

Koers

The background is a detailed historical map of the world, showing continents like Africa, Asia, and Europe. A large, 3D cross is superimposed on the map, with a bright, glowing beam of light emanating from its center. The map includes various geographical labels and a grid of latitude and longitude lines.

Wetenskap in die lig van die Môrester
Scholarship in the light of the Morning Star

Festschrift: B.J. (Bennie) van der Walt

Wetenskap in die lig van die Mōrester
Scholarship in the light of the Morning Star

Artikels opgedra aan / Essays dedicated to:
Barend Johannes (Bennie) van der Walt



The prophetic Word was confirmed to us. You'll do well to keep focusing on it. It's the one light you have in a dark time as you wait for daybreak and the rising of the Morning Star in your hearts.

(2 Peter 1:19; cf. Revelation 22:16.)



Barend Johannes (Bennie) van der Walt

KOERS



BULLETIN VIR CHRISTELIKE WETENSKAP
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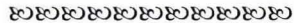
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BULLETIN VIR CHRISTELIKE WETENSKAP

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Inhoudsopgawe / Table of contents

Voorwoord / Preamble	xv
Erkenningsboodskappe / Messages of acknowledgment	
<i>N. Lantinga</i>	
Bennie and IAPCHE	xix
<i>J.J. Venter</i>	
Uit die skatkis van herinnerings: Instituut vir Reforma- toriese Studie	xx
<i>M.F. Heyns</i>	
Prof. (B.J.) Bennie van der Walt en Filosofie	xxi
<i>J. Swanepoel</i>	
Groete – Reformatoriese Beweging van Suider-Afrika	xxii
<i>A.L. Combrink</i>	
Bennie van der Walt – 'n huldeblyk	xxiii

Persoonlike boodskappe / Personal messages

R. Letšosa

Professor B.J. van der Walt: a very complex and dynamic configuration of a variety of functions centrally religiously directed in all his actions xxvii

K.A. Brill

Voor Bennie en Hanneltjie van der Walt: herinneringen aan meer dan 40 jaren vriendschap xxxi

J.C. Vander Stelt

B.J. van der Walt: consummate educator xxxv

Perspektiewe / Perspectives

S. Bishop

Interview with Bennie van der Walt xli

B.J. van der Walt

'n Voetpad deur die werklikheid – filosofiese memoires lxix

Navorsingsartikels / Research articles

S. Griffioen

Een concentratieprobleem bij B.J. van der Walt / *B.J. van der Walt's concentration problem* 1

E.S.A. Ayee

Reflecting on our past: reconciling a divided nation through listening / *Besinning oor ons verlede: versoening van 'n verdeelde nasie deur te luister* 15

Y. Turaki

Professor Bennie van der Walt: a bridge between white Afrikaners and black Africans / *Professor Bennie van der Walt: 'n brugbouer tussen wit Afrikaners en swart Afrikane* 33

D.F.M. Strauss

Die sentrale plek van 'n lewens- en wêreldbeskouing / *The central place of a life- and worldview* 53

<i>J.L. van der Walt</i>	
Religion in education: is there yet another solution? / <i>Godsdiens in die onderwys: is daar nie tog 'n ander oplossing nie?</i>	79
<i>E. Schuurman</i>	
De strijd om de richting van de Westerse cultuur / <i>The struggle around the direction of Western culture</i>	99
<i>C.G. Seerveld</i>	
A Christian mission of glocal culture within riven societies in God's world / <i>'n Christelike missie van glokale kultuur binne gebroke samelewings in God se wêreld</i>	115
<i>S. Fowler</i>	
Towards authentic development / <i>Op pad na egte ontwikkeling</i>	135
<i>R. Coletto</i>	
Traces of neo-Calvinism in France and Italy / <i>Spore van neo-Calvinisme in Frankryk en Italië</i>	149
<i>H.A. van Belle</i>	
Reflections on a Christian view of human communication / <i>Reflektering op 'n Christelike uitkyk op menslike kommunikasie</i>	173
<i>J.H. van Wyk</i>	
<i>Hermeneia</i> : 'n teologiese gesprek oor hermeneutiese vrae met drie Suid-Afrikaanse teoloë / <i>"Hermeneia": a theological discourse on hermeneutical issues with three South African theologians</i>	189
<i>M.F. Heyns</i>	
Moraliteit, die opdringerige en die voorwaardelike / <i>Morality, the obtrusive and the conditional</i>	217
<i>F. Sawyer</i>	
A reading of T.S. Eliot's <i>Ash-Wednesday</i>	245

B.J. van der Walt

Geskrifte van B.J. van der Walt: 1960-2010 / <i>Publications of B.J. van der Walt: 1960-2010</i>	267
Voorskrifte vir skrywers / Style sheet	279
Intekenvorm / Subscription form	291



Voorwoord

Dit is 'n eer om in hierdie festschrift hulde te bring aan die Potchefstroomse filosoof, Barend Johannes van der Walt. Professor Van der Walt het oor dekades heen 'n belangrike bydrae tot die reformatoriese filosofie gelewer: in sy navorsing, entoesiastiese onderrig aan die destydse Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys, in sy leierskapsrol in IAPCHE en die IRS en veral ook in die inspirerende wyse waarop hy sy roeping uitleef. Sy talryke publikasies strek oor vakgrense heen om die idee van 'n volle integrering van 'n Christelike perspektief in die alledaagse lewens van mense te belig en te ontwikkel. Professor Bennie van der Walt het 'n besondere sensitiwiteit vir die konteks waarbinne mense werksaam is en ontgin graag die wyse waarop dit ons verstaan van die skepping kan verryk. As een van die stigterslede van IAPCHE (International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education) en as direkteur van die Instituut vir Reformatoriese Studie (IRS) het hy ook 'n grondslag gelê sodat hierdie werk voortgesit kan word.

Professor Van der Walt se bydrae tot filosofie is op internasionale sowel as nasionale vlak erken en vereer. Hy het van Kosin Universiteit, Korea, sowel as Sárospatak Gereformeerde Teologiese Skool in Hongarye ere-doktorsgrade ontvang. Op eie bodem het die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Kuns en Wetenskap in 2010 die Stalsprys vir Filosofie aan Professor Van der Walt toegeken. Hierdie spesiale uitgawe van *Koers* het dit ten doel om die viering van sy wetenskaplike bydrae voort te sit.

Dit is gepas dat die artikels in hierdie uitgawe 'n breë veld van wetenskap reflekteer aangesien Professor Van der Walt se eie werk strek van filosofiese navorsing tot meer vakspesifieke bydraes. Die lys van meer as 700 publikasies, wat in die finale deel van die uitgawe verskyn, getuig van sy omvattende navorsingsbelangstelling.

Die uitgawe bied ook perspektiewe wat van naderby 'n blik gee op Professor Bennie van der Walt se lewe en loopbaan: sy eie memoirs, 'n onderhoud wat Steve Bishop met hom voer, sowel as huldigingsblyke van kollegas bied 'n insiggewende beskrywing van sy persoonlike en filosofiese ontwikkeling. Kollegas, vriende en oud-studente van regoor die wêreld huldig graag die werk van 'n stem uit Potchefstroom wat nog vir baie jare gehoor sal word.

Redaksionele komitee

Preamble

It is an honour to celebrate the Potchefstroom philosopher, Barend Johannes van der Walt, in this Festschrift. Over the past decades, Professor Van der Walt has made a significant contribution to reformational philosophy through his research, passionate teaching at the previous Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, his position of leadership in IAPCHE and the IRS, as well as the inspiring way in which he carries out his vocation.

His many publications stretch across disciplinary boundaries in order to highlight and develop the idea of a complete integration of the Christian perspective in our daily lives. Professor Bennie van der Walt demonstrates a special sensitivity for the context in which people function and draws from this in order to enrich our understanding of creation. As one of the founding members of IAPCHE (International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education) and director of the Institute for Reformational Studies (IRS), he set down the foundation for the continuation of this work.

Professor Van der Walt's significant contribution to philosophy has been acknowledged and honoured at national as well as international level. He has been awarded honorary doctorates by Kosin University, Korea, and Sárospatak Reformed Theological Seminary in Hungary. On home ground, Professor Van der Walt has recently been named the recipient of the South African Academy of Art and Science's Stals Prize for Philosophy. The purpose of this special issue of *Koers* is to continue the celebration of Professor Van der Walt's scholarly achievements.

The articles in this issue aptly reflect a broad field of scholarship. Professor Van der Walt's own work ranges from philosophical inquiries to more subject-specific contributions. The list of more than 700 publications, provided in the final section of this issue, bears

testimony to his extensive research interests. The issue also offers a more in-depth account of Professor Van der Walt's life and career: his own memoirs, an interview conducted by Steve Bishop as well as tributes by colleagues present an insightful perspective on his personal and philosophical development. Colleagues, friends and former students from all over the world celebrate the work of a voice from Potchefstroom that will be heard for many years to come.

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Erkenningsboodskappe / Messages of acknowledgement

Bennie and IAPCHE

In the office of the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE) hangs a picture of the delegates to our founding conference in 1975. In the front row, sandwiched between two larger delegates, sits Bennie van der Walt. His back is straight, pose formal, hair dark. Pictures of recent IAPCHE conferences show the same man (with a slightly lighter hair color). To most he still appears formal, but to those who have moved from respect to friendship can detect the warmth of a friend, and perhaps an earthy joke. Such a reflection is likely to befall many, for in the intervening decades, Bennie has championed IAPCHE's efforts to cultivate a community that "serves Jesus as Lord by fostering, worldwide, the development of integral Christian higher education through networking and related academic activity". Through curiosity, respect, friendship and humor Bennie has demonstrated God's grace at IAPCHE events in Canada, Hungary, India, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Russia, the US and throughout his beloved Africa.

Perhaps because these traits sustained him during the painful apartheid struggles, he was able to reflect on sensitive issues in difficult contexts. For example, Bennie investigated the ways in which various cultures approach or avoid God's structured creation, the testimony of Scripture, and the presence of the Spirit. At a time of increasingly centralised cultural power, Bennie highlighted the variety of faithful cultural practices. Bennie reflected not only on the global diversity of faithful Christians, but also on the mutual relationships between thought and action. Academics can neither hide in a tower nor be confined to ghetto. The "mere" (C.S. Lewis) Christians, who benefit from Bennie's efforts in IAPCHE, continue to praise God for his continuing work faithfully conducted among the peoples from all nations as John depicted in Revelation 7.

N. Lantinga
Executive Director: IAPCHE

Uit die skatkis van herinnerings: Instituut vir Reformatoriese Studie

Bennie van der Walt het die Instituut vir Reformatoriese Studie op die been gebring. In die sewentigerjare van die vorige eeu het die destydse rektor, professor Hennie Bingle en sy raadgewers besluit om die Instituut ter Bevordering van Calvinisme (IBC) tot stand te bring – Bennie van der Walt was die aangewese persoon om die uitvoerende leiding te neem. In 1975 is die eerste internasionale kongres van inrigtings vir tersiêre onderwys in die Calvinistiese tradisie gehou – dit het later die International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education geword. Dit was gedurende die hoog-apartheidstyd, met 'n lang en moeilike stryd tussen die PU vir CHO en die Vrije Universiteit te Amsterdam. Bennie het homself in hierdie tyd laat ken as 'n vredemaker.

Sy taakomskrywing by die IBC, wat later die Instituut vir Reformatoriese Studie geword het, was om die Calvinisme, of te wel die reformatoriese denke, vir gewone mense toeganklik te maak. Bennie het sy taak nie tot die Afrikaanse gemeenskap in Suid-Afrika beperk nie, maar geskrywe en kongresse gehou vir en oor Afrika heen. Hy het verskillende van sy kollegas, nogal huiwerig, aan die ore en baadjiepante saamgesleep. Op hierdie manier het sommige van ons selfs die voorreg gehad om met President Kaunda in sy studeerkamer te gesels, en met die ANC in ballingskap (sonder om in die moeilikheid te kom).

Uit die IRS het onder sy leiding letterlik honderde publikasies in verskillende formate die lig gesien. Omdat hy verstaanbaar geskrywe het, het sowel die lesende publiek as die akademici waarde in sy werk gevind. Die verrassing van die sluiting van die IRS deur die Universiteitsbestuur was pynlik, bevreemdend, miskennend en onnodig soos ook die skade aan verskillende ander vorms van fundamentele werk in hierdie tyd (waaronder die Departement Filosofie). Bennie het 'n taak van die PU vir CHO ontvang, 'n opdrag wat hy, dikwels totaal oorwerk, met nougesetheit tot die einde deurgevoer het. Dat dit sinvol was, blyk uit die feit dat hy na die sluiting van die IRS en na sy aftrede 'n eredoktorsgraad van Kosin Universiteit in Pusan, Korea, ontvang het, en ook een van Karoly Gaspar Universiteit in Hongarye.

J.J. (Ponti) Venter
Instituut vir Reformatoriese Studie

Professor (B.J.) Bennie van der Walt en Filosofie

My eerste herinnering aan professor Bennie is dié van 'n eerstejaarstudent in die Geskiedenis van die Filosofie-klas in die Frans du Toitgebou van die ou PU vir CHO. Hy het die erns oor die vak Filosofie en 'n Christelike perspektief daarop gemeng met humor – wat die vreemdheid en ingewikkeldheid van die Filosofie vir 'n sewentienjarige draaglik gemaak het. En dit is hoe professor Bennie dit steeds doen ... en hoe sy “nageslag” by Filosofie aan die NWU dit behoort te doen.

Ek onthou dat hy altyd baie besig was en nou verstaan ek waarom: iemand wat óór die 700 publikasies in sy lewe gelewer het, het nie baie tyd gehad om ledig te wees nie. Professor Bennie het afgetree, maar is steeds 'n aktiewe skrywer en navorser en steeds onder die top twintig persent uitsetpresteerders van die Noordwes-Universiteit.

Diegene wat sy akademiese invloed ken, weet ook dat hierdie uitset nie net “ivoortoring”-filosofie is nie. Professor Bennie is bekend as die kenner van Afrika-denke in die kringe van die reformatoriese filosofie, en in die kringe van Afrika-Christene is hy bekend as die filosoof wat 'n suiwer Christelike rigting aandui en onvermoeid werk aan die reformasie van Afrika-denke. Hiervoor het hy allerweë in Afrika en verder internasionale erkenning gekry. Die eredoktorsgrade wat hy reeds van Kosin Universiteit in Korea en die Sárospatak GereformeerdeTeologiese Skool in Hongarye ontvang het, spreek hiervan.

Natuurlik moet dit ook genoem word dat hy een van 'n handjievol akademici aan die ou PU vir CHO was wat hulself konsekwent en radikaal teen die ideologie van apartheid verset het – 'n ingesteldheid wat nie altyd sy persoonlike belang as akademikus bevoordeel het nie. Met die insig van terugskouing, is dit egter 'n nalatenskap soos hierdie van professor Van der Walt wat dit moontlik maak om te argumenteer dat daar geweldige krag vir vernuwing in 'n Christelike wêreldbeskouing is.

Professor Bennie het 'n groot invloed gehad op die Skool vir Filosofie aan die Noordwes-Universiteit se Potchefstroomkampus, asook die voormalige Departement Filosofie van die PU vir CHO en het dit nog steeds. Ons eer hom daarvoor en dank die Here wat mense roep en bereid en bekwaam maak – dankie vir die geskenk wat ons in professor Bennie het.

M. Heyns
(Skool vir Filosofie, Noordwes-Universiteit)

Groete – Reformatoriese Beweging van Suider-Afrika

Professor Bennie van der Walt is reeds vir etlike jare ten nouste met die Reformatoriese Beweging van Suid-Afrika (REBSA) geassosieer. Hierdie verbintenis berus op 'n gedeelde strewe, te wete die bevordering van 'n reformatoriese perspektief op die wêreld waarin ons leef. Tipies van hierdie soort Christelike kyk op sake is dat dit 'n integrale visie wil wees. Dit beskou die mens se roeping in God se koninkryk as iets wat op elke samelewingsterrein uitgeleef moet word, nie net op godsdienstige of die kerklike terrein nie. Hierdie uitkyk op sake beywer hom vir voortdurende hervorming; dit wil die samelewing verander. Daarom onderskryf dit nie 'n konserwatiewe vasklou aan die bestaande bedeling nie. Eweneens is dit nie ingestel op die omverwerping van die bestaande by wyse van revolusie nie. Nee, dit wil konstruktief die norme wat uit 'n Christelike oriëntering op ons samelewingsproblematiek voortvloei van toepassing maak.

In die talle jare wat Bennie van der Walt by REBSA betrokke was, eers as redaksielid en later as een van die vier redakteurs, het hy sy talente met ywer vir die verwerkliking van hierdie ideaal beskikbaar gestel. Dit het hy gedoen as skrywer en keurder van artikels vir REBSA se meningstydskrif *Woord en Daad*. In hierdie proses het hy meermale met konstruktiewe kritiek artikelskrywers begelei om hulle standpunte helderder te formuleer.

In sy betrokkenheid by REBSA het hy 'n oog vir dit wat in die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing aan die gang is en wat om hervorming roep. Maar sy oog het ook verder gestrek, na Afrika en na geesgenootlike Christelike gemeenskappe elders in die wêreld.

REBSA is bly om met hierdie Festschrift geassosieer te wees.

J. Swanepoel:
REBSA (Voorsitter)

Bennie van der Walt – 'n huldeblyk

Om 'n huldeblyk of waardering oor professor Bennie van der Walt (“Bennie Boekwurm”) te skryf, is 'n besondere voorreg, nie net uit hoofde van my baie lang persoonlike verbintenis en vriendskap met Bennie nie, maar ook uit hoofde van my redakteurskap van *Koers*, my betrokkenheid as raadslid by die IRS en my betrokkenheid as bestuurslid van die Potchefstroomkampus. Voeg daarby my lang betrokkenheid as die vertaler van baie van Bennie se geskryfte en die prentjie is min of meer volledig.

Ek wil graag my huldeblyk soos volg inkleef: Eerstens Bennie se afkoms en die feit dat hy 'n stoere Dopper is (en tog nie is nie), tweedens sy verknogtheid aan sy mense en sy liefde vir die natuur, derdens iets oor sy status as akademikus en filosoof, vierdens iets oor hom as aktivis en laastens iets oor hom as geroepene, omdat dit die kern van sy menswees omvat en in die aansig waarvan al die ander dinge vervaag.

In die werklike sin van die woord is professor Bennie 'n stoere Dopper – in die beste sin van die woord, maar, soos ek later sal laat blyk, geensins onkrities nie. Dit is seker 'n besondere soort getuigskrif dat hy deur dr. J.D. du Toit (Totius) gedoop kon word – met goeie familienaam, Barend Johannes van der Walt. Professor Bennie bou voort op die voorbeeld van sy ouerhuis met 'n gelukkige huwelik met Hanneltjie, en is 'n vader van formaat vir die drie seuns en die een dogter. 'n Mens hoef nie eens te spekuleer oor hoe 'n goeie oupa hy is nie – al is sy kop dikwels nog in die filosofiewolke. Sy gesin (en nou uitgebreide gesin) is vir Bennie die mikrokosmos waarbinne hy kan leef en werk en die krag opbou om die wyer koninkrykswerk te doen waarvoor hy 'n roeping het.

Dit is nie sonder stampe en stote hier en daar nie, maar sy waardes bly leef in sy gesin. Dit is en bly ook iets besonders dat hy in staat is om sy ander groot liefde op persoonlike vlak, die natuur, saam met sy gesin te kan beoefen. Sy algehele passie vir die natuur, veral in die Drakensberge, wat hulle te voet deurkruis het, is maar net een sigbare uitlewing van sy noue saamleef met sy Skepper.

Filosoof en akademikus

As filosoof in die reformatoriese tradisie het Bennie diep spore getrap – en sy leermeesters nie in die skande gesteeke nie. Sy blootstelling aan bepaalde groot geeste het sy eie skoling as filosoof

grondig beïnvloed, en vir Suid-Afrika 'n heel besondere filosoof gegee. Bennie se bydrae tot die reformatoriese filosofie kan moeilik oorskat word, ook in die lig van die feit dat hy sy filosofie “gepopulariseer” het vir 'n baie groter leserspubliek daarbuite. Die feit dat hy in die meer onlangse verlede sy skryfwerk meer akademies gemik het, is ook van groot belang, sodat sy denke ook in die meer akademiese sfeer tot sy reg kon kom. Die feit dat hy in 2008 as die mees produktiefste publiserende dosent aan die Noordwes-Universiteit aangewys kon word, dui daarop dat die werk wat hy oor al die jare gedoen het altyd van hoë kwaliteit was en verdien het om in akademiese tydskrifte gepubliseer te word. Die meer populêre weergawes van sy werk wat oor so 'n lang tyd dwarsoor die wêreld versprei is, was ook altyd van hoogstaande gehalte.

Dwarsdeur sy akademiese loopbaan is daar natuurlik die een kenmerk van Bennie altyd kennelik sigbaar, naamlik sy werklike en wesenlike nederigheid.

Aktivis

Soos baie Afrikaanses uit die sestiger- en sewentigerjare het Bennie ook grootgeword binne die raamwerk van die denke van die tyd, en was hy ook soos baie van ons onbewus van groter en kleiner onregte wat gepleeg is – en waarmee die kerk maar oogluikend saamgegaan het. Bennie se politieke opvoeding het egter sy gang begin gaan en daarom het sake soos die Universiteit se eise rondom sy M.-studie hom ongemaklik gehad. Sy belewenis in Nederland, waar die verguising deur Nederlanders oor Suid-Afrika se apartheidbeleid fel was, en ook sy beleving van die Europese proses van universiteits Hervorming het natuurlik daartoe bygedra dat hy anders gedink het en dit moes noodwendig in sy loopbaan manifesteer. Die feit dat hy ook 'n tydperk in die Transkei deurgebring het, kon nie anders nie as om hom op die versetpaadjie te plaas waar hy oor tyd harde bene gekou het. Dit is veral toe Bennie terug is Potchefstroom toe, en deur die IBC en later die IRS sy grootste lewenswerk gedoen het dat hy werklik as “aktivis” na vore getree het – nie met geweld nie, nie met gegil vanaf openbare verhoë nie, maar met 'n stil, onversetlike rigtingsbewustheid wat die IRS wyd bekend en gerespekteer gemaak het. Die “toemaak” van die IRS en die gepaardgaande afskaling van denke oor die reformatoriese akademiese ideaal was waarskynlik vir hom die grootste persoonlike slag – maar hy het dit met waardigheid gedra en het steeds sy oortuigings uitgespreek. Ook binne die kerk het hy nie opgehou met die stryd nie – Bennie se oortuigings oor die feit dat die kerke ná 1994 die Christelik-nasionale dualisme verwerp het net om

vasgevang te word in die nuwe dualisme van private godsdiens teenoor 'n publieke sekulêre bestaan, verwoord sy frustrasies.

Geroepene

Bennie se beroep was aan die begin mooi uitgestippel – hy word predikant. Soos gesien, het sy paadjie verskeie afdraaie beleef, maar hy het nooit ver van sy roeping beweeg nie, en die besondere manier waarop hy sy beroepslewe bedryf, het in elk geval altyd sy geroopenheid voorop gestel. Hy het vroeg reeds gevoel dat hy liever 'n sendeling as 'n gewone predikant wil word en sy lewenswerk was altyd maar 'n vorm van sendingwerk. Hy bly nog altyd oortuig dat 'n werklike Bybelsbegronde, reformatoriese lewensvisie (wetenskaplik uitgewerk in 'n Christelike filosofie) op *alle* terreine van die lewe in Suid-Afrika en die res van Afrika 'n onontbeerlike rol te speel het, indien die Christelike geloof enige impak buite die eng mure van persoonlike geloof en kerklike lewe wil maak.

Dit is die Bennie wat ek ken en wil huldig – die geroepene in die koninkryk wat in alles wat hy doen steeds die koninkrykswerk voor oë het, en in die volle oortuiging van hierdie insigte altyd sonder huiwering optree, selfs al is die gevolge vir hom persoonlik soms traumaties. Sy sterk gees en roepingsbewustheid dra hom daardeur.

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Persoonlike boodskappe / Personal messages

Professor B.J. van der Walt: a very complex and dynamic configuration of a variety of functions centrally religiously directed in all his actions

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A man of faith

Professor Bennie (*Ramoholo*) is truly a man of faith and a God-fearer. Ramoholo (Grandfather) is the name many of the church members use when referring to him. He is one of the first members of the Kereke ya Gereformeerde Boskop which became independent around 1995. He did a lot of mission work around this congregation before and after its establishment. His contribution was especially leading Bible study sessions from which two sermon books appeared. His house remains open even now and he is never too busy or committed when it comes to issues of faith.

It is unbelievable when one looks at the volume of work under his name and he still puts in time for the work of the Lord. One can see the strength of his faith in the fact that he is always available to give a hand. In most instances when the congregation was still in possession of the kombis for the transportation of the members, it rarely happened that a Sunday would pass without one of them

having a breakdown. In extreme cases both would suffer a breakdown which implied that this Professor Bennie would have to spoil his afternoon sleep, take his bakkie and get into the job of towing the vehicles on a hot, cold or rainy Sunday afternoon. It occasionally also happened that before church services his phone would ring because some of the kombis would not start. To cut a long story short, he would then also become a mechanic before church service. This is only but one aspect of his devotion.

Despite the fact that he was directly involved at the Theological Seminary, he was notorious among almost all the black theological students, sharing his books among us, even once bought some commentaries for us. In this regard he made us humble. During Bible studies we always had our own "Bosberaad" in which we handled most issues concerning the different wards we were serving but also personalia. In a certain sense we became a very close family. We never departed from his house without some tea and biscuits. *Mamoholo* was the woman behind all this as she was always part of the Bible study and her contributions were always of great significance.

Not only was he involved in Bible study and church administration, he was, in fact, an ordained elder in the Reformed Church Boskop with only black membership and moreover in a rural area. As an elder he was also a very active missionary. He conducted services every Sunday at Tenline and Mamoholo helped with the children. Their involvement at ground level meant a lot to the members. Their service did not end in church on Sundays, but became visible even during the course of the week. Once a month he would go to medical practitioners with arrangement of collecting some medication for the elderly people who could not make it during the week to the clinic or to see a doctor. Most members, including the minister, could hardly survive without him.

During church council meetings he was known for his sincerity, humility and honesty. He has a special sight for any impending danger and would always warn in advance. His advise always reflects not only his love for the Reformed Church Boskop but especially for his Master. For a number of years he also acted as secretary for the Bible study group as well as for the church council, which in fact took much of his time.

A man of people

Ramoholo and Mamoholo know many people around the globe – not only because they travelled around the world, but also because they open their doors to people irrespective of their race. Their home in some sense became a guest house run at their own expense. They not only understand, but also practice the words in Hebrews 13 that we always have to accept guests, because in so doing we might unknowingly welcome angels in our homes. The Van der Walt family can be a witness to this.

His philosophy

One thing that Professor Van der Walt hates in life is the idea of dividing a person into different sections. He emphasises the holistic viewpoint of a person. A human being, to him, is a very complex and dynamic configuration of a variety of functions centrally religiously directed in all his/her actions. This viewpoint of what a human being is, in fact is of great benefit to people in understanding their response to God and his creation. In all his writings he stresses the fact that people should not accept the status quo uncritically. They are in the world but not of the world and thus have to respond positively and not to withdraw from the world. Christians' faith should not be reserved to the church, but should grow out of the church into the world to make a difference. To sum up Professor Bennie's philosophy: one can call him the reformer of the modern era.

