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4 | **Re-thinking ‘Matriarchy’ in the Life of Anna Elisha Mghwira**

Women in Religion and Politics in the Context of
1 Kings 1:1-2:19

Dorcas Juma

Introduction

The concept re-thinking ‘Matriarchy’ is based on the ideology of a society in which everybody in the society enjoys perfect mutuality in leadership, economically, socially, in political decision making and at the cultural level (Heide Goettner-Abendroth & Karen P. Smith 2008:49). In many contemporary African societies, when one speaks about gender, culture, religion, politics, and power, there is always the concern of vanishingly few matriarchal societies around the world (Sarah Madaus 2019). Yet there continues to flourish a stubbornly persistent patriarchal structure that relegates women to the private sphere and empowers men to dominate over women in the name of religion, ‘our’ culture and ‘dirty’ politics. According to Isabel Apawo Phiri (2007:13), “in Patriarchal societies, culture is formulated by men while women are on the receiving end.” She says; “while culture is dynamic, aspects of culture that ensure male dominance over women are upheld by society at the expense of the personhood of women.” Even so, in the very African patriarchal societies, the contribution of women in development and societal transformation through religion and politics cannot be underestimated. Notably, an anthropological study conducted in Sumatra in Indonesia shows that scholars have used a western definition of power to define Matriarchy in ways that do not apply to non-Western societies. It seems that Matriarchy exists but not as a mirror image of patriarchy (Margaret L. Andersen & Howard F. Taylor 2016).

Thus, Matriarchy should be understood from the perspective of a society in which women are empowered to awaken to the potential and

gifting bestowed on them by God. This is in reference to the power and vulnerability of women that have the potential to transform society in ways that enables the lives of both men and women to flourish. When Anna Elisha Mghwira was asked on how she balances family and politics, Mghwira said that she has always been a leader (Baraka Bitariho 2015). For Mghwira, if one is a head of a department, director, and advisor, then you are a leader (Simbarashe Msasanuri 2015). It is from this perspective that through an African Women's hermeneutical lens it is possible to Rethinking 'Matriarchy' in the religious and socio-political life of Anna Elisha Mghwira. Putting Mghwira's religious and political life in conversation with the life of Bathsheba from the context of 1 Kings 1:1-2:19 creates the possibility for two things. First, the possibility for rethinking matriarchy in such a way that creates an environment for steering empowerment conversational talks around the question of why women should hold religious and political leadership positions. Secondly, the question of how women in religion and politics have transformed society through gender parity dialogues forums and movements like the Circle. Women have an inherent teaching and leadership ability (Jennifer L. Martin 2011:18). In the inherent motherly instinct, women have given birth to ideas and societal socio-religious organs that water life allowing life to flourish. Mercy Amba Oduyoye gave birth to the Circle of Concerned Women Theologians (CCAWT) which was officially inaugurated in 1989 at Trinity College in Legon Ghana (Isabel Apawo Phiri & Sarojini Nadar 2012:21).

Anna Elisha Mghwira, is one of the founding matriarchs of the CCAWT now the Circle (Helen A. Labeodan 2016). Notably, "the road to Ghana was nurtured by a committee mainly composed of women from Africa; who were members of the ecumenical association of third world theologians (EATWOT)" (Phiri & Nadar 2012:21). For the pioneer founding matriarchs, "religion and culture are the crucial point of departure for creating a liberating theology that responds to the needs of women in Africa" (Phiri & Nadar 2012:21). After giving birth to the first-born child – the circle, *Mama* Oduyoye, through the Circle, gave birth to a theology that responds to the needs of African women in ways that empower women – African Women Theology (Oduyoye 2001). Oduyoye, was keen to ensure an effective response to the diverse and dynamic

vantage points, the plurality of African traditional religions and location of African women. Thus, *Mama* Oduyoye was keen to limit the word women to those who count themselves African and also believe that women have a desire and responsibility to do their own thinking in ways that speak their own words about God (Oduyoye 2001:10-11).

