on the 6th of October 2014; when a number of leading global aid agencies released a briefing on the situation in South Sudan. In the briefing it is cautioned that if steps are not taken to end conflict, the consequences are likely to be a serious famine that could cripple the young nation. Many South Sudanese have been displaced from their homes and removed from farmland. They have been surviving by selling their belongings, assets and in some cases killing their livestock, an extreme step to those living in cattle society as many tribes are. Fighting was considered unlikely to cease, as reports emerged that both the government and the rebels had spent the rainy season preparing for a continued war by regrouping and planning new attacks. The report painted a grim outlook for Sudan's future. It highlighted the lack of both personal security and food security. The level of violence against the civilian population was labeled as *extreme*. It called for UNMISS forces to improve security for people, especially women. Women are the ones who are going to markets and securing food, and therefore need to be protected to help improve food security and avoid famine.

Within the briefing a number of recommendations were presented to the international community. It emphasised the need to end hostilities, to protect the civilian population and prevent the country from plunging into a humanitarian catastrophe. Further it made clear that it is necessary to increase the presence and autonomy of aid agencies within the region. UNMISS forces were called to increase their patrol-range, ensure that all mandated troops are deployed and improve the security and capability of their *safe-zones*. The report also urged the UN Security Council to pass an embargo on weapons and ammunition to South Sudan, and establish an independent monitoring agency in an attempt to end the supply of weaponry.

Yet the number one concern for the immediate future was famine. A situation that they made clear needed to be averted at all costs. (Oxfam International, 2014)

2.8 The Current Situation - South Sudan in 2015

As we entered 2015 there was hope that the many peace-talks and discussions would lead to a lasting cease-fire agreement between the warring parties. In February government and opposing forces agreed to a cease of hostility agreement in Ethiopia. While some saw this as a sign of better times ahead and hoped the change was real, others again did not believe the agreement would have any effect at all on the situation. Sadly the latter proved to be correct. Despite both parties having signed cease of hostilities agreements this theoretical ceasefire has been broken numerous times since its inception in Ethiopia. Simultaneously with the agreement IGAD established a monitoring committee for to keep track and monitor cease-fire violations. It is troublesome that since February they have reported a total of 40 incidents of the cease-fire being violated extensively. These cease-fire violations are not one-sided, but seemingly symptomatic of a leadership that do not respect or acknowledge the authority of the agreement. Reports published in May 2015 show that both rebel and government forces have broken the cease-fire agreement equally; with more than 20 violations directly affecting, killing or injuring the civilian population. The IGAD reports show that despite there being numerous battles between the two sides, the war is at a standstill. One day the rebel forces controls a region or city, the next the government takes it, before the rebels it back again and so on. These clashes are primarily taking place in Upper Nile, Unity and Jonglei territory. Reports show that a large deal of the fighting between Government forces and the rebels have been attempts to capture the city of Malakal; the capital of the oil-producing state in the Upper Nile. Military control of this vital oil-production capital has changed hands numerous times over the span of the conflict. (IGAD, 2015)

The reports from IGAD also show that several of the agreed points in the cease-fire, such as regional control, agreements of neutral-zones, and other significant agreements have been thoroughly ignored by both parties.

There has been little to no change in the frequency of clashes between the sides. Reports in March 2015 worryingly tell of attacks and shooting against UN controlled UNMISS bases. In one specific incident government forces believed rebel soldiers were being harboured within the base and opened fire on it. Breaching both the cease-fire as well as international conventions. When confronted with these accusations the government forces responded forcefully that it would continue to fire on UNMISS bases if they suspected rebels soldiers were hiding or being harboured there. (International Crisis Group, 2014)

A report on weapon supply and weapon destruction written by Conflict Armament Research shows that weapons used in the conflict have been produced all over the world, including but not limited to; United Kingdom, Germany, Israel, China, Portugal and Iran - a majority of confiscated and destroyed weapons originate from old soviet stockpiles, produced in the 60s and 70s. The source, or sources of these weapons has yet to be determined. (Conflict Armament Research, 2015)

In April 2015 the South Sudan Council of Churches released a statement re-iterating the seriousness of the current situation. They speak of an overwhelming desire of the population to see peace and justice return, and to end the war. In their statement they describe how the country is in a state of virtual lawlessness. Anarchy is on the rise and a culture of revenge drives a seemingly unending climate of conflict and war among people. (Afrik-News, 2015)

On the 26th of May a unified South Sudan Council of Churches released a statement criticising many aspects of the peace negotiations and reiterating the deteriorating position that the country finds itself in. The country is in a state of anarchy and lacks the rule of law. It has been replaced by private security organisations acting as if they are above the law and handing out their view of justice indiscriminately. Regarding the peace talks they particularly criticised how political negotiations were being held in large, secure, luxury hotels while the people are killed all over the country. Lamenting that agreements were being signed left, right and centre with no positive changes visible for the people at all and instead hostilities were increasing in frequency.

The statement condemned the actions of the political leadership and firmly stated that they are responsible for the current situation. (South Sudan Council of Churches, 2015)

The Sudan Council of Churches have taken it upon themselves to attempt to find a solution to the many wars and conflicts ravaging the country, and in a bid to better understand peace and reconciliation in a tribal dominated society, they had a week-long conference retreat in Rwanda. There they spent time with church leaders and various congregations in Rwanda in an attempt to learn from how Rwanda handled their societal issues after the genocide there in 1994. After the retreat, the SSCC released three page statement where they reiterated the need to end hostilities immediately. They described their disgust at the jockeying and negotiation of position with strong imagery, asking why political leaders were arguing while men and women lay dying in the streets in a conflict fought by the political leaders who were safe and far away from the fields of battle.

“There is no political will for peace. Furthermore, we believe they have no idea how to make peace. They have no exit strategy; they are unable to find a face-saving compromise that will convince their followers they have gained something. If the two principals [Riek Machar and Salva Kiir] sign an agreement, there is no guarantee that their commanders and other followers will actually agree to implement it. People are completely polarised.” (South Sudan Council of Churches - Kigali, 2015)

Chapter 3 - Theory

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will present a number of theories and theoretical models that will be used to build a theoretical tool-kit. To accomplish this I will primarily rely on three main sources of theoretical material as mentioned in chapter 1. I will present each theory by highlighting those aspects within the theories that will be used for the analysis in Chapter 6.

3.2 Restorative Justice and Reconciliation

How to restore society after conflict has for a long time been at the centre of the modern peace-building discourse. Today two theoretical approaches stand out as dominant. Namely; *Restorative Justice*, and *Reconciliation*. As Llewellyn and Philpott explain in their latest book; these are *twin frameworks*. They argue that these two approaches are, among a myriad of theoretical concepts and frameworks, the two best-suited candidates for a holistic and integrated view of justice. Justice is not understood as the punitive justice we might be familiar with from societal law. Rather as a tool to build relationships between people who have been wronged, or where the past has damaged societal relationships. The focus on justice within this context relates to how to establish and maintain peaceful relationships in the present and the future. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, p. 16)

Llewellyn and Philpott therefore understand restorative justice as a relational theory of justice. That is to say; the focus is on how people relate to each other and their *interconnectedness* in society. Harm towards individuals within a society has an effect on all of society. Not simply the ones subjected of the wrongdoing and the one committing it. The wrongdoing has a ripple effect. It affects people in the victim and the perpetrator's family, the local community, and the very fabric of the given society when the wrongs committed have affected a significant part of the population.

Restoring, or perhaps in some cases building from relationships from scratch requires both input and involvement of the local community and of the given society. This has a direct implication on how one should practice justice in a restorative justice approach. For justice to be *served* it must be adapted to the context in which it will be utilised. It must involve the local community with the goal to secure the future. Unlike the classical western understanding of retributive justice, the restorative justice system looks not to make the offender pay for past actions, but rather looks to how the past actions harm the relationships within society, and how offender, victim and the society can address that. Ensuring a peaceful and equal future for all parties. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 21-22)

Naturally that involves a significant amount of work from the offender(s). It is their job to reintegrate themselves into society and in some way provide restitution for their actions. However it also means that both victim and the society in question will have to ensure that the offender is given the possibility to reintegrate into society. This way of looking at justice can perhaps be most beneficial when dealing with severe internal post-conflict situations, where the guilt of a few often is subscribed to the many and the scope of harm is often immeasurable. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 20-23)

The second holistic approach to justice is that of reconciliation. According to Llewellyn and Philpott the idea of reconciliation as justice can be found in scripture of all three monotheistic religions. Reconciliation has for many years been at the forefront of theological thinking surrounding peace building, this has been exemplified by projects undertaken by the likes of Bishop Desmond Tutu and Pope John Paul II. As such it is perhaps not surprising that it is linked with a religious understanding of peace. What Llewellyn and Philpott argue however is that reconciliation can also be seen as a type of justice. Reconciliation in itself is justice. The thinking behind the idea is that while religious scripture often touches upon justice, the translated terms used to describe justice are almost interchangeable with righteousness; with righteousness understood as “Demands of right relationship among the members of a community in all of their roles - economic, political, familial, cultic - and with respect to God.” (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, p. 24)

Reconciliation looks to repair right relationships, it attempts to figure out how to repair damage inflicted to these relationships through injustices, and to heal the resulting wounds. Reconciliation practices must therefore identify these wounds, find a way to address them and employ practices to achieve their objective. The driving force behind reconciliation is that of mercy. In order to achieve this Llewelyn and Philpott identify six practices that can help bring about reconciliation.

The first is a *presence of just political and economical institutions*; so that people do not feel discriminated against. Second *acknowledging the past and acknowledging the suffering of victims* is a practice common to the theory of reconciliation. We see this reflected in the thinking behind truth-commissions, as well as museums, monuments and remembrance rituals. Third we have *reparations*; a practice where victims are given material compensation for their suffering. While material compensation is unlikely to ever be sufficient repression it does serve as a public recognition of victim's suffering, and reinforces the legitimacy of the victims grievances.

Fourth is the idea of *accountability*; those guilty of oppressing people and committing crimes must be held accountable in some way. This can be done through reparations, acknowledgement of wrongdoing or other means of holding perpetrators accountable. Fifth is *apology*; the need for those guilty of oppression and wrongdoing to apologise for their actions. Be it apologising on your own behalf and your own misdeeds, or apologising for the role of government or political leadership in the past. Finally we have the concept of *forgiveness*. Those who have been wronged look towards the future rather than dwell in the past. They decide to not take a path of revenge and anger against those who wronged them. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 26-27)

3.3 Accountability

Daniel W. Van Ness reiterates the importance of accountability in his article on the issue. How you decide whom to hold accountable and how to do so has a significant impact on wider society and in extension any peace and reconciliation effort.

As restorative justice and reconciliation looks to restoring relationships that have been harmed it is also important to consider how to hold individuals and groups accountable for what they have done in a manner that aids the restoration of these relationships. To achieve this Van Ness presents three fundamental elements in a restorative understanding of accountability, namely that of reparation, truth-telling and taking responsibility. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 131-132)

Reparation is needed to mend the broken relationships and can be done in a myriad of different ways, especially in cases where the state is directly, indirectly or socially responsible for the harm that has befallen its citizens. Restoring people's fundamental rights as citizens is a necessity as it is vitally important in order to repair the relationship. Restitution, defined as *restoration of freedoms*, ensures that citizens can live within their community and society without being subject to legal or physical impediments to their civic, economic, social and political life.

Further reparation may be added in the form of satisfaction, where it is necessary to end the processes and practices that cause the human rights violations, re-establish the dignity of the victim(s) through efforts to make amends to the civic population. It is also necessary to provide a guarantee of non-repetition. Apologies, restitution and satisfaction mean nothing if violations continue. It is therefore necessary, particularly when the state is at fault, to implement concrete measures and mechanisms to avoid a repeat of violations, be it through ensuring civilian control of the military, strengthening the judiciary, creating safe-guards to prevent political overreach, making necessary law reforms and so on. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, p. 132)

Truth-telling speaks to the heart of restorative justice understanding of accountability. For there to be an acceptance of accountability there also needs to be a willingness to tell the truth about what has occurred. However it must not be limited to the idea of truth as singular and objective in nature. *Truth-telling* is as much about individuals, both perpetrators and victims, and those who have been both, to tell their story and their account of what has happened, how it happened and why it happened. Van Ness explains that a truth-commission is - or at least should be - fundamentally different from that of a legal hearing, in so far that it must be accepted and understood that truth is not static. In restorative justice terms it is important that truth commissions grant the right of telling the *truth* as they understand it to all parties. This can be particularly important to keep in mind where long-standing conflicts see the victim/offender roles change from one period of time to the next, where a victim can be an offender and vice-versa. Van Ness presents the case of the child-soldier, once a victim robbed from their life and home has now become a perpetrator as a soldier, their story and their *truth* is complicated and change between victim and perpetrator over the course of the conflict.

By truth we are not referring to a neatly presented argument discussed in order to find a consensus, as it largely is in a court of law. Rather we seek a set of stories that together can form a picture of the past and create a deeper understanding of what went wrong. While in doing so help aid a national healing process and perhaps help restore society. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, p. 133)

The third and final element that Van Ness highlights is that of taking responsibility. Walgrave in his work on restorative justice explains that responsibility in relational justice grants the offender the possibility to avoid *passive responsibility* and instead provides the opportunity to engage in *active responsibility*. Whereas legalist understandings of responsibility often result in incarceration, sanctions or other hard treatments for actions of the past, a restorative understanding gives the offender a possibility for redemption by demonstrating a willingness to take responsibility and a willingness to make amends. Restorative justice values responsibility that is willingly accepted and acknowledged, where the offender acknowledges that their actions have been harmful and accepts the responsibility and duty to repair the harm of their actions.

Whereas passive responsibility is force upon the offender, active responsibility can not be forced and must be sincere. Admission of guilt, apologising, and working towards repairing the harm caused are essential for active responsibility to take place, if these are not present then the only other option is that of forced passive responsibility. Yet in a restorative understanding of justice even the forced passive responsibility must include sanctions that help repair the harm that has been done, it is not enough simply to punish and “balance out the scales of pain”. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, p. 134)

3.4 Cultural Adaptability and Influence

This way of thinking about justice and accountability resonated very well in South Africa; where the traditional South African concept of Ubuntu provided a concise and clear point of reference for what needed to be healed among South Africans. Ubuntu can be understood in many different ways, some like Martha Minow see it as an inclusive sense of community valuing everyone, while others like Doxtader regard it as a cultural interest in realising a common humanity, Ubuntu however remains something intrinsically South African as we see from the explanations by Desmond Tutu. In Tutu’s words it is the accumulation of the synthesising mindset of Africans, the idea that no-one lives in isolation from the community and the actions of one has an effect on society itself - on what has been labeled Ubuntu. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 83-84)

For simplicity’s sake we can call it the soul of society, a way of regarding society as the individual rather than each individual person. If one part of Ubuntu harms another part he harms himself, similarly to if you cut your left hand with a knife in your right hand you may have used one part to cut a different part of you, but you still hurt yourself. It is a concept born out of a different mindset than the western society where individualism reigns supreme and a systematic approaches to the social contract, our community and our understanding of fellowship dominate our understanding and thinking.

What Ubuntu speaks to more than anything is the benefit of bringing traditional peace and conflict resolution into modern-day understandings of peace and reconciliation. To use and adapt traditional concepts rooted deeply within a culture to help achieve peace.

John Braithwaite points out that almost all of the concepts we use in our modern-day peace-building arsenal of tactics and theories come from the west, more specifically the Northeast of North America. While most of the world, barring a handful of regions, have state-justice systems based on European and Western principles, he points out that in some countries, such as Timor-Leste, a large majority of people take their grievances and issues to a traditional-justice system rather than a state-justice system.

However, as he points out, while much of the tradition within traditional-justice may have roots in cultural tradition, much of it has come about in a synthesis of relatively modernly introduced beliefs and concepts - such as Christianity or concepts of justice - and traditional practices. Many see *traditional-justice*, or rather *village dispute mechanisms* as a solution to bringing local communities together on their own terms. They see these systems as restorative by their very nature. This would be a simplistic way of looking at it according to Braithwaite. While it is certainly true that some practices found in village dispute resolution have strong restorative qualities, it is equally true that many does not. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 214-216)

What it does provide however is a suitable vernacular; a way of talking about foreign or difficult concepts. It can provide the tools for understanding and grounding restorative justice and reconciliation work within the local culture and tradition. It was that Ubuntu grounded the idea of truth and reconciliation firmly as South African in nature, a concept born out of and understood as distinctly African. We see similar word adaptation in Fiji. Here the term *Bulubulu*, and the practice of providing those you have wronged with a whale tooth as an became a cornerstone in their work for women's right and fighting rape. These cases show that when local concepts, practices and ideas are put into the hands of skilled translators who are capable of understanding their cultural significance, as well as their restorative potential. They can successfully be used to provide a conceptual hook to hang reconciliation efforts onto. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, p. 220)

Similarly we should be aware of the power that local religion, religious beliefs and religious rituals have over people. Braithwaite shows that in Timor-Leste part of the reason why people preferred the traditional-justice system was because they felt and

believed that once they sat on mats that the village elders put down they were subject to an unbreakable agreement with the spirits. Any agreement that would come about during such a meet could not be broken. If any of the parties did so it was believed that the spirits would punish them for breaking an unbreakable agreement. This interestingly gave the village justice system a much higher authority in the eyes of the people than state-justice. The use of religious words, prayers, beliefs and rituals can in some cultures seemingly reinforce the belief among people that whatever is agreed to during these meetings is subject to a much higher law than those of men. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 222-224)

Cultural adaptability of *restorative justice* and *reconciliation* is not only beneficial, but often necessary to create successful reconciliation. As Braithwaite points out, his own basic starting model on peace and reconciliation regarding truth, justice and reconciliation is based largely on experiences and empirical literature from South Africa. Yet the reliance on *truth* has not been validated in any of the 12 conflicts looked at through “Peacebuilding Compared”. It is seemingly not necessary for *truth* to be a part of the equation for reconciliation to be successful. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 225-227)

One concept may work well within one cultural context, but may prove disastrous in another. In his concluding remarks Braithwaite explains that the adaptation of concepts, rituals and ideas must be done in a thoughtful and considerate manner, and while tradition often plays a key role in drumming up war-sentiments, it must not be disregarded as a possible vehicle of peace. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, p. 235)

3.5 Amnesty for Justice

In her chapter of Llewellyn and Philpott’s book Louise Mallinder presents *amnesty* as a tool that can help achieve restorative justice and reconciliation. As with the aforementioned theories Mallinder also emphasises relationships and the harm that is caused to them.