His family

In addition to his biological children, God blessed him with a number of other children of which I am one. My experience with him testifies to numerous things about him. Whilst Mamoholo is humble and understanding, he is honest and sincere. He makes his stand boldly and if you do not understand him you'll feel sorry for yourself. But if you do understand him, you'll love him more for he only wants the best for his children. A spade is a spade to him and that's how his children grew to know him. He is not harsh, but very gentle and very sincere. He can laugh and smile and he can be very social for he is a man of the people.

Professor Bennie as a person

Professor Van der Walt is a blessing, a kind, understanding and very approachable man. He is always busy like a bee. Resting to him appears like a waste of precious time which has to be used fruitfully.

I understand that whilst he plans to take a day of rest, once something comes to mind, he will at once wake up and jot it down. No wonder that so many books and articles saw the light under his name – he sleeps with a pen and paper next to his bed. When he walks, he is always in a hurry! I at times wonder if he ever had/has time to stroll in his life. When something comes upon his way, it soon has to get out of the way. He does not believe in postponing unnecessarily. He faithfully follows the words of Jesus in John 9:4: "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work".

Conclusive remarks

God gave him all these beautiful gifts and still keeps him down to earth. He is now reaping part of the rewards of his hard work here on earth. In receiving some or part of the rewards now, he remains humble and does not think himself higher than other people, for he knows that he does not deserve them, it is only grace that he experiences now. He is waiting for the surprise that the King of kings has in store for him. For Hebrews 11:39-40 says: "And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us! We are all looking forward to that which God has in store for us!"



Voor Bennie en Hanneltje van der Walt: herinneringen aan meer dan 40 jaren vriendschap

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In 1963 kenden Bennie en ik elkaar nog niet, maar er was tussen ons al een onzichtbare band.

In dat jaar hield professor D.H. Th. Vollenhoven van de Vrije Universiteit van Amsterdam gastcolleges in Potchefstroom en Bennie was druk bezig daar aantekeningen van te maken. Dat kan ik met zekerheid zeggen want Hanneltje vond kort geleden een stapel notities terug. Ik meen bij het stofzuigen.

In hetzelfde jaar was ik leraar biologie in Noord Nederland, in Groningen en was in mijn vrije tijd bezig Vollenhoven te bestuderen. Ik maakte daarbij een index op zijn wijsgerige interpretaties van alle personen die hij in zijn artikelen behandelde. Het kaartsysteem staat hier nog.

Tijdens mijn biologiestudie in Groningen volgde ik de colleges reformatorische wijsbegeerte van prof. K.J. Popma. Popma was een heel bijzonder mens, schijnbaar chaotisch in zijn colleges en geschriften, een overtuigd en inspirerend christen. Het bleek me later dat ook Bennie geboeid was door Popma. Ik zocht naar een levens- en wereldbeschouwing als christen, ook tegen een veelal naturalistische biologie met een reductionistische mensvisie. Popma attendeerde me op het belang van de studie van Vollenhoven. Ik wilde die gebruiken bij de studie biologie. Zo verscheen, in *Philosophia reformata*, 1993:28 v., een betreffende studie. Ik begon als leraar

met een tweede studie, filosofie aan de Vrije Universiteit, vanuit Groningen.

De docenten van Bennie, Stoker en Taljaard en ook Popma stonden alle drie in relatie tot Vollenhoven. Stoker via ds. S.O. Los (1871-1944), die in relatie met Paul Kruger had gestaan sinds diens bezoek aan Nederland – zo kwam Los in contact met Zuid-Afrika. Ds. Los verwees in 1922 de 23-jarige Stoker naar Vollenhoven (J. Stellingwerff. *D.H. Th. Vollenhoven*, 1992:58 v.). En later in 1955 promoveerde Taljaard bij Vollenhoven.

Kort na 1963 trokken we beiden naar Amsterdam, naar de Vrije Universiteit. Ik werd in 1966 – door dr. Stellingwerff – als medisch bibliothecaris, hoofd van de Medische Bibliotheek van de Faculteit Geneeskunde en van het VU ziekenhuis. We kregen een woning in Amstelveen. En Bennie en Hanneltjie gingen in 1968 in Amsterdam wonen. Gezien onze achtergrond was het geen wonder dat we direct een goed contact kregen.

Bennie en Hanneltjie kwamen bij ons op bezoek en het bleek dat ze onze kinderwagen goed konden gebruiken voor hun kleine Mias. We hadden geregeld contact totdat Bennie en Hanneltjie in 1970 weer vertrokken. Nu naar de Universiteit van Fort Hare in Oos-Kaap.

Ons contact bleef bestaan en werd geregeld vernieuwd doordat Bennie naar Nederland kwam als deelnemer of spreker voor conferenties, met name van de Association for Reformational Philosophy. In die gevallen hadden we een logeerkamer ter beschikking. Die noemden we, zoals in 1 Koningen, het kamertje voor de profeet – hij is weer beschikbaar. Bennie nam voor Aukje een mooie jas mee uit het atelier van Hanneltjie. Een atelier waarin zwarte vrouwen een vak leerden en inkomen hadden. 's Ochtends in de vroegte als we nog sliepen, trok Bennie zijn trainingspak aan, zijn "sweetpak", en ging hier rennen in de polder.

Na mijn promotie in de wijsbegeerte in 1986, over westerse denkstructuren, kreeg ik een verzoek van de PU vir CHO om daar het volgende jaar een reeks gastcolleges te geven, en ook te Bloemfontijn. Dat was toen tegen het uitdrukkelijke beleid van de VU. Het vertrek was kort na het overlijden van Jaap, onze oudste zoon. We konden toen ook Bennie en Hanneltjie bezoeken en onze andere goede en hartelijke studievrienden in Potchefstroom. We konden ook een dienst meemaken waarin Bennie voorging in een zwarte gemeente. Bennie liet ons de prachtige natuur in Zuid-Afrika zien. Hij trakteerde me daar op speciaal bier – vreselijk zuur. Hij had voor

Aukje een present achter zijn rug. Als je blijft – dank je Bennie: het bleek een rest achtergelaten door een ezel!

De stof voor de gastcolleges heb ik later gebruikt voor een inleiding in de probleemhistorische methode in het boek van A. Tol en Bril, *Vollenhoven als wijsgeer*. Dit gedeelte werd kortgeleden iets herzien uitgegeven als *Vollenhoven's problem-historical method: introduction and explorations*, door Dordt College Press.

Na meer dan 40 jaren: merkwaardig, de geschiedenis herhaalt zich. Enkele jaren geleden bracht Bennie hier de geluidsopnamen van Vollenhovens gastcolleges in Potchefstroom van 1963. Ze stonden op klassieke tapes waarvan twee van 17 cm doorsnede – totaal 2 340 m. We konden nu nergens meer een apparaat vinden om deze tapes af te spelen tot de heer L. de Vries organist en geluidstechnicus ons heeft geholpen. Alle colleges zijn nu overgezet op twee CDs. Het is de bedoeling dat de tekst ook in gedrukte vorm zal verschijnen.

Vele teksten van Vollenhoven die hij schreef meer dan 30 jaar geleden zijn in 2000 en 2005 gepubliceerd door John Kok, Tony Tol en mij. Tevens heeft Bennie deze teksten gebruikt voor diverse recente verhelderende studies, o.a. voor antropologie en voor een analyse van het denken van Calvijn – ik moet me als oud-bibliothecaris beheersen om ze hier niet allemaal op te sommen. Nog steeds bestaat er een boeiend en vruchtbaar perspectief.

Ik vertelde van het kinderwagentje. Onze zoon Anton heeft zelf inmiddels twee kinderen en bezocht met zijn gezin dit jaar Zuid-Afrika. Hij kon gebruik maken van de reisbeschrijvingen van Bennie vooral van zijn *Voetslaanavonture in die Drakensberge*. Ze zijn ook door Bennie en Hanneltjie gastvrij ontvangen – “kom kuier”.

We hebben nu wat psalm 90 noemt de leeftijd der sterken bereikt, we hebben beiden de laatste tijd ernstige ziekten doorgemaakt. Je zei tegen me: “We leven nu in de genadetijd”.

Moge ik eindigen met een gebed – een gebed van Mozes tegen het einde van zijn leven:

Laat Uw werk aan Uw knechten openbaar worden
en Uw heerlijkheid over hun kinderen.
En bevestig Gij het werk onzer handen over ons,
ja, het werk onzer handen, bevestig dat.



B.J. van der Walt: consummate educator

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The first time we met was at the First International Conference, in 1975 at what is now North-West University in Potchefstroom, of the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE). The last time we met was earlier in 2010 at an international workshop of IAPCHE at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, USA. Both of us were beginning and aspiring teachers of philosophy and theology 35 years ago. Now since 1999 retired, we are both still, thank God, energetic and enthusiastic in our work, although a bit more realistic and somewhat wiser.

My colleague and friend in South Africa, B.J. van der Walt, is not really *retired*, but actually *refired*. What continues to motivate him in South Africa, and international circles, is his insatiable desire to think, lecture, and write about the heart-centered and mind-boggling perspective he learned as a graduate student in South Africa and in Amsterdam during those restless 1960s.

Retirement enables a person to look back, around, down, up, and ahead in a more relaxed and perceptive way. In June 2009, Van der Walt – simply known as Bennie – spent ten days with us in our home, especially in my library and office. Extensively and intensively, we reflected on our common lifelong vision and its implications for our thinking, teaching, and writing in and about our troubled, yet fascinating, world.

An excellent example of Van der Walt as philosopher, educator, writer, and occasional preacher is his long paper presented June 2010 at IAPCHE's International Workshop at Calvin College on the assigned topic. "Worldwide responses to reformed Christian higher education". That paper is typical of his familiarity with many con-

flicting philosophies, societies and cultures in our world. It also reflects his own understanding of life, the world, and history. Without oversimplifying matters, he zeroes in on the basic needs and challenges of humans everywhere and on their hope in the Anointed Savior, through the Holy Spirit's power.

For this Festschrift in B.J. van der Walt's honor, I will call attention to what I believe to be his most significant contributions. The seven distinct, and closely interrelated, insights listed below are, although religiously simple, really academically complex, educationally demanding, culturally sensitive, and historically significant.

Firstly, the relationship between revelation and philosophy, heart and head, faith and reason, chapel and education, worship and scholarship, religion and culture, church and state, and prayer and production, is not one requiring an integrating, combining, or joining of two essentially different matters. Rather, it is one in which, in each instance, the former affects the latter in an integral, intrinsic, or re-directing way. *Religion* is not some addition, something extraneous, to one's daily life at home, in society and culture. To be human is to be inherently religious in everything one does.

Secondly, given the three-fold, i.e. creational, Scriptural and incarnational nature of God's revelation, devaluating any one form of revelation undermines the two other forms of revelation. To minimise, or ignore, any part of God's revelation, sooner or later, distorts one's relation to the Creator/Redeemer, understanding of the world and history, and everyday role in society and culture. God's revelation does not permit, or sanction, any mystical view of heaven that is of no earthly good.

Thirdly, Christians must be known, first of all, for what they are for, and then as a result, secondly, for the perversions and distortions they oppose. Their primary task is to be positive, restorative, wholesome, thetical, or let the light of God's Word shine on our dark(ened) traditions, cultures and world. Those who close their eyes to the Light of the world are the ones who are actually anti-thetical. Their intentional, as well as ignorant, resistance may not intimidate, let alone silence, followers of Christ Jesus. In fact, opposition on the part of those who are really anti-thetical somehow strengthens Christians in their resolve to remain prophetic, press for renewal, and pray for those who resist God's liberating Word of life. Such childlike, yet powerful, faith in God enabled B.J. van der Walt to avoid adopting an "anti-establishment" mentality during the

restless sixties and seventies, or succumbing to the horrors of an apartheid ideology in his country, South Africa.

Fourthly, as aspiring teacher and nascent scholar, and especially as director of the IRS (Institute for Reformational Studies) at PU for CHE, involvement for almost four decades in IAPCHE, and regular contacts with colleagues and students in other parts of Africa and even the world – in all these various ways he sought to avoid misleading problems in scholarship and higher education and false dilemmas in society and culture.

He disliked any “either/or” mentality, and, at the same time, rejected a “both/and” mindset. These dead end approaches have no longevity. They are impressive at first, but soon prove to be inadequate. The solution does not lie in choosing between, for example, biblicism or scholasticism, faith or reason, rationalism or irrationalism, capitalism or socialism/communism, Western or African culture. Neither does the solution lie in combining these, and any other contrasting issues, traditions, or cultures.

Fifthly, key to B.J. van der Walt’s important role in determining IAPCHE’s goals and in implementing its program, since its beginning in 1975, has been his vision of *integrally* Christian higher education and scholarship and our local and global role in pressing for this. At the First International Conference of IAPCHE in Potchefstroom in 1975, he told me, during a conferee bus ride to the famous Voortrekkermonument, that he disagreed with the ideology of apartheid. Last June, after perusing, in our home, the very long “Broederbond membership list” printed as an Appendix in Ivor Wilkins and Hans Strydom’s *The Broederbond* (1979, New York & London: Paddington), he expressed his surprise, and sadness, about so many names of former students, colleagues, and clergymen in that list.

The most difficult international conference of IAPCHE, especially for Van der Walt and others from South Africa, was the fourth one held in Breukelen and organised by the Free University in Amsterdam and Theological University in Kampen. Some members of the South African *Broederkring*, established in opposition to the *Broederbond*, demanded that B.J. van der Walt, and several others like him – who actually were *not* members of the Broederbond – be removed from the conference and be replaced by the boycotters. Although their demand was not granted, B.J. van der Walt was saddened about the departure of the boycotters from the conference.

Sixthly, already as a graduate student, B.J. van der Walt learned from D.H. Th. Vollenhoven (and H. Dooyeweerd) at the Free University in Amsterdam about the difference between, on the one hand, radically “reformational” living and thinking and, on the other hand, the tradition of speculative probing and scholastic system-building in reformed circles, especially in philosophy and theology, and their detrimental effects on the resulting worldview.

In this regard, the person who “religiously” influenced Vollenhoven as a graduate student, pastor, and philosophy professor during the 1920s and 1930s was also the one whose way of reading Scripture and viewing created reality significantly shaped B.J. van der Walt’s perspective on life and philosophy, viz. A. Janse (1890-1960). Janse was the principal of a small elementary Christian day school in the tiny village of Biggekerke (for details about Janse, see B.J. van der Walt, *The eye is the lamp of the body: worldviews and their impact*, 2008:189-229). The down-to-earth and liberating perspective of this teacher influenced Vollenhoven’s interest in systematic philosophy and history of philosophy. The latter’s work, in turn, influenced also B.J. van der Walt’s insights into daily life, especially education and philosophy, in South Africa and elsewhere in Africa and the world.

Pivotal in his thinking and educational endeavors has been Janse’s and Vollenhoven’s rich biblical – not rigid biblicistic – meaning of “covenant”. While appreciating Calvin’s work as *reformer*, he did not like certain philosophical, notably anthropological, scholastic elements in his thinking, nor the presence of related scholastic ideas in such reformed thinkers as H. Bavinck and H.G. Stoker. B.J. van der Walt’s life resembles that of A. Janse in that both stressed the need of “walking with God” also in one’s theorising and philosophising. Important in life is not to become reputable, but to make a difference for good. This motivated B.J. van der Walt to strive for renewal in his life as philosopher and educator in South Africa and elsewhere in the world.

Seventhly, about B.J. van der Walt’s wide-ranging interests and many publications, other contributors to this Festschrift will no doubt comment. However, to me two of his publications deserve special mentioning. They are of a somewhat different nature. One of them he did not write, but only edited. It is “gift of thanks” to him, however, as Director for 25 years (1974-1999), from the IRS in Potchefstroom. In it, 26 colleagues throughout the world reflect in their articles on politics, faith life, society, and other issues in scholarship and education in the general spirit of the stance, worldview, and kind of analysis B.J. van der Walt advocated throughout his life. The title of

this IRS “a gift of thanks” (1998) to its director is, appropriately, *Signposts of God’s liberating kingdom: perspectives for the 21st century*. It is a wonderful tribute to the IRS’s director for his passion to foster a tradition of dynamic and broad reformational, not static and restricted reformed, living, thinking, educating and sharing of the Good News of God’s kingdom for, and in, our broken and hurting world.

The second publication I want to call special attention to is B.J. van der Walt’s *The enchanting world of the Drakensberg Mountains as experienced by an adventurous family* (2003; 2006; 2008; 250 pages). In an engaging way, he reflects on his experiences (and those of his wife, Hanneljje, and their four children) in the majestic Drakensberg Mountains in Kwazulu-Natal wildlife. Near the end of his interesting and practical journal, he makes a reformationally pertinent, also for philosophy and higher education, observation, one that is assumed in all of his work and writings:

Man is not a being closed off within himself. He needs to reach out beyond himself to God, or to an idol. It is a simple fact that all people are religious, whether they acknowledge it or not. All people have an innate spiritual capacity, not necessarily to serve the true God, but also many self-manufactured idols. It is not only ‘primitive’ people who have sought ultimate certainty in a hard world. The modern world abounds with idols, religions and cults of various kinds, for example, the idolization of money, sex, honour and many more. It is not even impossible to turn hiking into a cult (perapatetism)! (p. 241.)

Bennie, keep wrapping yourself in the blanket of God’s *shalom*, as you continue hiking in his world.



Perspektiewe / Perspectives

Interview with Bennie van der Walt¹

Mr. Steve Bishop (e-mail stevebishop.uk@gmail.com and website www.allofliferedeemed.co.uk) asked prof. Van der Walt on 3 August 2008 a number of questions to which he responded below.

1. Life and family

1.1 Tell us something about your family and yourself

Steve, I was born on 12 April 1939 in the town of Potchefstroom in the present North-West Province of South Africa. I grew up on the farm Vyfhoek (divided into small holdings to help farmers to earn a living after the devastating Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902). My parents, J.J. (Mias) (1909-1989), and C.E. (Tiena) van der Walt, (1916-1991) suffered from the flu of 1918 and the economic depression of the 1930s and could not enjoy higher education after standard 6. My father, for instance, had to dig diamonds in the Lichtenburg district and later on became a mason. He inter alia helped to build the main building of the Potchefstroom University – a place where I myself would many years later continue his physical labour on an academic level. Prior to their marriage my mother (born Delpport) worked for a few cents a day in a clothing factory.

They were hard-working people and God blessed their labours. While my father worked as a bricklayer, he and my mother also became farmers. First only part-time (lucerne and wheat), but later poultry farming, dairy farming (with Ayrshires imported from Scotland) and finally (before they passed away) sheep farming. Their

1 Since few readers will be able to read my (BJvdW's) philosophical memoirs in Afrikaans elsewhere in this volume of *Koers*, this interview in English is republished here with the permission of Mr. Bishop. (Fortunately the two pieces do not overlap too much.)

financial progress also benefited their children. I have one brother and three sisters of which the youngest died at the age of two. All of them enjoyed the privilege of university education. Our parents were, however, wise not to spoil us: we had to take our share in all the farming responsibilities.

During my studies (in 1964) I married J.M. (Hannetjie) Looock (born 5 December 1940). Because of her love and support, she should receive the credit for whatever I may have achieved during the past 45 years. We were blessed with four children, first three boys and then a daughter. All of them are married and we are already “oupa” and “ouma” to nine grandchildren. The whole family are lovers of nature. We have done a lot of camping and hiking in many parts of our beautiful country – especially in the Drakensberg Mountains of KwaZulu-Natal. As could be expected, I wrote a few books on our hiking experiences in Afrikaans and English.

1.2 What was it like growing up and living in South Africa?

This is a difficult question to answer, Steve, since I did not have the experience of growing up elsewhere. My ancestors arrived here from Friesland (the Netherlands) long ago in 1727 and I am already part of the eighth generation of Van der Walt's in South Africa. We, therefore, regard ourselves as true white Africans.

During my own life I experienced pre-apartheid, apartheid as well as the postapartheid era. A brief word about each of them follows.

I enjoyed the privilege of growing up in a healthy, God-fearing family in a rural environment mostly unaware of all the political problems of South Africa. Even the black farm labourer, Silas Tekiso, his wife, Dora, and their children were treated as part of an extended family. My father also donated a part of his land for a primary school to be erected for all the black kids of the Vyfhoek area.

It was only later on, especially during my studies in the Netherlands (1968-1970) and my work at the University of Fort Hare (1970-1974) that I became fully aware that something was terribly wrong with the apartheid system. Especially during my time as director of the Institute for Reformational Studies (1974-1999) South Africa became the skunk of the international world. Many white people were, however, still blinded by this ideology and I had the difficult task to convince many of my fellow brothers and sisters in the Lord that they had no biblical grounds for their viewpoint. (For examples see 4.3 below.)

After the demise of apartheid in 1994 the situation again changed drastically. We realised that the consequences of apartheid could not be eradicated immediately, but would accompany us for many years. Most of us – both black and white – hoped for a better future. South Africa's present deterioration is perhaps not so much noticed outside the country, because the country is acknowledged internationally and the upper class of both blacks and whites still enjoy economic prosperity.

As you may perhaps already know from media reports, the following factors today concern every South African citizen:

- Rampant lawlessness, like rape, robbery, murder and other forms of brutal violence. Those who can afford to take care of their own security, have to invest huge amounts to do so. The legal system cannot handle all the criminal cases, neither can the prisons accommodate the convicted.
- Wide-spread corruption, especially among politicians and state officials on national, provincial and local level. Many of our leaders today – the so-called fat cats – are not really examples for a younger generation, because they are not motivated by service, but by greed and a culture of entitlement.
- A weak state, unable to see to it that standards are maintained and to deliver the necessary public services.
- The HIV and AIDS pandemic has infected a large part of the population – with detrimental implications.
- A scarcity of jobs, while millions of refugees from other countries, e.g. Zimbabwe, are entering the country, leading to xenophobia among the South Africans who are losing their jobs.
- Reverse discrimination through inter alia one-sided affirmative action against whites and increasing racism from the side of both black and white.
- An unacceptable and dangerous gap between the very wealthy and the masses of extremely poor people.
- A huge brain drain of the highest qualified people to countries like Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.
- Many people, who cannot or do not want to emigrate, start emigrating inside their own individual concerns, thus withdrawing from the problems of wider society.

- An unwillingness to accept personal responsibility, blaming for instance the apartheid past or present racial tensions for own incapability, laziness and corruption.

Did I mention these examples of the disintegration of a society – in spite of the most modern Constitution and Bill of Rights – to ask for the sympathy of outsiders or to make South Africans even more despondent and eager to leave our “rainbow nation”? I will not blame people who, for their own safety and that of their children, finally decide on the last option. I am one of the many families who have a son and three grandchildren in faraway Canada. But I also firmly believe that it is not by mere chance that one belongs to a certain nation. However difficult it may be, God asks of us to get involved and try to change our own situation for the better.

To summarise: Once South Africa was an example to the whole world of what was despicable; then it became a shining model to the world of what was to be admired (e.g. the Mandela-era); today South Africans have to start working diligently to prove that their country not only deserves the respect of the outside world, but can be a place where all its own citizens can feel at home.

1.3 How did you become a Christian?

Since I grew up in a Christian family, it is not possible for me to indicate when I became a Christian. I did not experience a sudden conversion. Already during secondary school and at my official confession of faith in the Reformed Church I knew that I loved the Lord and wanted to be in his service. However, at that time I still held a somewhat narrow view of the Christian religion. If you really wanted to serve Him, full-time ministry in the church was the only option! One of the major benefits of studying Christian philosophy (starting with the B.A. degree in 1958) was that it opened my eyes to a much wider perspective: Life – one’s whole life – is either service to the real God or to an idol taking his place.

1.4 What is Christianity and the church like in South Africa?

Steve, I can only answer briefly to this question – which implies a great amount of generalisation. On the positive side according to a recent census more than 80% of South Africans regard themselves as Christians. In the light of what I have said previously (without playing God, the only One who can see into peoples’ hearts), one may, however, ask how many of these are real Christians and how many are only nominal Christians. Especially for someone like myself, who believes that Christianity does not exist for itself (to

save your soul and ensure a place in heaven), but to transform God's fallen creation in the power of his Spirit, it is difficult to accept that 80% of the South African population have so little impact on the unacceptable situation I have described above.

It is true that Christianity in South Africa is currently suffering from a crisis of legitimacy since in the past it condoned the apartheid ideology. It is also true that, since the acceptance of a secular state in 1994, secularisation in every area of life increased dramatically. The Christian faith is now wrongly regarded, as elsewhere in the globalising world, by many as something private (a personal faith in family and church) with little, if any, relevance to the so-called public life. During the apartheid era (white) Christians operated with a dualistic Christian-national worldview. After apartheid this dualism was not corrected, but Christians passively accepted a modified version of the same old dualistic perspective, viz. that of private-public.

Since dualism paralyses the power of the Christian faith, old main-line churches are at the moment in decline both in numbers and influence – they are now called the “old-line” churches. Especially the charismatic churches are growing. Many people (cf. Anon. 2008) see this as a new sign of hope for the future. These churches may grow numerically, but I doubt whether they will have much more influence on the political-economic-social situation since they also operate from a dualistic worldview. On the one hand many of them have accommodated to a “gospel” of health and wealth. On the other hand they will try to alleviate poverty, but do not get involved in politics to challenge the underlying structural causes of such poverty. (Under 5.2 and 5.3 below I would like to say more in this regard.)

As a philosopher I sometimes tend to be too critical about church life. In the final instance history, however, is not about Christianity, but about Christ. In spite of all our failures, He will not fail us. He will lead history towards the final arrival of his glorious kingdom.

2. Influences on your development

Tell us something about the following:

2.1 What/who were your early influences?

The only grandfather I knew and loved (my mother's father) told me when I was still young (11 years) that I should become a minister. Perhaps it was what he himself actually wanted to be. At home we

read the Bible, prayed and sang the Genevan hymns during our evening family devotions. The thoroughness of our Reformed minister's classes in the Heidelberg Catechism further moulded my Christian convictions. I also cannot forget the influence of committed teachers at school who encouraged me to develop the talents I have received. They were, however, not convinced that I should become a minister of religion!

2.2 How did you discover reformational philosophy?

God can lead people in mysterious ways. Some time ago I was, for instance, told that a student in Europe discovered reformational philosophy by way of one footnote in an article, making reference to a book by Herman Dooyeweerd. However, I did not discover reformational philosophy accidentally in this way. When I started my B.A. studies in 1958 with the idea to follow it up with a Th.B. (theology), at least one course in philosophy was compulsory. However, since I discovered that philosophy digs deeper than any other subject, I decided to take it as a three year major in combination with Latin.

All the lecturers in the Department taught their subject from an explicitly Christian perspective. During the three years for the B.A. degree we covered the whole history of Western philosophy, mainly under the guidance of Professor J.A.L. Taljaard (1915-1994). He received his doctoral degree from the Free University of Amsterdam (cf. Taljaard, 1955) under the supervision of Professor D.H. Th. Vollenhoven (1892-1978), one of the fathers of reformational philosophy in the Netherlands. Taljaard translated both Vollenhoven's history of philosophy and his systematic philosophy (cf. Vollenhoven, 2005a and 2005b for recent English translations) into Afrikaans for the use of his students. For a start we used Spier, 1959 (A comparable English introduction today would be Kok, 1998.) Taljaard's own systematic philosophy was also very much in line with Vollenhoven's ideas (cf. Taljaard, 1976). In those days B.A. students intending to study theology, had to follow a compulsory course in the Dutch language. We were therefore expected also to read Dutch textbooks in our philosophy courses.

