Ecodomy – Life in its fullness

Brokenness and Wholeness

Edited by
Dirk J. Human

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This book is a memorial *for victims of all kinds of injustices in the South African Society. It offers an attempt to contemplate how the different disciplines of theology can contribute to 'life in its fullness' by focussing both on its 'brokenness' and 'wholeness'.*

◼ Peer Review Declaration

The Publisher (AOSIS) endorses the South African 'National Scholarly Book Publishers Forum (NSBPF) Best Practice for Peer Review of Scholarly Books'. The manuscript was subjected to rigorous two-step peer review prior to publication, with the identities of the reviewers not revealed to the author(s). The reviewers were independent of the publisher and/or authors in question. The reviewers commented positively on the scholarly merits of the manuscript, and recommended that the manuscript be published. Where the reviewers recommended revision and/or improvements to the manuscript, the authors responded adequately to such recommendations.

■ Research Justification

This book provides a coherent and conceptual portrayal of aspects of the theological research theme, entitled *Ecodomy* (literally meaning to 'build a house'). In its figurative meaning the term *Ecodomy* addresses the theme, 'life in its fullness'. This fullness of life entails a polarity which is inherently part of life, namely its brokenness and its wholeness. From various theological disciplines, namely Old Testament Studies, New Testament Studies, Systematic Theology, Church History and Practical Theology, both the brokenness and wholeness are addressed theologically.

Every chapter focuses on a specific theological discipline, while the combination of theological disciplines, addresses the brokenness and wholeness of life as coherent concept. One pole does not exclude the other. Brokenness is visible in current or recent very relevant societal challenges, such as racism and xenophobia, apartheid, foreignness and exclusivism, leadership crises and violence. In contrast, wholeness is embedded in themes such as the African concept of ubuntu, a life of faith and wisdom, reconciling leadership, or transforming space and community. Ultimately, a Greek term ἀναίδεια (persistence) is connected to the meaning of *Ecodomy* and 'life in its fullness'.

Several methodologies have been used in the different contributions of the book. Every theological discipline applies a different methodology for the purpose of exposing a specific topic or research theme. In general, the contributions in this book follow a combination of a literature study with the further application of diachronic and synchronic exegetical methods. In addition, single contributions follow an own hermeneutical approach.

Not one single contribution, but a combination of different theological disciplines, which form the concepts of brokenness and wholeness (life in its fullness), which expose the polarity of life, are included in this book. In its exposed interdisciplinary interwovenness, the book provides a tapestry of how different theological disciplines are combined into a single theme and how they contribute together by means of theological analyses and attempted building blocks to build the broken 'houses' of societal structures or human life.

The book contributes to selected aspects of broken life in society and the healing experiences of human life. Several themes touch on recent and relevant challenges which have contributed to the brokenness of life. Not only in South Africa, but globally these are currently relevant themes. They include realities of racism and xenophobia, apartheid, foreignness and exclusivism, leadership crises and violence. With the focus on wholeness, specific attention is given to the African concept of ubuntu, a life of faith and wisdom, reconciling leadership, and transforming space and society. A Greek term ἀναίδεια (insolence as 'in keeping on asking' – Lk 11:8) illuminates the theme of *Ecodomy* from the perspective of a parable.

The target audience of the book is academic scholars and theologians, who specialise in the different fields of Theology, the Humanities and other Social Sciences. Furthermore, the book is also accessible to scholars of other academic disciplines outside these disciplines.

The book contains original research and contributions have not been plagiarised from publications elsewhere.

Prof. Dr Andries G. van Aarde
AOSIS Chief Editor: Scholary Books

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Abbreviations appearing in the Text and Notes

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
BCE	Before Common Era
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CE	Common Era
CF	Canadian Forces
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
EKD	Evangelical Church in Germany
ELCSA	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Africa
FNRS	Belgian National Fund for Science Research
FRT	Faculty Research Theme
HB	Hebrew Bible
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IHOM	Institute for the Healing of Memories
IRT	Institutional Research Theme
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
NGK	Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHKA	Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk van Afrika
NKJV	New King's James Version
SACC	South African Council of Churches

SACLI	South African Church Leaders Indaba
SSM	Society of the Sacred Mission
TLG	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCC	United Church of Canada
UP	University of Pretoria/Universiteit van Pretoria
UPCSA	Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa
WARC	Word Alliance of Reformed Churches
WCC	World Council of Churches
WVK	Waarheids-en-Versoeningskommissie
WWII	World War II
YHWH	Most holy name of God, as written in ancient Hebrew

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Zoro Dube is senior lecturer in the Department of New Testament Studies at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, holding a PhD. His research niche embodies hermeneutical focuses and develops the ideas of Gabriel Marcel, especially the notion of participation as epistemological lens to re-describe the activities of Jesus of Nazareth and to interrogate the negative effects of globalisation – rising nationalism and xenophobia. He is the author of several articles including 'Strengthening the ubuntu social canopy after the Afrophobic attacks' (2016), and 'Dance hall music and urban identities in Zimbabwe – A constructive postmodern perspective' (2016). Email: zorodube@yahoo.com

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Gerda de Villiers is a senior lecturer in the Department of Old Testament Studies at the University of Pretoria. She was born and lived in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal for 17 years, where she attended school at Port Natal primary and high schools, and matriculated at Hoërskool Port Natal. She completed her graduate studies at Stellenbosch University, obtained a BA degree, and a postgraduate Diploma in Editing and Translating. Thereafter she worked as a research assistant at the Bureau for Continuing Education (SU), until she moved to Pretoria. Her theological studies as well as her studies in Semitic languages were completed at the University of Pretoria where she obtained Masters Degrees in Semitic Languages and Old Testament Studies, the degree DLitt in Semitic Languages on the Gilgamesh Epic and the degree PhD in Old Testament Studies on the Book of Ruth. She is currently a senior lecturer at the University of Pretoria, Department of Religion Studies in Ancient Myths and Ancient Religions and co-editor of the theological website, www.teo.co.za. Email: gerdadev@mweb.co.za

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■ Jerry Pillay

Jerry Pillay was elected as the first President of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) in 2010 and he is currently Head of Department of Church History and Church Polity at the University of Pretoria. He served as General Secretary of the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa (UPCSA) from 2008 to 2014.

During 2004–2006 he held the office of moderator of the UPCSA. Prof. Pillay has a wide knowledge of the Church having served, and continuing to serve, as convener and member of numerous General Assembly Committees and Ecumenical organisations. He has a very wide interest and involvement in ecumenical matters, church unity and Christian mission. As a pastor, he formed and led ecumenical groups wherever he has served in congregations and has represented his denomination in ecumenical bodies both inside and outside of South Africa. He served on the Executive of the South African Council of Churches and the National Religious Leaders Forum in South Africa. He is currently a patron of the South African Church Leaders Indaba (SACLI). Following secondary education he enrolled at the University of Durban-Westville completing his Bachelor of Theology (honours) and Master of Theology (MTheol). By academic profession Pillay specialised in the area of Missiology, Church History and New Testament Studies. He completed his PhD at the University of Cape Town and is an Extraordinary Professor in Systematic Theology and Public Life at Stellenbosch University. In 2013 an honorary doctorate from the University of Debrecen in Hungary was conferred on him. Email: jerry.pillay@up.ac.za

■ Wayne G. Smith

Wayne G. Smith was raised on a Canadian pig farm, graduating from a technical college (Lambton College, Sarnia, Ontario) in the early 1970s with a diploma in Communication Arts. After a 12-year career as a newspaper journalist and editor, he acquired a BA in Religious Studies (University of Windsor, Ontario) and Masters degrees at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland (MPhil) and McGill University, Montreal (S.T.M). In 1991 he was ordained in the Presbyterian Church in Canada. He later joined the Canadian Forces (CF) as a contract unit chaplain and training officer-chaplain at the CF ecumenical/multifaith chaplains' school and with the Canadian Naval Reserve. Honourably discharged in 2004, he joined the Ordered Ministry of The United Church of Canada (UCC) where his ministries have included denominational committees of Pastoral Relations, Pastoral Oversight, Financial Services, Christian Life & Growth, and as Intentional Interim Minister, Transitional Specialist, and Grief Recovery Specialist as well as pastor. In 2015, he earned a PhD at the University of Pretoria (April 2016) for a dissertation engaging relational ontologies of ubuntu and that of A.N. Whitehead's 'process' cosmology. He has published in peer-reviewed publications examining media-faith interactions and a book chapter imaginatively examining analogies of transitions

in 'the wardrobe' of C.S. Lewis. He is now a UCC Minister at a congregation near Halifax, Nova Scotia. His other passions include serving as language editor at Polish-based DeGruyter Open. His hobbies include that of amateur musician and volunteering as production assistant at a community radio station. He is married to the Rev. Carol Smith and they have four children and six grandchildren – and a dog named Duchess. Email: harrisville-steeves@rogers.com

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Foreword

Theology contemplates 'life in its fullness'. From different theological disciplines the theme of 'life' is often being dissected in order to seek avenues of meaning and fullness. The reality, though, is that life offers a variety of experiences between the ultimate polarity between brokenness and fullness, between life and death, good and bad, pain and healing, or ill-being and well-being. There is no exception in this experience in whatever global context people find themselves.

This book provides a coherent and conceptual portrayal of aspects regarding the theological research theme, entitled *Ecodomy* (literally meaning to 'build a house'). In its figurative meaning the umbrella term *Ecodomy* comprises 'life in its fullness', from aspects of brokenness to aspects of wholeness. From various theological disciplines, namely Old Testament Studies, New Testament Studies, Systematic Theology, Church History and Practical Theology both the aspects of brokenness and wholeness are addressed theologically and exemplary.

The book comprises two parts with the overarching themes of 'brokenness' and 'wholeness' providing a key focus on each part. Every chapter is written from the point of view of a specific theological discipline, while the combination of the theological disciplines addresses the brokenness and wholeness of life as coherent concept throughout the book. One pole does not exclude the other and therefore every chapter reflects an interwovenness of these two polar themes. In the first part 'brokenness' is described in terms of current or recent very relevant societal challenges, such as racism and xenophobia, apartheid, foreignness and exclusivism, leadership crisis and violence. In contrast, in the second part, 'wholeness' is embedded in themes such as the African concept of 'ubuntu', a life of faith and wisdom, reconciling leadership, or transforming space and community. Ultimately, a Greek term ἀναίδειαν is connected to the meaning of *ecodomy* and 'life in its fullness'.

In short, the various scholarly contributions entail the following.

In the first part **Jerry Pillay** contemplates how racism and xenophobia have become a worldwide issue and challenge. The recent flood of immigrants and refugees

into Europe and America has put this matter on the world map. In South Africa racism and xenophobia have, in recent times, reached explosive proportions and have greatly intensified the need for the Church to get more deeply involved in the creation of racial harmony and peace as these work towards the fullness of life for all people. This chapter explores the challenges of racism and xenophobia in South Africa and concludes by discussing the role of the Church in combating these realities. The chapter challenges current thinking on the issues of racism and xenophobia and has the potential to enlighten churches, religious organisations, NGOs and government on how to engage with them. On an intra-disciplinary level this challenge transcends the theological disciplines of Systematic Theology and Ethics, Missiology and Church History. By contemplating these themes, it offers interdisciplinary implications for the field of psychology, sociology and human and community development in respect of the changing human behaviour and society, with the apartheid era and the German National Socialism history as parallel examples of human 'brokenness'.

Piet Meiring describes the role of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and similar South African theologians to address this polarity from their various contexts. Although Dietrich Bonhoeffer never visited South Africa, the relevance of this German theologian for South Africa was never in doubt. In the struggle against apartheid his message served to guide theologians, church leaders, and lay Christians alike. His life and his death inspired many during their darkest hours. Theologians, with John de Gruchy in the lead, studied his works extensively. Heroes from the struggle, like Beyers Naudé, Desmond Tutu, Steve Biko, even Nelson Mandela, were hailed as latter-day Bonhoeffers. At ecumenical gatherings, his teachings were often invoked. But it was especially in the aftermath of apartheid, when the very serious challenges of reconciliation and nation building, of healing and forgiveness, of amnesty for perpetrators weighed against the demands of justice for the victims were at stake, that many turned again to Bonhoeffer's life and work for guidance. Meiring, who served as member on the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), discusses the prerequisites for reconciliation in South Africa against the backdrop of the TRC experience, emphasising the need for South Africans, following in the footsteps of Bonhoeffer, to look for 'costly reconciliation'.

Gerda de Villiers examines the concept of *Ecodomy* – life in its fullness – as it unfolds in the Book of Ruth. The book is dated to the post-exilic period in the history of Israel, and is read as narrative critique against the Moabite paragraph in Deuteronomy 23:3–5,

and against the way that this text is interpreted and implemented in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Naomi, Ruth and Boaz, the protagonists in the narrative, become paradigmatic for the situation in post-exilic Israel. Their stories, dealing with loss and death, and the actions they take in order to heal the brokenness become indicative for the post-exilic Israelite community. As the narrative plot develops, the chapter aims to indicate how 'life in its emptiness' is changed into 'life in its fullness' by the courage and creative initiative of individuals, even if it means overstepping boundaries and challenging the social conventions of the time. Against the exclusivist policy of Ezra and Nehemiah, the Book of Ruth argues that foreigners may be included in the community of YHWH and that their solidarity with Israel is to the benefit of all God's people. The contribution of the chapter emphasises that life in its fullness cannot be taken for granted, but requires human efforts.

From the discipline of Practical Theology **Christo Thesnaar** offers a specific focus on religious leadership and its role and commitment to reconciliation. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Committee's (TRC) re-enactment consultation afforded the opportunity to reflect on the leadership of religious leaders during the apartheid era, and in the years that followed. This chapter shows particular interest in the prophetic leadership provided by religious leaders during apartheid, and the 20 years following the transition by engaging with some normative thoughts on prophetic dialogue. Findings on this kind of leadership provided during the post-TRC period are reflected upon in terms of reconciliation through the hermeneutical lens of the Belgian scholar Valarie Rosoux. Hereby, Thesnaar seeks to show a way towards reconciliation and national unity in the current South African context with some strategic conclusions. He reiterates that the process of reconciliation becomes a priority for all faith communities across the nation. In this way 'brokenness' could turn slowly into 'wholeness'.

By taking a socio-historical approach, **Zorodzai Dube** attempts to trace some history from World War II (WWII) and illustrates various instances in which economic and political activities intersect with theological themes. For example, after WWII and in view of the aftermath of war, it seems, the dominant paradigm in theology tilted towards moral economy, focusing on issues of fairness, justice and peace. Also, the triumph of global capitalism since 1989 provides the discursive space where theology provides injunctions on matters of fairness and justice – a perspective which agrees with the central message of narratives around Jesus of Nazareth.

The second part of the book illustrates aspects of life's 'wholeness' against the backdrop of its 'brokenness'. The content of the contributions comprise the following:

Wayne Smith foregrounded the African concept of ubuntu, which encompasses a philosophy of communal care and engagement of the individual. This exposition of ubuntu is engaged in a conversation with the speculative philosophy of organism ('process') to acquire an extended tool by which to engage within its ontology the widest possible range of human interaction. The engagement by ubuntu's relational doctrine of the speculative philosophical cosmology of A.N. Whitehead placed portions of the latter's constructs at the service of ubuntu's transversal capacity to examine and apply the deepest understanding of its own etymology. It has been a challenge to understand occasions of injustice and suffering which have manifested within the same African culture that has given to the world the language and concept of ubuntu. It has been commonplace to isolate the utopian relational ontology implicit in the aphorism from occasions of the worst of human nature. It was the premise of this chapter that an understanding of an ubuntu which excludes dystopian occasions has done a disservice to the breadth, depth and height of what is to be fully human – including occasions of suffering and antisocial behaviours.

Old Testament wisdom literature encourages the reader to do the right thing at the right time in order to behave wisely and to enhance happiness, wealth, justice and all kinds of well-being of human life. **Pieter Venter** argues that the Books of Proverbs and Daniel seem to present opposite viewpoints on what life should be. Proverbs propagates a life of faith, wisdom and participation in the orderly world God created. Daniel's advice is to wait upon God in this chaotic world. These seemingly two opposing viewpoints are exposed here. It is proposed by Venter that they are to be read in dialogue with each other. Their juxtaposition presents a lifestyle that is optimistic as well as realistic trusting upon God's superior reign. Such a lifestyle brings about or enhances the 'wholeness' of a broken life.

Johan van der Merwe describes the role that leadership of the Dutch Reformed Church played in the years 1990–1994 en route to the first democratic election in South Africa. During these four years – in which South Africa was on the brink of a civil war – meetings between church leaders, who became known for their support of the notorious policy of apartheid, and the leader of the ANC, Nelson Mandela, took place. Mandela requested these leaders at several meetings to play a reconciliatory role

between different political parties and groups in South Africa. It also led to Mandela addressing the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church (1994). Mandela's visit to the synod as well as the visits of Ben J. Marais and C.F. Beyers Naudé became controversial in the aftermath of that meeting. This controversy surrounding the synod meeting, popularly known as the 'Synod of reconciliation' is also addressed. Imbedded between two important markers, namely the Rustenburg church consultation (1990) and the special day for churches at the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (1997), this chapter concludes that the meeting was indeed a 'Synod of reconciliation'. Prophetic leadership during the proceedings of that meeting had challenged the Dutch Reformed Church to be part of reconciliation in the new democratic South Africa. The brokenness of an apartheid system was challenged by reconciliatory leadership.

Tanya van Wyk proposes a political-theological and hermeneutical reflection on the origin, nature, intention and contribution of research themes within the dynamics of an institutional space. This is done by taking a critical look at the 'rules' and the 'game' of university academia. Specific reference is made to two institutional and faculty research themes, namely 'reconciling diversity' and '*Ecodomy*' – 'life in its fullness'. The institutional academic space is compared to a Hunger Games style *panopticon*, with its 'rules' and 'play'. It is argued that these research themes can only make an authentic contribution if the 'play' and the 'game' of the space in which these themes originate, are deconstructed. If this deconstruction can take place, there might be an authentic chance for unhindered dialogues towards the transformation of the academic space and the greater community it serves. Currently, where South African universities find themselves in the turmoil of student uprisings and political instability this chapter offers helpful insights into rethinking the broken past in order to establish new paradigms for a more whole future.

The final chapter by **Ernest van Eck** and **Robert van Niekerk** offers reflections on a Greek term, which contributes to the understanding of *Ecodomy* – 'life in its fullness'. The aim of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, it presents a comprehensive picture of the meaning of the term ἀναίδειαν in extant papyrological evidence. The conclusion reached is that the term, as is the case in early Jewish and patristic writings, the LXX, Graeco–Roman literature and in early Christian writings, always carries a negative and pejorative meaning. This meaning of the term is then used to interpret the occurrence of ἀναίδειαν in the parable of the Friend at Midnight. Secondly, as part of a publication that celebrates the centenary of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria (2017), a few

remarks are made with regard to the Faculty of Theology's Faculty Research Theme, *Oikodome – Life in its fullness*, and the attitude of ἀναίδειαν as depicted in the parable.

In an exemplary way, these ten scholarly contributions serve as an academic offering of gratitude for 100 years of 'brokenness' and 'wholeness' experienced in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria since 1917. With the Faculty Research Theme, entitled *Ecodomy*, these contributions are meant to celebrate 'life in its fullness' from the wide range of theological disciplines during the centenary year.

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Part 1

Brokenness

Racism and xenophobia: The role of the Church in South Africa

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Introduction

In an article titled *Difference and inequality,* Howard Winant points out that the United States of America (USA) faces a pervasive crisis of race, a crisis no less severe than those which the country has confronted in the past (in Cross & Keith 1993:108). The origins of the crisis are not particularly obscure; the cultural and political meaning of race, its significance in shaping the social structure and its experiential or existential dimensions all remain profoundly unresolved as the USA approaches the end of the 20th century. As a result, the societies as a whole, and the population as individuals, suffer from confusion and anxiety about the issue (or complex of issues) that we call race. In a similar way, the issue of race and identity has taken centre stage in Europe with the influx of refugees. A report in the newspaper *International New York Times* (26 April 2016) puts it more squarely:

> As Britain engages in fierce debates centered on national identity, it is also confronting challenges to traditional norms of political discourse, with issues of race and religion surfacing more overtly and provocatively. (p. 1)

Perhaps, the same can be said about South Africa today. Some 22 years after the inception of democracy South Africa seems to be exploding on the issues of racism and xenophobia. While making some references to other parts of the world, this chapter mainly attempts to look at the struggle of racism and xenophobia in South Africa and then proceeds to discuss the role of the Church in relation to these challenges.

▇ Racism

Racism is not easy to define today. The complexities abound in a variety of ways. For example, many accused of racism respond with the argument that their actions and aspirations are to do with patriotism, or that their claims revolve around matters of *ethnic* or national *culture*, not race. To which others add the view that everyone is racist. Ali Rattansi (2007) explains the confusion and complexity of understanding racism by pointing out that:

> the notion of race, and its associations with skin colour, facial features, and other aspects of physiognomy, has been intertwined, amongst other things, with issues of class, masculinity and femininity, sexuality, religion, mental illness, and the idea of the nation, and crucially, with the development of science. (p. 12)

In spite of what we have said above, it must be noted that at an International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, more than 160 countries agreed on the definition of racism as:

> any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, or any other field of public life. (cited in the ANC's submission to the World Conference Against Racism NGO Forum Durban, 3 September 2001:3)

Such attempts at a definition tend to be general and far-reaching, with key terms (such as 'race', 'colour', 'descent', 'ethnicity', 'nationality') requiring further definition or conceptual clarification. A slightly more helpful definition for this is found in the *Early Years Trainers' Anti-Racist Network Manual*:

> an unjust situation, in which a group because of its unequal place in society, suffers from a persistent pattern of prejudice, exclusion, injustice, discrimination and disadvantage which are slow to change and rooted deep in the institutions and structure of society and in people's psyches. (Darbyshire 1994:9)

For Lane (1999), racism may include practices and procedures that discriminate against people as a result of their colour, culture and/or 'race' or ethnicity, with the term 'race' being seen as a social and political construct linked to power, status, wealth and social

position (Derman-Sparks & Phillips 1997). Turning the process of definition on its head, McLaren and Torres (1999:59) argue that racism is an ideology that produces the concept 'race', and it is not the existence of 'races' that produces racism. Rather than attempt to define as a single term 'racism', therefore, it is more helpful to break it down into some of the various, invariably overlapping, levels on which it can be manifested.

Educational psychologist, Jace Pillay, attempts to do this in the South African context by exploring the notions and levels of racism in public schools. He refers to the different levels in which racism can be identified: 'overt racism', 'structural racism' 'institutional racism', 'covert racism', 'personal racism', 'interpersonal racism' and 'cultural racism' (Pillay 2014:150). Further, Pillay states that the emergence of *'modern racism'* has made the injustices and inequalities associated with racism all the more difficult to identify. More subtle and often disguised, this more 'covert' form of racism may not intend to be malicious, but many white people still subconsciously hold onto an internalised superiority complex in their interaction with black people. Because legislation outlaws all forms of racism in a democratic society, white people are expected to be 'politically correct', that is providing reasons for actions that cannot be seen as racist, but which are under the surface. For example, white parents may withdraw their children from State schools on the pretext that the large classes are not conducive to teaching, while in reality they do not want their children to interact with black children (Pillay 1996). Pillay points out that these levels of racism mentioned above are not mutually exclusive, but may have varying impacts on each other. They are also interactive and each level influences and is influenced by the others. One or a combination of levels could be operative at a given time.

Racism[1] is generally linked with the asserting of whiteness. The ascendancy of whiteness is usually associated with the rise of capitalism, modernity and the nation-state, and the cultural capital which coincided with such developments. There are long-standing accounts of this process which place the colonised, enslaved, underdeveloped and dark-skinned world in the role of perpetually exploited proletarians in relation to the resource-stealing white and Western world (Robinson 1983; Williams 1964). In this version of the world, the global working class is of colour, and not by accident. Rather, capitalist expansion has depended so heavily on mythologies of race and their attendant violence that the double project of racial and economic subjugation is a constitutive aspect of this expansion (Bhattacharyya, Gabriel & Small 2003:35).

. . . .

1. It is important to draw a distinction between racism, racial prejudice and racial discrimination. Racism is the belief that some races of people are better than others, and racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race. Racial prejudice is a negative attitude towards a group of people based on race, arising from race-based stereotypes. Racial discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than another person in a similar situation because of their race, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin.

Although it is invariably linked to white Western subjects, who came to represent the embodiment of humanity and reason, whiteness is not simply an ontological state. It is an imaginary one. In Aaron Gresson's words:

> whiteness is not limited to physical characteristics like hair texture, skin hues, nose shape, lip and hip size, and the like. Whiteness is about the position that the category of 'white people' happens to occupy in people's minds. (cited in Semali 1998:183)

June Jordan deepens this point by stating that:

> white supremacy goes beyond racism, it means that God put you on the planet to rule, to dominate, and occupy the centre of the national and international universe - because you're white. (Jordan in Bernasconi 2003:21)

In the South African context it is the affirmation and imposition of whiteness as the superior pigmentation and population group at the extent of oppressing and dehumanising the black majority population which led to black people actually believing that they are inferior human beings. The apartheid policy entrenched the protection of white rights embedded in political privilege, social advantage and economic domination. Economics was racialised not just in terms of production forms and processes but also in terms of processes of distribution and consumption. The job market was systematically geared to protect the economic activity and sustainability of white people. It is clear that economic pressure was exerted and manipulated to sustain racism and white privilege. Further, apartheid policies activated institutionalised discrimination in such areas as housing, marriage, education, employment and health. The power of whiteness in this sense lies in its capacity to impoverish, starve, contaminate and murder, all seemingly within the bounds of legality.

While South Africa has now moved to a new democracy since 1994, it still continues to struggle with the issue of racism which has become ever so prevalent in many ways in the country. More so, we see the ever-increasing accusation of reverse racism[2] often made by white people. We have seen this in the social media in recent times which has caused hurts and pains in many people. People often think and ask how we can have such racist experiences and expressions in a new democratic South Africa. Do people never learn? Well, racism is often driven by deep-seated insecurities, anxieties and fears which are then expressed in numerous, neurosis-driven expressions of whiteness. But whiteness is not just rooted in fear; it also elicits fear. This is precisely what we are seeing in South Africa with the decline of white power and dominance.

....

2. This is a phenomenon in which discrimination, sometimes officially sanctioned, against a dominant or formerly dominant racial or other group representative of the majority in a particular society takes place, for a variety of reasons, often initiated as an attempt at redressing past wrongs.

To address the evils of racism in South Africa transformation must be energised by economic redistribution, social redress and political balance. This is precisely the challenge, while we have managed well to address some issues we have not been successful in getting to the heart of the matter. Consequently, economic power still lies mainly in the hands of white people who continue to provide market and labour leadership. Unless this issue is realistically and sensibly addressed, racism would continue to live with us because racism has perpetuated inequalities. We may have a democratic country, but the question is do we have a democracy that takes seriously the balance of economic and political power. Political liberation must be accompanied by economic liberation and redistribution if democracy is to be truly effective. Williams makes the argument that globalisation has reconfigured social relations, and there have been some losers as a result, but whiteness in its new global guise remains powerfully intact (Williams 1997). Some of the old codes associated with privilege may have been questioned (e.g. around language and dress), but many of the mechanisms of white privilege (e.g. social networks) remain. Using this argument Gargi Bhattacharyya et al. (2003:10) state that what we are facing worldwide is not the demise of racism but the changing configuration of whiteness. Can this be descriptive of the South African context today? Bearing in mind the multidimensional aspects of racism, it is imperative that we recognise the need for the transformation of the *whole* South African society. However, we need to realise that real transformation also requires the transformation of the economy as an integral part of transforming the South African society to combat unemployment, poverty and inequalities and to promote social cohesion and harmony. We shall return to this later as we focus on the role of the Church in South Africa today.

◼ Xenophobia

Let us now look at the issue of xenophobia. Prior to 1994 immigrants to South Africa faced discrimination and even violence which largely stemmed from the institutionalised racism of the time due to apartheid. One would have expected incidences of xenophobia to decline after 1994 with the establishment of the new democratic government, however; on the contrary, it increased. In May 2008, 62 people were killed, attacks apparently motivated by xenophobia, although 21 of those were South African citizens. In 2015, a nationwide attack on immigrants ensued which even prompted a number of foreign governments to begin repatriating their citizens. How do we understand xenophobia in the context of South Africa?

The word xenophobia comes from two Greek words *xeno* meaning stranger and *phobia* meaning fear. Both words combined speak about the intense dislike or 'fear of strangers'. However, this is extended now to include refugees and immigrants, people from other countries. It describes attitudes, prejudices and behaviours that reject, exclude

and often vilify people based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity.

Xenophobia is usually differentiated from racism. While racism speaks about the racial superiority of one race group over another, xenophobia refers to the feelings of fear or hatred of others from another group. Generally racist people accept the presence of others but attempt to keep them oppressed and dominated. Xenophobic people, however, tend to refuse to accept the presence of other people around them usually because they are perceived as a source of threat. In this regard of differentiation, Blumer (1958) points out that racism is more behavioural and xenophobia is more attitudinal. Xenophobia can be associated with racism and ethnicity where there is a dominant minority group, oppressed majority and suppressed indigenous group. In my opinion, xenophobia is directly linked to racism and ethnicity when institutionalised measures are undertaken to protect the rights and interest of the 'in-group' against the development of the 'out-group'. In this sense, it can be directly related to the South African policy of apartheid which entrenched the protection of white privilege against the majority black people.

The xenophobic crisis in South Africa was not between white and black people but between black South Africans and mainly black foreigners from Zimbabwe, Nigeria, and Mozambique, including people from Pakistan, India, et cetera. How do we understand these xenophobic attacks? Were they racist or ethnic in their form? Can it be described as such? Dixon (2006) claims that the:

> presence of racial or ethnic group is only the first step in the causal claim of prejudice. The question is whether this threat related to size is due to the competition over available jobs, concerns about the welfare state being undermined, or whether immigrants are perceived to threaten the natural way of life of the majority population. (p. 2181)

All these lead to anti-immigrant attitudes. This is precisely the situation in South Africa. Immigrants have been allowed to settle mainly in poorer communities; consequently they have been accused of taking the jobs, wives and limited opportunities of the local population in the townships. Xenophobia is strengthened when immigrant workers settle for low wages and poor working conditions than what the majority population is prepared to accept. The free-ride on the welfare state also aggravates xenophobic reactions. While the South African government freely and rightly allowed for immigrants to settle in South Africa, they failed to implement what I refer to as an *integration plan* taking cognisance of the local population and that of the immigrants. Thus, it was only a matter of time that xenophobic outbursts would become a reality, as we have seen in 2008 and 2015 in South Africa.

Blumer (1958), using the concept of group theory, establishes that the larger the minority becomes, the more threatened the majority feels and, therefore, the more

averse the majority becomes. The majority becomes averse because it perceives that the minority is a threat to its dominant position as the group competing over scarce resources. Also, the larger the group, the greater the potential is for collective (political) action against the majority. In other words, the majority group can perceive large numbers of immigrants as competitors in the economic domain and/or in the area of identity politics. In group theory, people become averse towards 'out-groups' when they feel threatened by members of those groups. In other words, it is not the existence of immigrants that matters, but the existence of immigrants who threaten the host residents' position. These perceived threats are usually economically, culturally and religiously inclined.

In my assessment, the reaction to the 'out-groups' has been mainly economically linked and partially culturally instigated. Racism and ethnicity can play a role in the area of culture, especially when it comes to intermarriages and values of the majority population. Foreigners are viewed as potential threats to national identity, social order and, most importantly, to the values cherished by the majority population. While the cultural aspect may be an element to the xenophobia attacks in South Africa, it is not as dominant as the economic reason. The competition for scarce resources is the root cause of xenophobic attacks in South Africa. Although economics does play a serious role in, for example, addressing the refugee situation in Europe, of equal significance are the cultural and religious aspects. Previously, when foreigners entered into a host country, it was hoped that there would be a process of assimilation through which immigrants would take on the language and cultural values of the host country; then there would be no problem. Nowadays, this does not seem to be the case. Instead of assimilation what we are witnessing is cultural pluralism and religious differences. We can even see this in South Africa where foreigners first came into local churches but soon started to meet separately, using language and culture as the main reasons of justification for independence and separation.

In the Western world and even in parts of Africa Islamophobia has become a huge religious threat with immigrants, fortunately not so much within the South African context. Although there have been traces of attacks on Muslim foreigners, it is not intended against Islam as such, but driven by economic realities and struggles. Especially in Europe and America, Islamophobia displays a mix of ingredients that lead to a wrongful view of conflict of religions and civilisations: the association of Islam to violence and terrorism, the suspicion concerning Islamic teachings, the prohibition to display visual signs like veils, headscarves and minarets (Herring 2011:290). What can be seen from all these are the fact that cultural and religious intolerances are also becoming serious factors that contribute to xenophobia and racism. Ultimately, racist and xenophobic discourse is characterised by its affirmation of the immutable nature of cultural, ethnic or religious

identities. We shall now turn to look at the role of the Church in addressing racism and xenophobia.

What can the Church do to address racism and xenophobia?

In addressing the issues of racism and xenophobia in South Africa the Church has to lead the way, in conjunction with others, so that all may have the fullness of life in the context of racial harmony, economic justice, peace and inclusivity. In this regard, the Church is called upon to do, among other things, the following.

The Church must engage the issue of racism and xenophobia from a biblical and theological perspective. We should not get caught up with the economic order and practice of the day; instead, we need to do proper analysis and speak prophetically into the context. The Church must be able to analyse the context, conduct research and establish the facts about the situation. It is not acceptable that we simply accept the government's position on racism and xenophobia and rely on the media and social networks to inform our thinking and position on matters. The Church must be able to get to the grassroots causes of the issues surrounding racism and xenophobia. What does Scripture teach us about pilgrims and co-pilgrims, this world, the use of the earth and its resources, economic sharing and solidarity, the care of the poor and needy, the Kingdom of God, justice, peace and righteousness? These are important theological themes the Church often displaces in the quest to identify with power and privilege. The Church needs to engage a prophetic role in the light of injustices and the dehumanising of human beings.

Further, the Church should be able to read the signs of the times and be proactive in forecasting the future rather than been reactive and coming into the fray when it is forced to. The Church should hold the government accountable in its immigrant programme and integration plan. In Germany, I was excited to hear wonderful stories of how churches have come together to assist refugees with food, clothing, shelter, documentation and help in finding jobs. They have partnered with government in addressing the refugee crisis. In fact, the Church has suddenly come alive and people are keen to get involved, despite the fact that some people are not happy about the presence of refugees. In the USA, churches have opened their facilities to welcome refugees, providing opportunities to learn English, helping them to prepare for employment interviews and jobs.

The Church needs to ensure that the government does have a plan to combat racism and xenophobia. During the apartheid days in South Africa, the South African Council of Churches (SACC) promoted the programme to combat racism. This endeavour should be revived to address issues of racism in South Africa today.

The problem is that much of those programmes ended with the establishment of the new democratic South Africa, but that does not mean that we had adequately addressed the challenges of racism. If anything, the given realities indicate that we have not dealt with racism at its deepest level. The Church in South Africa must return to helping people confront and address deep-seated racist beliefs and practices and take the lead to welcome and assist strangers.

The Church should take the lead in education, reorientation and building of relationships. It is true that children learn racism as they grow up, from the society around them – and too often the stereotypes are reinforced, deliberately or inadvertently, by mass media. McLaren (2003:930) states that friendship reduces xenophobia and racism. The 'theory of contact' tells us that when people rub shoulders, have ample time and opportunity for building meaningful relationships, they soon learn to trust one another. The prejudice, racial inclinations and xenophobic feelings of hatred and dislike are reconditioned and challenged when people get to know one another. The Church should play a vital role in this regard. The Gospel is one of good news and love. It is a message of how the love of Christ brings people together, triumphs over evil and establishes the good. The idea is not to Christianise or convert but to be Christ-like and to be the Good Samaritan exercising love and compassion on the poor, injured, neglected, suffering and dying.

The Church should understand that *cultural differences* play a very significant role in separating and dividing people. Because these are often religious in nature, their members tend to interpret most of life through a religiously informed grid. Differences in culture are often given absolute and transcendent meanings. Furthermore, all religious expressions are embedded in particular cultural forms, so individuals experience God through culturally specific media. This is what is referred to as religiously charged ethnocentrism (Christerson, Edwards & Emerson 2005:175). How can the Church provide space to address this reality to expand and broaden the horizon of a limited worldview or cultural experience? Most churches in South Africa are now attracting people from different race and ethnic groups, yet they fail to create meaningful spaces where people can share their different life experiences and learn from one another about the other. The experience of worship and the use of liturgy can be more meaningfully adapted to facilitate and embrace diversity and learning.

In attempting to build relationships and allay fears that swell racism and xenophobia, the Church should embark on a programme of education to biblically explore what it means to be God's people on the earth. The Church has a unique opportunity of attracting people from all sorts of backgrounds; it should use this facility of the 'mixed economy' to enable people to *transcend cultural and racial boundaries*, retain their identity, but learn to respect and accept the way of life of the 'other'. How can the Church build bridges and not walls, become inclusive and not exclusive and in so doing demonstrate that God so 'loved

the world?' These are some of the challenges we need to be discussing in the light of resurfacing racism and xenophobia both in South Africa and across the globe. The Church needs to also make its contribution to this end. While respecting and accepting the variety of cultural affiliations prevalent in South Africa, the Church must help interpret and integrate these as part of its endeavour to build a nation. The Church is in a unique position to encourage cultural tolerance, education and acceptance because millions of people in South Africa from different races, tribes, colour, languages and cultural backgrounds belong to it. In order to build our nation in this regard it is important for the Church to start promoting the same in its life, work, witness and worship. Thus, the Church by virtue of the fact of what it is called to do and the unique position it has in society, together with its already established infrastructure, must take the lead in building and uniting the nation culturally and politically.

The Church has to put time and effort in building the *human community*. The majority of people in South Africa have been dehumanised and demoralised for a long time. Apartheid made them feel like no people. In fact, the majority of South African black people still suffer with an inferiority complex. They still have this notion of being second- or third-class citizens. Although apartheid is no longer existent in the laws of our country, it continues to live in the hearts and minds of people and it will do so for a long time. In short, we are still far from the establishment of the 'Beloved Community' that Martin Luther King spoke about in the fulfilment of the American dream and the actualisation of the Kingdom of God, a society where all live lives that befit their dignity as children of God; a society where everyone is accepted, everyone belongs (Marsh 2005:50).

Modern racism, as we have shown earlier, is taking many forms; it is no longer just the simple issue of black and white. The Church by the very nature of its mission has the ability to reach into peoples' hearts and minds. It does this through the message of the Gospel and the power of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the Church must never hesitate to proclaim the biblical message that all people are equal before God, and in this sense it must seriously engage issues of 'whiteness' and 'blackness' that continue to perpetuate separation and division. It must not choose to remain with a comfortable message when its calling is to speak the truth in love. The Church must work towards the restoration of the dignity and self-worth of all those who have been dehumanised. It needs to embark on programmes and activities that bring people together, empower and train them and develop their confidence and skills so that they do not think any less of themselves, but as people created in the image of God. For example, the 'Black Lives Matter' movement in the USA is working for the validity of the lives of black people. It campaigns against police brutality against black people. All of this is intended to build the human community that abounds in mutual respect and acceptance. The Church, as part of its task of building human community, needs to

learn to be the 'Church for Others'. Building the human community requires dealing with all those realities that continues to propagate racism, tribalism, ethnocentrism and xenophobia.

We also need to be Church *together* with others. Opening the Church, especially its parochial organisation, means embracing the world we live in. Thus, Church is not only for others, but also *together* with others. In this sense, the Church opens its doors to people of other faiths and no faith. The Church joins with people of other religious affiliations to help build the human community. Duncan makes the claim that Christianity can no longer be treated either as a foreign faith or as a superior faith to others, including African Traditional Religion (Duncan 2002:333). This, too, provides the opportunity to address issues related to racism and xenophobia. The Church then, is not only for one another but *with others*. Understanding and appropriating this ideal will help address religious intolerance, violence and Islamophobia, which are so prevalent in the world today.

In building the human community, the Church must work at ensuring and securing the rights of human beings. The Church has the responsibility to work towards the fullness of life for all people on earth, and in this regard it has the duty of upholding and defending human rights where it is violated. Bonhoeffer, for example, tried to reconcile the puzzle of seeing natural life as either exclusively an end or as a means to an end. Using the role of Christ, he argues that insofar as Jesus Christ's life expresses its createdness, it is an end in itself, and insofar it expresses its participation in the Kingdom of God, it is a means (Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works 6, p. 179). Bonhoeffer thus contended that rights are the expression of life as an end in itself while duties arise from life as the means to an end. In this sense he declared that rights come before duties (Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works 6, p. 186). He further claimed that human rights are God-given, and therefore no one should violate them. In the context of racism and xenophobia human rights are always violated. The Church has the responsibility of standing with God in defending the rights of people to live with dignity and sustainability. The numerous municipal protests in South Africa are an expression of standing up for ones' rights for basic provisions and healthy lives. The Church needs to support these endeavours and challenge the authorities that fail to fulfil their elected responsibilities in the interest of the poor people.

The Church should impress on the fact that human rights should be understood in the broader context of respecting the rights of others. As John Mbiti wrote, many traditional Africans believed and conducted themselves in such a way that: 'Since we are, therefore I am', or, otherwise stated, 'I am because we are and not the other way round'. In a general sense, life was largely communal, and it still remains largely communal, although the Western individualised concept is fast spreading among Africans. Otherwise, as Akinosho pointed out:

> By contrast the African concept of human rights is based on the conception of communalism, which is collectivism since rights exist because of the communality of humankind and this concept derives its power from aspects of human dignity which corresponds with communal duty. (Cited in Bedford-Strohm, Bataringaya & Jahnichen 2016:98)

The African concept of ubuntu can teach us a lot about human community and communal rights and care for one another – a concept that can help us to overcome the challenges of racism and xenophobia.

The Church must continue in the struggle for justice in South Africa, and in particular economic justice. South Africa has received political liberation; however, nothing can really change without the new government having economic power. In this regard, in order to make a difference to the lives of people in their impoverished circumstances, it is necessary to transform power relations; to shift the balance of power towards the poor, as well as to lay foundations which can help to determine the shape of society, as a long-term measure. The Church in South Africa must therefore challenge the economic system in place. An improvement in the quality of life is related to a fundamental restructuring of the economy, which is essential to meet the needs of the majority of the population. A major part of economic growth and improving the quality of life is by opening up the economy, and thereby creating access to those traditionally discriminated against (Kleinschmidt 1995:175). Racism and xenophobia has a direct bearing on economic factors and systems. The task of the Church is to play a prophetic role in addressing inequalities that continue to fracture and divide people.

In this sense, the Church must enter into the realm of economics and not simply leave it to the trained professionals. In any case, most of these professionals are probably members of the Church. Hence, the Church should not resist the opportunity to teach these people to apply the Word of God to their professions as well. Perhaps the Church should share in the training of our economist – the time has come for us to engage a theology of economics. Economics does not only have to do with growth, it has to deal with people, attitudes and ethics. In this regard, the Church has much to offer to the shaping of the country's economic policy and budget. Opportunity is often given to public participation in drawing up the government budget; the Church should participate fully in these structures upholding the interest of the poor and needy.

Economic justice is and must be a concern for the Church. However, if the Church is to be true to this end it must first put its own 'house in order'. It is no use pontificating or pointing fingers at others when it is guilty of the same sins. This warning is in place because too often churches have been, and still are, part and parcel of existing political-economic systems. Therefore, churches have to begin with repentance over their past role in society seeking to liberate themselves from their own history and thus earning the authentic right to speak on behalf of the exploited and poor people.