Tools of restorative justice should help bring about a restoration of these relationships. (Llewellyn and Philpott 2014:145) Where she differs however is in her focus on *amnesties*. Mallinder presents *amnesties* as a tool of restorative justice. A tool that when used wisely can both end conflicts and help establish, maintain and ensure peace within a post-conflict society. For instance, we can see this practice employed in South Africa. Those willing to testify to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission openly and honestly could in exchange secure amnesty for their political and criminal offences. The practice, while controversial, arguably ensured that considerable information that would otherwise not have seen the light of day surfaced. The TRC even justified their use of amnesties within the truth commission process arguing that the justice served was that of a restorative justice. As Mallinder points out; while the process may not have been perfect and has been justifiably critiqued by many scholars over the years, the way amnesties were framed as part of a restorative justice principle “transformed a contentious transitional compromise into process that delivered greater truth and accountability”. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 151-152)

What is key in the use of *amnesty*, as Mallinder explains, is that amnesty helps ensure peace, and end conflict. *Amnesties* that do not serve to end conflict or ensures that enough information reaches the population to benefit reconciliation, are counter-productive. If utilised incorrectly or unwisely amnesties can create more conflict and a sense of injustice. When it is used in the appropriate way, *amnesties* have the potential to end seemingly endless conflicts or help lay the foundations for a societal peace.

3.6 Levels of Actors

In his book “Building Peace”, John Paul Lederach presents us with a clear theoretical framework for peacebuilding and reconciliation. He too sees relationship as the core element in any conflict. Conflict breaks relationships, and harms them. It becomes the goal of reconciliation to change these relationships into peace-building and reconciliatory relationships.

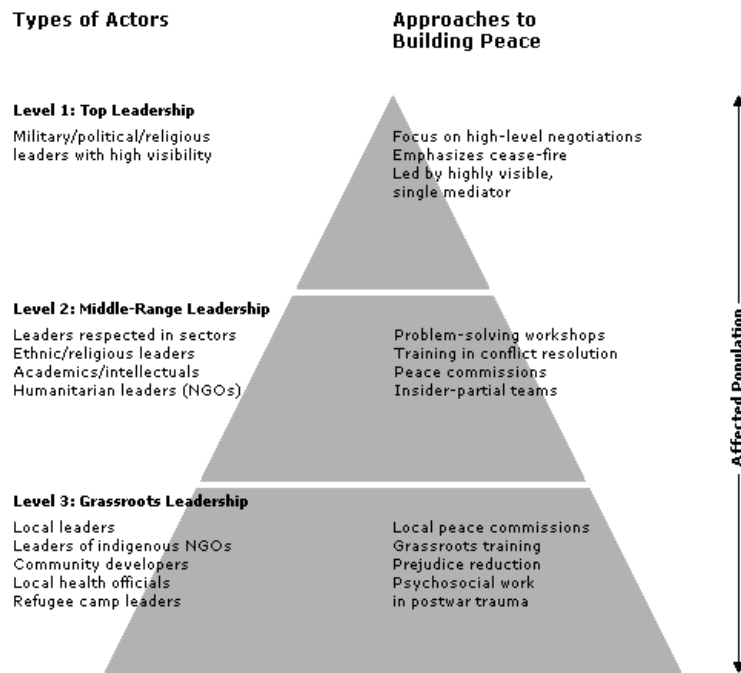
In order for reconciliation to have such a capacity to change relationships there has to be a way for people to express to one another feelings of trauma and anger for past events. However, while giving the past just credence it is also crucial that the focus of all reconciliation is towards the future. Past grievances and traumas must be acknowledged, stories must be shared and justice must be delivered. At the same time the objective of reconciliation is to provide a foundation for a shared peaceful future. Therefore reconciliation must provide room, or in the words of Lederach; a space. In this space people can share in and acknowledge the past without indulging and burying themselves in it. (Lederach, 2013, p. 30)

Reconciliation must look beyond the traditions of mainstream international politics, discourse and operational modalities. The setting of contemporary conflict is chaotic and emotional. Fear, anger, hatred, despair and bloodlust run high. The nature of the conflict feeds into these emotions and intensify the emotional ballast. Rather than treat the social-psychological dimensions as periphery concerns, they should be looked upon as core issues. The immediacy of these emotions and their direct influence on the conflict would suggest that in order to reshape the conflict, its transformation would have to be rooted in the social-psychological and spiritual dimensions, and not seen as irrelevant to the structural peace. Lederach argues that reconciliation is a *locus*. Here a number of key concerns come together to provide the foundation for a long-term future, a place where the aforementioned dimensions are not only seen as sub-elements of peace, but as key elements crucial to the transformation. Four concepts are highlighted as key to reconciliation; *Truth*, *Mercy*, *Justice* and *Peace*. (Lederach, 2013, p. 27)

Truth is understood as the necessity to validate and acknowledge people's experiences and trauma. People's longing to have their losses, their hardship and their stories not only heard, but also validated as a powerful motivator. Further, the concept of *Mercy* is understood as the process of acceptance. Of not letting past grievances stand in the way of a peaceful future and *letting go*. While *Truth* is necessary, it must be tempered with *Mercy* to ensure a peaceful future. *Justice* speaks to the need and the desire to see injustices punished and restituted. While *peace* relates to the need for security, well-being and interdependence in society. (Lederach, 2013, pp. 28-29)

Lederach understands *reconciliation* as both a *focus* and a *locus*. As a perspective he believes *reconciliation* at its heart deals with the relational aspects of the conflict. As a social phenomenon Lederach argues that *reconciliation* represents a social space in which parties in a conflict meet. It should be the goal of reconciliation to provide a setting in which the past can be discussed with the goal of achieving a better future. (Lederach, 2013, pp. 30-31)

In order to visualise how one can develop approaches to building peace, Lederach shows us a pyramid model of the different levels of social actors. He identifies three primary levels of social actors; top leadership, middle-range leadership and grassroots leadership. We can imagine a pyramid where the grassroots - the group with the highest population - makes the foundation, followed by middle-range leadership and topped off by the apex of top leaders.



Derived from John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 39.

Fig 1. Ledearch's Pyramid of Actors and Approaches to peace

At the level of Top Leadership we find the few and well recognised leaders of society. Be it high level politicians, high ranking clergy, or other leaders with great influence and visibility in society. These are the leaders that we normally see international diplomacy target. These leaders are perceived to speak for the people. However as Ledearch makes sure to point out; in most conflict situations the social picture is far more complex with a more fractured and diffused societal hierarchy than obviously apparent. While international diplomacy targets these top level leaders it has often been the case that leadership further down the pyramid do not recognise their authority. (Lederach, 2013, p. 38)

A number of features are common to this level of leadership. They are often highly visible; that is to say their every move, statement and position receives a great deal of attention. In cases where a conflict receives international media coverage, they are the leaders who are frequently presented as being of importance. These leaders are also under heavy pressure to project a position of strength. Leaders at this level are limited in their freedom to maneuver. Accepting a resolution that is anything less than their publicly stated goal or compromising on demands is often seen as a capitulation. It is perceived as a sign of weakness or a loss of face. These are the leaders that through the media come to represent the conflict and personify it. (Lederach, 2013, pp. 40-41)

Second we have the Middle-Range Leadership. Here we find religious leaders and clergy who aren't as visible in the media and in society at large. We find those who function in a leadership capacity within a situation of protracted conflict, but whom are not necessarily controlled or defined by the top leadership. They may be leaders within different parts of society. The Church is a clear example here, while the upper echelons of their leadership may be considered to be within the top leadership bracket, most of their leadership are not highly visible or involved in intergovernmental discussions. The church for instance does not derive its authority from the government, the opposition forces or any other top level leadership structure. Similarly tribal elders, humanitarian leadership working with relief efforts, as well as other members of sub-groups of society that hold leadership roles, fall into this category. (Lederach, 2013, pp. 41-42)

As we can see; while top leadership is easily identifiable, the work to identify the middle-range leadership is a lot more complex and arduous. A number of people may fall into this category. It may be everything from a prominent to a local chieftain. People whom enjoy great influence over and/or respect within various parts of society without necessarily being connected to the power-elite. In conflicts that are considered *ethnic-conflicts*, where ethnicity is a powerful divider, mid-range leadership can often be found operating within each ethnic group as well. (Lederach, 2013, p. 42)

The third level, grassroots leadership is even more complex and difficult to identify. They represent the base of society, a group which is characterised by a survivalist mentality. This societal group is during a worst-case scenario primarily concerned and involved with finding food, water, shelter and safety. The leadership of these groups operate on a day-by-day basis. They are on the ground with the local populace and know intimately the fears and troubles the population is under. Some may be refugee camp leaders, members of NGO's, doctors and nurses, or people with a special position within their local community. Often the grassroots level presents you with a microcosm of the bigger picture. The lines of identity of a given conflict is often drawn directly through the local community, making the deep-rooted hatred and animosity very clear to those involved with the populace on a day-by-day basis. (Lederach, 2013, pp. 42-43)

3.7 The Soceital Peace

The goal of *reconciliation* is according to Clegg, to ensure a sustainable peace in all levels of a conflict or post-conflict society. While she acknowledges the importance of ensuring political reconciliation, she stresses that *societal reconciliation* is the key to create a sustainable and lasting peace.

She sees it as vital that the different sides in a conflict join together to re-negotiate identities and embrace what is perceived as the *threatening other*. According to Clegg; political reconciliation is concerned with the macro level of society. It relates to the re-establishment of order, security, governmental institutions and judicial mechanisms, which are often devastated as a result of prolonged conflict.

It is at this level that peace agreements are discussed, proposed, argued and ratified. It also plays role in establishing a *societal peace*. Clegg notes that when the political process has been on hiatus in Northern Ireland it has brought about a rise in community violence. This in turn affects the other levels of reconciliation, such as societal reconciliation.

Societal reconciliation essentially focuses on the group to group relationships within the given society. When a conflict ends people still need to live together and to co-exist in peace. Else they risk falling into a spiral of violence and war. This can be very difficult process for many who have experienced great loss and injustice. The difficulty in having people accept the *other* in their shared space is the essence of societal reconciliation. Clegg emphasises that the only prerequisite for societal reconciliation is the will of co-existence. That is to say the willingness to live in the same shared space as the *other*. (Kim, Kollontai, & Hoyland, 2008, p. 83)

Intepersonal reconciliation looks at people to people and small-group interactions. On this level personal pain, suffering and injustices play an important role and necessitate the presence of both forgiveness and repentance. Interpersonal reconciliation is directly about personal hurt and personal healing. It requires a grieving processes and reconciling processes. The extensiveness of these processes depends in some extent on how far each individual have come in their own personal reconciliation.

Personal reconciliation can be understood as each person reconciling themselves with who they are, what they have become and what they have experienced. According to Clegg; it includes processes such as psychological personal growth, personal development and awareness, as well as spiritual awareness. At this level of reconciliation the individual reconciles with past experiences and accepts, and sometimes forgives, what has happened to them. Both compassion and forgiveness plays a vital role in this level of forgiveness and are paramount for the personal reconciliation process. (Kim, Kollontai, & Hoyland, 2008, pp. 83-84)

In Cecilia Clegg's view societal reconciliation can and has shown to help all other levels of reconciliation. She points to the Sunningdale Agreement presented in 1973. The agreement was rebuffed and made void by the lack of popular support as a result of a lack of societal reconciliation. The agreement was successful in terms of political reconciliation, but because of the lack of societal reconciliation in Northern Ireland the result was that the citizens weren't prepared to accept or receive the agreement. The population approved an agreement with similar terms a few years' later, Clegg notes that this was likely due to societal reconciliation having become more pervasive. (Kim, Kollontai, & Hoyland, 2008, pp. 84-85)

The importance of *societal reconciliation* then becomes paramount in establishing the conditions necessary for *reconciliation* on a more holistic scale. For Clegg it is representative of man's highest aspiration. It is a primal need for identity and to identify with a group. It is not a system that is easily identified, but a complex of interconnected or interwoven parts. In a situation of conflict these identities are often at odds with each other, creating a *we vs them* mentality. It is the goal of social reconciliation to re-negotiate those identities and provide the conditions necessary to convert *we vs them* into *us*. Clegg notes that societal reconciliation takes both time and immense effort to be achieved, while being highly vulnerable to negative events and forces. While violent sectarianism, racial violence and other destructive ideas grow quickly and are resilient, societal reconciliation can be retarded or even destroyed by relatively small setbacks. Merging both patience and long-term thinking is vital for the development of a *societal peace*. At its core societal reconciliation revolves around a feeling of identity, a biological desire to be part of a group and to identify with other people. It is in reshaping this highly complicated interwoven web of relationships that societal reconciliation can take place. At the most basic level societal reconciliation requires a willingness to live together, and the willingness to goodwill. (Kim, Kollontai, & Hoyland, 2008, pp. 84-86)

Clegg uses the term *goodwill* interchangeably with a Christian reverence for god, yet it is well worth pointing out that *goodwill* does not depend upon having a Christian religious belief, only a realisation that good will is reciprocated for the wellbeing and welfare of all.

According to Clegg, the key to societal reconciliation is the re-negotiation of identities; specifically the re-negotiation of group identities. Quite often identity is distorted into what Marc Gopin calls *negative identity*; identities that are formed and reinforced by painting the *other* as dangerous and threatening. An alien group that is harmful to your own welfare. This form of *negative identity* creates an understanding of identity as being different from the other, and in turn makes that identity intrinsically linked to the *negative identity*. It is an understanding of *I* being part of a *we*, while *we* is quintessentially different from *them*. *Them* by their very nature, seek to harm *we*, and therefore also *I*. As a result *I* and *them* become opposites. (Kim, Kollontai, & Hoyland, 2008, p. 86)

Your own identity becomes reliant on viewing the other as a *threatening other*. These identity markers are a real challenge to a lasting peace; they separate groups of society and break the chains of unity. These bonds are required in order for groups of different people to see each-other as part of the same group. It is through identity transformation that we can help create a societal breeding ground for unity, togetherness and harmonious coexistence. This can ensure a lasting peace among people and not simply a political peace among leaders. *Societal reconciliation* is in Clegg's view key to ensure a long-lasting and resilient peace. (Kim, Kollontai, & Hoyland, 2008, pp. 91-92)

3.8 Summary

All things put together we are now equipped with a theoretical tool to confidently and assertively analyse the data. From Restorative Justice and Reconciliation approaches by Llewelyn and Philpott we gain an understanding that relationships are at the centre of peace resolution. During conflict and strife these relationships are harmed.

In a restorative approach we value approaches that help repair those relationships. This gives us a clear premise to work from and a clear goal to look for when analysing the data.

Van Ness's theories on accountability provide us with a restorative understanding of accountability, an alternative to the classical accountability thinking behind retributive justice. Adding to that his theories provide three specific elements to look for, *reparation*, *truth-telling* and *responsibility*. Mallinder give us an alternative way of looking at *amnesty*, as something that isn't based on retributive justice. Rather it is a tool that can be used to *restore* peace, as a way of creating peace and giving society enough information to work through the past. Through these theories we are able to establish a solid framework of our theoretical analysis. Not all cases are the same, and not all cultures respond in the same way to ideas and concepts. Therefore we need the work of Braithwaite and his theories on cultural adaptability to both provide an explanation as to what is different, and how to utilize these differences in our theoretical models. Not all words and concepts translate easily from culture to culture, and through Braithwaite's work we are made aware of this fact and how to spot it during the analysis. While also being made aware of the importance of working with local leaders that have the necessary cultural sensitivities.

John Paul Lederach's theories have been at the forefront for many years and are therefore important to keep in mind when looking at how peace-oriented organisations work with peacebuilding today. His pyramid of actors gives us a clear and structured view of society. It gives us an indication of how society is made up and how it can be influenced. Through his theory we can create rough distinctions within society and give us a guideline for how various social actors impact society. Lastly; the theories of Cecilia Clegg help define the type of peace and the type of reconciliation that is necessary to ensure a lasting peace. Her theoretical work explains part of the root-cause behind broken relationships and gives us a key element to look out for when analysing the data. Namely how people view their *identity* in relation to others and the existences of *negative-identities*. Together all these theories and theoretical approaches complement each other to create a large and extensive theoretical tool-set capable of analysing the data extensively on multiple fronts.