Systematic philosophy also received proper attention. We were, for instance, introduced to Abraham Kuyper's (1837-1920) Christian worldview as expounded in his well-known Stone Lectures (cf. Kuyper, s.a. for the Dutch version we used and Kuyper, 1961 for the English text).

In those times three main approaches to a systematic Christian philosophy were distinguished. Firstly Herman Bavinck's (1854-1921) *Philosophy (of the idea) of revelation*. We read Van der Walt's (1953) dissertation on Bavinck and Bavinck 1908 – again a Dutch version of his Stone Lectures, *Wijsbegeerte der openbaring*. (For the English text, see Bavinck, 1979.)

Secondly, Henk G. Stoker's (1899-1993) *Philosophy of the idea of creation (Wysbegeerte van die skeppingsidee)*. Stoker did his doctorate (cf. Stoker, 1925) with Max Scheler (1874-1928) as supervisor, a German irrationalist philosopher. However, very early in his career he maintained contact with the development of a Christian philosophy at the Free University (cf. Stoker, 1933a). He also developed his own distinctive brand (cf. Stoker 1933b, reworked in Stoker, 1970b:202-330; for more details about this specific Christian philosophy cf. also Stoker, 1969; 1967; 1970a).

Thirdly, as students we were also introduced to the philosophy of *the idea of law or cosmonomic idea* as both Dirk H. Th. Vollenhoven's and Herman Dooyeweerd's (1894-1977) philosophies were called at that time. Today we know that these two Christian philosophers did not hold the same viewpoints. We did not study their original writings, but did so by reading Spier's introduction in Dutch, later also translated into Afrikaans. (Cf. Spier, 1972. For an English translation, cf. Spier, 1966. Later Kalsbeek's book (1970) became more popular as a textbook. For an English version, cf. Kalsbeek, 1975.)

2.3 Did you meet Vollenhoven when he lectured in South Africa? If so, any abiding memories?

You should be informed that for some time a good relationship existed between the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE) and the Free University of Amsterdam (FU) until the breakdown at the end of the 1970s (cf. Schutte, 2005:445 ff.). Guest lectureships were exchanged between both institutions. Already in my second year (1959) I had the privilege to attend Professor S.U. Zuidema's (1906-1975) guest lectures. Little did I know that ten years later in 1969, he would for some time be my study leader at the FU.

In 1963, when Vollenhoven gave his series of guest lectures at the PU for CHE's Department of Philosophy, I had already started my Th.B. studies in theology, but attended most of his lectures. I still have a book with all my notes and the Vollenhoven Foundation is

also in the process of publishing his Potchefstroom lectures from the tape recordings made at that time.

Of course I was greatly impressed by – as Klapwijk (1987:98) calls Vollenhoven – this intellectual giant with his wide knowledge and deep insight. However, what impressed me most – and it was the same when later in 1968-1970 in the Netherlands I attended his *privatissima* (private classes) after his official retirement at the FU – was his obvious Christian faith and his sincere humility. Vollenhoven was approachable, unsophisticated, uncomplicated and, according to his Dutch students, also lived closely to his students and the ordinary people.

Klapwijk (1987:101) also mentions the reason why this great scholar deep down in his heart remained a child: Vollenhoven was indeed a great philosopher, but never put his trust in any, not even his own, philosophy. He gave his heart to God and his Word. He realised that philosophy (*wijs-begeerte*) is merely a desire for wisdom – not less, but also not more. Philosophy (“love for wisdom”) does not own the truth, it is merely a fallible, scholarly aspiration towards wisdom. If it, therefore, gives the impression of having arrived at a final truth, it is deceiving people. According to Vollenhoven, the Word of God alone could answer our deepest questions and longings.

2.4 H.G. Stoker was an influential reformational thinker. What is your assessment of him?

I got to know Stoker better during my B.A. Honours degree in Philosophy when I was the only student to follow his lectures on “the philosophy of the idea of creation”. (For more details, cf. again his collected works in Stoker, 1967 & 1970b:202-330. An English translation of his philosophy of the idea of creation undertaken by the School of Philosophy at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University is in progress.)

In spite of the fact that I later decided to work more in the Vollenhoven line, I had the greatest respect for Stoker as a person, lecturer, as well as an original Christian philosopher. To my mind his contribution to reformational philosophy in South Africa and also internationally is underestimated. Three factors may have contributed to this. Firstly, because he did not publish much in English; secondly, because of the unwise and negative way Malan (1968) dealt with Stoker’s contribution. He criticised Stoker’s philosophy from the viewpoint of Dooyeweerd’s ideas (for Stoker’s reply to Malan’s dissertation, cf. Stoker, 1970a:411-433); thirdly, because Stoker tried to

condone apartheid as he viewed the nation (*volk*) as a separate societal relationship. (Most lecturers at the PU for CHE, however, propagated apartheid in those days.)

3. Education

3.1 Tell us something in general about your academic training

After my B.A. degree (1960) and Honours (1961), I decided to continue with an M.A. in philosophy (1962) and could finish the exam papers, but not the thesis. From 1963 to 1966 I completed a theological (Th.B.) degree at the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Churches in South Africa.

Earlier in my life I acquired the nick-name of “Bennie Bookworm” (Later in my life I tried to compensate for all the books I had devoured by writing a few new ones myself!) Because of my protracted studies, I now also earned the title of the “eternal student”. I succeeded, however, financially as a part-time student assistant (in Philosophy) and by getting paid by my father for determining the sex of thousands and thousands of day-old chickens and (after our marriage) from my wife’s salary at the University Library.

In 1967 I finally completed the thesis for the Master’s degree under the supervision of Prof. Taljaard, dealing with the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) in his *Summa Contra Gentiles*.

3.2 Why your M.A. topic, Aquinas in particular? Isn’t he an unusual choice for a Calvinist?

Steve, I agree that it was a rather unusual topic, since even during my theological studies a lecturer would still warn his students against “die Roomse gevaar” (the Roman Catholic danger). However, my theological studies already indicated to me that a synthetic tradition of nearly 2 000 years (starting with the early Church Fathers and systematised by Aquinas in the Middle Ages) was still with us. It was the dualism of nature and grace, reason and faith, philosophy and theology. This bifocal way of looking at God’s creation led to many other distortions, e.g. that theology would by nature be Christian, while philosophy is to be regarded as a neutral discipline; that theology is the queen of the sciences and that philosophy as well as other disciplines should get their biblical direction from a supposedly “pure” theology. This kind of dualism was, furthermore, not only of a theoretical nature, but influenced the

churches and all other areas of everyday life. Then, I already suspected that the Christian-national ideology (cf. 1.4 above) was founded in this kind of dualism. However, I did not have the courage to say so publicly before 1976.

Needless to say that the young radical's M.A. thesis caused furore among reformed theologians up to the highest academic body, the Senate of the University. Finally I received the degree with distinction – on condition that I should rewrite (water down) the final chapter.

3.3 Why your Ph.D. topic, viz. *Natural theology with special reference to Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin and the "Synopsis Purioris Theologiae" – a philosophical investigation (1974)?*

This topic reveals my continued interest in questions on the borderline between philosophy and theology. I started to do the research at the PU for CHE, got bursaries from my alma mater as well as the FU and continued my research from July 1968 to June 1970 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. During that time (1969) I also received doctoral status (*doctoraal status*) as well as an appointment as assistant in Medieval Philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy of the FU. This caused me to decide to rather register for a Ph.D. at the FU. Unfortunately other circumstances were not as favourable to realise this dream. My second supervisor, Professor S.U. Zuidema, got so ill that he had to retire and I had to work with a third supervisor. I then decided to rather accept the offer of a senior lectureship in Philosophy at the University of Fort Hare at Alice in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa (July 1970 to June 1974).

You would, however, be more interested in the topic of the dissertation than in the circumstances surrounding its completion, finally at the Department of Philosophy of the PU for CHE in 1974 where Professor J.A.L. Taljaard was my supervisor. Of course I knew beforehand that the reformational tradition would reject a *natural* theology. What I was primarily interested in, was how to understand God's creational revelation which was – and still is – underestimated in reformed theology. Only in the second place, I was interested whether a natural theology could be built upon God's so-called general revelation. What I also wanted to achieve was to follow the philosophical lines from Aquinas (my M.A. thesis) to Calvin (father of the reformational tradition), and from him to the reformed scholasticism of the *Synopsis Purioris Theologiae* (1625), a handbook in dogmatics that was re-issued by Herman Bavinck in

the previous century. I discovered, with the help of Vollenhoven's problem-historical method, that neither was Calvin's so-called theology fully biblical, nor could the *Synopsis* be called the "purest reformed theology".

4. You spent the greatest part of your life as director at the Institute for Reformational Studies (IRS) at the PU for CHE. May I ask a few questions in this regard?

4.1 How did the IRS start?

This Institute was started in 1962 at the PU for CHE. (For more about its aims and history, cf. Van der Walt, 2008:278-303.) Until the beginning of the 1980s it was called the Institute for the Advancement of Calvinism (IAC). I became its first full-time director in 1974 and recommended that the name should be changed to IRS (of course not realising that in the USA it is the abbreviation for the Internal Revenue Services). My motivation was that *Calvinism* did not cover the whole reformational tradition. Furthermore, the apartheid-ideology was, according to its proponents, built on the Calvinist worldview.

My work at the IRS provided me with many opportunities to enlarge and enrich my views: research on the reformational worldview and its implications, editing publications (620 in total) by authors from different disciplines and all over the world; organising local and international conferences (about twenty of them). Apart from other parts of the world, I travelled to fifteen different African countries during South Africa's time of isolation from the world to acquire first-hand information about situations in the rest of our continent.

Especially IRS conferences, for which we usually also invited Christians from outside South Africa, played a significant role in opening people's eyes to the real situation in our country. You should keep in mind, Steve, that these conferences were not merely academic in nature, but were characterised by deep Christian fellowship which made it possible to bridge the deep divide between black and white Christians.

4.2 Did being a South African organisation have any effect on the IRS's international status?

Yes, indeed. Let me mention only three examples of the hassles the IRS experienced in organising international meetings during South Africa's time of isolation. When I invited Christian leaders from other

African countries (remember it was before e-mails) – to help open the eyes of our own people – because of a postal boycott against South African mail, I had to send the letters to a friend in the Netherlands, who remailed them (in new envelopes with Dutch stamps) back to the specific African country. The invited speaker was then issued with a PTA (prepaid ticket advice) – which often got lost – to fly to South Africa. He could, sometimes, not even fly directly to Johannesburg International Airport, since his/her own country would then know that he/she visited the apartheid country. Therefore, we used the airport of a neighbouring country. When finally entering the country we pre-arranged with the customs officials for the person's passport not to be stamped, but for a lose-leaf immigration certificate to be issued instead. Otherwise the immigration official in the person's home country would, upon his/her return, know that she/he had visited South Africa and would not allow him/her back in his/her own country.

Since Christian literature from the West was not always relevant to African problems, the IRS started a project, Christian literature for Africa (CLA), in which Christian writers from Africa could write for Africans on the unique issues facing the continent. In this case we also experienced difficulties getting the identified writers (men and women) from countries like Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya to visit South Africa. The IRS, together with the International Association for Reformed Faith and Action (IARFA), therefore arranged for writers' workshops (including the South Africans) in neighbouring countries, for instance in Harare, Zimbabwe – next to an ANC house! Another problem was that in many cases publications from apartheid South Africa were banned in other African countries. When visiting e.g. Lesotho and Ghana, I therefore investigated the possibility of printing and publishing the books written in the CLA project outside South Africa. Eventually this project took so long that the material available was published by the IRS itself when the African boycott was no longer in place.

A third example is the position of the IRS in the international movement for Christian higher education. After the First International Conference for Christian Higher Education was held in September 1975 at Potchefstroom, the IRS was appointed to administer an International Clearing House for Christian Higher Education. Because of the political tensions between the PU for CHE and the FU after this meeting (lasting for about a decade), membership of the PU for CHE in the international body (later on to be called the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education, abbreviated as IAPCHE) was withdrawn and the Clearing House at

the IRS closed. (For more details, cf. Van der Walt, 2001a and 2005; Schutte, 2005 and Hulst, 2009.)

4.3 Why was the IRS closed in December 1999? Can you also say something about its voice against apartheid?

I am not surprised that you ask this question. Why would a University close one of its Institutes which (according to objective, outside observers) put the PU for CHE on the international map? To my mind one of the primary reasons why the IRS was closed was because of a growing tension between the political viewpoint it stood for and that of the University authorities. Even after the 1994 democratic elections it continued since not everyone at the University whole-heartedly accepted the postapartheid dispensation. However, for someone outside South Africa this explanation needs some explication. Unfortunately it will not be possible to do so in a few sentences. (The problem I have to face here is that of self-justification as director of the IRS and of blaming others. May I be excused for perhaps too subjective an interpretation?)

It should be remembered that the majority of the staff of the PU for CHE (an Afrikaner university) were supporters of the apartheid regime of the National Party. Furthermore, most of them belonged to the Reformed Churches of South Africa (RCSA) which established, supported and staffed the University and also condoned apartheid.

From about 1976 the IRS itself had to venture into the crossfire between different political perspectives: it had to choose between the political viewpoint maintained by the University officials and what was correct according to the Bible and a genuine reformational worldview. Neither the more conservative viewpoint (*verkramp* in Afrikaans), nor the more progressive (*verlig* or enlightened) among the Afrikaners provided a real solution. Mere window-dressing was not enough – the apartheid ideology itself had to be rejected. (For detailed information on the position of the IRS during the difficult political years of 1976-1996 cf. Van der Walt, 2010:471-512.)

Steve, permit me to illustrate the growing tension between the mother (the PU for CHE) and her daughter (the IRS) with a few flashes from history.

- As early as 1976 the IRS published the proceedings of a conference of the Reformational Movement of South Africa (REMSA) with the title *Geregtigheid in die Suid-Afrikaanse same-*

lewing (“Justice in South African society”) in which apartheid was questioned.

- On 16 November 1977 a few young lecturers (including myself) and students of the PU for CHE (and a few like-minded people from outside) issued the *Koinonia Declaration*, a document which opposed apartheid and its biblical justification (cf. Villa-Vicencio & De Villiers, 1998, 4:82-83). The text of this declaration was printed by the IRS. The authors were reprimanded by the university officials. (For a reprinted text in Afrikaans cf. Van der Walt & Venter, 1998:31-44.)
- During the 1980s different local initiatives at reconciliation between blacks, coloureds and whites were undertaken. The university authorities disliked this to such a degree that we encountered problems to appoint a white minister, who had participated in such activities, on the IRS-staff.
- From 1983 to 1995 different national and international conferences organised by the IRS criticised the apartheid ideology as well as the PU for CHE – by name a Christian institution – which did not accommodate black students (cf. *Orientation*, 75-78:613-621, Jan.-Dec. 1995 for references to the various conference resolutions.) By the way, I have to emphasise that my family and I never suffered but only benefited from apartheid. The worst that happened was that I was aware that my telephone was tapped and that prior to or after an IRS-conference a “spy” of state security would enter my office to ask a few “innocent” questions. Even this worried me – I was no anti-apartheid hero.
- During 1984-1986 the violence between the ANC and the security forces (police and army) of state president P.W. Botha became so widespread and intense that he declared a state of emergency. From 29 July to 5 August 1987 IAPCHE’s International Congress met in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia – also the headquarters of the ANC. Some members of the staff of the PU for CHE who went to the congress had secret talks with a few ANC leaders. Because of the tense atmosphere during these days (the PU for CHE was no longer a member of IAPCHE, and we as white South Africans were again repudiated for the unchristian apartheid policy of our country) I had little sleep and one night at 2:00 came upon an idea. The idea was that the ten white conference participants from South Africa should try to make an appointment with Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, state president of Zambia at that time, who was an influential black leader in the Southern part of Africa. He could act as a mediator between the

ANC and NP. I was appointed by the group of ten as their spokesperson. Kaunda promised to try his best. He sent me home with the message: "Go home. Don't become a terrorist, but open the eyes of your students." That is exactly what I tried to do during the difficult years ahead.

- At an IRS-conference in 1992 I gave my own critique on apartheid (later republished in Van der Walt, 1994:375-398). Thereafter (cf. Van der Walt, 1995) I tried to explain to my fellow-Afrikaners where and how our Calvinist heritage had become derailed and how we could regain a true Christian identity. I also pleaded again for reconciliation in 1996 (cf. Van der Walt, 1996a). But since then the top University leaders abstained from participating in IRS conferences like the 1996 International Conference on "Christianity and democracy in South Africa".
- From 1996 a difference of opinion on the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) further increased the tension. (For reports on the work of the TRC cf. Krog, 1998; Tutu, 1999; and Meiring, 1999 as well as the official 7 volume report edited by Villa-Vicencio & De Villiers, 1998-2002.) The TRC asked the RCSA (of which many of the leaders at the PU for CHE and also myself were members) for a submission. The synod (1997) of the RCSA, however, declined this invitation (cf. Villa-Vicencio & De Villiers, 1998, 4:83). I phoned Professor Piet Meiring (a member of the TRC), informing him that a number of RCSA members were disappointed by their synod's decision. We were planning to do something about it, maybe submit a confession of guilt of our own (cf. Meiring, 1999:102).
- Meanwhile the IRS made its own offices available to a delegation of the TRC to inform local people about its aims and procedures. The IRS also publicly appealed to its members to accept the TRC and participate in its important work (cf. Van der Walt, 1996b).
- Subsequently, on 6 August 1997 four members of the RCSA (Prof. J.H. (Amie) van Wyk, Prof. J.J. (Ponti) Venter, the Rev. A.J. (Alwyn) du Plessis and myself) in their personal capacities issued a public confession of guilt concerning apartheid. (For historical purposes I am also giving, apart from their nick-names, which are mentioned in Villa-Vicencio & De Villiers, 1998, 4:60 as well as Meiring, 1999:281, the initials of the four people. Another correction to be made is that only Van Wyk and Du Plessis were ministers and theologians. Venter and myself were reformational philosophers.)

- The TRC organised different institutional hearings (cf. vol. 4 of Villa-Vicencio & De Villiers). One of them was held for all the faith communities in East London (17-19 Nov. 1997). At this important meeting (cf. Villa-Vicencio & De Villiers, 1998, 4:59-92) it became clear how different faiths reacted to apartheid. Through acts of commission and legitimisation as well as acts of omission as agents of repression, but also as opponents and even victims of oppression.

We were invited by Professor P.G. Meiring to attend and present our public (Potchefstroom) confession at this meeting. Unfortunately it was only possible for two of the above-mentioned four (Prof. J.J. Venter and myself) to go to East London and to read and explain our confession on the last day of the meeting. (For the Afrikaans version of the confession cf. Van der Walt, 1997:28-30, and for the English text Van der Walt & Venter, 1998:29-31.)

I have to mention here my great appreciation of the way Archbishop Tutu acted as chairman of the TRC. To me he is the model of a Christian leader of integrity and consistency since he does not allow any politician to prescribe to him what to think. In the past he not only criticised apartheid, but also did not spare the present ANC regime.

It therefore caused me great joy when finally (2003) my own alma mater under new leadership showed its appreciation to Tutu by way of an honorary doctorate. It was my privilege to edit the motivation for granting the degree. A special issue of the journal *Koers* (68, 2003) was also dedicated to Tutu. (I contributed two articles on his Christian worldview on p. 15-57. For an English version cf. Van der Walt, 2008:230-277.) In the same year (2003) the Archbishop wrote the preface to my book *Understanding and rebuilding Africa*.

I do hope, Steve, that these fragments from history will provide enough background – at least according to my own viewpoint – to give one important reason why the IRS did not survive to see the 21st century. The PU for CHE made a decision that instead of the previous time of retirement at the age of 65, its staff should already retire at 60. However, simultaneously at my own retirement at 60, the IRS was also closed at the end of 1999.

It may be that I myself – because of my unwillingness to conform to the wishes of the leaders of my university – should take responsibility for the closure of the IRS. If, however, I did follow their political directions, I would not only have acted against my own con-

science, but much more, I would have betrayed a genuine reformational worldview and philosophy based on God's Word.

A few – to my mind not really substantial reasons – were afterwards (2000) offered by the University authorities for the demise of the IRS (cf. Van der Walt, 2008:292). I therefore had to guess what the decisive reasons were (cf. Van der Walt, 2008:293-295).

In spite of the promises that the PU for CHE would continue at least some of the work undertaken by die IRS (through a newly established Centre for Faith and Scholarship) nothing has been realised for the past ten years. This may add strength to my suggestions about reasons other than the political reasons (e.g. increased secularisation of a Christian institution) behind the IRS's death sentence.

I mentioned these things not primarily because it took me years to work through the trauma that one's life task had been destroyed, but because I realise that today, in an increasingly secular society in South Africa and Africa, there is an even greater need to have an institute like that which the IRS was for 37 years. I have, therefore, hoped and prayed that something similar will one day be born again – and that it will get wings to fly all over our vast continent.

The Lord has already given evidence that He is answering our prayers. In May 2005 the Kosin University, Busan, South Korea (who granted me an honorary doctorate) started its own Institute for Reformed Studies and appointed me as its honorary director. A friend, Dr. Tokunboh Adeyemo, established a Centre for Biblical Transformation in Nairobi, Kenya. And more or less at the same time an interdisciplinary Kuyper Association (AKET) was founded in Belle Horizonte, Brazil.

4.4 What is the Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa (ICCA) and when/why did that come about?

Steve, I was always keenly interested in Christianity on my own continent. Also, because I knew that it would be the end of the IRS endeavours, after my retirement in 2000, I established my own independent publishing company, called ICCA, to continue at least something of the reformational publications of the erstwhile IRS. (There is, even today, still a demand for older IRS-publications.) Thus far my financial position unfortunately only allowed me to publish a few of my own works (cf. aloffliferedeemed.co.uk/vanderwalt.htm). Old age also convinced me that to try to work wider

than publishing (e.g. conferences and seminars) will not be possible any more. However, at the end of my life I realise even more than previously that we have received a rich heritage in a reformational worldview and philosophy to be adapted for the African situation. At seventy I can still share it on paper with my fellow Africans.

5. Because of your interest in Africa, may I ask something in this regard?

5.1 You already mentioned your travels in Africa, your books comparing African and Western culture from a reformational perspective and inviting African Christian leaders to IRS conferences. More personal contacts with local black Africans?

Already during my years at the University of Fort Hare I was involved in missionary work and started a Christian periodical in Xhosa, called Umthombo Wamandla (Fountain of power).

When the PU for CHE finally opened its doors also to black graduate students, I became one of their lecturers for an introductory course in a Christian worldview. Prior to this, many black students received free copies of many IRS publications.

I also had close contact with black students, especially those who studied Theology, when we started a Bible study group at our home on Tuesday evenings. We were enriched by the way each one of them read the Word of God from their different cultural perspectives. During these Bible studies we also made sermons to be preached at different locations where the Word of God was preached to local black reformed congregations on Sundays. Some of these sermons were also published in an African language (Sesotho) to help ministers elsewhere. Those students were regarded as our “children” and we were called their “parents”. Some of them became ministers and one even a professor in Theology.

My wife and I also decided to join (as the only two white members) a black Reformed Church (Kereke ya Gereformeerde Boskop), consisting mostly of farm labourers in the Potchefstroom district. My wife gave Sunday school classes for the kids and needlework for the ladies. Apart from elder and preacher (every Sunday), I was more or less jack of all trades, taking care of minutes, finances, transport, acting as ambulance to hospital and even as funeral undertaker. On one occasion I had to testify in court to get an innocent kid (Levi Diamond) out of jail. He was imprisoned for throwing petrol bombs,

not wanting to do so, but intimidated to join the struggle of other young radicals. It was a very precious ten years in the lives of both of us.

My wife, Hanneljie, started her own development project, namely a clothing factory ("Another Hannah") at our house when our children left home. She eventually trained about fifteen unemployed black women to be able to take care of their households themselves.

Because of the poverty among most black people, I was also interested in the whole issue of development in Africa. My first book in Afrikaans on the problems and possible solutions in this regard, appeared before my retirement at the IRS (cf. Van der Walt, 1999). It was followed by more scholarly articles in journals or chapters in books in English. Some of them are used today by overseas development NGOs in Africa.

5.2 Can you tell us something about Christianity in Africa?

Let me first briefly say something about the history of Christianity in Africa. You may be aware of the fact that Christianity in North Africa, for instance in Ethiopia, is far older than European Christianity (cf. Hein & Kleidt, 1999). Usually a distinction is only made between three other later periods in the development of African Christianity: the missionary Christianity of the nineteenth century and the establishment of the different mainline churches (of European origin); the beginning from the early twentieth century of the many African Independent Churches; and since the 1970s, the growth of various charismatic churches.

In the charismatic groups three phases can also be distinguished, i.e. the arrival of the Assemblies of God and the Apostolic Faith Mission in Africa; the influx after World War II of neo-Pentecostalism from the US; and the growth afterwards of indigenous African Pentecostalism.

As in the rest of the Southern hemisphere (the so-called developing world, of Asia and Latin America) Christianity in all these different forms is making extraordinary advances. (You may be aware of the books of Jenkins in this regard.) This dramatic advance is, by the way, also taking place in Eastern Europe and Russia. Simultaneously Christianity in Europe is declining. Missionaries from Africa are today, for example, re-evangelising a world that previously sent out its missionaries to Africa.

Many Europeans are not aware of this Christian fever in sub-Saharan Africa, because it is not regarded as news by the media – nobody has been killed! Until about a century ago Christians were a small minority on our continent. Today they number about 350 million, one in every six of the global Christian community. African Christianity is rapidly becoming the new centre of gravity within world Christianity.

Amazing parallels exist between this young, contemporary Christianity in Africa and early Christianity of the second to fifth centuries. A leading African theologian, Bediako (1992:xii), who passed away two years ago, even writes that, if he looks closely at the concerns of modern African theologies, it may be possible one day to wake up and find himself in the second century AD. Christians in Africa today again face the choice between four basic options, namely world-flight, world-conformity, world-compromise or world-transformation. The first three options, however, boil down to some kind of dualism (for details cf. Van der Walt, 2001b:17-22).

5.3 How do you see the future of this “new Christendom”?

In the first place we should be positive, rejoice and praise the Lord for what is happening. I also do not doubt the sincerity of my African brothers and sisters in Christ – many have died as martyrs. One should also keep in mind that African Christians should not be carbon copies of Western Christianity – they should be allowed and encouraged to serve the Lord in the garb of their own cultures.

At the same time one should not become triumphant or ignore possible weaknesses. Some scholars simply try to explain the phenomenal growth of Christianity in Africa as resulting from the situation of poverty on the continent. Especially a gospel of health and wealth (cf. e.g. Gifford, 1998) will naturally attract people living in economic deprivation.

Others argue that Christianity in Africa today is like a very wide river, while its water is only a few millimetres deep. Increasing secularism will eventually lead to a totally dry river bed.

Personally, I am more worried about the often unnoticed dualistic tendencies (world-flight, world-conformity or compromise) already mentioned. As you will already be aware, I do not regard Christianity as a waiting room for immortal souls to be taken to heaven. We cannot live close to God if we deny his creation. We serve Him not alongside or apart from creation, but in this everyday world. The closer we move in genuine love to all his creatures, the closer we

come to Himself. And the closer to Him, the more we will be concerned about his world – a world which He loved so much that his own Son died for it to be redeemed.