The Church needs to be mindful to the fact that although apartheid may be a thing of the past, its legacy of hurts, sufferings, wounds and painful experiences continues to surface in the present. The complex history of South Africa necessitates the twofold ingredient of reconciliation and healing to become part of the process of transformation, in 'healing a broken people' in our country. It is a known fact that when people who have gone through dramatic experiences of gross human rights violations, *viz.* torture, assassinations and massacres and the like reminiscent and make known their plight by talking about them, they experience healing. In order to facilitate this process of healing in our land the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established. Many have shared their stories, recorded the facts and relived their horrible experiences during the sitting of the Commission. While the TRC has helped many to receive healing, the whole issue of amnesty and reparations remain in question. It is here that the Church must hold the government to its promises. Is there a correlation between political reconciliation and the Church's understanding thereof in our context that can be utilised to build community and ubuntu? (see August 2005:14–29).

The Church has a vital role to play in bringing about racial reconciliation and healing in South Africa, and here it needs to embrace a pastoral-prophetic approach. It ought to do this because many of its own members have become victims themselves or they have been affected in some way or another. Likewise, the Church can also encourage its members, who have promoted the evils of apartheid, in whatever way, to seek repentance and forgiveness. Reconciliation and healing are the business of the Church as expressed in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. While proclaiming love and forgiveness the Church must take cognisance of the deep pain and sufferings of people under apartheid, whom lost loved ones and are still searching for answers to people still missing.

It is a biblical fact that the truth shall set us free. It is also a biblical fact that we serve a God who advocates justice. Allan Boesak has pointed out that the politicians and journalists have claimed the concept of reconciliation from the Church making it a buzzword in the new South Africa (Boesak 1995:27). He pleaded with the Church to reclaim it and to emphasise the biblical injunction that reconciliation is really not possible without confrontation – confronting what we are, confronting what we have been and confronting what we have done.

Reconciliation is not possible while one tries to cover up the sins, to paint over the cracks; they have to be uncovered for reconciliation to take place. The tragedy in South Africa is that we have moved on without attending to the evils of apartheid, and racism is now resurfacing to haunt the South African nation. Admittedly, the Church too failed in adequately addressing the problem of racism, pain and suffering. Reconciliation requires that we surface the truth from under the carpet; confront it and find forgiveness and healing, which would also require restorative justice. The Church should incorporate this into its liturgy, worship and practice. The Church should embark on programmes to

facilitate healing and reconciliation ministries. It is a matter of fact that unless this happens we will fail in our attempts to build a new nation. The Church has the right to pave the way in this responsibility because biblically speaking, it is itself a reconciled community, a community of the redeemed, a community of love and a healing community (Pillay 2002:319).

The majority of churches in South Africa consist of a mixture of people from different cultural, ethnic and racial groups, and as such it has the ideal facility to promote reconciliation and healing in our land. Though people may be members of the same church their experiences in life may be vastly different because of the tragedy of apartheid. The Church must not resist the opportunity of bringing its members together and embarking on exercises to foster reconciliation and healing. It can be certain that such endeavours by the Church will have a rippling effect throughout the nation, especially if the greater part of the South African population is said to be Christian. An even greater measure of success in this attempt surrounds the Church because all its members, no matter their experiences, already have a common unity in the name of Jesus Christ.

Clearly, the Church as it addresses racism and xenophobia is to be both a living example and an agent of human unity. Wherever there is division, enmity or discrimination, there reconciliation must be the mission of the Church. When the Church is not about the task of reconciliation, it has lost its way, working at cross purposes to its own identity and misunderstanding its fundamental task.

◼ Conclusion

In spite of all the good efforts to build a new community, country and world, racism and xenophobia would continue to perpetuate separation, division, oppression and domination of different people groups. This divide would continue to extend itself in racial, cultural, political, religious and economic manifestations that persist in the failure of creating human community and unity and racial harmony. The Church, because of the very nature of the Gospel of Christ, is called to bring unity, reconciliation, healing and peace. The (ecumenical) Church in South Africa struggled in dismantling apartheid; it must now continue to build a nation freed from the evils of racism and economic injustices. It needs to work towards the fullness of life for all people.

◼ Summary: Chapter 1

Racism and xenophobia have become a worldwide issue and challenge. The recent flood of immigrants and refugees into Europe and America has put this matter on the world map. In South Africa racism and xenophobia have, in recent times, reached

explosive proportions and have greatly intensified the need for the Church to get more deeply involved in the creation of racial harmony and peace as it works towards the fullness of life for all people. This chapter explored the challenges of racism and xenophobia in South Africa and concluded by discussing the role of the Church in combating these realities.

Bonhoeffer and costly reconciliation in South Africa – through the lens of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission[3]

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◼ Introduction: 'And the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Prize goes to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission!'

It was a day to remember, the 25th of April 1999. In the French Cathedral, in Berlin, former Archbishop Desmond Tutu, chairman of the South African Truth and

3. See Meiring (2015).

Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Dr Alex Boraine, deputy chair, were given a resounding applause when the Dietrich Bonhoeffer Prize was handed to them. In the award document, it was stated that 'the Commission has courageously and energetically supported the process of finding out the truth and made forgiveness possible' (Evangelical Church in Germany [EKD] 1999:1).

The former General-Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), Philip Potter, praised the achievements of Desmond Tutu and his colleagues during the difficult period of changeover from the apartheid system to democracy in South Africa. Desmond Tutu, in turn, thanked the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) for their support in the fight against apartheid, calling upon the 'rainbow nation' of South Africa to find peace with itself and with other peoples (EKD 1999:1). It was evident to all that 'the Arch' and his fellow commissioners in the TRC were, in the spirit of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, on the way to reconciliation and forgiveness. A new day was dawning in South Africa (EKD 1999:1).

Dr Alex Boraine, in his address, sounded a serious note. He regretted the fact that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had failed to make reparations in many cases due to legal restrictions. He also pointed out that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission could merely lay the ground stone for reconciliation. He said that it could possibly take generations before the wounds were healed (EKD 1999:1). In South Africa, at the time, Boraine's concerns were shared by many. How far were we really on the road towards forgiveness and reconciliation? The TRC traversed the country, since its inception in 1995. Human rights violation hearings were held in cities and towns, in busy townships and far flung rural areas. In the process, more than 27 000 victims were recognised, their stories captured. Reparation proposals were prepared for the victims and their families. Representatives from many interest groups and organisations were asked to appear, among them the political leaders of the day. The Amnesty Committee processed the applications of more than 7000 perpetrators. Researchers worked day and night to capture all that happened during the apartheid years, using every source available to them, to compile a report on South Africa during the apartheid years (1960–1994). In the end a comprehensive seven-volume report was handed to the nation. But the vexing question remained: We have a report. We have 'the truth'. What, now, about reconciliation? The cartoonist Zapiro (Shapiro 1997:11) captured the general feeling in his own inimitable way (see Figure 1).

◼ Dietrich Bonhoeffer in South Africa

Back to Berlin, to the celebration in the French Cathedral. It was not the first time that Bonhoeffer's name and his legacy was connected to South Africa, not by far.
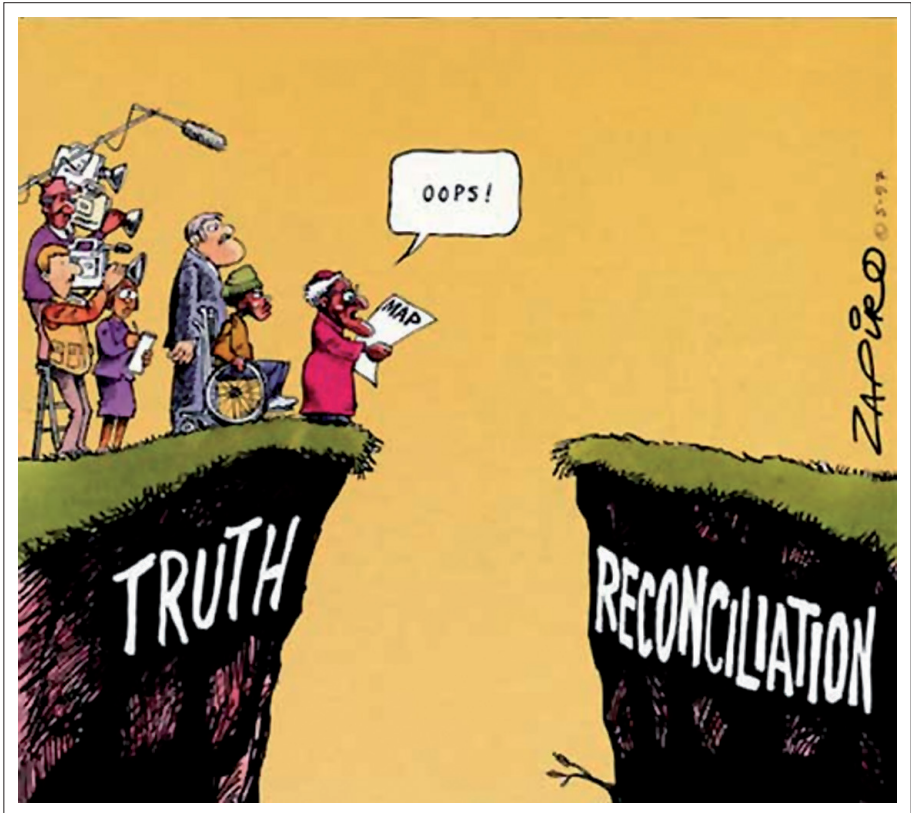
FIGURE 1: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Indeed, the figure of the pastor in the Tegel prison cell, has loomed large over the country for the past 70 years.

'When did Bonhoeffer visit South Africa? He knows our situation from the inside!' (De Gruchy 1984:4). Eberhard Bethge, Bonhoeffer's friend and biographer, was amused at the question put to him quite innocently by a number of lay Christians who had no previous knowledge of the German theologian, at a Bonhoeffer seminar in Johannesburg in 1973. Back home he remembered the question, and in an essay based on his experience in South Africa he wrote about the many similarities – as well as differences – between Bonhoeffer's Germany and South Africa in the 1970s (De Gruchy 1984:4).

Bonhoeffer indeed never visited South Africa, and he probably did not know a great deal about the country. But the relevance of Bonhoeffer for South Africa was never

in doubt. John de Gruchy chose Bonhoeffer as partner in dialogue for doing theology in South Africa. He wrote his doctoral thesis on Bonhoeffer, as did *inter alia* Johan Botha, Russel Botman and Carel Anthonissen in the years that followed.

Heroes from the struggle against apartheid, Beyers Naudé and Steve Biko, among others, were hailed as latter-day Bonhoeffers. Mandela's famous 'Speech from the dock' before his conviction and imprisonment at the Rivonia Trial was compared to Bonhoeffer's (1995) essay on *The structure of responsible life.* At ecumenical gatherings, his name and his teachings were often invoked, whenever protest was lodged against the injustices of apartheid, especially against the theological defence of apartheid.

When the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, meeting in Ottawa in 1982, took the historic step of declaring that the apartheid situation in South Africa, and the position of two white South African member churches on the issue – the Nederduitse Gereformerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church) and the Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk (Netherdutch Reformed Church of Africa) – constituted a *status confessionis,* the voice of Bonhoeffer could be heard in the background. It was Bonhoeffer who retrieved the concept of a *status confessionis,* last used in 1550 in the Lutheran Formula of Concord, in his discussion of the question whether the 'Aryan paragraph', introduced by the Nazi government, might also be applied in the church.[4]

Three years later (1985) the *Kairos Document* was published (Nürnberger & Tooke 1988:11–21). Reminiscent of Bonhoeffer's blunt distinction between the true and the false church, the *Kairos Document* declared that the time had come for Christians to choose sides, to join the resistance. It was not enough to reject apartheid in principle and yet stop short of political solidarity with the liberation struggle. The moment had arrived for the Church to stand with the oppressed in their struggle for justice and freedom. There could be no cheap reconciliation. What was needed was, in Bonhoeffer's words, costly grace. Three years later, at the 'National Initiative for Reconciliation conference' (Pietermaritzburg 1988) David Bosch uttered a similar plea, again referring back to Bonhoeffer ('Processes of reconciliation and demands of obedience: Twelve theses' [Nürnberger & Tooke 1988:98ff.]).

. . . .

4. To exclude (baptised Christian) Jews from membership of the church, Bonhoeffer contended, would be a violation of the church in its substance, a denial of God's act of reconciliation in the cross of Jesus Christ, through which he:

> [*H*]as broken down the dividing wall between Jews and gentiles and 'made the two into one' (Eph 2:14f). A church that accepted the Aryan paragraph in its own life, would cease to be the church of Christ. One could serve such a (pseudo) church only by leaving it. (Blei 1994:5)

So serious the situation was adjudged, that the membership of the Afrikaans churches was suspended by the World Alliance, until the day they truly repented of their sin and heresy.

■ Back to Tutu and the Zapiro cartoon: How far are we on the road to reconciliation?

Did the work of the TRC and the publication of the TRC report contribute to reconciliation, to help the rainbow nation to find peace with itself? The Commission's lofty charge inspired many at the time:

- To provide a historic bridge between the past of a deeply divided society characterised by strife, conflict, untold suffering and injustice, and a future founded on the recognition of human rights, democracy and peaceful co-existence for all, irrespective of colour, race, class, belief or sex.
- The pursuit of national unity, the well-being of all citizens, of peace and reconciliation and the reconstruction of society.
- The recognition of the need for understanding but not for vengeance, the need for reparation but not for retaliation, for ubuntu but not for victimisation (TRC 1998:55–57).

Recently (23 September 2015) at a gala dinner for a delegation from Sri Lanka that travelled to South Africa to discuss the possibility of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission in their country after years of civil war as well as a bloody aftermath, the aged Advocate George Bizos was invited to speak. Bizos who was more involved in the local TRC process than many of his peers and who represented numerous victims at the hearings, was positive about the outcome of the TRC process. Everything was not perfect, he said. There were lapses, especially in the process of paying proper reparation to many victims, but South Africa would have been much the poorer without the TRC. Tensions would have run much higher in the community.

But, having said that, we do have to face the fact that South Africa, 20 years after democracy, is still a fractured and a very divided country. One needs only to take the annual 'Reconciliation barometer' (Wale 2013) published by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation in hand, to realise how far we still have to go on the road to healing, reconciliation and nation building. Millions are still suffering from poverty and disease. For large numbers of South Africans without proper education, without jobs, without security, the future seems bleak. Racism, alienation, xenophobia are still with us, as is the case with corruption and greed and endemic violence. Public trust is at a very low ebb, the delivery of services often a nightmare.

However, everything is not lost. Looking back at what has been achieved during the TRC years, one cannot but be amazed and heartened by how far the country has travelled on the road of reconciliation. But reconciliation does not come easy. There are a number of prerequisites for the process of forgiveness and healing.

█ Reconciliation

The first prerequisite has to do with definition. The commission appointed was aptly called a Truth and *Reconciliation* Commission, but to describe the meaning of reconciliation proved to be difficult. In the years running up to the new political dispensation in South Africa, many different definitions and many different preconditions for reconciliation were coined and discussed. In ecumenical circles many statements were produced, *inter alia* by the Kairos theologians, by the South African Council of Churches, the Evangelical Witness produced by a group of 'Concerned Evangelicals', as well as the 'Church and Society' policy document of the Dutch Reformed Church. In 1988 a meeting of the National Initiative for Reconciliation was called in Pietermaritzburg where prominent church leaders and academics – among them Frank Chikane, David Bosch, Michael Cassidy, Denise Ackerman, Klaus Nürnberger, Bongani Goba and John de Gruchy – reflected on the issue of reconciliation.

In the same vein, immediately after its appointment, the TRC had to grapple with the same questions: What does reconciliation really entail? Tutu describes in his book on the TRC, *No future without forgiveness,* the different views on the matter: the way in which the politicians and lawyers, the religious leaders and the community workers, the commissioners from so many different backgrounds, discussed their understanding of the concept of reconciliation, and on the process that was necessary to lead the country on the way to forgiveness and nation building (Tutu 1999:70ff.).

For Tutu, it was evident that the process would be profoundly spiritual. After all, President Mandela knowingly, decided to appoint an archbishop to chair the TRC! (Tutu 1999:71). The President, Tutu argued must have realised 'that forgiveness, reconciliation and reparation were not the normal currency in political discourse … Forgiveness, confession and reconciliation were far more at home in a religious sphere' (Tutu 1999:71). Tutu made it clear that he was addressing the issue of reconciliation from a Christian vantage point. Regularly quoting Paul's message in 2 Corinthians 5, Tutu stated his conviction that only because God has reconciled us to him by sacrificing his Son Jesus Christ on the cross, true and lasting reconciliation between humans became possible. Knowing this, all Christians need to recognise and accept their own responsibility to become ambassadors of reconciliation in our everyday lives:

> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. (2 Cor 5:18f. [RSV])

Tutu, however, never failed to emphasise the role the *other religions* in South Africa had to play in this regard. At many hearings, as well as during inter-faith services that regularly

accompanied the TRC's programme, the Archbishop called upon leaders of the other faith communities – Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, African Traditional Religion, et cetera – to join the debate, to reflect on what they, from the deepest sources of *their* religious traditions and beliefs, might contribute, helping the TRC to arrive at the true meaning of reconciliation in the country. At the faith communities' hearing in East London (November 1997) much time was set apart for this process. It was clear from the statements from the imams, rabbi's and priests that the other faiths indeed had much to offer.

Defining reconciliation, as well as describing the responsibility that Christians have to accept in this regard, was of equal importance to Dietrich Bonhoeffer. In a poignant passage in his *The cost of discipleship* (1963), he reminded his fellow Christians in Germany, at the time of the Third Reich:

> Not just our own anger, but the fact that someone has been hurt, damaged, or disgraced by us, who 'has a cause against us,' erects a barrier between us and God. Let us therefore as a Church examine ourselves, and see whether we have not often enough wronged our fellow men. Let us see whether we have tried to win popularity by falling in with the world's hatred, its contempt and its contumely. For if we do that, we are murderers. Let the fellowship of Christ so examine itself today, and ask whether, at the hour of prayer and worship, any accusing voices intervene and make its prayer in vain. (p. 144f.)

The debate on the real meaning of reconciliation is still with us. There are some who are even questioning the use of the word. To many it has become a discredited term, an oppressive term. But we dare not let go of the concept, for reconciliation lies at the heart of the gospel of Christ. We need the light from many lamps, also Bonhoeffer's lamp, to lead us along the way.

■ The truth shall set us free

Equally important on our journey towards reconciliation and forgiveness is the quest for truth. When the then Minister of Justice Dullah Omar introduced the TRC legislation to Parliament, he called upon all South Africans 'to join in the search for truth without which there can be no genuine reconciliation' (Villa-Vicencio & De Gruchy 1985:128). It was a tremendous task, to capture the stories of thousands of South Africans, of victims as well as perpetrators, to try to establish what really had happened in South Africa during the apartheid years, and to try and capture the many nuances and unspoken truths encapsulated in the evidence presented to the TRC.

In his introduction to the TRC report Desmond Tutu reflected on the difficulties involved in finding the truth – and of sharing the truth with fellow South Africans, as well as with the outside world. Tutu quoted a Dutch visitor who observed that the TRC

was bound to fail. Its task was simply too demanding. Yet, she argued, 'even as it fails, it has already succeeded beyond any rational expectations.' Referring to the words of Emily Dickson she added: '[*T*]he truth must dazzle gradually … or all the world would be blind' (TRC 1998:4).

But, wrote Tutu, the TRC was not prepared to allow the present generation of South Africans 'to grow gently into the harsh realities of the past.' The commissioners, confronted with the ugly truths, had often wept. But fellow South Africans needed to share their tears:

> However, how painful the experience has been, we remain convinced that there can be no healing without the truth. Not only the pain and injustice of thousands needed to be uncovered. The fatal ideology behind it, the structures erected to support apartheid, needed to be scrutinized. (TRC 1998:4)

As was the case in Bonhoeffer's Germany when Bonhoeffer had to take a firm stand against the many distortions of truth by the ideology of National Socialism, against the deceptions, cover-ups and half-truths that were rife in society, South Africans were called by the TRC to take a stand for truth, to look for the truth that will eventually set them free.

Finding truth, the commissioners realised, goes far beyond collecting facts and weighing findings. Finding truth is to imagine yourself in the other's shoes, to accept accountability, to look for justice, to restore and to maintain the fragile relationship between human beings. The process needed to be handled with sensitivity and the utmost care. If not, to quote Tutu's visitor, South Africans would be blinded. The hope, however, was that the process would succeed, that by inviting the many victims to the podium, by confronting thousands of perpetrators with their dastardly deeds, and by calling upon political parties, academia and civil society to reflect on their role in the past, it would eventually lead to national catharsis, to forgiveness, to the point where the truth really sets one free.

This indeed is what happened. The annals of the TRC contain the testimonies of a large number of perpetrators who used the opportunity to appear before the Amnesty Committee. All of them were required to disclose all the facts and motives behind their deeds. They were subjected to questioning and cross questioning. For a many this was a painful and embarrassing experience, but for the 1167 perpetrators who did receive amnesty it meant a new lease on life. When the former Minister of Police, Adrian Vlok, was granted amnesty for his role in the bombing of the SA Council of Churches' headquarters in Johannesburg, he responded: 'My heart sang. I got a lump in my throat and I thanked God for his grace and mercy to me' (Meiring 1999:357). The same was the reaction of Mongesi Manqina and his three colleagues who received amnesty for the killing of an American fieldworker fieldworker, Amy Biehl, and of the parents of Amy

who travelled from the USA to be present at the hearing in Cape Town. Listening to the testimonies of Mongesi and the others, the Biehls declared their satisfaction and admiration for the TRC process. They found healing and peace, they said, and started a non-governmental organisation, the Amy Biehl Foundation, to support black youths in various ways – employing two of Amy's killers as staff members of the foundation (Meiring 1999:67ff.).

Many victims reported a similar experience. The truth set them free as well. At a hearing in Soweto an elderly gentleman spoke for many fellow victims:

> When I was tortured at John Vorster Square my tormentor sneered at me: 'You can shout your lungs out. Nobody will ever hear you!' Now, after all these years, people are hearing me! (Van Vught & Cloete 2000:190)

At the East London hearing Beth Savage who was almost killed by an attack at a Christmas party at a golf club in King Williams Town (1992) and who had spent many months in hospital, was asked about her feelings towards the perpetrators of the attack. She said that she indeed understood their motives. 'My honest feeling is: there but for the grace of God, go I … It is marvellous that we have a Truth Commission', she said.

According to Meiring (1999):

> To be able to get everything of your chest brings healing … What I really want is to meet the man who threw the hand-grenade. I want to do it in a spirit of forgiveness, in the hope that he, for whatever reason, will also forgive me. (p. 27)

The Truth and Reconciliation process however required that not only the perpetrators and victims be exposed to the truth. The *nation* needed to be invited into the process. They, too, needed to sit down and listen. It was not easy.

Throughout its life, the TRC was concerned about the fact that many white South Africans, English as well as Afrikaners, were conspicuous in their absence at the hearings, seemingly unwilling to involve themselves in the process. But the media played their part. Day after day the testimonies at the hearings were carried in the newspapers and reported on over radio and television. The public needed to be confronted with the truth, albeit in their own family rooms. They needed to be shamed by the truth. They, too, had to struggle with what had happened in our country. They were challenged, daily, to reflect upon their own complicity. And in the end, many of them were able to experience that the truth, hard as it may be, sets one free.

This process has to continue. We have not reached the end of the road to reconciliation. To the contrary, there are many stories yet to be told, the stories of our time: of mothers unable to feed their children; of the victims of violent crime; of young people depressed

and angry because they cannot find work; of students who cannot pay their fees; of fellow Africans who crossed our borders to find a new life, only to experience alienation and rejection and xenophobic attacks on their homes and their township spaza shops; of farmers, black as well as white, who suffered the horror and often mindless cruelty of farm attacks. They, too, need the opportunity to tell, to be listened to, to be taken seriously, and to experience healing in the process.

■ The call for justice

Bonhoeffer was a young pastor, 27 years old, when he challenged his colleagues in the church, with the publication of his essay *The church and the Jewish Question* ([1933] 1965). Against the view of many German Christians that the churches ought to emulate the Aryan Clauses enacted by the German government, he called for the virtue of justice on behalf of the victims of injustice. It was a heroic step to take, Bonhoeffer embarking on a road that put him in direct conflict with the powers of the state, that would eventually have him arrested, and in the end, would cost him his life.

But he had no choice. Justice and reconciliation go hand in hand, Bonhoeffer taught us. Lasting reconciliation can only flourish in a society where justice is seen to be done. In his 'Thoughts on the baptism' (a baptismal sermon for his godson included in his *Letters and papers from prison* [1959]) he emphasised the relationship between justice and reconciliation in society, lamenting the fact the church in the past:

> [*H*]as fought for self-preservation as though it were an end in itself and has thereby lost its chance to speak a word of reconciliation to mankind and the world at large. (Bonhoeffer 1959:160)

In South Africa, with the granting of amnesty to perpetrators of apartheid, a choice was made between *retributive* justice and *restorative* justice. The latter, Tutu (1999) contended, was characteristic of traditional African jurisprudence:

> Here the central concern is not retribution or punishment, but in the spirit of *ubuntu,* the healing of breaches, the redressing of imbalances, the restoration of broken relationships. This kind of justice seeks to rehabilitate both the victim and the perpetrator, who should be given the opportunity to be reintegrated into the community he or she has injured by his or her offence. (p. 51f.; TRC 1998:435)

The quest for justice is still on the table. People are still suffering in South Africa. We live in a society torn apart by inequality, poverty, unemployment, racism and violence. We have barely begun to address the vexing issues of equal education, of land reform, of proper governance and of corruption.

In 1972, Beyers Naudé, the South African on whom Bonhoeffer's mantle had fallen, was standing trial in Johannesburg. His statement reverberated inside as well as outside the courtroom:

> No reconciliation is possible without justice, and whoever works for reconciliation must first determine the causes of injustice in the hearts and lives of those, of either the persons or groups, who feel themselves aggrieved. (De Gruchy 1979:171)

That was his mission, Naudé declared. To identify with the aggrieved in our country, to stand with them in their quest for justice.

Two decades later the Confession of Belhar, also standing in the tradition of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the *Bekennende Kirche*, called Christians in South Africa to be true to their calling:

> The church must … stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

> The church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm other. (Confession of Belhar Article 4) (Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa 2012:770)

◼ No future without forgiveness

Bonhoeffer spoke and preached eloquently about forgiveness. His sermon on Matthew 18:21–35, is a point in case – and as relevant today as in Germany many decades ago (Bonhoeffer in press). Nobody can put down Bonhoeffer's *The cost of discipleship* and not be moved by what Bonhoeffer wrote about the possibility of forgiveness. Equally, nobody can close his *Letters and papers from prison* (1959) without being profoundly touched by the way he, in the last days before his execution, reached out in love to others, to his fellow prisoners as well as to their gaolers:

> Christian love draws no distinction between one enemy and another, except that the more bitter our enemy's hatred, the greater his need of love. Be his enmity political or religious, he has nothing to expect from a follower of Jesus but unqualified love. In such love there is not inner discord between the private person and official capacity. In both we are disciples of Christ, or we are not Christians at all. (Bonhoeffer 1963:164)

Reconciliation requires a deep, honest confession – and a willingness to forgive. One of the more controversial aspects of the Truth and Reconciliation process in South Africa was that the 'act' did not make it a condition that the applicant had to show remorse for

his actions, or that he had to openly express his regret to those whom he had wronged. When I, at the start of the process, asked him about this, Jude Hassen Moll, chair of the Amnesty Committee put it into perspective. It was correct that no such requirement was stipulated in the 'act', he said:

> Because, how can one read a man's heart? How will one ever really know whether the man has sincere regrets, or whether he is just saying the right words? Such a condition would force some people to be dishonest. (Meiring 1999:45)

Tutu, on the other hand, often expressed the necessity of confession for reconciliation. Lasting reconciliation, he contended, deeply depends upon the capacity of perpetrators, individuals as well as perpetrator communities, to honestly, deeply, recognise and confess their guilt towards God and their fellow human beings, and to humbly ask for forgiveness. And it equally rests upon the magnanimity and grace of the victims to reach out to them, to extend forgiveness.

In his *No future without forgiveness* (1999) Desmond Tutu discussed different aspects of forgiveness. Forgiveness is *a risky business,* he explained. Asking for forgiveness, as well as extending forgiveness, is often extremely difficult. You find yourself in a very vulnerable position. What if your reaching out to the other is spurned? What if the victim does not want to forgive – or the perpetrator, arrogantly, does not want to ask for forgiveness?

But we need to remember, the Archbishop counselled, that forgiveness and reconciliation are *meant* to be a risky and very costly exercise. Quoting the ultimate example of Jesus Christ, he writes: 'True reconciliation is not cheap. It cost God the death of his only begotten Son' (Tutu 1999:218).

Introducing the TRC report, Tutu mentioned the misunderstanding that reconciliation asks for the glossing over of past mistakes and injustices, that reconciliation requires national *amnesia.* This is totally wrong. Reconciliation is not about being cosy. It is not about pretending that things that happened in South Africa's past were other than they were. Reconciliation based on falsehood, he emphasised, is not true reconciliation and will not last (TRC 1998:17):

> Forgiving and being reconciled are not about pretending that things are other than they are. It is not patting one another on the back and turning a blind eye to the wrong. True reconciliation exposes the awfulness, the abuse, the pain, the degradation, the truth. It could even sometimes make things worse. It is a risky undertaking, but in the end it is worth-while, because in the end there will be real healing from having dealt with a real situation. Spurious reconciliation can bring only spurious healing. (Tutu 1999:218)

Forgiveness, however, means *abandoning your right to retribution,* your right to pay back the perpetrator in his own coin. But it is a loss, Tutu maintains, which liberates the victim. Many instances of this were recorded in the annals of the TRC:

> One of the most moving testimonies came from Mahlomola Isaac Thale, the first witness called to the podium at the Alexandra hearing (October 1996). He was an embittered man, and shared it with the audience. He was arrested in 1993, interrogated and tortured, and eventually sent to Robben Island for twelve years. Upon his release, he was banned to Qua-Qua, hundreds of kilometres from his home. He was a broken man, in and out of hospital for many years. A few weeks after his appearance, Thale passed away. At his funeral his priest shared with the congregation a conversation he had with Thale, some months earlier. He was really embittered! 'If I had to die today', he said, 'and if I had to arrive in heaven and come across the perpetrators who had done me so much wrong, I will say to God: I am in the wrong place. Please send me to hell!' But when Thale returned from the hearing in Alexandra he was totally a different person. His bitterness was gone, he said to the priest: 'If I am to die now and arrive in heaven, I will be able to forgive the perpetrators who did me wrong. I found peace. I am reconciled.' (Meiring 1999:98f.)

However, not only individuals are called to embark on the road to forgiveness – either by asking for forgiveness or by extending forgiveness. Communities – especially the leaders of these communities – are called to follow suit. Tutu was able to point to some examples: Willy Brandt, chancellor of West Germany kneeling in front of the Warsaw War Memorial, President Gerald Ford apologising to the Americans of Japanese origin who were treated shoddily up by the United States government during the Second World War, Pope John Paul II confessing the cruelty of the Roman Catholic Inquisition, and nearer to home, Willie Jonker's sincere plea to fellow South Africans for the many atrocities of apartheid perpetrated by his fellow-Afrikaners (Boraine 2001:372). Desmond Tutu called upon all political leaders in South Africa to do the same, to make some symbolic act of atonement, setting an example to all in the country. Sadly, none of the leaders accepted Tutu's challenge.

■ Counting the cost: Costly reconciliation

Reconciliation, history teaches us, is a costly enterprise. But this is to be expected. During the 1930s Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1963) repeatedly warned his fellow Christians against the temptation of 'cheap grace', which is a mortal enemy to the gospel. 'Costly grace' should be the aim of all believers who, knowing and accepting their salvation as a free gift from God, offer themselves to him, and to one another, as a living sacrifice:

> Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of our Church. We are fighting today for costly grace … Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves … Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance … Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate. (p. 45)

In 1988, at the height of the struggle against apartheid, when tensions were at a breaking point in apartheid South Africa, a number of concerned church leaders called a National Initiative for Reconciliation together in Pietermaritzburg. At the meeting David Bosch reflected upon Bonhoeffer's words (Bosch in Nürnberger & Tooke 1988):

> Almost fifty years ago Dietrich Bonhoeffer taught us that cheap grace was the deadly enemy of the church. I want to suggest that the same is true of cheap reconciliation. What, then, is 'cheap reconciliation'? It is – as the phrase suggests – reconciliation that costs us very little, that can be obtained at a minimum of expense. It is the papering over of deep-seated differences … (It) sees our being reconciled to one another only in spiritual categories … Cheap reconciliation means tearing faith and justice asunder, driving a wedge between the vertical and the horizontal. It suggests that we can have peace with God without having justice in our mutual relationships … (It) means applying a little bit of goodwill to the South African society, but that is like trying to heal a festering sore with sticking plaster or treating cancer with aspirin. (p. 98)

Bosch's words echoed the sentiments of the authors of the *Kairos Document* who, three years earlier (1985), had called on South Africans during the height of the struggle against apartheid to guard against the temptation of 'cheap reconciliation', reconciliation without cost, which, too, is a mortal enemy to the gospel of our Lord. We need to rediscover on a daily basis what 'costly reconciliation' entails, and dare to live according to our discovery (*Kairos Document* par. 3.1) (Nürnberger & Tooke 1988). Thirty years later (2015) the protagonists of Kairos came together to, once again, call for a process of costly reconciliation, without which healing and nation building will never succeed.

Reconciliation is no easy task. To be a peacemaker, to try to build bridges between opposing individuals as well as communities, to 'stand in the breach' for truth and for justice, requires a strong commitment, resilience, and nerves of steel. It may ask your all. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, was willing to lay down his life, to face the cross, and he called his disciples to follow his example. Before the outbreak of the Second World War Bonhoeffer's friends in the United States of America (USA) and Britain pleaded with him not to return to Germany. Going back would surely lead to arrest, even death. But Bonhoeffer refused. He would not take the easy way out. He went back to live and, at the end, to die in solidarity with those who were oppressed and those who resisted the oppressor. He chose to live according to his own conviction: 'When Christ calls a person, he bids him (or her) come and die' (Clements 2006:118f.).

In conclusion, allow me to point to another lesser-known link between South Africa and Bonhoeffer, to the life-sized statue of a demure African girl – Manche Masemola, who lived and died in a small village Marishane near Polokwane in the Limpopo Provence – that was erected at the entrance to Westminster Abbey in London (see Figure 2).
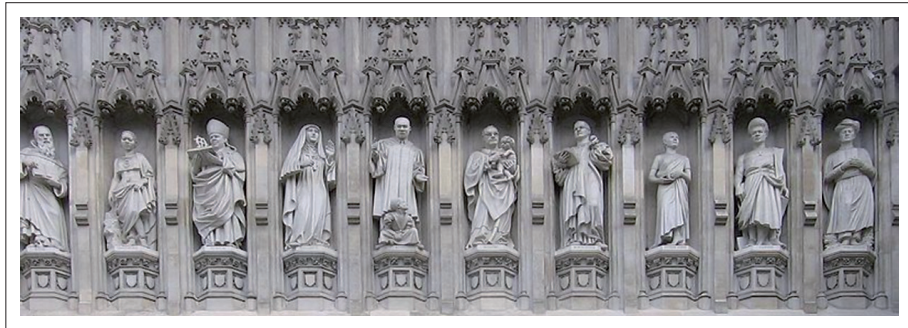
Source: P.G.J. (Piet) Meiring

Figure 2: Twentieth century martyrs at the Westminster Abbey. Statues of 20th-century *martyrs* on the façade above the Great West Door of *Westminster Abbey* (from left to right): Maximilian Kolbe, Manche Masemola, Janani Luwum, Grand Duchess Elizabeth of Russia, Martin Luther King, Oscar Romero, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Esther John, Lucian Tapiedi and Wang Zhiming.

When in 1998, the statues of ten 20th century martyrs were erected above the west entrance to the Abbey, Dietrich Bonhoeffer was an obvious choice. But alongside Bonhoeffer, Janani Luwum, Martin Luther King and Oscar Romero, a niche was found for Manche, the young South African girl who met the Lord Jesus Christ and devoted her life to him. She was ostracised from the community, and suffered severely when she refused to denounce her faith in Jesus (Manche Masemolo's statue is the second from left; Bonhoeffer's statue is fifth from left). In their desire to suppress her witness, her parents beat her, forbidding her to attend the church services. To keep her at home, they stripped her naked. Manche eventually ran away and hid, but her father and mother found her and beat her to death. She was buried in a lonely grave in the veld.

Manche Masemola was 15 years old, still preparing for baptism and her first communion. She, in the end, knew that she might die before that came to pass. Her prophetic words to her cousin were fulfilled: 'I shall be baptised with my own blood' (Makele 2011:1). In years to come many pilgrims, inspired by her example, visited – and still visit – her grave. Manche died a martyr's death in 1928, 17 years before Bonhoeffer, but it is fitting that they appear together at the western entrance of the great church in London: A young African girl and a brilliant German theologian who – albeit that the context and the content of their witness differed widely – both understood the cost of discipleship. Both were called by Christ to die (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Manche Masemola's statue is placed between Maximillian Kolbe and Janani Luwum.

South Africa was fortunate not only having leaders like Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Steve Biko and Beyers Naudé, leaders who – in the spirit of Manche Masemola and Dietrich Bonhoeffer – were willing to devote their lives, even to die, for their convictions, but also having tens of thousands of women and men, some young, some old, who were equally willing to rise to the occasion. In many instances, they had to pay a costly price for being harbingers of peace. The annals of the TRC contain the stories of many of them, ordinary citizens who reached beyond themselves, to facilitate reconciliation in their communities. 'It never ceases to astonish me', Tutu wrote in between Truth Commission hearings, 'the magnanimity of many victims who suffered the most heinous violations, who reach out to embrace their tormentors with joy, willing to forgive and wanting to reconcile' (Meiring 2002:68).

When the TRC eventually closed its doors, the chairperson had a final word of encouragement for all who had embarked on the arduous and adventurous journey of reconciliation, a word reminiscent of his acceptance speech at the Bonhoeffer Prize ceremony in Berlin. It is a word for us, today, as well:

> We have been wounded but we are being healed. It is possible even with our past suffering, anguish, alienation and violence to become one people, reconciled, healed, caring, compassionate and ready to share as we put our past behind us to stride into the glorious future God holds before us as the Rainbow People of God. (Meiring 1999:379)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, I dare say, would have agreed.

■ Summary: Chapter 2

Dietrich Bonhoeffer never visited South Africa, and he probably did not know a great deal about the country. But the relevance of the German theologian for South Africa was never in doubt. In the struggle against apartheid his message and his theology served to guide theologians, church leaders as well as lay Christians alike. His life and his death served to inspire many during their darkest hours. Theologians, with John de Gruchy in the lead, studied his works extensively. Heroes from the struggle against apartheid, Beyers Naudé, Desmond Tutu and Steve Biko, among others, were hailed as latter-day Bonhoeffers. Nelson Mandela's famous 'Speech from the dock' before his conviction and imprisonment at the Rivonia Trial was compared to Bonhoeffer's essay on *The structure of responsible life* (1995). At ecumenical gatherings, his name and his teachings were often invoked, whenever protest was lodged against the injustices of apartheid. But it was especially in the aftermath of apartheid, when the very serious challenges of reconciliation and nation building, of healing and forgiveness, as well as of amnesty for perpetrators weighed against the demands of justice to the victims were at stake, that many turned to Bonhoeffer for guidance. The author who served with Archbishop Desmond Tutu on the TRC, discusses the prerequisites for reconciliation in South Africa against the backdrop of the TRC experience, emphasising the real need for South Africans, following in the footsteps of Bonhoeffer, to look for 'costly reconciliation'.

Ecodomy: Taking risks and overstepping boundaries in the Book of Ruth

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▌Introduction

This volume of *Verbum et Ecclesia* deals with the topic 'Ecodomy', a term that was coined by scholars of the New Testament and Dogmatics and Ethics at the Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria. Broadly speaking, 'Ecodomy' pertains to 'life in its fullness'. However, research on the topic revealed that 'life in its fullness' cannot be taken for granted, because reality as it presents itself in the lives of individuals and communities, comes in the guise of 'life in its emptiness', life in its brokenness. 'Life in its fullness' requires an effort, and the key role players are individuals within such troubled situations who take initiative to heal and to make a difference.

This chapter aims to address the topic 'Ecodomy' from an Old Testament perspective, particularly from the perspective of the Book of Ruth. In this book, it appears that 'life in its fullness' becomes realised by unconventional methods. The key role players, Boaz and

Ruth, dare to overstep the prescribed behaviour, legislation and customs of their time. They break down barriers and boundaries, however, never with violence. The Book of Ruth approaches emptiness and brokenness creatively, by challenging existing presuppositions in a compelling narrative.

■ The problem of dating the Book of Ruth

The narrative background of the Book of Ruth is the 'time of the judges' (Rt 1:1). Because this time seems to fit the agrarian and pastoral scenario of the plot in the book, some scholars accept that the origins of the Book of Ruth may be traced back to pre-exilic Israel. Gow (1992:207–208), Grant (1991:424–441), Hamlin (1996:2), Loader (1994:12), Nielsen (1997:28–29) and Prinsloo (1982:5–6) date the book to the beginning of the monarchy, during the time of King David and King Solomon. Gow and Nielsen both argue that the Book of Ruth may have been written as an apology for King David's Moabite ancestors – as becomes evident in the genealogies at the end of the book (Rt 4:17b; 18–22). According to them there were some anti-David factions that were trying to slander David – during his reign or soon after – by foregrounding his possible Moabite descent. The Book of Ruth may have been written towards the end of his reign or at the beginning of the reign of Solomon in order to legitimise the Davidic monarchy. Loader and Prinsloo are of the opinion that the archaic language indicates the pre-exilic origins of the book. Focusing on the text as it is and the narrative as it presents itself, these scholars all come to more or less the same conclusion: Although God is hardly mentioned and not actively present throughout the narrative, he is working behind the curtains, helping those that help themselves. Doob Sakenfeld (1999:4–5) points out the 'timelessness' of the Book of Ruth. Regardless of its dating, it proposes an attitude of inclusivity and tolerance towards the 'other': in pre-exilic Israel towards the Canaanites, in post-exilic Israel towards those excluded by the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and in communities today, towards whoever may be considered as the 'other'.

However, if the Book of Ruth is dated to the time after the exile, it becomes something other than a 'captivating idylle', as Korpel (2001:233) puts it. Korpel agrees with other scholars that the Book of Ruth was written during the post-exilic period in Israel's history to address the problem of foreigners in the community of YHWH and that it especially polemises against Ezra and Nehemiah's policy regarding foreign wives (see e.g. Cohn Eskenazi & Frymer-Kensky 2011:xli, 4–5; Fischer 2001:62, 124; Goulder 1993:316; Grätz 2007:277; Köhlmoos 2010:xv, 4; Korpel 2001:233; LaCocque 2004:25; Lau 2011:45; Matthews 2004:212; Moen Saxegaard 2010:201; Spangenberg 2000:190; Spangenberg 2000:190; Zakovitch 1999:62–64). In fact, the whole of Korpel's quote does not describe the Book of Ruth only as a 'captivating idylle', but as 'a programmatic pamflet in the guise of a captivating idylle' (Korpel 2001:233), thereby emphasising the polemic nature of the narrative.