In African Women Theologies, the experiences of women are taken very seriously (Teresia M. Hinga 2017:54). Thus, in a conversational approach to the life of Mghwira and the role of Bathsheba in the religious and politics of the nation of Israel it is possible to see that, in patriarchal societies it is not women who change. It is the societal expectation of women that change people's perspectives towards women who dare the traditional structures that relegate women to the private sphere. Sometimes the perspectives affect women positively, sometimes negatively. Thus, many women have continued to hesitate to venture into religious and political position because of the 'branding' of such women as 'the bad girls.' In patriarchal settings, a good woman is one who stays away from women who transcend traditional boundaries. In patriarchal settings, socially constructed norms have socialized women to believe that men are born leaders, while women are natural caretakers of men in the name of the home (Catherine E. McKinley 2023:11). Unfortunately, women will be the first ones to discourage fellow women from brazing the challenge of entering politics or playing a key role in shaping religious life and political life of patriarchal societies (Kevin Otieno 2016). For Mghwira, patriarchal societies have socialized people to believe that a woman cannot take politics seriously despite the fact that in Tanzania; many women have held high positions such as ministers and other areas of leadership including the private sector and women in business. Yet, with all these female leaders people will still ask why a woman (Msasanuri 2015). Can this be the reason why Bathsheba for example, has often been viewed as one of the Bible's bad girls? (2 Samuel 11, 12; 1 Kings 1,2). For Collin Huber (2018), the 'Bad Girls' of the Bible like Bathsheba deserve a fresh look.

Mghwira's Societal Transformation Through Religion and Politics

In order to understand the role of Mghwira in societal transformation through religion and politics, it is important to begin by celebrating her through who she is. Mghwira is a Tanzanian Lutheran and a founding matriarch and member of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (CCAWT). She worked in her national church offices and in 2015 ran for presidency representing the Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT) – Wazalendo party in which she was the national chair (Paul Kollman & Cynthia Toms Smedley 2018:206). Anna Elisha Mghwira was born on January 23, 1959 and died in July 22, 2021. She was married to the late Shedrack Maghwiya in 1982, and was blessed with three boys - Fadjhili, Peter and Elisha (Bitariho 2015). Besides being a lawyer and a theologian, she was a development worker for a long time. She was well experienced in the operation of local government, international organizations, religious institutions and issues involving women, children, refugees, administrative and human rights. In political spheres, she is popularly known as a politician, who had the capacity to balance between politics and family life. Anna Elisha Mghwira came from a very humble background with a unique experience that would have prevented her from her celebrated achievements today. She spent her early years as a child at home due to a health problem which delayed her ability to walk (Wasomi Ajira 2021). She joined Nyerere Primary school from 1968-1974. She then went to Ihanja Secondary school from 1975 to 1978 before joining the Lutheran Seminary for her advanced level from secondary education 1979 to 1981. She attained her bachelor's degree in Theology from Tumaini University before joining the University of Dar es Salaam, where she attained LLB in 1986. She went to the University of Essex in England, where she attained a master's degree in law (LLM) in 2000 (Ajira 2021).

Her father was a councilor through Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). TANU was the principal political party in the struggle for sovereignty in the East African state of Tanganyika (now Tanzania). The party was formed from the Tanganyika African Association by Julius Nyerere in July 1954 when he was teaching at St. Francis' College (which

is now known as Pugu High School). The policy of TANU was to build and maintain a socialist state whose aim was economic stability with self-sufficiency. Additionally, eradication of corruption and exploitation was important for TANU through production and exchange under the control of the peasants and workers (*Ujamaa*). *Ujamaa* is a Swahili word which means 'extended family', 'brotherhood' (Alistair Boddy-Evans 2019). Through TANU her father championed for a society in which all people look at each other as an extended family in a brotherly way (Ajira 2021). It is therefore possible to argue that Mghwira's passion to affect the society positively through religion and politics was shaped by a 'redemptive' and transformative masculinity that she experienced through her father (Andrea Doucet 2006:61). Just like Tabitha/Dorcas in Acts 9:36-43 who was creative with her hands, Mghwira was also creative with her hands. Mghwira is known for her good works and acts of charity in her later life that touched many lives. She also used her skills in braiding hair and crochet work to contribute to her school fees for her two years of secondary education. Some of her products were sold in the United States by one of her teachers, earning her US\$1,200. Shortly the hand work turned into serious profit after her clients learnt of her skills and decided to donate more (apart from purchasing her products) for her school fees up to "A" level (Ajira 2021).