If we take this as a norm, the young Christians of Africa still have to learn more. To be converted and plant a church is only the beginning. After the apostle Paul completed these two steps (cf. the Acts), a third followed: teaching the young Christians and churches the implications of living in every aspect of their lives as kingdom citizens (cf. Paul's different letters). That is why my Nigerian friend, Tukunboh Adeyemo, emphasises the need for a Christian worldview (including a Christian view of being human and of society) for Africa. What we need at the moment, is more visible signs (shelters of hope) of God's liberating kingdom in Africa. However, let me immediately remove a possible misunderstanding: a comprehensive (pre-scientific) worldview and (scholarly) Christian philosophy will not guarantee our salvation. It will also be wrong to look down upon fellow-Christians who do not have such reformational insights.

Many of the above concerns were also voiced about my own church (the RCSA) in a book in Afrikaans that was published shortly before my retirement (1999) by the IRS. Its title was *Naby God* and the full title translated in English reads: *Nearer to God; Christian and church on the threshold of genuine spirituality*. However, apart from minor changes to the church order and liturgy as well as other formal aspects, not much that is essentially new has occurred during the past decade since the book appeared – hailed by some as a prophetic voice and by others as unnecessary criticism. Perhaps a reformed church is the most difficult of all churches to reform!

By the way, I sometimes wonder whether my Christian philosophy does not lead me astray to become a philosophical Christian. I then experience a tension between my philosophical faith and the simplicity of being a normal Christian. I envy ordinary Christians their childlike faith and sometimes doubt whether even a Christian philosopher can maintain his/her faith and be saved. When I read Christ's command not to worry about what one shall eat, drink or wear (Matt. 6:28 ff.), I wish He had also added – as a reminder to myself – that one should not be troubled about philosophising!

I say this since *intellectual* Christians may tend to become too critical without any inspiration to other church members. At the same time, however, thinking Christians have a responsibility to not simply swallow anything going by the name of Christianity or church. Therefore, I find rest in the fact that God also created, and bears

with, people like myself. In our own unique, but limited way we are also called “to seek first his kingdom and righteousness” (Matt. 6:33). Whether his kingdom will arrive, will not be dependent upon answers to all my philosophical questions.

5.4 Is there anything non-Africans can do?

My honest viewpoint is that especially Western people will have more influence in Africa if they do not prescribe to Africans with an attitude of superiority how they should develop. With a humble attitude, outside help of all kinds will be appreciated and much can be achieved. Apart from financial assistance (Africa will not be able to get out of its poverty trap without outside help from the rich northern part of the world), we need all kinds of expertise. For instance, Christian teachers and lecturers are badly needed at the growing numbers of Christian schools, colleges and universities on the continent.

I am in no way shifting the blame for its own poverty away from the Africans themselves, but I do hope that most African countries have by now realised that “first to seek the political kingdom and everything else will be yours” (Nkhrumah) will not solve their problems. Christians themselves have to mobilise their own resources, build a strong civil society and not expect everything from their governments.

6. You have been a Christian scholar for over forty years. Two final questions:

6.1 What lessons have you learned?

With this kind of question, Steve, you are enticing me to write another book. Let me suffice with only a few things that come to my mind at the moment.

In my philosophical memoirs (in Afrikaans elsewhere in this volume of *Koers*) I explain my life history as a footpath, sometimes not straight and also including turn-offs along the way. Initially I wanted to become a minister (preferably a missionary) to be able to serve the Lord. However, through my acquaintance with a reformational worldview and philosophy, I discovered that He wanted to use me elsewhere in his creation-wide kingdom. In this way I finally became a Christian philosopher. The first lesson I have thus learned, is that one should always pray to God that He will use you as He has

decided, and then fully trust Him to guide you through all of life's zigzags.

Concerning a Christian philosophy, I have realised that even the greatest reformational thinkers stood on the shoulders of their predecessors and were, furthermore, influenced by the philosophical trends of their times. Because their deepest intention was to be obedient to God's revelation, they moved a few steps ahead of their teachers. At the same time, however, some of their ideas remained unreformed. Therefore, Calvin's adage, *semper reformanda*, will be valid until our Lord comes again. Every new generation has to take up this task anew. An important implication is that – in spite of the fundamental critique offered by a reformational approach – we should always share our insights with others in genuine humility.

As far as lecturing is concerned, I have realised – perhaps too late in my life – how important it is in teaching a Christian philosophy to be a mentor or model for one's students. Of course they have to study the contents of a reformational worldview and philosophy, but they also need its confirmation in the example of an older person who him-/herself lives accordingly. Apart from that they also need the support of a like-minded community of younger people. I say this especially in the light of the increasing commercialisation of life, including universities, resulting in less and less personal contact between students and their lecturers.

In spite of the secularisation of my own alma mater (and this can also be a message to Christian scholars at other secular universities), Christians should be innocent as doves, but also shrewd like snakes (Matt. 10:16). Taking an example from the red-chested cuckoo, we can still lay our Christian eggs to be hatched in a secular nest (curriculum). The students will be able to see the difference between one's own viewpoint and the prescribed syllabus. As Christians we have received a great gift in our reformational tradition. We have the obligation to share it – and the more we share, the richer we will become!

6.2 What advice would you give to budding Christian students and scholars?

If I start sermonising, Steve, please bear with me – I am a philosophical missionary after all! Again only a few remarks:

In our contemporary, materialistic, market and consumption-driven societies the temptation to get wealthy – even at great costs – can

be very strong. Since a Christian philosophy cannot be weighed, measured and counted in cash value, its real value may be severely underestimated. However, do not be misled: the wisdom it offers is worth far more than gold. For the time invested in studying it, you will reap a rich harvest on both the theoretical and practical level.

The contemporary postmodern world and philosophy is confusing, while a reformational perspective provides direction. Of course this does not imply that reformational thinkers should be afraid to ask questions. One should, therefore, first shape an own Christian viewpoint before one spends all the time unravelling present philosophical tendencies.

Do not try to be accepted by simply following the most recent philosophical currents. Remember that a reformational worldview can be traced back to the sixteenth century. It is 75 years since the revival of a genuine reformational philosophy in the Netherlands. While it should never be regarded as a closed system, it is a tried and tested tradition, not simply something fashionable that will be replaced tomorrow by a new philosophical freak. We need students and lecturers to carry the torch of this liberating philosophy into the new context of contemporary culture, a world that was still unknown to Vollenhoven, Dooyeweerd, Stoker and their many followers worldwide.

I have also realised that our so-called contemporary tolerance of all viewpoints can in fact be very intolerant – especially of a clear Christian perspective. Do not be scared, do not withdraw. You have a basic right to serve the Lord with your mind. And the rest of the world has a right to hear his Good News. He will finally bless us, not necessarily for what we have achieved, but for our faithfulness as Christian scholars. Revelation 14:13b promises something amazing. Not that our works will precede us, but that they will follow us. God will use them as building blocks for his renewed creation.

To talk about oneself can be very difficult. The danger of thinking too much of one's own life is always present, while God's Word in many places (e.g. Prov. 27:2) advise humility. May I nevertheless thank you, Steve, for this interview. The kind of questions you asked forced me to review important aspects of my past life. It also helped me to ascertain whether I want to share something with a new generation of reformationally-minded Christians. Finally, it reminded me that I have to look ahead, because God leads one's life journey "like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day" (Prov. 4:18) when He will awake us on his renewed earth.

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'n Voetpad deur die werklikheid – filosofiese memoires¹

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Abstract

A footpath through reality – philosophical memoirs

How does a philosopher come into being? By employing the metaphor of a foot-path through life and its realities, Professor B.J. (Bennie) van der Walt traces his own intellectual development, indicating the many people and different circumstances during the previous century that influenced his shaping into a Christian philosopher. These memoirs are done not in the traditional, typical academic curriculum vitae style, but simply in telling his personal story about understanding reality. His journey through different seasons develops from his early childhood up to the age of 70. He also provides a brief evaluation of his own publications. In his review of the past he recognises the hand of his Father in heaven. He now hands over the torch of reformational philosophy to the present generation. Finally he looks ahead, expecting another journey

1 Die versoek dat dit nie 'n droë, tradisionele *curriculum vitae* mag wees nie verklaar die trant waarin hierdie memoires geskryf is. Die gebruik van die derde persoon maak dit makliker om oor 'n mens self te skryf. Vergelyk Van der Walt (2010a), waarin verduidelik word waarom hy die metafoor van 'n voetpad op sy lewe toepas.

Interested readers who can not follow Afrikaans, may consult Bishop, S., ed. 2011. "Like the first gleam of dawn": reformational studies. Grand Rapids: Paideia. (To be published.)

(that will be both continuous and discontinuous compared to the present) on a new earth.

Opsomming

'n Voetpad deur die werklikheid – filosofiese memoires

Hoe ontstaan 'n filosoof? Met gebruikmaking van die metafoor van 'n voetpad deur die lewe en die werklikheid volg professor B.J. (Bennie) van der Walt sy eie intellektuele ontwikkeling waarin hy aantoon hoe baie mense en verskillende omstandighede gedurende die vorige eeu sy vorming tot 'n Christelike filosoof beïnvloed het. Hierdie memoires word nie in die tradisionele, droog-akademiese styl van 'n curriculum vitae geskryf nie, maar op 'n eenvoudig-persoonlike wyse vertel 'n bepaalde filosoof sy eie pogings om die werklikheid te verstaan. Die voetpad ontwikkel vanaf sy kinderjare tot op 70. Hy gee ook 'n kort evaluering van sy eie publikasies. In sy terugblik op die verlede sien hy duidelik die hand van sy hemelse Vader in sy eie lewe. Met 'n versoek om die reformatoriese wysbegeerte te vertroetel en verder uit te bou, dra hy die fakkel van hierdie bevrydende denktradisie oor aan die geslag van die hede. Self kyk hy vooruit na 'n toekoms, na 'n ander reis deur 'n nuwe werklikheid, wat sowel kontinu as diskontinu met die huidige sal wees.

Kinderjare

Hy is op 12 April 1939 – op sy moeder se verjaardag – tuis gebore in Rivierstraat, Potchefstroom. Toe hy sy verskyning maak, is die koppie vervorm en die gesiggie blou as gevolg van die moeilike geboorte. Die vroedvrou se klap op sy boude laat hom egter met 'n eerste skree aankondig dat hy lus het om te lewe. Dr. J.D. du Toit (Totius), die prediker op dié Sondag, doop hom (in die ou Gereformeerde Kerk Potchefstroom-Sentraal (wat later gesloop is) met die name van sy oupa, naamlik Barend Johannes. Hy word Bennie genoem, die oudste van vyf kinders van Mias en Tiena van der Walt, wat later op die Vyfhoekhoewes boer. (Wie dalk sy voorgeslagte verder terug wil nagaan, raadpleeg Van der Walt *et al.*, 1989:221, 222, 315; Van der Walt & Van der Walt, 1998:199, 711. Meer oor sy kinderjare is te vinde in Van der Walt, 2010b.)

Soos baie vaders en moeders vandag nog, wonder sy ouers hoe hierdie outjie se lewenspaadjie sal loop. Is daar nog 'n toekoms? Die meeste Suid-Afrikaners was ná die vroeëre Engelse oorlog en die depressie van die vroeë dertigerjare arm. Daarbenewens word die gerugte van 'n tweede wêreldoorlog (wat inderdaad enkele maande later, op 3 September 1939, uitbreek het) al sterker ...

Laerskooljare

Die knapie groei egter fluks van die ouerliefde en gesonde plaaskos, sodat hy op die ouderdom van sewe jaar, per fiets, die paar kilometer na Vyfhoekskool kan ry om Graad 1 te begin. Baie van sy skoolmaats is arm en die skooltjie voorsien tydens “klein speelyd” toebroodjies en aangebrande sop en kakao. (Hy onthou dié reuk vandag nog.)

Eers skryf hulle met 'n griffel op 'n lei. Later mag hulle met penne, wat kort-kort in die inkpot van hulle skoolbanke gedoop moet word, probeer skryf. (Balpuntpenne word eers baie later uitgevind.) Soms beland die blonde vlegsels van Iris Vermeulen (volgens die seuns die mooiste meisiekind in die klas) egter “per ongeluk” ook in sy inkpot. (Wanneer daar volkspele saam met die meisies gedoen moet word, verdwyn hy egter skoonveld.) Sulke ongelukke mag egter nie te dikwels gebeur nie, want die kwaai mnr. Oosthuizen hou 'n rottang in sy klas. Ag wat, netnou is dit weer “groot speelyd” en kan 'n mens jou top of albasters uittoets ... Omdat Van der Walt lelik skryf (sy onderwyser waarsku hom dat 'n mens se handskrif 'n prentjie van jousef is), maar darem mooi prentjies kan teken en verf, sê sy een onderwyser hy moet maar 'n skilder word. Maar die ander een dink (omdat Bennie allerhande dinge ontwerp) hy sal 'n ingenieur moet word. Nog 'n stem – die van sy oupa Delpport, vir wie sy kleinseun (as enigste oupa) baie lief is – het hom egter reeds vir die predikantskap bespreek.

Hoërskool

Sy sekondêre onderwys ontvang hy aan die Hoërskool Gimnasium, Potchefstroom. Hy kan Kuns as ekstra (sewende) vak neem. Maar uiteindelik behaal hy onderskeidings in die vakke wat hom die meeste interesseer: Latyn, Geskiedenis en Natuurwetenskap – veral laasgenoemde. (Hy het sy eie laboratorium met gevaarlike chemikalieë en elemente op die plaas aangelê en die plek eenkeer byna met plofstof opgeblaas.) Mnr. De Lange wys hom hoe om 'n teleskoop te bou en is van mening dat 'n natuurwetenskaplike rigting die pad is wat Bennie moet volg. Maar die Wiskunde wat daarmee sou saamgaan, interesseer hom glad nie. Verder lê daar diep in sy hart die begeerte om in sy toekomstige lewe die Here te kan dien. (Sy dominee, P.W. Buys, se deeglike belydeniskategese versterk net hierdie begeerte.) Maar hoe kan dit gebeur anders as om 'n dominee te word?

Voorgraadse studies

Sy ouers gun aan hulle kinders die voorreg wat hulle self nie kon geniet nie: hoër onderwys. Hulle het nooit (soos sy onderwysers en oupa) vir Bennie gesê wat hy moes word nie, maar hulle is heelwaarskynlik bly toe hy in 1958 aan die destydse Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys vir die B.A.-graad inskryf met die oog op 'n latere Th.B. (Teologie). Om 'n predikant in die familie te hê, sou goed wees!

Een van die vakke wat die jong student moet “loop”, veroorsaak egter dat sy voetpad nie reguit loop nie. Dit is die vak, Filosofie, waarmee hy nog nooit kennis gemaak het nie, maar wat hom van die begin af boei, omdat dit ditself op die diepste lewensvrae toespits. Die Christelike lewensvisie en filosofie wat Stoker (1899-1993), Taljaard (1915-1994) en Du Plessis (1932-) voorstaan, bied vir die jongman ook die oplossing op 'n belangrike lewensvraag. Aangesien hulle leer dat die hele lewe religieus bepaald is, diens aan die ware God (of 'n afgod), is godsdiens nie beperk tot die kerk of predikantskap nie. Die Here kan en moet op *elke* terrein gedien word. Selfs die terrein van die wetenskap is nie iets neutraals nie. Wat 'n verruimende – en bevrydende – perspektief! Die inspirerende lesings van professor S.U. Zuidema (vroëer sendeling in Oos-Indië) van die Vrije Universiteit aan die Puk (1959) laat die begeerte verder groei om na te gaan hoe 'n mens die Here ook met jou verstand kan liefhê.

'n Honneurs en M.A. in Filosofie

Dit beteken egter ('n voorlopige) afdraaipad. Terwyl sy ander studentemaats aan die Potchefstroomse Teologiese Skool van die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika hulle Th.B.-studies begin, besluit hy om hom dieper in die Filosofie in te graawe. Te veel vrae is nog onbeantwoord! Ook die aanbod (van prof. W.N. Coetzee) van 'n beurs vir 'n Honneurs in Latyn (sy ander hoofvak vir die B.A.-graad) word van die hand gewys. Sy werk op sy pa se hoenderplaas (geslagsbepaling van dagoud kuikens) sal wel help om sy studies en die koop van boeke – 'n groot swakheid – te kan bekostig.

Vir die Honneurs in Filosofie word 'n wye spyskaart aangebied. Professor H.G. Stoker gee sistematiese filosofie deur die bril van sy eie wysbegeerte van die skeppingsidee (vgl. Stoker, 1933); professor J.A.L. Taljaard behandel (aan die hand van 'n Afrikaans-vertaalde diktaat, *Kort overzicht van de geschiedenis van de wijsbegeerte*; vgl. Vollenhoven, 2005) die Geskiedenis van die Westerse Filosofie

volgens die probleem-historiese metode van sy leermeester (sy eie sistematiek publiseer hy eers baie later; vgl. Taljaard, 1976); dr. P.G.W. du Plessis fokus veral op etiese vraagstukke.

Aangesien Van der Walt die enigste student is, leer hy ook meer van sy dosente se persoonlikhede en eienaardighede. Die eerste van hulle, professor Henk Stoker, is een van die Puk-legendes (vgl. Van der Schyff, 2003:520-522; en 2005:125-128). Tydens die Tweede Wêreldoorlog moes Stoker (as gevangene nr. K2231/42) 'n jaar lank in die Koffiefonteinse Interneringskamp agter doringdraad deurbring. Dit het heel waarskynlik gebeur as gevolg van sy negatiewe siening van die Smutsregering se deelname aan die oorlog. In sy *Stryd om die ordes* (Stoker, 1941) het hy volgens die veiligheidspolisie van die Smutsbewind te veel begrip vir die ontstaan van die Duitse Nasionaal-Sosialisme openbaar! (Vir besonderhede oor die redes vir Stoker se inhegtenisneming en sy eie politieke standpunt vgl. Van der Schyff, 2003:504-505, 520-522.) Die boek, *Agter tralies en doringdraad*, (BOGP, 1953:1-82) bied volledige besonderhede oor die omstandighede tydens die Tweede Wêreldoorlog en die gevolge daarvan – die verset van die Ossewabrandwag, die vervolging en gevangenisskap van sy lede, ensovoorts. Stoker (1953:306-325) het self 'n bydrae tot hierdie bundel gelewer waarin hy – tipies filosoof – die sosiologiese, psigologiese en etiese aspekte van die Koffiefonteinse boerekamp beskrywe.

Stoker se Olivetti-tikmasjien staan op sy lessenaar, want alles word getik – niemand kan sy handskrif ontsyfer nie. (Die jong student dink by homself: as hierdie geleerde so onleesbaar skryf, hoef ek nie langer oor my eie gekrap skaam te voel nie.) Verder rook hy die kamer donker met afwisselend pyp en sterk filterlose sigarette – en tog haal hy 94 jaar! Maar dit terloops. In sy studeerkamer met die baie boeke (het hy hulle werklik almal al gelees?) sit 'n jong student ademloos en luister hoe Stoker, sonder notas, uit die hoof, vir twee ure ononderbroke klasgee.

Professor Jan Taljaard se lewe loop van dié van 'n mynwerker na professor. In teenstelling met Stoker, het hy 'n duidelike, gelykmatige handskrif wat soos drukskrif lees. Ook hy steek nie sy politieke oortuigings onder stoele en banke weg nie. Omdat hy – soos ook baie Afrikaners in die vroeë veertigerjare (vgl. Van der Schyff, 2003:493 e.v.) – lid van die Ossewabrandwag was, word hy ook opgesluit.

In professor Taljaard se studeerkamer bring Van der Walt nie net ure nie, maar letterlik dae en selfs nagte vir sy M.-verhandeling en

proefskrif deur. (Net soos tant Miriam Stoker, voorsien tant Dirkie Taljaard ook tee, koffie en beskuit vir die vermoeide siele.) Indien 'n mens die bemoeienis wat dosente destyds met hulle studente gemaak het met die huidige situasie (2009) vergelyk, is daar 'n wêreld se verskil. Vandag produseer universiteite – met studiegidse en so min moontlike persoonlike aandag van dosente – studente wat wel grade verwerf, maar dikwels nog nooit selfstandig leer dink het nie. Vir die jong Van der Walt is die mentorskap en meesters-klasse van sy dosente in Filosofie dus 'n ongelooflike voorreg. 'n Filosoof ontstaan nie oornag nie!

Op die ou einde word die afdraaipad na die Honneursstudie 'n onderbreking van twee jaar, aangesien die versoeking te groot was om ná die Honneurs (in 1961 behaal) ook 'n Meestersgraad in Filosofie aan te pak. Die verhandeling (oor Thomas van Aquino, die Middeleeuse denker se filosofie in sy *Summa Contra Gentiles*) kan egter nie in 1962 voltooi word nie.

Jeugwerk

Tydens sy studentejare het Bennie ook diep in die J.V.'s (Jongeliedeverenigings op Gereformeerde Grondslag) betrokke geraak – en soms meer tyd daaraan as aan sy studies bestee. Dit begin by die plaaslike J.V. Gideon, later as voorsitter van die Transvaalse Bond, op die Federale Bond van J.V.'s in SA, op die redaksie en later as redakteur van *Die Bondsode* (amptelike maandblad van die J.V.'s in SA). Talle leierskampe word georganiseer en verskeie publikasies oor jeugwerk word uitgegee. Terugskouend besef 'n mens eers hoe 'n groot vormende waarde hierdie J.V.-werk op die jongmense van destyds gehad het. Reformatories-lewensbeskoulike ideale kon in die J.V. prakties beleef word.

'n Lewensmaat

Veel belangriker is ook dat die Jongeliedeverenigings nie net uit jong mans bestaan het nie. Ons goeie Skepper het ook aan ons twee oë gegee om al die skoonheid wat Hy gemaak het, te kan raaksien. Tot sover het Bennie die vroulike skoonheid net van ver af bewonder. Sy J.V.-voetpad kruis nou egter met dié van die sekretaresse van J.V. Gideon: 'n (van binne en buite) mooi swartkopnoui, Hanneljie Loock (1940-12-05). Toe kom die liefde – weergaloos! Hierdie verhouding loop in 1962 op 'n verlowing uit en eers in 1964 ('n student was destyds maar armlastig) op 'n huwelik. (Aan haar het hy oneindig veel die afgelope 45 jaar te danke: geduld, 'n fyn kritiese oor, selfopofferende liefde en – nie die minste nie – duisende blad-

sy se tikwerk.) Van nou af sal ten minste twee sáám die kronkelende voetpad stap ...

Teologiese studies

Die pad draai egter nog 'n keer af van wat, agteraf beskou, die eintlike pad sou wees. Vanaf 1963 tot 1966 studeer Van der Walt aan die plaaslike Teologiese Skool en behaal (einde 1966) die Th.B.-graad (met onderskeiding). Hy het groot waardering vir die klasse van veral professore. W.J. Snyman (Nuwe Testament) en Hugo du Plessis (Sendingwetenskap). Hy besluit ook dat hy liever 'n sendingeling as 'n gewone dominee wil word – verkieslik onder die Boesmans in Suidwes-Afrika, waar hy gedurende die wintervakansie van 1966 met sendingwerk in die Gobabisdistrik help.

Intussen het die eerste Van der Waltjie, Mias (op 19 Augustus 1966), sy opwagting gemaak. Hanneltjie kan nie langer die broodwinner wees nie. Die “ewige student” moet nou begin koers kry ...

Probleme rondom 'n verhandeling

Maar wat van die onvoltooide M.-verhandeling in Filosofie? Met gratis verblyf op Vyfhoek en nog steeds die inkomste uit die geslagsbepaling van dagoud kuikens, is dit dalk finansiële haalbaar. 'n Tydelike assistentskap by die Departement Filosofie moet verder in 1967 die oop gaatjies vul.

Die vertraagde verhandeling bied die voordeel dat Van der Walt sy filosofiese en teologiese kennis daarin kan kombineer. Ongelukkig is dit vir sommige mense nie so 'n goeie kombinasie nie. Die feit dat hy aangetoon het dat alle teologieë op (meestal versweë) filosofiese vooronderstellings gebou is (dit geld natuurlik van alle vakke), maak sekere Potchefstroomse teoloë ongemaklik. Is Teologie dan nie *ipso facto* Christelik en die koningin van die wetenskappe nie? Uiteindelik besluit die Senaat van die PU vir CHO in 1968 (in teenwoordigheid van Van der Walt, wat spesiaal daarvoor ingeroep is) dat die graad – nogal met onderskeiding – aan hom toegeken sal word op voorwaarde dat hy die laaste, mees kritiese hoofstuk oor die teologie, oorskryf.

Hierdie verloop veroorsaak groot twyfel in die (teologiese) loopbaan wat Van der Walt homself voorgestel het. Vryheid van denke – om alleen aan God se onfeilbare openbaring gehoorsaam te wees – moet tog belangriker wees as feilbare menslike teologie. Dalk dui die reformatoriese filosofie 'n beter koers aan. Waarom dit nie by die bron self – in Nederland – gaan vasstel nie? (Die saadjies is reeds

in 1959 deur professor Zuidema en in 1963 deur professor Vollenhoven se gaslesings aan die PU vir CHO gesaai.) 'n Doktorsgraadbeurs van sy Alma Mater en 'n internasionale beurs van die Vrije Universiteit maak hierdie nuwe trajek op sy intellektuele voetpad moontlik.

Twee jaar in Nederland

Die Super Constellation van Luxavia – wat olie by een van sy motore lek – bring die soekende student met sy vrou (reeds 7 maande swanger) en Mias (2 jaar oud) via Luanda en Kreta veilig in Julie 1968 tot op Luxemburg. Daarvandaan reis hulle na Schipol (Amsterdam), waar 'n ou studentemaat – die enigste bekende in die vreemde stad en land – hulle ontmoet. Hulle vind eers tydelike onderdak, maar gelukkig – voordat klein George op 18 September 1968 sy opwagting maak – verblyf te Dirk Sonoystraat 173, Geuzenveld in Amsterdam-Wes. Dit word 'n soms moeilike, maar terselfdertyd ryke ervaring vir die Van der Walts.

'n Opdraende pad

Die pad was soms moeilik, want die Nederlanders is uitgesproke mense en verstaan ook nie altyd die “leuke kindertaaltje” wat 'n Afrikaner praat nie. Veral die spraaksame Mias kry swaar – om nie te praat van die grou, “viese” weer nie! Daarby word Suid-Afrikaners oral oor die kole gehaal oor hulle afskuwelike apartheidsbeleid. (Selfs op die kraambed van die Akademiese Ziekenhuis van die V.U. word felle kritiek die wit “Afrikaan” nie gespaar nie.) Dit terwyl die meeste van die Suid-Afrikaanse studente se vorige leermeesters in sy eie land “afsonderlike ontwikkeling” nog goedgepraat het. Die studenteopstande – selfs gewelddadig – en die demokratisering van Nederlandse universiteite is vir Van der Walt ook iets vreemds. So ook die toenemende verwêreldliking waarteen die kerke blykbaar tevergeefs probeer wal gooi. Tuis het vroulied haar hande vol met die twee kleuters, veral toe 'n derde seun, Barend, op 22 Maart 1970 sy opwagting maak. (Geen wonder nie dat die bure begin praat het van die meneer wat heeldag by die huis “sit” en die “mevrouw wat maar aldoor ‘babies’ kregen”.) Dan is daar nog nie vertel van die soms knaende verlange – veral Sondae – na jou tuiste op die ongerepte aarde, daar ver weg onder die suiderkruis nie ...