Especially the works of Braulik (1996:61–138, 1999:1–20) sparked the interest of the debate between the Book of Ruth and the so-called Moabite paragraph in Deuteronomy 23:3–6 and consequently the way in which this law was interpreted in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. The post-exilic community was a divided community with diverse interests and it seems that one of the main problems was the presence of non-Israelites who came to worship YHWH and wished to be included in the congregation. In terms of 'Ecodomy', it appears that there were two parties who had opposing views on realising 'life in its fullness'. On the one hand were the exclusivists, represented in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah who envisioned a stable and prosperous community only by following the law in a very literal and unyielding manner, that is, prohibiting foreigners to enter the community of YHWH. On the other hand, were the inclusivists, represented in the Books of Ruth, Jonah and the passage in Isaiah 56:1–8 for whom the worship of YHWH was also paramount, but who argued that a YHWH-worshipping community would include foreigners and their diligence and contributions within that congregation.

Thus, although the Book of Ruth is set against the time of the judges, it should be read as a 'historical novel' – a deliberate choice for an archaic time with powerful critique against contemporary issues. This is also the historical backdrop against which the Book of Ruth is understood in this chapter.

■ Life in its emptiness

Life in its fullness is mostly preceded by life in its emptiness, and this is the opening scenario of the Book of Ruth in its first chapter.

■ Fate comes knocking at the door

☐ Famine (Rt 1:1)

The Book of Ruth opens with a depressing scene: A famine that drives a Judean family from their hometown to a foreign country in order to survive (Rt 1:1). The man Elimelech, his wife Naomi and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, leave their residence in Bethlehem, Judah, to find refuge in the fields of Moab. Moab, for the most of its part, is regarded as a negative space in the Hebrew Bible and receives generally bad press. First of all, the origins of the nation can be traced back to incest (Gn 19:30–37; see Braulik 1996:117; Cohn Eskenazi & Frymer-Kenski 2011:xlvii; Frevel 1992:45; Zenger 1986:36). Furthermore, during the Israelites' wanderings through the desert, the Moabite king Balak, overcome by fear for this awesome nation, hires the soothsayer Balaam to curse them (Nm 22–23) – and this is also one of the reasons why the Moabites are forbidden in Deuteronomy 23:4 to enter the congregation of YHWH.

Yet, the author of the Book of Ruth is neither negative nor positive about Moab. In fact, the statement in Ruth 1:1 is neutral: There was famine in the land – presumable Judah – and a Judahite family sought and found refuge in the field of Moab. The family stayed there and apparently survived the famine.

☐ Death (Rt 1:3, 5)

However, for Elimelech, the Judahite patriarch, the flight to Moab was not a good decision. The family survives the famine, but he, the *pater familias*, passes away (Rt 1:3). No reason is given for this tragedy: Elimelech simply dies and leaves a widow and two sons behind. However, it seems that in the meanwhile the sons have grown into manhood, because they take wives for themselves, women from the region, Moabite women. Moabite women, like the country that they come from, are also regarded with suspicion by the authors of the Hebrew Bible. Just after the Balaam incident (Nm 22–24), as the Israelites are at the point to enter the land, they 'commit harlotry' with the daughters of Moab (Nm 25:1) – and the result is apostasy (see Cohn Eskenasi & Frymer-Kensky 2011:xlvii; Doob Sakenfeld 1999:19; Köhlmoos 2010:4; Zenger 1986:36).

It seems that Machlon and Chilion did not make a good choice by taking these Moabite women as wives. In the first place, the marriages are childless. One almost reads over the lines: After taking Orpah and Ruth for wives, they 'dwelt there about ten years' (Rt 1:4). But as Marjo Korpel (2001) notices:

> The deadening silence between v. 4a and v. 4b may escape a modern ear, but certainly did not escape an audience in ancient Israel. Ten years – and two childless couples. (p. 70)

The two Judahite men and their Moabite wives suffered ten years of 'life in its emptiness'. Extended families were the backbone of communities in the ancient Near East and Israel. Infertility, barrenness was a deep tragedy. In this regard one may recall the narratives of Sarah and Hagar (Gn 16:3), Rebecca (Gn 25:21), Rachel and Leah (Gn 30) and later Hannah (1 Sm 1:1–7). A life without having children was life in all its emptiness.

Then the men, Machlon and Chilion die (Rt 1:5), and as in the case of their father, no reason is given for the death. This devastating event, says Korpel (2001:7) addresses the inexplicable theodicy question – why do bad things happen to good people and why does God allow it to happen? In the Ancient World as in Israel, life and death were in the hands of the deities, God gave life and he took it. The death of the two sons vaguely recalls a similar episode in Genesis 38 and the death of Judah's two sons, first Er (v. 7), and then his brother Onan (v. 10). However, both Er and Onan did something that was displeasing YHWH, thus, there were probably reasons why they died. In the case of Mahlon and Chilion, no explanations are given.

☐ Loss of identity

Three childless widows are left behind. In the ancient Near East this was the deepest tragedy imaginable (Fischer 2001:126; Frevel 1992:49; Köhlmoos 2010:8; LaCocque 2004:43; Zenger 1986:35, 122). Two young women lost their husbands; the elder Naomi suffered a double loss: she lost her husband as well as her two sons. Three devastated women have to cope with their agony, as well as face a desperate situation. In ancient societies men took care of the family: First the father, and if he passed away, the eldest son took over the responsibilities, among others to look after the widowed mother (Frevel 2009:40–41). For Naomi, Orpah and Ruth there were no men to take care of them.

However, verse 5 simply summarises the events: The woman (Naomi) was left without her two sons and her husband. Naomi is the centre of attention and the narrator comments on her bereavement. No mention is made of Orpah and Ruth and what they may have experienced or suffered by the loss of their spouses. At first glance the narrator may seem unsympathetic towards the two Moabite widows. Yet, the focus on Naomi seems to be deliberate. Both Frevel (1992:55) and Zenger (1986:124) consider Naomi's return from Moab to be paradigmatic for Israel's return from exile. Widow-Naomi becomes widow-Israel. Frevel (1992:50) furthermore emphasises Naomi's loss of identity – in ancient patriarchal societies women were identified in terms of men, husband or sons. When Naomi loses her husband as well as her two sons, it is more than a deep human tragedy of agonising distress. She also loses her identity. She is no one's wife, no one's mother. She stands there with empty hands (Frevel 1992:50).

Verse 5 does not want to deny the agony of the two Moabite widows; rather it wants to emphasise the emptiness and loss of identity of the Judahite widow who becomes the protagonist in the rest of the chapter. For it is widow Naomi whose emptiness is going to be filled in an exceptional manner by a foreign woman. She is Ruth, the Moabitess. By foregrounding Naomi's sorrow, the Book of Ruth 1:5 wants to alert post-exilic Israel that the loss and trauma experienced by the exile, may be addressed and consoled in unexpected ways by the foreigners in their midst.

Naomi's loss of initial identity and change to an identity of loss and bitterness, is further accentuated when she returns to Bethlehem. The women hardly recognise her, probably due to the changes that suffering and grief had brought to her appearance. Firstly, she requests that they call her by a different name: Mara, which means 'bitterness'. Some scholars (e.g. Zenger 1986:43) are of the opinion that this is an allusion to the 'bitter water at Mara' (Ex 15:23), yet one should also remember that a name in ancient societies always indicated the essence of someone's nature (Neuman 2006:325). When Naomi asks the women to call her 'Mara', she is also implying that her identity had changed. And then she cries: 'I went out full, but YHWH has brought me home empty.' (Rt 1:21). Life in its very emptiness, not only deserted by YHWH, moreover, he is to blame.

The turning point towards realising 'life in its fullness'

Reckless love (Rt 1:16–17)

The turning point in Naomi's life starts a short while before her arrival in Bethlehem. As she departs from Moab, making her way back to her hometown, her two daughters-in-law, the two Moabite women, insist on accompanying her. Naomi, who realises that she has no future to look forward to, pleads with the two younger women to turn back and start a new life while they still have a chance. One of them, Orpah understands the implications and obstacles that she would face if she chose to stay with Naomi; she kisses her mother-in-law and returns to Moab (Rt 1:14). Ruth however, refuses stubbornly. When Naomi pleads with her to do as her sister-in-law, Ruth answers her with her first and longest monologue in the whole Book, which in Hebrew consists of thirty-four words (Köhlmoos 2010:17):

> Entreat me not to leave you, or turn back from following after you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die and there I will be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, if anything but death parts you and me. (Rt 1:16–17 [NKJV])

Ruth's role in realising 'life in its fullness' already starts in her first speech in the narrative: She insists that she will not turn back to Moab but 'cling' to her mother-in-law until parted by death (Rt 1:16–17, verbatim quote above). One should never underestimate the far-reaching implications of this choice. Obviously, it demonstrates an act of solidarity with someone in need. But, as Wetter (2014:150) points out, it goes almost without saying that one is more inclined to show solidarity with one's own group. In Ruth's case, although she seems to have had a very good relationship with her mother-in-law until now, Naomi is not part of her group, Ruth and Naomi belong to different groups of people. Ruth chooses to show her solidarity with someone who is not of her own kind.

Furthermore, Ruth is prepared to leave her identity – her nationality and theology – behind her in Moab and to assume a new identity, namely her mother-in-law's people and her God. This is a radical choice, even a stupid choice. Ruth is willing to sacrifice some security – albeit minimal – that she may have had in Moab, to follow her mother-in-law and share in her fate whatever that may be. At this stage both widows are experiencing life in its very emptiness, yet one of them is prepared to take a risk without knowing the end result, whatever that may be. Her motivation: reckless love.

Boaz steps in

On the harvest fields

In the second chapter of the Book of Ruth, a new male character is introduced: Boaz (Rt 2:1). This information is given solely to the reader: neither Naomi nor Ruth are aware of his presence. Boaz is said to be a kinsman of Naomi's deceased husband, Elimelech, and also a 'man of great wealth'. The narrative then proceeds and resumes where Chapter 1 ended: The beginning of the barley season and Ruth who takes the initiative, perhaps because Naomi is too sunken in her depression to do anything. Ruth asks her mother-in-law's permission to go gleaning barley on someone's fields in whose eyes she may find favour (Rt 2:2).

Apparently, Ruth is laying claim to the legislation in Leviticus 19:9–10 and Deuteronomy 24:19 (Braulik 1996:118; Fischer 2001:62; Köhlmoos 2010:28; Zenger 1986:54). This legislation pertains to the harvest season in Israel and makes provision for the widow, the orphan and the stranger who may not have enough to eat. The harvesters are instructed not to pick up sheaves that they forget or that accidentally fall out of the bundles, but to leave them on the ground for the marginalised in the society to pick up. Ruth seems to qualify: she is a widow and she is a stranger.

Stranger or foreigner: What is the difference?

Before elaborating on the meeting between Boaz and Ruth and the actions that follow, it is necessary to remark on the 'stranger' and the 'foreigner' in Israel and the difference between the two concepts, as this is very important to understand the unfolding of the plot. The key text in this regard is Ruth 2:10, just after Boaz addressed Ruth with words of the utmost kindness. When she bows down before him to express her thanks, she asks him why he is so good to her, and she refers to herself as a נָכְרִיָּה – a 'foreigner'. Fischer (2001:175), Siquans (2009:448–449), Wetter (2014:151) and Wuench (2014:1139–1142) all distinguish between the terms גֵּר and נָכְרִי. All these terms pertain to what is usually translated as 'stranger' or 'foreigner', however, they are not simply synonyms of the same concept.

Fischer (2001:175) and Wetter (2014:152) point out that in the post-exilic time, נָכְרִי was mostly used in a negative sense and conveyed a hostile attitude towards foreigners, the non-Israelites: נָכְרִי implies malevolence, inferiority. A נָכְרִי was more than simply an unknown stranger; the presence of a נָכְרִי foretold disaster, a נָכְרִי was a welcome element that fell outside the boundaries of Israel's cultic and social community and that was potentially dangerous (Fischer 2001:175; Siquans 2009:448–449; Wetter

2014:151; Wuench 2014:1139–1142). Furthermore, when the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah critique foreign women, they use the term נָכְרִיָּה. Fischer (2001:175), LaCocque (2004:70) and Siquans (2009:449) relate Ruth's calling herself a נָכְרִיָּה directly to the Ezra-Nehemiah objections against foreign women and are of the opinion that that Ruth 2:10 should be read in opposition to the social religious policy proposed in these books (see Ezr 2:10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 44; Neh 13:27–30). According to Ruth (2:10), she falls into this category.

Who then was the גֵּר? Here scholars differ. Wuench (2014:1140) is of the opinion that a גֵּר refers to a stranger who is also part of the Israelite community, in other words, an Israelite but one who is not known by the locals of a particular village or town. The question now arises, why should Ruth call herself a נָכְרִיָּה while such a designation would evoke emotions of hostility? Wuench (2014:1152–1153) suggests that one of the reasons may be that Hebrew does not have a feminine form for the noun גֵּר. However, he finds a better explanation in Ruth's surprise over the 'favour' that she found in Boaz's eyes, and in his answer to her, namely that he knew everything about her (Rt 2:11). According to her perspective, he should have regarded her as a נָכְרִיָּה. However, from Boaz's point of view, she acted like a גֵּר – in leaving the land of her birth and coming to a people that she had not known before. Wuench 2014:1140 states: 'We could therefore say that Ruth 2:10 seems to demonstrate the process of a stranger moving from foreigner to becoming a guest.'

However, Fischer (2001:175), Siquans (2009:448-449) and Wetter (2014:151) differ from Wuench: נָכְרִיָּ wants to emphasise Ruth's status as a foreigner. Several scholars agree that גֵּר indicates an Israelite 'stranger' (cf. Braulik 1996:118; 1999:14; Fischer 2001:175; Frevel 1992:74; Siquans 2009:448; Köhlmoos 2010:41; Zenger 1986:56). Braulik (1996:118) explicitly states that the term גֵּר *gehört zum sozialen Spektrum der judäischen Bevölkerung.'* In other words, the גֵּ is an unknown countryman who is in need and seeks temporary refuge on the territory of a fellow countryman. The נָכְרִיָּ on the other hand, is considered to be a trespasser who has no right to be on the premises.

Above (see 'On the harvest fields') has been referred to Leviticus 19:9–10 and Deuteronomy 24:19 with regard to the legislation during the harvest time and special care that has to be given to the marginalised in the society. It is significant that the text of Leviticus as well as the text of Deuteronomy employs the term for גֵּר [stranger], never נָכְרִי. This supports the idea that the גֵּר is someone from within the group. As a נָכְרִיָּה, Ruth is considered to be an outsider, she can lay no claims on the legislation which seems to benefit the widows, orphans and strangers within the Israelite population. Her foreignness is foregrounded, as a Moabite her presence on Judahite soil is forbidden, and according to the exclusivists, she poses a severe threat to the Ecodomy of the community. If a post-exilic dating of the Book of Ruth is to be accepted, the choice of גֵּר נָכְרִיָּה above seems to be a deliberate choice on the side of the author of the book.

◼ Boaz breaks the law

As has been said, this chapter assumes a post-exilic dating for the Book of Ruth. Mention has also been made that the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah make it clear that the presence of foreigners in Israel was a controversial matter among the post-exilic community. The so-called 'community law' in Deuteronomy 23:2–5 was especially important in this regard. Whereas Ezra is generally hostile towards foreigners and foreign women, Nehemiah 13:1–2 directly alludes to Deuteronomy 23:3–4 (Hebrew Bible [HB] 4–5) which forbids the presence of Moabites and Ammonites in the congregation of YHWH. The Book of Ruth offers narrative critique against this Moabite paragraph, as well as against the way that this text is interpreted and implemented in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Boaz's actions should be understood against this background.

At this stage the intended audience of the narrative should be fully aware of the fact that Ruth is an outsider, she is trespassing on Judahite soil. However, when Boaz notices her, he apparently does not yet know whether she is a גֵּר or a הַיּוֹרְכָה. Nevertheless, she seems to arouse his interest and he asks after her identity. His servant-in-charge informs him that she is the Moabitess who came back with Naomi from the fields of Moab (Rt 2:8). The words 'Moab' and 'Moabitess' are once more accentuated, probably deliberately to enhance the tension in the narrative. If Boaz is a good and respected 'Israelite', he should immediately give orders that Ruth should be removed from his premises – at least, that is what the audience of the Second Temple Period would expect him to do. Yet, he does exactly the opposite.

Boaz's generosity towards Ruth comes as a surprise, not only to her but to the post-exilic audience as well. Firstly, he does not chase her away; on the contrary, he forbids her to leave his field. The presence of a הַיּוֹרְכָה, moreover, if she is a Moabite among the Judahite people, is unheard of. Then Boaz instructs Ruth to stay close to his reapers, because he had forbidden them to 'touch' her (Rt 2:9). Interpretations regarding עָגַע [touch] vary from a neutral touching or touch with the intension to cause harm, or to molest sexually (Cohn Eskenazi & Frymer-Kensky 2011:35). Whatever the case, Boaz seems to be overprotective towards this Moabite woman, preventing her from hurt or inappropriate sexual advances. Therefore, he gives Ruth the assurance that she will be safe as long as she stays on his field: this may not be the case on another person's property.

▢ Boaz challenges social boundaries

Consequently, Boaz gives Ruth permission to drink water from the vessels that are used by his workers. Once again it should be remembered that water was a scarce commodity in the desert-like climate of the ancient Near East and Israel, and very precious for the reapers who worked all day long in the scorching hot sun. The idea of sharing water with

a הַיְרְכָן, would certainly not be welcomed at all. No wonder Ruth is overcome with gratitude at Boaz's gestures of kindness.

One may expect some resistance from Boaz's workers; he allows a הַיְרְכָן in their midst, forbids them any sexual pleasures they may have with her, and he even grants her permission to drink from their precious water. However, no one seems to complain. Boaz is certainly an impressive figure, yet the narrative does not portray him as someone who exercises his authority by means of force. On the contrary, from the mutual greetings extended in the name of YHWH (Rt 2:4), it appears that Boaz has a good relationship with his workers, consequently they would also respect and obey his orders (Cohn Eskenazi & Frymer-Kensky 2011:31; Fischer 2001:167).

This good relationship between landowner and workers becomes furthermore apparent when Boaz extends yet another invitation to Ruth at lunchtime: to sit beside him and the reapers and to share in the meal (Rt 2:14). On the surface this appears to be a pleasant social gathering, a group of people having lunch together, before they resume their activities on the field. However, Fischer (2001:181–182), Frevel (1992:74), Lau (2011:60–61) and Zenger (1986:58) are of the opinion that in this verse, all social boundaries in the Ancient World are transgressed and turned upside down.

Firstly, the difference in social status between Boaz and his workers should be kept in mind. In the Ancient World, it was unusual that a landowner would mix freely with his workers and even share a meal with them. Secondly, and even more radically, the gender roles in ancient communities were sharply defined. Men and women seldom ate together. In this little scenario (Rt 2:14), Ruth as a הַיְרְכָן not only shares the meal with Boaz and his workers, she is even served by him! This is shocking to say the least. Moreover, he does not stop when he realises that she is satisfied, she can even take some food home.

☐ Boaz bends the rules

Boaz seems to be a man who does not feel restricted by the laws or the social conventions of his time. And when the people rise to resume their activities on the field, he goes even further. Boaz's instructions to his workers regarding the falling sheaves from the bundles of grain, obviously allude to the stipulations in Leviticus 19:9–10 and Deuteronomy 24:19. To quote from Deuteronomy 24:

> When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger [הַגֵּר], the fatherless and the widow. (v.19)

A likewise instruction can be found in the Leviticus text. However, Braulik (1996:118–119), Fischer (2001:183) and Frevel (1992:78) all remark that Boaz actually radicalises this law when he instructs his workers to let her glean among the sheaves and also to 'let some grain from the bundles fall purposely for her' (Rt 2:16). In other words, they are to leave

the sheaves that accidentally fall from the bundles and furthermore, they should purposely let some grain fall on the ground for her to glean. One could almost say that Boaz is willing to suffer losses for her to benefit from them.

Boaz's actions can be summarised in the words 'more than'. In every way does he more than is necessary. In doing this, something of 'life in its fullness' is starting to realise for the two miserable widows. At the end of the day, when Ruth returns home to her mother-in-law, she brings back food – that which she had gleaned, as well as the leftovers from the meal that Boaz had offered her. However, in the Book of Ruth, Boaz's generosity should not be read simply as deeds of kindness towards a poor woman in need: Boaz is an example of someone who (1) challenges the social boundaries of his time by allowing a הַיְרְכָנ on his land, and (2) expands the prescribed rules regarding the accidental falling of sheaves. By daring to go against the expected norms of society, 'Ecodomy' becomes realised.

■ Deuteronomy 23:5 – The tables start to turn

■ The curse changes to a blessing

Just like Boaz, Ruth also challenges the stipulations of a very important law in the society. Above her identity as 'foreigner' and 'Moabite' has been illuminated. Foreigners and especially Moabites were not welcome in the Israelite community, and with regard to this section of the chapter, the community law of Deuteronomy 23:3–4 [HB 4–5] should once again kept in mind – not the prohibition against these nations, but especially verse 4 [HB 5], namely the reason why Moabites are forbidden:

> [*They*] did not meet you (Israel) with bread and water on the road when you came out from Egypt, and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor … to curse you. (Dt 23:3–4 [HB 4–5])

After the first meeting between Boaz and Ruth and Boaz's unexpected hospitality, Ruth is overcome by his generosity and asks him why he is so kind to her. He first answers her that he knows what she has done: she was kind to her mother-in-law, her husband, and she left her country to live among a people unknown to her (Rt 2:11). Then he utters a blessing: 'May YHWH repay your work, and may your reward be full' (Rt 2:12).

Fischer (2001:177–178) is of the opinion that Ruth 2:12 is a correction on the curse on the Moabites because of the Balaam episode. She explains as follows. The word in Hebrew for 'hire' (in Deuteronomy 23:4) is – רָכָשׂ that could mean 'hire' or 'pay'. Ruth 2:12 uses מַשְׂכֻּרְתֵּךְ – that is a noun that is derived from the same root of רָכָשׂ and is appropriated to Ruth as reward for the kindness she has shown to her in-laws. Thus, reasons Fischer, Ruth, the Moabitess will be rewarded for not doing harm to Israel like Balaam, but

because she left Moab behind to seek refuge under the wings of the God of Israel while demonstrating selfless solidarity with her (Israelite) mother-in-law. Balaam would have been 'paid' for a curse, but YHWH changed the curse on the Moabites into a blessing by means of what Ruth had done. Ruth 2:12 cancels the curse that rests on the Moabites due to the Balaam episode and also disposes of one of the objections in Deuteronomy 23:4 [HB 5].

Bread and water to the destitute

Deuteronomy 23:4 [HB 5] also accuses the Moabites of not having provided the Israelites with bread and water during their wanderings through the desert after the exodus. This correction on the Moabites starts in the second chapter of the Book of Ruth, also with allusions to events in the desert, however, not to the Balaam episode, but with the gathering of manna.

One of the key words in Ruth 2 that deals with the events and the gleaning on the harvest fields, is the Hebrew word that is used for 'gleaning' (לַקָט). It occurs throughout the chapter several times: Ruth 2:2, 3, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19. Braulik (1996:118, 1999:13) and Köhlmoos (2010:29) notice that Exodus 16 also uses the term לַקָט to describe the way in which Israel 'gathered' manna in the desert. Likewise, the second chapter in the Book of Ruth uses the same word to describe what had happened on the harvest fields of Boaz, and it ends when Ruth brings back and hands over to her mother-in-law that which she had gleaned. Braulik's words are quite moving when he says: '*Die von der Moabiterin aufgelesenen Ähren werden zum Manna ihres Exodus, von dem sie ihrer Schwiegermutter Naomi gibt*' (Braulik 1996:118). The grain that Ruth has gathered, becomes for her like manna in her 'desert' time and from that she also gives to Naomi, her mother-in-law.

From the last verse in the chapter, Ruth 2:23, it appears that Ruth had gleaned the whole time during the harvest season on the fields of Boaz, and that she still lived with her mother-in-law. One may also conclude that she had gleaned enough grain to sustain herself and Naomi everyday with enough to eat. In this regard and with specific reference to Ruth 2, Braulik (1996:115) describes the Book of Ruth as '*eine Gegengeschichte vor allem zum sogenannten Gemeindegesetz das Deuteronomiums* (23:4–7) [a counter story against the community law in Deuteronomy]. LaCocque (1990:86–87) agrees that the whole Chapter 2 of the Book of Ruth is directed against the accusation that the Moabites did not provide the Israelites with bread and water during their journey through the desert. Ruth becomes the character of a Moabite who does exactly the opposite: She actually provides a hungry and destitute Israelite with ample food in her situation of need. With her actions of selfless love, Ruth the Moabitess uplifted the curse of Deuteronomy 23:3–5 that rested on the Moabites. She made it clear that no Israelite could object in any way to her presence – and by implication to the presence of foreigners like her – in the community of YHWH.

■ Decisive steps – On the threshing floor

However, 'life in its fullness' has not yet been realised completely. Some more barriers have to be broken down, and Chapter 3 of the Book of Ruth is probably the chapter that violates sexual as well social constraints in a rather radical way. It happens on the threshing floor. As Cohn Eskenazi and Frymer-Kenski (2011) state:

> Being set apart from daily activity, the threshing floor was also a liminal, or transitional space. Thus, the threshing floor could also be the site of transgressions, since it was also associated with freedom from ordinary constraints (see Hos 9:1). (p.15)

Since the opening verses of the chapter, there is an erotic 'crackle in the air' (Fischer 1995:183). Naomi instructs Ruth to prepare herself like a bride (Braulik 1999:15; LaCocque 2004:91) and to go down to the threshing floor but remain unseen. Only when Boaz is merry with food and drink, and lies down to sleep, should she quietly sneak in and 'uncover his feet' (Rt 3:4). Several scholars remarked on the sexual implications of the verbs שָׁכַב [to 'lie down]' and מַרְגְלֹתָיו – derived from the root רֶגֶל – meaning 'foot', which is also an euphemism of a man's penis (see Braulik 1996:119; 1999:15; Halton 2012:32; LaCocque 2004:91). Thus, Naomi's instructions may be read as: 'Go and seduce the man.'

According to the narrative, Ruth follows her mother-in-law's orders closely and does exactly as she is told. The climax of the nightly encounter is reached when Boaz awakens at midnight with a start, and discovers a woman at his 'feet' (Rt 3:8). Once again he asks after her identity, and she introduces herself only as 'Ruth'. Significantly she does not refer to herself nor is she referred to in the narrative as a 'Moabitess', she merely mentions her name, thereby suggesting some measure of intimacy (Fischer 2001:210; Köhlmoos 2010:61; Nielsen 1997:73; Siquans 2009:447; Zenger 1986:71). She also calls herself his 'maidservant' אָמָה [maidservant]. The term which she applied to herself in Ruth 2:13, also translated as 'maidservant' was שִׁפְחָה. According to several scholars, these two terms are not simply synonymous: שִׁפְחָה suggests a slave girl who worked outside on the fields, while אָמָה pertains to someone who worked inside the house, and could be taken for a second wife if the first wife of a man happened to be barren (see Doob Sakenfeld 1999:58; Fischer 2001:210; Frevel 1992:100; Köhlmoos 2010:61; LaCocque 1990:110; Zenger 1986:71). It is almost as if Ruth wants Boaz to understand that she is not the slave girl mentioned in Chapter 2, but that she has now come into his house and that he should take notice of the change.

The climax of the chapter, which is also relevant to this chapter, lies in Ruth's request to Boaz: 'Spread your wing over your maidservant for you are [a] redeemer' (Rt 3:9). This may be a literary device referring back to Ruth 2:12 where Boaz lauds Ruth for seeking shelter under the 'wings' of YHWH. However, the difference between 'wings' (plural) and 'wing' (singular) should be noted. The use of 'wings' in the plural – כְּנָפֶיךָ – may indeed be metaphorically employed to indicate shelter, especially shelter under the wings of YHWH.

However, 'wing' in the singular – כָּנָף – has a double meaning. It may simply refer to a piece of clothing, but it may also imply a sexual relationship, especially in the way that it is employed in Ruth 3:9 (Braulik 1996:119; 1999:15; Doob Sakenfeld 1999:58; Fischer 2001:211; Frevel 1992:101; Halton 2012:35; Zenger 1986:71). Thus, Ruth's request to Boaz to 'spread his wing' may be interpreted as a marriage[5] proposal (Braulik 1999:15; Fischer 2001:211; Köhlmoos 2010:61–62; Nielsen 1997:73).

With this request, several boundaries are violated. Firstly, the sexual barriers in the Ancient World are overstepped: The request comes from a woman who admits that she is from a lower class הָמָא [maidservant]. Secondly, ethnic boundaries become merged: Ruth is a Moabite and Boaz is a Judahite. Lastly, religious prohibitions are ignored: marriage with foreign women are forbidden by religious law (see 'Decisive steps – On the threshing floor').

The reason that Ruth proposes for her request, is that Boaz is the גֹּאֵל [redeemer]. De Vaux (1988:21–22) explains the function of the redeemer as stipulated in Leviticus 25:23–50. This legislation pertains primarily to slavery and land redemption. If an Israelite has to sell himself as a slave or sell his land due to poverty, the redeemer, a next of kin (not necessarily a blood brother) has to step in to prevent this from happening. The main purpose was to protect the interests of the family. However, the practice of marriage – even the levirate marriage (which is not the case in the Book of Ruth) – and the practice of a slave – or land redemption are not related. Marriage and redemption are two different institutions.

According to Berlin (2010:3), Fischer (1999:40; 2001:212), Frevel (1992:108) and Zenger (1986:88) this connection between marriage and redemption is unique and occurs only once in the Old Testament, namely here in Ruth 3:9. This is an innovative and creative invention on the part of the author of the book who wishes to emphasise a particular point. An important motive may be family solidarity, for marriage as well as redemption have the objective of maintaining family relations and possessions. Furthermore, as will be revealed in Ruth 4, there is a closer relative than Boaz. Boaz is under no obligation to perform any of these duties, he is not the closest relative, but there happens to be a closer relative. Thus, Boaz is once more portrayed as an exceptional benefactor.

Berlin (2010:12–13) offers some particular heuristic insights regarding Ruth's requests for marriage and redemption in the same breath. Firstly, she agrees that Naomi's return to her homeland may be paradigmatic with Israel's return from the exile. Then she

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5. It should be noted that 'marriage' does not imply marriage in the modern sense of the word, especially since Hebrew has no noun or verb for 'marriage' or 'marry' and that ancient customs around ceremonies of betrothal were very different from customs in a contemporary Western world.

suggests that the combination of marriage and redemption, especially land redemption (see also Rt 4:5) would be most appropriate for the post-exilic community. Family relations and land ownership were destroyed by the exile and it was necessary to rebuild and maintain that backbone of the community. However, the most important point that Berlin notices, is that in Ruth 3:9 and Ruth 4:5 the promises to the patriarchs resound: promises of descent (the result of marriage) and possession of the land (Gn 12:1–3). In the Book of Ruth these promises would become realised by a foreign woman; in the post-exilic community, the promises would become realised again by the foreigners in their midst. Although the land strictly speaking belonged to the Persians, Israel still had the opportunity to eke out a living by means of solidarity among themselves and together with YHWH-worshipping foreigners.

■ Life in its fullness

The Book of Ruth has a happy ending: life in its fullness. The union between Boaz and Ruth is exceptionally fruitful and soon after he takes her as wife, YHWH grants her to become pregnant and a son is born. This son is called Naomi's redeemer by the 'women', presumably Naomi's associates, and he will take care of her in her old age. Her life of emptiness has changed to a life of fullness when she nurses the child on her lap. Furthermore, the narrative looks forward into the future, and by means of the genealogies at the end of the book (Rt 4:17b; 18–22) discloses that this child, Obed, is a forefather of none other than the great king David. Life in its fullness, not only for an individual family unit, but for the nation as a whole is realised. Read from a post-exilic context, the Book of Ruth envisions a future that does not exclude but includes foreigners who wish to be part of the community of YHWH, and who are eager to realise life in its fullness together with them.

However, a last remark by Fischer (2001:241) is important. The reader of the Ruth narrative is sometimes inclined to judge Orpah for turning back to Moab as being a coward and rejecting the 'true God of Israel' (Rt 1:14–15). Likewise, the nameless so-and-so, the closer redeemer in Ruth 4:6, is seen as being selfish and only thinking of his own interests. But in the narrative these two characters are not judged, and neither should the reader judge them. Rather, Orpah and the nameless so-and-so represent rational, logically thinking people. They are put before a choice, they weigh the pros and the cons, and eventually they do what would be the logical thing to do in the given circumstances. Ruth and Boaz, on the contrary, demonstrate what it demands to realise 'life in its fullness'. 'Life in its fullness' is realised by illogical, irrational choices, regardless of the consequences. Only by Ruth's reckless act of selfless love, of unconditional solidarity with her mother-in-law, and by taking a dangerous risk on the threshing floor, 'life in its fullness' becomes a reality. Only Boaz's disregard for the prescribed rules of behaviour of society, his

generosity towards a foreigner who should be an outcast and his eventual decision to take her as wife, provide Naomi with a redeemer in her old age, and provide the nation with a glorious king.

Conclusion

This chapter examined the topic of 'Ecodomy' – life in its fullness – from the perspective of the Book of Ruth in the Old Testament. The narrative of Naomi, Boaz and Ruth serves as a reminder that 'life in its fullness' cannot be taken for granted. Ecodomy demands that more than what is necessary has to be done and that there is no room for prejudices and stereotypes. 'Life in its fullness' can only be realised by acts of loving kindness, selfless love, and often needs to challenge the expectations and norms of the society of the day without taking the consequences into account. Thus, Ecodomy is not a natural state of affairs, but requires an effort.

Summary: Chapter 3

This chapter examined the concept of 'Ecodomy' – life in its fullness – as it unfolds in the Book of Ruth. The book is dated to the post-exilic period in the history of Israel, and is read as narrative critique against the Moabite paragraph in Deuteronomy 23:3–5, and against the way that this text is interpreted and implemented in the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Naomi, Ruth and Boaz, the protagonists in the narrative, become paradigmatic of the situation in post-exilic Israel. Their stories, dealing with loss and the actions they take in order to heal the brokenness become indicative for the post-exilic community. As the narrative plot develops, the chapter aims to indicate how 'life in its emptiness' is changed into 'life in its fullness' by the courage and creative initiative of individuals, even if it meant overstepping boundaries and challenging the social conventions of the time. Against the exclusivist policy of Ezra and Nehemiah, the Book of Ruth argues that foreigners may be included in the community of YHWH and that their solidarity with Israel is to the benefit of all the people. The point that the chapter wishes to make, is that life in its fullness cannot be taken for granted, but requires effort.

Prophetic dialogue: The quest for religious leaders seeking reconciliation

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◼ Introduction

In a speech given by Father Michael Lapsley (2014)[6] at Regina Mundi Church in Soweto during the 20 years of Freedom Celebration, he referred to a grandmother who raised a question during a visit to poor, rural KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) a number of years ago, to talk about the work of the Institute for the Healing of Memories (IHOM). She asked, 'Father, are you working with our leaders?' His response was that the IHOM had chosen to work with people mainly from the local communities of the country. To this, the grandmother replied: 'Well you should work with our leaders; they are much more

6. Fr Michael Lapsley, Society of the Sacred Mission (SSM), is the Director of the Institute for Healing of Memories at Regina Mundi Church in Soweto. The short excerpt that follows is taken from a speech he gave at the Interfaith Celebration of 20 years of Freedom, 15 August 2014.

"messed up" than we are.' We can only speculate about the reasons for her remark. Although she probably referred to the political leaders, we would be naïve to think that being 'messed up' and traumatised only applies to them. Many of the religious leaders were in one way or another actively involved in the liberation struggle, and therefore, this remark is applicable to them as well as to the political leaders.

Religious and political leaders played a major role in the fight against apartheid, as well as in the transition process leading up to the first democratic election (see De Gruchy & De Gruchy 2005). The nature of this leadership was generally depicted as brave and prophetic with a firm commitment to the cause of freedom no matter what the consequences were. In many instances the price paid for dismantling apartheid and journeying towards freedom had a devastating impact on the leaders from the liberation movements. It became clear retrospectively that leaders and other role players who had to uphold the apartheid regime became disillusioned after the transition in South Africa and are in need of healing as well. It was therefore understandable that in the aftermath of apartheid safe spaces needed to be created for leaders and citizens to deal with the ensuing pain and suffering caused by the duration of the struggle for freedom. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (TRC) (1998a) was one such attempt, occurring at a particular time in our history, setting in motion the journey of truth and remembering, as well as facing the past in order to facilitate reconciliation, justice, transformation and healing.

The 1997 TRC faith hearing (see Meiring 1999) was a very specific space where the leaders of faith communities could engage with past injustices, reflect on their role during apartheid, and indicate their contribution towards reconciling and healing our traumatised nation. During this hearing submissions were received from a variety of faith communities on human rights violations during the apartheid era. Most of these submissions included firm commitments to reconcile and rebuild the nation (Thesnaar 2013:54–56). In a sense, the success of the TRC was dependent on key role players such as the religious society, government, and non-govermental organisations (NGOs), et cetera, to take the responsibility to foster the reconciliation process by ensuring the implementation of the TRC's recommendations[7] in a post-conflict South Africa, among others. Given the number of citizens who indicated that they belong to a faith community (Wale 2013:24) as well as the fact that the faith communities are depicted as the most trustworthy of all institutions (Wale 2013:24), one could assume that the religious leaders of the faith communities were probably the most suitably placed to pick up the batten after the dismantling of the TRC. Sadly, this fundamental part of the process did not materialise. One can safely assume that the leaders at all levels of society did not have the time, space or opportunity to deal with their trauma, as they had to fulfil demanding leadership roles

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7. See Doxtader (2005) on their assessment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations and their implementation.

in the newly liberated government and society. This was equally true of religious leaders within the post-apartheid society. Based on this premise, the Beyers Naudé Centre (at Stellenbosch University) partnered with the Desmond and Leah Tutu Foundation to set up a consultation (as another safe space) to re-enact the faith hearings of the TRC (that took place in 1997). This re-enactment consultation was held on 8 and 9 October 2014, in Stellenbosch (Thesnaar 2015).

In light of the above, this contribution seeks to critically engage with religious leadership regarding reconciliation in a post–TRC era. It is therefore structured as follows: Firstly, a brief review of the recent re-enactment of the TRC faith hearing consultation is presented, with a specific focus on the various viewpoints held by the faith community leaders on the leadership that was provided (by religious leaders) during the apartheid, post-apartheid and post-TRC eras. Secondly, some normative thoughts on prophetic dialogue are considered. Thirdly, these findings on the leadership provided during the post-TRC era are reflected on in terms of reconciliation through the hermeneutical lens of the Belgian scholar Valarie Rosoux, an expert in negotiation, reconciliation and transformation in a post-conflict context. Finally, the chapter concludes with thoughts on the kind of leadership that is needed within the current South African context to ensure that the process of reconciliation becomes a priority for all faith communities across the nation. In this regard, this chapter also strives to make a contribution to develop responsible and prophetic leadership for faith communities in order to contribute to reconciliation and national unity in the current South African context.

■ Re-enactment of the TRC faith hearing

It must be noted that the purpose of the re-enactment was not in any way to commemorate the TRC or the faith hearings of the TRC as such. The dangers of commemoration are well known and always open to abuse (Hutton 2004:252) by leaders who want to use such a platform for personal gain. In contrast, the purpose was to use the re-enactment of the TRC faith hearings as a vehicle for renewed engagement between past and present religious leaders concerning their role and responsibility in relation to the key issues of remembering, reconciliation and justice within the current South African context. With this purpose in mind the goals envisioned for the re-enactment were therefore as follows: Firstly, to find a way for the process of reconciliation to once again be placed on the main agenda of all the faith communities and organisations. Secondly, to focus on the current challenges facing reconciliation and national unity, and finally, to contribute to the development of responsible and realistic reconciliation strategies and to offer practical suggestions on how faith leaders can address the current challenges of reconciliation, transformation and justice in their faith communities as well as in the broader community.

Some general observations regarding the re-enactment

The following three observations from the re-enactment are found to be applicable for reflecting on and interpreting religious leadership within the current South African context:

Firstly, it soon became evident that the re-enactment created an empowering and dignified space for religious leaders to reflect and make a contribution. The space was conducive for religious leaders to revisit their initial submissions to the TRC (in 1997) and to recommit them anew to the process of reconciliation; it was indeed a profound experience for all those participating (see Thesnaar 2015). Furthermore, the physical space for the re-enactment was set up in a similar way as the 1997 hearings. Another parallel was that it was chaired by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (Cuywagen 2014:3) with the assistance of commissioners Dr Yasmin Sooka, Prof. Hlengiwe Mkhize, Glenda Wildschut and Prof. Piet Meiring. Based on the memory (re-performative memory) (Cole 2007:167)[8] of how the TRC process was set up, the presence of the Archbishop and the commissioners implicitly created the impression, especially for the religious leaders, that the re-enactment was an 'official' event. In that sense, the re-enactment was implicitly provided with the 'authority' to call the religious leaders to participate. Although it was not official and the re-enactment had no authority in any sense, the legacy and significance of the TRC process still provided that status, even though it was 15 years later. This was evident in the way the religious leaders referred to and addressed the 'commissioners' as Madam by Commissioner or commissioner (see e.g. Thesnaar 2015:14–15). This was further emphasised with the spontaneous singing (led by Rev. N. Nyobole of the Methodist Church) of an opening hymn those present, which was not planned by the organisers of the re-enactment consultation meeting. This particular hymn was sung together and marked the beginning of the hearing from the faith-based communities (FBCs) at the TRC hearings in April 1997 in East London where Rev. Nyobole served as manager of the process. It was astounding to observe that the 'power' and legacy of the TRC was still so prominent that the faith leaders were committed to participate and engage in the re-enactment with the same seriousness and vigour as they did before. In a sense, this bears witness to the need for current leaders of faith

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8. Cole (2007) writes:

I argue that scholars have barely begun analyzing what the performative nature of the South African TRC might tell us about the impact, outcomes, and daily practices of this unique model of transitional justice, a model that has been widely celebrated and replicated throughout the world. While many performance and theatre scholars have been drawn to write about South Africa's TRC, most have focused on theatrical or aesthetic representations of the commission rather than on the commission itself as performance. (p. 186; cf. Cole 2010)

communities to re-claim their space in our contemporary society, as it was during the time of the struggle.

Secondly, a profound impact was how these faith leaders used this space to communicate an almost desperateness to once again seriously engage the political, social and economic spheres of life as a collective. In some ways, this performative setting brought back many nostalgic memories of the TRC hearing itself, particularly memories of how the leaders of the faith communities worked together as a united front to end apartheid and lead the country to liberation. Many of the leaders remembered the prophetic and determinant role the South African Council of Churches (SACC), as well as specific leaders such as Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, Alan Boesak, Peter Story, Frank Chikane and Imam Haroon, to mention a few, played to end apartheid. Being true activists they did not hesitate to engage and challenge the current injustices of our society at all levels (Thesnaar 2015).

During the presentations by the faith leaders, it was evident that there is a large distinction between the leadership provided during the freedom struggle and the leadership provided during the post-apartheid era by the faith communities. For example, the leadership provided by the SACC during the apartheid era was nostalgically described during the re-enactment as key, prophetic and powerful[9] in its quest to end apartheid. To succeed, the SACC had many resources that made this possible such as well-organised structures, international financial support, and extremely effective and respectable leadership.