Chapter 4 - Methodology

4.1 Qualitative Research Methodology

As Silverman points out Qualitative research design is uniquely suited to research phenomenon that aren't accessible any other way. While Quantitative design is aptly suited to study correlations between variables. Silverman presents the correlations between national identity and voting behaviour as an example; it lacks the ability to study the motivations behind a phenomenon. That is to say; it can not accurately discern the motivations behind a phenomenon, nor describe how it is shown and constituted locally. This is where Qualitative research when done appropriately can fill a gap in social research that Quantitative research methodology simply is unable to fill. (Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 2011, pp. 16-17)

The Norwegian philosopher Pål Repstad describes the need for qualitative research through an example from religious sociology. Here he presents the study by Per Salomonsen to show how useful the application of qualitative research methods can be to find and present the nuances of a phenomenon. While a quantitative study can determine the percentage of people who say they believe in the Christian God, it can not accurately analyse the subtleties and details of ones faith. As Salmonsens experienced; some of those who answered that they believed in God during a quantitative study were found to contradict those findings during a qualitative study. A qualitative study uncovered substantial amounts of additional data. It showed the individual's perception of the divine, the inner struggles of faith as well as doubt. More often than not the individual or group's every day life deeply affected their religious understanding. When undertaken in a qualitative study, the question "Do you believe in God" showed the nuances of personal faith in a way that a quantitate method simply isn't able to. (Repstad, 2007, pp. 25-26)

The strengths of this methodology is the ability to dive deeper into the inner workings of a social phenomenon. As Silverman points out, it is unable to create a valid generalisation of the occurrence of a phenomenon in the same way that quantitative research can.

However, it can give us a deeper understanding of how a phenomenon is socially constructed. (Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 2011, p. 14)

As Bryman puts it; giving the researcher an opportunity to see the phenomenon through the eyes of the people being studied. It is a social fact that people unlike the subject matters of natural sciences, can attributes *meaning* to their environment and surroundings. As the social world is made up of people, it is necessary for researchers to see the world through their eyes in order to understand the social reality in which they exist. The concept of a social world, which Qualitative research aims to study, is according to Bryman grounded in an epistemological view consisting of two basic tenants. First, the view that face-to-face interaction is the most aptly suitable method to understand and participate in the mind of another human-being. And second, that in order to acquire social knowledge or knowledge of the social world you must participate and understand the mind of another human being. (Bryman, 2012, p. 399)

The limits on depth for quantitative research necessitate the use of an *operational definition* according to Silverman. If you are going to do a quantitative analysis on the prevalence of any given phenomenon, you would first have to define this phenomenon to fit into a broader understanding. Giving you a higher level of generality at the cost of accurately describing the phenomenon you are studying. Often the process of arriving at such an operational definition is arbitrary, and as a result the so-called *hard data* it produces becomes somewhat of a mirage. Secondly Silverman argues; that while questionnaires are useful to collect massive amounts of data, in some cases it may very well not be suitable to measure what it is intended to measure. (Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 2011, p. 15)

For Quantitative research to be fruitful you are dependent on good data, primarily in the form of statistics gathered through surveys, questionnaires and other data collecting methods that involve a high potential for generalisation. If such data is not readily available or can not be produced a quantitative approach becomes counter-productive.

With the situation in South Sudan deemed precarious, with much of the country in a state of civil war and unrest, it would be irresponsible to attempt to do research within South Sudan. As a result traveling to South Sudan to conduct surveys, interviews and other forms of data collection is too dangerous, and would likely not yield sufficient reliable data. The USA, Great Britain and Norwegian Foreign secretary departments caution against traveling to South Sudan. The security situation is considered highly dangerous and they advice that any travel to be done only if strictly necessary and with substantial security arrangements. As a result of these warnings I will not be traveling to South Sudan to conduct field research. The danger, as well as the lack of access to the general population and interesting subjects does not benefit the research. (U.S Department of State, 2015) (Utenriksdepartementet, 2013) (The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2015)

4.2 Interview

As Bryman notes, interviews done within a qualitative research design are markedly different from those in a quantitative study. Whereas in quantitative research the structure of an interview is designed to answers very specific questions intended to maximise the reliability and measurements of key concepts. What we've seen Silverman refer to as *operational definition*. It is the intent of qualitative interviewing to generate rich detailed answers. As a result; a structured form of interview will not be suitable for a qualitative study. Rather one can choose between a semi-structured or an unstructured form of interviewing. Within an unstructured interview form the interview appears more like a free-flowing conversation than an interview; going off-topic and changing topics mid-conversation is encouraged. Rather than seen as a hinderance to the objectivity and generality of the research. (Bryman, 2012, pp. 470-472)

As for the usefulness of interview as a method Pål Repstad points out that there are some issues and phenomenons you simply can not get to without actually talking to people and interviewing them. He highlights the subjects' world-views, or unwritten societal codes and rules. These set of codes and rules are inaccessible through simple observation.

Therefore it is necessary with a certain level of direct interaction; which interview can provide. Interviews can also be useful in extending the understanding of an observation. Repstad presents a case from 1964 where a number of youths seemingly spontaneously began making trouble during park productions of Shakespeare. While observation was sufficient to see the phenomenon and catalogue it, it wasn't until the youths themselves were interviewed that their motivations and reasons were made clear. (Repstad, 2007, p. 77)

Bryman further emphasises this by pointing out that interviewing is advantageous in situations and issues that are resistant to observation. For instance such issues like the one Repstad mentions, and issues with understanding reasons for life-choices. Bryman argues that finding the motivation and reason for converting to vegetarianism is not feasible by the use of observation alone. It therefore becomes necessary to conduct interviews. Similarly when attempting to understand something that has happened in the past and reconstructing past events, it is impossible to do so with the use of participant observation alone, as it is an event of the past and inaccessible to present-time observation. Another method is required to gain an insight into it. For such purposes interview becomes an essential tool to employ. As I am studying an ongoing conflict which has been affected deeply by past events and an ever-changing situation in a foreign context Interview can benefit my thesis. (Bryman, 2012, pp. 494-495)

Silverman presents three different models of understanding interview data. Each of them view the data derived from interview in different lights. Positivism see a highly structured interview with pre-defined multiple-choice questions and a randomised sample as having the potential of providing the researcher with facts about the world and wider societal understanding of these facts. They aim to generate data which is not only reliable and valid for the specific interviewees, but for a greater social group. (Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 2011, pp. 170-171) As Positivists aim to generate facts they take great care to attempt to limit the discrepancies between the interviewees answers, and that of *reality* that tend to surface through survey-based interviews.

Positivists believe there is a reality one can objectively observe; their main goal is to discover facts about this social reality. (Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 2011, pp. 174-175)

The second understanding Silverman presents is that of emotionalism. While not as concerned to uncover *facts* regarding social reality, emotionalists aim to discover “authentic accounts of subjective experience”. (Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 2011, p. 174) In order to achieve this emotionalists believe that they should use very open-ended interviews in an effort to generate an atmosphere where the interviewee is not restrained from expressing their authentic accounts by the limitations of an interview schedule. The emotional experience of the interview subject is of much greater interest than generating data which can be widely reliable. Therefore the role of the interviewer does not become a detached observant, but rather an emotionally involved participant that helps generate the atmosphere in which the interviewee can express their experience authentically. (Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 2011, pp. 175-176)

The final form we see Silverman introduce is constructionism. While both positivism and emotionalism look for their method to discover facts about reality through interviews, constructivism see interview as valuable in and of itself. Constructivists see the social world as constructed by its actors, as an ever-changing social landscape. As a result constructivists see the interview as part of the process of social construction. (Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 2011, p. 181)

As I’ve already noted that due to the lack of access to people and relevant data within South Sudan, mainly because of its current security situation, travel to the country will not be possible. The travel limitations also exclude the possibility of conducting any form of observation of the process in action. As Bryman notes, when observation does not have the potential to yield sufficient data of a phenomenon, or an object of study is resistant to observation, interview is a welcomed and useful alternative capable of generating vast amounts of relevant data. It will therefore be beneficial for me to interview people who have direct contact with people in South Sudan, or have observed the situation first-hand. (Bryman, 2012, pp. 494-495)

The interview guide used for this thesis can be found in Appendix A at the end of this thesis.

4.3 Qualitative Document Analysis

Documents, texts, books and other written sources are excellent sources for data, as long as one remembers and understands what they represent and what they do not represent. They do not represent an objective factual truth. You can not accurately discern the inner workings and functions of a social organisation, but you can uncover what Silverman refers to as *social facts*; an insight into the socially constructed world from the perspective of the author(s) involved. Understanding how these documents may affect the social reality in which they are a part. (Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*, 2005, pp. 234-238)

Bryman further emphasises this point by referring to Atkinson and Coffey. The idea that documents and publications for different organisations can present us with a factual *social reality* is unlikely. Atkinson and Coffey argue that rather than view documents as capable of uncovering a hidden social reality, they should be seen as a social reality in their own right. That is to say; the documents produced serve a purpose. They are designed to convey a message, an impression; basically they have a function. Documents do not exist in a vacuum, but have to be seen in context with similar documents and documents on the same subject. This interconnectedness of documents, referred to as inter-textuality, is important to keep in mind when analysing documents. (Bryman, 2012, pp. 554-555)

I will primarily be using documents created by organisations that work closely with the peace and reconciliation process in South Sudan. These are such documents as documents concerning government grants, reports on the situation by various organisations, documents from religious leadership and religious interest groups.

These various documents are all referred to and produced in the same inter-textual environment and are in addition to being useful sources of data also important for understanding the context in which they are written. Namely; the situation that South Sudan finds itself in. (Bryman, 2012, p. 555)

It is important to note that the subjects of document analysis, in particular of personal texts such as diaries and written down personal stories of events, are inherently subjective in nature. The perception of any given situation or event presented may differ greatly for each of the participants. It is therefore important to keep that in mind when working with these sort of documents, and beware of the potential such presentations have for bias. Documents that relate personal reflections, testimonies or news stories will always have a subjective element to them, which is important to be aware of.

In terms of judging the quality of the documents and relevant sources in question, social researcher John Scott has presented four basic criteria to be aware of. These as presented in Bryman's book from 2012 and from John Scott's book *A matter of record* from 1990 are the following; first, Judging the authenticity of the document. It is necessary to weigh whether or not the evidence presented is genuine and of unquestionable origin. Simply put, do those the document originate from where and whom they claim to originate. Second, Scott argues that we should look at the credibility of the document. Is the evidence free from error and distortion, that is to say; is the document as it was produced or has it been altered post-production. Third, is the evidence representative. Finally, is the evidence clear and comprehensible. Can we say with relative certainty that we are able to read the text, and the meaning, in the document in question? At the very least; that my subjective understanding and presentation of the document is reasonable and logical. (Bryman, 2012, p. 544)

4.4 Reliability

According to Bryman the term *reliability* is concerned with the question of whether the results of any given study are repeatable. Often the term is used when judging whether or not a concept measures what it is designed to measure and whether or not it is consistent in its use. This is however not as relevant for qualitative research as it is when using quantitative methods. Therefore I will have to consider the *reliability* of the research presented in a different way, more aptly tuned for qualitative research. (Bryman, 2012, p. 46)

Within qualitative research the concept of *trustworthiness*, as will be explained in section 4.6, has become an alternative to judge *reliability* of qualitative research. In addition the concept of *reliability* has been reshaped to be used for qualitative research. Bryman points out two main understandings of reliability in qualitative research, as envisioned by LeCompte and Geotz.

External reliability; goes towards the possibility of a study to be replicated. This can be especially difficult in qualitative research as often the method of study is based on the social setting at the time. You can not freeze a social setting. (Bryman 201:390) While difficult, several strategies can be employed by qualitative researchers to meet this requirement. Ensuring that the researcher writes in great detail about the methods employed, theoretical tools, and other parts of the research process can go a long way in helping with that. In studies where observation are involved it is also advisable to make note of what role the observer had in the social setting they were studying. Ensuring that other researchers can adopt a similar role in their research for them to have the best chance of getting comparable data. (Bryman, 2012, p. 390)

Internal reliability is most relevant in cases where more than one researcher is involved, and seeks to ensure that there is an agreement between the researchers of both their finds, the empirical data and the final conclusions. It simply seeks to ensure that researchers agree that their study says the same thing. As I am not working with another researcher in this thesis, this criterion does not apply to this thesis. (Bryman, 2012, p. 391)

4.5 Validity

Bryman defines *validity* as follows; “Validity is a concern with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research.” He separates them into four distinct categories of *validity* - *measurement validity*, *internal validity*, *external validity* and *ecological validity*. (Bryman, 2012, p. 717)

While *validity* is crucial to quantitative research and serves to ensure that your measurements are valid, it is a different matter entirely to use it in a qualitative study. There are a number of strategies employed by researchers to ensure the quality of their qualitative research on the basis of reliability and validity. One of these methods; *trustworthiness* will be expanded upon in the next section of the chapter. The other method is considered a more or less direct transfer of the quantitative concept of *validity*, and is divided into two main forms, namely that of *external* and *internal validity*.

Internal validity goes towards the link between theory and empirical data. Do the theoretical ideas presented fit with the empirical data gathered? In the eyes of many, such as LeCompte and Goetz *internal validity* is in many ways the strength of qualitative research. Due to the nature of qualitative research the researcher can ensure a high level of congruence between the concepts they employ in the research, and the observations they have made. *Internal validity* concerns itself with whether or not the theoretical concepts and ideas used in the study adequately and accurately explains the empirical data. (Bryman, 2012, p. 390)

External validity as a concept attempts to judge whether or not the theoretical findings can be generalised to a larger group and across social settings. This is where qualitative research often intentionally falls short. Due to the limited sample size, the degree of immersion and a tendency to make use of case-studies, external validity of concepts is difficult to determine. While it is possible in many cases to assume theoretical similarities, the nature of qualitative research makes it difficult to judge whether or not the theoretical findings can be generalised. (Bryman, 2012, p. 390)

4.6 Trustworthiness

As an alternative to the classic terms of reliability and validity derived from quantitative research, Bryman offers up an alternative - namely that of *trustworthiness*. Created by Lincoln and Gruba specifically to judge the quality of qualitative research, Bryman describes trustworthiness as being made up of four criteria specifically designed for qualitative research. I will go through each of these in turn, and as I go along explain its relevance to my thesis.

Credibility aims to ensure that the research conducted is carried out with good practice and can accurately describe a social world. In order to do this two methods in particular are presented as ideal. One is that of *respondent validation*, where the findings of interviews in particular are presented to the respondents for confirmation that the researcher has understood the social world the interviewee has tried to express and present. Second is *triangulation*. In *triangulation* the researcher uses more than one method, source of data or theoretical perspective to ensure the credibility of their findings.

In terms of *credibility* my research is very solid. I have used several sources of data, such as documents, interviews, statements and reports to ensure a wide array of sources of data. This provides a more solid foundation for the findings and the perspectives presented. I have also approached the analysis with several different theories, which each analyse different aspects of the peace and reconciliation processes. The use of more than one theoretical approach throughout the research adds to the credibility of the analysis and thus to the research itself. (Bryman, 2012, pp. 390-391)

Transferability is the second concept Bryman presents in regards to *trustworthiness*. In short this concerns the presentation of methods and data collection. *Transferability* recognises that *reliability* is difficult to achieve in qualitative research. Instead *transferability* provides a way of ensuring that the researcher has detailed the research process in such a way that it can be used as a template for similar research, or an attempt to replicate the study.

While 1:1 replication is impossible by virtue of the type of research being done, a detailed description at least gives researchers a sturdy platform to continue the research or test the research from. For a study to meet the requirement of *transferability* it would have to contain a detailed explanation of the research process, sources and research methods employed. By writing a detailed chapter on methods, including my thematic interview guide, and explaining how I use the specific theories throughout my analysis I believe that I have met this requirement.

Bryman, briefly touches upon *dependability*. Lincoln and Guba presented *dependability* as a parallel for *reliability* in quantitative research. *Dependability* relies on the researcher presenting all stages and details of their research to a number of peers for *auditing*. The peers are then tasked with going through the research to make sure that all arguments, the methods employed and the theoretical inferences are justifiable and logical. Due to the high amount of data collected in qualitative research the idea of having the research audited as suggested it is seen as impractical. It puts a heavy workload and immense pressure on the auditors. This could be why the process of auditing has not caught on among researchers, and is very rarely employed. This criterion is difficult to meet even under the most ideal circumstances. Not only is it difficult to find peers that will willingly take on the role as auditors, it requires the project to be revised and completed in good time for the auditors to have their say. While I have discussed parts of the thesis with other students and my guidance-councilor, I have not engaged auditors. (Bryman, 2012, p. 392)

Confirmability aims to ensure that the researcher has not let their personal feelings, personal values or theoretical bias guide the research excessively. It aims to show that the researcher has acted in good faith and has as far as is possible maintained objectivity throughout the process. As I have researched a society and conflict that I knew nothing about to begin with, its nature and complexity has surprised me many times during the research. As I learned more about the conflict I revised my theoretical approach several times; discarding unsuitable theories as I conducted the research. I feel confident that my thesis meets this criterion.