Thus, Mghwira's societal transformation through religion and politics can be seen in different ways. She was brought up in the hands of a father who believed in a society in which all people live together as extended family with 'brotherly' love. Her theological education also seems to have firm roots in the main ideologies of African Women Theology which champions for an approach of theology that does not stop on theory, but moves to commitment, advocacy and transforming praxis (Oduyoye 2001:16). One sees this aspect in her passion to brace the challenge of contesting for presidency – a countries top-most seat that has always been believed to be the reserve of men. Arguably, she might have known that the top-most seat holds all organs of the government that shape policies and decisions that can change the country into a country that embraces gender parity. In fact, through her courage to vie for presidency, Tanzania is the first east African country to have a female president Mama Samia Suluhu (Abdi Latif Dahir 2022). Mghwira planted a seed of theology in

praxis that is now growing and bearing fruit in Mama Samia Suluhu. Mama Samia Suluhu, as her name suggests in Swahili – *Suluhu* means solution to problems, has changed the political landscape of Tanzania and the attitude of many east African male presidents towards the leadership of women. Kenya now has a woman in the position of chief justice. Martha Koome was sworn in as new Kenyan Chief Justice on May 21, 2021 (Edgar Odongo 2021).

Anna Elisha Mghwira showed leadership traits during her youthful days to such an extent that she held various leadership positions at school, church and in the community (Miriam Zacharia Matinda 2019:115). One African proverb goes: ‘when a forest is growing, it does not scream. People just marvel with awe when it’s already grown, “what a forest!” Religion and politics require women to be enterprising people. It requires women to be courageous enough and venture into traditionally and religiously male structures and leadership roles traditionally reserved and branded masculine. This is “because traditional gender roles and patriarchy go hand in hand” (Linda L. Lindsey 2015:403). This way, patriarchal societies that suppress women and make it difficult for women to transform society through religious and political position will only marvel at the achievements of women when there is created a society that dignifies both men and women. While religion and politics has shaped women’s lives and perspective of life, the life of Mghwira is a religious and political institution in itself in ways that challenge women not to watch from a distance as they continue to be portrayed as passive recipients of societal injustices. “If there is no enemy within, the enemy outside can do us no harm” (African Proverb - Fearless Motivation 2017). That means that the power to transform the negative patriarchal worldview towards women’s role in religion and politics can be de-constructed when women realize their potential from the inside out without allowing the fear of unknown from preventing one.

Re-thinking ‘Matriarchy’ in the Life of Anna Elisha Mghwira

The main aim of this paper is to re-think matriarchy in the life of Mghwira from an African women’s hermeneutical lens. An African women’s hermeneutical lens is an approach that empowers African

women with the skills for interpreting the Bible and culture from women's own location (Oduyoye 2001:11). The approach recognizes that the Bible has become part of the African context hence the need to use a biblical and cultural lens that is keen on women's experiences and point of view (Kudzai Biri 2020:87-89). An African women's hermeneutical lens finds its roots in African women's Theology. African women's Theology expresses aspects of global and African Christian theologies from the vantage point of women's experiences and location. African Women Theology reflects women's heritage of participation in Africa's colonial and missionary history (Oduyoye 2001:11). African Women Theology recognizes that there are unique insights that come from contexts other than one's own and that there is something to be appreciated from that which is different (Loreen Maseno 2021:3-6). African women Theology emphasizes on the use of dialogue in such ways, which strengthen the aim of women in affirmation and continued questioning of tradition. The aspect of dialogue is very important in view of contemporary challenges facing African women today such as Gender Based Violence (GBV), marginalization and the relegation of women to the periphery in all spheres of the society. African Women Theology is keen on women's struggle as long as it contributes to the creation of theologies that respond to the demands of spirituality and the challenges that deny Gods people the right to live with dignity as proposed in Genesis 1:27, regardless of time and space (Oduyoye 2001:11).