In the same vein, the leadership provided by the SACC and some of the faith leaders during the post-apartheid period and time of the TRC was described as struggling, non-prophetic and even dead (Thesnaar 2015:17, 30). A noteworthy statement made by the Archbishop was that this consultation could play a prominent part in the rebirth of the SACC (Thesnaar 2015:75), affirming how the current role of the SACC is understood today. The SACC was viewed as powerless[10] with limited structures, little support, few resources and inadequate funding. Despite having quality leaders, the religious leaders of the faith communities failed to act.

Thirdly, the conscious decision to not only invite the leaders of the faith communities who attended the initial TRC faith hearing in East London (1997) but also to invite those

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9. According to the Collins English Dictionary (2011:619) the word 'powerful' is an adjective and explained as follows: firstly, to have great power or influence; secondly, to have great physical strength; and thirdly, it means to be extremely effective. Also, see the TRC re-enactment report (Thesnaar 2015:127–143).

10. According to the Collins English Dictionary (2011:619) the word 'powerfulness' is an adjective and explained as follows: firstly, to be without power or authority, and secondly, to be unable to act.

who did not or could not attend, had a profound impact. This provided an inclusive space for faith communities such as all three streams of the Lutheran Church, and representatives of two white Afrikaans churches – the Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk van Afrika (NHKA) and the Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika – to be a part of the current process of remembering, reconciliation and healing. These leaders' contributions had a significant impact on the process of the consultation, especially the contribution by Rev. Fourie from the NHKA, who demonstrated humbleness, brokenness and a deep sense of humility during his contribution. He pleaded for understanding, patience, support and assistance for their journey (Thesnaar 2015:33). The space created by the re-enactment not only allowed Rev. Fourie the safety to contribute but also evoked a reaction from the Archbishop who in turn embraced him. The audience gave him a standing ovation endorsing the space, the event itself, and more specifically, the opportunity it presented to those who were not able to, or for whatever reason could not attend the initial TRC faith hearing (1997), to be granted a space to do so during the re-enactment.

In conclusion, we need to acknowledge and understand how difficult it was for the leaders of the faith communities to (vulnerability reality of memory [Vosloo 2015]) move beyond justifying their faith community's role in the past (historic or fossil memory), so as to unlock its role in the present (developing memory [Vosloo 2015:9]), in order to create a future capacity that can provide hope (future-orientated memory)[11] for our coming generations. What is desperately needed within the current South African context is for leaders of religious communities to facilitate and develop an active generation-crossing memory, by means of responsible hermeneutics (Vosloo 2015:9). Responsible, mature and prophetic leadership is needed to reach this goal within our post-conflict society.

Prophetic dialogue

In his book, *Pastor en profeet,* Miskotte (1992:32) refers to the task of a biblical prophet as someone who disturbs those slumbering and sleeping. To him, biblical prophets are always alert and ready to distort the balance. Miskotte (1992:42) describes the goal of the prophet as someone who hopes to penetrate the world of the powerful in order to guide them to use their power in the service of justice. To embody disturbing and distorting the

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11. According to Vosloo (2015):

A first remark in this regard links with the fact that the plea for the power and importance of an ethics or theology of memory is confronted from the very beginning with the vulnerability (and maliciousness) of memory. Our memory is vulnerable and can easily deceive us: we remember selectively and when we recall events from the past and recount them, they are often historically inaccurate and distorted. (p. 12)

balance and to challenge the world of the powerful will most certainly lead to all forms of resistance. Therefore, the challenge is to be a prophet and to deal with the resistance in a mature and responsible way. Responsible, mature and prophetic leadership that is able to facilitate an active generation crossing memory by means of a responsible hermeneutic is deeply rooted in the DNA of practical theology. The New Zealand theologian, Gerard Hall (2007:1 of 10), explores the significance and implications of 'prophetic dialogue' for the task of practical theology. He argues, whereas 'prophecy' gives priority to the Word of God in scripture and tradition, 'dialogue' highlights the importance of respectful human, cultural and religious encounters. For him it is clear that both components are necessary due to the fact that they stand in a dialectic relationship to one another. In his approach, he argues that whatever practical issue one is dealing with, whether it be peace, justice, reconciliation, liberation, inculturation, or interreligious encounter, the category of 'prophetic dialogue' is helpful for understanding and evaluating the theological task. Hall (2007:6 of 10) proposes two possible avenues for advancing practical theology as 'prophetic dialogue,' namely, Raimon Panikkar's (1995:149–152) 'cosmotheandric dialogue'[12] and the 'triple dialogue'[13] advocated by Asian theologians.

In short, the 'cosmotheandric dialogue' is in essence a dialogue with the divine, human and earthly reality, whereas the 'triple dialogue' is a dialogue with the poor, cultures, and religions. These dialogues are by no means simplistic but rather challenging and instructive. Hall (2007) specifically argues that:

> [W]hatever practical issues one is dealing with – peace, justice, reconciliation, liberation, inculturation, interreligious encounter – the category of 'prophetic dialogue' is helpful for understanding and evaluating the theological task. Specific methodological approaches will be developed by others – although I see in the triple mediation of liberation theology a helpful foundation with much potential for practical theology. (10 of 10)

They remind us that analytical powers used to understand a situation only ever scratch the surface of the full earthly-human-divine reality in which we are privileged to play our part. He indicates, in no uncertain terms, that leaders should participate in society in a spirit of 'prophetic dialogue', which entails engaging with a listening heart, intelligent head and an articulate tongue. These attributes are deeply rooted in scripture

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12. Hall (2003) indicates that:

Panikkar develops his cosmotheandric vision of reality with reference to three major religious traditions to which he 'belongs': the Christian Trinity; the Vedanta Hindu *advaita*; the Buddhist *pratityasamutpada*. He claims, nonetheless, that the threefold pattern – traditionally *Theos-anthropos-cosmos* – are invariants of all religions and cultures. (p. 5)

13. The Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) uses the dialogue approach that revolves around three key poles: local Church, dialogue, and the Asian peoples and their realities (Kroeger 2008:82).

and in the theology of the church as well as the community of faith. Prophetic dialogue is therefore extremely sensitive to the pain of wounded individuals and a wounded nation, and according to Bosch (1991:510), we should engage it with bold humility.

◼ Interpreting the lessons from Rosoux within the post-TRC context of South Africa

The emphasis on prophetic dialogue as explicated by Hall (2007) is indeed very helpful in terms of a theological basis for how leaders of faith communities should engage with society. It is, however, of great value to further dialogue with an expert who specialises in reconciliation and negotiations in post-conflict scenarios in order to be able to understand and interpret the TRC context of South Africa. In a recent article by Valarie Rosoux[14] (2013) titled: 'Is reconciliation negotiable?', she tries to determine whether there is a need for further research on the interaction between the fields of reconciliation and negotiation in post-conflict scenarios. Rosoux (2013:488) found that 'more research needs to be done to clarify the relationship of reconciliation to peace-building and to determine which aspects of peace-building are negotiable and under what circumstances.' In her research she analysed numerous case studies within a post-conflict situation, and based on her findings, she indicates at least three[15] lessons to keep in mind during any post-conflict situation. Her research is particularly relevant to the South African context as it incorporates the themes of reconciliation (the choice for the TRC process) and negotiation (the transition in South Africa was based on a negotiation settlement, as was the choice for the TRC process) in a post-conflict situation. Of significance here is that she highlights that reconciliation is not a one-off event but a process.

From the beginning of the re-enactment it was clear that a different emphasis was placed on how reconciliation was understood before and during the time of the TRC, and how it was understood during the re-enactment. Before and during the time of the TRC, the impression was created that most people understood reconciliation in an idealistic and romantic way. This could be attributed to the relatively smooth transition, the emphasis of the TRC, and the symbolic role Emeritus Archbishop Tutu played in stressing reconciliation and nation-building with the notion of being a 'rainbow nation'. However, during the re-enactment it was clear from the outset that

14. Rosoux is a senior research fellow at the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS) and lecturer at the University of Louvain (Belgium) where she teaches International Negotiation and Conflict Transformation.

15. This will be discussed in more detail further in this section of the chapter.

reconciliation was no longer understood as idealistic or in a romantic manner, but rather as a process that includes justice, dealing with the past, reparation, restitution and so forth. This reinforces the need to clarify the meaning and understanding of reconciliation, which is affirmed by Rosoux (2013) as a necessity within a post-conflict scenario when she indicates:

> There is much at stake, since without a fundamental clarification in this regard, the notion of reconciliation may turn out to be counterproductive. Beyond a theoretical interest, this question has a direct impact for practitioners; a better understanding of the issue is actually a *sine qua non* condition for more efficient interventions. (p. 488)

However, in a bid to grapple with a responsible understanding of reconciliation, Rosoux (2013:489) warns 'reconciliation is decidedly not something that occurs after a handful of dialogue workshops between local leaders, nor through meetings solely at the elite level.' Rosoux (2013) rather advocates for a more modest understanding of reconciliation that could be explained with a two-stage negotiation approach:

> First, a peaceful coexistence for *pragmatic* reasons (common involvement into institutional and economic frame), afterwards a potential transformation of beliefs and identities. Rather than expecting a process that entails truth, justice, and forgiveness, it is critical to adopt a reasonable opinion in terms of aims and timing. (p. 489)

Although the TRC process at the time made a significant contribution by setting in motion the process to deal with the traumatic past of the country, it is time to be completely honest about the actual impact it had on reconciling the people of this nation. Prophetic dialogue entails that leaders need to be honest about the role religious leadership played in honouring a mindset that expected too much of the outcome of the TRC and of what it achieved in terms of reconciliation. Prophetic dialogue further emphasises that religious leaders also need to acknowledge that they not only expected too much from the TRC, but that they also did not adhere to the promises made by them during the TRC faith hearing in 1997, especially in terms of their comment to actively initiate and promote reconciliation. Rosoux (2013:488–489) helps us to understand that perhaps our expectation of the TRC was too high, but also that the faith leaders neglected to timely and structurally participate and engage within the institutional and economic framework, as well as to facilitate the transformation of beliefs and identities in order to assist the process of reconciliation.

With the above reality in mind and the need for further research on reconciliation and negotiation in a post-conflict context, as well as considering the danger of making generalisations without being context specific, Rosoux (2013:488) does, however, identify at least three lessons from analysing numerous case studies that are extremely pertinent in our post-conflict context. These lessons aid in interpreting and understanding the South African post-conflict context, and assist religious leaders in their endeavour to

reconcile our nation. I will therefore make further use of these to reflect on the South African post-conflict, post-apartheid and post-TRC context.

- Firstly, within a post-conflict scenario, Rosoux (2013:488) emphasises that leadership is critical to favour a better understanding of the others' interests. This resonates with the notion that religious leaders should function from intercultural pastoral hermeneutics (Thesnaar 2014:1–8), which will provide them with the ability to understand and to interpret. Where leaders are able to understand and interpret the challenging contexts of the other, they are able to initiate a sense of trust between former adversaries. In this regard, she particularly draws our attention to the fundamental factor that trust lies in the personal past of each respective leader. Her research indicates that when a nation is in transition things will develop more smoothly if reconciliation is advocated by a leader or person who has accomplished heroic actions against the enemy and now seeks reconciliation. Then, when this leader or person asks others, or more specifically, the nation to reconcile, transform and overcome the resentment towards the former enemy he or she develops trust, as it is something the leader or the person has undergone him or herself.

Applied to the South African transitional process before and since 1994 it was evident that the leaders who negotiated the process from apartheid to a new democracy, such as Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu, to name a few, were leaders that embodied trust as they themselves embraced reconciliation after they overcame resentment and dealt with their past. They had the moral authority to provide leadership to assist the nation to begin to change the views of the other during and in the immediate aftermath of the transition. As time elapsed after the TRC, and as these trusted prominent leaders moved out of the public sphere, the significant question that comes to the fore is: Where are the current leaders who have managed to gain trust on the grounds that they have dealt with their past and overcome resentment of the other in order to move towards building a nation, and therefore, call the current and next generations to follow suite?

Rev. Nyobole (Thesnaar 2015:5) acknowledges this challenge, albeit in one area of our existence in this country, and therefore, requests that it is time to reclaim our role in education, as we know that through these institutions we are shaping the leaders of tomorrow.

Since leadership is critical to favour a better understanding of the other, the question regarding the representation of the leaders in the process of reconciliation and transformation is raised. At the re-enactment consultation it was clear that the leaders representing the faith communities were mostly middle and old-aged men. Prof. Jerry Pillay from the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa specifically raised the essential issue of gender justice:

> With regards to gender justice, I think the first critical and prophetic message is to the church itself. If you look at the church leadership – and if you look at us who are making presentations today – where are the women? It is a crucial question and we have got to own that. We have got to accept that that is a critical question to ourselves. (Thesnaar 2015:15)

Another group and voice that was visibly absent was the youth of these faith communities. In this regard, Rev. Mathe (Thesnaar 2015:19) from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Southern Africa (ELCSA) made a strong plea that religious leadership should also actively involve the youth in building bridges.[16] Similarly, this was also echoed by Rev. George Ngamlana (Thesnaar 2015:23) from the Baptist Church when he indicated that they have opened up spaces where young people can come and share their views on the Baptist policy of the separation of state and church. Based on the above, it is clear that what is needed is a concerted effort to develop mature and trusted prophetic leaders that have the ability to move beyond their own limitations, power, et cetera, and to include leaders that represent the compositional diversity of our faith communities.

- Secondly, within a post-conflict scenario, Rosoux (2013:488) indicates that the only reason why former enemies can favour a rapprochement based on a constant negotiation process is because all of them perceive the effort as useful and profitable. In this sense, former belligerents will only commit themselves to such a move if it serves their national interest. According to Rosoux (2013:488), the best way to ensure that this occurs is to establish joint projects and to set up activities where all parties have to work together to benefit and reach their goal. Robust and credible institutions allow the negotiation process to progressively affect all levels of society (Rosoux 2013:489).

In South Africa, the emphasis was initially placed on negotiations at a political level. Spaces such as the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) 1 and 2 (Thesnaar 2015:12), the creation of the (new) Constitution, the Bill of Rights, processes of transformation and the TRC process were created to engage former belligerents to participate in dealing with the horrendous past of South Africa, but also to develop a new future together with the other. In this way, the process of negotiation and participation was useful and profitable, as they could develop processes to create a new nation.

At the religious level, the SACC and religious leaders such as Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, Allan Boesak and others, played a prominent role in creating a climate for the process of negotiation and transformation to take place and to mobilise their constituencies to participate in these processes. Although this is of undisputed value,

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16. This was also confirmed by Dr Nadine Bowers-du Toit from the The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa (Thesnaar 2015:55).

Rosoux (2013) reminds us of the importance of mobilising the population to support these leaders in their endeavour to promote reconciliation:

> Their role is undoubtedly critical to give clear signals to the other party. However, without the support of the population, official discourses and public ceremonies are ineffective. This point is fundamental since the outcome of the process depends above all on popular support. Even if a rapprochement seems necessary to the representatives of each party, it cannot be imposed by decree. The authorities can create a climate that encourages private steps towards reconciliation but they cannot force individual initiatives. At the most basic level, reconciliation is all about individuals. (p. 489)

This does raise some significant questions regarding the current post-TRC process of reconciliation: Has the leadership of the religious constituency in the post-TRC era engaged with the religious population for their support to collectively and individually commit them to reconciling our nation? Have the former belligerents within the religious denominations entered into a space where they actively work together in projects to deal with the past and address the challenges of their current society?

At the re-enactment, Bishop Kevin Dowling of the Catholic Church (Thesnaar 2015) expressed that we need leadership that is independent and authentic to help us move on:

> Who will take us further? ALL OF US. Leadership in the faith communities, yes, but together with all the members of faith communities. We cannot pontificate from on high. Who will take us further? An empowered, poor, disenfranchised people … through the empowerment of their spirits. This is the place where the faith communities are uniquely empowered to be: sitting in the shacks; doing theology there; enabling our people to believe in their own dignity. Enabling our people to see that, if we are going to change the situation, then WE are the ones that are going to have to change it. (p. 12)

This was echoed by Bishop Horst Müller from ELCSA who reiterated that leadership must acknowledge that things are also happening on the ground, and that the world is bigger than their own denomination and leadership. At the grassroots level, things are indeed happening (Thesnaar 2015:17). However, at the level of leadership there must be more visible and sincere engagement with the other as is the case of some congregations.

In this regard, during the re-enactment Rev. Aucamp from the Gereformeerde Kerk, emphasised that leaders need to be imperative in what they do. He mentioned that leaders need to be prophets of another way (Thesnaar 2015:38). This implies that the church will need to move in a way that the whole pack can go forward. Leaders, therefore, need to understand and interpret the context of the people in their ministry. They need to know the Bible and the socio-economic context – the preacher needs to journey with the congregation to understand and interpret the

Bible, and integrate it in their everyday lives. In this way, the people will support the leaders. However, in reality, Pillay (Thesnaar 2015) indicates that although many things have changed within the church in terms of the race composition of many congregations:

> [T]he pastor has not learned the dynamics of change – how to adapt to a new context, a new community. We need training. We need education and I don't think churches are talking about these things enough. (p. 15)

• Thirdly, within a post-conflict scenario, Rosoux (2013:489) denotes the importance of timing where the objective is to change an adversarial relationship. She refers to the work of Weinrich (1999:189) who alerts us to the fact that 'some events, particularly traumatic violations of human rights, can remain unexpressed for a period of time – a period that psychoanalysts often call "latent."' Caruth (1995:8) argues that the temporal structure of trauma is linked to the repetition of the trauma, and therefore, refers to its 'timelessness' and 'placelessness'. Based on the above, it is significant that trauma can re-occur over time, manifesting in different ways, with daunting consequences for both the individual and the collective. The impact of the timelessness and placelessness of trauma is that it affects the coping ability of an individual, group, community, and even a nation to function or participate in society. In this sense, it is impossible to envisage transforming past conflicting relations within one generation with a single process such as the TRC in South Africa. It will take a few generations to deal with the past, and therefore, Valarie Rosoux (2013:489) is indeed correct when she states that such a process may not be imposed on a population that is still deeply hurt by the stigma of the past. As individual wounds often hinder any immediate rapprochement, one can possibly postulate the following proposition: The shorter the delay between the conflict and the reconciliation process, the sharper the resistance within the population. Again, this raises the question regarding the current post-TRC process of reconciliation: Were the leaders of the faith communities aware of the limitations of the TRC process and the devastating effects of timelessness on individuals and communities due to the impact of the trauma?

Conclusion

The religious leaders need to understand that the TRC and similar initiatives aimed at different levels within our society seeking to bring South Africans together to soften their hatred towards one another will not necessarily lead to reconciliation. Fanie du Toit (2014:3) indicates that (since 2003) most South Africans agree that the greatest source of division in South Africa is material inequality and not race or gender. Although the issue of race is still important and has not disappeared, it does not constitute the primary cause

of division in society. What makes this even more pronounced is that in South Africa poverty is not only a material penalty, but also a social penalty – poverty marginalises people in society. Furthermore, class inequality continues to reflect racial divisions: it is mostly black people who form the majority of the poor, while white people constitute the majority of the wealthy.

Fanie du Toit (2014:3) indicates that those in the highest income groups in South Africa more easily feel that society is reconciled (mixed marriages, mixed neighbourhoods, schools, etc.). However, the same view is not shared by lower income groups, as these groups live in almost total isolation from the other groups. Thus, it seems that reconciliation is something limited to those with careers and employment. However, when one scrutinises the statistics even further, the contact between high-income groups and other groups manifests as mere talking rather than actually socialising with them. Although a high percentage of South Africans may say one should forget about apartheid, forgive and move on, there are more marked differences of opinion regarding redress, for instance, white people especially are less keen on talking about financial and material redress. In this regard, religious leaders will need to demonstrate leadership by timeously and structurally participating in, and engaging with, the institutional and economic framework towards economic justice, as well as to facilitate the transformation of beliefs and identities in order to assist the process of reconciliation.

For religious leaders to honour this commitment and opportunity they will need to be honest about their own commitment to reconciliation. Even before they consider reconciliation programmes, leaders must ask themselves how committed they truly are to seeing this process happen. During the re-enactment, Bishop Horst Müller (ELCSA-NT) (Thesnaar 2015:18) remarked that the tragic truth is, unless the religious leaders take the responsibility and initiative to be proactive, then nothing is going to happen. He stated that religious leaders will need to humbly recognise that their work is not over. This again places an emphasis on the role of a trusted umbrella body such as the SACC to assist in closing the gap between the leadership and the people at the grassroots level, and to restore a level of trust. Prophetic dialogue entails that leaders take the initiative and lead by example, as this will re-establish trust in the religious leaders and in the process of reconciliation.

During the consultation, the leaders recognised this challenge. Bishop Mathe (Thesnaar 2015:48) indicated that it is high time that leaders set up a team to focus on what brings us together rather than on that which divides us. The Muslim cleric, Maulana Abdul Khaliq Allie,[17] indicated that prophetic teaching says we have to be balanced, and therefore, religious people are indeed waiting to be led by responsible prophetic leaders, as it is their responsibility to provide guidance and directives for the

17. He is the Secretary General of the Muslim Traditional Council.

people (Thesnaar 2015:60). In this regard, the faith leaders pleaded for action to honour the legacy of religious leaders such as Emeritus Archbishop Tutu and others, and to become role models across the spectrum of our inter-faith communities. Maulana Abdul Khaliq Allie (Thesnaar 2015:60) highlighted that the visibility of religious leaders acting in solidarity in the midst of ongoing challenges is of extreme importance, as religious people want to witness how their religious leaders and members can work together within our societies. Furthermore, he explained that in Cape Town, for years, the norm in many areas has been to address the issues young people are struggling with in our communities, for instance, crime, drugs, gangsterism and alcoholism (Thesnaar 2015:60). During the final session of the re-enactment a young participant urged the leaders to understand that the consultation is indeed a Kairos moment but it calls for a different kind of theology that can underpin our actions (Thesnaar 2015:72). This was clearly a plea directed at religious leaders to listen to the theology that emerges from the grassroots where young people live and engage. It affirms the necessity for faith leaders to demonstrate a leadership style that has the ability to listen and develop from the trenches of the grassroots and that can assist the reconciliation process. Prophetic dialogue therefore implies that religious leaders can no longer proceed with business as usual, resulting in the need to take responsibility and show leadership in this regard.

The reality of the depth, multi-levelled and multifaceted past trauma affirms that the journey of healing in South Africa will take several generations. In a post-TRC context, prophetic dialogue demonstrated by religious leaders as acts of courage, wisdom, and the ability to lead by engaging with grassroots people in order for them to develop a theology together, has the ability to transform our society and lead us to reconciliation. It is above all not only the responsibility of the religious leaders but also the whole of the religious society to journey towards becoming a nation of wounded healers – gentler, kinder and more just. Prophetic dialogue is not cheap reconciliation. It is about the commitment of both leaders and members to the process of reconciliation.

■ Summary: Chapter 4

The TRC re-enactment consultation[18] afforded the opportunity to reflect on the leadership of religious leaders during the apartheid era, and in the years that followed. This chapter is particularly interested in the prophetic leadership provided by religious leaders during apartheid, and 20 years following the transition by engaging with some normative thoughts on prophetic dialogue. The findings on the leadership provided

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18. The re-enactment consultation (8–9 October 2014) on reconciliation was presented by the Beyers Naudé Centre for Public Theology, Faculty of Theology, Stellenbosch University, in collaboration with the Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation (see Thesnaar 2015).

during the post-TRC are reflected upon in terms of reconciliation through the hermeneutical lens of the Belgian scholar Valarie Rosoux. Hereby, this chapter seeked to contribute to reconciliation and national unity in the current South African context with some strategic conclusions to ensure that the process of reconciliation becomes a priority for all faith communities across the nation.

Voicing God: Theological Injunction to economic issues

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◼ Introduction

At the aftermath of Zuma's Nkandla scandal where he was alleged to have mismanaged more than 250 million rand while renovating his private residence, the Chief Justice of South Africa, Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng said that to avoid corruption, South Africa needs leaders with moral integrity (Raborife 2016). He went further by saying that:

> [*Ethical leadership is a*] national imperative because when you are a leader you have the authority to influence those that you lead, and it is what you do that largely determines what those who follow you are likely to do. (n.p)

Commenting on the current national sentiments, he explained that we 'are where we are as a result of what unethical leadership did to us as a nation' (Raborife 2016).

Though given outside the purviews of theology, the Chief Justice's words beckon the intervention of theology in matters of economy and politics. Can theology speak to economic activities?

The events of the last 50 years after World War II (WWII), focusing on rebuilding global economies after years of self-destruction due to wars, placed the study of economy as the main focus on most modern societies. The year 1989 is important because it spells the demise of communism and the triumph of global capitalism (Fukuyama 1989:3). Within this context, due to global capitalism, the modern states lost their power. Claus Offe (1984:35) and Susan Strange (2002:121) are of the opinion that, within the context of global capitalism, states are applying 'crisis management' through administering the welfare system. The negative effects of capitalism, since the dawn of the Enlightenment, which includes a growing inequality, were not fully envisaged (Hokheimer & Adorno 1972:6). These negative effects were felt much more within former colonial countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia where the postcolonial era showed little dividend for the livelihoods of the people because global capitalism is stronger than local markets (Touraine 1971:14). Today we live in a global capitalistic environment, characterised by economic policies that favour the rich at the expense of the poor. Within such a context the question is how we ensure the fair distribution of our local or global limited resources in a way that allows all people to live better lives. To answer this question, this chapter traces two strands – one of complicity and the other of disavowal to capitalism. The chapter concludes by suggesting that theology, while drawing its impetus from Jesus of Nazareth, should focus on a moral economy of fairness and justice, thus establishing its voice among the poor.

■ First strand – In support of capitalism

There are always challenges when we use the terms theology and economy in the same sentence. The first challenge is that economy, as a social science, is a much younger field that started recently in the late 18th century with the rise of the Enlightenment and the nation states (Hall 1996:185). Its emergence coincided with the disintegration of feudalism across Europe. Economics as a science and a younger discipline, one would naturally expect that it ought to listen to an older field of study such as theology. Before the rise of economics as a science for example, during feudalism, economics was embedded within other spheres of society such as theology and politics. This is why the feudal kings were both political and religious figures – thus, theology was the all-encompassing glue that provided the moral tapestry and direction to society (Hall 1996:185).

As mentioned earlier, economy as a social science, and independent of other social disciplines, is a product of the Enlightenment and state formation (Brown 1996:90). By the end of the 1700s, the vast lands of Western Europe, up until then controlled by feudal

kings and the church, began to metamorphose into fragmented states (Held 1996:56). The Enlightenment, by questioning tradition, provided the ideology to critique and contest feudalism. People wanted freedom from the feudal kings and the church. Thus, the context under which states were formed was one characterised by the desire for freedom and spaces for self-determination. However, like any other ideology, feudalism did not disappear overnight. In the book, *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of the nations*, which became the hymnbook for those who clamoured for capitalism, Adam Smith (1976:351), the father of modern economics, wrote that to benefit all, a new economic paradigm, was needed. His writings can be seen as protest against feudalism, which he accused of creating a hierarchical social order in which the majority of peasants paid tribute to the kings, lords and the church. Anchored by the desire for freedom, Smith suggests that the economy should benefit all through promoting the 'invisible hand'; the ripple effects of various economic practices that ultimately benefit entire societies. For example, if one person is interested in trading with shoes, this would benefit many small industries such as people who are involved in rubber, nails and glue. Smith's theory resulted in other perspectives to emerge, especially those that discuss questions concerning supply and demand. One such is John Maynard Keynes, whose views came to be known as the Keynesian theory (Brown 1996:90). It should be noted that Smith's ideas were relevant to pre-industrial communities. He was, however, misunderstood by people such as Karl Marx, who, while he lived in industrial societies, found Smith less critical of economic inequality (Brown 1996:90).

However, the important fact derived from Smith (1976:351) is the need for the economy to benefit all, which will be attended to in more detail below. In protest against feudalism, the theology of those days supported the liberalisation of the economy, though, firstly by associating labour with purpose or a design. For example, Max Weber ([1930] 1992:19) remarked that work is a 'vocation', that is, a calling by God. One's choice of work is linked to one's freedom to choose or have freewill. As free human beings, people have the freedom of personal choice which was denied them by feudalism and by denying freedom, feudalism was construed as ungodly. Contemporaries of Weber, such as De Tocqville, John Mill and John Locke, regarded freedom as the foundation of modern societies (Porter 1990:12). They celebrated the human will to decide and choose. The birth of nations, thus assisted to bring about a theology that propelled the engines of personal freedom and self-determination.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the nation states, also referred to as the economic and war entities, brought theology and economy much closer by construing the nation as an imagined, self-defined entity of people within the same geographic and cultural space (Anderson 1991:7). In anticipation of imperialism, a nation embodied sacredness. Its activities were seen as sanctioned by the gods or God. Consequently, as industries developed, the need for raw materials increased. European countries such as Germany, Portugal, England and France extracted the raw materials, from far-away regions such as

Africa, Asia and the Americas. Stuart Hall (1996:216) has described how the West assigned biblical themes to their colonies in the Americas. The discovered lands were regarded as God-given. Theology provided the myths for imperialism and later colonialism. To conjure up a sense of innocence, the discovered lands were described in biblical scenes such as the Garden of Eden (Hall 1996:216). Underlying the imperial project was the idea that the discovered lands were God-given; virgin lands which had not yet experienced the exploitation associated with industrialism and wars. As such some European expeditions were described with metaphors of 'new Canaan' and the imperialists as children of God who go to occupy what God has given them. As such, the people were painted nude projecting the original myth of innocence associated with the Garden of Eden (Hall 1996:216). Clearly, theology provided the mythical worldview for imperialism and colonisation, by presenting the discovered regions as God-given lands. To some extent, even some of the old traditional hymns may give a glimpse into how people regarded themselves as sent by God to annex the promised lands. For example, the songs *Onward Christian Soldiers*, and *Stand up, stand up for Jesus ye Soldiers of the cross*, conjure such images.

As Western imperialism expanded, so did economic plunder, injustice and ecological injustice (Giddens 1990:40). The writings of the Frankfurt school especially that of Horkheimer and Adorno (1972:6), and later by Jean Lyotard (1993:1) in his *Libidinal economy*, criticised the hegemony of Western epistemology, due to its inequalities and injustices. The Enlightenment turned into Western hegemony the rest of the world over. It divided the world between the rational West and the rest of the world (Hall 1996:184), in the process, widening the gap between the rich and the poor (Touraine 1971:16). Ecologically, it destroyed nature (Giddens 1990:40).

■ Second strand – Moral economy and the critique of liberal economy

In reaction to the exploitation that took place under modernity, a different theology emerged, which responded to the evils of colonialism and capitalism. The negative effects of the Enlightenment caught the attention of many theologians. Many of the early voices centred on economic injustice and the need for peace and order after WWII. The critique of capitalism based on a moral economy was slow, but the moral seeds already existed in most peasant societies across the globe. In England, the moral economy was popularised by James Scott (1990:12) and E.P. Thompson (1971:76), who observed that rural English peasants were comfortable with the fair price of commodities rather than the market price. The fair price was determined by the needs and affordability within the village, never driven by profit (Scott 1990:12). The moral economy, which undergirded subsistent communities for generations, was based on virtues of justice, fairness and promotion of life. In fact, Adam Smith's (1976:15) critique of feudalism was not meant to promote

capitalism, to the contrary, writing from the context of pre-industrial England, Smith criticised those who accumulated wealth at the expense of the poor (positional goods). We find similar injunctions against greed and injustice throughout the mediaeval period in various movements such as the Franciscan and Dominican orders. Equally, in France during the dawn of industrialisation, a Roman Catholic Jesuit father in France, Luigi Taparelli, challenged the owners of industry to, instead of focusing on maximising profit, give their workers a decent income (Burke 2010). Instead of profit, Taparelli said those with means must share and are accountable for the needs of the less privileged. These examples show the friction between the emerging economy driven by profit and the traditional worldview that undergirds subsistent economies.

Important for this chapter is the maxim that moral economy provided the seeds for liberation theology; the theology of the poor. Liberation theology was born at the intersection of the exponential rise of instruments that measure human rights in the 1950s, post-colonialism and the self-determination of former colonised states (Elliot 2007:343). After WWII, because of the loss of authority of the national state and the church, and the rise of universal human rights, the individual assumed greater importance and sacrality. Life, food, water, education, and health became human rights. The image of Jesus, which emerged after WWII, was as a campaigner for human rights.

For example, in Latin America, a Peruvian priest, Gustav Gutierrez argued that God has preferential treatment for the poor. Equally, Jon Sobrino (2005:254) argued that, through feeding, healing and exorcism, Jesus was constructed as the champion for the poor. Jesus was viewed as one who incarnated and assumed the pain of the poor. Through suffering, Jesus calls us to reorder the social and the economic status quo. In Germany, Bonhoeffer, a student of Reinhold Niebuhr, observed that in the black churches in America, the kind of Jesus they preached was socially committed (Rasmussen 2005:130). On his return to Germany in 1933, he applied the ideas of a socially-committed Jesus to critique the evils associated with the Nazis regime. He opposed the infiltration of Nazis in the church and advocated social justice and peaceful resistance. Similar movements in the form of black theology exist in South Africa.

▊ The moral economy of Jesus

At this juncture, it is important to point out that, besides the perspectives of freedom and justice, other perspectives such as human rights provide a significant ideological tributary in our construction of Jesus. Zorodzai Dube (2016) remarks:

> The 1950s are significant in that, not only do we witness a world healing from the aftermath of World War II, but the universal campaign for other forms of freedom. The desire for universal human freedom should be understood within the matrix of postmodernity, which is a worldview and mindset that promotes individual freedom and choices. In this regard,

institutions – family, church or state – should not be prescriptive, instead they should be engaging. A leading voice concerning this topic is Michael Elliott (2007:343). In an article, *Human Rights and the Triumph of the Individual in World Culture*, Michael Elliott (2007:343) explains that the discussions about universal rights are a process which 'is driven by a broader world culture where the individual is increasingly regarded as sacred and inviolable. (p. 1)

The need for a just and moral world, as advocated by the sentiments of human rights and postcolonial advocates, influenced the construction of Jesus from the 1970s onwards. Jesus was labelled as pro-poor, which shaped the way in which the first century was interpreted. From the 1970s, several biblical scholars embraced the idea of a socially committed Jesus which they buttressed with insights from archaeology and social scientific criticism. Ched Myers (1991:42), for example, in his *Binding the strong man,* says that Jesus reacted to economic and political oppression by calling for the redistribution of the economy and a revamp of the hegemonic social structures. More vocal in this regard is Richard Horsley (2001:177), who has suggested that, disgusted by the abject poverty of the poor, Jesus competed against the hegemonic Roman Empire by reviving the kinship's reciprocity cultural values that underpinned Israel's collective identity. In (re)constructing first-century Palestine, a majority of New Testament scholars believe that, demographically, Jesus' movement comprised of the poor, the displaced and disfranchised (Levine 1992:xx; Neyrey 1995:129; Rohrbaugh 1995:183).

Evident from these biblical scholars is that ideas about human rights and freedom were and currently are heuristically used in the construction of an image of Jesus. Jesus was accorded agency, and this reconstruction of the first-century Palestinian context resonates with the worldview of postcolonial context. Jesus as the champion of freedom was extended to other areas of life such as gender which is evident from the rise of literature that constructs Jesus as pro-women, and in support of alternative sexuality (Moxnes 2003:177; Nortje-Meyer 2002:118).

Where traditional institutions such as the household could not be transformed from construction, Jesus left the household by creating a new kind of fictive kinship. This is the main thesis of Elliott (2002:75) and Moxnes (2003:177), who put forward the idea that Jesus exited the traditional household and community, imitating a new exodus; forming alternative household communities in which the economical outcasts built fictive kinship ties based on God being their Father. Moxnes's perspective should be understood from the background of ideas of non-violence which are associated with Oswald Mosley in Britain and Mahatma Gandhi in India, the American peace brigade and the Abraham Lincoln Bridge. Again these ideas construct an individual who is an agent and can influence economic and political processes. Thus, unlike John Elliot (2002:75), Richard Horsley (2001:177), Halvor Moxnes (2003:177) and Ched Myers (1991:42), constructed a Jesus who is against oppressive institutions such as patriarchy and other gender practices that oppress women and men.

■ Is a moral economy possible in South Africa?

We are living in a global capitalistic world and yet espousing a Jesus of fairness and justice. How do we balance the contradiction? Importantly, what forms or strategies can be expressed or lived through the moral economy? From the above brief historical survey, for the most part, the theology which emerged after WWII was critical towards issues of economic disparity by calling for peace and justice. Is this kind of moral economy possible or is it mere rhetoric? If possible, how and under what conditions? To answer these questions, an understanding of the South African context needs to be foregrounded.

South Africa is not an island; its economy and social issues are intertwined with global events. In 1989 the world witnessed the demise of communism and a world ushered into adopting liberal economies (Fukuyama 1989:3). In Fukuyama's article 'The end of history', he sees the end of communism as indicating that capitalism has no other rival; it has won as the global economic policy. Fukuyama's (1989:4) position is problematic, because capitalism does not predominate in most Islamic countries and China. However, there is truth in Fukuyama's point of view because the 21st century global economy has been propelled by West European countries, and North America. Wallerstein (1991:184) adds to this by predicting the world will be governed by mega and multi-cooperate capitalistic systems. Capitalism has become the global culture (also see Jameson 1991:45). Capitalism exists in different forms, and its main fertile soil has been where a government has limited regulation of economic activities. Can this kind of moral economy be nurtured in South Africa?

Perhaps we should start with the question of whether the state, though compromised, can intervene to cushion the household from global capitalism? Anthony McGrew (1996:239) noted four types of state intervention, namely, (1) the strong interventionist welfare state (e.g. Sweden, Norway, Austria and Finland; here the state has extensive social policies and is committed to full employment); (2) soft compensatory welfare states (e.g. Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, and to an extent France, Germany, Ireland and Italy; here the state offers generous social entitlements but with low commitment to full employment); (3) full employment-oriented small welfare states (e.g. Switzerland and Japan; here the state offers low social entitlement but is committed to full employment) and (4) market-oriented welfare states (e.g. Australia, Canada, the United States of America, United Kingdom, and New Zealand; in these cases the state has limited social rights and a low commitment to full employment) (McGrew 1996:239).

South Africa most probably falls into the second category of a soft compensatory welfare state because of its commitment to offer housing, providing funds towards education, and attempts towards a state-sponsored healthcare. Welfare from the state is an attempt by the state to lessen the effects of capitalism by providing services to its people, or, as Claus Offe (1984:35) explains, 'crisis management'. The crisis comes from

global capitalism which has rendered the state redundant. For example, Susan Strange (2002:121), notes the declining power of the nation states due to globalisation and capitalism.

With reference to South Africa, the findings by Claus Offe (1984:35) Susan Strange (2002:121) that the state has little power, places the responsibility at the door steps of the church. Historically, the ecumenical bodies such as the South African Council of Churches have voiced concerns over various social ills, including growing inequality, poverty and lack of housing. In the post-apartheid period, the church has been vocal over issues such as corruption, and has been involved in helping people who suffer from HIV and AIDS. Recently the church was on the forefront in condemning the excessive corruption associated with President Zuma (Tandwa 2016). But, is this enough?

Buttressing a moral economy

In this final section I brainstorm the various elements that should be in place for the church to be firm in its calling for a moral economy which is based on fairness and justice.

Biblically based

Due to postmodernity, where truth is multifaceted and the Bible is one of the many sources of truth, the church faces the danger of spreading a message that has no biblical foundation. I argue that a moral economy should be based on the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. The message of Jesus regarding a fair and just economy came from his understanding of God who created us all equal. Thus, lack of fairness and justice violates the foundation on which creation is anchored. The scriptures, though having gone through various stages of ideological interpretation have one central message – do unto others as you want them to do unto you. Most cultures have similar ethnical teachings of fairness and justice. For example, ubuntu teaches that our humanity is intertwined; meaning that inhumanity to others is injustice to oneself. If our economic practices are based on fairness and justice, then we succeed to overcome the temptation of greed and self-gratification.

The collective

Secondly, to preach a moral economy of fairness and justice, the church, despite its various forms should be one united in purpose. Throughout history, lack of ecumenical voices has curtailed the effectiveness of the church in influencing important political and economic decisions.

Lead by example

Thirdly, to preach a moral economy, the church should lead by example. The church cannot be wholly different from its context, but the manner in which it models and practices fairness and justice gives impact to its message. The current postmodern context, which is characterised by a libidinal economy, presents danger for the church to lose its relevancy. Already there are fears that merging African Pentecostal movements are more of business enterprises than the preaching the message of Christ. If the church leads by example, it avoids what Adam Smith calls 'positional good'; a status based on materiality. Jesus had similar harsh words for people who use materiality for selfish reasons. Commenting on several New Testament texts, including Mark 6:13–14 and Luke 13:32–33, Moxnes (2003:17) argues that Jesus was not against being rich, but he criticised those who failed to uphold the kinship values of sharing.

Theological training should be multidisciplinary

Lastly, an interdisciplinary approach will ensure that theology does not remain an ivory tower. In 2013, Dube (2013:1) proposed a multidisciplinary approach to teaching the Bible. He is convinced that one way in which theology can make a sound contribution to issues in the public space is through commitment to the world behind the text and an awareness of the current context. This does not mean that theologians should be trained in economics or agriculture, instead, Dube advises that theologians should have a good grasp of major critical theories because practices are based on particular theories. If one knows a theory, then one has the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of a particular ideological position. To students of theology, knowing theories places emphasis on ideologies underpinning the various knowledges that we have about Jesus and the Bible. Therefore, students immersed in multidisciplinary perspectives are able to wrestle with questions such as: What affects peace, currency, trade, welfare, and justice? In this regard, our prayer would come from a position of knowledge about the current issues.

Conclusion

The chapter demonstrates the various instances in which theology and economic issues intersect. I noted that whenever theology sides with capitalism, it abandons its cause for the poor. In this regard, theology has the crucial role to play of ascertaining that economic activities are done within a fair and just society. This is important given that, within a global capitalistic context, the state has lost its regulative power which has potential to leave a large section of our society suffering from the injustices of capitalism. Due to postmodernity, there is real fear of realising that institutions such as households and states that used to bind people together have lost their relevance. Given this, there

is fear that the rich will continue to amass wealth while the poor suffer, which in the past has resulted in protests in many sections of our society. This study argues that Jesus' moral economy remains central to our generation. To be effective in its role as custodians of a moral economy, the church should remain biblically relevant, united and interdisciplinary in its epistemology.

■ Summary: Chapter 5

Taking a socio-historical approach, this chapter traces history from World War II (WWII) and illustrates the various instances in which economics and politics intersect with theological themes. After WWII the dominant paradigm in theology tilted towards a moral economy by focusing on issues of fairness, justice and peace. This chapter argues that, in view of the triumph of global capitalism since 1989, the future and relevance of theology is located within spaces that provide ethical and moral influence towards fairness and justice, thus agreeing with the central message of Jesus of Nazareth.

Part 2

Wholeness

A postfoundational ubuntu accepts the unwelcomed (by way of 'process' transversality)

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■ Introduction

This interdisciplinary conversation seeks to facilitate a rational, transversal conversation between the speculative cosmology of English mathematician and philosopher A.N. Whitehead commonly known as 'process'[19] thought and the operative principles and lines of force and congruent attractions and repulsions in the African concept of ubuntu.