The motivation for looking into this particular situation was based on a vague understanding of the societal structure in South Sudan, and a deep curiosity in its inner workings rather than any pre-established view. While this did require me to read substantial amounts of books and reports on both the history and current situation of South Sudan during the research, which added substantially to the work-load, it also means that I was largely unaffected by any pre-conceived notions before researching. (Bryman, 2012, pp. 392-393)

As an addition to these four concept, Bryman's book also suggest *Authenticity*, that is essentially a judgment of how beneficial your research is for the people and/or groups being researched. While this is not a very common or influential concept in modern research, it does deserve a mention. The basic gist of *authenticity* are a number of criteria that can be evaluated to ensure that the research you are doing will actually have a societal benefit for the group or milieu you study. These criteria are; *Fairness* - does the research fairly represent different viewpoints among members of the social setting. *Ontological authenticity* - Does the research help members to arrive at a better understanding of their social milieu. *Educative authenticity* - does the research help members to appreciate better the perspectives of other members in their social setting. *Catalytic authenticity* - has the research acted as an impetus to members to engage in action to change their circumstances. And finally, *tactical authenticity* - has the research empowered members to take the steps necessary for engaging in action? (Bryman, 2012, p. 393)

These criteria are difficult to determine in my case due to the subject I have chosen, as well as the weight I have put upon the perception of the situation. I have treated each interviewee as a source into an understanding of the situation, rather than as a source of the de-facto situation. Though the combination of books, reports, articles and interviews I've gained a holistic picture of the situation, but at no point would I claim that the research has uncovered the core truth of the situation.

4.7 Limitations

Some of the limitations of my research are very much limitations as a result of the methods I've chosen, and the subjects I've chosen to interview. Because this is a qualitative study I can not claim that my findings are applicable to all aid-organisations, all conflict situations or even the entirety of the conflict in South Sudan. The research can not claim to accurately represent how citizens within South Sudan truly think and feel, nor can it give an accurate account of how individual members within the South Sudan council of churches think and feel about their work. Both due to the lack of qualitative data, lack of direct contact with these individuals and not having traveled to South Sudan myself the research presented is based on perceptions by individuals working in Norway and reports written by various organisations and departments working with and within South Sudan.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Ensuring that research is ethical can be vital for many studies and researchers. In order to ensure this, the ESRC in the UK have compiled a six point reference guide to ensure that research is accepted by them and holds to a certain ethical standard. First and foremost the research has to be of high quality, if a study is poorly designed it will likely fail to get funding, but more so it will fail to get ethical approval. A poorly conducted and designed study is not an ethical one. Second, it is important that all research staff and subjects are informed fully of their role in the research and the extent of their participation. Keeping in line with that the third concept is that of confidentiality, it must be upheld at all times between the researcher and the subject(s). In terms of anonymity it is vital for a researcher to keep to the concept and maintain anonymity when it is required or desired. Not doing so would be unethical; revealing the identity of your research subjects would be considered a gross violation of ethics. Fourth, the involvement of all research participants should be consensual and voluntary. Fifth, harm to participants must be avoided at all times. Sixth, the independence of research must be made clear and any conflict of interest or partiality must be explicit.

That is to say if you are biased due to your personal connection, financial connection, funding connections or otherwise this must be explicitly stated. For example if you are funded by an organisation that works with specific issues within the social setting you are researching then there might be an affiliation bias, in that case it must be made clear that you are funded by said organisation in the study. (Bryman, 2012, p. 146)

Another ethical issues that one has to be aware of is that a researcher can sometimes take sides when researching a specific group or subject. Often when immersed with a group or studying a subject from one angle over a period of time a researcher can often end up taking sides. While in some studies it might even be necessary one should for the most part be aware of this tendency and attempt to limit the influence this has on the final research. (Bryman, 2012, p. 152)

For my study in particular there are some ethical concerns that are unique. In studying an active conflict there is some data and information that I have to be careful about how I present. During my research it has become clear that the conflict in South Sudan is filled with violent episodes and dramatic events, some of which are crucial in understanding the core of the conflict, as I will explain in chapter five, others would simply serve to exaggerate the situation and would have little research benefits. While some of these events and descriptions can be used in understanding the perception locals, NGO workers and organisations have on the conflict, there needs to be a balance in order to avoid misrepresenting the conflict and exaggerate the problems. Further I have to be aware that while I rely heavily on the perception a number of NGO workers have towards the situation and the conflict that there are other sides to be aware of as well.

4.9 Sample

The method used for sampling is a purposeful targeted sampling. I have chosen interview subjects who are not only involved with South Sudanese peace and reconciliation efforts, but whom have recently had direct contact with the South Sudan Council of Churches and whom are involved in a continuous working relationship with the church in South Sudan.

This provides me with a naturally more narrow focus on the role of the church within the peace and reconciliation efforts. The focus on the church and its efforts ensures that politics do not take centerstage. The focus remains on the church. As I am unable to travel and meet with actual church leaders in South Sudan, and as the scope of a masters degree would not allow me the sufficient time to get access to council members or gain the trust necessary for a good interview. Therefore I have chosen to interview a handful of people in my own country, who work directly with the council on a regular basis. While this does provide me with an outside view to some extent, it also ensures that as little information and data as possible is lost during translation. In interviewing people who have a similar cultural and linguistic background as myself I avoid confusion that can be caused by having different cultural perspectives. All interviews were conducted in Norwegian and then translated into English for this thesis.

4.10 Experiences

While conducting the interviews it became clear that it would take between five and ten minutes for interviewees to become comfortable and the conversation to have a natural flow. As a result the questions that were asked at the beginning of the interview yielded very few complete answers, and I had to reformulate them later on in the interview to get a full answer. While I had a rough interview guide for each interview it proved impossible to limit myself to these questions only. The knowledge of the participants as well as their fields of interests, and the new knowledge that was discovered during the interviews necessitated a certain degree of flexibility in the questions posed. As such, while the interview guide, and the theme of each interview was the same, the questions posed varied from participant to participant.

This allowed for conversations to become more fluent, focusing on different aspects based on the individuals knowledge and area of expertise, while at the same time covering the same overarching theme.

Another experience I had while conducting my research was that when studying a subject such as a conflict situation which is in constant transition and changing on a monthly, weekly and even daily basis, there is a constant stream of documents, reports and statements that you need to keep up to date with. While this vast amount of data helps keeping the research up to date and relevant, it also requires you to constantly keep yourself updated and adaptable to new data, making each month both exciting and challenging as there is never an automatic cap on the amount of data to keep up with. Further it surprised me how much of a mental toll reading reports and descriptions of human rights abuses would have on me during the research. Specifically, a report detailing the events, witness statements and descriptions of the ethnic cleansing in Juba of December 15th 2013 were specifically difficult to handle, as the violations and level of violence were so extreme that it took several days of contemplation to process the information and begin the analysis of the data.

Throughout the research I experienced several times that the reports, documents and analysis I read would affect my mood for a few days, especially when the reports were wholly negative, brutal or highly pessimistic in nature. I would not have expected studying South Sudan this closely would have such an effect on my mental state, nor that it would directly affect the time it would take to work through the data. I was lucky enough to have close contact with a handful of people who have both worked in conflict situations and worked with the specific situation in South Sudan, which gave me an outlet to discuss and process some of the more difficult subjects I read about.

Chapter 5 - Findings

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will present the findings from the empirical data in a thematic and structured way. I will begin with looking at the nature of the conflict, particularly how the current conflict began. From there I will move on to presenting how identity is perceived in South Sudan, before taking a look at the South Sudanese state itself. The next theme I will look at concerns the working strategies, goals and plans of the NCC and the NCA respectively. At the end of this chapter I will present findings relating to the church in South Sudan.

5.2 The Nature of the Conflict

Respondent 3 commented that sources in South Sudan claimed that the conflict that has plagued the country began when a private conversation between Salva Kiir, and two other individuals in which Salva told the two men “I’m getting tired, I think we need to begin a process to identify my successor”. (Resp3) The confidential and private conversation was leaked to a number of political figures, including Rebecca Garang and vice-president Machar among others, which resulted in a tug of war over power within the party and jostling for position that caused problems. The core essence of the conflict, or the trigger for the conflict, was a post-Salva Kiir thinking that set the wheels in motion. With Salva being not only the president of South Sudan, but also the commander in chief, leader of the party, and the unilateral leader of government this caused a few conflicts.

In a leaked copy of a report, not yet made official and unlikely to be published as is, the trigger for the atrocities committed in Juba on the 15th of December 2014 was twofold. First, the political climate was chaotic, passionate and poisonous. Riek Machar and the opposition supporters had verbally attacked president Salva Kiir for months, launching public campaigns against the president, claiming he was an incompetent political steward. Salva fought fire with fire and exclaimed in no uncertain words that he would take on anyone who would try to take the presidency.

Throughout the recount of the climate leading up to the events of December 15th spelled out by the AU report, it is made clear that Salva and Riek share a deep mutual distrust towards each other. With Salva on more than one occasion expressing a complete lack of confidence in Riek and referencing their long-standing feud from 1991 whenever expressing his distaste for his deputy. Throughout their rule and years in command they had both turned to *their own*, that is to say Salva had turned to Dinka representatives and Riek to Nuer representatives, establish their own factions of government a long ethnic lines.

As things became more and more volatile between the two, a commission headed by Deng Alore tried to reconcile the two leaders - with military intelligence and several generals warning the AU High Level Panel in Sudan that if this failed civil war was but a certainty. (African Union - Leaked, 2015)

In the days before the 15th of December numerous rumours started to spread within the army and within government. The first rumour claimed that Salva had ordered all Nuer soldiers in the army and the presidential guard to be disarmed. This rumour was denied by several commanders, but another one surfaced shortly after - claiming Salva had mobilised his own tribe in Luri. According to the report military intelligence officers were aware of Salva having mobilised a private army, and that Riek knew about this and prepared a resistance force to combat Salva - something he admitted to the AU Commission. While it is unclear from all the testimonies as to what actually happened to cause the attacks night of the 15th of December, it is within a climate of fear, rumours, political intrigue it all sets off. There are competing testimonies as to who fired the first shot, but the deep mistrust and tribalism within South Sudanese society resulted in a rumour laden few days becoming a massacre and launching the country into a war;

“Both are to be blamed – Salva more because he is president. I freed myself from this tribalism since I was in high school. We even discussed that maybe we should arrest these people – but we had a problem. The Dinka will not understand that I was trying to rescue them, they will think I am acting as a Nuer. So we said we do not do this.” - General James Hoth Mai (African Union - Leaked, 2015, p. 9)

In Norwegian Church Aid's Country plan for 2013-2015 on South Sudan, written before the conflict escalated in December of 2013, they point towards an increased insecurity in local communities, noting that an unequal lack of vocational possibilities for young people is a driving factor in increasing conflict and emphasising feelings of favouritism and tribalism within society. While the government have voiced their understanding of this situation, their implementations haven't resulted in any actual change on the ground, made even worse by the general perception among people that corruption and incompetence is hindering any well thought out implementation of policies. (Norwegian Church Aid, 2012, p. 14)

As the civil war has raged on the civilian situation has worsened exponentially. At the beginning of the New Year Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul released a statement through the national healing peace and reconciliation committee where he appealed to the local communities to not get involved in the conflict between Salva and Riek. In the statement he labeled the conflict as political, and not ethnic in nature. (Deng Bul, 2015)

In a statement from the SSCC from the 7th of June 2015 the situation is described as rapidly deteriorating, with community/community violence, basic crime and ethnic divides becoming stronger and stronger, while the rule of law is dissipating, close to sending the country into a state of anarchy. There is increase in violence both within communities and between them, an increase in crime that is met with inaction, and a sense of lawlessness that makes people fear those who are tasked to protect them and a lack of judicial responsibility and response that makes people take the law into their own hands. (South Sudan Council of Churches, 2015, p. 2)

Among people working closely with the conflict on a daily basis there appears to be a fairly pessimistic perception of the conflict. In an e-mail between a handful of development workers this perception is made clear. In describing recent work with locals in local communities around South Sudan one development co-ordinator notes that it is "heartbreaking-but enriching" to see people work so hard for "a better future-against all odds". With the situation being described as "a country on the brink of sliding into anarchy".

5.3 Identity in South Sudan.

Throughout the interviews it is clear from the answers from all of the respondents that there does not appear to any perceived feeling of unity among the South Sudanese. The perception all the respondents had was of a splintered people that were divided along ethnic, confessional and even local-community lines. There was no feeling of national unity, with many South Sudanese only having the South Sudanese flag in common, and not much else. Further, those who work with the Christian churches in South Sudan on a regular basis saw these churches as divided along ethnic lines, in no small part due to strategies for proselytisation laid down by missionaries in the early 1800s. However, the respondents all seem to believe that the church, and more specifically the South Sudan Council of Churches, is capable of being a force of unity for the South Sudanese. The respondents agreed that they were certainly a key unifier in the fight for independence, but that individual church agendas largely took over after independence was achieved.

“Historically, there was a much closer bond between the churches during the war, when they had a joint enemy in the regime up north. When independence arrived, it became a little like in South Africa where the church was united strongly during apartheid, but after it sort of underwent... dispersement. To borrow an analogy from cattle-herding; During the war we were like cattle - we stood around in a circle protecting each other and had a firm grasp of unity. When the external enemy was no longer - we all go out grazing” (Resp3)

One of the respondents commented that one of the issues in creating unity is that there is no way for people to come together in large-scale and culturally diverse group meetings within the country. While the Church of Norway has worked together with the SSCC and the SCC to hold inter-church conferences these are few and relatively small scale. The logistics of having people meet is however tricky as several respondents said to have experienced difficulties in co-ordinating meetings due to a lack of communication technology, infrastructure, and very costly travel expenses.

The lack of proper infrastructure and a decent road-network within South Sudan, in addition to the precarious security situation in the - for a lack of a better term - the wilds, leads to people having to travel by plane to any meeting or event.

While it could be beneficial for national unity, as respondent two points out it would help create ownership of the state and nation as a whole for people on the grass-roots level, it would require substantial financial backing from a third party. (Resp2)

In a report published by the SUDD institute on the 7th of June 2013 - before the events of 15th of December - they highlight what they consider a very broken social interaction between different social groups in South Sudan. Particularly between Dinka and Nuer there is a deep-seeded and long-standing state of suspicion and conflict that have made inter-ethnic relations tense and highly prone to explosive conflicts.

The war brought the two tribes - Dinka and Nuer - together in a manner that was unprecedented. A huge number of Dinka recruits would march through Nuer territory to join up with the SPLA for training in Ethiopia. Here a number of recruits were killed in the upper Nile, and conflict between the people from the two tribes led to many deaths and sporadic conflicts. The antagonistic sentiments that this left between people of the two tribes was very much present among the numerous soldiers who were deployed into South Sudan after being trained in Ethiopia. (The Sudd Institute, 2013, pp. 10-11)

The Sudd report also points to a massive issue for reconciliation in the Upper Nile region. There are significant grudges between the Dinka, the Nuer, the Murle, the Anyuak and other ethnic groups in the region due to unresolved historical conflicts. One issue in particular that the Sudd Institute found was that among the peoples of this region there is a view that there are a lot of unresolved issues within the region. Many people are still unsure what happened to their loved ones, why killings took place and more, this uncertainty and suspicion has created a deep sentiment of animosity between the different groups. An issue that has further divided people along ethnic lines. In short, the report goes a long way in saying that the issues within South Sudan and the historical issues between tribes and ethnic groups are so intense, severe and extensive that the social interaction among people has broken down almost completely. Resulting in such deep animosity between peoples that people at any time can end up in fights with each other on the street, or worse - violent conflict - which was the case in December of that year. (The Sudd Institute, 2013, pp. 11-12)

Further there is a perception of social imbalance among people that increases the feelings of ethnic divides. The Sudd institute report shows that there is a widespread perception that power, wealth and security is divided along ethnic lines. Therein for instance a perception among many people that the government favours certain regions and ethnic groups above others in providing jobs, wealth and even justice.

When it comes to justice the Sudd Institute report is damning in its statements. Many studies seem to suggest that the rule of law is absent in many local communities. In rural communities the customary justice system has been stripped of its judicial power, while the statutory law institutions that are supposed to replace them are inaccessible and unavailable for many. This has resulted in a number of communities taking the law into their own hands, in absence of possibilities for restitution a culture of revenge and community to community violence has taken over. Not only is the judicial system largely absent but a large chunk of South Sudanese do not have access to basic services, which has led to what the Sudd institute call a “need for reconciliation between citizens and the state”. (The Sudd Institute, 2013, p. 12)

5.4 The South Sudanese State

The state is perceived by both respondent 2 and respondent 3 as lacking both in trust and local involvement. When asked about how the people of South Sudan perceive the leadership and rebel leadership in South Sudan, respondent 2 commented that the church and the people as a whole are quite clearly sick of war and conflict that has been ravaging the country and that they put the blame squarely on president Salva Kiir and former vice-president Riek Machar’s shoulders. The average South Sudanese is barely aware of the state’s existence, with no de-facto state-involvement at the local level they feel both abandoned and let down by their government. (Resp1 & Resp2) Further, a key principle of state-hood is the ability to defend and protect its citizens and borders, here the South Sudanese government falls short with multiple local militia ravaging the countryside up and down the country. Many citizens have been driven from their homes and been the

target of systematic extermination campaigns - such as in Juba in December 2014. Banditry, armed robbery and grand theft has also risen sharply over the years, as poverty, famine and a drastically shrinking economy has taken its toll on the local populous more and more people have turned to crime in order to survive. (Resp3) The state then is perceived as nothing more than a token for many people. While parliament and the president's office write and pass laws and policy, there's a clear disconnect between the governing body of South Sudan and the execution at a local level. Here local village committees and NGOs reign supreme, with little to no involvement from the greater South Sudanese state. (Resp3)

Respondent three described state involvement as threefold. At the top you have the state, largely symbolic in nature, responsible for foreign-policy, trade-policy, economic policy and security policy. While some of these policies are followed through, such as trade ,security, national budgets and foreign-policy, most of South Sudan barely see the effects of any of these. Most of the money going into Juba, stays in Juba, while the various states are barely getting any economic support from the state. Corruption is rampant, there's limited check's and balances systems, and the office of president holds unilateral power over the state and the state apparatus. On a second level you have a state by state government, each of the ten states also have their own state-government. There seems to be a similar trend of centralist investment is present here, all the money is invested in big capital cities rather than spread out among the various villages and cities. It does however spread the wealth much more than the state is capable of, managing to at least in part keep policies and politics relevant down to a handful of regions. From the regional level and down to the village and local grassroots level there's a giant disconnect. Policies decided further up rarely if ever seem to be implemented, and most of the state's duties have been overtaken by various NGOs, the church and foreign-investors. While the state does seemingly exist for citizens living in some cities and regions, for the majority of South Sudanese the state is an idea of a nation that has seemingly failed to come to fruition, at least yet. (Resp3)

As we saw in the Sudd report from June of 2013 many people are sceptical to the government. Due to the ethnic conflicts between the different social groups the fact that the president is Dinka has caused people to perceive the Dinka as being part of a privileged elite. This point of view has been exasperated further by the fact that when it was time to chose a leader for the national reconciliation program the president appointed Bishop Deng Bul as the leader, who is also a Dinka. South Sudanese were not foreign to the idea that a reconciliation committee could be used as a tool to expand political power.