Therefore, re-think matriarchy in the life of Maghwira from an African woman's hermeneutical lens means re-defining matriarchy from the context of her role in societal transformation through religion and politics. Matriarchy is commonly understood in three different ways. First; a system of society or government ruled by a woman or women. Second; a form of social organization in which descendants and relationship are reckoned through the female line and third; the state of being an older, powerful woman in a family or group (Douglas Wilson 2018:10). Notably, this perspective of matriarchy has been criticized as a mirror form of patriarchies and a western Euro-centric perspective (Shehla Burney 2012:43-172). The main concern is that an understanding of a society from such a context socializes, some women to also exercise their power negatively to dominate, oppress and dehumanize fellow women. In

Kenyan streets and public space phrase there is a common phrase that says ‘women are enemies of themselves.’ Notably, “Women take the lead in calling out men as beasts. Yet in the confines of their homes, or [spheres of influence] they turn into the very oppressors they so hate” (Sarah Haluwa 2019). According to Haluwa (2019), “women with power will mistreat, underpay and kick the hell out of their house girls and juniors at work, just for the fun of it.” It has therefore been proposed, that Matriarchy should be understood from the perspective of an emphasis of maternal meanings. This is where maternal symbols are linked to social practices influencing the lives of both sexes and where women play a central role in these practices (Sara Ruddick 2009:306).

In Mghwiras religious and political contributions, one sees a matriarchal society in which women leaders are moved with compassion towards the suffering in the society. Maghwira understood well that empowerment is very important in having the capacity to influence policy, make demands, and call to account the state institutions that affect upon the lives of both men and women. That is why Jethro Pettit (2012:2-5) is keen to point out that “empowerment and participation are deeply complementary and can be considered both means and ends, processes and outcomes.” Thus, according to Oduyoye (2001:17), “Theology [proper] has had to deal with the community in its manifestation of empowerment as well as its organized limitations on individual and often on initiatives and innovations.” This is the Matriarchal society that Mghwira enables one to see in her societal transformation through religion and politics. A society in which women have religious and political representation allows for mutual dialogue on matters collective action. Thus, in Mghwiras religious and political societal influence, one sees a matriarchal society which considers and values women’s participation in public religious and political life hence the need to champion for the empowerment of women in ways that allows for women to access and mobilize equal distribution of resources for gender parity within formal and informal religious and political spaces. In Mghwira’s political and religious influence, one sees a Matriarchal society in which religious and political empowerment is no longer conceptualized as limited to men. At the same time, women are not forced to behave like men if they are to be considered for political and religious positions.

In Mghwira's religious and political contribution to societal transformation, one sees a Matriarchal society in which widows brace traditional challenges to destabilize the status quo. According to Kate Young (2006:200), "a widow is usually a woman who has fulfilled all, or many, of the expectations of society; she has married, borne children, nurtured and educated them, cared for her husband, and often many of his close kin as well." These are all qualities that Mghwira embodies. Unfortunately, in many patriarchal societies like East Africa, "a widow is in an anomalous social position; she is feared as a potential danger to social stability, because she is a single adult woman, whose sexuality is no longer contained within a marital relationship, to be controlled by her husband" (Young 2006:200-202). Arguably, in spite of the fact that Mghwira is a widow, in her religious and political life, it is possible to see a society that accepts the matrilineal and material services of women, listens to their voices, seeks their leadership and welcome their initiatives for a holistic society that celebrates the lives of all. In Mghwira's contribution, one envisions a matriarchal society in which women are challenged not to align themselves with patriarchal forces that question the true humanity of the 'other' (Biri 2020:102). Instead of finding ways to justify the oppression and marginalization of the already marginalized, all women are motivated to evaluate the contribution of fellow women in dialogue with the contribution of biblical women to the transformation of society (Nishimoto 2014:248).

The Bible plays a key role in the lives of many African Christian women. Mary L. Kategile (2020:41) has pointed out "Since the arrival of Christianity in Africa, the Bible has been received well by Africans. It has become the canon in most spheres of life." According to Kategile (2020:41), "for African women especially, the Bible was and still is the book of hope and courage to whatever situations women experience since the Bible provides them equal status with men and new avenues of religious service." For Kategile (2020:41-43), Gender equality has its basis in the Bible and it is God's intention for women and men to serve together in all aspects of church life including leadership." Thus, putting women's contribution in dialogue with the contribution of biblical women empowers African women to envision a matriarchal society that illuminates the value of the completely human person. Speaking about