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19. We acknowledge here the strong *caveat* and challenge by Seibt (2005) against a total equation of the terminology and structure of Whitehead's philosophy of organism with the nomenclature of 'process'. While 'the term "process ontology" should not be equated with Whitehead's philosophy' (Seibt 2005:2) it is employed here and throughout as a shorthand reference, aware of the formal inadequacy of its usage. It is further acknowledged that the thesis of this chapter rests heavily on the implications of ontological and relational space both occupied and resisted (i.e. welcomed and unwelcomed) between societies and

Ubuntu has been arguably translated into English as 'a person is a person through other persons' (e.g. Forster 2010a, 2010b; Louw 2001:15). Ubuntu is commonly understood to proffer utopic 'virtues that reflect an orientation towards other people, like kindness and hospitality' (Kruidenier 2015:3 of 7). The usual, and historically preferred, 'hermeneutical process' (Müller 2015:3) of ubuntu has until now – we respectfully post – begun and ended on a foundation of the best of human (individual and societal) nature.

However, it is the thesis of this chapter that such a hermeneutics of utopian optimism stands to be respectfully challenged by dystopian realities, which are also part of the human condition. As Louw (2001:26) observes, the African aphorism 'incorporates both relation and distance.' The operative lens of this work is this: How much more 'distant' can we be from one another when we are at enmity? Also, how much more 'related' are we when we are restored to one another and within our societies? Ubuntu, understood in a postfoundationalist manner, can and does account for and includes not just the 'saints' among us but also the 'sinners' – not just relation but also distance, the welcomed and the unwelcomed.

■ Philosophy of organism ('process')

The terms 'relation and distance', and the ontologies which they represent, are described in Whiteheadean terms as reflective of the existential 'various grades of proximity and remoteness.' Whitehead equates his category of positive prehensions with persistence and continual relations. He associates negative prehensions with elimination. It may be safely posited that personal and unending (i.e. enduring) positive human relations without distance is a world that does not exist – in any culture, African or otherwise. Whitehead's categorical scheme (1978:187) acknowledges and works with this reality: '[A]n absolute extreme of undifferentiated endurance [is a world] of which we have no direct evidence.'

Whiteheadean relations of proximities and occasions of personal distance of remoteness reflect the philosophy of organisms' account of the play of contrasts which defines all ontologies and their relationships: '[N]o realized eternal object shall eliminate potential contrasts' (Whitehead 1978:278).

....

(footnote 19 continues...)

their constituent members as well as the space both occupied and resisted between the concepts and realities and epistemologies depicted in both Whiteheadean 'process' thought and that outlined by postfoundational understanding of ubuntu. See the 'General Process Theory' (GPT) challenge to Whiteheadean 'entities that never move' (Whitehead 1978:73) and yet they relate as explicated by Seibt who charges that the Whiteheadean construct (and therefore, in this chapter's context, also to some understandings of ubuntu) are 'strangely incongruent since emergent one-place properties apparently lack proper logical subject' (Seibt 2009:481).

Whitehead (1978) describes the world and other people that we encounter as providing the 'presentational immediacy' (p. 174) of publicly-presented influences (data) which require our private interpretation, which is always subsequent and consequent to the encounter which is prehended. It is important in the philosophy of organism to acknowledge that the *real* world lies behind, beneath and beyond each encounter:

> We open our eyes and our other sense-organs; we then survey the contemporary world decorated with sights, and sounds, and tastes; and then, by the sole aid of this information about the contemporary world, thus decorated, we draw what conclusions we can as to the *actual* world. (Whitehead 1978:174; emphasis added)

The actual world of meaning, for Whitehead, is found in the interpretation of life's encounters which facilitate their subjective integration from the objective realities. For Whitehead (1978) '[*t*]hese integrations often involve various types of "symbolic reference"' (p. 173).

The creaturely demands on our symbolic references are a process by which the many influences of life are necessarily reduced for our single incorporation by our selective prehensions. Some influences and data we take in or accept or appropriate into our lives and sense of being (positive prehensions) and others are either rejected or held in abeyance for some future consideration (negative prehensions). Whitehead (1978:211) applies linguistic symbolism in his use of his all-important concept contained in the word 'concrescence' as it bears the ontological freight of explaining the whole process by which each 'subsequent and therefore new' event arising from the interface of previous events – an evolution (with no moral judgement) as 'the process in which the universe of many things acquires an individual unity.' That ontological unity is a composite one because 'it' will offer parts of itself for subsequent 'subordination' to its ontological successor. It is the bold thesis of our 'process' ubuntu conversation that the word and motion implicit in such a concrescence exactly describes the relational ontology of ubuntu: a person is a person through other persons.

Whitehead (1978) explains that the central principle of 'process' is that each entity is 'constituted by its becoming' (p. 23) and the central element of that becoming is extended by which 'the term "many" presupposes the term "one", and the term "one" presupposes the term "many"' (Whitehead 1978:21). It is a relational ontology in which each occasion is an 'event' which arises from the concrescence of prior events. In this philosophy of organism, the becoming of events occurs out of prior events.

Every event in life, however familiar it may appear, is in this cosmology not exactly as its predecessor(s) – hence, each prehension is novel and is each concrescence. This creative advance is the essence of Whiteheadean relational ontology and it is the very 'nature of things that the many enter into a complex unity … the many become one, and are increased by one … [producing] a novel togetherness' (Whitehead 1978:21).

Each 'one' is 'a system of all things' (1978:36). This ontology serves to 'blur the distinction between what is universal and what is particular.' A few paraphrased reverberating renditions of ubuntu seem appropriate at this juncture: I am because you are, I am through you, I love because you love, I suffer because you suffer.

■ Etymology of ubuntu provides a transversal node

Transversal touchpoints with this 'process' ontology can be discerned in an etymological description of the symbolic representation of the relational ontology of ubuntu:

> Ubu evokes the idea of being in general. It is enfolded being before it manifests itself in the concrete form or mode of existence of a particular entity. In this sense ubu is always oriented towards ntu. At the ontological level there is no strict separation between ubu and ntu. Ubu and ntu are mutually founding in the sense that they are two aspects of being as an oneness and an indivisible whole-ness. Ubu as the generalized understanding of being may be said to be distinctly ontological; ntu as the nodal point at which being assumes concrete form or a mode of being in the process of continual unfoldment may be said to be distinctly epistemological. (Ramose 2001:para. 3)

Ubu cannot be separated from ntu: the former provides the universal and the lived individualities of the many 'ntu' reflect the many 'ones' in community. In this we can hear the concurrent Whiteheadean description (Whitehead 1978:29) of this relational ontology by which the many become one and the one becomes the many which are increased by one – and the 'many' provide the way in which the collective 'one' (or ones) to which they belong, enter into the world.

This chapter is anthropological as it does not deal with the theological or human understanding of their relations to the divine (e.g. 'vertical' in Forster 2010b:7–8 of 12) but rather with the 'horizontal relationships that shape who one is. True (ubuntu) identity … is shaped through *shared* life *in* the community' (Forster 2010b:9 of 12; emphasis added). Such a relationship as defined by ubuntu is understood to be reflective of 'individual identity [that] is based upon a complex active interrelationship of beings that share a common meaning in community' (Forster 2010b:9 of 12). It is the thesis of this transversal examination of a selected commonality between ubuntu and 'process' constructs that complexity of human interaction cannot arbitrary and *a priori* limit what would, or would not, qualify as falling within the realm of 'complex'. Also, the question of seeking 'common meaning' invites a question as to what would constitute the fullest of human 'meaning'. The answer implied in the fundamental perspective of this study is that it is in responses to occasions of suffering that humanity discovers threats and challenges to 'meaning'. The 'localised' (i.e. horizontal) meaning provided by a community to its ubuntu constituents

(because 'it' is, then 'we are') contains not some but all of life's occasions – the welcomed and the unwelcomed.

Whitehead's cosmology coheres with the Ramosean explanation of ubuntu: For Whitehead, the atemporal, or trans-temporal, ontological ground is, firstly, the 'one' (cf. ubu-) comprised of 'the multiplicity of data' (Whitehead 1978:224) and, secondarily, the source of meaning is located in the activity of the creative prehensions of individual's entities (cf. -ntu) as they exist in the nexus of 'prehension' (Whitehead 1978:191).

◼ Transversality

However, 'universal' we might wish to maintain that both ubuntu's creaturely interrelated sensibilities and 'process' categories of relations may be, this conversation between them is not suggesting a universality forced between them to seek a larger meaning but rather the application of a 'figure of discourse – that of "transversality" … [which] replaces universality' (Schrag 1994:75). This conversation strives to enact a transversality 'extending over, lying across, intersecting, and converging without a resultant coincidence' (Schrag 1994:65). Such a transversal interface – if it is to be coherent and rational – requires a point or points, of praxis between the interlocutors. This chapter treats occasions of creaturely suffering and influences and impulses that would threaten a community as located at a 'praxial critique [serving as] the place from which discernment and valuation issue' (Schrag 1994:73).

In this chapter, occasions of unwelcomed influences in life provide the conduit for a dialogue of transversality in that they lie across, extend over, intersect both the speculative structure of 'process' thought and speak to what defines an ubuntu community. Schrag (1994:65) refers to a 'play of figuration' which defines a transversal conversation. The two disciplines will reveal in their transversal considerations 'some family resemblances' (Schrag 1994:65).

This study is aware of the danger, and some ongoing suspicion, within the African academy of appropriation by thinkers of the Western and Northern Hemispheres of worldview historically viewed as alien itself and imposition of an Anglo-Saxon worldviews upon a study of ubuntu.

The extension sought in this work is that this dialogue can achieve two goals, namely, (1) free the philosophy of ubuntu from a foundationalist residence on some utopic ship, isolating outside of its schema all manifestations of human dystopic tendencies (as being un-ubuntu) and therefore unable to speak to human suffering and (2) can also release its 'process' interlocutor from allegations of an isolation in a speculative and philosophical bubble. Such a conversation can bring a sense of freedom to both. Ramose (2003:7) holds

out the promise of such transversal freedom, in his observation that 'it is clear that the liberation of philosophy is possible only through dialogue.'

In a concurring defence of a transversal conversation between an ubuntu schema and that of a 'process' relational ontology (i.e. cosmology), Whitehead, speaking in harmony with Ramose, observes that in the history of culture(s) the general assumptions must be fluid and cannot remain in isolation, immune from change just as 'the older hills, are worn and diminished in height, surpassed by younger rivals (Whitehead 1978:10).

Space does not permit an examination of all the probable inconsistencies and failures that reside in all human endeavours, not less that of ubuntu and 'process' thought. It is enough to say here that both philosophical worlds that each have created, and whose respective views of life they reflect, are not monocultures but are multivalent in themselves. Van Huyssteen (2000) observes that there is, in all systems of thought:

> [T]he kind of cognitive fluidity that enables true interdisciplinary dialogues with one another as a form of transversal reasoning. Transversality in this sense justifies and urges and acknowledgement of multiple patterns of interpretation as one moves across the borders and boundaries of different disciplines. (p. 427)

It is the premise of this work that occasions of suffering, oppression, misery, injustice, evils and – with apologies to Shakespeare – the 'thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to' (Shakespeare 2003–2005, *Hamlet,* Act III, Scene 1, l. 1755–1756) each provide in this study the precise point of philosophical and existential conciliation and a transversal conversation between ubuntu and 'process'. This will be addressed momentarily.

In citing his own 1999 work entitled *The Shaping of Rationality: Toward Interdisciplinarity in Theology and Science* Van Huyssteen (2005:1) applies transversal rationality as a 'heuristic device … for identifying those interdisciplinary spaces where the relevance of scientific knowledge can be translated into the domain of Christian theology and vice versa.' Although Van Huyssteen was here self-referencing his dialogue between theology and science, we present here that an interdisciplinary conversation between the philosophies of Whitehead and ubuntu provides a prime candidate for Van Huyssteen's 'interdisciplinary space for thinking between more than one knowledge system or reasoning strategy' (Van Huyssteen 1998:5). It is the thesis of this chapter that the two knowledge systems and reasoning strategies of 'process' cosmology and the relational ontology of ubuntu exhibit, and can yield, productive meaning through 'transversal lines of force that issue from that which is other' (Schrag 1994:74)

This present conversation presents each occasion of human dystopia – even evil – as a proper candidate for his 'interdisciplinary space' between Whitehead's philosophy of organism and ubuntu as understood outside of its foundationally-understood utopian boundaries:

> Would it be possible to identify between radically diverse disciplines something like a common issue a shared problem a kind of mutual concern or even a shared overlapping research trajectory that might benefit precisely from interdisciplinary dialogue? (Van Huyssteen 2005:1)

Utopic views of the concept and relationships inherent within and reflected by ubuntu must expand the boundaries of what it is to be the fullest 'ubu-' community of which each 'ntu' is a part. The community of the welcomed must share the same world as the unwelcomed if their interplay is to be acknowledged. The inclusion of the creaturely unwelcomed within a post-foundationally understood ubuntu respects its context and expands its application beyond its origins.

Such an expanded understanding and application of ubuntu 'acknowledges that human knowledge is contextually shaped, but recognizes that human rationality is not contextually bound.' (Loubser 2012:85). Occasions of misery and unwelcomed occasions can provide the conduit for this 'process-ubuntu' conversation, in a 'postfoundationalist approach' which reinforces and supports:

1. the role of context
2. the epistemically crucial role of interpreted experience
3. the way that tradition shapes the epistemic and non-epistemic values that inform our reflection about God and what some of us believe to be God's presence in this world
4. the need to point creatively beyond the confines of the local community, group or culture toward a plausible form of cross-contextual and interdisciplinary conversation (Van Huyssteen in Loubser 2012:85).

We suggest that a postfoundational understanding of ubuntu assists the type of transversality that can be deployed in healing the divide between 'him' or 'her' from 'us'. Accepting that a relationship of true ubuntu 'overcomes, and corrects, many of the effects of radical dualism between self and other' (Forster 2010b:6 of 12), then it must surely be irrefutably counter to the indivisibility of the existentially and epistemologically conjoined ubu and ntu to place outside of its epistemological and existential boundaries even the personally and socially unwelcomed among us: brokenness and wholeness are bound together. To cleave the unity of ubuntu by exclusion of some diversity of '-ntu' is to limit ubuntu to the 'confines of the local community, group or culture' (Van Huyssteen in Loubser 2012:85).

The whole includes all of its parts: '[*T*]he African approach [is one through which] one cannot reduce identity simply to the experiences of the individual, or the perceptions of the group' (Forster 2006:6, n. 7) and in the 'mutual implication of extensive whole and extensive part. If you abolish the whole, you abolish its parts; and if you abolish any part, then that whole is abolished' (Whitehead 1978:268).

A postfoundational ubuntu takes seriously that any definition of parochialism is not the fullest possible reflection of the African ethical demands of ubuntu. On the contrary, a foundationalist identity, that is to say, a foundationally-limited category of knowledge, mistakenly presumes all individual qualities of identity 'mean the same thing to me as they do to you … [h]owever, identity is no longer a matter that is so easily verifiable' (Forster 2010b:2 of 12).

This chapter's discussion of a postfoundational ubuntu considers as a question the verifiability of identity and 'personhood'. The 'African cosmology' (Kanu 2013:533) of ubuntu must be inclusive by its own definition, as noted in Forster (2006).

An admittedly oversimplified definition of the ethic of ubuntu can be found if its translation is limited to – however admirable – humane care (Forster 2006:15 of 29, n. 14). It is conceded, with Nkhata (2010:34), that ubuntu bears in itself a 'lack of amenability to an all-embracing definition.' That being said, '[t]he significance of *ubuntu* becomes much clearer when its social value is highlighted' (Nkhata 2010:35). The 'social value' of such 'humane care' comes under a special postfoundational examination when the unwelcomed are excluded from the definition of a person or human. This occurs whenever the opposite of a person having ubuntu is proffered:

> '*usibani bani ungumuntu*' (meaning 'that person is a human' or, 'that person has "ubuntu"') is proffered in phrases such as '*akamuntu walutho lowo*' ('that one has no use or help'). (Forster 2010b:8 of 12)

A postfoundational (and processive) understanding of ubuntu frees itself from communal xenophobia, which is also part of the human condition:

> Evolution has made Homo sapiens, like other social mammals, a xenophobic creature [who instinctively divides humanity into two parts, 'we' and 'they' leading us – especially when encountering some other 'them' – to claim that [w]e are all responsible for each other, but not responsible for them [i.e. the unwelcomed]. We don't want to see any of them in our territory, and we don't care an iota what happens in their territory. They are barely even human. (Harari 2014:195–196)

A pre-postfoundational understanding of ubuntu fails to account for those that those unwelcomed and dystopic occasions among the many '-ntu' that comprise the One 'ubu'. There is cultural transversal congruence in xenophobic impulses noted from broader research. An revealing citation of Harari's research is pertinent to this current search for an inclusive ubuntu:

> In the language of the Dinka people of the Sudan, 'Dinka' simply means 'people'. People who are not Dinka are not people. The Dinka's bitter enemies are the Nuer. What does Nuer mean in Nuer language? It means 'original people'. Thousands of kilometres from the Sudan deserts, in the frozen ice-lands of Alaska and north-eastern Siberia, live the Yupiks. What does Yupik mean in Yupik language? It means 'real people' (Harari 2014:196).

The existential presence of the unwelcomed includes occasions of suffering, even evil(s), and the unwanted, the 'non-persons', the one of 'no use'. The inclusion of the personally and socially unwelcomed within an expanded ubuntu boundary, as voiced by De Beer (2015:4 of 12) is a 'demand of respect for persons *no matter what their circumstances might be.*' (emphasis added).

It is the unwelcomed that present to this process-ubuntu conversation its 'specific transversal issue' (Loubser 2012:97). This specific transversal issue 'provides moments and spaces of convergence within which productive interdisciplinary discourse can occur' (Reynhout (2011:2). We now address that discourse.

Entities, events, and persons are not static and – in addition to the process-ubuntu transversal touchpoint between the welcomed and the unwelcomed – these three prove a congruent relationality between ubuntu and 'process' that is found in each discipline's paradoxical ontology of the juxtaposition of each moment at the nexus of the stability of presence and the creative lure of the 'not yet'.

The essence of ubuntu, from Louw (2001:26) is its 'perception of the other [as] never fixed or rigidly closed but adjustable or open-ended. It allows the other to be, to become.' This relational conduit finds transversal concurrence in one of Whitehead's definitive categories of explanation. In this it is explained that every single living event has the potential to be part of a larger concrescence of events, data, impulses or occasions. It is this potential that is 'the one general metaphysical character attaching to all entities, actual and non-actual; and that every item in its universe is involved in each concrescence' (Whitehead 1978: 22).

This transversal conversation acknowledges that it is also true in the cosmology of ubuntu that the aphorism 'denotes both a state of being and one of becoming' (Louw 2001:26); so too in Whitehead (1978):

[H]ow an actual entity becomes constitutes what that actual entity is; so that the two descriptions of an actual entity are not independent. Its 'being' is constituted by its 'becoming'. This is the 'principle of process'. (p. 23)

Evil and suffering as a mutual concern between ubuntu and 'process'

The portrayals of human evils and dystopic manifestations reflect congruent definitions of the unwelcomed parts of human interaction in each of Whitehead's 'processes' systematically and in ubuntu. Acknowledging the best-case impetus of ubuntu as an African gift to the world does not remove the reality that peaceful interactions are, regrettably, 'often not the first activities that spring to mind when one reflects on

Africa' (Louw 2010:2). The relational 'because' and 'through' of the ubuntu does not protect the collective nor its constituent members from harm. Neither does the relational ontology of ubuntu provide a protection from societal and/or personal dysfunction as a healthy body cell might retreat from an infectious presence, lest it be contaminated.

Ubuntu, as the 'relational ontological approach to individual identity' (Forster 2010b:7 of 12) must by definition include all that it is to be fully human – the 'blessed' and the 'sinful'. Forster (2010a) appears to support (unintendedly?) the inclusion of unwelcomed tendencies of human interaction within the rubric of ubuntu in as much as the human community includes persons:

> [W]ho help one grow through affirmation, nurture and care, and others who help one grow through conflict, disappointment and struggle. (p. 250)

Definitions of ubuntu which seek to present a prophylactic to protect a relational intersubjectivity from unwelcomed factors of human behaviour do a disservice to the reality of the panoply of human interaction, including both live-giving and of destruction. For example, the glue of the societal norms of traditional relations (and in this example of intergenerational relationships) has been used, infamously, in the context of child soldiers. Former commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda Romeo Dallaire (2011) observed:

> In traditional African societies, age always and still is greatly respected, and children simply do not disobey or cause trouble without risking instant discipline from elders. This feature of typical society has been ever more instilled in the child soldier through training, socialization and combat experiences. (p. 145)

This 'perversion of social norms' (Dallaire 2011:145) is certainly an example of the Whiteheadean observation (1933:259) of the ontological 'intermingling of Beauty and Evil.'

Impediments to wholeness must be included in the lived definition of ubuntu relational ontology if it is to account for the fullness of humanity. It is our thesis that such accounting extends an understanding of ubuntu past its foundationally-historic utopic impetus to also account for a noble sacrificial impetus, although welcomed, which bears unwelcomed collateral destruction, as, for example, witnessed in Kruidenier (2015):

> Women experience several traditional practices of hospitality that are accompanied by risk of disease and violence and economic strains. These acts of hospitality and caring are acts of ubuntu in the community. (p. 5 of 7)

In the language of ubuntu, a true postfoundational unity of humanity includes, by definition, the paradoxical conjunction of welcomed and unwelcomed, moral and immoral, relations. Coetzee (2003) observes:

[*T*]here is no African philosophy which is not a product of cultural construction [and that] the moral domain admits a multiplicity of moral orders (there is no single moral order for all human beings). (p. 322)

The inclusion of unwelcomed behaviours and consequences in a postfoundational definition of ubuntu is a matter of integrity, wholeness of the application and relevance of the aphorism. A postfoundational claim for ubuntu is that it can, and must, include in its ontology and cosmology the unwelcomed and dystopic influences in a society or individuals that can find support in 'the very concern with authenticity in African philosophy [which] *presupposes* a background of crisis'. (Wiredu 2007:73; emphasis added)

Whitehead's (1978) relational category of 'concrescence' is:

[*T*]he process in which the universe of many things acquires an individual unity in a determinate relegation of each item of the 'many' to its subordination in the constitution of the novel [meaning the singularly newly-felt experience as] 'one'. (p. 211)

Process thought and ubuntu converge, again, on this following point. The coalescence of welcomed and unwelcomed experiences under the postfoundational epistemological umbrella of ubuntu into a unified experience presents intersubjectivities which 'blur the sharp distinction between what is universal and what is particular' (Whitehead 1978:48). The previously noted etymological study of both conjoined and distinct meanings of ubu and -ntu offers a free-standing independent yet concurring epistemology from the formative culture of ubuntu in this way: The nexus of the universal (ubu-) and the particular (-ntu) is the nexus of our 'morally ambivalent natures … [*m*]oral awareness, [and] the depths of depravity' (Stone 2006:86).

This scene of personal collision bordering on elimination reflects the interdependence of wholeness and brokeness, of welcomed and the unwelcomed occasions – and persons – and reaches into the Whiteheadean observation of the existential prehension of the extended (i.e. extensive) transversality of the external (public) and the internal (private) datum of life. Such interrelatedness of conjunction and disjunction of external and internal, public and private, data is the experience of their nexus as the 'co-ordination of [those] prehensions' (Whitehead 1978:290).

The Whiteheadean 'concurrent realisation of a purpose towards elimination' (Emmet 1966:269) is the definition of evil and describes – with ubuntuesque echoes – 'how disturbingly intimate [is] the relationship between the oppressed and his or her oppressor, the self and the other' (Brink 1998:199).

We have seen congruent ontological and categorical harmony between 'process' and ubuntu. A closing example follows of the ontological intimacy that exists at the nexus of individuals and their communities of both relation and distance, prehensions

of interlocking positive (inculcated) and negative (held in abeyance) natures, and ultimately that 'there is no element in the universe capable of pure privacy' (Whitehead 1978:212).

One of many such nexus was recorded by Gobodo-Madikizela[20] which occurred at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Committee on Human Rights Violations (TRC 1998). At one point of the proceedings, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, once the 'embodiment of suffering, resistance, survival, and all the images associated with the fight against apartheid, was questioned as a perpetrator.' (Gobodo-Madikizela 2004:101).

It is in dystopic experiences that the reach between ubuntu and its transversal interlocutor of the philosophy of organism renders its most profound and unavoidable conduit for unwelcomed experiences. The presupposition of crisis in the formation of personal authenticity in the 'because' and 'through' of ubuntu was revealed in no less a scenario than during one particular 1997 prison interview with former South African Police Colonel Eugene de Kock by clinical psychologist Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (2004):

> Standing there stunned, in conversation with a broken man who had been an angel of death, I felt as if I were in the midst of a collision of scattered meanings within these prison walls that had enclosed our conversations. (p. 114)

At the TRC, Gobodo-Madikizela reported having experienced another a powerful example of the ubuntu-process relational ontologies' paradoxical co-mingling of 'relation and distance' (Louw 2001:26).

According to Gobodo-Madikizela:

> [S]he (Madikizela-Mandela) approached Stompie Siepe's [sic] mother while the cameras rolled. With a triumphant smile and open arms, she embraced her. I watched the moment of contact between the two women: the mother's humble smile and return of the gesture, and Madikizela-Mandela's triumphant smile, enacting her imposing power through her embrace. Two smiles: one symbol of power, and the other a symbol of impotence. (Gobodo-Madikizela 2004:102)

■ Conclusion

The intimate relationship of oppressed with oppressor, the welcomed and the unwelcomed, is but one proof of the demand for a postfoundational ubuntu whose ontology and epistemology reflect the unity-amid-diversity that is the human condition.

....

20. Gobodo-Madikizela was a member of the TRC Committee on Human Rights Violations, established 16 December 1995, with public hearings beginning April 1996; its reports were presented to President Nelson Mandela 29 October 1998. Reports of open public hearings can be found in Truth and Reconciliation Report (TRC 1998).

Whitehead speaks of the spectrum of truly human nature that cannot be neatly subdivided to the welcomed and unwelcomed:

> Nothing can be omitted, experience drunk and experience sober, experience waking, experience drowsy and experience wide-awake, experience self-conscious and experience self-forgetful, experience intellectual and experience physical, experience religious and experience sceptical, experience anxious and experience care-free, experience anticipatory and experience retrospective, experience happy and experience grieving, experience dominated by emotion and experience under self-restraint, experience in the light and experience in the dark, experience normal and experience abnormal. (Whitehead 1933:226)

Transversally spoken, a postfoundational ubuntu offers a language and experience in life that draws a community and each of its members into the fullest of being and becoming - where brokenness mingles with wholeness. Expressed in yet another translation: 'Your pain is My pain, My wealth is Your wealth, and Your salvation is My salvation' (Nussbaum 2003:21).

■ Summary: Chapter 6

This examination of ubuntu is engaged in a conversation with the speculative philosophy of organism ('process') to acquire an extended tool by which to engage within its ontology the widest possible range of human interaction. The engagement by ubuntu's relational doctrine of the speculative philosophical cosmology of A.N. Whitehead placed portions of the latter's constructs at the service of ubuntu's transversal capacity to examine and apply the deepest understanding of its own etymology. It has been a challenge to understand occasions of injustice and suffering which have manifested within the same African culture which has given to the world the language and concept of ubuntu. It has been commonplace to isolate the utopian relational ontology implicit in the aphorism from occasions of the worst of human nature. It was the premise of this study that an understanding of an ubuntu which excludes dystopian occasions has done a disservice to the breadth, depth and height of what is to be fully human – including occasions of suffering and anti-social behaviours.

A contribution from Proverbs and Daniel to reflection on Ecodomy

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▍Introduction

The publication of 'The Limits of Growth' (cf. Meadows et al. 1972) by a research team of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1972, caused a worldwide reaction. In theological circles it generated a new branch, that of ecological theology. Years of exploration and abuse of the earth are leading to an ecological crisis that has to be addressed by us. Solutions and suggestions on how to meet the crisis are to be provided by the church as well. This world is the only world we have and has to be cared for. As contextual theology and branch of ecological theology, the discipline of Ecodomy reflects on the way believers are to react to this crisis.

Ecodomy 'denotes the act of building or edifying' (Kok 2015:6 of 12). Ecodomy aims at informing and enlightening God's community of faith to live a full life in this world.

Ecodomy consults different sources to inform the faithful. The Bible is one of them, if not the main source. The Old Testament consists of various perspectives on how to live. Some of these perspectives seem to present opposing viewpoints on the same if not similar issues. In the Old Testament, the Book of Proverbs, especially Proverbs 1–9, refers to the world, its creation and living a full life on earth. Another biblical book, also dealing with the world and one's place in it, is the apocalyptic book of Daniel. In Daniel the world is seen as being in crisis. The readers are presented with an apocalyptic view to help to survive these threatening circumstances. In the same Old Testament therefore, two seemingly opposing views are presented. This chapter studies these two apparently conflicting viewpoints and proposes that when they are read in conjunction with each other, they can inform Ecodomy studies. Ecodomy studies can be advanced by a multiple approach, availing itself with two or more perspectives, even opposing ones, used in dialogue with each other.

In what follows the Chapters 1–9 of the Book of Proverbs is discussed first outlining a specific view of the world and the role of human beings in the larger totality of God's creation. Next, the seemingly opposing view found in the Book of Daniel to rather wait upon future events, is examined. Finally, it is proposed to read these two stances in juxtaposition with each other – a phenomenon that is found all over the Old Testament.

◼ Book of Proverbs and Wisdom

The Books of Proverbs and Daniel are not usually included in theologies of the Old Testament. Neither of them 'feature any of the major constructs of twentieth-century scholarship' (Brueggemann 1997:334). Being part of the canon, however, make them theologically relevant and as important as any other book in scriptures. Both of these two books reflect a view on the world as a totality and deal with the believers' participation in the events of this world.

The Book of Proverbs belongs to the category 'wisdom literature'. Sapiential writings 'instil a desire to acquire knowledge and an understanding of the world so that one can make sound judgments and lead a successful and fulfilling life' (Goff 2010:1339). That is exactly what is found in the Book of Proverbs. The poetic units found in Proverbs 1–9 consist of sayings, all intended to form the reader into a wise person. These poems are 'more concerned with forming character than with urging specific actions' (Clifford 2009:659). The mark of a wise person is that he stands in a sound relation to all of creation and to Jahweh its creator. This wisdom-lead, all-inclusive relationship enables the person to live life in its fullness. Sayings, wisdom and life form a *Motivkonstellation* [arrangement of motifs], an inseparable tri-unity of terms (cf. Venter 1981:281–330) in Proverbs 1–9. To take the sayings in these nine chapters to heart, makes you a wise person, someone

who really lives in the fullest sense of the word. Meaningful *life* depends on being *wise* instilling the values taught in the *sayings*.

Basic to all of this is to be in awe of God. The 'fear of the Lord' (Proverbs 1:7, 9:10), to know God, is fundamental to wisdom and real life. It is the 'compass point' (Crenshaw 1998:13) from which life is decided. Religion and ethics form a union and any cognitive endeavour to deal with reality takes God into account.

From this vantage point the world is seen as God's orderly creation. He instilled order into the world. This is 'a network of cooperative, interrelated parts, whereby nourishment and well-being are given' (Brueggemann 1997:337). Furthermore, God bestowed on his creation 'the necessary clues to enable humans to assure their continued existence' (Crenshaw 1998:12) in it. This order is experienced empirically and formulated in the sayings of the sages. By remoulding and transmitting these 'wise sayings and teachings about how to live a righteous, productive, and happy life' (Fox 2008:11) one can become wise.

This 'network of cooperative, interrelated parts' (Brueggemann 1997:337) consists of parts that are different and sometimes even in opposition to each other. Seemingly contradictory sayings are found in Proverbs 26:

> Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself. Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes. (vv. 4–5)

What is sometimes wrong, may be correct on another occasion. It is an all-encompassing order God created in which the most varied entities stand in orderly interrelation with each other.

Wisdom and life are associated with each other. Those who find wisdom find life (Pr 8:35). Murphy and Huwiler (2012:11–12) label wisdom's call 'a divine call to life.' 'Wisdom' and 'life' are 'more closely associated than any other concepts in Proverbs' (Murphy 1998:54). '[*T*]he goal of wisdom is life' (Murphy 1998:54). Murphy (1966:9) calls 'life' the 'kerygma of the Book of Proverbs'.

As wisdom is 'the reasoned search for a specific way to assure wellbeing and the implementation of those discoveries in daily existence' (Crenshaw 1998:16), the focus falls on everyday life. Wisdom is the conscientious effort to bring everything, even different things, in line with God's order, adding to it an 'ethical dimension' (cf. Brueggemann 1997:337). It includes every aspect of life, be it human relations, family life, sexual ethics, wellness, honour, length of life (cf. Crenshaw 1998:13, 15). It concerns 'modest and prosaic' (Fox 2008:7) issues like dealing with other people, deciding wisely and avoiding dangers.

What is meant by 'life' in Proverbs is therefore much more than mere existence. It is an active way of life that encompasses every aspect of life, be it health, friendship, marriage, posterity, possessions, even sickness, poverty, or whatever (cf. Crenshaw 1998:72).

It is the same as in Egyptian literature where life 'implies vitality and soundness as well as physical existence' (Fox 2008:118). The term 'way' is very often used to indicate this type of existence that can be called 'real life'. Actively deciding upon the correct way, guarantees enjoying life in its fullness.

However, life does not indicate eternal life or resurrected life in Proverbs (cf. Fox 2008:136). It simply refers to everyday life in its fullest extent. It does, however, intend a long life, with regard to quantity as well as quality. In Proverbs 3:2 wisdom prolongs its adherents' life with many years bringing peace and prosperity. It brings a quality to life that is not implicit to the existence of all human beings. In Proverbs 4:10 the father's teaching is to be understood 'in a qualitative sense' (Murphy 1998:21) when it is said to bring about many years of life. For those who 'fear' the Lord years will be added to his life through wisdom and his days be many (Pr 9:10–11).

Wisdom is also called 'a tree of life' (Pr 3:18) for those who embrace her. This 'mythological symbol' (Murphy & Huwiler 2012:24) indicated the fountain of life, that evoked fertility and immortality in the ancient Near East, sometimes meaning 'eternal life' (Fox 2008:158). For Israel it rather meant a full life. This picture of a tree is also found in Genesis 2:9; 3:22, 24; Proverbs 11:30; 13:12, and 15:4. In Proverbs it is a 'figure of speech for a full life' (Murphy & Huwiler 2012:24), an indication of 'vitality and healing' (Fox 2008:159). In Proverbs 3:18 it is a depiction of wisdom that bears the fruit of a full and enriching life (cf. Matthews, Chavalas & Walton 2000: note on 3:18). It functions as 'metaphor for the happiness that was associated with the good life in sapiential teaching' (Murphy 1998:22).

Wisdom is also depicted as a 'personified mythical figure' (Venter 2016:7 of 8) in Proverbs 1:20–33, 8:1–36 and 9:1–6. Toy (1899:vi) calls wisdom the 'controller of life'. The 'substantiated self-recommendation' (Loader 2014:323) of Wisdom in 8:1–36 sketches her as the source of life and everything that makes life prosperous. In Chapter 8 she acts as 'agency for generating life-giving order' (Brueggemann 1997:343). In Proverbs 3:16 wisdom holds long life in her right hand and riches and honour in her left hand. Based on an Egyptian model of the goddess *Ma'at*, wisdom is depicted as source of a life that consists of both wealth and longevity (cf. Loader 2014:171). In Proverbs 8:12–21 she promises sound judgement, insight, dexterity for those who rule, and riches and honour to all who seek to find her. Speaking like a prophet, wisdom invites all and everybody to heed her words, or else receive an ordeal of judgement. The 'acquisition of wisdom' (Loader 2014:367) is substantial to real life. When someone stands in a very close relationship with wisdom, she should even be called that person's sister (Pr 7:4; cf. the erotic vocabulary in Song of Songs, cf. Loader 2014:297). She should be cherished and embraced (Pr 4:8). Like the wife in Proverbs 31:10–31, wisdom will look after those who embrace her. Whoever does this, will receive a full life from her – quantitatively as well as qualitatively.

The conditions for real life are clear. It is a dynamic endeavour. One should adhere to the sayings, venerate God and his creation, seek wisdom with all one's might and walk on the path of righteousness. That will bring about a joyful and prosperous life. Wisdom's call (Pr 1:20–21; 8:1–3), however, is not to be ignored. Life is to make decisions and live a disciplined existence. It is a 'narrow path through rough and perilous territory full of pitfalls, snares, rocks, and storms' (Fox 2008:164). The pursuance of wisdom is a 'drama charged with conflict' (Clifford 2009:659). In Proverbs 1–9 the threat to full life comes from the loose women and deceptive men. Wisdom and life stand in stark contrast to foolishness and undisciplined living. There are two ways: the way of the wicked and the way of the righteous. All the different generic terms used for life in Proverbs, stand in opposition to the generic terms used for folly here.

The assumption in all of these sayings is that 'the world has the capacity to reward good deeds and punish wicked deeds' (Clifford 2009:657). It supposes a connection between an act and its consequences. The wise knows this connection and is therefore able to live in harmony with the world. The wise is able 'to cope with reality in any circumstance of daily experience' (Boccaccini 2002:104).

◼ Parallel streams or 'Judaisms'

There were different viewpoints or 'streams' of thinking in the history of Israel. The Pentateuch reflects a juridical approach based on God's laws. The prophetic literature presents the view that God revealed his will to the prophets of the Bible.

The viewpoint in books like Proverbs represents what Boccaccini (2002:103–111) calls 'Sapiential Judaism'. It was an 'autonomous movement' (Boccaccini 2002:103) already in existence in the monarchic era (10th century BCE). This movement maintained its autonomy right through exilic times and started to flourish during the Second Temple period (516 BCE – 70 CE). This stream had a history of its own representing both preservation, continuation and adaptation. The over-optimistic view in Proverbs 1–9 (written somewhere between 6th and 4th century BCE) was challenged during the time of the Second Temple (cf. Adams 2010:1103).

The exile brought totally different circumstances presenting new questions and different answers. The rise of Hellenism since the 4th century BCE and its philosophical design of time, pushed the directness between deed and consequence into a life after death (cf. Crenshaw 1998:29). Developing a linear view of time, reward and retribution was now projected upon a future time after death. That left the present in an uncertain turmoil.

The Books of Job and Ecclesiastes represent sapiential adaptation to new conditions under changed circumstances during the 3rd century BCE. Traditional wisdom was

challenged as insufficient to meet the demands of changed conditions. The wisdom stream also influenced the new upcoming stream of apocalyptic ideas. The 'midrashic aspect' (Goldingay 1998:322) of the Book of Daniel clearly indicates that a 'variety of streams of tradition' (Goldingay 1998:322) stand behind the book. A form of wisdom is reflected in Daniel that can be called 'mantic wisdom'. Daniel's wisdom 'is primarily revealed, apocalyptic wisdom, but it also embraces a certain amount of empirical learning' (Collins 1993:403). This can be seen in 'the catalogues of natural and cosmic phenomena' (Rowland 2010:346) referred to in the apocalyptic Daniel. The developing differences in worldview between Proverbs and Daniel is to be studied against this social background.

Book of Daniel and Apocalypticism

The apocalyptic worldview:

> [*I*]nclude[s] the proclamation of eschatological judgment, a conviction that the present world order is sinful or corrupt, the allocation of rewards and punishment after death, and a concern with the angelic world. (Goff 2010:1341)

This proclamation is presented in the Book of Daniel as a narrative depicting God's plans for the world. Where the sayings of Proverbs are applied to the present world only, this new worldview operates with 'a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial, insofar as it involves another, supernatural world' (Collins 1996:7). The revelations in Daniel are 'intended for a group in crisis with the purpose of exhortation and/or consolation by means of divine authority' (Hellholm 1986:27).

The development of apocalyptic literature in Israel is to be understood against the background of the history in Judea since the return from exile (c. 538 BCE). Different groups started to vie for authority in Judea. There were different views on the restoration of Israel. One visionary-inclined group continued prophetic eschatology anticipating restoration in 'terms of plain history, real politics, and human instrumentality' (Hanson 1979:12). Another group represents what Hanson (1979:12) calls 'apocalyptic eschatology'. They did not think *diesseitig* [on this side] about salvation in everyday terms. Due to 'a pessimistic view of reality growing out of the bleak post-exilic conditions within which those associated with the visionaries found themselves' (Hanson 1979:12), they had a different view of God's sovereignty. A movement from prophetic literature to apocalyptic literature took place among them (cf. Venter 2012). This development steered away from what Boccaccini (2002:34–72) calls 'Zadokite Judaism' and 'Enochic Judaism' (Boccaccini 2002:89–103).

When the Seleucid ruler, Antiochus IV, commanded the daily sacrifices at the temple in Jerusalem to be discontinued, the altar to be used for sacrifices to deities, and a new

calendar to be introduced in 167 BCE (cf. 1 Macc 1:21–24, 30–50), it led to vigorous reaction and 'competitive interpretations' (Boccaccini 2002:163) of the crisis. Among the apocalyptically inclined parties, the group responsible for the Book of Enoch joined the Maccabees in taking an activist stance. The group from which the Book of Daniel originated, 'chose for a modified apocalyptic form of asceticism' (Venter 1997:68). The Book of Daniel does not reflect a reaction to the events during the time of Antiochus as such, but presents 'a way of perceiving those events that is quite different from what we find in the books of Maccabees' (Collins 1993:61). There was a dispute '*um die richtige Einschätzung der leidvollen Gegenwart und die richtige Handlungsalternative für die Zukunft*' [for the correct assessment of the sorrowful present and the correct alternative action for the future] (Albertz 1992:672).

The inventive and emblematic language used in the Book of Daniel intends to open up the eyes to the supernatural dimension of reality (cf. Collins 1993:61). God is in control. The course of events is beyond human control. The Daniel group therefore preferred to avoid confrontation and retracted, waiting for God to intervene (cf. Venter 1997:89). Although the Divine Warrior motive is found all through the Book of Daniel, the readers are never encouraged to use any violence against the Seleucids themselves. They should rather fall back on the motif of *menschliche Ohnmacht* [human powerlessness] (cf. Venter 2001:326). Daniel shows 'a movement from violent God (theology) and violent people (ethics) to violent God (cosmology) and non-violent people (anthropology)' (Venter 2001:326). Over and against Enoch's viewpoint where the elect 'act as instruments of social change' (Boccaccini 2002:197), all change is exclusively the work of God in Daniel. The dynamic approach in Proverbs 1–9 is changed into an impassive approach. Perseverance is seen as 'the principal virtue' in Daniel, 'decisive for salvation' (Boccaccini 2002:198). In the light of the revealed power of God 'the acceptance of martyrdom makes sense' (Collins 1993:61). 'Daniel 10–12, then, provides a rationale for martyrdom' (Collins 1993:403). Those persecuted have the 'freedom to stand fast in confidence' (Collins 1993:61).

The Book of Daniel comprises of two sections: court tales in Daniel 1–6 and apocalyptic revelations in Daniel 7–12. The court tales in 1–6 'share with Esther the concern about maintaining Jewish identity in a foreign land, in the service of a foreign king' (Collins 2004:554). Stories from an older tradition were merged here 'to provide a model by which the apparently contrary themes of faithfulness to Jewish law and success in a Gentile milieu were brought in harmony' (DiTomasso 2010:516). These narratives, however, are not 'exercises in history writing' (Collins 2004:554) merely depicting actual events. Incidents from the exile are used to picture Daniel and his friends as faithful Judeans loyal to the pagan rulers and simultaneously faithful to God and their religious traditions. All of these narratives in Daniel 1–6 'show the sovereign power of the Most High God' (Collins 2004:561). They are intended to encourage the faithful to

trust God under very difficult circumstances. In these stories wisdom, prophecy and law are fused into something new. Daniel and his friends keep the laws, like dietary rules (cf. Dn 1), prescribed in the Pentateuch. Daniel is also depicted as receiving messages from God, although in a totally different way than the prophets. He exercises mantic wisdom, receiving and reading dreams like Joseph (Gn 37–50).