As Horjen notes in his book “En lang vei til fred” Riek Machar had used his reconciliation committee to further establish his power in local communities throughout South Sudan, a committee that was shut down by president Salva Kiir when he established the Deng Bul led committee. (The Sudd Institute, 2013, pp. 2-3)

Whenever there is talk about the conflicts in South Sudan; all literature and respondents seem to agree that two men in particular are heavily involved and responsible for the current situation. President Salva Kiir and former Vice president Riek Machar are perceived as the root-cause behind the conflict. When asked about the South Sudanese perception of the two leaders all the respondents answered that there was a general perception that the two men were largely responsible for what had gone wrong. While at the same time acknowledging that removing them would be extremely difficult.

Respondent one described the current conflict-situation as an incredible example of how two men’s disagreements can drag an entire country into war. Further respondent one described the perception of South Sudanese as largely critical, pessimistic and frustrated. Even within his own party, the SPLA, high-ranking party members have been very critical in how President Salva has handled the situation and how the two men had destroyed the dream of a peaceful and unified South Sudan. The perception that respondent one was left with was that the people, while regarding their leaders with a certain level of respect due to their position in society, are largely fed up with the situation and that the dreams that they had for the future has been compromised and destroyed by “useless leadership”. (Resp1)

Respondent two was equally emphatic in the description of the two men, describing them to be largely responsible for all that had gone wrong with South Sudan. The perception of the people was described as a people weary of war, frustrated with their leaders and sick of their conflicts. The conflict in South Sudan is largely seen as one resulting from two men's political differences and personal differences. Respondent two described the two men as destructive to the country's future and that due to their focus on personal and tribal gains, as well as having in all likelihood committed numerous war-crimes should not be involved in any future government or governing of the country.

Yet it was clear that there is a general perception that it will be impossible to simply remove the two men from power or take them to court for their crimes, and it would therefore have to be done somewhat on their terms and with willingness. (Resp2)

Respondent three described the two men as problematic, but that the general perception among people is that they have done something wrong and that they need to apologise. There seems to be a widespread acceptance among people that Salva Kiir and Riek Machar are going to be involved on some level in the future as well, and that people are seemingly willing to give them a chance at rebuilding the trust that they have lost so far, if they go out to the people, stop fighting and apologise for their mistakes. One problem however is that neither man is free to call to peace, both in countries around South Sudan and within the country itself there are leaders and commanders who would be very unhappy to see either side settle the conflict. Further there's a general belief among people that even if the two men managed to come to an agreement this would unlikely stop the fighting, either the consequences of breaking the agreement would be perceived as inconsequential, or the various commanders around the country would continue the fight unabated. While an agreement would certainly be a step in the right direction, it is unlikely that it would end the conflict. (Resp3)

The AU report is clear in placing the blame of the conflict squarely on President Salva Kiir and former Vice President Riek Machar's shoulders, while seeing it as most beneficial to remove them from power, they at the same time see it as implausible. As a representative from the UK put it, "Dinka without Kiir won't settle, and Nuer without Machar won't settle; and yet the two will not work together." (African Union - Leaked,

2015, p. 53) Making it clear that there is no easy way to end the current conflict, nor ease the ethnic tensions between Dinka and Nuer. The ethnic aspect of the conflict is also rising rapidly, with the Murle, having attacked their former allies the Dinka due to feeling neglected and looked over for positions of power. With tribal connections largely influencing the power-distribution within the country, feelings of being overlooked and over-ruled are commonplace.

Another problematic element for the state is that the South Sudanese economy is falling quickly. The war has already cost the country billions of dollars in addition to the cost of human lives and stability. Frontier Economics released a prognosis of the financial and economical cost of the war for South Sudan in January, where they estimated that if the war continued for another 5 years the direct financial impact on South Sudan would be a loss of anywhere between 22.3 and 28 billion dollars on real GDP per capita. In her article regarding the report Financial Times journalist Katrina Manson notes that some experts believe that in reality the cost could be substantially higher as the impact on productivity is undervalued in the report. (Manson, 2015)

In addition to the cost to South Sudan, the authors of the Frontier Economics report predict that if the conflict is not resolved quickly it could cost the entire region both financially and in terms of security, which could cause further issues in the region in terms of security and financial downfall. (Frontier Economics, 2015)

5.5 How does the Norwegian Christian Council work in South Sudan?

The respondents under the employ of the Norwegian Christian Council outlined their work area as relation in character (Resp1 & Resp2). For many years the Norwegian Christian Council have been engaged in pastoral conferences with the South Sudanese and the Sudanese council of churches. Before they split into two separate groups and South Sudan gained their independence, these councils were perceived as important as they allowed for church leaders from both the South and the North to meet and discuss church related issues, the civil war and improve relations between them.

As the war raged on, and the international community became more heavily involved in ensuring peace in South Sudan the importance of these conferences became less clear and contact between the Norwegian Christian Council and the Sudanese council of churches at the time, became less frequent and less prioritised. This was clear during the late 90s, early 2000s, as contact between the two were scarce. (Resp1)

“I would not say we work in South Sudan, but rather that we work with South Sudan. We don’t have any employees there, our work primarily revolves around a solidarity-relation with the national council of churches. During these conferences the theme for the most part is - What can the churches do to promote peace [and reconciliation] in South Sudan?” (Resp2)

Shortly after South Sudanese independence in 2011-2012 a new contact was established with South Sudan Council of Churches. According to respondent 1 there was a perception within Norwegian Christian Council that the church could play a key role in helping reconcile South Sudan, Sudan and its people. This became even more clear after the terrible events of December 2013, with it the focus on national reconciliation became even stronger. In recent times Norwegian Christian Council have begun to look at their role slightly differently as shown by both respondent 1 and 2. It was clear from both their interviews that the focus in the past had been to arrange meetings where churches could discuss and meet, primarily being a facilitator of contact. Whereas more recently the focus has shifted towards a more strategic role of facilitating education for leadership, integrating women into church leadership, and generally increasing leadership competency on the grassroots level and in churches. Both respondent 1 and 2 emphasised that they did not directly manage this form of training, leaving this job to the South Sudanese, while facilitation of training of trainers.

“We follow up [on competence courses] with training of trainers. This way we are able to train new course-holders who can bring this onwards [to their local communities]. Primarily we host a four day course [for a select few] and then from there trainers of trainers [the course-attendees] go out [to train others].” (Resp1)

In the Norwegian Christian Council application to UD for 2014-2015, their work in South Sudan is described as a small piece of a much larger puzzle to promote peace, reconciliation and a more developed society. They particularly point to the Church's position within South Sudan and its potential to influence the grass-roots in a positive direction. In their application for funds for church conferences, they outline three main themes they aim to address are; reducing tensions among people, increasing the position women hold in society, and strengthen inter-church relationships for a united church council to be able to fulfill its potential. (Kirkelig Fredsplatform, 2014, pp. 6-7)

Using leadership training where both conflict sensitivity and conflict mechanisms are taught, attempting to enforce 50% men and 50% women at all conferences and courses, holding training courses on HIV/AIDS and arranging meeting-places for the churches to discuss the future are seen as key elements to achieve this. Respondent two described the desired path forward from a Norwegian Christian Council position to be focused on capacity building, or leadership training with a particular focus on conflict-resolution, conflict-sensitivity and conflict awareness. In training such leaders in conflict-sensitivity, awareness and conflict resolution you provide the tools for the local population to take control of their own situation. The various course-takers would be trained through a training program called *Do No Harm*. A specialized and widely acknowledge training program to help ensure that aid, humanitarian action and project implementations reduce the level of conflict, rather than increase it. While there is a wish to continue with sporadic solidarity conferences, there is a desire to go into a more direct form of aid through the use of courses, training of trainers and conflict-awareness. (Resp2)

5.6 How does Norwegian Church Aid work in South Sudan?

When it comes to Norwegian Church aid they have a long-standing presence and history of cooperation with South Sudan and the South Sudanese. NCA has been present in the region of South Sudan since the 1970s and have been working there throughout the war periods. Due to the organisation's size and history in the region they are involved in many different types of work.

From the political issues of strengthening the role of women in society, and attempting to help lay the groundworks for peace in local communities, to providing basic services such as water supply and sanitation, improving the quality of education, and providing hygiene education to peoples in rural areas. (Norwegian Church Aid, 2011)

Respondent three described the work of the NCA in South Sudan to be varied and extensive. However a key issue they had identified was the need for increasing the linkage between the state and the local community.

In today's South Sudan the local population in a vast majority of the country rely on the help and involvement of various foreign aid organisations. Basic services such as water, food, education and health are all provided outside the state-apparatus. The people have become recipients of services, and there is a recognised necessity to change this dynamic so that people become active citizens - rather than people relying on foreign aid to fulfil basic needs and services.

In order to achieve this respondent three emphasises the importance of working together with the South Sudan Council of churches. The church is the only organisation in South Sudan with a network large enough to reach all of South Sudan, it is well established in many villages, has a long standing position of respect and has over several decades as well as during war-time gained immense trust among the locals. They are also heavily involved with local communities on a more formal level, responsible for a vast majority of educational facilities and health facilities in the country. This means that the church should be one of the state's closest allies when it comes to nation building, a process that South Sudan has largely failed to take to as of yet. With that in mind the NCA are working closely with the South Sudan Council of Churches to reach the local population. This however does require that the SSCC both function as an organisation and is free of the corruption that people perceive instances of government to have. Strengthening the SSCC both in terms of how the organisation itself is run and governed, as well as its influence on the way forward for the nation-state. (Resp3)

This is reflected in the NCA strategic plan document, in which building civil society in South Sudan more or less from the ground up stands as one of the primary goals of the NCA's work in the region. By the establishment of local institutions and links between various local communities through the use of Boma councils. The NCA plan recognise that there is no clear link between government and local communities, and it is therefore necessary to build civil society from the ground up, starting by organising committees and organisation at the local level and work from there. One of the key issues in the strategic plan is to secure water access, education, health care and create the groundwork for a peace building effort at the local level. By promoting and helping organise village water committees, parent teacher associations, health committees and so on.

Identify what issues exist at the individual village level, and then bring villages together in the form of Boma councils to discuss what issues they are all facing, and how they can go about solving these issues. From there the various Boma councils would meet in Payam councils, a collection of several Boma councils, who would then go on to the state level to help categories, organise and develop strategies for the state at large. (Norwegian Church Aid, 2012, pp. 15-17)

Today the reality of such organisation is that most villages do not communicate with each other, only a handful of Boma councils are active and with the link between the various levels of government being fractured the co-ordination of efforts within health, water and sanitation as well as education is currently chaotic. The lack of local government structure is seen as one of the key issues in ending the conflict and ensuring a lasting peace - building the nation through a very structured strategy to improve national and local governance.

What is also clear in the strategic document is that the key partner for facilitating contact with local communities, setting up committees and encoring local governance is the church. In terms of facilitating water and sanitation access we can see that some of the main partners in achieving this locally are churches such as; the Catholic Church, the African Inland Church and the Episcopal Church.

This pattern is repeated within the field of education and peace-building as well, and shows a strong link between the South Sudanese church and the development strategy of the NCA, where the expansive network of churches is seen as key in implementing and facilitating projects. (Norwegian Church Aid, 2012, pp. 34-40)

5.7 The Church in South Sudan

Among the respondents there is a common understanding that the Church can play a very special and vital role in working towards peace. Not only do they have a widespread network of churches that touch every region of South Sudan, they also have a trust among the local population which is unrivalled. (Resp1, Resp2 & Resp3) During the Yao Yao conflict the two sides, Dinka and Nuer were locked in what seemed to be an endless war. Countless mediators from the UN and several other third parties were involved in trying to resolve it to no avail. What finally created a breakthrough in the conflict was when Bishop Paride Taban took charge of the process and began to slowly unravel the root of the conflict between the two sides. After intense efforts from the international community it became clear that the only group with enough trust in both camps was the church, and in particular Paride Taban. Being from South Sudan, having a well-established trust among the people and having individuals who enjoy a massive amount of respect among the people such as Paride Taban - who we will expand upon later - the church was able to resolve the conflict in a manner that none other would have been able to. (Resp3)

“If you want to achieve a local peace, who are the main actors? Who do we need to bring together? - We need the traditional leadership, we need this and that, right. The ability to work [in that context]. None of us others can do that. We don't know the local communities, but they [church and priests] know the local community. Some of these peace processes locally in East-Equatoria end up with the slaughter of bulls, drinking blood and other traditional peace-[rituals]. Here the church is capable of going into the local community and employ some of these local mechanisms to resolve the conflict.”
(Resp3)

This process of using local conflict resolution enjoyed a great deal of success and international recognition in South Sudan through the People to People process in Wunlit back in 1999.

According to John Ashworth the foundations for a people to people conference was laid down a year earlier in Lokichoggio. Here influential chiefs and elders on the west bank of the Nile from Dinka and Nuer, as well as priests and church leaders from the region, came together to discuss peace and improve relations.

During this meeting Ashworth identifies a number of key elements that are important for the Wunlit conference.

The first key element they considered was to identify a religious and biblical basis for peace, this to build a momentum locally and attempt to push the grassroots towards peace, and ensure that people were actually interested in a peace conference. The second key element was to build trust between the different leaders. This was done through the use of stories. The act of telling each other stories became one of the fundamental principles in building trust between the two sides, as a way of sharing pain and suffering with each other. For several days they would tell stories of the ongoing conflict, of pain and suffering of the people and the vast destruction it had wrought onto them. The third element was to bring in traditional justice and reconciliation processes, to ground the peace efforts not only in religious duty and popular desire, but also ground it within ancestral tradition. The fourth element sought to ensure that a community, such as the Dinka and Nuer, could achieve and ensure peace without the explicit approval of military leaders such as John Garang and Riek Machar. Traditionally peace was not an agreement between two men, but rather between two communities, they therefore established that they did not need the two influential leaders to agree to peace - this was a conflict between two communities and not one decided by two men. Throughout the discussions a fifth element appeared, that of imagery and symbolism. Bishop Nathaniel Garang held up a heavy chair above his head - *the chair of leadership* - and shouted for help to carry the burden of leadership. A chief rushed forward to help him and the use of symbolism and imagery became very much a part of the process. (Ashworth, 2014, pp. 154-155)

This carried over to Wunlit. The conference itself was protected by military might by the then military commander, now president, Salva Kiir. The preparations for it however was ingrained with symbolic acts. One of these, mentioned in Ashworth's book, was the exchange of visits. Five chiefs and a women's representative was accompanied by

Church leaders and walked together to exchange visits to other communities. Upon arrival their feet would be washed by local women as a welcome, chiefs would offer to be held as hostages to guarantee the safety of the others an offer that was always declined as per tradition. (Ashworth, 2014, pp. 155-156)

The importance of symbolism is even further emphasised though the sacrifice of a white bull - the Mabior. The Mabior holds a great deal of importance within cultural, religious and ancestral tradition in South Sudan. The sacrifice of such a bull is a sacred act, an act that infuses the oath made, such as a peace agreement, with powerful magic. Anyone who breaks an oath made through the sacrifice of the Mabior will be cursed by the curse of death. The more the bull fights as it is being sacrificed and the fiercer it is, the worse the curse is if you dare break the oath. The symbolic power of the sacrifice of Mabior was so strong that many chiefs considered the agreement as unbreakable and was ready to go home after the sacrifice. With one chief proclaiming;

“You, Dinka and Nuer, I caution you to be very careful of what you have observed in Mabior. It was very wild. I have never seen a bull as wild as that bull. Mabior will take revenge on anyone who revives these conflicts.” (Ashworth, 2014, p. 156)

“It is very clear that the people lean on the church. When the state fails as totally as it has in this instance, the church is the only South Sudanese institution which is left for the people.” (Resp3)

The church in South Sudan consists of many different church societies. The most prominent of which are the Catholic Church, the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian church and the African Inland church. During the revolution against Khartoum the church played an instrumental role throughout the war, both in relieving civilians, and cataloging the many bombing raids on South Sudanese civilians by Sudanese bombers. When the war was at its most chaotic, and communication was scarce and difficult, the churches around the country played a vital role in recording bombings, casualties, and victims of these bombings. While at the same time, when almost all other aid-organisations left the region of South Sudan due to hazardous working conditions, the church was always there to help the people and continue humanitarian efforts. (Ashworth, 2014, p. 9)

While the church was largely believed to be unified, the experience of the various respondents speak of a splintered church, lacking in leadership and unity.