Deborah in Judges 4-5 for example, Kategile (2020:42) has pointed out “Deborah played multi roles in her time. She was a wife, keeper of the tabernacle lamps, counselor to her people, judge and deliverer during the time of war - multi roles like the roles of many women today.” Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam and widow to Uriah the Hittite (2 Samuel 11) is known by many Bible readers as a “bathing beauty, and not as a power-player in the religious and political life of Israel as a nation” (Jessica Feinstein 2008). However, Feinstein (2008) has argued: “as queen mother, Bathsheba occupies one of the most important positions in Israel. Her transformation from a silent object of lust to a politically astute – and vocal – queen, is striking. She displays the wisdom gained from a lifetime as a politician’s consort.” Thus, Mghwira’s just like Bathsheba was widowed in a patriarchal setting in which widows are seen as a curs and bad omen in the society. Bathsheba remarried unlike Mghwira. Through Bathsheba’s marriage to King David, she got the opportunity to influence religious and political life of Israel. Mghwira remained a widow. Yet in her status of widowhood in a patriarchal society, she contributed a lot religiously and politically.

Women in religion and politics in the context of 1 Kings 1:1-2:19

We now put Mghwira’s religious and political contribution to societal transformation in dialogue with Bathsheba’s’ role in religious and political life of Israel in the context of 1 Kings 1:1-2:19. This will be done in order to celebrate the role of the circle in women empowerment for societal transformation. Arguably, the role of women in religion and politics in the context of 1 Kings 1:1-2:19 allows for one to do a remembrance of Mghwira the *sahn-koh-fah* way in mapping the way forward for the circle the Mghwira-Bathsheba way. Religion and politics remain the main sources of women’s oppression, exploitation and subordination in addition to culture. Politics discriminates against women using the law and constant amendment of the law while religion does it in her structure, belief system and in practice. The Old Testament boldly exposes instances of sexual abuse against Dinah, and Dinah, the Concubine woman, Bathsheba and Tamar among many other women

(Genesis 34; Judges 19; 2 Samuel 11 & 13). Yet the Old Testament also shows how political, cultural, social and religious positions of men have aided men in power to cover up instances of sexual abuse, women exploitation, oppression and the silencing of women's voices (Craig 2005:269). In the name of God's judgment over the sinfulness of some political and religious leaders in Israel for example, a Son of a King can rape her father's concubines on the roof of the palace in daylight for all Israel to see. (2 Samuel 12:1; 2 Samuel 16-18). Unfortunately, many commentators lighten the actions of Absalom by indicating that he sleeps/ lay with his father's concubines (C. Dennis Williams 2015:31-33 & Ira Sharkansky 2014:109). For Mark Rutland (2021:119), "Absalom methodically raped his father's concubines." What Absalom did was the use of patriarchal power as a tool of oppression against women; but also, to humiliate his father. In the same way, some African worrying communities use their political power against each other by raping, abusing and silencing the voices of women (Chantal Kalisa 2009:117 & Nicola Weston 2011:6). However, when women take the center stage, religion and politics transforms into a tool of empowerment for women and a societal transformational agent for a holistic society that values the humanity of all.

The role of Bathsheba in the religious and political life of Israel in 1 Kings 1:1-2:19 is set within the background 1, that has a male contestant who has already put himself forward and said, "I will be king" (1 Kings 1:5). The aspirant for the top leadership in Israel is introduced as Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith. The role of Adonijah's mother in his political ambition is not very clear from the text. However, we are told that his father did not rebuked him for behaving the way he did and that he was also very handsome and was born next after Absalom (1 Kings 1:6). It is not surprising that King David did not rebuke his son for his behavior. In patriarchal settings it is 'normal' for men to scheme, conspire and support each other to get their favorite candidate who will protect their deals and interests into religious and political positions (Chukwuemeka E. Onyejinduaka 2013:9). Nathan the prophet already knew that Bathsheba, Solomon's mother had already made King David to swear an oath that Solomon Bathsheba's son shall inherit David's throne (1 Kings 1:11-14). With the prophet Nathan on her side, Bathsheba uses her

womanhood wisdom to bow down, prostrating herself before the king and to remind him of his oath. Bathsheba Knowing very well how political schemes work in patriarchal setting she is concerned that as soon as King David dies Bathsheba and her son Solomon will be treated as criminals. In many African countries, women play a key role in conflict resolution and peace building. When they take part in peace talks, the likelihood of that agreement lasting is increased. Women should use the same wisdom to build healthy and inclusive societies knowing very well that “we still live in a male-dominated world and in a male-dominated culture” (Elizabeth C. Wolfe 2019:23).