Daniel 7–12 reports four supernatural visions Daniel had. They 'are a response to the national-religious crisis precipitated by the policies of the Seleucid king, Antiochus IV (167–164 BCE)' (DiTomasso 2010:514). These visions are presented as apocalypses. According to Collins (2004:563), apocalypses fall into two categories: Those of a wonderful journey with its cosmology and the abode of the dead, and a second category with its emphasis 'on history, which is typically divided into a specific number of periods' (four kingdoms, seventy weeks of years). In apocalypses of this type, the focus is on the time of the end, when God will intervene for judgement (cf. Collins 2004:563–544). While Chapters 1–6 of Daniel deal with the *diaspora*, reflecting an acceptance of gentile rule, the 'visions, in contrast, are focused on events in Jerusalem, and reflect a time of persecution' (Collins 2004:564). These visions are found in Daniel Chapters 7–12.

This coincides with two major approaches to Apocalypticism in research. One group deducts from the contents of apocalyptic literature an 'eschatological belief system characterised by dualism and expectation of a new better world breaking into this world from beyond and swamping this age with its glory' (Rowland 2010:346). Another group of scholars working from the 'fact and form of revelation' (Rowland 2010:346) claims that revealed knowledge is the focus in apocalyptic literature. Eschatology does not stand central in apocalypses, but merely stands parallel to other ideas, such as cosmology (cf. Rowland 2010:346). According to Rowland (2010:346) both of these viewpoints are important. The visionary component is indeed central in the apocalypse being eschatological in orientation. This, however, does not *ipso facto* mean that:

> [H]ere was a radical, and widespread, shift from *this-worldly* to *otherworldly* in the eschatology of the apocalypses. The apocalypses largely reflect the biblical hope for fulfilment in this world. (Rowland 2010:346)

'Most apocalypses, though, do expect a new age or world order of some sort, but envision it being fulfilled precisely in this world' (Rowland 2010:346).

Daniel's mantic ability to interpret dreams and visions leads to 'a new theology of history wherein any resolution of the present state of affairs could not be imagined to occur within the pales of history' (DiTomasso 2010:515). Moving away from the older Deuteronomistic theology of history where everything depends on upholding the covenant between God and Israel, the catastrophic events of the present (3rd century BCE) is interpreted in the context of a divine master plan for the world. Presenting a 'transcendent reality' (DiTomasso 2010:515) this plan is revealed by an angelic being to

Daniel through visions. These revelations confirm that God is in control and will remove the tribulations in good time. They serve as some form of emergency aid for believers in distress encouraging them to continue their life (Dn 12:13). This brings about a type of in-this-world, but-not-from-this-world attitude.

Two more issues are to receive further attention with regard to Ecodomy: time and the effect of the Book of Daniel upon its readers. In both sections of Daniel, the well-known pattern is used consisting of 'the idea that a sequence of four kingdoms would be followed by a lasting one' (Collins 2004:557). This 'predetermined duration of history' (Boccaccini 2002:198), is intended 'to give to history a meaningful sense for which people could live and die' (Boccaccini 2002:201).

In the exegetical history of the Book of Daniel the aspect of time has been greatly the victim of westernised historical thinking. Revelations in apocalyptic literature have both a temporal as well as a *spatial* axis. This spatial coordinate has been grossly neglected in present exegeses in favour of a Hegelian linear view of history. Aspects of Apocalypticism like the 'expectation of the imminent end of the age, a radical contrast between present and future, the hope for another world breaking into and overtaking this world' (Rowland 2010:345) has been causing interpretation from a western viewpoint on time and history. Dispensational schemes calculating the end of time according to a specific view on the contents of Daniel and Revelations, have led to disastrous events among eschatological groups. James Ussher's six-thousand-year scheme (1650), Darby's millennial dispensationalist design in the early 1830s, the Scofield Reference Bible (1909), Jim Jones' Temple community at Jonestown (18 November 1978), David Koresh and his Branch Davidians (19 April 1993), Applewhite's Heaven's Gate people (23–26 March 1997) and Joseph Kibweteere's Restoration of the Ten Commandments group (17 March 2000) are the main examples of misguided readings of apocalyptic literature.

The concept of time in Daniel should be read against the background of its 'social and historical matrix' (Hanson 1985:466). Due to the lack of sufficient evidence for this matrix, however, scholars are inclined to treat time in Daniel according to 'their own conceptualization of time' (Venter 2000:673). The reference to 'time, times and half a time' in Daniel 7:25, 'seventy sevens' in Daniel 9:24–27, and 'the time of the end' in Daniel 11:40–12:13, is either read form a developmental westernised concept of time and history or from a 'more world and present orientated' (Venter 2000:680) view on time and its meaning. Time in Daniel should be read according to Daniel's contemporary view of Sabbaths and jubilees and its understanding of time in the context of shame and contempt (Dn 12:2). It should also be interpreted in conjunction with the spatial axis of its Apocalypticism.

The spatial axis in the Book of Daniel is closely linked to the interpretation of its temporal axis. The dualistic view in the book not only intends another time as well, but

also another place, different from the present earth. Although Chapter 7 of Daniel depicts a heavenly being sitting upon his throne, the vision 'takes place on earth and is implemented here' (Goldingay 1998:331). The restoration to life sketched in Chapter 12 'is a restoration to earthly life of whole people, not of disembodied spirits in heaven' (Goldingay 1998:331). The different kingdoms paraded in the book are all earthly kingdoms. Even the kingdom of God is part of the reality of this world. Simultaneously this world is part of a much greater universe over which God rules.

Which space is intended, present earthly space, or otherworld future space, depends on how the indications of time in Daniel 12 are interpreted. According to Collins (1993:400) the 'end' in Daniel 12:13 'is never the utter cessation of history.' The question, however, is whether there is a longer history, where (place) will it happen? The numbers in Daniel 8:14 (2300 evenings and mornings), Daniel 12:11 (1290 days, 1335 days) differ. The first 'is specified as the time until the sanctuary is right' (Collins 1993:400). Collins' (1993:401) explanation for the second longer time in Daniel 12:11 is that the earlier expected end after 1290 days 'is drawn out, and the faithful must "wait" for the later date.' This 'end', however, is not the anticipated cleansing of the temple (Goldingay 1998:310). The time between the desecration of the temple and its re-consecration was three years (1 Macc. 1:54; 4:52–54). Something 'more than the restoration of sacrifice' (Goldingay 1998:310) is designated here. It was rather 'some more definitive event, most probably the resurrection that was described at the beginning of the chapter' (Collins 1993:401). No information is given on what will happen at the end of that time (cf. Goldingay 1998:310), nor where it is going to take place. This is 'obscure to us' (Goldingay 1998:310). The numbers could have been symbolic or based on different calendars (cf. Nelson 2013:315-317). This 'end' is to be read in conjunction with Daniel's 12:1–3 expectation of God's kingdom and the resurrection (cf. Goldingay 1998:310). This issue is taken up again below.

It can be supposed that the 'end' in Daniel 12:13 is the same as 'the time of the end' in Daniel 12:4 (cf. Goldingay 1998:310). Read along with the 'awake' in Daniel 12:2 and interpreted within its context, there are different literal possibilities. It could indicate the time that came to an end 'with Judas's victories, the temple rededication, Antiochus's death, the arrival of news of his death, or the further events envisaged by 11:45–12:3' (Goldingay 1998:310). It is part of an apocalyptic vision, a 'flight of the imagination' (Goldingay 1998:306). It is not the articulated belief of resurrection in some future time as formulated by Jews and Christians later on. It refers to the hard reality of persecution and death and the possibility that those who are faithful may die. The visions in Daniel inform God's people 'on the significance of history, past, present, and future' (Goldingay 1998:332). The wise (Dn 12:3) teach the faithful 'the apocalyptic interpretation of events' (Collins 1993:403). What happens in history is to be understood in terms of God's control over the world and its history. God is in full control of everyone and everything.

The four eras show that history has an 'imposed destiny' (Goldingay 1998:315). The visions indicate 'how God's rule becomes reality' (Goldingay 1998:331). His kingdom breaks into *this world* and makes it possible for those who stand under oppressive political power to still have a full life.

This implies a life that even 'transcends death' (Collins 1993:402). Life entails something beyond the normal boundaries. The visions do not offer any prospect of a supernatural deliverance here on earth. Life still goes on without any real change. Daniel is encouraged to still go his way till the end (Dn 12:13). The hope for salvation is, however, transferred to a point beyond death (cf. Collins 1993:403). Death will not jeopardise the final outcome of God's rule. God in his power will bring about resurrection. But God's history does not stop there. The visions envision 'a world that is clearly one with our world, even though it points to signals of transcendence that suggest something beyond our world' (Goldingay 1998:333). Earthly kingdoms may come to an end, like the oppressive reign Daniel experienced in his time, but that will not be the end of God's reign on earth. The visions present in their own peculiar way:

> [A] radically different world that makes continuing life in this world possible on the basis of its not being the only world, or in the End the most important one. (p. 334)

These imageries 'opened up an alternative world that people were prepared to believe would endure as the old order would not' (Goldingay 1998:334). They give the weak and powerless the possibility to live a full life in the here and now.

This belief in God's transcendent power endows the wise referred to in Daniel 11:33–35 and Daniel 12:3 to 'shine like the brightness of heaven' (Dn 12:3) and the stars. They teach and show others how to live a meaningful life even under the most afflicted circumstances. To be faithful to God demands continuing your life within his overarching rule of the world. Goldingay (1998:332) remarks that the 'visions are not specific about lines of action they expect of the faithful (military action? passive resistance? continuing obedience to the Torah? withdrawal from temple worship?).' We indicated above in our discussion of the Book of Daniel that the people responsible for the book chose a type of asceticism (cf. Venter 1997:68).

▮ Conclusion

The wisdom approach in Proverbs 1–9 sees the world as an ordered entity that can be enjoyed with full intensity when it is seen as the world God created, and when it is lived with wisdom. The apocalyptic literature in Daniel sees the world as a world in shambles that can still be enjoyed if it is experienced in terms of God's overarching reign that overreaches even present oppression. How can both of these be implemented in a meaningful life? My view is that they are to be used in conjunction with each other.

This can be illustrated in Daniel 9 where the *Gattung* [genre] of a Penitential Prayer (Dn 9:4–19) is used with its Deuteronomistic theology of history interlinked with an apocalyptic narrative (Dn 9:1–3, 9:20–27), with its deterministic theology of history (cf. Venter 2007:40–41). The prayer and narrative are put in 'juxtaposition to express a central truth' (Venter 2007:43). In the typical Semitic way of thinking, two different theologies are put here in a mirror-like relationship to form a newer position. The Deuteronomistic contents of the prayer are enriched by the apocalyptic view of the narrative and vice versa.

Another example are the two dates in Daniel 12:11. They can probably reflect different stages in the growth of the book. When the end did not come after 1290 days, more days were added: 1335 days. Goldingay (1998:310) read it as referring to 'God's kingdom and the resurrection.' Nelson (2013:315–317) sees these numbers as 'symbolic or based on different calendars.' What is important, however, is that both dates are kept in the final book, even when the last number of days did not bring the end. Why keep two dates as no one of them seems to be a literal and correct forecast of the time between the desecration of the temple and the end? Josephus disconnected these predictions 'from their historical moorings' (Collins 1993:401) and connected them to the destruction of Rome in 70 CE. In my mind we are dealing with typical Semitic antithetical poetry here. I think that exegesis of this information is to be freed from *all* exact historical calculation. These two numbers are to be read in conjunction with each other. They intend something more than just calendrical dates. The theoretical physicist, Stephen Hawking, uses his theory of 'Model-dependent realism' (Ferguson 2011:424) to explain dualities in the cosmos. Dualities are those 'situations in which two different, perhaps mutually exclusive, descriptions are necessary to gain a better understanding than either description alone can provide' (Ferguson 2011:424). Together these dates probably refer to the time until the end that cannot be calculated exactly according to human calendars. All time is in God's hand. Salvation does not come from any specific date or master plan, but from God himself and his decision.

The dialogical process, indicated in the history of the Book of Daniel above, was also present in the forming of the eventual Hebrew Bible itself. Parallel streams of tradition, or what Boccaccini (2002) would call 'Judaisms', moved alongside each other, often influencing each other. A 'rapprochement and even fusion between priestly, apocalyptic and sapiential traditions' (Venter 2002:485) took place. Daniel is depicted as a sage practicing mantic wisdom. The older wisdom literature found in Proverbs stood in dialogue with the critical wisdom in Job and Qohelet, which in turn were juxtaposed to the crucial stance of the world found in the apocalyptic book of Daniel. What is of importance, however, is that the older phases of the canonical process are *not* replaced by younger developments in the forming of the eventual canon. Not only literature representing a specific stage in canon growth are found in the canon, but also much older literature standing in juxtaposition with much younger literature.

Reflecting on the use of the Old Testament for our study of Ecodomy, the wisdom literature of Proverbs 1–9 should be read in juxtaposition with the apocalyptic literature in Daniel. They are two sides of the same coin. The Book of Proverbs invites the reader to enjoy a full life by believing in God the creator of the earth and use wisdom as a guide to interact with an orderly creation not only benefitting from all that the earth can present, but also to contribute to the prosperity of its reality. Daniel lives in a chaotic world, but is able to survive by knowing God is in command. God reigns not only over the present world, but even over a cosmos which also includes other spaces and other times. Hamlet, after all, told Horatio: 'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy' (Shakespeare Quick Quotes, Hamlet 1.5.167–168). Although someone keeps a passive stance he can actively resist what is going wrong on earth, slowing it down. Both Proverbs and Daniel are dealing with a way of life, not so dissimilar as one would think. Both propagate belief in God, taking part in the world either by wisdom or by apocalyptic belief that God will always be in control. This dialogical view should be developed further by putting the 'apocalyptical, prophetical and priestly viewpoints' (Venter 2002:486) and sapiential views in the Old Testament in dialogue with each other and eventually in dialogue with the different viewpoints found in the New Testament. Ecodomy can learn from the Bible to use a lateral dialogical model of thinking that accommodates more than one view on earth and its inhabitants.

■ Summary: Chapter 7

Ecodomy studies need heuristic models to inform Christians how to cope with their world. The Bible presents different appropriate models. These models are to be read in conjunction with each other. The models presented by the sapiential literature in Proverbs and the apocalyptic literature in Daniel are studied in this chapter. The Books of Proverbs and Daniel seem to present opposite viewpoints on what life should be. Proverbs propagates a life of faith, wisdom and participation in the orderly world God created. Daniel's advice is to wait upon God in this chaotic world. It is proposed that these seemingly opposing viewpoints are to be read in dialogue with each other. Their juxtaposition presents a lifestyle that is optimistic as well as realistic, trusting God's superior reign.[21]

Versoening en die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk: Die *Algemene Sinode van 1994* as baken vir 'n lewe van volheid[22]

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22. Die doel van hierdie hoofstuk is nie om die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK) se rol ten opsigte van versoening in die breë, of binne die NGK-familie te bespreek nie. Die fokus val op die rol wat die leiers van die kerk gespeel het in die versoeningsproses in Suid-Afrika op weg na die Algemene Verkiesing van 1994. Aandag word spesifiek gegee aan gesprekke tussen die kerkleiers en mnr Nelson Mandela, sekerlik een van die belangrikste stemme van sy tyd. kontroversie rondom die Algemene Sinode van 1994 waar mnr. Nelson Mandela as spreker opgetree het, word ook bespreek as voorbeeld van die NGK se interne worsteling met versoening. Die bronne wat vir die artikel gebruik is bestaan hoofsaaklik uit onontginde primêre bronne, naamlik persoonlike korrespondensie, briewe en notules van vergaderings. Beperkte sekondêre bronne is daarom gebruik.

Inleiding

Die Fakulteit Teologie aan die Universiteit van Pretoria het *oikodome* in 2014 as navorsingstema vir die fakulteit aanvaar (Pillay 2015:1 van 8). Hierdie term verwys na 'n lewe van volheid vir alle mense.[23] Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK), een van die belangrike vennote van die Fakulteit Teologie aan die Universiteit van Pretoria,[24] het egter vir 'n groot deel van die kerk se geskiedenis juis nie bygedra tot 'n proses wat 'n lewe van volheid vir al die mense van Suid-Afrika moontlik gemaak het nie.

Die kerk se ondersteuning van die Nasionale Party se beleid van apartheid het juis die teendeel bewerk. In 1986 het daar egter 'n draaipunt in die NGK se beleid gekom toe die dokument 'Kerk en Samelewing' aanvaar is (Van der Merwe 1990:610). Dit het die NGK op 'n nuwe koers geplaas wat dit vir die kerk moontlik gemaak het om 'n belangrike versoeningsrol in Suid Afrika te speel. Indien versoening verstaan word as 'n situasie waar individue of groepe vriende word van mekaar nadat hulle van mekaar verskil het of selfs vyande was (Odendaal 1985:1266), is 'n lewe van volheid sonder versoening haas ondenkbaar. Wanneer nagedink word oor versoening en die NGK, staan die Algemene Sinode van 1994 (NGK 1994) as 'n baken op die versoeningspad uit, tot so 'n mate dat dit algemeen bekend geword het as die *Sinode van versoening* (NGK 1994). Dit dien daarom ook as 'n baken op die pad van die kerk in sy soeke na 'n lewe van volheid vir alle mense in Suid-Afrika.

Die belangrikheid van hierdie kerkvergadering word deur Gaum (NGK 1997a:61) bevestig wanneer hy skryf: 'Dié sinode, waarvan ds. F. Swanepoel tot moderator verkies is, het nie verniet in die pers die benaming "Sinode van versoening" gekry nie.' Twee belangrike gebeurtenisse tydens die vergadering het daartoe aanleiding gegee. Eerstens het mnr Nelson Mandela die vergadering op 13 Oktober 1994 besoek en toegespreek (NGK 1994:536). Tweedens het die vergadering 'n besluit geneem waarin verskoning gevra is vir die onreg wat aan profete uit eie geledere gedoen is. Die besluit het soos volg gelui:

> In die lig van die klag van politieke dienstigheid deur die Ned. Geref. Kerk, wys die Algemene Sinode lidmate daarop dat daar deur die jare heen steeds lidmate, ampsdraers (en selfs kerklike vergaderings) was wat krities was oor apartheid en kerklike besluite in hierdie verband. Die Algemene Sinode erken met spyt dat daar in die verlede dikwels van kerklike kant op 'n onbarmhartige en onsaaklike wyse teenoor sulke persone gehandel is. (NGK 1994:374)

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23. Vir 'n volledige verklaring van die term sien Kok (2015).

24. Die NGK het in 1938 met Teologiese opleiding aan UP begin (Van der Watt 1987:178).

Nadat hierdie besluit geneem is, het prof. B.J. Marais en dr C.F. Beyers Naudé die vergadering op verskillende dae besoek. Albei is hartlik ontvang en die besluit is aan hulle voorgelees. Na afloop van die sitting is daar oor die vergadering soos volg berig:

> Die negende Algemene Sinode van die Ned. Geref. Kerk wat verlede week in Pretoria ten einde geloop het, is gekenmerk deur 'n gees van versoening en was ongetwyfeld een van die merkwaardigste sinodesittings wat sedert die eerste vergadering van die Algemene Sinode in 1962 gehou is. Nie net is 'n hand van versoening uitgereik na mense soos prof. Ben Marais en dr. Beyers Naudé nie, maar 'n versoenende houding is ook geopenbaar deur prof. Evert Kleynhans, 'n vorige moderator, wat hom die afgelope jare meermale skerp uitgespreek het oor sommige aspekte van die Ned. Geref. Kerk se beleidstuk, *Kerk en Samelewing 1990.* Ook dr. Sarel Eloff, bekend vir sy behoudende oortuigings, het 'n bemiddelende rol gespeel en 'n belangrike bydrae gelewer sodat die Algemene Sinode deurslaggewende besluite oor eenheid in die NG Kerkfamilie kon neem. Die besoek van Pres. Nelson Mandela aan die Algemene Sinode het eweneens in die teken van versoening gestaan. (Gaum 1994:1)

Die Sinode van versoening in die spervuur

Hierdie verstaan van die Algemene Sinode van 1994 het egter in 2013 in die spervuur beland met die publikasie van die bundel van prof. Piet Strauss *Kerkwees in die Branding: Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk in Algemene Sinodale verband 1994–2011.* Strauss (2013:14) skryf soos volg: 'Die Algemene Sinode van 1994 word deur sommige bestempel as die sinode van versoening.' Strauss gaan dan voort en bevraagteken hierdie verstaan van die sinode deur onder meer te verwys na die besoek van mnr. Nelson Mandela aan die sinode en die besoeke van prof. B.J. Marais en dr Beyers Naudé aan die sinode (Strauss 2013:14–19). Alhoewel hy tereg meen:

> Om te bepaal wat die goedgekeurde houding van die Algemene Sinode van 1994 oor 'n saak was, moet die notule of acta geraadpleeg word. Die woorde van die voorsitter in die verwelkoming van iemand sowel as die reaksie van die vergadering, kan nie hiersonder gelees word nie. (bl. 16)

Strauss (2013) gaan dan voort om sy eie belewenis van die gebeure weer te gee:

> Dit blyk dat die strekking van die acta van Gaum verskil en dat hy vanuit sy eie verstaan van gebeure werk. As sinodeganger het ek die gebeure ook anders beleef as dit wat Gaum in 'n paar eenvoudige sinne aanbied. (bl. 16)

Strauss beskryf voorts hoe die voorsitter van die vergadering volgens hom sake gemanipuleer en gemodereer het omdat hy onder meer vir dr C.F.Beyers Naudé om verskoning wou vra. In sy konklusie skryf hy:

> Hy wou Naudé om verskoning vra. Daarom het hy besluit om die besluit te modereer en as 'n lanseerplatvorm vir sy verskoning te gebruik. Hy is egter been voor paaltjie betrap! Op die kyk weer van die notule was hy uit. (Strauss 2013:18)

Die vraag moet onwillekeurig gevra word of Strauss hom nie self skuldig maak aan sy eie verstaan van gebeure – juis dit waarvan hy vir Gaum beskuldig nie. Die antwoord kom van Strauss (2013) self wanneer hy skryf dat die geskiedenis wat hy beskryf 'n kykie is wat onder sy eie oë plaasvind – dus 'n eie perspektief op gebeure wat plaasgevind het – soos wat met alle vorme van geskiedskrywing gebeur.

In reaksie op die publikasie het ds. F. Swanepoel, moderator van die Algemene Sinode van 1994 in 'n brief aan die uitgewer op 3 Junie 2014, gereageer. Daarin het hy beswaar gemaak teen die eensydige interpretasie van die gebeure en versoek dat die verspreiding van die publikasie gestaak word omdat dit nie tot voordeel van die N.G. Kerk en sy geskiedenis sou wees nie (Swanepoel 2014a:1). Swanepoel het sy versoek soos volg gemotiveer:[25]

Oor die besoeke van Prof. B.J. Marais en dr C.F. Beyers Naudé skryf Swanepoel (2014a):

> Die outeur wil laat blyk dat Prof. Marais se besoek spontaan was en die van Dr Naudé beplan. Die losstaande mosie oor Prof Marais is wel op 14 Oktober geneem (Acta 1994, p 456), maar hy besoek die sinode eers op 18 Oktober (Acta 1994, p. 490). Albei persone besoek dus die sinode nadat 'n besluit wat hulle direk raak deur die sinode geneem is. Hiermee verval die driftige betoog van u outeur omdat sy aannames oor die besoeke foutief is. Oor sy besoek het Dr Naudé reeds voor die sinode sy voorneme daartoe aan die Ekumeniese Kantoor bekend gemaak. Die tyd van sy besoek was dus vir die Moderatuur ook 'n verrassing. Die staande applous waarmee die persone begroet is, was 'n spontane gebaar van die sinode, maar getuig sekerlik dat die oorgrote meerderheid van die vergadering die optrede positief beleef het. (bl. 1)

Oor die verskoning aan dr C.F. Beyers Naudé skryf Swanepoel (2014a) soos volg:

> Oor die optrede van die Voorsitter teenoor Dr Naudé is daar beswaar dat die besluit van die sinode aan hom aangebied is. Nêrens is daar bepaal dat die besluit in 'n glaskas gebêre word slegs om na te kyk nie. Volgens my interpretasie was dit 'n oop besluit wat wel aan persone aangebied kan word. By buitelandse kerke kon ek die inhoud van die besluit en die gesindheid wat dit uitstraal telkens aanbied as bewys van die sinode se erkenning vir persone se 'profetiese stem oor apartheid' (Acta 1994, pt 1.5.8, p 501). Lg. besluit gee erkenning aan Dr Naudé toe hy in die sestigerjare nog leraar/lidmaat van die NG Kerk was en 'n opvolgende besluit (ACTA 1994, pt 1.5.12 p 501) wat aan die NG Kerk familie gerig is. Hy was mos later lidmaat van die VGKSA. Die woord 'verskoning' het ek nooit gebruik nie. So 'lomp' en 'onopgelei' is ek werklik nie. (bl.1)

Oor die *Beswaar* skryf Swanepoel (2014a):

> Die outeur meld dat hy en sy medestanders 'agterna' by die Moderatuur beswaar gemaak het. Wat hy nie meld nie is dat die Moderatuur tydens die sinodevergadering gedreig is met optrede

. . . .

25. Weens die belangrikheid van Swanepoel se reaksie word dit grootliks verbatim weergegee.

indien hulle nie onderneem om die wat beswaard is aan te hoor nie. In lyn met die talle tekens van die versoening tydens die sinode het die Moderatuur direk na afloop van die 10-dae lange sinode geduldig die besware van 'n groep afgevaardigdes aangehoor. Wat ook nie gesê word nie is dat die antwoord van die Moderatuur verstaan en aanvaar is en dat die saak daarby gelaat is. (bl. 1)

Oor die *Waarheids-en-Versoeningskommissie* skryf Swanepoel (2014a):

Die gedeelte bevat ongelukkig ook vele onjuisthede. So het ek nooit gesê of geglo dat die NG Kerk 'n 'vroeëre apartheidsagent' was nie. Die relaas oor my bedanking en 'taktiese bewegings' is absurd. Blykbaar het ek darem vir pres Paul Kruger nagedoen! Ook hier word die voorsitter aangedui as iemand wat geen respek vir 'n kerklike vergadering of sy lede gehad het nie. (bl. 2)

Swanepoel (2014a) het voorts geskryf dat:

[D]it lyk of die versoenende deel van hierdie sinode sistematies uitgewis word en die leiers doelbewus afgekraak word. Swanepoel het voortgegaan: Laat my ook maar aansluit by die beeld van die 'kyk-weer'. Op die terrein van krieket is ek darem kundig. As die 'kyk-weer' verder terug gedraai word sal u sien dat die bouler 'n foutbal afgestuur het. Die kolwer is terug geroep en het rustig sy honderdtal gehaal en saam met sy span die wedstryd gewen. Hy het afgesluit: My grootste bekommernis is steeds dat studente 'n onvolledige beeld van die NG Kerk in die oorgangsjare kry. Deur die Here se genade het die NG Kerk en sy lidmate deur versoening en diens 'n onmisbare bydrae gelewer tot 'n vreedsame oorgang. Hierin het die sinode van 1994 'n onuitwisbare rol gespeel waarvoor ek vandag nog dankbaar is. (bl. 2)

Dit was egter nie net Swanepoel wat gereageer het nie. In sy reaksie het dr F. Gaum (2014a), wat skriba van die sinode was, soos volg gereageer:[26]

En nou: die Sinode van Versoening. Jy bevraagteken dié benaming vir die betrokke sinode met 'n klompie interessante argumente. Jy skryf ter aanvang: Hierdie aandag (op die Algemene Sinode van 11–20 Oktober 1994 in Pretoria) is verskerp toe die leier van die ANC, Nelson Mandela, op eie versoek – so het ons as sinodelede dit verstaan – die vergadering op Donderdag 13 Oktober besoek en toegespreek het (bl. 4). (bl. 1)

Gaum (2014a) gaan dan voort met wat hy 'n paar regstellings en los opmerkings noem:

Mandela was in daardie stadium die president van Suid-Afrika. Waarom noem jy dit nie in bg sin nie, maar beklemtoon eerder net dat hy die leier van die ANC was … asof hy die sinode *as ANC-leier* besoek het? Ek as skriba het Mandela met die medewete van die mense wat die destydse sinode gereël het, genooi om die openingsaand *by te woon.* Hy kon nie, want hy was oorsee. Met sy terugkoms het sy kantoor my tydens die sinodesitting, en in opvolging van die aanvanklike uitnodiging, gebel en gesê hy sal tog die sinode een of ander geskikte tyd wil kom besoek en die sinode dan ook graag sal toespreek. Ek het die versoek met die Moderatuur bespreek en sy kantoor laat weet hy is welkom. Dankie dat jy skryf (bl. 5) dat Mandela sy

26. Weens die belangrikheid van Gaum se reaksie word dit grootliks verbatim aangehaal.

bekende benadering van versoening in die vergadering ingedra het, en dat daar versigtige, beheersde afwagting en hoop ... in die sinode was. Dus: Die Sinode van Versoening. (bl. 1)

Gaum (2014a) het verder soos volg gereageer op die drie voorbeelde wat Strauss gebruik het:

'n Volgende punt wat jy maak, is dat Mandela nie dankie kon gesê het vir die rol van die NG Kerkleiding in die oorgangstyd nie, omdat die oorgangstyd in daardie stadium vyf maande oud (was) en nog nie behoorlik uitgespeel nie (bl. 15). En verder Mandela kon die NG leiding glo net bedank het vir die skep van 'n positiewe klimaat vir die oorgang tydens die eerste demokratiese verkiesing in 1994. Die punt is: ons was destyds in 'n oorgangstyd en die president het die leierskap van die NG Kerk bedank vir die konstruktiewe rol wat hulle rondom die verkiesing gespeel het ... wat immers in die hart van die oorgangstyd was! Ek, en niemand, het die oorgangstyd probeer meet en probeer bepaal hoe lank dit nog moes duur voordat ons anderkant sou uitkom nie. Gaum beklemtoon verder dat prof. Piet Meiring 'n belangrike rol gespeel het in die besoeke van prof. B.J. Marais en dr. C.F. Beyers Naudé aan die sinode. Hulle het die sinode op twee verskillende dae besoek en is hartlik verwelkom. In Gaum se woorde: Daar was met albei se besoek 'n staande ovasie vir hulle ... in die geval van Naudé was dit Johan Heyns wat eerste opgestaan het en die res van die sinode (behalwe 'n paar, onder andere Piet Strauss?) het hom daarin gevolg. Die voorsitter het nie dieselfde woorde gebruik toe hy die twee besoekers verwelkom het nie. In Ben Marais se geval, het die sinode op 14 Okt., opregte waardering teenoor Marais uitgespreek vir wat hy oor baie jare vir die NG Kerk beteken het. Op 19 Okt het die sinode 'n pertinente besluit geneem wat na lidmate verwys het wat 'n duidelike profetiese stem oor apartheid laat hoor het. Die sinode het met spyt erken dat daar van kerklike kant in die verlede op 'n onbarmhartige en onsaaklike wyse teenoor sulke persone opgetree is. Alhoewel spesifieke persone nie by name genoem is nie kan dit nie ontken word dat hierdie besluit vir Marais en Naude ingesluit het nie (Gaum 2014a:3).

Gaum (2014a) berig voorts:

Op 20 Okt het Naudé die sinode besoek en die voorsitter (Freek Swanepoel) het moeite gedoen om die sinodebesluit van die vorige dag presies woordeliks voor te lees, en hy het bygevoeg dat dit hom (Naudé) ook insluit. En die sinode het met Swanepoel saamgestem deur tydens sy besoek aan Naudé 'n staande ovasie te gee. Gaum interpreter die reaksie van die sinode korrek wanneer hy sê: Die gebaar van die sinode se kant was om te toon dat die sinode regtig spyt is omdat die kerk nie beter na Naudé en ander se kritiese stemme geluister het nie, maar dat, ten spyte van foute (aan albei kante), *versoening* in die radikaal veranderde omstandighede in die land en kerk moontlik is. (bl. 4)

[*Dus*] die *gees* van die sinode daardie gedenkwaardige paar dae, was om hande uit te steek, 'n nuwe era hoopvol te verwelkom (Mandela), foute te erken en spyt uit te spreek (Marais en Naudé). 'n Onbevooroordeelde waarnemer sou sê: die sinode het, met ander woorde, verskoning gevra. (bl. 4)

Gaum (2014a) som die gebeure tydens die vergadering soos volg op:

> Ek meen verreweg die meeste onpartydige waarnemers sal ook saam stem dat Swanepoel se hantering van die 1994-sinode oor die algemeen uitstekend was – in krieketterme: 'n onoorwonne honderdtal. Hy het been-voor-paaltjie-appèlle van 'n paar gefrustreerde boulers met gemak oorleef. Dit beteken ook dat ek jou aantyging van 'n lompe, ooglopende manupilering (*sic!*) van sake, waarvan jy Swanepoel – en die ander lede van die Moderatuur saam met hom? – in verband met die Naudé-besoek beskuldig (bl. 18), met nadruk verwerp as ongegrond en moedswillig. (bl. 4)

Dit blyk uit bogenoemde duidelik dat beide Swanepoel en Gaum, Strauss se verstaan en beskrywing van die gebeure tydens die Algemene Sinode van 1994 ernstig bevraagteken. Swanepoel en Gaum handhaaf die standpunt dat die sinode inderdaad 'n *sinode van versoening* was. Die agtergrond waarteen die vergadering plaasgevind het bevestig Swanepoel en Gaum se standpunt. Dat dit bepalend vir die verstaan van die belang van die sinode is, word deur Labuschagne (2013) bevestig wanneer hy skryf:

> With words we express meaning and understanding. Words are, however, always related to a background or context. Then there is also the ripple effect created by multiple interdependent contexts to contend with. (bl. 2 van 10)

Belangrike versoeningsgebeure en gesprekke voor en na die sinode vorm die raamwerk waarbinne hierdie vergadering plaasgevind het. 'n Oordeel oor die betekenis van die vergadering kan nie daarsonder gemaak word nie.

▮ Die Algemene Sinode van 1994 binne die raamwerk van versoening

Die *Algemene Sinode van 1994* het teen die agtergrond van belangrike versoeningsgebeure plaasgevind waarby die NGK betrokke was. Drie sake moet aan die orde kom: Die Rustenburgberaad van 1990, die versoenende rol wat die Nederduits Gereformeerde kerkleiers gespeel het in die jare 1990–1994 en die voorlegging van die Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk by die Waarheids-en-Versoeningskommissie (WVK) in 1997.

▮ Die Rustenburgberaad van 1990

Die aanloop tot die beraad het reeds in 1989 begin. Die destydse staatspresident, mnr F.W. de Klerk, het na 'n wenk van prof. J.A. Heyns, tydens sy kersboodskap 'n beroep op die kerke in die land gedoen om 'n klimaat te help skep wat bevorderlik vir onderhandeling, versoening en verandering in die land sou wees (Du Toit et al. 2002:105). Die beraad wat vanaf 5–9 November 1990 by die Hunters Rest Hotel buite Rustenburg plaasgevind het,

is namens die NGK deur P.C. Potgieter, P. Rossouw, D.J. Hattingh en F.M. Gaum bygewoon. Proff. J.A. Heyns en W.D. Jonker is as sprekers na die beraad genooi. Tydens die beraad het prof. W.D. Jonker die besluit van 'Kerk en Samelewing' van 1986, wat in 1990 tydens die Algemene Sinode (NGK 1990b) herbevestig is, tot sy volle konsekwensie deurgetrek toe hy die volgende belydenis gedoen het:

> I confess before you and before the Lord, not only my own sin and guilt, and my personal responsibility for the political, social, economic, and structural wrongs that have been done to many of you, and the results of which you and our whole country are still suffering from, but vicariously I dare also do that in the name of the DRC of which I am a member, and for the Afrikaner people as a whole. I have the liberty to do just that, because the DRC at its latest synod has declared apartheid a sin and confessed its own guilt of negligence in not warning against it and distancing it itself from it long ago. (Jonker 1998:204)

In reaksie op Jonker se belydenis het Aartsbiskop Desmond Tutu opgestaan en gesê dat as die NGK vandag sê dat hy berou het, almal moet sê: 'Ons vergewe julle'. Jonker beskryf die toneel as volg:

> Op daardie oomblik het almal opgestaan. Daar was trane; daar was 'n gees van bewoënheid. So iets het ek nog nooit belewe nie. Ek het dit ervaar as 'n omarming, as 'n diepe gebaar van aanvaarding deur medegelowiges wat in diepe bewoënheid ons skuld van ons afneem. (Jonker 1998:205)

Reaksie op die belydenis was hewig. Een van die eerste persone wat beswaar gemaak het, was 'n vorige staatspresident, mnr P.W. Botha. In 'n telefoongesprek met prof. Potgieter het hy heftig te velde getrek teen Jonker se belydenis. Potgieter het Botha versoek om te wag tot die NGK se amptelike reaksie op die belydenis (Potgieter 2013).

Die belydenis van Jonker is die volgende dag deur prof. Pieter Potgieter onderskryf toe hy gesê het:

> The delegates of the DRC want to state unambiguously that we fully identify ourselves with the statements made by prof. Jonker on the position of the church. He has in fact precisely reiterated the decision made by our General Synod in Bloemfontein recently. We want to see this decision of the synod as the bases of reconciliation with all people of all churches. (Jonker 1998:207)

Nadat die verklaring tydens die agt uur nuusbulletin op TV uitgesaai is, het Botha Potgieter weer gebel. Hy het vir etlike minute uitgevaar teen die belydenis en die verklaring en duidelik laat blyk dat prof. Jonker nie die reg gehad het om so 'n belydenis te maak nie. Op 'n stadium het Potgieter aan Botha gesê: '[M]nr Botha, hierdie gesprek gaan nêrens heen nie en die telefoon in Botha se oor neergesit' (Potgieter 2013). Die verklaring van Potgieter was 'n bevestiging van die feit dat 'Kerk en Samelewing' die NGK onherroeplik op 'n nuwe koers geplaas het. Dit het die deure na Rustenburg oopgemaak waar die belydenis van Jonker verdere deure vir die NGK laat oopgaan het, wat die kerk in staat gestel het om 'n belangrike versoeningsrol in Suid Afrika te speel.

Versoeningsgesprekke met politieke leiers

Alhoewel verskeie politieke leiers wat 'n belangrike rol in die oorgangsproses gespeel het, lidmate van die NGK was, het die leierskorps van die NGK ook 'n deurslaggewende rol gespeel om versoening in die land te bevorder. Die deure wat met die aanvaarding van 'Kerk en Samelewing' en die Rustenburgberaad oopgegaan het, het aan die kerk 'n besondere leierskapsrol in die aanloop tot die verkiesing gegee. Nie alleen is eie lidmate tot vrede gemaan nie, maar die leierskorps van die kerk het ook aktief bygedra tot versoening. Dit is deur mnr Nelson Mandela self bevestig toe hy tydens die 'Sinode van versoening' (NGK 1994) gesê het:

> Ek verwys u graag na die konstruktiewe rol wat die leierskap van die Ned. Geref. Kerk gespeel het tydens die onstuimige tye met die aanloop tot die verkiesing van 27 April 1994. U bereidwilligheid om ook sommige van u eie kerklidmate te maan teen rasisme en onverskillige geweldspraatjies, het 'n belangrike bydrae gelewer om die wonderwerk van Suid-Afrika se vreedsame oorgang tot demokrasie moontlik te maak. U is 'n integrale deel van die besondere getuienis wat Suid Afrika vandag lewer in 'n wêreld waarin daar nog soveel geweld en onverdraagsaamheid heers. (NGK 1994:536)

Dat Mandela bedoel het wat hy aan die sinode gesê het word bevestig deur verskeie ontmoetings tussen hom en die leiers van die NGK tussen 1990 en 1994. Hulle het mekaar vier keer ontmoet: drie keer in die Sinodale Sentrum in Pretoria en een keer in Luthuli-huis (Gaum 2014 b:1). Volgens dr Frits Gaum, wat op daardie stadium skriba van die moderamen was, het al die ontmoetings in 'n goeie gees plaasgevind en het dit 'n besliste bydrae gelewer tot die bevordering van vrede in die land (Gaum 2014b:2). Gaum (2014b) reflekteer soos volg:

> Die gesprekke tussen mnr Mandela en die Dagbestuur van die Moderatuur het veral op twee aspekte van die geweld in die land gefokus: Geweldadige verset van die ver-regse Afrikaner Weerstands Beweging (AWB) en geweldadige protes van die ANC om die Nasionale Party-regering van mnr. FW de Klerk om ver te gooi.Ten spyte van die onderhandelinge wat tydens CODESA 1 en CODESA 2 plaasgevind het, was daar hardnekkige gerugte dat 'n militante faksie in die ANC beplan het om die regering met geweld oor te neem. Gerugte oor 'n sogenaamde 'Derde mag' wat deur die regering gebruik is om onrus tussen die ANC en Inkatha in Kwazulu Natal aan te hits, was ook deel van die besprekings. (bl. 2)

Die eerste ontmoeting het op 30 Mei 1991 plaasgevind. Tydens die gesprek het mnr Mandela veral klem gelê op die voortgaande geweld tussen die ANC en die Inkatha-Vryheidsfront. Hy het die kerkleiers onder meer versoek om as tussengangers op te tree deur mnr Buthelezi te vra om druk op sy ondersteuners uit te oefen om op te hou om tradisionele wapens tydens optogte te dra. Hierdie versoek is tydens 'n besoek aan Buthelezi aan hom oorgedra (NGK 1991).

'n Tweede ontmoeting het op 26 April 1993 plaasgevind. Uit die ontmoeting was dit duidelik dat mnr Mandela baie bekommerd was oor regse faksies onder Afrikaners. Hy het die leierskorps van die NGK spesifiek gevra om die leiers van die regse groeperinge te versoek om wel aan die onderhandelingsproses deel te neem. Na die gesprek is prof. J.A. Heyns getaak om met genl. Constand Viljoen kontak te maak in 'n poging om hom te oorreed om tog deel te vorm van die onderhandelingsproses. Viljoen maak dit egter duidelik dat hierdie ontmoeting nie goed afgeloop het nie en dat hy verdere gesprekke van die hand gewys het omdat hy Heyns nie vertrou het nie (Viljoen 2014).

Die derde ontmoeting met mnr Mandela het op 12 November 1993 plaasgevind teen die agtergrond van 'n groter wordende bedreiging van die Regse Afrikaner groepering onder leiding van genl. Constand Viljoen. Die fokus van die gesprek was die eskalerende geweld in die land. Die moderatuur het spesifiek melding gemaak van die negatiewe invloed wat sommige ANC leiers soos mnr Peter Mokaba gehad het met sy lied *Kill the boer, kill the farmer*. Mandela het gereageer deur te sê dat dit nie amptelike ANC beleid was nie en dat die ANC besig was om die saak intern te hanteer (NGK 1991).