While it is clear that the church as a whole stood very much gathered during the war, in the aftermath the lack of a singular focus has caused more division than unity. Each of the respondents had different stories to tell about how the SSCC had been mismanaged. How corruption and poor leadership had severely hurt the council's legitimacy. A jostling for position had led to key church leaders to feel sidelined and run over by smaller and less influential churches - causing splintering in all directions. After CPA the churches began to work on their own agendas and their own projects, largely in isolation from the rest of the churches in the country. The strong and unified front that they had shown and displayed during wartime was no longer there, and the effects of this has been visible in the SSCC. (Resp1, Resp2 & Resp3)

As a result of what two of the respondents labeled as "useless leadership" (Resp1 & Resp2) in the SSCC and the need to once again show a more unified front the SSCC's leadership was replaced. With the support of church leaders from the largest churches in South Sudan the Presbyterian Peter Gai has been appointed the new chairman of the SSCC, and the Catholic Church - South Sudan's largest church - has agreed to find and appoint a general-secretary of their choice. With the new leadership having support from all of the major churches, including Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul, there is a perception of hope when it comes to the future role of the SSCC in terms of peace and reconciliation advocacy. With Gai being a Nuer this also adds to an perception of a balance of power between the two tribes. Peter Gai is also highly respected within several church communities in South Sudan, enjoying a great deal of respect from locals as well as church leaders throughout the country. (Resp3)

The results of this change was almost immediate, with statements from the SSCC becoming considerably more frequent, strongly worded and with more signatories. Before the change there were still frequent statements released, but many of them came from individual churches and organisations, such as the Catholic Church, or the CNHPR, or other individual churches. Exemplified with their publication of “Go Deeper”. (Loro, et al., 2015) What we see after the leadership change is that first and foremost the churches seem unified again.

In the first statement released by the SSCC after the change all of the *major players* in the different South Sudanese churches had signed the document. Peter Gai from the Presbyterians, Archbishop Lukudu Loro of the Catholic Church, Archbishop Deng Bul of the Episcopal Church, Dr Majok Dau of the Pentecostal Church, Bishop Wani Lemi of African Inland Church, all stood as signatories - displaying a unity in statement that had been lacking. (South Sudan Church Leaders, 2015)

Chapter 6 - Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will utilise the theoretical tool-kit I developed in the second chapter and use it to analyse the empirical data from Chapter 5. In doing so I am fully aware that I am looking at a highly complicated conflict situation and focusing on a small part of it, namely that which can be seen through reconciliation and restorative justice theories. Taking Cecilia Clegg's societal reconciliation theory as a foundation, I will start by analysing how identity is perceived in South Sudan. I will proceed in my analysis by looking at the South Sudanese state, and analysing it in accordance with restorative justice and reconciliation theory. Within that section of the chapter I will also look closer at the leadership in South Sudan. I will describe the dynamics between Salva Kiir and former vice president Riek Machar, as well as their role in the current conflict. In analysing their role in a reconciliatory approach I will be looking specifically at *accountability* theory and *amnesty* theory.

As I proceed I will discuss how we can rethink the concept of reconciliation and restorative justice in the South Sudanese context to help lay the groundwork for creating a national identity among South Sudanese. Further I will look at how some of the challenges in South Sudan mean that we have to rethink the theoretical approach for it to be useful. From there I will analyse the role of the church using John Paul Lederach's pyramid of actors and his theories on reconciliation to better understand what impact the church can have on this new approach. From there I will look at how the NCA and the NCC work in South Sudan and analyse it through the theoretical spectacles that we created for ourselves in chapter two.

Finally I will discuss what these theoretical and empirical findings can tell us about South Sudan, what questions we are left to ponder and study, as well as sum up what the analysis has uncovered and what we have discussed throughout the chapter. Throughout the analysis we have to emphasise clearly that we are purposefully and intentionally limiting how broadly we look at the country, the people and the situation in South Sudan.

What we are looking at is truly a small piece of a much larger puzzle, and that has to be recognised throughout.

6.2 Identity in South Sudan

This section ties directly together with the empirical data uncovered in both “The Nature of the Conflict” section and “Identity in South Sudan” section in the previous chapter. What we can see from those two sections is that the war in South Sudan can be perceived as a conflict between different identities. A conflict where tribal connections form the backbone of your identity and one where these identities in turn have dragged people into a political conflict and caused a war along ethnic lines.

By looking at the empirical data in light of the theoretical elements of *negative identity*, as presented by Cecilia Clegg, we see the possibility that South Sudan might be suffering from being over-reliant on a *negative-identity spiral*. The close unity experienced among South Sudanese during the war against Khartoum’s rule particularly in the church, and the split of identities that seem to have occurred in the post-war society that emerged seem to indicate that defining oneself as *not the other* could be said to be prevalent among South Sudanese. The key of a *negative-identity* mentality is that you think of yourself as something different than what you perceive as the threatening other. During the war, the perception held by the respondents and in the literature, seems to indicate that the different tribes were tied together in their struggle by the fact that they were different than the Arabs in the North. They felt, as Horjen spells out, like Africans that were being subjugated by an Arabic colonial power. (Horjen, 2014, pp. 21-25)

When the war ended and Khartoum lost a significant deal of its influence over the region many perceived the threatening other - the Arabs - as significantly less threatening. In this environment it is possible that this negative-identity vacuum caused people to begin to look inside their own country for a new threatening other.

We should not underplay the historical relationship between the different tribes and the difficulties they have had in the past, but at the same time we would be doing South Sudanese a disservice to overplay those as well. What we see by looking at the the SSCC during this time, one of the few organisations that have representation among all peoples in South Sudan, there is a common perception that they were united during the war. When it ended the different churches struggled to work wholly together - dispersing like cattle that went to graze wherever the grass was green enough for them as a respondent said. (Resp3)

We see similar, albeit a more personal aspect of this between the president and the vice president Salva Kiir and Riek Machar. The general perception seems to be that when the war ended the two men slowly but surely began to move more towards their tribal groups, using much of their power to build their power base through their own tribe.

Salva gathered his supporters among his own tribe - the Dinka - and Riek did the same with his - the Nuer. Resulting in a divided government structure where significant seats of power and government were divided between the two tribes and where each of the men kept to their men and their side. (African Union - Leaked, 2015, pp. 6-7)

It is in this perceived environment that a new negative-identity is born. Being Dinka becomes the opposite of being Nuer and vice versa. The truth of that statement was unfortunately exemplified with horrible emphasis with the killings of Nuer on the 15th of December 2013. It is clear from all the reports, investigations and testimonies from that day that people were killed and targeted in a systematic extermination for being Nuer. With each transgression on the basis of tribal background the negative-identity relationship between the two grows. This negative identity climate could perhaps then be viewed as not only working to destroy the national unity between peoples, but also to reinforce the tribal connections that each person experience, so much so that it makes national unity very difficult. In a negative-identity much of your self-understanding is defined by not being the other, and as such it would be challenging to see how two tribes locked in a negative-identity mentality could manage to view each-other as unified countrymen.

Viewing identity in such an antagonistic way fuels the negative identity spiral, and what is perhaps even worse, it forces it upon others within its sphere of influence - affecting all elements of society.

What we find in the empirical data seem to suggest that there is a lack of a national identity and a national unity. That tribal-identities bears a much heavier weight among people. You are seemingly perceived as being of your tribe first and of South Sudan second. Here we can for instance mention the appointment of Archbishop Deng Bul as the head of the CNPHR. (The Sudd Institute, 2013, p. 3) Deng Bul is unquestionably a widely respected man; he is the archbishop of the Episcopal Church, one of the larger churches in South Sudan, and perceived by many as a messenger of God. Yet his appointment as the head of the CNPHR has been met with significant scepticism among people in South Sudan. The main issue being quoted is that Deng Bul is Dinka and because of this his loyalties are questioned. His tribal-identity is put in the forefront, with his position and his many years as an influential member of society unable to trump his tribal-connections in the eyes of many South Sudanese. It is perhaps interesting that when the SSCC were to choose a new leader they chose a respectable and highly influential Nuer - the *opposite* of Salva and Deng Bul in terms of tribal-connections. Either this is simply a curious coincident, or a deliberate choice to avoid similar accusations and issues that against the SSCC. While we should most definitely not underplay Peter Gai's influence and the level of respect he enjoys among South Sudanese as the key reason why he was asked to lead the SSCC, it is an interesting fact to take note of that he is in fact a Nuer.

In the recent Human Rights Report on transgressions against the Murle people, the tribal affiliations and the position of tribe over nation is once again made clear. In the case of the Murle we find another group used as a reference point for negative-identity mentality. The report notes that a number of South Sudanese have spoken derogatory about the Murle, labling them as overly aggressive, difficult to manage and especially problematic. Further it is made clear that within the Army there are a number of commanders that view the Murle with scepticism due to their tribe's role in the YauYau rebellion.

Throughout the report it is made abundantly clear that Murle is perceived as different from Nuer and Dinka. Much like it was made clear in the Sudd Institute report; Dinka is perceived as different from Nuer.

This type of negative mentality, where the actions of the relative few seem to be defined as actions by entire tribes, is perhaps one of the reasons why it has been difficult to achieve unity among South Sudanese. (Human Rights Watch, 2014)

In South Sudan we find a number of different conflicts that have been raging for many decades. Throughout the conflict, allies have become enemies and enemies have become allies. The lines between who is the victim and who is the perpetrator becomes difficult to distinguish. As the empirical data shows, the rule of law can be categorised as largely absent from considerable parts of South Sudan. This has led to a reported cycle of revenge killings, communities and individuals have taken the law into their own hands and this has further blurred the line between perpetrator and victim. Further it is clear that there is not a single group of people that has been untouched by the conflicts and wars in South Sudan. All peoples, tribes and individuals are in some way touched by the war and the conflicts it has brought with it. These processes can arguably be said to have fractured the country in such a way that tribal connections have become so dominant as to render nationality more or less irrelevant and national unity a distant dream.

6.3 The South Sudanese state

In this section I will be taking a closer look at the empirical data uncovered in section “5.3 The South Sudanese State” from the previous chapter, as well as section “5.4 Salva and Riek”. This is done in order to give the analysis a better focus which both include the state and the state-level actors. By merging the two sections into one in the analysis both the structure of the state and the role of the individual leaders within that structure can be analysed as one element.

Let's look at the six recommended practices outlined by Llewellyn and Philpott regarding Reconciliation and identify those that are relevant in terms of national governance. The first practice recommended go straight to the core of the state's responsibilities namely that of just political and economic institutions. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 26-27)

As we have seen in our analysis of South Sudanese identity; when viewed through our theoretical lens it seems suggest that identity may be strongly linked to tribal connections. These are further emphasised by a possible negative-identity spiral that serves to increase the reliance on these identity markers. When we transfer this perspective from the greater societal structure and look at a sub-structure such as government we see that there are a possible myriad of problems associated not only with the way government is run, but also in the very structure of the institutions. One issue that the NCA have identified as a key component in the conflict is a centre/periphery dynamic which is at best uneven. This is displayed in part through an investment and power distribution bias from the government. Which can be judged to favour certain tribal and ethnic groups more than others. There is for instance a perception that President Salva Kiir favours members of the Dinka tribe for positions in cabinet and his circle of advisors, while the former vice president Riek Machar favoured members of his tribe the Nuer. While perhaps not an entirely accurate understanding of the realities of government, it does speak towards a perception by both outsiders and people inside the country that certain groups are favoured above others - and that this mainly occurs a long tribal lines, which in itself can cause feelings of neglect. There is for instance little doubt that state-income has not been invested evenly across the country. A majority of the money has been invested centrally such as in the capital of Juba. How much of that is tribal bias and how much is poor prioritising or lack of funds is unknown. The perception however is that positions in power of government are based on tribal connections.

If we view this perception as a common thread among most South Sudanese we begin to see an issue with the way government is structured, particularly the seat of the presidency. In a society where we could feasibly argue that tribal identity carries more weight than national identity, the seat of presidency can potentially become a symbol of the tribal hierarchy within the country.

As the empirical data seem to suggest; there is a perception that Dinka are favoured by the government, primarily because the President is Dinka. It is therefore perceived, as the Murle rebellion suggests, that Dinka hold a privileged position within the country as an extension of holding the presidency. In such a climate the presidency would perhaps find it difficult to be perceived as a representation of an entire nation, and rather be seen as the symbolic representation of which tribe is dominant in the country today. This becomes even more problematic as the seat of presidency in South Sudan holds considerable power over all branches of government, and has unilateral control over the government's military. The more power the position has, the more power the tribe of the sitting president would be perceived to hold. In such a climate it could perhaps be argued that the position itself reinforces the influence of tribal identities rather than providing a unified nation with a figurehead. The presidency then becomes a destructive element in a negative-identity spiral, which we touched upon earlier in the chapter, increasing the tensions between the different tribes and a perception of the existence of favoured policy across tribal and ethnic lines.

The second practice outlined by Llewelyn and Philpott is that of recognising and acknowledging the past and victims of criminal acts. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 26-27) In South Sudan the lines between perpetrator and victim are interchangeable. In Bor, Riek Machar ordered ethnic cleansing of Dinka. In Juba, Dinka elements of the tiger battalion took it upon themselves to ethnically cleanse the capital from Nuer. On the way to Ethiopia, Dinka recruits were killed by Nuer tribes, and throughout the war the different tribes found themselves both at war with Khartoum and each other. (The Sudd Institute, 2013, pp. 10-11) In Pibor the Murle found themselves at war and in conflict with the Dinka, the Nuer and the government's forces. (Human Rights Watch, 2014) Not only that, but the recruitment and use of child-soldiers means that many perpetrators are themselves victims. While there is a widespread desire to know what happened to their loved ones among many South Sudanese, the vicious cycle of revenge killings that is present makes the situation chaotic and the line between victim and perpetrator almost impossible to distinguish.

With the rule of law being absent from considerable areas of South Sudan, many victims have taken the law into their own hands, becoming perpetrators themselves in the process. Inter-community fighting has become so extensive in certain areas along the Upper-Nile that it is difficult to see what was sparked by the war between Salva and Riek, and what was sparked by other events between the different communities. Certainly the leadership has to take responsibility at some level, but who are the victims and who are the perpetrators is very much a question up for debate.

While acknowledgement of each tribe's suffering could perhaps alleviate some of the pent-up anger that many South Sudanese feel, the share scope and breadth of suffering that has been inflicted upon the country could further fracture the tribes. Especially considering the lack of solid justice institutions and security to protect civilians, and to ensure that transgressions are registered and documented when they happen.

The third practice Llewellyn and Philpott mention is that of reparations (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 26-27) which can also be seen as rather problematic in the current South Sudanese context. With the lines between victim and perpetrator blurred to such an extent; who is deserving of reparations? Should the various tribes pay tribute and reparation for the damage they have done to each other, or should the government provide reparations to citizens who have been displaced by the war? Many citizens have lost their livelihoods, their farms and their herds because of the conflict. If all those displaced are given reparations the economic impact would be severe. Even if the issue of who should be given reparations were to be resolved, how would they go about finding the resources to provide this? South Sudan's economy is shrinking rapidly, with economic forecasts of the situation to predict South Sudan to lose approximately \$22.5 billion in a five year period, and those figures are deemed too positive by some analysts. Their main source of income, oil exports, has been dramatically reduced through the war, and with the fact that they have a fixed-price agreement with Sudan regarding oil-transport that income is also vulnerable to market changes. It would appear, at least in part, that due to the vast amount of people directly affected by the war, the share scope of victims and perpetrators involved, reparations would be truly challenging.

Even if you could somehow figure out who are to be given reparations, without purposefully or accidentally discriminating against anyone, the country's economy would perceivably be unable to cope with a significant amount of reparations. (Frontier Economics, 2015)

Already we are beginning to see how engaging in traditional approaches to reconciliation may prove challenging in the South Sudanese context. Many of the systems that these practices seemingly require are absent in the South Sudanese context, or severely underdeveloped.

Simultaneously we can also see how reconciliation process could easily become chaotic given the very real lack of clear accountability, where the line between victim and perpetrator is diffuse and difficult to affirm. Not only that, but as we will see next accountability has become difficult to ascertain in the current situation.

Fourth, is the practice of accountability (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 26-27) where I have to repeat the chaotic situation that South Sudan is in. It is plain to see from the data, the respondents and the reports released regarding the situation that the line between victim and perpetrator is difficult to judge appropriately. While it is clear that the country's leadership - namely Salva Kiir and Riek Machar - have to be seen as at least somewhat if not entirely accountable for the chaotic situation South Sudan is in, there is a general perception that even if the two were to decide to end the war, there are forces behind them and around them that would not. The general perception among respondents, and recent reports surfacing regarding the situation, indicate that neither are in complete control of all military commanders, and that some are considered likely to continue to fight even if a peace-agreement that the two men decide to respect is in place. Yet it is clear that the perception of the people is that their leadership has failed them, and that they are the ones that need to apologise and make right what the country has become.

The SSCC has been very clear in its condemnation to pin-point the personal conflict between Salva and Riek as the root cause, and while our data indicates that the issue is seemingly rooted deeper than a political conflict, it is this perception that the people and

the church operate from and have presented of the conflict. However, inter-community fighting has become so extensive in certain areas along the Upper-Nile that it is difficult to see what has been sparked by the war between Salva and Riek, and what has been sparked by other events between the different communities.