Geleidelik word die vreemdheid oorwin. Pa Bennie ry soos 'n regte Kaaskop met sy fiets (met twee hangsakke oor die agterste draer) om “boodschappen” (inkopies) te doen. Ma Hannah stoot die twee seuns in so 'n ouderwetse kinderwa ('n geskenk van Nederlandse

vriende) rond, dat die verbygangers op straat gaan stilstaan en omdraai om nog 'n keer te kyk: "Wat een rare wagen!" Sy leer ook gou om iedereen in plat Amsterdams aan te spreek. (Die korrespondensie van familie tussen Nederland en Suid-Afrika gedurende Julie 1968 tot Junie 1970 lewer 'n boeiende verhaal op, wat dalk nog eendag ontgin kan word.)

'n Ryke ervaring

Dit word egter ook 'n ryke ervaring wat die gesin, by nabaat gesien, nie vir iets anders sou verruil nie. Bennie Boekwurm, amptelik op 5 September 1968 geregistreer as student nr. 17 028 aan die V.U. (vgl. Schutte, 2005:693), sit dag en nag met sy neus diep in boeke – en vind steeds 'n "los" gulde om nog 'n boek te koop.

Hy het ook die besondere voorreg om reformatoriese denkers (wie se boeke hy nog net gelees het) persoonlik te ontmoet: eerstens die joviale professor Hendrik van Riessen (1911-2000) by 'n jeugbyeenkoms (Van der Walt moet vir die J.V.'s in Suid-Afrika navorsing doen oor die Gereformeerde jeugwerk in Nederland). Met sy pyp wat skeef in sy mond hang, staan hy op 'n kassie en probeer al die jongmense se vrae beantwoord. Daar is ook die grote, aristokratiese professor Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977; Klapwijk, 1987: 105 beskryf hom as 'n "gracieuze nieuwlichter bij de gratie Gods"); verder ook professore J.P.A. Mekkes (1898-1987, oudgeneraal en filosoof), K.J. Popma (1903-1986, die man met die hartseer oë en volgens sommiges 'n verstrooide warhoof, maar ook iemand wat die diepste waarhede oor hierdie gebroke werklikheid kan neerpen) en A. Troost, teoloog-filosof en etikus (1916-2009).

Besondere geleerdes

'n Nog groter belewenis is dit om professor D.H. Th. Vollenhoven (1892-1978) se *privatissima* (klasse ná sy emeritering aangebied) by te woon. Daarin deel hy die resultate van sy jarelange probleemhistoriese ondersoek van die geskiedenis van die Westerse filosofie met belangstellende studente.

Klapwijk (1987:99, 101) wat hierdie besondere geleerde goed geken het, tipeer hom soos volg:

Tegen Vollenhoven zag menigeen op als een reus, een denkreus ... maar Vollenhoven, de reus, had ook iets van een kind. Hoezeer professor, toch was hij de eenvoud zelf, ongekunsteld en ongecompliceerd. Hij stond vlak bij zijn mensen, zijn studenten, zijn geestverwanten. Hij volgde wie hem niet

volgen konden ... Vanwaar deze houding? Niet aan de wijsbegeerte maar aan het Woord heeft deze filosoof zijn hart verpand ... Alle wijsbegeerte is glibberig ... Het Woord is vast ... Dus heeft de wijsbegeerte de wijsheid niet in pacht. Wijsbegeerte is begeerte-naar-wijsheid, nie minder, ook niet meer. Geen wijsgeer kan deze begeerte uit eigen voorraad bevredigen. Of hij verkoopt knollen voor citroenen ... het Woord alleen geeft antwoord ... Ik ga een beetje begriipen waarom Vollenhoven, de grote geleerde, in zijn hart een kind gebleven is. (Vgl. ook Klapwijk, 1992.)

Om te luister hoe professor S.U. Zuidema (1906-1975) die laat-Middeleeuse denker, Willem van Occam, analiseer, om die jong dr. Jaap Klapwijk (geb. 1933) se lesings in logika te volg, om professor H. van Riessen (1911-2000) se seminare by te woon, om enkele voordragte van die briljante geskiedenisfilosoof, professor M.C. Smit (1911-1981) te volg, om 'n keer by die teoloë, soos G.C. Berkouwer, in te loer ... dit alles is – al was dit soms te hoog om by te kom – in die spons van Van der Walt se geheue opgeneem en bewaar.

Veral Van Riessen is bekend vir sy “moppe” (grappe), en sy klasse vind gewoonlik ook plaas te midde van die donker wolk van 'n dik sigaar se rook, sodat studente die trane uit hulle oë moet vee om hom te kan sien. By meer informele byeenkomste is die sigare aangevul met 'n “borrel” (jenever) of meer – net om die debat tot hoër vlakke te verhef.

Van der Walt se kennismaking met medestudente en geesgenote uit die jongere generasie reformatoriese denkers is ook belangrik – denkers waaronder Kor Brill (geb. 1932), Jaap Klapwijk, Egbert Schuurman (geb. 1937), Sander Griffioen (geb. 1941), Henk Geertsema (geb. 1940), Bob Goudzwaard, Al Wolters en andere, met wie in die jare daarna kontak behou is en/of uit wie se (latere) publikasies veel geleer is.

Zuidema as promotor benoem

Van der Walt ontvang van die VU (op grond van sy Th.B.- en M.A.-grade aan die PU vir CHO) doktorsale status en kan dus in Nederland promoveer. Waarom nie so 'n groot geleentheid aangryp nie? Van Riessen word as leier van student Van der Walt benoem. Dit blyk egter dat hy (as oud-ingenieur, veral geïnteresseerd in die invloed van die tegnologie op die samelewing) nie die beste promotor sou wees vir Van der Walt se eerste belangstelling, naamlik in probleme op die grensgebied van filosofie en teologie nie. S.U.

Zuidema, professor in Middeleeuse Filosofie, word dus in sy plek benoem.

Die rede waarom Van der Walt ook meer aanklank by Zuidema gevind het, word goed deur Klapwijk (1987:115-117) verwoord wanneer hy die twee uiteenlopende kante van Zuidema se persoonlikheid beskryf:

Zuidema staat bij velen geboekt als een rabiate antithese-voorvechter, een oecumenische querulant, een politieke scherpslijper, een filosofische dwarslegger ... o wee, als hij zijn scherp zette, het voorhoofd gefronsd, de gladde kruin gerimpeld. Wee wie slachtoffer werd van zijn priemende blik, zijn vlijmende tong, zijn klievende pen. Dan bleek maar één ding geraden: inpakken en wegwezen!

Van die ander kant van sy persoonlikheid sê Klapwijk egter:

Toch was deze vinnige debater en felle polemist in wezen een o zo gevoelig en zachmoedig mens. Die leeft bij de lofzangen van Israel. Die toornde van de kathedr en troostte van de kansel. Die valse leiders ontmaskerde om de misleiden te brengen aan de voet van het kruis. Zuidema was zendeling ... Zuidema was gedreven door 'missionêre beweging'.

Van der Walt leer in sy ontmoeting met sulke groot geeste nie net filosofie nie. Hy leer ook dat werklike groot denkers, in die besef van hulle beperkte insigte, nederige mense bly (vgl. Rom. 12:3, 16 en Ef. 4:2). Hy word herinner aan Calvyn, 'n geestelike vader van die reformatoriese tradisie. Die hervormer stel in sy *Institusie* (1559) drie vereistes vir sy Christelike filosofie: in die eerste plek nederigheid, in die tweede plek nederigheid en in die derde plek weereens nederigheid (*humilitas*). Veral vandag besef Van der Walt nog duideliker dat 'n mens niks besit wat jy nie – van God of ander mense – ontvang het nie en daarom nie moet dink dat jyself of jou eie denke vreeslik belangrik is nie (vgl. 1 Kor. 4:7).

Afgesien van so 'n uitstekende promotor, ontbreek dit boonop met twee universiteitsbiblioteke in dieselfde stad ook nie aan navorsingsmateriaal nie. Wat jy nog wil lees, is per interbiblioteeklening binne dae beskikbaar. Dit word 'n fees! Bowendien word Van der Walt na 'n jaar ook as wetenskaplike medewerker vir Middeleeuse Filosofie aangestel, sodat die finansiële bekommernisse ook minder word. (Dit wat Pa en Ma maandeliks ekstra tot die beurse uit Suid-Afrika stuur, kan nie meer al die geldelike gaatjies van 'n hele gesin toestop nie.)

'n Groot teleurstelling

Net toe dit begin lyk asof die pad nou reguit gaan loop, word professor Zuidema egter siek en moes weens gesondheidsredes aftree. (Van der Walt kon gelukkig 'n deel van sy kosbare biblioteek teen 'n billike prys bekom en later na Suid-Afrika laat verskeep.) In sý plek word professor M.C. Smit benoem. (vgl. Schutte, 2005:617). 'n Universele geleerde en 'n perfeksionis, wat nie net aan homself nie, maar ook aan sy studente byna bomenslike eise kan stel – so asof 'n mens lewenslank kan studeer: te veel vir 'n haastige Van der Walt! Dan maar liever na die oorspronklike plan terugkeer om net die navorsing in Nederland te doen en die proefskrif self by die PU vir CHO in te handig.

'n Nuwe wending

Intussen het die Van der Walt-egpaar nog steeds gedink dat hulle wel eendag op sendingpos êrens in (Suid-)Afrika sal tuiskom. Hulle pad maak egter weer 'n onverwagte draai. Die posman lewer by Dirk Sonostraat 173 'n telegram af: Professor Jan de Wet, rektor van die Universiteit van Fort Hare, doen navraag of mnr. Van der Walt vir 'n onderhoud met die oog op 'n senior lektoraat in Filosofie na Alice in die Oos-Kaap wil kom.

Wat nou gedaan? Weer 'n afdraaipad? Dalk die regte pad? Daar word gewik, geweeg, gebid ... Die deurslaggewende woord kom van Van der Walt se vorige geliefde dosent, professor Willie Snyman (wat vir 'n kerklike vergadering in Nederland is en juis toe by hulle besoek aflê): "Gaan! Jy kan die Here net so goed op hierdie manier dien." Agterna sou blyk dat ook hierdie nuwe hoofstuk noodsaaklike vorming was vir die Van der Walts se lewensreis.

Vier jaar op Fort Hare

Vanaf Julie 1970 was hulle dus terug op eie bodem: nie langs die Mooirivier nie, maar die Thumi (waar baie gesneuweldes in die Xhosa-oorloë uit die vorige eeu nog begrawe lê), aan een van die "bosuniversiteite" van die apartheidsregime. Aanhoudende studentestakings maak dit moontlik om verder aan sy proefskrif te werk. Dit word uiteindelik by die PU ir CHO ingehandig en die graad word in 1975 toegeken. Terselfdertyd besef die dosent in Filosofie egter nou nóg duideliker hoe verkeerd hierdie rassistiese ideologie is. Nog baie meer word geleer, naamlik van die groot rol wat hierdie inrigting (toe dit die enigste hoër onderwysinstelling vir swart mense in Suidelike Afrika was) in die opleiding van belangrike Afrikaleiers

gespeel het. Hy leer om die reformatoriese lewensvisie in 'n nuwe konteks vir die swart Christene van Afrika oor te dra. Hy probeer die Xhosakultuur met die Westerse vergelyk en begryp. Vir die eerste keer moet hy ook nie net Engels lees nie, maar dit ook praat en skryf. (Belangrik vir hom, maar verraad teenoor sy ouma Van der Walt wat, a.g.v. haar konsentrasiekampervarings, die "Rooinekke" verag het en hom aangeraai het om nooit eers hulle taal te praat nie. Dat sy Engels nooit meer as 'n Wes-Transvaalse dialek van dié *lingua franca* sou word, is nie hier ter sake nie!)

Wat wonderlik is, is dat hy ook sy ander liefde hier kan uitleef. As ouderling moet hy een van die verspreidwonende wyke van die Gereformeerde Kerk Oos-Londen (100 km in deursnee) behartig. Hy raak betrokke by die sendingwerk van die Free Church of Scotland. Op versoek van die Administratiewe Buro van die Gereformeerde Kerk begin hy as redakteur ook 'n nuwe Christelike blad in Xhosa, *Umthombo Wamandla* (*Fontein van krag*).

Die alledaagse lewe gaan egter sy gang. Ná drie seuns word die Van der Walt-gesin (op 6 April 1973) verryk met 'n dogter, Marieta. Uiteindelik sou Alice egter maar 'n kort intermezzo word.

Terug op Potchefstroom

Na slegs vier jaar maak die Here 'n nuwe voetpad oop wat vir die volgende 25 jaar gestap sal word. Dit gebeur toe Van der Walt in Julie 1974 die pos as direkteur van die Instituut vir die Bevordering van die Calvinisme (IBC), wat later herdoop sou word na die Instituut vir Reformatoriese Studie (IRS), aan die PU vir CHO aanvaar. Van nou af tot by sy aftrede in 1999 moet hy help om die Suid-Afrikaanse Calvinisme "in te kleur". In 1980 word hy tot professor in Filosofie bevorder en doseer dié vak tot drie jaar na sy aftrede in 1999. Aangesien die geskiedenis en werk van die IRS reeds (gedeeltelik) elders beskrywe is (vgl. Schutte, 2005:373; Van der Walt, 2000; 2006; 2008a; en 2009b; Van Eeden, 2006:159-161; en Van Wyk, 2007) word slegs die volgende vermeld. Navorsing word oor die Calvinisme in Suid-Afrika gedoen en 'n groot aantal publikasies verskyn (vgl. die appendix van Steve Bishop se webwerf: www.allofliferedeemed.co.uk/vanderwalt.htm) en nasionale en talle internasionale konferensies oor aktuele sake word aangebied.

"Waarom is reformasie tog so moeilik?" moet die direkteur van die IRS homself egter dikwels afvra. Soms raak die frustrasie selfs met sy eie kerk so groot dat dit hom dryf tot geskifte soos *Naby God*

(1999). Sommige mense het groot waardering vir die boek, terwyl ander hom as 'n "beroerder van Israel" beskou. Terugskouend oor die afgelope tien jaar, het daar ongelukkig in die meeste gemeentes nog nie veel reformasie plaasgevind nie, maar het die krisis in die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika eerder verdiep. Die kerke raak al meer "spiritualisties" na binne gerig en maak hulself irrelevant in die res van die samelewing. Te veel gemeentes gaan op in interne twis tussen verkramp en verlig oor liturgie en kerkorde (*wine, women and song*), terwyl die wêreld rondom hulle aan die brand is. Hulle gaan gebuk onder visielose, bysiende leierskap. Ook die lidmaatgetalle daal jaarliks. Weinig lidmate weet iets van 'n Bybels-begronde, reformatoriese lewensvisie as oplossing uit hierdie impasse. Die kerke het ná 1994 die Christelik-nasionale dualisme verwerp om vasgevang te word in die nuwe dualisme van private godsdiens teenoor 'n publieke sekulêre bestaan.

Behalwe die politieke, kerklike en kulturele voetpaaie is daar gelukkig ook die natuurlike voetpaaie. Die Van der Walt-gesin kon gereed vir vakansies uitkamp en met rugsak en stewels groot dele van die sentrale en suidelike Natalse Drakensberge verken. Ook hierdie ervarings vind neerslag in twee Engelse en drie Afrikaanse boeke.

Internasionale kontakte

Seker die belangrikste van al die reeds genoemde IRS-konferensies is die Eerste Internasionale Konferensie vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys (Sept. 1975) op Potchefstroom. Hieruit groei die latere International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE), waarvan die hoofkantoor later by Dordt College in die VSA gesetel is. Van der Walt dien vanaf die begin vir verskeie termyn op die Raad van IAPCHE en ook as adviseur vir die Afrika-streek. (Vir 'n kort oorsig oor die geskiedenis van IAPCHE vgl. Van der Walt, 2005; 2008b; Schutte, 2005:455-580 en Hulst, 2009.)

Die IRS het ook in die branding van die politieke spanning (vanaf ongeveer 1975) in Suid-Afrika te staan gekom en moes daarin probeer standpunt inneem en leiding gee (vgl. Van der Walt, 2006; 2009b; asook Van Eeden, 2006:485-499). Van der Walt is oortuig dat die IRS uiteindelik ook deur die universiteitsowerhede hoofsaaklik om politieke redes (einde 1999) gesluit is. Die owerhede kon nie verstaan dat die IRS nie tussen die oppervlakkige teenstelling van politieke "verkramp" of "verlig" kon kies nie (konserwatief of progressief mag nie die norm wees nie), en ook nie vir revolusie nie (die een revolusie bring net 'n volgende voort), maar 'n eie – die reformatoriese – weg wou aandui (vgl. weer Van der Walt, 2009b).

Retrospektief het die feit dat sy eie voetpad met dié van so baie mense buite sy eie land regoor die wêreld gekruis het, 'n groot bydrae tot sy eie vorming as mens en denker gemaak. (Hy dink byvoorbeeld aan S. Fowler, P. Marshall, G. Spykman, C. Seerveld en A.M. Wolters.) Daarbenewens bly sy belangstelling in Afrika. Reise na ongeveer vyftien Afrikalande is vanaf 1984 onderneem. (Vgl. Van der Walt, 2009a:22 e.v. vir ervarings tydens sommige van hierdie "ontdekkingsreise".) Dit vind later neerslag in verskeie boeke oor 'n vergelyking tussen die Afrika- en Westerse kultuur.

Nog 'n sypad

Deur die jare vervul Van der Walt ook sy oupa en sy eie wens: hy bly betrokke by die plaaslike evangelieverkondiging onder hoofsaaklik Tswana-plaasarbeiders in die distrik. Die *moruti* (soos hy aangespreek is) loop baie voetpaaie saam met hierdie mense, omdat sy amp ongeveer alles impliseer: ouderling en skriba, maar ook nutsman, taxi, ambulans, sieketrooster en begrafnisondernemer. Elke Sondag (vanaf 10:00-15:00) word gepreek en gekatkiseer. Stapels preke word deur 'n multi-kulturele Bybelstudiegroepie gemaak om die helpers van goeie kanselstof te voorsien. Hy en Hanneljie (*Mamoruti*) word vir meer as tien jaar ook lidmate van die Kereke ya Gereformeerde Boskop (vgl. Van der Walt, 2007 vir besonderhede en 2009a:2 e.v. vir interessante ondervindings in hierdie verband).

Publikasies

Sedert 2004 (Van der Walt is toe as navorsingsgenoot by die Skool vir Filosofie van die Potchefstroomkampus aangestel) breek rustiger tye aan om publikasies van meer wetenskaplike aard die lig te laat sien as die gepopulariseerde geskrifte wat by die IRS vir die breë publiek geskryf is. Eintlik bied Van der Walt in al hierdie geskrifte slegs meer wetenskaplik-verantwoorde uitwerkings van baie van die temas wat hy reeds in *The liberating message* (1994 en herdrukke) en *Visie op die werklikheid* (1999; 2000) onder druk en slegs baie kortliks (vir studentegebruik) kon aansny. ('n Eie uitgewery, The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa (ICCA), gee die meeste boeke uit waarin baie artikels, oorspronklik in Afrikaans, in Engels verskyn.) Sy latere geskrifte (sedert 2000) konsentreer eers hoofsaaklik op Afrika (in sy verhouding tot die Weste). Sedert 2008 en daarna keer Van der Walt egter terug na die belangrikheid van 'n reformatoriese lewensvisie en die grondprobleme in die reformatoriese filosofie, soos die ontologie, antropologie en samelewingsfilosofie. (Iemand wat hierdie tradisie ken, sal Van der Walt heel waarskynlik as 'n Neo-Vollenhoveniaan tipeer.) Hy is nog steeds

daarvan oortuig dat 'n werklike Bybelsbegronde, reformatoriese lewensvisie (wetenskaplik uitgewerk in 'n Christelike filosofie) op *alle* terreine van die lewe in Suid-Afrika en die res van Afrika 'n onontbeerlike rol te speel het, indien die Christelike geloof enige impak buite die eng mure van persoonlike geloof en kerklike lewe wil maak.

'n Eie beoordeling

Indien Van der Walt toegelaat word om self sy geskrifte te beoordeel, sou hy wel iets oor hulle *aard* wou sê. (Die *inhoud* word uiteraard aan die lesers se beoordeling oorgelaat.) In die eerste plek was daar te veel van hulle. 'n Kollega van Bennie – 'n marathontleet – het 'n keer opgemerk dat Van der Walt vinniger boeke skryf as wat hy kan hardloop. (Sy persoonlike ervaring was egter dat iets eers vir hom werklik duidelik was wanneer hy dit logies-sistematies op papier kon neerpen.) Sy geskrifte word ook nie gekenmerk deur briljante oorspronklikheid nie, maar is eerder persoonlike verwerkings van wat hy van sy voorgangers en tydgenote in die reformatoriese filosofiese tradisie kon leer. 'n Xhosa spreekwoord sê tereg: "Intaka yakha ngoboya bezinye" – 'n voël bou sy nes met die vere van ander; dit wil sê, geen mens is selfgenoegsaam nie. Die boeiende, breë perspektiewe was vir hom ook steeds belangriker as die klein detail. Die hoofdoel met sy skryfwerk was dus om vir ander – veral sy mede-Afrikane – op 'n eenvoudige wyse van 'n kosbare, bevrydende denktradisie te vertel. Hy het graag van sy Westerse geesgenote se bekwaamheid en diep insigte gebruik gemaak, maar homself nie ten doel gestel (of bekwaam geag) om daarmee te kompeteer nie. Dit wat hy geskryf het, sal ook nooit volgens streng kriteria as suiwer filosofie beskou word nie. Dit is 'n mengsel van filosofiese en teologiese (eerder Bybelse) kennis. Dit wou – ter wille van die geldigheid van hierdie denktradisie in die oë van sy (Christelike) lesers – so na as moontlik aan God se Woord bly.

God se teenwoordigheid

Tot sover die voetpad wat deur iemand in 'n bepaalde tyd en omstandighede deur die werklikheid gestap is; of, as u wil, sy "filosofiese memoires". (Dit is gelukkig net 'n deel van sy lewe. Die lewe is – dankie tog! – véél meer as ons feilbare nadenke daaroor.) Wat 'n waagstuk, want nie net is dit moeilik om ander mense te peil nie, maar nog veel moeiliker om jouself te verstaan en dus die waarheid oor jouself te vertel. Ten diepste is en bly elke mens 'n misterie.

Professor Ponti Venter (2010:iii) sê egter in sy voorwoord tot Van der Walt se nuutste boek *At home in God's world* dat Van der Walt, ten spyte van 'n slingerende lewenspad, ten minste die regte koers bly behou het:

In all these years [I have known Bennie van der Walt] he has matured, but kept direction. His orientation did not change – but the spectrum of his vision widened and deepened.

Hoewel die *struktuur* (inhoud) van sy filosofiese denke – soos dié van sy voorgangers – feilbaar is, was die religieuse *rigting* daarvan tog opreg bedoel. Filosofe stel immers vrae oor die antwoorde wat ander as vanselfsprekend aanvaar. Omdat dit die moeilikste (grens)-vrae van die lewe is, sal hulle ook nooit finale antwoorde daarop kan gee nie en moet hulle aanhou soek.

Afsluitend die volgende: wanneer Bennie op sy lewe – nee, hulle lewe sáám – terugkyk, dan bemerk hy dat dit tog sin gehad het. Betekenis, omdat hy glo dat God self in elke mens se geskiedenis teenwoordig is en elke stap op die voetpad begelei (vgl. Smit, 1987). Dié sin was daar nie as *gevolg* van nie, maar *ten spyte* van sy eie soeke daarna. God het gesorg dat die kruis- en afdraaivoetpaaie nie doodlooppaaie geword het nie (vgl. Jes. 55:8, 9) en dat Hy menslike talente in sý diens gebruik. (Sy vader het – destyds nog as meselaar – aan die imposante hoofgebou van die Potchefstroomkampus van die Noordwes-Universiteit help bou. Sy seun het probeer om hierdie bouwerk – op 'n meer abstrak-filosofiese vlak – te help voortsit.)

'n Boodskap vir die nuwe geslag

Wanneer 'n mens die laaste lewenseisoen bereik, só skryf die Christelike psigiater Van Belle (2004), maak 'n mens nie net die balans van jou eie lewe op nie – soos op die voorafgaande bladsye gedeeltelik gepoog is. 'n Mens wil dit wat jy as waardevol beskou ook graag aan 'n nuwe geslag oordra. Ook dit word by hierdie geleentheid gedoen.

Soms word lekker gespot met die “filesefie” en filosofe se “gefilesefeerdery” (vgl. Deist, 1989:44-47). Filosofie – vir baie 'n bietjie “wolliger” (die sistematiek) en “stowwerig” (die geskiedenis van die Wysbegeerte) – is egter 'n boeiende vak. Soos reeds gesê, problematiseer dit gangbare (dikwels oppervlakkige) oplossings vir veel dieper probleme.

As gevolg van hierdie voortdurende kritiese vrae is dit vir baie hedendaagse mense frustrerend – 'n soort vryblywende intellektuele spel. Deur egter 'n bietjie dieper te spit, wil dit die oë vir breër en beter oplossings van fundamentele lewensprobleme oopmaak. Op hierdie wyse bied dit verdieping in elke vakgebied en beroep.

Die reformatoriese wysbegeerte is nie 'n eendaagse modevlinder nie. Dit bestaan (in 2010) al 75 jaar. Dit het blywende waarde, nie omdat dit volledig of volmaak is nie, maar omdat dit in God se absoluut-betroubare, drievoudige openbaring in die skepping, in die Skrif en in Christus gewortel is. Van der Walt versoek dus sy jonger geesgenote: Laat dit jou besiel, koester dit, dra dit onbeskaamd uit na die honger, onseker, relativistiese wêreld rondom julle! Indien 'n mens so 'n groot rykdom ontvang het, het jy ook 'n groot verpligting om dit met ander te deel. As gevolg van die sondeval bring die wêreld vandag in plaas van goeie, gesonde filosofiese voedsel, baie keer net dorings en dissels voort (Gen. 3:18). Daarteenoor is julle taak om in die plek van sulke soort filosofieë, waardevolle, stewige mirte- en sipresbome te kweek (vgl. Jes. 55:13).

'n Ewigheidsperspektief

Behalwe dat die *verlede* vir 'n bejaarde belangrik is en hy/sy iets aan die nuwe geslag van die *hede* wil nalaat, moet hy ook van die hede begin afskeid neem en hom op die *toekoms* voorberei (vgl. weer Van Belle, 2004).

Daar sal – merkwaardig – volgens die Skrif, kontinuïteit wees tussen die hiermaals en die hiernamaals, tussen die lewe nou en ná die opstanding. God se Woord beloof selfs dat ons werke ons sal *volg* (Op.14:13b). Let wel: nie (as 'n verdienste) *voorafgaan* nie. Ongehooflik: wat hier goed en reg gedink en gedoen is, word eendag boustene vir 'n nuwe aarde! Daarom kan en moet ons volhard om oorvloedig te wees in die werk van die Here – dit is nie tevergeefs nie (1 Kor. 15:58). Christelik-filosofiese werk is ook daarby ingesluit.

Behalwe die kontinuïteit, sal daar egter ook diskontinuïteit wees. Baie dinge, veral die gevolge van die sonde, sal gelukkig nie meer daar wees nie (vgl. Op. 21:4). Selfs die soekende filosoof sal dan rus vind:

Nou kyk ons nog deur 'n dowwe spieël en sien 'n raaiselagtige beeld (ook van onself), maar eendag sal ons alles sien soos dit werklik is. Nou ken ons net gedeeltelik, maar eendag sal ons ten volle ken soos God my ten volle ken. (1 Kor. 13:12.)