Die vierde ontmoeting het op 25 Januasie 1994 plaasgevind. Weereens het Mandela die kerkleiers spesifiek versoek om genl. Viljoen te oorreed om deel te word van die onderhandelingsproses en om deel te neem aan die opkomende verkiesing (Gaum 2014b:3). Dit is duidelik dat Mandela en die ANC bekommerd was oor waartoe Viljoen en sy ondersteuners instaat was. Teen die agtergrond van Viljoen se geheime onderhandeling met die ANC was hy op hoogte van wat Viljoen beplan het en het hy daarom die leiers van die NGK versoek om druk op Viljoen uit te oefen. Die situasie word deur Viljoen bevestig wanneer hy sê: 'Ek het die pistool in my hand gehad' (Viljoen 2014). Mandela het ook versoek dat die kerk sy lidmate moes aanmoedig om nie die staatsdepartemente waar hulle werksaam was, te verlaat nie maar om eerder 'n konstruktiewe bydrae te maak tot die opbou van die land.

Die vier ontmoetings tussen die NGK-leierskap en Mandela toon aan watter belangrike rol hulle gespeel het. Die wedersydse respek en vertroue tussen die leiers van die kerk wat apartheid ondersteun, en die eerstydse politieke gevangene van Robbeneiland het hulle belangrike akteurs gemaak in die drama wat homself in Suid-Afrika afgespeel het. Dit is deur ds. Freek Swanepoel, moderator van die 1994 Algemene Sinode, bevestig toe hy gesê het:

> Mnr. Mandela was 'n fyn strateeg wat geweet het dat die Ned. Geref. Kerk – wat die grootste Afrikaanse kerk was – 'n groot invloed op Afrikaners in die land uitgeoefen het. Deur die kerk te gebruik om versoening na te jaag, het hy in 'n groot mate daarin geslaag om gemoedere te kalmeer onder 'n deel van die bevolking van Suid-Afrika. (Swanepoel 2014b)

Dit word verder bevestig deur 'n brief wat mnr Mandela aan prof. Pieter Potgieter geskryf het na sy uittrede as moderator in 1994. Daarin het hy Potgieter bedank vir sy bydrae in die jare van onrus op pad na die verkiesing van 1994 (Potgieter 2013).

Dit is teen hierdie agtergrond wat die besoek van mnr Mandela en sy toespraak tydens die Algemene Sinode van 1994 verstaan moet word. Sodanig dien dit dan as verdere bewys dat hy die rol wat die NGK gespeel het, hoog geag het en dat die kerk inderdaad 'n belangrike rol gespeel het om 'n lewe van volheid vir almal in Suid-Afrika te verseker.

Gesprekke met mnr Mandela het ook na die vergadering van 1994 gevolg. Op 2 November 1995 het die Dagbestuur van die Algemene Sinodale Kommissie hom (Mandela) in sy woning in Pretoria besoek. Die hoofsaak op die agenda was die hofsaak teen genl. Magnus Malan en 10 afgetrede offisiere van die veiligheidsmagte. Die kerkleiers het dit onder die president se aandag gebring dat die hantering van die saak uiters nadelig vir die versoeningsproses in die land was (Swanepoel 2014b:1). 'n Opvolggesprek is beplan vir 1996 waarin die kerkleiding verdere belangrike sake onder die president se aandag gebring het.

Die leierskap van die NGK het nie net met mnr Mandela gesprek gevoer nie. Verskeie gesprekke is ook met ander politieke leiers gevoer om 'n bydrae tot die vredesproses te lewer.

Op 26 November 1990 het die Dagbestuur van die NGK (1990a) vir die eerste keer na afloop van die Rustenburgberaad met mnr F.W. de Klerk beraadslaag. Hulle het die geleentheid gebruik om persoonlike terugvoer oor die gebeure te Rustenburg te gee. Die belydenis van prof. Willie Jonker en die negatiewe reaksie uit sommige Afrikanerkringe is ook bespreek. De Klerk is verder ingelig oor die protesvergadering wat vir 1 Desember 1990 beplan is. Die besoek aan mnr De Klerk is opgevolg met gesprekke in November 1991, Maart 1992, Augustus 1993 en November 1993. Die agenda tydens hierdie gesprekke is deur die geweld in die land en vordering in die onderhandelingsproses oorheers. Die posisie en rol van die Afrikaner het ook aan die orde gekom. De Klerk is verder ingelig oor die ontmoetings met regse groepe en die gesprekke met mnr Mandela. Bogenoemde gesprekke bevestig die feit dat die leierskorps van die NGK hulleself in 'n mediasierol bevind het. Hierdie rol is verder genoodsaak deur grootskaalse verdeeldheid onder Afrikanergeledere na die referendum van 1992. Die verdeeldheid het nie net vir die politieke landskap in Suid-Afrika gevolge ingehou nie, maar was ook 'n ernstige bedreiging vir die kerk wat reeds in 1987 as gevolg van politiek geskeur het.[27]

Die ontmoetings met mnr De Klerk is opgevolg deur 'n ontmoeting met die leierskorps van die Nasionale Party op 10 Augustus 1993 in Kaapstad. Tydens hierdie gesprek is spesifiek gevra hoe menseregte in die nuwe bedeling beskerm sou word. Dit is 'n vraag wat deur baie lidmate op grondvlak gevra is, en is in hierdie ontmoeting deur die kerkleiers aan die politieke leiers oorgedra. Op hierdie wyse het die kerkleiding ook as mondstuk vir gewone lidmate op grondvlak opgetree (NGK 1993b).

27. Die Afrikaanse Protestantse Kerk is in 1987 deur regse Afrikaners gestig nadat 'Kerk en Samelewing' deur die Algemene Sinode van 1986 aanvaar is.

Ernstige gesprekke is ook met die regse groepe in Afrikanergeledere gevoer. 'n Brief van prof. Pieter Potgieter aan die Dagbestuur van die Algemene Sinodale Kommissie, na 'n gesprek met genl. Constand Viljoen, dien hier as voorbeeld. In die brief het Potgieter 'n dringende telefoonvergadering aangevra om 'n ernstige krisis te probeer afweer wat ernstige gevolge sou inhou (NGK 1993a). In die vertroulike brief het Potgieter aan lede van die Dagbestuur geskryf:

> Uit ontmoetings wat ek met Genl. Viljoen en andere gehad het, is dit duidelik dat die eis om selfbeskiking vir die Afrikaner **BAIE** sterk is. Hy en sy kollegas voel dat hulle standpunt in die onderhandelingsproses geïgnoreer word en dat die Ned. Geref. Kerk 'n belangrike rol kan speel om te verseker dat reg en geregtigheid geskied (NGK 1993a).

Die voorstel wat tydens hierdie telefoonvergadering aanvaar is dui op die erns waarmee Potgieter en Viljoen bejeën het en hoe ernstig die situasie was. Die voorstel is ingelei met 'n oproep tot almal wat by die onderhandelingsproses betrokke was om erns te maak met die behoefte van verskillende groepe in Suid-Afrika wat selfbeskikking op 'n streeksbasis begeer het. Daar is verder 'n oproep op alle partye gemaak om nie van die onderhandelingsproses te onttrek nie en om nie geweld aan te wakker nie (NGK 1993a). Dit blyk duidelik uit hierdie gebeure dat Viljoen vir Potgieter baie duidelik gesê het dat hy die pistool in sy hand het en dat hy van plan was om die verkiesing te ontwrig as daar nie aan sy eise voldoen is nie. Alhoewel Viljoen dit duidelik gestel het dat hy nie vir oorlog was nie (Sparks 1995:156), het dit duidelik 'n opsie begin word soos wat die einde van 1993 nader gekom het. Die uitstel van die ondertekening van die ooreenkoms wat Viljoen in die geheim met die ANC onderhandel het, het ook nie bygedra om gemoedere te kalmeer nie. Alhoewel Viljoen ontken dat die rol van die kerkleiers deurslaggewend was in sy besluit om nie oorlog te maak nie, sê Gaum (2014b):

> Mnr. Mandela het die kerkleiers versoek om Viljoen te oorreed om deel te neem aan die verkiesing. Alhoewel die generaal in verskeie ontmoetings geweier het om toe te gee aan druk, het hy tog van plan verander. Dit sou arrogant wees om te verklaar dat dit die Ned. Geref. Kerk was wat Viljoen oorreed het, maar dat hulle 'n belangrike rol in die proses gespeel het kan nie ontken word nie. (n.p)

Deelname aan die Waarheids-en-Versoeningskommissie: 1997

'n Derde belangrike gebeurtenis wat die NGK se rol in die versoeningsproses beklemtoon, was die kerk se betrokkenheid by die Waarheids-en-Versoeningskommissie. Mnr Nelson Mandela het in sy toespraak voor die Algemene Sinode verwys na 'n forum van heling wat bekend sou word as die Waarheids-en-Versoeningskommissie (WVK) (NGK1994:537). Die vraag wat gou aan die orde was, was: Moes die NGK voor die

WVK getuig of nie? (Du Toit et al. 2002:119). Die aanvanklike besluit van die Algemene Sinodale Kommissie van die NGK was om nie 'n voorlegging voor die WVK te doen nie.[28] Ds. Freek Swanepoel, voorsitter van die Algemene Sinodale Kommissie van die NGK het na afloop van die vergadering tydens 'n perskonferensie gesê dat die besluit egter ter enige tyd verander kon word. Alhoewel die vergadering amptelik besluit het om nie 'n voorlegging te doen nie, was Swanepoel self van mening dat die NGK dit aan sy lidmate verskuldig was om sy verhaal oor die landsgebeure op skrif te stel (SAPA 1996). Hy het vier maande later gesê: om nou te swyg sou dwaas wees (Swanepoel 1997:13). Op 22 Mei 1997 het die Algemene Sinodale Kommissie sy standpunt om nie 'n voorlegging aan die WVK te doen nie, herbevestig. Dit het gevolg op 'n brief waarin die NGK saam met ander kerke gevra is om dit wel te doen (Du Toit et al. 2002:120). Daar is wel besluit om die verhaal van die NGK met betrekking tot volkere en rasseverhoudinge in Suid-Afrika, soos wat dit sedert die totstandkoming van die Algemene Sinode in 1962 ontwikkel het, op skrif te stel (kyk NGK 1997b). Prof. P.J.G. Meiring, enigste verteenwoordiger van die NGK op die WVK wou egter nie aanvaar dat die kerk nie 'n voorlegging sou maak nie. In herhaalde briewe aan die skriba van die Algemene Sinodale Kommissie het hy die NGK versoek om tog 'n voorlegging te maak (Gaum 1997). Die pogings van prof. Meiring het vrugte afgewerp toe die Algemene Sinodale Kommissie tydens 'n vergadering van 28–30 Oktober 1997 die volgende besluit geneem het:

> [D]ie voorsitter moet die Ned Geref. Kerk by die getuienisgeleentheid verteenwoordig en hy word versoek om, indien hy 'n spreekbeurt kry, klem te lê op die kerk se versoeningstaak en die toekoms. Daar sal egter nie 'n formele voorlegging deur die Ned. Geref. Kerk gemaak word nie. (NGK 1997a:3)

Op 19 November 1997 het ds. Freek Swanepoel die NGK in Port Elizabeth verteenwoordig tydens 'n openbare getuienisgeleentheid vir die meer evangeliese en Afrikaanse kerke. In sy toespraak het ds. Swanepoel onder meer gesê dat die NGK verbind is tot versoening, dat die NGK dit saam met ander wil aanpak, wat onder die praktiese implikasies van versoening verstaan word en dat versoening persoonlike kontak vereis. Hy het ten slotte verwys na die verlede en die toekoms (Meiring 1999:286). Met die getuienis van ds. Swanepoel voor die WVK kon die NGK weer sy regmatige plek in die galery van kerke in Suid-Afrika inneem. Dit is moontlik gemaak deur die deurslaggewende besluite van 'Kerk en Samelewing' en het gehelp om die raam van versoening waarbinne die sinode van 1994 (NGK 1994) plaasgevind het, te voltooi.

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28. In 'n brief aan die Voorsitter van die Waarheids-en-Versoeningskommissie (WVK), gedateer 27 Augustus 1997, het die Skriba van die Algemene Sinodale Kommissie die WVK in kennis gestel dat die NGK nie 'n voorlegging aan die WVK sou doen nie maar dat Reis met Apartheid vir alle belangstellendes beskikbaar was (Gaum 1997).

■ Konklusie

Die apartheidsbeleid van die Nasionale Party het sedert 1948 veroorsaak dat 'n lewe van volheid nie vir die inwoners van Suid-Afrika beskore was nie. Deur die regeringsbeleid van apartheid Bybels te fundeer en aktief te propageer het die NGK die beleid bevorder. 'n Belangrike draaipunt in 1986 met die aanvaarding van 'Kerk en Samelewing' is dit vir die kerk moontlik gemaak om 'n belangrike versoeningsrol in die samelewing te speel. Die Algemene Sinode van 1994 staan uit as een van die groot bakens op die versoeningspad van die NGK. Wanneer die gebeure tydens hierdie vergadering teen die agtergrond van die groter konteks van die NGK se versoeningspogings verstaan word, kan dit nie anders as om dit die 'Sinode van versoening' te noem nie. Op hierdie wyse het die NGK, as vennoot vir teologiese opleiding aan die Universiteit van Pretoria, bygedra tot 'n lewe van volheid vir almal in Suid Afrika.

■ Summary: Chapter 8

The Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria chose *oikodome* as a Faculty Research Theme (FRT) in 2014. This term refers to life in its fullness. The Dutch Reformed Church, as one of the partners of the Faculty, contributed to life in its fullness through the important role it played in the reconciliation in South Africa since 1986. One of the beacons on this road of reconciliation was the General Synod of 1994. It became known as the 'Synod of reconciliation' as a result of the visits of Mr Nelson Mandela, Prof. B.J. Marais and Dr Beyers Naudé, and the important decisions that the meeting took. It was however, not only the visits of these important roleplayers in history which made the meeting a beacon on the road to reconciliation. This chapter shows that it was imbedded in a much larger context of reconciliation in South Africa in which the Dutch Reformed Church played an important role. By participating in the process of reconciliation in the country, the Dutch Reformed Church contributed to *oikodome* – life in its fullness for all.

Let us play: (un)shackling liaisons, (un)masking games and (un)hindered dialogue in the arena where theology takes place

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Modes of play: Political theology and rhetorical style

Introduction

In 1973 the theme of the May issue of the theological journal *Concilium* was 'The crisis of religious language'. The linguist Harald Weinrich (1973:329) used the *compositum* (composition) 'narrative theology' for the first time. In the same issue the German political theologian Jean-Baptiste Metz (1973:334–342) argued that 'narrative theology',

within the broader context of political theology, is a mode of discourse which is particularly sensitive to the 'experience' of people. At the time, and in that particular context, this argument was not met with enthusiasm. Eberhard Jüngel (1974; [1977] 1992) and Dietrich Ritschl (1976; 1984) did not appreciate any theology that had anything to do with life experience and social relevance, and Ritschl (1976:18) referred to narrative theology as 'that idiom'. Metz, on the other hand, argued that theology cannot in any circumstances be 'socially uninvolved' (Metz 1973; 1967). It was Metz who together with Jürgen Moltmann developed the notion 'Political Theology' during the 1960s as a socio-critical theology (Van Wyk 2015:1 of 8; cf. Schüssler Fiorenza 2013:38). Political theology is a theology 'with its face toward the world' (Metz 1968 [1969]:83; cf. Van Wyk 2015:1 of 8), committed to 'justice, peace, and the integrity of creation' (cf. WCC 1983). The three main tasks of political theology are: (1) socio-theoretical awareness of the complexity of different relationships; (2) an assessment of the state of affairs based on continuous social analysis; and (3) courage to engage multi-contextual and pluralistic environments (Schüssler Fiorenza, Tanner & Welker 2013:xiii–xiv; cf. Van Wyk 2015:6 of 8).

As contemporary of Metz, Moltmann has continuously made the same argument about narrative theology as a departure point or mode of, or entry into socio-critical theology – political theology – (Van Wyk 2015:2–3 of 8). Since he and Metz developed political theology in the German context, Moltmann (2000) has continuously emphasised this conviction in his published works:

> I have described the ways my own biography has given me entries into theology – in general, in my own person and in the community of the church and the university … I have described this process in the introductions … because I have come to see that the biographical dimension is an essential dimension of theological insight … My own experiences with theological thinking have taught me that two things belong together in Christian theology: the telling of God's history with us, and the argument for God's presence – biographical subjectivity and self-forgetting objectivity. (p. xviii–xix; cf. Moltmann [2006] 2008)

The narrative theology described here includes biography and autobiography (Goldberg 1981–1982; cf. Tracy 1975:207), in which the life story of the individual obtains meaning in the interaction with the stories of others (cf. Dreyer 2003:325–329; Ricoeur 1984:50–52).

This contribution constitutes a political-theological critical commentary and a hermeneutic-theological reflection on the dynamics of the space in which theology takes place, with specific reference to the research themes which are identified within that space. The space in question is institutional university academia – a Faculty of Theology being part of that space – and the research themes are 'reconciling diversity' and 'Ecodomy – life in its fullness', which are respectively institutional and faculty research themes.[29]

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29. 'Reconciling diversity' is an institutional research theme (IRT) as well as a faculty research theme (FRT) (cf. University of Pretoria, Faculty of Theology 2014:58).

The contribution is not an exposition of the theological content of the themes, but rather a critical reflection on the influence that the space wherein the research themes are conceived might have on the authenticity of the proposed and hoped for contributions of those research themes.

The rhetorical style of this contribution is therefore narrative-like because it is true to the theological paradigm of the contribution – political theology.[30] But the other reason is that my context and situatedness (*Sitz im Leben*) gave rise to the questions and issues to be considered in this contribution. A reflection on the origin, authenticity and outcome of research themes like 'reconciling diversity' and 'Ecodomy – life in its fullness' while also being a theologian situated at a university and a Faculty of Theology makes the proposed rhetorical style especially suited, but maybe also quite necessary, 'as a way leading to insight into the object of enquiry' (Moltmann 2000:xix). Not only do I therefore 'dare' to say 'I', I *must* say 'I'.[31]

In doing this, I am also following in the footsteps of a renowned South-African feminist (and political) theologian, Denise Ackermann. In the introduction to 'After the locusts, letters from a landscape of faith', she acknowledges that 'writing for the academy gets one into bad habits … we know the rules and we know how to play the game' (Ackermann 2003:xii). The motivation and explanation for her personal and narrative-like rhetorical style, is simply 'about my efforts to discover what is worth living for in the midst of troubled times' (Ackermann 2003:xii). Put differently, she is reflecting on 'life in its fullness' by marking her own situatedness, theologically and otherwise. Ackermann also acknowledges, 'the rules and the game' – the setting from which her reflection is

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30. In the introduction I have mentioned only the German context with regard to the correlation between political theology and a narrative-like rhetorical style. This is because my own introduction to political theology took place through the introduction to the theology of Jürgen Moltmann. The narrative style of political theology is not limited to the German context, of course. The narrative style however, does portray the differences of contexts of political theology that gave rise to this theology – that is the whole point: context, narrative and political theology go hand in hand. For two excellent comprehensive readers on the subject of political theology, see *Political Theologies* (De Vries & Sullivan 2006) and *The Eerdmans Reader to Contemporary Political Theology* (Cavanaugh, Bailey & Hovey 2012).

31. The background of the shift from 'modern scholarly writing' to 'postmodern scholarly writing, has been well documented. This shift entailed the use of 'I', and 'we', two personal pronouns which were absent in the process and product of writing. The reason for this was the Enlightenment concern about sources, methods and definitions and a 'modern pursuit of formal scientific truth' (Adams 1995:3). Postmodern scholarly writing is quite suited as method for a reflection on what 'Ecodomy' could mean (cf. Van Aarde 2015:1 of 8). For a detailed account of this shift, see Adams (1995) and Schutte (2005).

taking place, or rather, the setting which had its 'say' when doing scholarly work. In this chapter I will start off by describing my own 'setting' or situatedness which will set the scene for my reflection on, in Ackermann's words, 'the rules and the game'. The 'rules and the game' pertain to two aspects, which I take to be interrelated: the choice and content of a faculty research theme and the very space wherein this theme is reflected upon.

The title of the contribution demands a last introductory note: (un)shackling liaisons, (un)masking games, (un)hindered dialogue. It is purposefully laden with double meanings and the preposition between brackets denotes the simultaneous 'active' aspects and conditions, and an attempt to deconstruct the aspects and conditions. 'Play' and 'games' are also simultaneously active and deconstructed. The 'arena', as a space of 'play' and 'games,' is depicted as a function of power. Theologically, 'life in its fullness' entails reconciling diversity: reconciliation without dissolving diversity (Van Aarde 2015; cf. Van Wyk 2014). This is by no means easy. Some would say it is unattainable. Research themes such as 'life in its fullness' and 'reconciling diversity' amidst major transitions and discussions aimed at the implementation of necessary transformation at Institutes of Higher Learning in South Africa is a challenging and complex endeavour. Therefore, the third concept in the title '(un)hindered dialogue'. In my opinion, transformation can only start once the ethical condition of an openness towards unhindered dialogue, is active. The aspects that 'hinder' that dialogue then, also need to be exposed.

◼ The arena: The panopticon and the institutional 'Hunger Games' of university academia

◼ The scene of the play

The Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria announced its Faculty Research Theme (FRT) entitled *Ecodomy – life in its fullness* in the second half of the year 2014. It was formally set out in the Faculty Plan and the part of the Faculty Plan pertaining to the FRT was published on the Faculty's website under 'Research' and 'Research Focus' (University of Pretoria 2016). The aim of this was (is) to provide an umbrella under which aspects of the Faculty's research would be clustered. The intention of the theme is to 'address issues of ethical thinking and ethical decision-making on various societal issues and spheres of life, while taking religious worldviews, values and norms into consideration' (cf. University of Pretoria, Faculty of Theology 2014:58). 'Life in its fullness' with regard to the well-being of the 'household' (the keyword of the research theme being *oikodome* [household]), the economy, ecology, theology and religion is emphasised. Adjacent to this, the origins of the FRT are also stated: It was the result of a benchmarking initiative to determine the Faculty's unique selling proposition in terms of the branding of the Faculty (University of Pretoria 2016) and

that the 'FRT is aligned with the national and 2025 UP strategies and policies' (cf. University of Pretoria, Faculty of Theology 2014:58), as well as intended to 'support and interact with other FRTs and Institutional Research Themes (IRTs) at UP' (Faculty of Theology 2014:58).

I have been employed at the Faculty of Theology in the Department of Dogmatics and Christian Ethics since 2010 in various capacities. During this time, I have witnessed that the marketplace of theology became increasingly competitive and demanding. This also underlies the establishment of a FRT and IRT. The experience has been that of an ever-growing demand for increased citations, publications and other research outputs. On an institutional level, there is the demand these days that postgraduate studies be completed in record time. Postgraduate students are 'motivated' by means of ever-increasing registration fees. In such an environment, there is no time to really engage with the research one is doing, to collaborate and share knowledge to the benefit of one's peers in academia and the context in and for which one is conceptualising and practicing theology. Rather than focus on the desire to learn about and contribute to one's field of speciality, the focus is solely on outcomes. All of this is aimed at greater international recognition. In chasing these goals, local academic environments have become detached from the existential realities and challenges of historically disadvantaged communities, where people are desperately trying to obtain access to higher education. The past few months have seen a sudden and sometimes violent stimulus towards transformation (cf. Eye Witness News [EWN] 2016; SABC News 2016). In the midst of trying to be internationally recognised and locally relevant, research themes spring up and discussions take place.

These remarks are comments about the environment in which academic scholarship is conducted, the choice of research themes and the manner in which institutional demands and pressures influence, hamper, endanger or directly contradict the envisaged outcomes of the research. I am asking a critical question (and a political-theological one) about the ability of such an environment – governed by institutional structures, the 'marketplace' with its demands for more outcomes, more 'visibility', 'more recognition' – to make an *authentic* contribution to the realities of its context. How can a theology 'with its face [turned] toward the world', aimed at 'life in its fullness' for all of creation, be authentic if the environment it originates from, is one of hierarchy and competition? Is a theology of 'life in its fullness' and 'reconciling diversity' internalised or is it a strategy of the academic game?

The arena and the 'Hunger Games': A panopticon

To illustrate the mechanics of the space I have just described, I will use images and metaphors borrowed from the *Hunger Games* trilogy by Susan Collins (2008, 2009, 2010) because they depict the mechanics of a panopticon perfectly (Kushkaki 2013).

A panopticon is a structure of unseen surveillance which conveys omnipresent and omniscient power and enforces this power by convincing the objects of this structure to mutually enforce this surveillance because they experience the effects of it. This notion is based on a design by Jeremy Bentham in 1791 for an actual panopticon – a prison. In this prison, a centrally located guard in a central watchtower in a circular building observes the prisoners simultaneously. The prisoners know (or are almost certain) that they are being watched, but they cannot see who is watching them – the control from the 'institutional heart' of the space is invisible. This 'inequity in gaze' (Wezner 2012:149) creates the sentiment that the prisoners are being watched all the time, causing them to modify their behaviour accordingly and to internalise the surveillance and to start policing each other in the same way that they experience themselves to be surveilled (Bentham 1995:29–95; cf. Wezner 2012:149; Van Aarde 2012:4 of 11).

The story centres on the Capitol of the nation Panem which rules the 12 (13) other districts of the nation (cf. Collins 2008, 2009). In these districts living conditions are not liveable, the people pay heavy taxes and each district produces something different for the Capitol: coal, weapons, food, timber, technology, fabric et cetera. The panopticon structured prison is mirrored in the Collins' trilogy. The Capitol is surrounded by mountains, shielding it from any other city. The position and the infrastructure in the Capitol elevates it over the districts that is controlled by it and mirrors the central, elevated position of the prison warden, from where the warden is able to survey, unseen, all the inhabitants – in all the districts. The districts are isolated from one another and are therefore unable to share information or compare their experiences or join in a rebellion. Isolated, they adhere to the invisible power. The people in the districts are reminded of the constant surveillance. The promise of punishment in case of disobedience is a constant reminder to the inhabitants of the districts and is represented by the 'peace-keepers' – police or army-like people who are allowed to use extreme force to subdue the population.

The main way in which the people in the districts are controlled, however, are the annual Hunger Games. For this purpose, one male and one female must be 'reaped' from each district, to enter the Hunger Games and fight to the death in an arena of the Capitol's making. In the arena, they are faced with gruesome creatures, physiological attacks brought on by the Game Makers and each other. They must play this game until only one remains. The Hunger Games are portrayed by the president of the nation as a gift – a gift of the generosity of the Capitol for not killing every single man, woman and child in the Uprising that took place years earlier. There are frequent theatrical reminders of the powerlessness of the districts (Collins 2008:16–34; cf. Wezner 2012:150). Each year every district is shown a short historical film depicting the 'chaos' before the 'order' that was instituted by the Capitol. The Games are then sold as a sort of commemorative event. By forcing the districts to participate in the reaping, the president and the Capitol are also making sure that each district 'wars' with another, enforcing the

Capitol's oppressing paradigm on each other, because the competition in the arena is fierce and nobody is spared. 'Eternal glory' and a comfortable lifestyle await the victor. After the games, the winner settles down in his or her home district in one of the houses in the Victor's Village, a luxury housing section. Although these houses are in each district, there is an enormous difference between the lifestyle of the victors and the rest of the district. They become celebrities and mentors for future Games – participants in their district. They are showcased every year before the annual 'Hunger Games' and receive large amounts of money from the Capitol for the rest of their lives. In this way, the Capitol ensures that citizens are in a constant, fierce competition with one another, and the president and the Capitol ensure compliance, even satisfaction and gratitude towards the system and the status quo (Collins 2009; cf. Mortimore-Smith 2012:159–166; Pavlink 2012:30–38).

After being extracted from the arena of the 75th Hunger Games (which is named the Quarter Quell, a Hunger Games that takes place every 25 years), Katniss Everdeen, the main character, visits the ruins of her home district: District 12 (Collins 2010:1–15). The devastation she encounters is the result of her escape and her rebellion against the Capitol. She finds a white rose, one of the president's creations, in her old house, in the Victor's Village – untouched and in perfect condition. The implied message for Katniss is that of an omnipresent, albeit invisible, surveillance and control: 'perhaps I am watching you now' (Collins 2010:15). This rose and its message 'illustrates [*sic*] the disciplinary network as well as Katniss' interpretation of the network's control through surveillance and spectacle' (Wezner 2012:148). Her internal struggle throughout the series is her question about what to do about the situation – and how to play the game.

When the Capitol's power is eventually broken, a vote is cast by a council made up of leaders and other prominent figures and survivors of the 12 districts. The object of the vote is to decide whether to send the children of the Capitol's citizens into the arena for the commemorative final Hunger Games. District 13, the seat of the new regime, has a panopticon structure too – a survival mechanism that was initiated after it made a pact with the Capitol. The mechanics of the pact involved District 13 threatening the Capitol with nuclear weapons. The Capitol then agreed to relinquish control over said district and remove any trace of its existence so that the rest of Panem would be unaware of it. District 13 would then be left in peace to govern itself. However, another panopticon ensued and this one is more deadly and effective than the Capitol's panopticon, due to the move underground and the strict military-style codes of conduct (Wezner 2012:151). The votes are cast and the council decides to organise a 'final Hunger Games'. The panopticon keeps on functioning. The surveillance stays in tact – those who are surveilled keep on surveilling each other.

I am of the opinion that the content and contribution of research themes like 'reconciling diversity' and 'Ecodomy – life in its fullness' can be possible – but only if the

'arena', the 'game' and 'playing it' are deconstructed to represent something other than fierce competition and isolation. This deconstruction has three aspects:

- Firstly, it entails the recognition and acknowledgement of the panopticon. This starts by describing it, as I have done in the previous section.
- Secondly, it entails an epistemology of vigilance and the hermeneutics of suspicion. This will be explored from the paradigm of political theology with specific references to insights from feminist theologians.
- Thirdly, it entails an ethic of dialogue. This will be explored by investigating, (1) the ambiguity of games and (2) the deconstruction of 'play' from a hermeneutic-theological perspective with special reference to Hans-Georg Gadamer's dialogical-play with the Other.

An epistemology of vigilance

I have found the insights of feminist theologians with regard to the practice of a political theology as a critical theology, particularly helpful due to their own theological reflections and criticism towards a theology of life that does not take all the participants in that life's experiences and perspectives into account (Schüssler Fiorenza 2007; 2013; cf. Van Wyk 2015:3 of 8):

> The feminist critique of theology and tradition … has pointed out that all interpretations … depend on the presuppositions, intellectual concepts, politics, or prejudices of the interpreter and historian. Feminist scholars … point out that for all too long the Christian tradition was recorded and studied by theologians who consciously or unconsciously understood them from a patriarchal perspective of male dominance. Since this androcentric cultural perspective has determined all writing of theology and of history, their endeavour is correctly called his-story. If women, therefore, want to get in touch with their own roots and tradition, they have to rewrite the Christian tradition and theology in such a way that it becomes not only his-story but as well her-story recorded and analysed from a feminist point of view. (Schüssler Fiorenza 1986:611)

The choice to utilise the insights of feminist theologians in this section in particular, is based on the correlation I have drawn between political theology, narrative and context, which includes the context in which I contextualise and practice theology. In 2017, the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria will be celebrating its centenary. One hundred years of theology. One hundred years of scholars and academics making contributions, doing research, contextualising, theologising. In 100 years, the Faculty has had only four female academic scholars, in permanent and temporary positions, who were appointed starting in the year 2000.[32] The African

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32. The Faculty of Theology's church partners are part of the appointment process of academic scholars at the Faculty.

feminist theologian Musa Dube (2000:35), together with Ackermann (2011:4–5) remind us of the gross under-representation that still remains when it comes to women's participation in discussions that effect policy and paradigm shifts in the church (and church polity) and theology in Africa and South Africa, and the rest of the world (cf. Van Wyk 2015:7 of 8).

A theology of 'justice, peace and the integrity of creation' (WCC 1983) should be the driving force behind research themes like 'reconciling diversity' and 'life in its fullness'. No research topic is chosen in isolation or is interest-free. The task of political theology as a critical theology is to practice an 'epistemological vigilance' (Isasi-Díaz [1996] 2012:432). Political theology entails a continuous critique of ideology – even in the face of 'new' theological paradigms aimed at progress in terms of emancipatory action (Schüssler Fiorenza et al. 2013; cf. Van Wyk 2015:6 of 8).

I encountered 'epistemological vigilance' as a concept in the work of the South-American liberation theologian, Ada Maria Isasi-Díaz ([1996] 2012), who reflects on the task of theology in her specific context as a Latina woman, as she explains her theological endeavour in her contribution titled, 'Mujerista Theology: A challenge to traditional theology' (Isasi-Díaz [1996] 2012:418–437). This epistemological vigilance firstly refers to a critical consciousness of our own subjectivity, as well as being critically aware of the limits of our capacity to know reality and our tendency to distort this capacity (cf. Isasi-Díaz [1996] 2012; Maduro 1982:27–29). Theologians and other academic scholars should work hard at being aware of and revealing ideological biases. Epistemological vigilance secondly refers to the constant necessity of evaluating how the results of our theology, our research and the 'way in which we conduct our research' (Isasi-Díaz 1996[2012]:432) contributes to the theological enterprise we envisaged.

This means we should constantly evaluate the authenticity of the contribution we hope to make, given the factors or interests that form or determine the choice of research themes. Being part of an institutional panopticon means a constant vigilance as to whether our genuine hopes for the contributions of our research are not obscured by our situatedness and the powers that keep that setting in play. 'We need to apply the hermeneutics of suspicion to our constructive proposals, to our narratives, to our whole theological enterprise' (Isasi-Díaz [1996] 2012:432).

Thirdly, epistemological vigilance refers to the way in which we maintain community and our ability and willingness to grapple with contradictions and differences. Hard work is necessary to avoid losing the community, 'at not giving into the destructive competition, or worse … ignoring each other' (Isasi-Díaz [1996] 2012:433).

A 'hermeneutics of suspicion' as 'a willingness to suspect and a willingness to listen' (Ricoeur 1970:26) is a cardinal aspect of epistemological vigilance. Paul Ricoeur's

notion of a hermeneutics of suspicion (cf. Itao 2012:10–17) points to a critical reading of texts including 'human beings as texts' and symbols and includes political or theological suspicion (Van Aarde & Dreyer 2010:2 of 10; cf. Thiselton [2001] 2006:607). In this regard, there is a close connection with the hermeneutics of suspicion and critical theory[33] – indeed the hermeneutics provide access to critical theory (Kaplan 2003:7).[34] Critical theory is a necessary foundational aspect for doing 'theology of others' (Ackermann 2003) and one could say also for a research theme on 'Ecodomy life in its fullness':

> Critical theory … is any theory that renders explicit how cognitive reflection can throw light on systemic distortions, whether individual or social, and through that illumination allow some emancipatory action. (Tracy 1987:80)

In her reflection on the theology of Dirkie (D.J.) Smit, Denise Ackermann states how critical theory was a useful tool for feminist (political) theology as a critical theology (Ackermann 2003:4). It is a useful tool because it examines issues of economy, history, power and exploitation and interrogates them (Ackermann 2003:15). Schüssler Fiorenza (1986) also alluded to this in her earlier work:

> Critical theory … provides a key for a hermeneutic understanding which is not just directed toward an actualizing continuation and a perceptive understanding of history but toward a criticism of history and tradition to the extent that it participates in the repression and domination which are experienced as alienation. Analogously (in order to liberate Christian theologies, symbols, and institutions), critical theology uncovers and criticizes Christian traditions and theologies which stimulated and perpetuated violence, alienation, and oppression. Critical theology thus has as its methodological presupposition the Christian community's constant need for renewal. (p. 612)

A critical 'reading' divulges the agendas of those who take part in the communicative events (cf. Gadamer [1960] 1994:370). An authentic 'theology for others', or an authentic theology about 'Ecodomy – life in its fullness' and 'reconciling diversity', from the foundation of critical theory and critical theology, is only possible if there is equal participation – this pertains especially to the 'rules' and the 'games' of academia in general and theological academics in particular. The challenge of '(un)shackling liaisons, (un)masking games and (un)hindered dialogue' with regard to the authenticity

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33. 'Critical theory' originated from the Frankfurt School, specifically the Institute for social research which was affiliated to Frankfurt University (1920). The theory's intention was an alternative method to traditional hermeneutic approaches. It started with the work of Max Horkheimer and Theo Adorno and it sought to critique one-sided doctrines. It critiqued the driving forces of modernism like power, economy and history (cf. Tracy 1987).

34. David Kaplan (2003) emphasises the link between Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics and critical theory in his work.

of research themes, is to reconcile diversity in terms of different perspectives and experiences.

The ambiguity of games: Life, fun and violence

In a recent article, unification-philosopher Keisuka Noda, writes about the paradoxes, the meaning, the challenges and the responses of life. From his specific philosophical paradigm, he argues that the world and life is to be understood as a process of challenges and responses – as a game (Noda 2013). A game has three characteristics:

*   It consists of rules or determinants and an undetermined element of chance and because of this undetermined element, the game is fun.
*   It provides the opportunity for the development of skills necessary to play the game.
*   It is self-sufficient: the goal is not external to the activity (the object exists in the activity itself) – which to him, *can be* fun. (p. 118)

He associates play with creativity. Creativity is the 'capacity to play with reality' and deals with challenges (Noda 2013:120). It is the capability to 'change one's perspective to interpret a challenge and change one's stance and attitude towards challenge' (Noda 2013:120). It is the ability to re-contextualise a challenge. It is the ability to cope with a challenge. If one 'has room to play with reality', new ways to approach challenges are discovered.

In the Christian tradition, there has been a double tradition of denunciation and appreciation of games (Neville 2004:120). In the first age of the church, games in the Roman Empire were 'degrading spectacles' (Neville 2004:120). The fictional world created by Suzanne Collins and the Hunger Games are modelled on that type of 'play and game' (cf. Collins 2010). The name of the power-yielding nation that instated the Games, 'Panem' refers to the slogan *Panem et circensus*, that is 'Bread and Circuses' (Collins 2010:223). This slogan was coined by the Roman satirist Juvenal in reference to the way in which the ruling class pacified the commoners by diverting them from contemplating their subjugation. In ancient Rome, the 'bread' was the distribution of grain and the 'circuses' were the public games.

Because Christians were martyred during these degrading spectacles of violence and bestial passion, these circuses and those games were not held in high regard and contrasted sharply with the 'noble' Olympic ideal of civic pride and rivalry. In fact, the Greco-Roman philosopher Epictetus (cf. Long 2001) described the Olympic Games as one of the main analogies of life (the other being a banquet). In reality nations and people are (in the context of the madness of society) in constant war with each other. To idealise a world without conflict, that is to strive for an ideal utopia, is unrealistic. The Games, however, replicate the reality of agonistic competition, without killing each other. Instead, through

the Games recognition was given to both the winners and the losers, because both were allowed to participate.

Due to the violent spectacles of the games in which primarily Christians were murdered and with the inception of Christianity as the religion of the state, Constantine prohibited gladiatorial contests. That just meant that a lot of the violence went underground and also, that other types of games, like chariot races, could flourish. The crowds' behaviour in Constantinople at the start of the 5th century at these races could be compared to the football hooliganism at soccer (football) matches in modern times. Chrysostom denounced these 'games' (or 'races').

Violence as an attribute of 'games' within the Christian tradition however, did not come to an end. They were part of Christian education to make a boy a man, by playing games of shooting, slinging and throwing javelins – as is illustrated in a 15th century educational book for boys on how to train for battle and the use of games in the training (Neville 2004:121). The connection between games, violence and power did not end in the 15th century. The future archbishop of York, Cyril Garbett, was editing a practical theological textbook as a guide for work in a Christian community (congregation or parish) in 1915. He was of the opinion that 'the best test of a man's character is the way he plays his games' – this was linked to the worth of a man's religion and for boys it meant 'playing a clean game' (Garbett 1915:7). From this textbook and his notes, it also seems as if playing hard games were only the activity for men, because girls should play without any 'coarseness' (Garbett 1915:8).

Through the centuries however, some acceptance emerged that the human play instinct would always find (or seek) expression (Neville 2004:121).

The deconstruction of play

Hermeneutics and ethics of dialogue with the Other

The universal theme in the hermeneutics of Gadamer is 'play' (*Spiel*) – specifically 'understanding as play'[35] (Gadamer [1960] 1994). He regarded *understanding* as the 'basic

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35. Vilhauer argues that Gadamer's understanding of play is a 'hermeneutical key' to understanding his 'fusion of horizons', a concept that has been criticised by (for example) Betti (1980), Caputo (1987), Habermas (1990) and Hirsch (1967). With his aesthetics, Gadamer made an effort to grasp destructive and productive modes of engagement for the purposes of improving practice. Gadamer's hermeneutics of play can be applied beyond aesthetics (art) to 'general understanding' (Vilhauer 2010:xii).

posture of life' (Mootz & Taylor 2011:1) and the primary way in which we participate in the world and belong to the world. Understanding is *interpretive* and informed by our perspective. Our situated perspective is shaped by the way we belong to the world. *Belonging* to the world has two consequences: Firstly, as individuals we are participants in a larger community which is the basis of our identity, but secondly, these larger influences of the community (language, history, culture) have a sort of agency of their own – greater than the action of the individual. Gadamer expressed *belonging* as the function of *play*.

In 'play', the 'play' (music or games or language) has primacy over the players. Play entails being drawn in, participating, playing along. In Gadamer's terms, one must 'play along' (Grondin 2001:44). Players enter into the 'spirit of the game' and play by its rules. The play has an agency of its own. In this 'hermeneutic belonging' with its emphasis on participation in community, individuals relate to one another on the basis of 'the game' – the conversation – in which they participate. It is through dialogue and conversation the individual constructs the world we live in and the individual 'I' moves to 'we' through participation in the community. This 'play' is a dynamic process in which 'difference' (or diversity) is the essential component – not the enemy (cf. Vilhauer 2010).

The dialogue occurs by the mode of 'play'. Play only fulfils its purpose if the player loses himself in play (Gadamer 2004:103). In recognition of the potential value the conversation (the game) has for us to accomplish something greater than we would have on our own, we give ourselves over to playing the game ('belonging to conversation and/ or dialogue'). In this game, 'charity' and 'collaboration' are joined: charity in terms of 'taking' (listening to) what the other person is saying and collaboration in terms of expressing views (subject matter) in a way that could be 'taken' by the listener. The players are engaged in the collaborative attempt to arrive at an understanding of the subject matter. The dialogue is guided by the subject matter of the dialogue and what it takes to make the subject matter clear to the players. For Gadamer (2004; cf. Kögler 1996; Vilhauer 2010:xvii–xi) dialogue is essentially not about doing something *to* or *for* someone, but *with* someone – only on condition of the other person's mutual contribution – the agency of play.

The hermeneutic concept of play has an ethical dimension which can be used as a guide to practice in terms of opening up dialogue where dialogue has ceased and the subjects have become closed to one another (Vilhauer 2010:xi). This is because 'play' involves the subjects, much as the viewer of a painting, the listener of an opera or the reader of a novel find themselves drawn into it (Gadamer [1960]1994:101–110). But 'play' is not purely playful. In every 'play' there is a 'sacred seriousness' (Gadamer [1960] 1994:107). This is not only when applied to art, but also to any other type of

play – athletic games, social games. 'When we are playfully concerned with something, we are also seriously there … only someone who does not play along is not serious about the play' (Grondin 2001:44). Because the true experience of play is *being drawn into*, the opposite of play is not 'seriousness', but rather *not taking part*: 'the mode of being of play does not permit the player to relate to the play as an object' (Gadamer [1960]1994:108). Understanding does not take place by observing an object and therefore objectifying it. Understanding and being with others are events of participation. But we only participate to the extent that we allow ourselves to be drawn in, to be 'moved by the magic' of the event (Grondin 2001:45).