It is also difficult to hold leaders with such influence accountable for transgressions, or even to have them admit to these transgressions. They are in positions of substantial power and as such can not be directly subjugated to stand accountable for their actions. In cases such as this, Louise Malinder points out that the use of amnesty deals are useful in both holding individuals accountable and giving those guilty the chance to tell how, why and when things happened without the fear of criminal prosecution. It can be utilised to enable a process that could provide closure and acknowledgement to families who have lost their loved ones throughout the conflicts. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 15-152)

In South Sudan however Riek and Salva do not represent solely themselves, but have become representatives of their tribes as exemplified by the statements made by troika diplomatic envoys. They exclaimed their frustration over the fact that Dinka would not settle without Salva, and Nuer would not settle without Riek, which could also be interpreted as signs of the war having taken on the dimension of two tribes jostling for power.

What amnesty does provide is a possible way for Salva Kiir and Riek Machar to take responsibility for their role in the conflicts without risking severe legal ramifications. This could help lower the bar for when the two leaders would be willing to accept responsibility for the situation. As we see in the theoretical works of Van Ness regarding accountability; the act of taking responsibility and working to restore the trust of the population is an important step in restorative justice. To say “I’m sorry” without risking criminal persecution could provide a means for the leaders to begin to accept accountability, and for the people to feel like their suffering and despair has been acknowledged. Yet as respondents have pointed out and numerous reports have stated; It is highly unlikely that either of the two will simply give in regardless of being offered an amnesty deal or not. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, p. 134)

The fifth and sixth practices for reconciliation as mentioned by Llewelyn and Philpott go together hand in hand, namely that of apology and forgiveness (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 26-27) As respondent three stated when describing how many South Sudanese felt; “They [Salva and Riek] need to say they are sorry”. (Resp3) The people, while frustrated and saddened by the current situation, are seemingly ready to forgive their leaders for their role in the current conflict. While both respondents and reports describe a people that feel betrayed and forgotten, the SSCC’s statements show a clear intent, desire and willingness to forgive Salva and Riek for their roles in the current situation.

“Forgiveness seems foolish in the world of politics and militarism, but the Church of the Crucified Christ who, even as he was dying, said ‘*Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing*’ (Luke 23:34), forgiveness is the only way. [...] To choose forgiveness and sacrifice is to choose greatness.” (South Sudan Council of Churches, 2015)

What we end up seeing is that much of what is required for national reconciliation amongst the peoples of South Sudan is seemingly lacking. Respondents speak of a non-existent infrastructure for transport, an absence of communication possibilities and a generally poorly built infrastructure. Various reports and SSCC statements speak of a severe lack of adequate justice institutions capable of handling the most basic of criminal-cases, with people fearing those charged with their protection. These institutions are unable to handle basic day to day criminal proceedings, let alone something as huge as safeguarding a reconciliation process - which can be painful under the best of circumstances and dangerous if not handled with care, sensitivity to just practices and adequate security measures. Reconciliation as outlined in these influential theoretical models may not be possible within the current South Sudanese context. Yet it is clear that the betterment of relations between the different peoples in South Sudan is necessary. Perhaps the South Sudanese example shows us that we need to rethink certain elements of reconciliation theory and adapt it to fit the context we are working within.

We find support for this in the writings of reconciliation scholar Braithwaite. To engage in reconciliation through the use of *non-truth*, such as not bringing up violations the *other* has done against you and your own, is documented to be beneficial in bettering relations between peoples. In many instances, Braithwaite points out, *non-truth* has worked seemingly just as well as *truth* in reconciliation processes. (Llewellyn & Philpott, 2014, pp. 225-227) This discovery points to there being more to reconciliation and restorative justice practices than dealing with past atrocities directly.

When you remove the *truth* element from reconciliation it could be argued to become a process that primarily works to improve relationships through interaction. It is with this as a point of departure that we can perhaps begin to see how reconciliation practices can be used to better relations for a different purpose, such as national-identity creation. When we combine Cecilia Clegg's theory on identity renegotiation as key to reconciliation, and Braithwaite's discovery that reconciliation processes without the *truth* element can still help improve relationships; we find that through creating better relationships with the *other* we renegotiate our own identity.

As creating a national identity could be argued to revolve around finding a common identity, it could perhaps indicate that reconciliation approaches can help greatly in that effort as well. With that in mind we can perhaps use the different elements within the theories of reconciliation and restorative justice as a point of departure in helping lay the groundwork in creating a national identity. We will come back to the theoretical reasoning and arguments for this approach in section 6.6.

6.4 The Church in South Sudan

In this section I will show how expansive the church's network within South Sudan is and its role among the people. I will do so by using Lederach's pyramid of actors as presented in chapter two. Through this theoretical lens I will show how the Church can impact South Sudanese society, why the SSCC is both perceived as important and why they are an important actor to be aware of.

First I will identify how much of society the church is able to impact, based on Lederach's pyramid of actors and theories on reconciliation. In that process I will also make clear what areas it will have difficulty impacting and why. I will then proceed by using Braithwaite's cultural adaptability theory to understand how the church is able to impact areas of society that others are not, as well as analyse how willing and effective it is in doing so.

Interestingly, when viewed through Lederach's pyramid of actors the church in South Sudan is present on every single level of the societal pyramid. The top level is where the main actors in a conflict tend to dominate proceedings. On this arena the church do appear to at least have a symbolic and moral position of influence. (Lederach, 2013, pp. 40-41) The SSCC have increasingly been present during IGAD negotiations between Riek and Salva, and their presence has both been appreciated and encouraged.

What we also see is that a few highly influential leaders such as Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban or the leader of the CNPHR Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul also occupy this level, being present in mediation and mediating conflicts. Yet at this level the church becomes, to a large degree, a bystander. They become a third party that can only participate indirectly in the negotiations as mediators or as a moral voice. As the church is not on either side of the conflict - it does not command any armies - nor is it directly mediating the IGAD negotiations, it becomes difficult for the church to be decisively influential at the top level.

The middle level is arguably where we find the SSCC. As Lederach points out; at this level you have the leadership that isn't as visible to the media at large, and leadership that while influential do not have a direct impact on the top level. Actors at this level are generally not directly tied to top-level actors, yet are able to reach an expansive audience through their sphere of influence. Actors at this level usually operate on an organisational level within society. (Lederach, 2013, pp. 41-42) The SSCC is a council of the Christian churches in South Sudan, as thus they are both by intention and in practice meant to organise collective efforts across churches. They operate on the church's organisational level.

While nothing the SSCC does goes directly to the grassroots churches, it does influence the different church societies within South Sudan, who then in turn influence their grassroots churches. It is ideally though the SSCC that nation-wide projects or strategies can be employed and created, to coordinate the different churches in the country. Thus fitting nicely in line with Lederach's thinking and definition of middle-range leadership and a middle-range actor.

Yet while the SSCC is an organisation in the middle-range leadership, they lead churches which are arguably at the grassroots level, the third and final level of actors presented by the Ledearch. By the grassroots level I simply mean people who live every-day lives within the various local communities in the country. (Lederach, 2013, pp. 42-43) While perhaps not under direct control of the SSCC, the numerous churches all over South Sudan are all part of a greater network of churches. Individual churches and clergy are very much present at the grassroots level, working regularly within their local communities and having a trust among locals that few can match because of it.

This type of consistent presence throughout all levels of actors is unique to the church in South Sudan. Neither the government or any third party NGO can claim to have one organisation at every level of Lederach's pyramid. The SSCC while itself occupying the middle-range, has a direct influence on grassroots leadership, and simultaneously are present in the top-leadership bracket as well. In many ways the SSCC then speaks for the people and work with the people in a different way than most, if not all other organisations are able to.

We can see that this connection to the grassroots level played a vital role in the organisation, execution and process of the *Wunlit people to people conference* as described in chapter 5. As Braithwaite points out; the cultural adaptability required to successfully implement difficult processes, such as reconciliation, can only be achieved by organisations and individuals that work closely with the grassroots in a given context. The success of Wunlit, with all its traditional mechanisms, imagery and rituals, strongly indicate that the church has the ability to engage with the grassroots in a way that is both effective as well as in a way that local people understand and value.

Despite being a Christian church it is clear that the South Sudanese church is open to adapting its approach to use traditional rituals. The example of the Mabior – the sacrificial bull – at Wunlit shows that the church is not afraid to use rituals deriving from traditional religion in order to achieve peace. (Ashworth, 2014, p. 156)

Their influence on all levels of society gives them a unique possibility to act in ways and areas where others can not. Braithwaite explains that while not all traditional practices or traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are always suited in a modern setting, individuals who are aware of the cultural sensitivities can adapt the cultural vernacular to ground complicated processes of peace, reconciliation, restorative justice, mediation or other more modern concept with the traditional and ancestral. What we see Ashworth describe in his rendering of the Lokichoggio meeting is that the participants in dialogue with church leaders are able to use traditional vernacular to justify and establish new practices within their ancestral traditions. (Ashworth, 2014, pp. 154-155) *Wunlit* showed how the church as a whole skillfully adapted to traditional rituals and practices.

In the Yao conflict presented in 5.7 church leaders such as Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban showed that they both had the influence and the trust among the local population to mediate a conflict on their terms. It was a conflict that literally everyone else was unable to solve. Both UN diplomats and high level mediators were unable to bring the two sides to the table. Here Bishop Emeritus Paride Taban, with the help of the church, brought the two sides to the table through a high degree of cultural sensitivity and willingness to adapt to the local context. Showing similarly to *Wunlit*, that not only does the church have the potential to act within all levels of society, it does so as well. It could be argued that it is because of the strong influence and reputation at the grassroots level, combined with the willingness and ability to adapt to traditional concepts that the church is able to take on these tasks with such efficiency and local trust.

6.5 Analysing the work of the NCC and the NCA

This section analyses how the NCA and NCC work towards their goals in South Sudan. In this analysis the empirical data regarding the two organisations has been merged to enable a more comparative analysis. Within this section both the empirical data from section 5.5 and 5.6 in the previous chapter have been included with that in mind. This way we can compare their approaches, their experiences and better understand how our theoretical findings may help these organisations reach their presented goals.

The NCC work in a very indirect way with issues in South Sudan. Until recently their work in South Sudan has mainly revolved around reinforcing the relationship between the Norwegian Church and the South Sudanese church, as well as acting as a bridge between the various churches by arranging various pastoral conferences. They have been especially involved in arranging conferences for the Christian churches in Sudan and South Sudan, so that the two would be able to meet and discuss church related issues. Shortly after the South Sudanese independence in 2011-2012 this approach changed and they began to work more specifically to help the SSCC with reconciliation efforts. Where they primarily look for the SSCC to present what they need help with or support to do, and then attempt to facilitate that help in any way they can. In looking at the relationship through Lederach's models we can see that the relationship began as direct contact on the middle-range level, and then gradually developed into a relationship where that middle-range contact is used to influence the grassroots level through local churches by facilitating "training to trainers courses". It is similarly clear that the NCC see the church as the most ideal facilitator of these projects and training courses on the grassroots level.

The NCC present three main goals of their involvement. The main aim is to decrease tensions between peoples within the country and to work towards reconciliation. Second they wish to increase the position women have in society and to promote more women into roles of church leadership. During interviews it was made clear that the idea behind this was specifically because women can provide a different perspective to situations and perhaps add a more long-term vision to the discussion.

The NCC's commitment to ensure and increase women's activity in these processes is exemplified through a standing demand of a 50/50 men and women participation at all conferences and training courses. Women are seen as an integral part of the NCCs strategy, and one element that is present in every one of their plans and projects. The importance of dialogue with the SSCC and the grassroots communities are emphasised as important.

When speaking about the role of women in reconciliation and peace-processes the respondents from the NCC were very clear to express that all their projects had a desired requirement of 50/50 participation of men and women. Explaining that the unique perspective women provided looked at the conflict differently than what men tended to do. The respondents highlighted that women generally tended to be more concerned about the future of their children and family, thus making the female perspective vital for the long-term future of the country.

The NCA while more expansive in their projects, share many of their goals with the NCC. They too are looking to influence reconciliation among people through the church, in fact the NCA have a clear trend in leaning on the church to facilitate different aspects of their aid-work. The church is used as a facilitator in everything from basic needs such as water-security and food-security to the long-term projects involving reconciliation, the strengthening of civil society and an improvement in inter-community relationships. It is interesting to note that in all of these projects the various churches and the SSCC plays a vital role in facilitation of service on the grassroots level - showing clearly NCA's perception of the church's influence on the grassroots level.

The facilitation of Boma councils, payam councils and similar grassroots governance projects show that the NCA are hoping to begin processes of reconciliation and peace on the grassroots level. As we can see in the strategic documents as well as in the responses from respondent three the establishment and facilitation of these projects have been executed with the help of the various local churches in South Sudan.

In terms of women's involvement the documents go a long way in establishing that women play a unique and integral role in reconciling the peoples of the country. Respondent three commented that women in today's South Sudan do much more for reconciliation than has been published in the media, and considerably more than they have been given credit for. In many conflicts and issues it is women who have been able to end the stalemate and help bring the parties to the table. Their continued involvement in reconciliation efforts is considered vital for long-term peace and prosperity in the country.

Taking all these elements into account, the process on the grassroots level and the work of the NCC and the NCA it could be argued that supporting the SSCC in an effort to help establish a national identity would fall right in line with the work already present.. If we presuppose that a common-identity in some shape or form is a necessity for reconciliation, then national identity creation should be high on the list of priorities for both organisations.

6.6 Evolving a national identity through reconciliation.

In this section I will take what we have discovered in the previous sections of the analysis and put it all together. I will explain how the importance of *Ubuntu* in South Africa can serve as a blueprint in inferring the importance of a *common understanding* within a reconciliation process. I will explain why this *common understanding* is so vital and how we can use practices within reconciliation and restorative justice theory to help foster it. After going through the theoretical explanations of its importance, I will present how this would be best implemented as indicated by the theoretical analysis and the empirical data uncovered in the previous chapter.

What we have seen throughout this chapter is that much of the systems and structures reconciliation and restorative justice theories depend on are absent in the South Sudanese context. Without these structures reconciliation can prove both difficult and problematic.

Much of what would aid a reconciliation effort, such as a proper judicial system, simply isn't present. As we have seen earlier in the chapter; reconciliation is essentially a renegotiation of identities, one that require a common ground across identity-divides to be nurtured and fostered. Here the concept of *national-identity* can be helpful. It is with this as our point of departure that we look at reconciliation theory in a different light. Namely; as a number of practices that work to reshape and restructure identities..

Creating a national identity does not necessarily require people to dive into terrible events of the past. While reconciliation highlights the need to acknowledge suffering and victims of oppression, it is arguably too soon for South Sudanese. The structures around the process could be considered as too weak to hold the country and people together while digging into that difficult past. Perhaps it would be more beneficial for a people to engage in *story-telling* about their common and separate pasts, in an effort to begin a positive *national-identity* creation conversation. South Sudan is in many ways a new country, where a number of tribes and peoples have come together to form a state made up of formerly unlikely alliances. Each tribe has long historical and cultural roots, with their own religious aspects, as well as cultural and linguistically differences.

At the same time they have all been involved in the same war against Khartoum and have all been at a state of war for almost half a century. While not unified the people here have interacted at some level over many generations. What the empirical data from *Wunlit* seem to suggest when viewed through our theoretical lenses; is that there is significant power in *story telling*, utilising *imagery* as well as sharing myths and stories. This is also supported by reconciliation theory, which highlights acknowledgement of the past, and acknowledgement of suffering victims as a key element in achieving reconciliation among peoples. However, these ideas could also perhaps be employed with great effect in establishing a shared national understanding of each other as one people. A Dinka telling a story of how his family was slaughtered by a Nuer regiment, and vice versa, might result in acknowledgement of their suffering at the hands of each other, but perhaps it would be more beneficial for the Dinka and Nuer to come together in a different way.

To tell each other stories of how the past half a century at war with the North affected their families and their own lives, to talk about their common struggles, rather than the issues they have with each other, and to tell stories from their own culture and history to each other.

They could beneficially engage in a process where villagers from one tribe met with villagers from another, and quite simply told each other stories, not with the goal of finding similarities to *define* what being South Sudanese *is*, but rather to create a better understanding between the peoples, and thus create a naturally evolving understanding of what it means to be South Sudanese. One which the South Sudanese themselves define through their own cultural, historical and personal lenses. We will come back to the arguments for this later in the chapter. For now we will concentrate on why a common-identity is a necessary foundation for reconciliation. To explore this I will use the South African concept of *Ubuntu*, a concept that played an important part in the theological and theoretical development of reconciliation practices.

In speaking about *Ubuntu*, Bishop Desmond Tutu pointed out that when the black population of South Africa had suffered at the hands of apartheid, all of South Africa had suffered - it had harmed Ubuntu. This use of South African concepts to tie the black and white population together as one people served as a basis in understanding the suffering inflicted upon the other as having hurt the entire population. It was a common-identity that people could relate to. Apartheid had not just harmed the black population, it had harmed them all because of Ubuntu. Perhaps for reconciliation between tribes in South Sudan to be effective it would be necessary to tie South Sudanese together as one people through a concentrated national identity creation effort. In such a process it may be beneficial to employ reconciliation strategies such as truth-telling, using stories to create inter-personal connections and *work through* the past to help create the foundation for a unified national-identity. This in turn could provide a common understanding among peoples of South Sudan, which could serve as a basis for a continued effort to reconcile the different tribes within the country. Without a common understanding, efforts of reconciliation can run the risk of not being able to explain why reconciliation is desirable or what reconciliation truly entails.

Once again we can look towards South Africa, the concept of *Ubuntu* provided both an understanding of what reconciliation would mean - namely the restoration of *Ubuntu* - and why it was necessary - The actions had harmed *Ubuntu* and there was a transcendent duty to restore it.