In Bathsheba's approach to religion and politics, one sees a woman who knows that religion and politics requires one to be familiar with how patriarchal settings work in order to maneuver through. The words of the prophet Nathan in 1 Kings 1:11 “Have you not heard that Adonijah, the son of Haggith, has become king, and our lord David knows nothing about it?” (NIV) shows that the Prophet Nathan was a confidant and advisor of Bathsheba. That is why in 1 Kings 1:12-13, the prophet Nathan advises the queen mother to go and use King David's oath to her against the King. The fact that Nathan knew about the oath shows that Bathsheba kept the king's confidant – Nathan even closer to her in order to protect her political interests. Thus, while Bathsheba was doing the bowing and the prostrating before King David where Abishag the Shunammite was attending him as in 1 Kings 1:14-16, it is the prophet Nathan who does the talking. In many African settings men use their wealth and social standing in the society, to seek support from influential people in society in order to acquire top political position that can allow them to influence decisions in favor of male and the dominance of men over women. Thus, according to Robert Bahlleda (2015:19), “the key to changing our civilization lies in understanding patriarchy and its overwhelming control over who we are, how we act, and how we think as a human being”. Did Adonijah know about the oath of King David to Bathsheba that would see the enthronement of Solomon as King? (1 Kings 1:11-14) We do not know. However, we know that in a way similar to the way politics function in African patriarchal settings, Adonijah schemed to be King after David by going down and sacrificing great numbers of cattle, fattened calves, and sheep. He invited all the king's sons, the commanders of the army and

Abiathar the priest to eat and drinking with him and saying, 'Long lives King Adonijah! (1 Kings 1:24-27).

Politics does not have to be dirty so that people should play dirty to get political position. Men in patriarchal societies play dirty politics because they treat politics as status. Bathsheba enthroned Solomon as King without playing dirty politics but using a maternal instinct and a matriarchal inherent ability and influence to just remind the King about his oath (Feinstein 2008). Thus, a celebration in remembrance of Mghwira the *SAHN-koh-fah* way means mapping the way forward for the circle the Mghwira-Bathsheba way. That means just as in Mghwira's and Bathsheba's life, women should not seek attention through self-pity especially if they are in difficult circumstances that can prevent women from daring traditional barriers that bar women from religious and political leadership positions. Mghwira had a difficult early childhood experience that delayed her from walking. Just like Bathsheba, she was also widowed. Yet, their achievements and contributions to religious leadership positions and political spheres have the potential to transform the minds of many women. Through their lives, women learn to challenge their prevailing circumstances and experiences in such a way that women's achieving attracts attention to their role in societal transformation (George Mathew 1994:136). Many women with special needs in patriarchal settings for example face a lot of discrimination on top of the additional gender-based oppression (Ellen Desmet & Eva Brems 2017:126). In most cases, such discrimination impacts directly on the self-esteem of the victims causing many to seek self-pity. Mghwira and Bathsheba's life challenges women in patriarchal societies to realize that no condition is permanent. If every woman is given the opportunity, the sky is not even the limit since women commune with God directly through midwifery and procreation (L. Juliana M. Claassens 2012:35). I am not sure if Mghwira knew that one day one time, someone will be writing an article in celebration of her contribution to societal change through religion and politics. Yet, her contribution to religion and the political sphere transcend the borders of her country. Through the Circle, one can see how important it is for women to walk together in season and out of season.

CONCLUSION

As a member of the circle, it is such a humbling experience to get the opportunity to rethink Matriarchy through Mghwira's religious and political contribution to societal transformation in the context of 1 Kings 1:1-2:19. As a pan-African ecumenical organization the CCAWT supports scholarly research of African women theologians. Thus, this paper continues to emphasize the main aim of the Circle; to mentor the next generation of African women (theologians) throughout their academic careers. The world continues to be reminded that women's dignity is human dignity through a continuous countering of societal social constructions that dehumanize women. The world gets to read liberating literature by African women that counter dominant patriarchal narratives that have constantly socialized women to accept male dominance as a norm (Fidelis Nkomazana & Obed N. Kealotswe 2010:223 & Mpyana Fulgence Nyengele 2004). Thus, a celebration of Anna Elisha Mghwira as a founding Matriarch of the circle through her religious and political contribution to societal transformation already means remembrance in order to give the circle a prophetic vision that desires the dignity of all.

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