Gadamer (1996:132) uses the concept 'festival' to express 'playing along'. Participation is a specific element of the essence of festival: whoever joins in is included – or even more: immersed. Those who participate in the festival is open to communication (Gadamer 1996:133). But communicating is more than (or not necessarily) words being exchanged, it is 'rather a being with one another, involvement in others. Being and coming together is more important than agreeing about this or that' (Gadamer 1996:133).

The biggest obstacle to genuine *understanding* is a mutual openness of the dialogue partners toward each other. This is the ethical conditions for understanding and dialogue. The biggest challenge is to cultivate a mutual willingness in those who have become closed:

> When faced with a refusal to engage in genuine dialogue, individuals tend to be tempted to either disengage, retreat, and withdraw from any type of encounter with the Other, or to try to overpower the Other with force. Gadamer encouraged a recognition that our continued to-and-fro engaged play with the Other is crucial for our way of living and flourishing as human beings. Disengagement, the complete restriction of the Other's possibility for participating in play, the elimination of the Other – or any 'game-stopping' moves are the worst kind of violence against our human form of life. (Vilhauer 2010:xvii)

Dialogue with the Other is not:

> [*A*]bout understanding the Other's articulation; about submitting to the authority of the Other; taking on the Other's point of view in a way that means giving up your own power of reflection; giving yourself up to the Other; the projection of your own meaning or interpretation onto the Other. (Vilhauer 2010:xvi)

Gadamer ([1960] 1994:497–499) emphasised the ethical responsibility to engage in an on-going play … with the Other. The foundation of the Other's identity and personhood is the recognition of the true uniqueness of the Other. It is when we find those who are unwilling to engage in dialogue that we must find new ways of interacting, engaging and playing with them. 'The game must go on' (Vilhauer 2010:xviii). We have an ethical responsibility to keep on 'playing' … but by a different set of rules.

■ It is a game – play on!

■ Conclusion: A space of reconciling diversity constitutes life in its fullness

In this chapter, I have attempted to argue that a 'Hunger Games'-style panopticon that determines research prerogatives can endanger, obscure and hamper the authentic contribution of an institutional or faculty research theme aimed at making an impact in society and contributing to the wellness of that society – due to the power and other (economic) motives involved in making the choice of a specific research theme in the first place. The nature of the institutional game is the single greatest reason that research themes such as reconciling diversity and the practice of 'Ecodomy – life in its fullness', may not be internalised in the very society in which the research aims to make a difference. The game – in the panopticon manner as a 'hunger game' in which the competition is fierce and one player surveils the other because that secures survival – renders the authenticity of the notions of reconciling diversity and 'life in its fullness' null and void because it contradicts the notions of inclusivity, equality, openness, justice and participation.

The panoptical power might throw you into the game, but removing yourself from it is not the antidote to the power that governs it. On the contrary, if you are suspicious about the powers that have made you a participant, you can deconstruct the game, make your own building blocks, arrange the building blocks and develop new rules for your participation in it. 'Play' becomes something else. It is not a forced and oppressing activity, played in isolation. 'Play' becomes the very vehicle of openness towards a dialogue partner and a willingness to listen and learn from dialogue partners (other players) in conversation. Gadamer ([1960] 1994:101–110) explored 'dialogue-play' as a hermeneutical lens to interpretation, understanding, learning and practicing (ethics) (cf. Vilhauer 2010:xi; 49–72; 139–149). 'Play' features as a key concept in the dynamic and dialogical interpretative process, in which the participants come to grasp a common subject matter together (Vilhauer 2010). Gadamer explored types of interaction that reopen dialogue between those that have become closed to one another to reconceive the process of understanding. 'Understanding as dialogue' (cf. Vilhauer 2010:1) should be the foundation of the correlation between research themes within an institution. Understanding as dialogue should be the driving force behind the choice of research themes. 'The ethics of play' as an openness towards dialogue can contribute to the authenticity of the nature, content and output of research themes aimed at reconciling diversity and 'life in its fullness'.

Dialogue (play), or conversation (game), or indeed reconciling diversity of binary oppositions is only possible when power is not part of the 'play'. Moltmann ([2006] 2008) articulates this when he describes his understanding of truth:

> Humanly speaking, truth is to be found in unhindered dialogue – a dialogue which, if it is not already domination free, is at least truth-seeking. In this dialogue, community and freedom are joined: community in mutual respect and reciprocal participation, and freedom in the right to have one's own opinion and to give one's own assent. (p. 287)

We are situated at 'spaces of theology' with a specific dynamic: A lot of what we keep ourselves busy with is dictated by the interests of the marketplace in a purely financial sense; the alignment of faculty research themes with institutional research themes, with international relevant themes, to be an internationally acclaimed university, to attract more students and move higher on the world ranking list. In that regard it is more closely related to the gladiatorial games of old. But just as much as what we do is dictated by the concern of the church to bear witness of the good news of the gospel, so we also have a duty to practice public theology. In this regard, it might more closely resemble the nature of the Olympic Games of old. Based on both these aspects, the rules of the game are always changing and if we know that, then we know we are playing a game. The questions are, however, the type of game and the manner of play.

Conversations about the nature and content of 'public' theology from the perspective of our respective institutional situatedness (*Sitz im Leben*) are only possible with the deconstruction of the institutional power as a game, together with the awareness of both the ambivalent and dialectical nature of 'play' – with its possibilities and dangers. 'Play' and 'games' can be associated with leisure and fun. They can also be associated with strategy, acting, and 'pressures of conformity within a consumerist society' (Neville 2004:120).

For us it could mean an insistence on playfulness *and* a refusal to play along. From this perspective, a research theme about 'life in its fullness' might just be possible.

■ Summary: Chapter 9

This contribution is a political-theological and hermeneutical reflection on the origin, nature, intention and contribution of a research theme identified within the dynamics of an institutional space, by taking a critical look at the 'rules' and the 'game' of university academia. Specific reference is made to institutional and faculty research themes, namely 'reconciling diversity' and 'Ecodomy – life in its fullness'. The institutional academic space is compared to a Hunger Games-style panopticon, with its 'rules' and 'play'. It is argued that these research themes can only make an authentic contribution if the 'play' and 'game' of the space in which these themes originate, are deconstructed. If this deconstruction can take place, there might be an authentic chance for unhindered dialogue towards the transformation of the academic space and the greater community it serves.

Chapter 10

Life in its unfullness: Revisiting ἀναίδειαν (Lk 11:8) in the light of papyrological evidence

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▉ Introduction

The majority of parable scholars agree that the interpretation of the parable of the Friend at Midnight (Lk 11:5–8) hinges on the meaning of the word ἀναίδειαν in Luke 11:8. Scholarly opinion, however, is divided about the meaning and attitude being described with ἀναίδειαν. Does ἀναίδειαν, which only occurs in Luke 11:8 in the New Testament, refer to a positive or negative attitude? Also, to whom does ἀναίδειαν refer in the parable? To the host (outside the door asking for help) or the neighbour (inside the door being asked for help)?

Since ἀναίδειαν is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament, scholars have turned to extra–canonical evidence in an effort to define as precisely as possible the meaning and attitude described with ἀναίδειαν in the parable. Ἀναίδειαν, and its derivatives (e.g. ἀναιδεῖ, ἀναιδεῖς, ἀναίδεια, ἀναίδειαν, ἀναιδοῦ, ἀναιδοῦς, ἀναιδέστατον, ἀναιδείᾳ, ἀναιδῶς, αἰδώς, ἀναιδίας, ἀναιδὲς, ἀναιδῆ, ἀναιδὴς, ἀναιδείην and ἀναιδευόμενοι) occur in early Jewish and patristic writings, the LXX, in Graeco-Roman and early Christian writings.

We also have one inscription in which ἀναίδειας occurs. The meaning of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives, in these sources, has received its due attention in the study of the possible meaning of the term[36] and indicates that the term is consistently used in a negative and pejorative manner.[37] Some of these occurrences will be discussed below in a concise manner to present a comprehensive picture of the meaning of the term.

A comprehensive study of the meaning of the term in extant papyrological evidence, to our knowledge, however, has not been done. The main contribution this chapter wants to make is to fill this void. Roman-Egypt papyri contain nine occurrences of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives. Does the meaning of the term in available papyri follow the meaning it has in early Jewish and patristic literature, the LXX, Graeco-Roman and early Christian writings, and the one inscription thus far discovered? And, if it does, what implication does it have for the interpretation of ἀναίδειαν in the parable, and for the interpretation of the parable itself? Finally, it will be argued that a life characterised by ἀναίδειαν creates life in its unfullness.

The meaning of ἀναίδειαν in early Jewish literature, patristic literature, the LXX, Graeco-Roman writings, early Christian literature and inscriptions.

▮ Ἀναίδειαν in early Jewish literature

In *Sirach* (written *c.* 200–175 BCE) ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives occur four times.[38] In *Sirach* 23:6 the author prays that the greediness of the belly or lust of the flesh should not take hold of him, as well as a mind that is shameful (ἀναιδεῖ), and *Sirach* 25:22 remarks

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36. See, for example, the excellent contribution of Snodgrass (1997:505–513):

> Using the end of the fourth century C.E. as a reasonable range for analysis, the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae data base includes at least 258 occurrences of ἀναίδεια, all of demonstrably *negative* … It refers to people who have no proper sense of shame and willingly engage in improper conduct. (p. 506; emphasis in the original)

37. Using the end of the fourth century C.E. as a reasonable range for analysis, the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae data base includes at least 258 occurrences of ἀναίδεια, all of demonstrably *negative* … It refers to people who have no proper sense of shame and willingly engage in improper conduct. (Snodgrass 1997:506; emphasis in the original)

38. *Contra* Hultgren (2000:231, n. 23), who also lists *Sirach* 23:11 as an occurrence of ἀναιδὴς. According to our reading of *Sirach,* there is no occurrence of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives in *Sirach* 23:11.

that a woman who has to support (ἐπιχορηγέω) her husband is full of anger, shame (ἀναίδειαν), and disappointment. In *Sirach* 26:11 and 40:30 ἀναίδειαν also carries a negative meaning: In *Sirach* 26:11 fathers are warned when one of their daughters has an impudent (ἀναιδοῦ) eye, and should marvel if such a daughter is not disobedient and in *Sirach* 40:30 the words of a beggar are described as being shameless (ἀναιδοῦς).

In his writings, Josephus uses ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives 17 times[39] and like Joshua ben Sira, always in a negative sense. In *Jewish War* 1.84, for example, Josephus uses ἀναιδέστατον in the context of the murder of Antigonus in 103 BCE – through the machinations of Salome Alexander, the wife of Aristobolus – by the guards of his brother Aristobolus, the first ruler of the Hasmonean dynasty. When Antigonus heard the news that his brother was killed, he cried out 'O you most impudent (ἀναιδέστατον) body,' referring to the 'great crime' he allowed to happen. In *Jewish War* 6.199, Josephus tells of a mother that ate her son during a famine, calling this a shameless (ἀναίδειαν) act, and in *Jewish Antiquities* 20.154 Josephus refers to the lies some told about Nero as a shameless (ἀναιδῶς) deed. A final example from Josephus' *Against Apion*: In *Against Apion* 1.46, Josephus says that some persons write histories without having been near the places in which the events they describe took place. When writing history in this manner, Josephus argues, people abuse the world in a shameless (ἀναιδῶς) way. From these few examples, it is clear that when Josephus uses ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives, it is in a negative way. This is also the case in the other occurrences of the term in his writings.

Finally, *Baruch*, that *inter alia* has as theme God's exiling of Israel to Babylon due to their behaviour, states that God has brought against Israel a shameless nation (ἔθνος ἀναιδὲς) that had no respect for an old man, and no pity for a child (see *Bar.* 4:15; cf. *Dt* 28:50).

Ἀναίδειαν in the writings of the Church Fathers

In the writings of the Church Fathers, we find several occurrences of ἀναίδειαν, some with specific reference to Luke 11:8. Without exception, these writings describe the attitude of the host as negative, depicting him as shameless.[40] Chrysostom, for example, in *On the epistle of St. Paul the apostle to the Ephesians*, writes:

39. See *Jewish War* 1.84, 224, 276, 490, 504, 616; 2.278; 6.199, 337, *Jewish Antiquities* 13.317; 17.119; 20.154, 181, *Life* 1.357, and *Against Apion* 1.46; 2.22, 26, and 2.287. *Contra* Hultgren (2000:231, n. 23), who is of the opinion that Josephus has ten occurrences of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives, including *Jewish Antiquities* 20.357 that does not exist.

40. See, for example, Tertullian (Marc.), Tatian (Diat.), Origen (Comm. Matt.), Augustine (Anic. Fal. Prob.; letter to the widow of Sextus Petronius Probus, 412 CE), Chrysostom (On the epistle of St. Paul the apostle to the Ephesians; Homily XXVII, Hebrews xi. 28–31, written at Rome in 384 CE; Homily XXII, Matt. VI. 28, 29), John Cassian (The Conferences of John Cassian, The first conference of Abbot Isaac, On Prayer, Chapter XXXIV), and Ambrose (Off. I. XXX).

Hast thou never heard of that widow, how by her importunity she prevailed? (Luke xviii. 1–7). Hast thou never heard of that friend, who at midnight shamed his friend into yielding by his perseverance? (Luke xi. 5–8) (Schaff 1890:206)

Ἀναίδειαν in the LXX

The LXX (excluding the references to *Sirach* and *Baruch* above) has nine occurrences of ἀναίδειαν. In his prophecy against the house of Eli, the author of 1 Samuel accuses Eli that they look with a greedy (ἀναιδεῖ) eye at the sacrifices that the Lord demands, and in Isaiah 56:10–11 Israel's watchmen are described as being blind and without knowledge, as dogs that are mute with an insatiable (ἀναιδεῖς) appetite (Is 56:11). These two uses of ἀναίδειαν are clearly negative. In the other occurrences of ἀναίδειαν in the LXX, the word is also, and without exception, used in a negative sense. In Proverbs 7:13 the shameful lying face of an adulteress is described as ἀναιδεῖ δὲ προσώπῳ; Proverbs 21:29 describes the face of a godless man as bold (ἀναιδῶς); and Proverbs 25:23 states that someone who does not show due respect for another person by showing a cheeky or angry (ἀναιδεῖ) face, provokes the tongue. In Deuteronomy 28:50 Israel is warned that if they do not carefully follow all the commands of the Lord, he will bring a nation against them that is fierce-looking (ἀναιδὲς προσώπῳ), and has no respect for the old or pity for the young. In Jeremiah 8:5, Jeremiah describes the people of Judah as people who shamelessly (ἀναιδῆ) turned away from the Lord and who are full of deceit, and Ecclesiastes 8:1 describes the face of the wise man as not hard (ἀναιδὴς προσώπῳ). In Daniel 8:23 (see also Dn Th 8:23), the goat in Daniel's vision (cf. Dn 8:5–8), most probably a reference to Alexander the Great, is described as a stern-faced (ἀναιδὴς προσώπῳ) king who will cause devastation and deceit to prosper (Dn 8:24–25) and in Daniel Th 2:15, Daniel describes Nebuchadnezzar's decree – that he will cut his astrologers into pieces and turn their houses into piles of rubble if they do not tell him what his dream was and interpret it (cf. Dn 2:5) – as harsh (ἡ γνώμη ἡ ἀναιδὴς). Thus, without exception, ἀναίδειαν is used in the LXX to refer to something that is considered as negative.

Ἀναίδειαν in Graeco–Roman writings

As is the case in the writings of the Church Fathers, Graeco-Roman writings also have several occurrences of the use of ἀναίδειαν, and again, without exception, use ἀναίδειαν to describe negative attitudes, actions, or personal traits. A few examples will suffice.[41] *Sibylline Oracles* 4.24–36 compares holy men with men who commit murder, barter for

41. See, for example, also Homer (*Od.* 22.424), Archilochus (*Archil.* 78), Sophocles (*El.* 607), Herodotus (*Hist.* 6.129; 7.210), Aristophanes (*Fr.* 226), Plato (*Phaed.* 254d), Herodianus (*Hdn. Gr.* 2.453), Aristotle (*Top.* 150b), Demosthenes (*Theocr.* 6, Oratio 24), Menander Comicus (*Frag.* 1090.1–2) and Dio Cassius (*Rom. Hist.* 45.16.1).

dishonest gain, and abuse other males sexually. These men's actions and affections, according to *Sibylline Oracles* 4.36, are set on shamelessness (ἀναιδείην). Plato, in *Leges* 647a, describes the man who fears the law as modest, and the man who opposes the law as immodest (ἀναίδειαν). Demosthenes, *In Midiam* 62, *Oratio* 21, writes that no one 'has ever been so lost to shame (ἀναίδεια) as to venture on such conduct as this,' and in his *In Theocrinem* 6, *Oratio* 4, he writes that 'so far as effrontery (ἀναίδεια) goes, such a man is ready to do anything.' Plutarch (1936) also uses the word in a negative way. In *Moralia* 31.2 he writes that when shamelessness (ἀναίδεια) and jealousy rule men:

> [S]hame (αἰδώς) and indignation leave our race altogether, since shamelessness (ἀναίδεια) and jealousy are the negation of these things whereas shamelessness (ἀναίδεια) is not a counterfeit of shame, but its extreme opposite, masquerading as frankness of speech.[42]

And in *Isis and Osiris* 363F–364A he says that God hates ἀναίδεια. Xenophon (*Symp.* 8.36), as a final example, states that what to be worshiped is not impudence (ἀναίδεια), but modesty (εἰδῶ).

Ἀναίδειαν in early Christian literature

There are three occurrences of ἀναίδειαν in the Shepherd of Hermas' *Vision* and *Mandate*. In Shepherd of Hermas, *Vision* 3.3.2, Hermas, because he keeps on inquiring about a specific topic wanting to know everything, is described as being shameless (ἀναιδὴς). And when he asks a question that is too upfront, he is described as being shameless (ἀναιδευσάμενος; Herm. *Vis.* 3.7.5). In Shepherd of Hermas, *Mandate* 11.1.12, the man who thinks he has the Spirit, but in fact is possessed by an earthly spirit, is described as someone who wishes to have the best seat, who is bold, shameless (ἀναιδὴς) and talkative, who lives in the midst of many luxuries and many other delusions, and takes rewards for his prophecy. Basil, in his *On the renunciation of the world* 31.648.21, is of the opinion that high-mindedness, boldness and shamelessness (ἀναίδεια), are the imitation of the devil. Thus, as these examples suggest, also in early Christian literature the use of ἀναίδειαν is linked to negative character traits.

Ἀναίδειαν in an inscription on a stone in the Areopagus

A final example of the negative connotation of ἀναίδειαν is an inscription on the stone in the Areopagus on which the accuser stood, demanding the full penalty of the law against one accused of homicide. This stone is called the λίθος ἀναίδειας (stone of outrage), a clear negative use of ἀναίδειαν (see Liddel & Scott 1968:105).

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42. The translations of *In Midiam* 62, *Oratio* 21, *In Theocrinem* 6, *Oratio* 4, and *Moralia* 31.2 are from Snodgrass (2008:493).

■ Ἀναίδειαν in Roman-Egypt papyri

The above discussed occurrences of ἀναίδειαν in early Jewish and patristic literature, the LXX, Graeco-Roman and early Christian writings, and the one inscription on a stone in the Areopagus indicate that ἀναίδειαν is used, without exception, in the context of negative attitudes, actions and character traits. Do the occurrences of ἀναίδειαν in available Roman-Egypt papyri support this unanimous use of the term?

To our knowledge, no comprehensive study of the occurrences and meaning of ἀναίδειαν in available papyri has been done yet. In scholarship on the parable of the Friend at Midnight, only a few references are made to papyrological evidence when it comes to the possible meaning of ἀναίδειαν.[43] A search of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives in available Roman-Egypt papyri yielded nine occurrences. These occurrences will now be discussed, and the conclusion reached is that the use of the term in Roman-Egypt papyri concurs with the consensus that ἀναίδειαν always carries a negative meaning.

▌P.Cair.Isid. 75

P.Cair.Isid. 75, dated 24 October 316, originates from the Karanis village in the Arsinoite nome and consists of a petition submitted by Isidorus, son of Ptolemaeus, to Aurelius Gerontius, praepositus of the fifth pagus of the said nome. In the petition, Isidorus complains that on the previous day at mid-hour while he was working on his land, six fellow villagers, who were drunk and previously had no complaints about him, broke into his house by splitting the door, and smashing his furniture. If the women in the house had not called for help, Isidorus states, they would have damaged the premises also. In the petition, Isidorus alleges that the culprits felt secure from punishment by reason of their wealth. Their act he considers as shameful, and therefore asks for the law to takes its due course, an action on which he would settle:

αὐτοῖς ἐπεβουλεύοντο. ὅθεν τῆς τηλικαύτης αὐτῶν ἀναιδίας(*)
δεομένης τῆς ἀπὸ τῶν νόμων ἐπεξελεύσεως τῶν τε
θυρῶν καὶ τῶν συντριβέντων σκευῶν φανερῶν ὄντων,
ἀναγκαίως τὰ ἔγγραφα ἐπιδίδωμι ἀξιῶν αὐτ[ο]ὺς ἀχθῆναι ἐπὶ σοῦ

43. BAGD:54 only lists the occurrence of ἀναιδὴς in P.Lond. II 342 and ἀναιδευόμενοι in P.Ryl. II 141. Snodgrass (1997:506, n. 1) refers to five occurrences of ἀναίδειαν in the Duke Papyri (from the Packard Humanities Institute CD-ROM), stating that these occurrences all show 'the same understanding as those in the TLG data base.' He, however, does not present his analysis of the five occurrences referred to. See also Snodgrass (2008:733, n. 23).

20. ἵνα τὰ ἀκόλουθα τοῖς νόμοις πραχθῆναι δυνηθῇ, ὃ παραπη–
    συχάσω(*) ἐπὶ τούτοις. διευτύχει.[44]

According to Isidorus, it is clear that the perpetrators had no sense of shame (ἀναιδίας) and willingly engaged in improper conduct. In P.Cair.Isid. 75.16 the term clearly has a negative connotation.

P.Lond. II 342

P.Lond. II 342 originates from the Socnopaie Nesus village in the Arsinoite nome and is dated 21 June 217. The papyrus consists of a petition by Pabous to the benefactors of the village regarding the oppressive conduct of Sempronius, a πρεσβύτερος from the village. In his petition, Pabous tells of an incident during which Sempronius and other persons who accompanied him came to his house and falsely accused two of his relatives, Ekysis and Ephonychos, of some wrongdoing. After the accusation they left but came back later and violently tried to force him to hand over the two alleged wrongdoers. Pabous then states in P.Lond II 342.15 that Sempronius is shameless (ἀναιδὴς; P.Lond II 342.14), because:

15. ἐν τῇ κώμη καὶ παρ᾽ ἑκάστα λογείας
    ποιεῖται καὶ ἐργολάβει τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς
    κώμης καὶ τείρωνας(*) κυνηγῆσαι
    ὕστερον ἀργυρισθεὶς ἀπέλυσεν αὐτοὺς

Thus, according to Pabous, Sempronius is oppressive. He levies contributions on the villagers and forces some of the villagers to assist him in his hunting expeditions. Above all, Pabous had to pay a bribe to resolve the matter. This is why Sempronius is shameless: He has no shame to use his position to be oppressive, levy contributions and force people to help him. He uses violence, accuses people falsely, and takes bribes. He engages in improper conduct and is, therefore, a shameless person.

P.Oxy. 41.2996

This papyrus is a private letter from Anthestianus to Psois, originates from the Oxyrhynchus nome and dates to the 2nd century CE. In the letter, Anthestianus

44. Therefore, because of the gross shame of their plans, and what they would have done, it is required of the persecuting law to act on the door and the vessels which are evidently shattered, I give this necessary document, asking them to be brought before you, so that in conformity with the laws it can be made possible to exact punishment. I shall settle on this. May you continue prosperous (author's own paraphrased translation).

reminds Psois of the visit of Sarapammom, whom he sent to yet again ask Psois to settle the outstanding debt he accumulated over time. He owes Anthestianus seven hundred drachmas for chaff, the hire of animals for the transportation of the chaff and soil he bought. He also owes Horion the potter fifty drachmas and wine. Psois, however, was full of excuses for not paying. Anthestianus, therefore, has asked his friend, Dionysius, to pay him a visit and demand from him what he owes. He also wrote to Sarapammom asking him to again visit Psois, so that Sarapammom will:

40. θεῖν πάλιν πρὸς σ[ὲ] ἵ(*)να μὴ
      ἀναιδομαχῇς ἀ[γν]ωμο–νῶν πρὸς τὴν ἀπαίτησιν
      προφασιζόμενος, ἀλλὰ
      πάντως εὐγνωμόνησ[ο]ν
40. [again go to you so that (Psois) will not
      continue to quarrel with no shame,
      disregarding my demand
      and making excuses, but
      comply without fail].

Psois, according to Anthestianus, is a shameless person because instead of settling his long outstanding debts, disregard to Anthestianus' demands, and is full of excuses for not paying. He thus engages in improper conduct with no shame.

▉ P.Ryl. II 141

P.Ryl. II 141 is a petition of an unknown farmer to Gaius Trebius Justus, a centurion from Petermouthis; a farmer of state land and collector of public dues, and also a farmer on the estate of Antonia, the wife of Drusus. The petition originates from Euhemeria in the Arsinoite nome and is dated 28 April to 25 May 37 CE.[45] In the petition, the farmer states that while he was talking to the shepherds Papontos, son of Orsenouphis, and Apion, also known as Kapareis, on what they owe him for damages for their flocks grazing on his lands (P.Ryl. II 141.11–17), the two shepherds:

      ἔδωκάν μοι
      πληγὰς πλείους ἀναιδευ–
20. όμενοι μὴ ἀποδῶναι(*)
      [they attacked
      me with blows,
20. shamelessly refusing to pay].

....
45. The petition is written in the first year of Gaius Caesar Imperator, thus in 37 CE (see P.Ryl. II 141.9–11).

As a result, the farmer continues, he has lost 40 silver drachmae he had with him from the sale of opium, and his belt. The shepherds thus not only refused to pay, they also robbed him. What we have in P.Ryl. II 141 concurs with P.Oxy. 41.2996. In both cases, persons who owe money shamelessly refuse to pay. P.Ryl. II 141 also concurs with P.Lond. II 342 regarding the use of violence. Refusing to pay what is owed, and the use of violence is to engage in improper conduct with no shame.

SB 6.9105

Sb 6.9105 is a petition from Gaius Lucretius Papirianus to Philoppos, the chosen εἰρηνοφύλαξ (guardian of the pace) of Theadelpheia, to act against an official named Ababikein who unlawfully collected tax from a cripple. The provenance of the petition is the Arsinoite nome and is dated 1 August 198 CE. In his petition, Gaius Lucretius Papirianus states that Ababikein came to his orchard where he came across and injured the cripple who has been released by the governor from paying poll tax. Ababikein, however, overstepped his authority by extorting the poll tax from the cripple on the pretext of the authority of the elders. This act Gaius Lucretius Papirianus describes as shameful (τὰς ἀναιδείας; Sb 6.9105.9). This, however, was not the first time Ababikein acted in a shameful manner, as can been deduced from Sb 6.9105.8–12:

> …. οὐκ ἀγνοεῖς
> τὰς ἀναιδείας καὶ τὰς πει–
10. ράσεις τὰς περὶ Ἀβαβῖ–
> κειν, ᾧ καὶ ἄλλοτε πλη–
> γὰς ἐπέθηκας ἀναιδειῶν
> [You are not unaware
> of the shamelessness and you]
10. [will testify, regarding Ababi–
> kein, who also at another time, you had
> set blows on account of shamelessness].

It thus seems that Ababikein not only engaged in shameful acts but that his overall behaviour was that of a shameful person, engaging in improper conduct with no shame when collecting taxes.

SB 6.9387

SB 6.9387 originates from Ibion Eikosipentaruron in the Arsinoite nome and is dated 2nd to 3rd century CE. The papyrus is a private letter from Heron to an unknown addressee, in which he asks that the commander of the infantry should be removed, and to give him advice on the neglect by someone regarding three palm

groves and one fir tree of Hermopolis Themistou in the olive garden and the palm grove of Tonaitianes. This neglect, Heron describes as shameful (ἀναιδῶς) conduct (SB 6.9387.9).

SB 6.9421

SB 6.9421 is dated 300–400 CE, originates from Oxyrhynchus, and is a complaint lodged by Aurelius A[---], also known as Aphynchis, former exhibitor of games in the city of the Oxyrhynchites. The complaint is addressed to Aurelius Alexander, a police magistrate, and states that he was mistreated and assaulted by Didyme, wife of Agathos Daimon, the cook. In his complaint Aphynchis states that during the previous evening Didyme, while passing his house and seeing him and his family standing outside his house, started to insult him, using language that could not be repeated. When he asked her to stop insulting him and leave, she leaped at him and hit him. After this, she also insulted some of his daughter's sons. Because of these actions, he describes Didyme as γυνὴ ἀναιδείᾳ μεγίστη καὶ θράσει κεχορηγημένη – a women greatly furnished with shame and brutality (SB 6.9421.12–13). From this context, it is clear that ἀναιδείᾳ here carries a negative meaning.

SB 6.9458

Sb.6.9458, a complaint regarding excessive cargo fees, is dated in the second half of the second century and originates from the village Tebtynis in the Arsinoite nome. In his complaint, the petitioner, a priest named Kronion Pakebkis of Harpochration, complains that Kronios – a certain daring man (τινὸς ἀνθρώπου τολμηροῦ;[46] SB 6.9458.5–6) – was overcharging people on transportation costs (cargo costs) for wheat brought into the harbour. Transportation cost for one bag of wheat normally is 19 obol, but Kronios demanded from him 30 obols per bag of wheat. By charging this, Kronios wanted to make an unacceptable profit. Kronion was not willing to pay what Kronios demanded and only paid the normal price. Kronios was not happy with this. When Kronion was not at home, Kronios went to his home, acted violently, and made one of Kronion's slave girls strip naked in the middle of the street. Kronios even went further, as this was not enough, he victimised the slave girl. After this incident, Kronion did speak with Kronios, but he paid no heed to what Kronion told him. The

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46. Semantically linked to τόλμημα, -ατος which could be a 'daring act' or 'shameless act' (cf. P.Oslo 2.22.5–6, P.Col 6.47, P.Mich 3.174.9, P.Mich 6.423.26). See also *Sirach* 8:15, 9:2–3 where actions described by using the word τόλμημα and its derivatives (τολμάω, τολμηρός) are clearly acts which would be deemed as shameless (*inter alia* drunkenness, giving insults and the use of violence).

behaviour of Kronios, especially the overcharging of cargo fees, according to Kronion, is shameful (ἀναιδείᾳ; SB 6.9458.11).

P.Sakaon 48

P.Sakaon 48 is dated 6 April 343 CE and originates from the village of Theadelphia in the Arsinoite nome. The papyrus consists of a quite lengthy petition from Aurelius Zoilos, son of Melas and deacon of the principal church in Theadelphia, to Aurelius, curialis and praepositus of the eighth pagus of the Arsinoite nome. In his petition Aurelius Zoilos states that his late son, Gèrontios, married Nonna, the daughter of Annous. When Gèrontios became sick, Sakaon, also from Theadelphia, took possession of Aurelius Zoilos' house, and by assault abducted Nonna and carried her off to his own house. This act, he later heard, was done with the support of Nonna's mother and Sakoan's brothers. Later his other son, Pasis, after Gèrontios passed away, witnessed how Sakaon and his brothers ill-treated his grandfather. They were about to chop up his cloak with axes, and when Pasis intervened he was attacked with axes and clubs. Luckily Pasis was able to take flight, otherwise, he would have been killed. Since this incident, Sakaon and his brothers also carried off sheep, 16 oxen, and 5 asses that his sons had on lease, leaving Aurelius Zoilos with the responsibility to replace the asses as expected by the owner.

In his petition Aurelius Zoilos describes these acts as lawless and audacious (οὗ [ἐτ]όλμησαν ῥιψοκινδύνου πράγματος; P.Sakaon 48.12–13),[47] and considers it as shameful behaviour, as he states in P.Sakaon 48.4: οἱ τὸν ἀν[αιδ]ῆ [κ]αὶ ληστρικὸν [τρό]πον ἡρημ[έ]ν[ο]ι, καθαρώτατε τῶν [ἀ]νδρῶν, δίκα[ιοί εἰ]σι <τῆς> τῶν νόμων [Those who have chosen the way of shame and robbery, O purest of men, deserve to experience the visitation of laws].

Robbery, assault, malicious damage to property, theft and the use of violence, according to P.Sakaon 48, is the way of shame.

The above analysis of the ten occurrences of ἀναίδειαν and its derivatives in nine Roman-Egypt papyri concurs with the negative meaning of the term in early Jewish and patristic writings, the LXX, Graeco-Roman and early Christian writings, and the one inscription in which ἀναίδειας occurs. As in these literary sources, the term is consistently used in a negative and pejorative manner, referring to a willing and shameful participation in improper conduct; robbery, assault, swearing, housebreaking, malicious damage to property; illegal levy of contributions, forcing people to do something against their will; the use of violence, accusing people falsely, taking bribes, non-settling of outstanding debt; non-retribution for damages caused, unlawful collection of taxes, negligence of responsibilities; and oppressive behaviour.

....

47. See also παρανόμου καὶ ῥι[ψοκινδύνου] πράγματος in P.Sakaon 48.23.

■ Ἀναίδειαν in Luke 11:5–8

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that ἀναίδειαν has a negative and pejorative meaning. As stated by Herzog (1994:202): The 'meaning of *anaideian* remained consistently censorious from the classical through the Hellenistic and early church periods.' The papyrological evidence discussed above attests to Herzog's conclusion. Regarding the meaning of the term, Herzog (1994:212–213) has concluded that the meaning of ἀναίδειαν (and its related forms) fits into two major categories; greed, and behaviour that violate socially and religiously sanctioned boundaries. Papyrological evidence attests especially to the latter meaning of the term, namely willing and shameful participation in improper conduct (e.g. robbery, the use of violence, swearing, illegal levy of contributions, taking bribes, non-settling of outstanding debt, non-retribution for damages caused, unlawful collection of taxes, negligence of responsibilities, and oppressive behaviour). In short, the meaning of ἀναίδειαν refers to a shameful act that is considered as improper and unacceptable in terms of socially accepted norms.[48]

Defined as such, what is the implication for understanding the term in Luke 11:8?

- Firstly, the meaning of ἀναίδειαν in Luke 11:8 simply cannot have a positive meaning. There are, however, scholars who argue for a positive meaning of ἀναίδειαν. Derrett (1978:84), for example, tries to solve the pejorative meaning of ἀναίδειαν in Luke 11:8 by arguing that the word's meaning had shifted from an invariably pejorative to a more neutral meaning of 'boldly' or 'unselfconsciously'. Derrett's understanding of ἀναίδειαν in Luke 11:8 is representative of interpreters of the parable who, like Derrett, see the neighbour in the parable as a reference to God. If the neighbour in the parable represents God it creates a problem, since God cannot be characterised in a negative way. Ἀναίδειαν therefore cannot have a negative meaning, because God cannot be depicted as having no shame. To solve this problem, ἀναίδειαν is translated as 'importunity' or 'shameless boldness' (Herzog 1994:202; see also Snodgrass 2008:443), giving ἀναίδειαν a neutral

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48. Some scholars often render the meaning of ἀναίδειαν as importunity or persistence (see e.g. Donahue 1988:185; Funk, Hoover & The Jesus Seminar 1993:327; Kistemaker 1980:150; Lockyer 1963:264). Regarding these translations, Malina and Rohrbaugh (2003) make the following important comment:

> Western commentaries notwithstanding, there is no evidence that the Greek word rendered 'importunity' (RSV) or 'persistence' (NRSV) ever had those meanings in antiquity. The fact is that the word means 'shamelessness', the negative quality of lacking sensitivity (as sense of shame) to one's public honor status. (p. 273)

See also Hultgren (2000:231) and Scott (1989:91) for the translation of ἀναίδειαν as shamelessness, that is, conduct that is considered as shameful because it is considered as improper and unacceptable in terms of socially accepted norms.

(positive) meaning. If one, however, interprets the parable as a realistic story about village life in 1st-century Palestine, the neighbour is not a reference to God, but simply a villager being asked for help by a co-villager. From this perspective, there is no conundrum that has to be solved regarding the meaning of ἀναίδειαν. To this possible reading we return below.

• Secondly, and linked to the above, interpretations of the parable that link ἀναίδειαν to the attitude or actions of the host, although interpreting ἀναίδειαν as a negative term, should be dismissed. This understanding of ἀναίδειαν also takes as point of departure that the neighbour in the parable is a symbol of God. Ἀναίδειαν, because of its negative meaning, therefore can only refer to the attitude of the host. If not, the parable does not pay much of a compliment to God and leads to a 'theological morass', as it pictures God as a reluctant grouch who only answers prayers out of divine shame (Buttrick 2000:186). These interpretations should be dismissed because of the syntactical structure of Luke 11:8. In Luke 11:8, that reads λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ καὶ οὐ δώσει αὐτῷ ἀναστὰς διὰ τὸ εἶναι φίλον αὐτοῦ, διά γε τὴν ἀναίδειαν αὐτοῦ ἐγερθεὶς δώσει αὐτῷ ὅσων χρῄζει, the αὐτοῦ in Luke 11:8b is clearly linked to the ἀναίδειαν of the giver (host).[49]

With the above taken into consideration, what is a possible interpretation of the ἀναίδειαν of the neighbour in the parable? Put differently: Why does the parable portray the actions of the neighbour as negative? To answer this question, at least two things are important when reading the parable. Firstly, one has to picture the possible economic and political background that is presumed by the parable. And secondly, one has to determine, as far as possible, what was considered as normal and acceptable behaviour in village life in 1st-century Palestine.[50]

In 1st-century Jewish Palestine, the relationship between the ruling elite and the ruled peasantry was one of power and exploitation, especially by means of rents, taxes and tolls. The peasantry also had to cope with drought, famine, floods, overgrazing, overpopulation and scarce land. These conditions left the peasantry on the edge of destitution (see Herzog 1994:206), and had a negative impact on traditional village life and village values (esp. hospitality). Most villagers were under tremendous pressure to survive, which impacted heavily on the relationships between families (Herzog 1994:207). Some villagers, who previously felt responsible for helping their neighbours in times of shortage, were no longer willing to do so. Some even started to mimic their Roman overlords and the Jewish temple elite by setting up patron-client relationships with co-peasants and villagers. For them the solution for survival was balanced reciprocity; they

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49. See also Oakman (2008):

> The neighbor's importunity is often seen as the point of the similitude, but I take the second *autou* of 11:8 to refer to the man in bed, not the man at the door. (p. 94; emphasis in the original)

50. For a detailed analysis of the parable, see Van Eck (2011:1–14 of 14).

would help, but wanted something in return. General reciprocity thus was replaced by balanced reciprocity.

What was considered as 'normal' behaviour in 1st-century village life? Van Eck (2011:10–11 of 14) has indicated the following:

- receiving unexpected visitors (friends) as family
- extending hospitality to friends as a normalcy, a guest (friend) of one villager was considered to be a guest of the entire village
- treating a guest with honour was the responsibility of the entire village
- to ask for help from other villagers to feed (honour) an unexpected guest.

The host, therefore, asking a neighbour for bread in the middle of the night to feed a guest was normal behaviour. Put differently, there is no ἀναίδειαν (shamelessness) involved in his request. But the same cannot be said of the reaction of the neighbour inside the door. He is not interested in friendship and being hospitable. He, however, has an offer to make. Because of his ἀναίδειαν (shamelessness), he is willing to treat the host as a client. He will help, but only in terms of balanced reciprocity. He will help, but wants to get something out of the 'transaction'. And this, in terms of the socially accepted norms and values of village life, was improper and unacceptable – it was ἀναίδειαν (a shameless action). One of the exploited became an exploiter himself.

■ Ἀναίδειαν and 'Life in its fullness'

Since this chapter is part of the centenary celebration of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria, a final word is appropriate. The Faculty of Theology's Faculty Research Theme (FRT) is *Oikodome – Life in its fullness*. With this theme the Faculty aims, in its academic discourse, to be relevant in the South African society (see Kok 2015:1). In what sense does our academic discourse contribute to social cohesion in South Africa, our ethical norms and especially the weak in our society? Is our academic discourse practiced in the so-called ivory tower, or does it contribute to life in its fullness?

For the historical Jesus, from this perspective, life in its fullness was the kingdom of God. In his parables, Jesus offered his hearers a different world than that created by the privilege and power of those in power (Hoover 2001:92); a world that was just and in which everyone had enough. The implications of the study of the meaning of ἀναίδειαν in the parable of the Friend at Midnight is evident; where ἀναίδειαν is present, the kingdom of God (life in its fullness) is not. Life in its fullness will also be present where neighbours treat others as kin, practice general reciprocity – giving without expecting to get something in return.

█ Summary: Chapter 10

The aim of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, the chapter presents a comprehensive study of the meaning of the term ἀναίδειαν in extant papyrological evidence. The conclusion reached is that the term, as is the case in early Jewish and patristic writings, the LXX, Graeco-Roman literature and in early Christian writings, always carries a negative and pejorative meaning. This meaning of the term is then used to interpret the occurrence of ἀναίδειαν in the parable of the Friend at Midnight. Secondly, as part of a publication that celebrates the centenary of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria, a few remarks are made with regard to the Faculty of Theology's Faculty Research Theme (*Oikodome – Life in its fullness*) and the attitude of ἀναίδειαν as depicted in the parable.

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This scholarly book offers a coherent and conceptual portrayal of aspects regarding the theological research theme, entitled *Ecodomy* (literally meaning to 'build a house'). In its figurative meaning the umbrella term *Ecodomy* comprises 'life in its fullness', ranging from aspects of 'brokenness' to aspects of 'wholeness'. With perspectives on various theological disciplines, inter alia Old Testament Studies, New Testament Studies, Systematic Theology, Church History and Practical Theology both aspects of 'brokenness' and 'wholeness' are addressed theologically and exemplary.

The book comprises two parts, one with the overarching theme of 'brokenness' and the other 'wholeness', while providing the key focus in each part. Every chapter is written from the perspective of a specific theological discipline, while the combination of theological disciplines addresses the 'brokenness' and 'wholeness' of life as coherent concepts throughout the book. The one polar theme does not exclude the other. Therefore every chapter reflects an interwovenness of these two polar themes.

In the first part of the book 'brokenness' is described in terms of recent relevant societal challenges, such as racism and xenophobia, apartheid, foreignness and exclusivism, leadership crises, violence and war, fairness and justice. Contrasting this, the second part of the book describes 'wholeness' as embedded in themes such as the African concept of ubuntu, a life of faith and wisdom, reconciling leadership, or transforming space and community. Ultimately, the Greek term ἀναίδεια (persistence) is connected to the meaning of *Ecodomy*, namely 'life in its fullness'.

Ecodomy – Life in its fullness contributes to selected aspects of a broken life in society and attempts to open up avenues to healing experiences of human life. Several themes touch on relevant challenges which have contributed to the brokenness of life, not only in South Africa, but also globally. Scholars engage in critical scholarship with life and the South African history in order to address the 'brokenness' of human behaviour, structures or systems. In order to open up the avenues of experiences of 'wholeness' of life, every contribution proposes exciting analyses and suggestions.

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