Omdat nie ekself of ander mense nie, maar God alleen 'n mens werklik kan ken (vgl. ook Ps. 139), sal ook die name wat ons tans dra, hoe bekend ook al, met sý nuwe name vervang word (Op. 2:17; vgl. ook 3:12).

In sy bekende *Confessiones (Belydenisse)* – een van die beste outobiografieë ooit geskryf – kon Augustinus (2007), die eerste vader van die reformatoriese tradisie, nie anders nie as om kort-kort sy lewensbeskrywing te onderbreek en oor te gaan in gebed tot God. Aan die einde van hierdie oorsig oor my lewe wil ek dieselfde doen en soos Paulus in aanbidding buig:

O diepte van die rykdom en wysheid en kennis van God! ... hoe onnaspeurlik is sý weë! Uit Hom en deur Hom en tot Hom is alle dinge. Aan Hom behoort die heerlikheid tot in ewigheid! Amen.
(Rom. 11:33 en 36.)

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Abstract

B.J. van der Walt's concentration problem

This contribution probes the concept of secularism, a key notion of B.J. van der Walt's "Transforming power" (2007). It is found that Van der Walt's interpretation of secularism rests on a double assumption. The first assumption is that human nature is intrinsically religious. Humans cannot live without putting their trust in something. The second is that this religious nature manifests itself in "concentrated" ways, rather than dispersing itself over a plurality of objects. These assumptions in tandem explain why Van der Walt holds the view that atheism, agnosticism and even overt indifference in matters of faith are at heart propelled by convictions that share the main features of positive religions. It also explains why he assumes that all these convictions tend towards one and the same goal: to gain dominance in the public realm.

This article is sympathetic towards the first assumption, and skeptical towards the second. It is argued that the "concentration-thesis" fails to do justice to world and life-views that obviously do not claim total allegiance. To illustrate this point it turns to the phenomenon of "multiple religious participation", as well as to different strands within contemporary humanism. It concludes that the main problem may well be that secular culture has little to offer to satisfy the innate religious drive in humankind.

1 Ik dank de keurders van dit tijdschrift voor nuttige aanwijzingen tot verbetering. Keurder C dank ik bovendien voor suggesties voor een vervolg discussie.

Finally, an attempt is made to amend the notion of secularism in such a way as to steer clear from "Konsequenzmacherei".

Samenvatting

Een concentratieprobleem bij B.J. van der Walt

Deze bijdrage onderzoekt een dubbele veronderstelling van de benadering van secularisatie en secularisme in B.J. van der Walt's "Transforming power" (2007). De eerste veronderstelling is dat de menselijke natuur intrinsiek religieus is, in de zin dat niemand kan leven zonder zich aan iemand of iets toe te vertrouwen. De tweede aanname, door mij aangeduid als de "concentratie these", is dat de religieuze impuls normaliter zich in geconcentreerde vorm uit, in plaats van zich over meerdere objecten te verdelen. Op grond van beide vooronderstellingen herleidt Van der Walt atheïsme en zelfs godsdienstige onverschilligheid tot overtuigingen die qua intensiteit met geloofs-overtuigingen overeenstemmen en evenals de laatste naar hegemonie streven op het publieke terrein.

Na het analytische deel volgt een eigen stellingname. De schrijver van deze bijdrage staat sympathiek tegenover de eerste aanname, maar verwerpt de tweede. Het voornaamste argument is dat de concentratie these geen recht doet aan het verschijnsel van wereld- en levensbeschouwingen die het leven van aanhangers niet volledig in beslag nemen. Deze stelling wordt uitgewerkt in een beschouwingen over het hedendaagse humanisme en het verschijnsel van "multiple religious participation".

1. Vooraf

Het is een eer mee te mogen werken aan dit speciale nummer voor vriend Bennie van der Walt. De herinneringen aan hem gaan terug tot de tijd dat we samen bij prof. S.U. Zuidema colleges volgden over Thomas, *De ente et essentia*. Dat zal in 1967 zijn geweest. Verder bewaar ik goede herinneringen aan ontmoetingen van uiteenlopende aard, waar onder binnen het verband van de International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE). Graag verbind ik aan dit artikel mijn persoonlijke gelukwensen.

Bennie is ongeveer de laatste persoon met wie je van mening zou willen verschillen, en toch voelde ik een verschil van inzicht opkomen bij gebruik van zijn *Transforming power* (Van der Walt, 2007) als verplichte lectuur bij mijn colleges voor de opleiding International Master Christian Studies aan de Vrije Universiteit. Al hoewel geheel geestverwant in de hoofdzaken, ervoer ik de duiding van *secularism*

als te massief. De kwestie kwam vervolgens in beknopte vorm aan de orde in een opstel over secularisatie voor *Philosophia reformata* (Griffioen, 2008:71-84). Bij de bespreking van Hendrk van Riessens visie op secularisatie trok ik een lijn door naar Van der Walt. Het ging om de stelling dat achter de schijn van godsverduistering een (anti-)geloof schuil gaat. Van Riessen en Van der Walt gaan ervan uit dat de behoefte in "iets" te geloven tot de menselijke natuur behoort en dat dus achter de gesecculariseerde mens nog altijd een "gelovige" schuilgaat, dit wil zei iemand die nog steeds ergens zijn ankers uitgooit, vertrouwend er houvast te vinden. Hier nam mijn betoog een kritische wending. Wat ik wilde problematiseren is een assumptie die bij beiden met de zojuist genoemde gepaard gaat, te weten dat aan alle geloof – ook het ongelovige geloof – een *concentratietendens* eigen is. De veronderstelling is dat de gesecculariseerde mens nog altijd naar een laatste houvast zoekt en bewust of onbewust daarop al zijn strevingen concentreert. Ongeloof vormt zo bezien het negatieve spiegelbeeld van geloof. Aldus vallen ongelooft en positief geloof onder de ene categorie "geloof".

In het genoemde artikel werd alleen een begin gemaakt met deze kritische bevraging. De huidige bijdrage beoogt deze argumentatie voort te zetten in een dialoog met *Transforming power*. Begonnen wordt met een bespreking van wat dit boek inzake *secularism* leert. Daarop volgt een verdieping en uitbreiding van wat in het eerder genoemde artikel al ontwikkeld was. Het slotgedeelte nuanceert de gezeten verschillen door te onderscheiden tussen tweeërlei gebruik van de concentratie-these en maakt zo de weg vrij voor een herformulering van Van der Walts secularisatietheorie die het wezen ervan bewaart en de door mij verwoorde bezwaren wegneemt.

2. *Transforming power*

2.1 Introductie

Transforming power beschouwt *secularisme* als de meest kenmerkende uiting van de geest van deze tijd (Van der Walt, 2007:223). Van der Walt vreest dat in Zuid Afrika velen blind voor deze tijdgeest zijn. Als historische verklaring draagt hij aan dat in de periode van voor 1994 een façade van christelijke waarden was opgetrokken waardoor secularisatie allereerst een gevaar scheen dat van buitenaf de Zuid-Afrikaanse samenleving bedreigde. Hierdoor bleven velen blind voor wat van binnenuit kwam. Na 1994, schrijft Van der Walt "the Afrikaners no longer had the political power to further their Christian convictions"; eerst toen vielen de schellen van de ogen en zag men met schrik hoe gesecculariseerd de eigen samenleving in

feite was geworden. Maar ook sindsdien weten slechts weinigen het gevaar tot in de diepte te peilen (Van der Walt, 2007:225).

Secularisatietheorieën zijn volgens Van der Walt mede debet aan deze kortzichtigheid. Zij concentreren zich op uitwendige verschijnselen zoals dalend kerkbezoek (Van der Walt, 2007:228), en concluderen dat de religiositeit afneemt, zonder op te merken dat secularisme zelf een (tegen-)religie is. Onder deze theoretici vormt Peter Berger een uitzondering in zoverre hij erkent dat de mens van nature religieus is: “man is inherently a religious being who consequently seeks for sense and meaning which goes beyond his empirical existence”, zo geeft de schrijver diens opvatting weer (Van der Walt, 2007:229). Om het secularisme te weerstaan, is het eerst nodig religie en tegen-religie in hun radicaliteit te peilen. De crux is dat de mens als religieus wezen is geschapen en dat dus een religieuze oriëntatie – zij het op God of afgod gericht – de levensrichting bepaalt (Van der Walt, 2007:233).

2.2 Secularisme in geconcentreerde vorm

In deze samenhang stuiten we ook op wat ik zo-even een bijkomende assumptie noemde, namelijk dat niet alleen aan (positieve) religie, maar ook aan haar substituut een eenheidsstreven inherent zou zijn. Ten aanzien van ons onderwerp betekent het om te beginnen dat de verschijnselen die we tezamen als “secularisatie” aanduiden op een dieper liggend “secularisme” worden betrokken. Het betekent verder dat dit secularisme als een reële kracht wordt beschouwd; een kracht die zich naar buiten toe ook als zodanig doet gelden.

Hiermee zijn “nominalistische” duidingen afgewezen. Voorbeelden van zulke interpretaties zijn wel te bedenken. Zo zou men secularisme als een “container-begrip” kunnen beschouwen, dit wil zeggen als een verzamelbegrip voor diverse verschijnselen die door niet meer dan familieverbanden bijeen worden gehouden, en bij nauwkeuriger onderscheiden wellicht zoveel onderlinge verschillen laten zien dat ze met evenveel zo niet meer reden onder verschillende categorieën gesubsumeerd hadden kunnen worden. Een tweede mogelijkheid, die dichter in de buurt van Van der Walt blijft, is te onderscheiden tussen “drijfveer” en “uitingen”. Men kan enerzijds (met B.J. van der Walt) van een geconcentreerde religieuze drijfveer uitgaan, en toch ten aanzien van de uitwerking een meer nominalistische visie ontwikkelen. Later meer hierover.

The Transforming power veronderstelt een concentratietendens zowel in drijfveer als uitingen, en komt aldus tot de stelling dat het

secularisme een totaal beslag op het leven wil leggen en als alle religie meer wil zijn dan een private overtuiging: "It pursues the ideal (at least in the public field) of being the dominant faith" (Van der Walt, 2007:233).

2.3 Postmodernisme als testcase

Het wordt spannend waar het postmoderne levensklimaat aan de orde komt. Kan in dit klimaat wel een eenheidsstreven gedijen? Is het niet veeleer zo dat het diversiteit tolereert, zo niet prijst, en al wat zich als meerduidig voordoet bejubelt? Of moeten we aannemen dat deze veelgenoemde postmoderne "openheid" een façade is waarachter nog wel degelijk een eenheidsstreven schuil gaat? Het verbaast niet dat Van der Walt de laatstgenoemde conclusie trekt. Het is zijn overtuiging dat het postmoderne levensklimaat in vergelijking tot de modernistische mentaliteit zelfs een extra gevaar in zich bergt. Ja zeker, een bepaalde welwillendheid ten opzichte van religieuze diversiteit wil hij niet ontkennen (Van der Walt, 2007:258). Maar of er nu ook sprake is van een principiële wending ten opzichte van het modernistische ongeloof? Hij waagt het te betwijfelen. Het postmodernisme is slechts een nieuwe variant van secularisme. Vergissen we ons niet dan beschouwt hij de postmoderne openheid voor diversiteit eerder als een gevaar (nl. als aanleiding tot verslapping van waakzaamheid) dan als een wending ten goede.

Nu een mogelijke tegenwerping. Ook wie met de auteur instemt dat het naïef zou zijn de postmoderne geest als een bondgenoot te begroeten (bijv. omdat men er een drijfveer achter vermoedt die niet uit God is), kan zeer wel met hem verschillen ten aanzien van de stelling dat deze geest *slechts* een nieuwe vorm van secularisme zou zijn. "Postmodernism is merely a new form of secularism and thus cannot be seen as an ally of Christians against secularism." (Van der Walt, 2007:260.) Men kan dus met Van der Walt in de postmoderne tijdgeest een doorwerking en versterking van seculariserende krachten zien, en tegelijk van oordeel zijn dat deze geest zo weinig samenbindend vermogen heeft dat per saldo de oppositie tegen het christelijke geloof aan eenduidigheid inboet. Wie deze redenering volgt, zal ook de mogelijkheid van partiële bondgenootschappen niet op de voorhand willen uitsluiten.

2.4 Humanisten in soorten

Ik geef het voorbeeld van de Humanistische beweging in Nederland. Hierbinnen tekenen zich ten aanzien van ons onderwerp twee kampen af, met daarbinnen nog weer significante verschillen. De

meeste aandacht trekken de voorstanders van terugdringing van de publieke invloed van religie.² Anderzijds zijn er misschien wel evenveel humanisten die een neutrale staat een schrikbeeld noemen en het neutraliteitsstreven van de eerst bedoelden soms meer duchten dan de "terugkeer van religie in het publieke domein".³ Deze positieve houding kan evenwel weer verschillend gemotiveerd zijn. Niet zelden is het motief een verdediging in algemene zin van de vrijheid van meningsuiting op het publieke terrein – een vrijheid waaronder zowel godsdienstige als anti-godsdienstige uitingen vallen. Maar er zijn er wel degelijk ook die religieuze inspiratie voor onmisbaar houden en er geen moeite mee hebben dat het humanisme zelf tot de religieuze stromingen wordt gerekend. (Overigens moet bij dit laatste wel rekening worden gehouden met een zeker opportunisme: het is in Nederland nu eenmaal zo dat door zich te voegen in het landschap van religieuze stromingen het humanisme heeft kunnen profiteren van bestaande faciliteiten binnen de publieke orde. Zo hebben we nu humanistische geestelijke verzorging in het leger en in gevangenissen, alsmede een van overheidswege gesubsidieerde opleiding voor humanistische raads-

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- 2 Kenmerkend is de volgende reclameboodschap die de Nederlandse publieke omroep met enige regelmaat uitzendt. Op de binnenkomer "het geluid van religie klinkt tegenwoordig steeds luider" volgt een oproep de humanistische keuze voor menselijke verantwoordelijkheid metterdaad te steunen. De tekst eindigt met: "anders zijn we helemaal aan de goden overgeleverd".
 - 3 Over deze controverse zie bijv. dit bericht in *De Volkskrant*, (Dohmen & Manschot, 2007): Amanda Kluveld en Rozemarijn Schalkx geven een verkeerd advies aan het hedendaags humanisme. Dat stellen Joep Dohmen en Henk Manschot vandaag in *De Volkskrant*. Kluveld (historicus) en Schalkx (tot voor kort verbonden aan de Universiteit voor Humanistiek, UvH) schreven op 5 mei dat het humanisme er goed aan zou doen zich niet langer als surrogaatreligie te gedragen. De kernopdracht ligt volgens Kluveld en Schalkx "in het bewaken van het beginsel van de scheiding tussen kerk en staat, het bepleiten van een seculiere neutrale staat en de bescherming van het individu". Zij noemen de Universiteit voor Humanistiek als een van de aanstichters van het aanschurken tegen religies. Volgens Dohmen, universitair docent aan de UvH, en Manschot, emeritus hoogleraar filosofie en directeur van het UvH-instituut Kosmopolis lijken "de auteurs in de verste verte niet te beseffen dat humanisme en religies door de globalisering de laatste decennia in een volstrekt nieuwe situatie zijn beland".

Kluveld en Schalkx radicaliseren volgens Dohmen en Manschot de tegenstelling tussen humanistisch-seculier versus religieuze culturen en dragen zo bij aan het denken in "wij tegen zij". Het gaat in de huidige samenleving al lang niet meer om een tegenstelling tussen humanisme en religie, stellen Dohmen en Manschot. "Het gaat om een houding die weigert een samenleving te creëren met andersdenkenden tegenover een houding die democratie, dialoog en pluraliteit voorstaat."

lieden die helemaal gemodelleerd is naar de predikantsopleidingen, enz.) Tenslotte vinden we onder de humanisten een minderheid die, ofschoon zelf agnostisch ten aanzien van het Godsbestaan, de invloed van het christendom voor het voortbestaan van de Westerse cultuur van essentieel belang acht. Tot die laatsten behoort bijvoorbeeld Anton Zijderveld, cultuur-socioloog en tot voor kort prominent lid van het CDA (Christen-Democratisch Appel, lang de grootste regeringspartij). Mijn vraag luidt: kan “secularisme” in de zin van Bennie van der Walt recht doen aan deze schakeringen? Zijn over de hele linie bondgenootschappen uit te sluiten?⁴

3. Concentratie en divergentie

3.1 Werkzame schijn

In het *Philosophia reformata* artikel kwam *Transforming power* zoals gezegd zijdelings aan de orde in een beschouwing die aan Hendrik van Riessens secularisatietheorie was gewijd. Wat Van Riessens benadering onderscheidt, is dat hij de secularisatie tot in de structuren van samenleving en techniek aanwijst, ja zelfs tot in de technische apparatuur. Het gaat hem hierin vooral om de rol van de wetenschap. Wetenschap abstraheert met een zeker recht van Gods presentie in de leefwereld. Het probleem begint waar wetenschap zich tot wereldbeeld ontwikkelt en kennis die door abstractie was verkregen voor bij uitstek betrouwbaar wordt gehouden. Wat schijn is (nl. dat het Godsbestaan er niet toe doet) krijgt het keurmerk van bewezen waarheid. Over de boog van toegepaste wetenschap kan deze schijn zich vervolgens tot in de structuur van de artefacten vastzetten (zie Van Riessen, 1967:25-54, 101-123).

Als ongelooft zich tot in de dingen breed maakt en dan ook langzaam maar zeker als een normaal wordt ervaren, ligt het gelijk dan toch niet aan de kant van secularisatietheorieën die een afname van religie voorspellen? Van Riessens antwoord is genuanceerd, want behelst een *ja* en een *nee*. *Ja*, want de schijn dat, grof gezegd, God er niet toe doet, is *werkzaam*: het is geen hersenschim zonder realiteitswaarde. Het is ook geen ideologie die een samenleving op

4 Voor een vorm van samenwerking op het filosofische vlak, zie Brugmans (2002). Behalve als één van de negenentwintig auteurs, was ik ook referent namens de Stichting Reformatorische Wijsbegeerte, en als zodanig nauw bij de totstandkoming van dit boek betrokken. De samenwerking met het Humanistisch Verbond is van begin tot einde goed geweest. De eerlijkheid gebiedt wel te zeggen dat er moeite waren met betrekking tot uitgesproken secularistische opvattingen van tenminste één humanistische auteur.

afstand kan proberen te houden door om zich heen de façade van een *civil religion* op te richten. Nee, omdat, hoe werkzaam ook, de schijn toch *schijn* blijft.

Door de werkzaamheid te benadrukken, wil Van Riessen zijn lezers ervan doordringen de ernst van de situatie niet te onderschatten: de genoemde schijn wint met de dag aan plausibiliteit. Het ligt in zijn lijn te zeggen dat theorieën die secularisatie aan dalend kerkbezoek afmeten, aan de oppervlakte blijven en zich op uiterlijke symptomen blindstaren. Als het om diepte gaat, komt Van Riessen (net als Van der Walt trouwens) bij een geloof uit. Het is het geloof dat wetenschap de laatste arbiter is in zaken van wat waar is en wat niet. Dat wetenschap zo het laatste woord verkrijgt, is omdat mensen er hun hart op zetten. En waarom ze dit doen? Omdat ook zij van nature religieus zijn.

Hetzelfde artikel gaf voorbeelden die laten zien dat de term *secularisme* al in de negentiende-eeuwse Engelssprekende wereld op ongeveer dezelfde wijze gebruikt werd als nu door Van der Walt. De secularisme kritiek heeft dus oude papieren, en is bepaald niet alleen een specialiteit van calvinistisch-wijsgerige huize! In dit verband werd ook gewezen op een parallel met de kritiek van een Neuhaus op het neutraliteitsideaal. Hier is de passage over diens.

Men zal er een vergelijkbare secularisme-kritiek vinden, maar dan afgestemd op de Noord-Amerikaanse situatie. De teneur is evenzeer dat neutraliteit een onmogelijke droom is. Het publieke terrein blijft volgens Neuhaus nooit lang leeg: is de ene religie verdwenen, dan wordt het vacuüm door een volgende opgevuld. (cf. Neuhaus, 1984:74.)

3.2 In de verstrooiing

Wat we bij Bennie van der Walt vinden, is dus ten volle waard serieus te worden genomen. Dat het *Philosophia reformata*-artikel niettemin een kritische wending nam, is vanwege de sterke versie van de concentratiethese, een kwestie die boven al werd aangeroerd.

De aanleiding tot de formulering van een afwijkende visie lag in het verschijnsel dat bekend staat als "multiple religious participation" (MRP) – het fenomeen dat iemand zich tot meer dan één godsdienst bekennt. Ik werk dit nu verder uit.

Zoals bekend is in China (en breder: het Verre Oosten) het verschijnsel wijd verbreid dat personen zowel aan confuciaanse,

taoïstische als aan boeddhistische rituelen deelnemen (Griffioen, 2006). Wij zijn geneigd dit verschijnsel als *syncretisme* te duiden. De Chinese (in Amerika levende) filosoof Chenyang Li betoogt echter dat dit onjuist is, aangezien er geen vermenging van religies plaatsvindt. Let er op hoe hij MRP en syncretisme onderscheidt:

Multiple religious participation, however, is different from syncretism. People of multiple religious participation practice more than one religion with a recognition that these are different. They do it without making an effort to integrate them into one single religion on the basis of some common tenets. (Li, 1999:151.)

Nu kan het zijn dat Chinese bronnen de neiging hebben MRP te ideaaltypisch te duiden, als zou in deze praktijk elk eenheidsstreven ontbreken en als zouden de verschillende rituelen keurig gescheiden blijven. Enige scepsis lijkt me hier wel op zijn plaats. Maar dan blijft nochtans overeind dat geen van deze rituelen een totaal beslag legt op de deelnemer. Zoals ik zelf meemaakte als gast van een Taiwanese familie, heeft men bij het overlijden van een familielid de keuze uit confuciaanse en taoïstische rituelen, en kan men ook nog boeddhistische voorschriften inzake rouw volgen, zonder naar eigen besef ook maar ergens aan de integriteit van één van deze religies tekort te doen. Dit wil niet zeggen dat de gezindheid van het hart er niet toe doet. In tegendeel, oprechtheid is een voorwaarde voor het welslagen van de rituelen. Saillant gegeven is evenwel dat geen van deze religies een totaal beslag op het leven beoogt te leggen. Het “geen duimbreed” uit Kuypers rede over “Souvereiniteit in eigen kring” vindt hier geen pendant!

3.3 Onbepaaldheid

Hoe ligt dit bij de monotheïstische religies: christendom, islam en judaïsme? Ook hier komt “multiple religious participation” voor. Het is niet voor niets dat Ellis en Ter Haar (2004), schrijvend over religies en machten in Afrika, dit fenomeen van meet af op christendom en islam betrekken.

Plural religious allegiance is common, with individuals frequenting several religious communities at once or practicing rituals regarded in the west as belonging to different or competing systems of belief, such as Christianity and Islam, or Christianity and ‘traditional’ religion. (Ellis & Ter Haar, 2004:51.)

Het verschil ten opzichte van de oude religies van het Oosten is evenwel dat het nu een niet-normaal verschijnsel betreft. MRP komt

voor, maar gaat duidelijk tegen de norm in. De norm is onvoorwaardelijke toewijding tot de religie die men kiest. In deze absolute ligtheid ligt, historisch gezien, het voornaamste verschil tussen West en Oost.

Maar nu moeten we oppassen voor (verkeerde) *Konsequenzmacherei*. Gaat men er eenmaal van uit dat de menselijke natuur onuitwisbaar religieus is: wat ligt dan meer voor de hand dan ook aan te nemen dat idolen, ideologieën en “-ismen”⁵ die in confrontatie en wisselwerking met (vooral) de christelijke religie zijn opgekomen in principe ook in haar absolute ligtheid delen en op vergelijkbare wijze van hun volgelingen totale toewijding vragen? De aanname ligt inderdaad voor de hand, maar is toch niet zonder meer gewettigd. Neem opnieuw het Nederlandse humanisme: beschouwen we het als spiegelbeeld van christelijk geloof, dan zullen we voetstoots aannemen dat het in principe van zijn volgelingen een onvoorwaardelijke *commitment* vraagt, en verder dat het “genoeg in huis heeft” om die toewijding zinvol te doen schijnen. Ik betwijfel zowel het een als het ander. In de eerste plaats zijn me geen voorbeelden bekend van absolute claims. In de tweede plaats is het dubieus of het voldoende substantie heeft om zich tot een omvattende leer of ideologie te kunnen ontwikkelen. Moet je niet veeleer stellen dat het de religieuze aandrift niet kan bevredigen en zelfs geen sluitende “humanistische wereldbeschouwing” heeft aan te bieden?

Als bijzonder hoogleraar Reformatorische wijsbegeerte te Leiden (1979-1990) had ik regelmatig contact met Marcel Fresco, bezetter van de humanistische leerstoel “Socrates”. Rond 1985 organiseerden wij een publieke discussie, waaraan ook Paul van Tongeren deelnam, de houder van de Radboud-leerstoel voor katholieke filosofie. Met een minimum aan bekendmaking kregen we de zaal vol. Mijn uitgangspunt in de discussie was dat iedereen, ook Fresco, een wereldbeschouwing heeft. Diens reactie was bijna wanhopig: “elke keer dat ik met een calvinist debatteer moet ik opnieuw uitleggen dat ik geen wereldbeschouwing heb”. Dit was een *understatement*, want ik kende hem goed genoeg om te weten dat hij zich in zijn werk en leven door humanistische beginselen liet leiden. De waarheid was evenwel dat hij geen *volledige* wereldbeschouwing

5 Gemakshalve onderscheid ik niet tussen *idolen* (verabsoluteerde sport, sex, gezondheid, wetenschappelijke kennis, enz.), *ideologieën* (gelieerd aan maatschappelijke bewegingen) en *-ismen* (fysicalistische, materialistische, psychologische, logicistische, historistische, etc., wereldbeelden).

bezat. Was het daarom achteraf gezien niet beter geweest te beginnen met de vraag of het humanisme wel in staat is een all-round wereldbeschouwing te leveren en of het niet waar 't aankomt op vragen van leven en dood zijn aanhangers, met inbegrip van Marcel Fresco, in de kou laat staan?

4. Tweërlei gebruik van de concentratie-these

Terug naar secularisme. De lezer zal zich inmiddels afvragen of deze auteur de term nog wel kan blijven gebruiken. Is op mijn standpunt de term zelf niet al een probleem? Het antwoord is *ja* en *nee*. Ja, in de zin dat het gebruik geproblematiseerd dient te worden. Nee, als bedoeld zou zijn dat *secularisme* voortaan geheel onbruikbaar is. Problematisch is slechts de onkritische aanname van een concentratietendens in secularisatie-verschijnselen. Hiermee wil helemaal niet gezegd zijn dat deze tendens zich niet kan voordoen. Ook naar mijn oordeel zijn er tekenen die in die richting wijzen (naast andere waarvan ik dat betwijfel). Hier zij herinnerd aan het slotgedeelte van een recente bijdrage voor *Woord en daad*. Het ging er om openingen en moeiten voor reformatorische filosofie in Nederland. Als voorbeeld van moeite werd het verlies van twee bijzondere leerstoelen genoemd, naast de moeite door te dringen tot de kolommen van de glossy filosofische magazines en de prestigieuze fora. Na erkenning van tekortkomingen aan Reformatorische zijde, wees ik toch *secularisme* aan als de belangrijkste factor:

Maar als alles gezegd en gedaan is, blijft er toch een voorname (m.i. voornaamste) factor ongenoemd, en die is van geestelijke aard: het is de geest van secularisme die geen integraal christelijke visie naast zich verdraagt. (Griffioen, 2009:38.)