It is this common understanding, that sense of unity that there is a noticeable lack of in South Sudan. One respondent described the process of creating a national identity as horribly neglected. As Cecilia Clegg points out reconciliation is about renegotiating identities in such a way that there is a will for co-existence. Thus converting a *we vs them* mentality into a collective *us* mentality. Yet without a process to establish what *us* would entail, it may perhaps become difficult to see what has to be reconciled. It lacks a foundation to build reconciliation from. Perhaps in order to better lay the groundwork for reconciliation between tribes it is necessary for the people involved to better understand what it means to be South Sudanese. In such a national-identity creation process it is equally important to know what makes each tribe and culture different, as it is to know what makes us all the same. To foster a common understanding of what it means to be South Sudanese it is perhaps necessary for South Sudanese to tell each other the stories of what makes them what they are. To sit down Dinka to Nuer and talk about their ancestors struggles, the myths and stories told by their forefathers, their experiences with cattle herding, to speak man to man and woman to woman as people, openly. Without any other goal other than to talk together to foster a better understanding between peoples.

Here we have to keep in mind what Braithwaite writes about cultural adaptability and cultural sensitivity, as well as restorative justice theories presented by Llewlyn and Philpott. In order for reconciliation, and in this case national identity creation, to be possible it has to involve the local communities and for it to be effective it requires people who know the culture, language and history to be involved. A South Sudanese identity has to evolve naturally from the cultural background it exists in. Here the South Sudanese churches have shown the ability to maintain trust between different groups, while at the same time being perceived as working wholly for the South Sudanese people.

They have also shown themselves to be capable of adapting cultural practices, traditional mediation techniques and rituals to both get people together, to talk to each other and to resolve issues and conflicts that have appeared unsolvable at times. For the best possible impact, the church has to be actively involved in planning, creating and undertaking such a process. This ensures that all the cultural *bells and whistles* are present to ensure a holistic approach. Organising such meetings through the church ensures cultural sensitivity at the smallest community level, their lack of direct contact with the state power ensures that the process is owned entirely by the people and not guided by the state or any other organisation or overarching power. At the same time they have by far the broadest formalized and structured network in the country. They have a structure in place that can implement the process throughout the country and have the presence to continue it over a longer period of time.

As we can see both in the NCC and NCA strategies for implementation, the church is perhaps the most important partner on the local level. They are both very clear that the church is the key facilitator for projects on the grassroots level and the most expansive network available that has influence in virtually every single local community in the country. As Braithwaite points out only actors that are close to the community they intend to reconcile has the necessary understanding and knowledge of how reconciliation may best be adapted locally. The church which both has a *governing body* in the middle-range through the SSCC and a local influence through various churches, has both the capacity to facilitate projects on a large-scale while simultaneously being aware of the local curiosities which can have an impact on the project's success.

They perceivably have the trust of the population. Therefore it is important that the church be involved and largely in charge of any project designed to improve local relationships between peoples, as they would provide a neutrality that any such process would be reliant on.

In order to achieve a positive national identity process, relationships between all peoples would have to be improved. As the NCA and NCC both point out, women have a unique perspective of the future and the current conflict.

Women are generally perceived as more oriented towards the future, as well as being more willing to put aside their differences for the future of their children and families. On this basis ensuring that women from various tribes and peoples can come together and discuss the past, the future and the present with other women could provide a unique stepping-stone for reconciliatory efforts. With that in mind; it could be as vital to have women to women conferences as people to people conferences. To have women from different ethnic and tribal backgrounds come together and simply talk to each other in an effort to redefine the threatening other. While men may hold the political power, the effort to help create a positive national-identity has to be done within all elements of the grassroots level. Here women play a significant part in every-day life. As Cecilia Clegg notes the *societal peace* - the will to coexist - is created and maintained by how we handle every-day life situations.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

7.1 Summary

Now as I am approaching the end of this thesis I will begin by presenting a short summary of what I have done in each chapter.

I introduced the topic of this thesis in Chapter 1; Reconciliation in South Sudan. The chapter presented a short introduction to reconciliation and how it has risen to prominence in theoretical peace building. In this chapter I explained how I planned to write this thesis and introduced a few key-source I would be using. I further introduce a set of research questions that I will answer in the next section.

I proceeded in Chapter 2 by providing a thorough historical overview of South Sudan. I began by introducing brief snippets of history for the region from antiquity and until the first civil war began. From there I presented various historical events that led to the war that we are now seeing. The last part of the chapter presented various events that have happened the past few years and up until late June 2015.

Chapter 3 was dedicated to introducing the various theories and theoretical works I would be using for the analysis. The chapter discussed the various restorative justice and reconciliation theories and their areas of expertise in an effort to create a theoretical toolset. To achieve this I used Cecilia Clegg's theories surrounding identity and negative-identity, Llewellyn and Philpott's theories on restorative justice practices and Braitwaithe's insight into cultural adaptability. As a framework to help structure society I have used elements from John Paul Lederach's pyramid of actors. Finally Van Ness and Mallinder's theories on Accountability and Amnesty respectively, provided a different way of seeing justice in a restorative and reconciliatory understanding.

In Chapter 4 I presented the various methods employed in this thesis. Each method was discussed thoroughly and its strengths and weaknesses were presented. With each method I also discussed the reasoning behind choosing the method. While the chapter presented a number of methods that were not used in the thesis, they were presented to provide a full discussion behind the choices of each method and its limitations. In the final part of the chapter I presented a short summary of some the experiences I have had with writing the thesis.

The empirical data was presented in Chapter 5. Here the various sources of data; books, reports, interviews and articles were all presented thematically in a structured and clear way. I divided the data into a number of thematic segments based on the content of the data to give a clear picture of what the various pieces of data revolved around.

My analysis was presented in chapter 6. The chapter was divided in similar themes as the ones presented in Chapter 5 and followed the same structure to show the connection between the empirical data presented in the previous chapter and the analysis. Each theme was discussed through the use of the theoretical lenses and the theoretical toolkit I presented in Chapter 3.

Finally in this chapter; chapter 7 I present an overview of what the thesis has contained and what conclusions I have come to. The chapter begins by providing this overview and then continues to provide an answer to the research questions posed in chapter 1. Finally I present a short summary of some limitations of the thesis, as well as some thoughts as to future research.

7.2 Conclusions of Research Questions

When I began this thesis I presented a main research question, as well as three sub-research questions. Following is a short presentation of these questions as well as a concluding summary of what I have discovered through the thesis.

To what degree can the church be involved in reconciliation, and what is its current and future potential role?

The church has played a key-role in South Sudan's history. It was through church coordinated efforts that the scope of Sudan's bombing raids of South Sudanese civilians was finally uncovered and documented, and it was through the actions of some of the church leaders that the international community began to take note of the situation. It was not a political leader, but Bishop Paride Taban who spoke in front of the UN about South Sudanese suffering, and virtually demanded help from the international community.

The church was also one of the few humanitarian actors that was present for the local population throughout the wars and conflicts. As the various state-institutions failed the people, and NGOs kept out due to security concerns, it was the church that provided healthcare, education and basic needs for the population. This caused the church, or rather the various churches, to gain an immense amount of trust among the South Sudanese population. Throughout the analysis of the church's role we find that the church has the potential to play an important part in reconciliation efforts between peoples of South Sudan. The empirical data suggests that the church is able to influence society at all levels, in various degrees. When we divide society into levels based on Lederach's pyramid of actors we find that the church has a major influence on the grassroots level, while at the same time having a presence at the top and middle level. Their trust on the grassroots level would make the church the ideal partner for implementation of grassroots projects within the country.

We find that in cases such as Wunlit and Lokichoggio, the church has shown an ability to adapt to traditional concepts and peace-making processes and implementing them in their own work. The various churches in South Sudan are divided along ethnic lines, mostly due to missionary strategies from the past, while this makes co-operation a little difficult, it also means that the church as a whole have intimate knowledge and understanding of various peoples traditions and customs. This knowledge could in many ways be considered essential in mediating conflicts between peoples and help ground solutions and peace-processes in various local traditions.

What is it in terms of the interaction between the South Sudanese tribes that cause the animosity, and what is it that has made reconciliation efforts so difficult?

What the analysis of the situation suggests is that the various tribes in South Sudan are suffering from a negative-identity spiral. While the various tribes in South Sudan have had rivalries for centuries, we find an increase in tensions between the tribes in the wake of the civil war. During the war with Khartoum many saw themselves as different from the Arabs, in many ways this is perhaps what blinded them together. When independence was gained, the negative-identity reliance on Khartoum as an enemy disappeared. After having defined themselves in that way for so long, people began to look inward the country for defining identities. Experiences from the civil war, with all its chaos, shifting alliances and ethnical killings, made the various tribes suspicious to other peoples. It is in this milieu that we see indications of the negative-identity shifting from Khartoum and to other tribes for a great deal of people. Salva and Riek seek their allies among *their own*, and further emphasise the negative-identity element within the country. When it explodes their personal rivalry is perhaps perceived as an extension of the rivalry between Dinka and Nuer, causing people to join *their* side and launch the country into war. The empirical data suggests that there hasn't been a process to help establish national-unity, and people are unable to point to a common-identity that makes the peoples of South Sudan a single people.

It is this lack of a common-identity, or a lack of real common ground, that can perhaps be argued to have made reconciliation so difficult. In looking at the South African example, we find that the concept of Ubuntu provided a common understanding among people that they were one - that Ubuntu joined them all together. The African concept was arguably reconstructed by South Africans such as Desmond Tutu to provide a suitable vernacular to define what binds the white and the black population of South Africa together as one people, creating a common understanding to use as a foundation for reconciliation.

Without a common-understanding reconciliation becomes a very difficult task, not helped by the fact that the government and the state are ill-equipped to deal with reconciliatory efforts.

By looking at the empirical data through the theoretical spectacles we have created we can discern reconciliation and restorative justice approaches as being concerned with renegotiating identities. It is with this in mind that we consider re-employing the theoretical models in an effort to help create the foundations for evolving a national-identity.

With the state so absent from the grassroots level in terms of legal and political influence, it could be difficult to successfully implement measures for reconciliation and protect these processes. Reconciliation is in many ways an emotionally charged process, and without sufficient judicial safety and security it can be very difficult to avoid harming relationships even more. It is with this in mind that I propose that evolving a national-identity would be a more fruitful endeavor than attempting reconciliation at this moment in time. Having people from various tribes and communities in South Sudan come together and discuss their common challenges as well as their common and separate history could provide the groundwork for improved relations between people - a national identity evolved through interaction. Which in turn could provide a more stable foundation to build reconciliation on. In this process the involvement of women, possibly through women to women meetings in various churches and villages could play an important role in bringing various communities and ethnicities together. As I mentioned in the previous chapter;

Women are generally perceived as more oriented towards the future, as well as being more willing to put aside their differences for the future of their children and families. On this basis ensuring that women from various tribes and peoples can come together and discuss the past, the future and the present with other women could provide a unique stepping-stone for reconciliatory efforts.

To what degree can reconciliation be implemented in South Sudan?

As we have discovered, this is a difficult question to answer. There are perhaps too many issues in South Sudan at this current moment in time for a reconciliation effort to be fruitful. What we find in the empirical data is that the state appears to be absent in much of people's lives, and because of that a number of good-practices for reconciliation and restorative justice simply cannot be implemented. The lack of any real system of governance on the local level makes it difficult to engage in fruitful reconciliation processes. Despite this, there is clearly a need for relationships between the various tribes and peoples to improve drastically. In my analysis I presented South Sudan as a country that lacks a common understanding of what it means to be South Sudanese; that they lack a positive national-identity. It is here I believe we can find a way forward.

It might possibly be helpful to foster a national identity within the country. The various peoples of South Sudan are split into numerous tribes and their identity is often tied to their tribe rather than their nation. In providing South Sudanese with the chance to get to know each other and each other's cultural and historical heritage, you enable its people to naturally come to an understanding of what it means to be South Sudanese. Having various peoples meet with the purpose of learning how the other tribes think, what they believe in and what they have in common with themselves could help manage the fear of the unknown.

It is here that the South Sudanese church can be highly effective and helpful. No other organisation in the country has such a large area of influence and trust among the various local communities.

The church has both the will and the ability to adapt their approach to various cultural and traditional necessities, a skill that would be very valuable in keeping people comfortable when meeting the *threatening other*.

Negative-identity is reliant on defining oneself in relation to a threatening other, when the threat dissipates it creates a void where people define a new threatening other to fill that void, and a negative-identity spiral is born. The necessity to redefine *we* and *them* into an *us* is quintessential in this discussion. That process must be maintained locally; a job the church is ideal for.

Yet the creation of a national identity or common understanding does not remove the need for reconciliation, it is simply the first step. There needs to be a clear common ground between two sides for reconciliation to take place. In modern reconciliation this is arguably achieved by utilising clear systems to help guide the process. In a country where these processes aren't present, it is necessary to both help develop them as NCA are doing, as well as provide people with the opportunity to interact. Positive interaction fosters understanding. It is easier to see how two groups are alike if you discuss what you have gone through together, rather than what pains you have inflicted upon each other.

From the analysis we can say that the biggest issues South Sudan is facing is the deteriorating relationships between tribes. While the war between Riek and Salva is destructive the long term effects of hostile relationships between ethnic groups can be catastrophic. While the war must end, I suggest that we be aware of the relationships between groups as well. It could be argued to be beneficial to all parties involved if a concrete effort to improve relationships between people outside of a classic reconciliation process was undertaken. The natural evolution of a common ground, fostered between men and women of the various peoples in South Sudan could provide the necessary foundation to better handle reconciliation efforts in the future.

7.3 Limitations

The discoveries of the analysis conducted in this thesis are limited by a number of factors. It is important to note that the findings in this thesis are not necessarily applicable to many conflicts around the world, due to the nature of qualitative research and the choice of respondents.

The findings are limited to this particular conflict at this specific point in time. While some of the findings could be applicable in a more general sense, this would require significantly more research. Due to the lack of direct contact with South Sudanese as well as the difficulty in traveling to the region the thesis is based on perceptions of the situation as presented by respondents, and the various reports and documents used. While many of the documents were written by, or in collaboration with, South Sudanese sources it is important to note that these are written with a purpose to present the situation in a certain way. By utilising a number of different documents and reports, as well as using interviews and books to gain a more in-depth picture, I believe I have presented the conflict and the situation in an as accurate light as possible - while being fully aware that a completely accurate representation is not possible.

7.4 Further Research

When we presuppose that reconciliation is in essence the renegotiation of identities there is an array of possible avenues for further research. In this thesis I have shown that negative-identities seem to not simply disappear when *the threatening other* does. It appears that in the case of South Sudan the negative-identity that was tied to Khartoum found another *threatening other* when the larger threat disappeared. In the absence of a common-identity or a common national-identity, people returned to the negative-identity, causing a negative identity spiral. It seems plausible that unless a *common-understanding* or *common-identity* is found this negative-identity spiral will continue, dividing communities even more. With that in mind it would be useful for future research to look at how identities develop in a conflict, how *are negative-identities* created, and what fuels these *negative-identities*?

In terms of South Sudan further research into the nature of the animosity between the tribes, and how culture and traditional concepts can be used for reconciliation could be potential avenues of continued research. Continued research into the role that religious institutions can play in reconciliation would also be valuable. For example; how churches can have on reconciliation processes, and their impact on processes that need to be implemented on the grassroots level.

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APPENDIX A

As all interviews will be conducted in Norwegian, and therefore the guide itself is also written in Norwegian.

Organisasjonen

1. Kan du fortelle meg litt om din rolle i organisasjonen?
2. Kan du fortelle meg litt om hvordan din organisasjon jobber i Sør Sudan?

Kvinner i bistand og i deres arbeid

3. Jeg leste noen av rapportene og søknadene rundt Sør Sudan, og jeg la merke til at dere virker å ha et spesielt fokus mot kvinner og deres rolle i en fred og forsoningsprosess. Kan du fortelle litt om tankegangen bak det?

Stammetilhørighet i Sør Sudan - Forsoningsstrategier

4. Hvilke holdninger innen de forskjellige gruppene, hovedsaklig Dinka og Nuer, er mest problematiske for fred og forsoningsarbeidet?
- 4.b Hvordan jobber dere for å endre disse holdningene?

South Sudan Council of Churches og Kirken i Sør Sudan.

5. Hvordan vil du beskrive samarbeidet med South Sudan Council of Churches og Sudan Council of Churches?
6. Kan du fortelle meg om deres samarbeid med de lokale kirkesamfunnene i Sør Sudan?
- 7.b Hvordan syns du samarbeidet med de lokale kirkene fungerer? Hvilke utfordringer byr dette på?

Konflikten mellom Riek og Salva

8. Hvordan forholder din organisasjon seg til konflikten mellom Riek Machar og Salva Kiir, er dere involvert i lobbyvirksomheten for å bringe de to lederne til en fredsavtale?

Sikkerhetssituasjonen, utfordringer og oppfattet situasjon.

9. Hvilke utfordringer byr det på at landet er i en såpass vanskelig sikkerhetssituasjon?

Spesielt Norges Kristne Råd. (De var nettop på en konferanse med SSCC for noen uker siden)

10. Hvordan har dere har jobbet mot målene som ble fastsatt under forrige konferanse, og hvordan har dere jobbet for å nå disse målene?

11. Hvordan har disse målene blitt møtt i Sør Sudan? Hvordan har Sør Sudanesere jobbet mot disse målene.

12. Kan du fortelle meg litt om konferansen du nettop var på, om endringer i målsetninger, fokus ogsåvidere.