Zo komen we tenslotte uit bij tweërlei gebruik van de concentratie-these. De ene is de strikte modus, leunend op de gedachte dat (positieve) religie altijd een totaal beslag legt op het leven van haar volgelingen, en dat idolen hiervan een spiegelbeeld vormen. De andere is de kritische, die zich tot een restrictief gebruik beperkt. Het kan dan gaan om een lezen van zichtbare tekens en duiding van een actuele tendens, maar ook zeer wel om een concentratie-tendens die voor het blote oog niet zichtbaar is en alleen op het radarscherm van geestelijke verbeelding verschijnt.

Dit laatstgenoemde is belangrijk. Zoals het voorbeeld van het Nederlandse humanisme duidelijk maakte, ontbreekt het substituten voor het christelijk geloof veelal aan substantie om de religieuze honger te kunnen bevredigen. Daardoor ontwikkelen zich labiele

ideologische systemen in de samenleving, die als zodanig de mogelijkheid van radicalisering in zich dragen. Waar het blote oog niets ontwaart dan voortgaande verbijzondering en fragmentarisering ziet, kan een geestelijke verbeeldingskracht al een geconcentreerde anti-religie zien opdoemen. In deze zin heeft *secularisme* een belangrijke attenderende waarde.

Van harte wens ik *Transforming power* een tweede editie toe. Zou de auteur het gebruik van de concentratie-these in boven bedoelde zin problematiseren, dan voorspel ik dat dit werk nog verder aan overtuigingskracht zal winnen.

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Kernwoorden

concentratie-these: reformatorische wijsbegeerte
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sekularisme



Reflecting on our past: reconciling a divided nation through listening

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Abstract

Reflecting on our past: reconciling a divided nation through listening

The miracle of a relatively peaceful transition from apartheid to a non-racial democratic rule in South Africa stunned political pundits and observers. After decades of dehumanising laws which led to unbelievable racial conflict and the killing of many people, the country witnessed the birth of a new dispensation. This article briefly recounts the tragic history of South Africa, the current challenges the country faces for sustainable peaceful coexistence between the various racial groups, and the role that listening played and should continue to play in the process of national reconciliation.

Opsomming

Besinning oor ons verlede: versoening van 'n verdeelde nasie deur te luister

Die wonderwerk van 'n relatief vreedsame oorgang vanaf apartheid tot 'n nie-rassige demokratiese regering in Suid-Afrika het politieke waarnemers en kenners verstom. Na dekades van dehumaniserende wette wat gelei het tot geweldige rassekonflik en die dood van baie mense, is die geboorte van 'n nuwe bedeling waargeneem. Hierdie artikel bied 'n kort oorsig oor Suid-Afrika se tragiese geskiedenis, die uitdagings wat die land tans in die gesig staar ten opsigte van die volhoubare en vreedsame naasbestaan van die verskillende rassegroepe, sowel as die rol wat luister speel, asook die voortgesette rol wat dit behoort te speel in die proses van nasionale rekonsiliasie.

1. Introduction

Interracial conflict in South Africa is not a recent phenomenon; on the contrary, it dates back to the mid-seventeenth century with the arrival of Europeans on the subcontinent. Apart from the original African indigenous people, South Africa has been populated by colonial settlers of Dutch, German, French, and British ancestry. Even though segregation policies, practices and racism have their roots in South Africa's colonial past, the apartheid system that the National Party government created "imposed a legal form of oppression with devastating effects on the majority of South Africans" (TRC, 1999, 1:60). It is beyond dispute that the white colonial powers and other local white establishments that ruled South Africa from the mid-seventeenth to the late twentieth centuries used their monopoly over political, military, economic, and ideological power to advance themselves, plunder indigenous people, disrupt their social structures, and turn them into exploited workers (Terreblanche, 2002:5).

Since time immemorial, the attitude of many people of European descent towards people of other racial backgrounds reflects a deeply rooted belief of superiority, which is clearly reflected in how they treat others. History is replete with countless examples of not only ill-treatment but blatant and shocking killings. For example, in their early history of settling on the tip of the African continent, the Boers "viewed the native Hottentots as jungle animals ... and totally wiped them out" (Henslin, 2003:357). Henslin argues that when you label a group of people as less than human, it makes it easier to justify killing them in order to take over their resources as happened when many Native Americans were killed by white settlers in the 1800s, or as the British settlers did in Tasmania when they "stalked the local aboriginal population, hunting them for sport and sometimes even for dog food" (Henslin, 2003:357).

Creating an apartheid system in South Africa was not a social engineering program gone wrong; it was a deliberate scheme that reflects a worldview of superiority that many whites have. The apartheid system created racial categories for all South Africans based on a system of racial hierarchy. Sociologist James Henslin observed that when people use labels that dehumanise others it helps them to compartmentalise and separate their acts from their sense of being good and moral people. Regarding members of a group as less than human leads them to rationalise that it is okay to treat them inhumanely (Henslin, 2003:357). As Esterhuysen (2000: 146) points out, "apartheid is one of the most dehumanizing and

totalitarian ideologies to have become embodied in the political hegemonies of the twentieth century". The system and policies that were developed as a result of the ideology of apartheid were inherently immoral because it created conditions for the violation of fundamental human rights (Esterhuysen, 2000:147). When people are blinded to the humanity of others, it is impossible to genuinely listen to them. White South Africans therefore looked for every excuse under the sun to entrench themselves in power and create laws to justify their position.

2. Life under apartheid

Even though a system of exploitation and segregation existed in the early 1900s in South Africa, it was the promulgation of the Land Act of 1913 which dispossessed blacks of their land in order that white farmers could have them. This dispossession placed 80 percent of the population on less than thirteen percent of the land and resulted in desperately poor blacks being forced to provide cheap labor as farm workers, miners, and domestic workers. The dispossession continued through forced removals resulting in whole communities being moved to new locations, houses bulldozed and people's possessions dumped in far off areas. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report poignantly observes that the introduction of the 1913 Land Act by the first postunification South African Party government was "one of the [most] ambitious and far-reaching attempts at social engineering in twentieth century South African history" (TRC, 1999, 1:27). The report further notes that:

No other piece of legislation in South African history more dramatically and drastically reshaped the social map of this country. Not only did it lay the basis for the territorial separation of whites and Africans, it destroyed, at a stroke, a thriving African landowning and peasant agricultural sector. It did so by prohibiting African land ownership outside of the initial 7 percent of land allocated to the so-called traditional reserves and ending sharecropping and non-tenancy arrangements on white-owned farms. The Land Act set in motion a massive forced removal of African people that led, amongst other things to the deaths of many hundreds of people who found themselves suddenly landless.

The Land Act of 1913 was followed by the introduction of The Population Registration Act of 1950. This was the bedrock of the apartheid state because it provided for the classification of every South African into one of four racial groups: Europeans (whites),

Africans (Bantu or blacks), Coloureds (mixed race), and those from Indian origin (TRC, 1999, 1:30; Henslin, 2003:250).

Willem Verwoerd, grandson of the architect of apartheid observed that, “the system of apartheid was designed to benefit whites and disadvantage black South Africans” (Verwoerd, 2000a:1). That system was based on the belief of white superiority which denied blacks the most basic rights and freedom and forced them to live in conditions of poverty and inequality. It also forced millions of black people to work for grossly insufficient remuneration in white areas where they lived in enclosed compounds with their white employers, and their own families were not allowed to visit. Apartheid laws even “allowed people to die rather than violate ‘whites-only’ hospital edicts, and then determined in which plot of land they could be buried (TRC, 1999, 1:41). A person need not have been a political activist to become a victim of apartheid. Being black and seeking the basic necessities of life that whites took for granted and enjoyed by right was enough to become a victim of apartheid (TRC, 1999, 1:35).

It is important to note that even though people did many evil things during the years of apartheid, it is the system itself that was evil, inhuman and degrading for millions who were regarded as second and third class citizens. The everyday violence of systemic and institutionalised racism had a devastating impact on blacks (Valji, 2004). James Gibson also underscored the same sentiment when he wrote that the root cause of interracial alienation in South Africa was colonialism and apartheid, which robbed many people of their dignity and led to unbelievable violence and political repression (Gibson, 2004:15). At least 3,5 million black South Africans were expelled, forced to migrate, or dumped into the “national states” without jobs. Apartheid was a grim daily reality for all black South Africans whilst many whites lived in luxury at the expense of a powerless majority of exploited blacks (Frankel, 1989:11).

The preceding section shows that apartheid was an oppressive and inhuman system of social engineering. It was resisted by the oppressed people of South Africa and the international community gave its support to the liberation movements. Eventually, the white government yielded to the pressure of economic and cultural sanctions and common sense. As its demise approached on the political horizon, there was debate on the concept of reconciliation and transformation and how to mend a nation that was broken and in need of healing and justice.

3. The role of listening in political negotiation

Nelson Mandela was released from prison in 1990 after being incarcerated for 27 years. He and the then President F.W. de Klerk, risked their positions by choosing to engage in negotiated politics with its attendant compromises, instead of confrontational, adversarial politics. Even though there was the possibility that their followers may interpret their initiative as a sell out to the "enemy" or regard them as traitors, they nonetheless went ahead to involve other major stakeholders in the process of political negotiation.

One of the most bloody and violent periods in South African history was the period from 1990, when Mandela was released from prison, until 1994 when he was inaugurated as President. The climate of violence threatened to disrupt the political negotiation process and almost plunged the country into chaos (De Gruchy, 2002:186). Many people feared a civil war would engulf the country and those who were relatively optimistic feared there would be massive exodus of white people from the country resulting in a destabilised economy. Listening played a crucial role in this process as people saw the need for compromise in order to break deadlocks. Through debate and negotiation, a compromise was reached.

The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) continually felt marginalised during the negotiation process. Its insistence on a tribally based traditional authority within the framework of a federal state was rejected by the African National Congress (ANC). The IFP had strong feelings about their proposition and felt slighted. Their sense of ethnic identity and pride was wounded. Burley-Allen (1995) explains that strong feelings become a barrier that influences effective listening. This was so true when negotiations reached an impasse. Two weeks before the mandated election was to be held on 27 and 28 April 1994, international mediations broke down because of disagreement between the ANC and the IFP. The threat of a civil war loomed ominously over the political horizon. American former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and British statesman Lord Peter Carrington left the country after their mediation efforts failed. I lived in South Africa with my wife and four children from 1989 to 1995. I can bear testimony to the fact that people were disappointed and fearful when the international mediators left. However, unbeknown to many people, something unbelievable happened that turned things around for the better. Washington Okumu, a Kenyan professor of economics and an international mediator who was appointed advisor to the international mediation team remained in South Africa after the other mediators left. Michael Cassidy of African Enterprise, an inter-denominational

and interracial Christian organisation, was instrumental in bringing Okumu to lead backstage negotiations. It is important to note that successful negotiation is only possible when both sides are willing to listen and understand each other (Asherman & Asherman, 1990). Even though they could not initially see eye to eye, the protagonists were willing to patiently listen to each other, be more open to each other's views, suspend judgement during the discussions, and listen in order to negotiate an agreement that was in the interest of the whole country. Okumu's role led to a surprising negotiated settlement between Chief Mongosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the IFP, and the ANC. A Peace (Election) Agreement was signed in Pretoria on 19 April 1994 by Nelson Mandela, F.W. de Klerk, and Mongosuthu Buthelezi with Washington Okumu serving as witness. That was a political miracle in the unfolding dramatic history of South Africa.

Okumu (1995:xi) pointed out that the averting of an imminent civil war at the eleventh hour "can only be attributed to the intervention of Almighty God, blessing our humble efforts". This is a significant statement and reflects a worldview that acknowledges the primacy of divine intervention in human affairs. De Gruchy, recognising the spiritual dimension of life in the African worldview and its relatively obscure acknowledgement in Western thought, observed that one of the problems with a secular worldview is its inability to imagine that there are alternatives to those permitted by scientific rationality in the unfolding of history. Thus, "modernity leaves little room for the element of surprise, for the humanly unpredictable, but history is full of surprises, however we may account for them" (De Gruchy, 2002:211). Archbishop Desmond Tutu and others rightly point out that if the miracle of a negotiated settlement had not occurred in South Africa, the country would have been overwhelmed by the bloodbath that many people predicted would be the inevitable result of racial conflagration and civil war (TRC, 1999, 1:5; Gerwel, 2000: 281).

South Africa's emergence and transformation from authoritarianism and racism into a non-racial constitutional democracy happened through compromises that were the result of dialogue and difficult political negotiation (Simpson, 2002:221). The negotiation process involved a great deal of listening which enabled the various political players to modify their dogmatic positions in order to see and understand the perspectives of others on the opposite side of the fence. The willingness of all the parties to work cooperatively towards the establishment of a non-racial democracy could not have happened if they were not prepared to listen to one another. As

Wolvin and Coakley (1996:31) point out, "listening does not mean agreeing ... one willingly and actively engages in the total listening process. Then, as a result of having listened, one agrees or disagrees".

4. Listening and the process of reconciliation

The South African theologian and academic De Gruchy (2002:15) sees reconciliation as a process "in which there is a mutual attempt to heal and overcome enmities, build trust and relationships, and develop a shared commitment to the common good". He suggests that reconciliation occurs through the

... interplay of speech, listening and action motivated by hope and love. The way in which we speak with and listen to the alienated 'other' is already an action that makes reconciliation a possibility. Both words and deeds are necessary if we are to rescue reconciliation from banality and recover its costly connection with telling the truth and social justice. (De Gruchy, 2002:22.)

The process of reconciliation also enables people to deal with and overcome past alienation, enmity and hurt so that it can pave the way for them to learn how to relate to the "other" in the present (De Gruchy, 2002:27). But, reconciliation invariably has to do with the conditions of inclusion and exclusion, and the grounds on which we relate to and accept "the other" (De Gruchy, 2002:86). It follows, therefore, that reconciliation is a behavioral process in which people take action to restore a relationship that is broken or create a new one following forgiveness (Cahn & Abigail, 2007:293). A very important step in the process of reconciliation is to learn to put ourselves in the shoes of the "other" who has been hurt. Truth and justice are key elements that must help the process to achieve a genuine, *metanoia*, a turning around, a breaking with an unjust past, and a moving towards a new future (De Gruchy, 2002:164).

It could be argued that, at political level, reconciliation begun in South Africa when President F.W. de Klerk, leader of the National Party government, announced in Parliament on 2 February, 1990 that his government would unban the liberation movements, release political prisoners, and start negotiations. This announcement and the subsequent release of political prisoners and the unbanning of liberation movements, set in motion a reform process which four years later resulted in the election of Nelson Mandela as President of a new multiracial government. Boraine (2000:345) observes that,

“this was the beginning, and a very important beginning, of reconciliation in South Africa”. In December 1989, two months prior to his announcement, F.W. de Klerk in his Christmas address to the nation asked the Christian church in South Africa “to formulate a strategy conducive to negotiation, reconciliation and change” (Alberts & Chikane, 1991:14). In response to De Klerk’s request, a national conference of churches was organised in Rustenburg in November 1991. It brought together about 230 church leaders from 80 denominations and 40 para-church organisations (Alberts & Chikane, 1991:10). The conference produced what came to be known as the Rustenburg Declaration.

Frank Chikane observed that the conference gave church leaders an opportunity to get to know one another and to shed any stereotypes and distortions they had (Alberts & Chikane, 1991:10). One significant and memorable development at this conference was the spirit of confession which entered the ranks and took hold on all sides. It began with an astonishing confession from Professor Willie Jonker, a theologian from Stellenbosch University, related to the Afrikaner’s sins, in general terms, of racial discrimination and apartheid, and those of the Dutch Reformed Church in particular (Cassidy, 1995:98). Willie Jonker said:

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 to do that in the name of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) of which I am a member, and for the Afrikaans 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 itself from it long ago. (Cassidy, 1995:92.)

Many people attending the conference were moved to tears by this bold and courageous confession. Scores of people from different sectors of the church during the course of the conference went forward to also make confessions. These public confessions affirmed the commitment of many Christian leaders to be reconciled. However, not everyone appreciated all the confessions. Some confessions were “met with a measure of caution, if not skepticism” (Cassidy, 1995:99).

This public confession by church leaders and their desire for reconciliation is significant, because, as the Truth and Reconciliation

Commission later pointed out, during the apartheid era, "Faith communities often helped reinforce the idea that South Africa was a relatively normal society suffering from a few racial problems. Challenges to the consciences of whites were rare" (TRC, 1999, 4:65). In spite of this blot, it is well known that many church leaders and Christian organisations played a positive role not only in opposing the apartheid system, but also in the reconciliation process. De Gruchy (2002:121) observed that "Christians, Muslims and Jews did stand shoulder to shoulder in the struggle against apartheid, and they are likewise involved at many levels in working together today to make democratic transformation a reality". Prior to the democratic elections of 1994, some Christian leaders worked behind the scenes to bring political leaders from different parties to talk to each other or to mediate between warring factions in the townships. One such example occurred in 1992 and offers glimpses into the role that listening played in the unfolding history of reconciliation in South Africa.

Michael Cassidy of African Enterprise and his team came up with the idea of getting political leaders from different parties together to help them discover one another in real relationships. According to Cassidy (1995:49), this was "an experiment in building relationships and trust across political barriers". From December 1992 and throughout 1993, they succeeded in organising weekends of dialogue for over 90 senior politicians, more than 48 younger ones, and many political youth leaders at a place called Kolobe, a game lodge with excellent facilities located north of Pretoria (Cassidy, 1995:67). There were representatives from various political groups including the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), the Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO), the South African Communist Party (SACP), the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), the National Party (NP), the Democratic Party (DP), and the Afrikaner Volksunie (AVU).

During the weekends of dialogue, each person shared their own stories and experiences, they discussed various issues, shared their vision of a new South Africa, and an explanation of what steps they believed are required to reach this new South Africa (Cassidy, 1995:49-50). They also spent time going on game drives in the park to watch the animals, had picnics and lots of fun, and watched television together. At the end of their discussions, the participants looked to the future and proposed different strategies on how to get there. These groups of strangers soon became friends. The process of reconciliation was beginning in the hearts of the leaders from

various political and ideological backgrounds. They spent time talking to and listening to one another.

Cassidy (1995:79) reports the following touching incidents illustrating the positive impact of the weekends of dialogue. On one occasion, after listening to the leader of AZAPO's Northern Transvaal Education Secretariat during one of the dialogue sessions at Kolobe, a cabinet minister in the South African government of that time confessed: "I had grown up to hate AZAPO ... now I can feel and empathize with him because I have learned from him about his experiences. How can I hate someone I now know as a real flesh and blood human being?" On another occasion, the daughter of a veteran Indian politician who attended the younger leaders' dialogue said: "Last night I sat up late talking and listening to several conservative Afrikaners. Their stories have profoundly affected me and changed my attitudes to Afrikaners completely. All in the space of one day!".

Andries Beyers, leader of the Afrikaner Volksunie (AVU) and a one-time senior leader in the Conservative Party was so touched by the experience in Kolobe that he eventually renounced the policy of fighting for the establishment of an Afrikaner homeland. He also resigned as leader and member of the AVU. He noted that the weekends of dialogue with people from different political parties was the first time in his life that he had communicated with black leaders on a personal level. He added:

I found what I had missed all these years in terms of real communication with my fellow South Africans. In fact I came to realize I simply did not know my fellow South Africans. The only personal contact I had had with blacks previously was as an employer and them as my workers ... These people are not so bad after all and it won't be disastrous living with them as compatriots and fellow citizens ... in fact ... we can even work together. (Cassidy, 1995:81.)

Addie van Rensburg, a member of the National Executive of the Afrikaner Volksunie also later resigned from his political party because of his experience and radical attitude change which happened during four different weekend dialogue sessions he participated in. He indicated that the opportunity to get away was a very important strategy to help facilitate a positive climate for dialogue. Without this the full potential and impact of dialogue would not have been achieved. As he reflected on the Kolobe experience, Van Rensburg further observed:

Facing people who were on the wrong side of the apartheid fence made me realize with shame and sadness that apartheid had become a monster which dehumanized people and subjected them to the most degrading laws and regulations, and all in an attempt to preserve a *status quo* which could no longer be defended. The stories shared by people ... had a devastating impact on me and on the hearts and minds of everybody present. In fact, Kolobe proved to me that the biggest problem we face in South Africa is one of perceptions. We talk about each other rather than to each other. And we form perceptions of each other based on hearsay. Then through those false perceptions, we fan the flames of hatred ... while I love my own people deeply and will always be an Afrikaner, I will never again be part of a system which denies other people the opportunities I have had. (Cassidy, 1995:83.)

Going away to a place of beauty and quiet, isolated from the hustle and bustle of life for the dialogue sessions was very important. The environment they chose enabled people to open up to each other, to new things and to the chemistry of change. Cassidy (1995:78) also notes that

... the Kolobe encounters, and the process of listening to one another's stories, had the astonishing effect of causing people to lift blame and judgment on others and acknowledge varying degrees of their own guilt and culpability for inflicting pain, rejection, oppression or misunderstanding on others ... as people shared their stories and perhaps their pain, others came to see where they had contributed to that pain.

The Kolobe experience offers some important insights into the role of listening in the reconciliation process. We notice that people from various political and ideological backgrounds began to open up as they heard each other's stories and experiences. This slowly led to the development of what Wolvin and Coakley (1996:135) refer to as positive attitudes that give listeners the willingness – the desire – to listen. Political opponents suddenly began to develop positive listening attitudes – showing interest in what others had to say, putting themselves in the shoes of others (other-oriented), being patient, respecting others as equals, and being open-minded (Wolvin & Coakley, 1996). The ability to be open-minded and other-oriented allowed each person to patiently listen to what their opponent who they regarded as “the enemy” had to say. Open-minded listeners are also active listeners because they carefully listen to all sides of an issue without prejudging in order to understand issues and then respond in a respectful manner (Folger *et al.*, 2005; Dalton *et al.*,

2006; Galvin & Cooper, 2006). Through dialogue in Kolobe, racial prejudice and disrespect for the humanity of others gave way to new perceptions that were grounded in reality.

Nelson Mandela also contributed greatly to the process of reconciliation in a quiet but significant way. Terreblanche (2002:27) rightly points out that Mandela's reconciliatory attitude must be credited for the peaceful transition towards a non-racial dispensation. Mandela was willing to listen to divergent views and to make compromises; by doing this he set an example for many of his followers and supporters. His attitude towards reconciliation is an example par excellence.

5. Listening to the victims of injustice

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who served as chairperson of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, at the beginning of the public hearings called on South Africans not to forget the past, and

let bygones be bygones, because such amnesia would have resulted in further victimisation of victims by denying their awful experiences ... However painful the experience ... we need to know about the past in order to establish a culture of respect for human rights ... for the future (TRC, 1999, 1:7).

He pointed out that the Commission was committed to listening to everyone; therefore each person should be given the chance to recount the truth as they saw it (TRC, 1999, 1:112).

De Gruchy (2002:206) observes that if a society is serious about the restoration of justice within the context of national reconciliation, it must take the voice of the victims of injustice as primary and refuse to allow that voice to be silenced. The Commission heard the painful and tragic stories of parents who endured horrors in their encounters with the police and other officials. It also listened to perpetrators describe in awful detail the acts of terror, assassination and torture they had inflicted on many people for many years. In addition to this, consider also the stunning disclosure that the previous government, under its Chemical and Biological Warfare Programme, had many nefarious activities, including inter alia projects that allegedly aimed at conducting experiments to create diseases and sterilisation measures aimed at reducing the fertility of black women (TRC, 1999, 1:18; Valji, 2004:7). Any sensible person hearing these confessions would be enraged.

As the TRC report notes,

The Commission tried to listen, really listen – not passively but actively – to voices that for so long had been stilled. And as it listened to stories of horror, of pathos and of tragic proportion, it became aware again of the high cost that has been paid by so many for freedom. Commissioners were almost overwhelmed by the capacity of human beings to damage and destroy each other. Yet they listened, too, to stories of great courage, concluding often with an astonishing generosity of spirit, from those who had for so long carried the burden of loss and tragedy. (TRC, 1999, 5:306-307.)

Attitude plays an important role in our ability to listen empathically. “Empathy arises out of mutual efforts to understand and be understood, and requires the cooperation of *both* participants” (Brownell, 2002:186). From the preceding discussion, it is apparent that many blacks were eager to get information that will enable them to understand the past, know who were responsible for the disappearance and murder of their loved ones, and consequently, willingly embark on the process of reconciliation. By and large, the attitude of many whites was dismissive and showed contempt for the legally established Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Many whites were not prepared to listen; they had a negative attitude, one that was not open and interested in listening to “the other” people whom the ideology of apartheid did not consider as equals.

6. Challenges and the way forward

Some writers (Murithi, 2006; Terreblanche, 2002; Pigou, 2002; Bam, 2001; Gerwel, 2000) describe the current social and economic climate in South Africa as one in which a fragile reconciliation exists because of continuing inequality in the distribution of income, high levels of crime, violence, black unemployment, abject poverty, and a lack of material improvement in the lives of the majority of the people. They see tackling the economic well-being of large sections of the South African populace as a prerequisite for a sustainable reconciliation process. Social and economic inequalities are therefore issues that pose great challenges and need to be continually addressed. The challenge today is to work to restore the dignity and humanity of the majority of South Africans and to address the economic inequalities which could fuel social conflict.

Many South Africans sacrificed so much for the struggle in order to be free. Their expectation was that life would be better now than under apartheid. Unfortunately, it is predominantly only the leaders of the struggle whose lives have improved whilst many South Afri-

cans continue to endure unacceptably high levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality. This situation poses a very big challenge to reconciliation. As long as victims of the apartheid past as well as the majority of South Africans live in conditions not much better than what they were used to in the past, reconciliation will sound hollow and meaningless to them. Trying to reconcile a divided nation without trying to address the injustices belittles the suffering of many victims. Even though justice and equity are not sufficient conditions for reconciliation, they are important elements in the process of building harmonious and positive relationships between previously antagonistic parties.

Another thorny issue is the fact that many whites refuse to critically evaluate the past and explicitly acknowledge that they benefited from colonialism and apartheid. White young people say that they are not responsible for the atrocities of the past and should not be blamed for the effects of white domination and apartheid. They are usually adamant that the large-scale material benefits that they, their parents and grandparents accumulated during the period of colonialism and apartheid belong to them and them alone (Terreblanche, 2002:4-5). Verwoerd (2000b:2) concurs that "[t]he legacy of racial discrimination is painfully evident in the privileged lives of most whites and the acute deprivation experienced by most blacks". He further observes that many of the post-1990 generation of young white people

... display a shocking lack of historical awareness. They prefer to see their own and their parents' educational achievements ... good health and wealth as purely the product of hard work, as something they deserve (Verwoerd, 2000b:2).

He laments that whilst the silence of apartheid beneficiaries is deafening and the ongoing suffering of the systematically disadvantaged is undeniable, "many whites continue to deny their responsibility arising from systematic past privileging ... this denial rubs salt into the wounds of the disadvantaged!" (Verwoerd, 2000b:2). Hofmeyr suggests that it is difficult for the beneficiaries of the apartheid system to acknowledge that their "privilege was built on, and protected by, brutality that caused extreme hardship for millions. It can be argued that true reconciliation can only occur when this acknowledgement has taken place and the full extent of this reality has been grasped" (Hofmeyr, 2005:29). Terreblanche (2002:4) warns that if whites ignore the benefits of the past, they should not expect the victims of colonialism to accept them as trustworthy companions in building a common future.

For the sake of their own future, and the future of the whole country, whites must look out for practical and realistic ways to achieve equity, rather than protect their vested interests. They must redress the racial inequalities of the past in order to restore broken relationships with groups they have alienated from themselves. Getting those who profited from the past to realise the injustice of the apartheid system is only one side of the coin. "The other side demands deliberate *interventions* in order to transform South African society. This is one of the most serious ethical, political and strategic challenges" facing South Africa (Esterhuyse, 2000:153). The arrogance and unwillingness of some whites to see and accept that apartheid was wrong is appalling. Their refusal to listen to the agonising cries of many who were brutalised and dehumanised by the apartheid system is unacceptable.

Ethnocentrism, prejudice, negative stereotyping, and racism are major obstacles to effective listening. Therefore, South Africans must learn to accept people who are racially and ethnically different from themselves as equals and treat them with dignity and respect in order to facilitate ongoing dialogue and relationship building. South Africans must not forget or throw away their histories, neither should they pretend to be untouched by them. On the contrary, they must try to work with those histories in ways that acknowledge their complicity with the past, while attempting not to repeat it today (Erasmus, 2005:29-30).

The callous indifference of many white people needs to change. They must listen to the pain and suffering of many blacks who suffered under apartheid. They must support various initiatives to reconcile the nation and redress the wrongs of the past. Too little justice "could militate against the ability of victims and survivors to come to terms with the past – a matter that could come back to haunt the nation. Not least, it would not have helped in the rule of law and the need for accountability so desperately needed in an emerging democracy" (Villa-Vicencio, 2000:2).

It is important for all South Africans to heed the following words by American author and scholar, Paula Rothenberg (2002:4):

History tells us that in the end, an unjust and inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities leads to terrible violence ... A society that distributes educational opportunities, housing, health care, food, even kindness, based on the color of peoples' skin and other arbitrary variables cannot guarantee

the safety or security of its people. In this sense, all of us, both the victims and beneficiaries of racism, pay a terrible price.

The words in the opening lines of the Preamble of the 1996 Constitution of South Africa should be in all the official languages and placed in offices and homes as a reminder:

We the people of South Africa, recognize the injustice of our past; honor those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land; respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

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Professor Bennie van der Walt: a bridge between white Afrikaners and black Africans

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Abstract

Professor Bennie van der Walt: a bridge between white Afrikaners and black Africans

This article honours Professor Bennie van der Walt as a bridge builder between white Afrikaners and black Africans as well as a renowned Christian scholar. Historical Western colonialism in South Africa divided its citizens against each other by means of white racism and apartheid. The whites in general were pitched against the blacks on the basis of white racism and its doctrine of apartheid. This doctrine of separation of races kept the white Afrikaners from the Bantu Africans. However, apartheid as a form of political, social, cultural and religious racism is now history in South Africa. The role which Professor Van der Walt played in bridging the gap between this racial divide is highly commendable and needs to be acknowledged and appreciated, hence the primary objective of this article in honour of his 71st birthday. Furthermore, the article discusses the immense contributions of Professor Bennie van der Walt to Christian scholarship in Africa.

Opsomming

Professor Bennie van der Walt: 'n brugbouer tussen wit Afrikaners en swart Afrikane

Hierdie artikel bring eer aan professor Bennie van der Walt as brugbouer tussen wit Afrikaners en swart Afrikane, en as gerespekteerde Christelike akademikus. Die geskiedenis van Westerse kolonialisme het Suid-Afrika se burgers verdeel en

teen mekaar gedraai deur middel van wit rassisme en die leerstelling van apartheid. Hierdie leerstelling van rasseverdeling het wit Afrikaners weggehou van swart Afrikane. Apartheid as vorm van politieke, sosiale, kulturele en religieuse rassisme is egter nou deel van Suid-Afrika se geskiedenis. Die rol wat professor Van der Walt gespeel het om die gaping tussen die rasgebaseerde verdeeldheid te oorbrug, is hoogs prysenswaardig en behoort erken en waardeer te word – vandaar die primêre doelwit van hierdie artikel ter ere van sy 71e verjaardag. Die artikel bespreek ook professor Bennie van der Walt se ontsaglike bydrae tot Christelike wetenskap in Afrika.

1. Introduction

I write this article to contribute to this special issue of *Koers* in honour of Professor Bennie van der Walt, a dear friend of mine. I join my colleagues in “celebrating Professor Van der Walt’s exceptional philosophical legacy”. I structured my style of writing to meet this very objective. I will be more formal than scholarly as my comments and opinions about Professor Bennie van der Walt simply add to what others are saying in this volume. My primary goal is to highlight his immense contribution to the legacy of Christianity in Africa. Firstly, Professor Van der Walt was a bridge builder between white Afrikaners and black Africans. Secondly, he made substantial contributions to Christian scholarship in Africa. The article is focused on describing how Professor Van der Walt is indeed a bridge builder, on the one hand, and a renowned Christian scholar, on the other hand. The article is written from a personal perspective describing how I came to know him as a person, a friend, and an erudite scholar. I do not have an exhaustive knowledge of his person or his corpus of scholarship. For this reason, I will simply write about a dear friend and say a few things about his personal life and writings which I have personally come to know. In order to honour his 71st birthday, I will be highly selective in the things I write about him and his works. The aim is not to give an in-depth analysis of the works of Professor Bennie van der Walt, but to focus on his person and his major contribution to Christian scholarship in Africa. I limit myself to some comments and opinions about Professor Van der Walt and his works.

2. The man: Professor Bennie van der Walt

I first met Professor Bennie van der Walt in January 1989 at the writer’s workshop for the Christian Literature Committee for Africa (CLCA) at Harare, Zimbabwe. The workshop was organised by the

Institute for Reformational Studies (IRS) of the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education and the International Association for Reformed Faith and Action (IRFA). The Institute was then headed by Professor Van der Walt. Subsequently, I was invited by Professor Van der Walt to different conferences organised by the IRS in 1989, 1991 and 1992 (Turaki, 1999:vi). We also regularly saw each other at various international meetings outside of Africa. In addition to these international conferences, we communicated by exchanging publications. Whenever we had the opportunity of meeting again, we usually had deep and engaging discussions about Christianity in Africa, especially in its present state and its future prospects or problems (Turaki, 1999:vi). During the era of apartheid, we discussed its impact, especially on the rest of Africa. As a follow-up to this, Professor Van der Walt requested that I write something on apartheid. He published my article as a monograph of the IRS, *An African response to the question of apartheid* (Turaki, 1992).

After the fall of apartheid, we turned our attention to the relationship between Christianity and African Traditional Religion and cultures. On many occasions, Professor Van der Walt encouraged me to write a book on this subject. Through his support, the IRS published my book, *Christianity and African gods: a method in theology* (Turaki, 1999). This is what Professor Van der Walt said about the publication of this book:

Quite a number of books have been published in this CLCA project, but this one is the most important of them all. Because I have to take compulsory retirement at the age of sixty at the end of this year, I regard this book as a special blessing from the Lord – without it my mission as director of the IRS would not have been completed. (Turaki, 1999:vi-vii.)

Our friendship grew over the years and we have had opportunities to visit and stay in each other's homes for a few days at a time. It was during these homely situations that I personally got to know Professor Van der Walt as a man of deep convictions, Christian faith and prayer. His love for the Word of God, the Bible and his commitment to these convictions as the foundation of both his theology and philosophy is uncompromising. I saw a man consumed by a great desire for right Christian thinking and living through an integral and comprehensive Christian reformational worldview that is deeply rooted in the Bible and Christian faith (Turaki, 1999:vi). By knowing Professor Van der Walt's deep Christian and biblical roots and faith through such close encounters, I now understand why he is so consistent and persuasive in the exposition of his views in his

Christian scholarship. He is a man who carries the burden of formulating the right Christian scholarship as a tool for transformation of both humanity and society (creation).

It is not my intention to explore the inner life of Professor Van der Walt. I leave it to others to report on this aspect of his life. I will discuss only some aspects of his background in order to give insight into who he is and the evolving nature of his Christian scholarship.

3. Professor Van der Walt's background: apartheid and the African context

I know that a brief history of the making of South Africa as a modern nation-state in Africa would be better presented by some of the other contributors to this volume who are more qualified than I. For this reason, I will focus on some aspects of white racism and its ideology of apartheid.

The historical question of white racism and apartheid challenged both the Christian faith and its scholarship. Professor Van der Walt gradually and systematically responded to this immediate background in South Africa and the wider African context. He faced the great challenges of white racism and apartheid, Western theological dualism and secularism, the conflict of Western and African cultures, and the search for a reformational worldview and transformational theology for Africa. These challenges transformed him into becoming a bridge builder in a divided Africa and an erudite Christian scholar. He became the man who, through personal contacts and extensive and vigorous Christian scholarship, constructed a bridge that connected white Africans to black Africans during the era of white racism and apartheid. His bridge building was done effectively through organising conferences that brought together the whites and blacks for fruitful and meaningful engagement, as well as dialogue and sharing of their experiences of white racism and apartheid, conflict of cultures, and colonial, missionary and traditional contexts of Africa.

Permit me to briefly give a separate background of white racism and apartheid in the next section, while we treat the corpus of his Christian scholarship much later.

3.1 White racism and apartheid

It is important that I swiftly say something about white racism and apartheid which troubled the conscience of Professor Van der Walt

as a Christian. This understanding came from our mutual sharing of life experiences from Africa in general. My main objective is not to give an exhaustive analysis of the history of white racism and apartheid in South Africa as I am not competent to do so. I need only state its influence upon the young Bennie van der Walt as he was growing up in South Africa.

Apartheid, historically speaking, was a racial ideology, an offshoot of the white Afrikaner's nationalism in South Africa. Its historical roots go back to the British colonial legacy of the separation of races in Africa. This historically evolved racial ideology later became the greatest stumbling block and communication barrier between the whites and blacks in South Africa and to some lesser degree the whole continent of Africa which was under the domination of both European and Arab colonialism. Apartheid as a racial ideology became the focus of cultural, social, political and economic controversy, misunderstanding, misinterpretation and even misrepresentation on both sides of the divide. This racial division ran deep emotionally, religiously, culturally, politically, economically and socially in South Africa before the early 1990s (Turaki, 1992:1). Those of us who were black Africans and who saw the devastating effects of white racism and apartheid in South Africa commented variously about it.

Africans generally see apartheid as the illegitimate child of European colonialism born on African soil. For many decades, this illegitimate child has grown into becoming the most notorious bully-rag of Africa and has indeed become Africa's major concern and terror. (Turaki, 1992:2.)

Africans have many pictures about white racism and apartheid, just as others have about African tribalism and ethnocentrism. We thank God that apartheid with all its varied definitions is now history. Of course, we must not forget the principles of invariance, the persistence or continuity of authority codes of ideas or values (Baum, 1977:5-28). Sometimes values live long after the demise of the institutions that harbour them.

I have read about apartheid in books and heard about it through mass media, but to experience it personally is quite different. I have listened to both white and black South Africans tell me about their experiences of apartheid, and especially to Bennie's own story. I visited South Africa a few times before the fall of apartheid in the early 1990s.

Prior to this, I had a school mate at Boston University in the late 1970s from South Africa who shared with me his own personal struggles with white racism and apartheid during the days of Steve Biko's Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). Professor Motlhabi Mokgethi was the General Secretary of the Student Movement of BCM who told me about their aspirations and consciousness-raising strategies against apartheid. He contributed to their publication, *Essays on black theology* (Motlhabi, 1972). The major thrust of his doctoral dissertation at Boston University (Motlhabi, 1980) was the development of a non-violent strategy towards apartheid using the philosophies of Ghandi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Walter Muelder's personalism, Edgar Brightman's moral laws and the philosophy of the Black Consciousness Movement (Motlhabi, 1988).

Apartheid impacted the blacks of South Africa in three major ways: race, land and African personality/culture. It was the adverse impact of apartheid on black Africans that gripped the heart of Professor Van der Walt. As a state racial policy, the blacks in question were rendered politically and economically powerless and dehumanised. This deeper meaning and impact of apartheid gripped Professor Van der Walt's conscience. As a Christian philosopher-theologian, he was fully aware of its historical roots and conditioning, its historical-religious unfolding and affirmation, its cultural incubation and grooming, its economic rationale and ethic, its political logic and state policy and its racial inner spirit and compelling power (Turaki, 1992:7). Professor Van der Walt engaged himself in a serious quest for a Christian scholarship that could effectively address, evaluate and critique the religious roots of apartheid. He was a student of philosophy in the tradition of Christian scholarship at the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, the Theological School of the Reformed Churches in South Africa and the Free University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. His training in Christian philosophy and theology prepared him to address white racism and apartheid in the subsequent development of his Christian scholarship.

The religious roots of apartheid, as developed and nurtured by the Afrikaner church, is one of the most serious historical, moral, spiritual and ethical indictments on Afrikaners' Christianity. Professor Van der Walt stood his ground and refused to legitimise and affirm white racism and its ideology of apartheid. Even though it was a personal risk in a "police state" for him to break ranks with his compatriots, he openly criticised apartheid practice and probed into the moral conscience of the white Afrikaner in his tenacious holding

on to his strong belief in apartheid (Turaki, 1992:8). I would not be able to fathom Professor Van der Walt's strength of character or measure his substantial contribution to Christian scholarship in Africa without this difficult and vexing context of apartheid with which he had to contend with. Professor Van der Walt pitched himself against his background and his own church, a situation which was capable of claiming the life of anyone who dared to be different. This strength of character is noteworthy against the powerful and pervasive influence of apartheid.

My personal visits to the Afrikaners' historical sites, monuments and listening to the re-telling of Afrikaners' history of the Boer Wars in Potchefstroom, made me realise the magnitude of the impact which such a profound historical background could have had on Professor Van der Walt. It was his response to apartheid's context that blossomed into a gigantic corpus of Christian scholarship worthy of this dedicatory volume in his honour. I hail the courage of young Bennie who defied the strangle hold of white racism and apartheid, a phenomem I describe as follows:

Apartheid was a powerful ethnocentric ideology which was capable of creating a police state, hence, it had power of indoctrination, socialization, nurturing, assimilation and coercion, suppression and oppression. Its boundaries were well defined ethnically or racially, which transcended individuality. It was a movement whose locus was not in individuality nor within a nation-state boundary of a geo-political entity but of racial exclusivity and ethnocentrism. It was an aggregate of racial conscience, pride, identity and destiny which had developed over the period of time. For this reason, it had racial power, will and being. Individuals both within and outside who sought to differ or posed a great threat to its will, destiny and mission, stand the risk of total annihilation. To differ is heresy and treason and these ones do not know the way of peace but of violence and liquidation. Individuals within the apartheid system learnt in a hard way that the language of conformity, acquiescence and coercion, suppression and oppression applied. This language had kept in bondage and silence the would-be heretics and those who would seek to differ and seek to divert from apartheid. He who sought to dismantle apartheid whether an insider or an outsider, engaged himself with a powerful force capable of inflicting mortality, of stripping one naked, and denying one of all rights. Apartheid was such a powerful enemy of justice and rights because it succeeded in capturing the heart of humanity and ultimately its conscience,

thereby inflicting it with durable and incurable racial wounds.
(Turaki, 1992:8.)

These are the words I used to describe the historical context that Professor Van der Walt came from. At our first meeting in South Africa, I was very much scared by his criticism of apartheid and the position of the Reformed Churches in South Africa. I feared for his life knowing what apartheid was capable of doing.

Professor Van der Walt struggled with white racism and apartheid. I remember during one of the international conferences, the black African folks raised objections to some of the comments in one of his pioneering works. He was gracious enough to accept some of the blind spots in his Christian scholarship and promised to revise and discard such an accidental demeanor as he never thought it to be offensive to black Africans. Certainly, people all over the world, at times do become prisoners of their past and backgrounds. Some do find it very difficult to shake off their past or background, but Professor Van der Walt in his voluminous Christian scholarship, has demonstrated the spirit of openness, appreciation and maturity in discussing even the most difficult issues like white racism and apartheid, and executing comparative studies of Western and African cultures. Because of his consistency, erudite scholarship and willingness to share his convictions and correct what is obnoxious, offensive and heretical, he is not afraid to cross traditional and cultural boundaries just to get his views across.

Historically, apartheid imprisoned and isolated the white Afrikaner from the rest of Africa. The need to set the Afrikaner free from self-imprisonment and the self-inflicted racial wounds of apartheid, urged Professor Van der Walt to take up the mandate of reaching out to black Africans. The dangers existed not only within the context of apartheid South Africa, but also loom largely in the rest of Africa, especially in relation to the devastating influence of Western dualism and secularism, on the one hand, and the devastating influence of negative African cultures, worldviews, communalism and kinship values. Hence the necessity of reaching out to the rest of Africa.

Professor Van der Walt could not be imprisoned or immobilised by white racism and apartheid. He could not be tamed by guilt and shame as some of his colleagues fell victim to white racism, apartheid and ethnocentrism. The stigma of apartheid was not a *prohibita* to him. His Christian scholarship in philosophy and theology have defined and clarified for him what apartheid is all about, a theological heresy and a political tool of oppression and

subjugation. Not only did he see the alarming danger of apartheid for the church and South Africa, but across the fence, he also saw another danger rearing its head in larger Africa. This greater danger for the African church was not apartheid, but Western dualistic Christianity, secularism and African communalism and kinship values. The prophetic role of Professor Van der Walt as a Christian scholar launched him out of his immediate context in South Africa into the African continent.

His primary objective for reaching out to black Africans was not to be an apologist for apartheid or as a crusader against apartheid, but rather to correct a theological conviction of his church which had divided the unity of the Body of Christ by means of racism and apartheid. The practical life of Professor Van der Walt is a demonstration of the truth of the Bible as described in Ephesians 2. Our Lord Jesus Christ came to unite the divided humanity and to create a new messianic community or a new humanity by abolishing all walls of division or barriers. We are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:11). The church is an institution founded by our Lord as the means of uniting the divided world and the formation of a new humanity or a messianic community. Professor Van der Walt demonstrated these cardinal ecclesiastical and biblical truths practically through his physical presence among black Africans both in his own home and in the homes of black Africans in South Africa, and also across the continent of Africa during the era of apartheid. During one of my visits to his home, I was amazed to see the inventory of visitors who had spent days with his family. Most of them were black Africans. Professor Van der Walt told me about his up-bringing, especially by his mother who taught him love for black Africans. He had also passed the same principle to his children.

His reaching out to black Africans was motivated by the desire to share his Christian faith and convictions, especially the Christian reformational worldview and the philosophy of Christian higher education. He also wanted to share with all Christians in Africa the devastating influence of Western dualism and secularism. These negative Western values have not strengthened Christianity; rather, they have weakened it. The solution to Western dualism and secularism is the Biblical reformational worldview and Christian philosophy of higher education. This not only corrects Western dualism and secularism, but also the African worldviews, especially values such as communalism and some forms of culture that inhibit the socio-political and economic development of Africa. Professor Van der Walt sees his task and contribution to Christian scholarship in

Africa as that of developing and formulating a philosophy of Christian higher education that is rooted in the biblical reformational worldview.

4. Professor Van der Walt's burdens: his passion, vision and mission for Africa

In this section, I am examining in brief his Christian scholarship and writings which manifest his great concern for Africa. His passion, vision and mission for Africa can be revealed in both his personality and Christian scholarship. Professor Van der Walt took it upon himself to recruit young Christian scholars in Africa like myself to join him in his vision for African Christian scholarship and Christianity. He did his work with much love, affinity, passion and obligation to Africa. My analysis of the corpus of Christian scholarship of Professor Van der Walt in this section will be very brief and cursory due to limited space. For this reason, I present some personal views and observations with regard to only a select number of themes recurring in Professor Van der Walt's writings. I intend not to be exhaustive or systematic, but to highlight only what I find important in relation to his scholarship.

4.1 On white racism and apartheid

Professor Van der Walt did not write as much about apartheid as he did on other subjects. He shared with me that his primary response and approach to racism and apartheid took root in his family background. He was personally involved along with his family in dealing with the practical issues of racism and apartheid in South Africa as these affected the lives of black South Africans. However, in reviewing his corpus of Christian scholarship, I came across his article on the topic of racism and apartheid (Van der Walt, 1993:29-52). This article describes how he addressed the question of apartheid. He also wrote on similar subjects that deal with the vision of humanity and society from a biblical perspective. Some of these works are: *Being human: a gift and a duty – on the way to a Christian view of man for Africa* (Van der Walt, 1990); *Responsibility, conversion, confession, forgiveness, restitution and reconciliation: six of God's requirements for a New South Africa* (Van der Walt, 1996); *The Bible as eye-opener on the position of women* (Van der Walt, 1988a); *On being human and being a Christian in Africa: communalism, socialism and communism in a struggle for an African anthropology* (Van der Walt, 1988b).

Due to lack of space, we will limit ourselves to his views on apartheid. Professor Van der Walt states: "Apartheid is an ideology, and moreover a dangerous one" (Van der Walt, 1993:30). Also:

Apartheid is an ideology, which usually comes into being in a situation of threat, is a substitution of true religion with, at its highest ideal, an all-encompassing purpose, to the attainment of which any (power) means may be used, norms adapted, sacrifices demanded, and a specific image of the enemy propagated. (Van der Walt, 1993:52.)

Apartheid, he notes, had many faces: "it is like a many-headed monster" (Van der Walt, 1993:31). He identified seven ideological components of apartheid: a nationalist ideology, a communalist ideology, a racist ideology, a security ideology, an ideology of prosperity, a revolutionary ideology, and with a religious face (Van der Walt, 1993:31-39). We have no need of elaborating on each of the forms of the apartheid ideology as it now lies in the past. To demonstrate that Professor Van der Walt attempted to deal with the question of apartheid the following should be noted. He observed that

Apartheid is not simply a political policy. It is also not simply a collection of segregational laws so that, as soon as the laws have been repealed, apartheid will also disappear. It is a stubborn ideology which causes people to view reality in a certain way. This is the foundation of the whole South African societal order. It has also led to a physical condition of unequal distribution of power and prosperity. (Van der Walt, 1993:31.)

He not only critiqued apartheid as a Christian scholar, but put his life and family at risk. "Only the people who suffered under this terrible ideology will be able to fully tell you how it dehumanized them" (Van der Walt, 1993:39). He proposed a solution for the victims of apartheid in the following words:

A South Africa freed from apartheid therefore demands economic re-structuring and the re-location of wealth as well as the means of creating wealth for those who had been impoverished by apartheid. The mere creation of a fund to help the poor is not adequate. Enormous amounts will be necessary for the backlog in housing, education, health care, supply of jobs, et cetera. (Van der Walt, 1993:46.)

Professor Van der Walt's criticism of apartheid was rooted in his biblical view of man, which he called "scriptural anthropological viewpoints" (Van der Walt, 1993:46). These biblical views form the

basis of humane treatment of all human beings. He listed these ethical values as human equality and equal dignity, human diversity and unity, human interdependence, human (individual) responsibility, and human groups and societal relationships. These biblical and ethical values define a Christian vision of humanity and society as opposed to that of apartheid.

A Christian vision of man and human society to my mind means openness and communality as against the exclusivity and emphasis on the own as a characteristic of the apartheid ideology. In accordance of this view cultural identity is not an embarrassment but rather an opportunity, not a threat but rather the source for human unity. Relations with those outside the group do not destroy but rather enhance the own identity. Through the interaction of diversity, community is established – the basis for a stable society. The openness towards others is at the same time the guarantee for freedom, peace and social justice, because it counters the greed and power-hunger which emanate from national exclusivity. (Van der Walt, 1993:52.)

In addition to these ethical values Professor Van der Walt's personal love, affinity and obligation towards black Africans have demonstrated his personal experience and approach to apartheid as a white Afrikaner.

4.2 On Western dualism and secularism

Besides white racism and apartheid, he also addressed Western dualism and secularism. These two worldviews are contrary to the biblical and reformational worldview. Professor Van der Walt did his Christian training in philosophy and theology which were deeply rooted in the Calvinist Christian reformational tradition. Calvinism formed the foundation of the Christian reformational tradition. This Christian reformational tradition in philosophy and theology shaped his life in a profound way. He used it to critique Western dualism and secularism, on the one hand, and to formulate a Christian reformational worldview and reformational philosophy of Christian higher education, on the other. Professor Van der Walt pursued his Christian scholarship in this area with great passion. He developed a legacy of Christian scholarship which promoted Christian reformational philosophy and theology in Africa. The bulk of his writings and books are concerned with this theme. Besides the numerous articles in various journals and monographs, the following books are important and worth mentioning: *Anatomy of reformation: flashes and fragments of a reformational worldview* (Van der Walt, 1991b); *A Christian worldview and Christian higher education for Africa* (Van

der Walt, 1991a); *The liberating message: a Christian worldview for Africa* (Van der Walt, 1994); *Transformed by the renewing of your mind: shaping a biblical worldview and a Christian perspective on scholarship* (Van der Walt, 2001a); and *Transforming power: challenging contemporary secular society* (Van der Walt, 2007).

These works expose the devastating effects of Western dualism and secularism for Western Christianity and theories of society which are destructive and particularly dangerous for African Christianity and society.

4.3 Western dualism

Professor Van der Walt traced the origins of dualism to classical Greek philosophy. Christianity borrowed and used Greek dualism uncritically, especially the two-realm theory of reality, the “distinction between the profane (or secular) and the sacred (or holy)” (Van der Walt, 1994:109-110) and “the distinction between two levels of knowledge/ontological realms” of reality (Van der Walt, 1994:111). Dualism as a view of reality leads to a misguided distinction in creation, a confusion of structure and direction, and harbours detrimental consequences for the involvement of the Christian reformation in the (sinful) world (Van der Walt, 1994:109-114-116). Professor Van der Walt advocates a radical rejection of dualism.

Dualist Christian worldviews could be compared with a chronic disease which has paralyzed and crippled Christianity for two thousand years and robbed it of any energy to reform the world around it. It is such a dangerous enemy of Christianity, because most Christians are not even aware of the fact that they are infected with the virus. It has become the most natural thing for them to wear double-focus glasses and to see the whole of reality divided into secular and sacred domains. (Van der Walt, 1994:109-116-117.)

By way of solution, he suggests that Christians “get rid of their spectacles, their distorting worldview. It should be exchanged for a genuine Christian worldview which sees the whole reality as a place where we should serve and glorify God” (Van der Walt, 1994:117). A solution to Western dualism is a Christian worldview that defines religion as

... radical, total and integral. We do not serve God only in certain places, times and occasions, but we have to be everywhere and always in his service – irrespective of the type of work that we are doing. (Van der Walt, 1994:117.)

He offers the following ways of correcting the dualist conception of reality: a systematic approach, clarifying the relationship between nature and grace or creation and redemption; a historical approach, situating the sovereign God's all-encompassing kingdom in its historical development – creation, fall, redemption and consummation; and a religious approach (concerned with structure and direction) (Van der Walt, 1994:109-110). This methodology serves two functions: it serves as a critique of Western dualism and secularism as well as a process of formulating a Christian reformational worldview and philosophy of Christian higher education.

In order to address the problem of dualism, Professor Van der Walt used a Christian theology, philosophy and social history, and the Holy Scriptures as foundation for a Christian reformational worldview and the philosophy of Christian higher education. His works in this area have challenged Christians in Africa to examine Western forms of Christianity that have been infected with dualism and secularism and to replace them with the Christian reformational worldview.

From most of the books mentioned above, it emerges that, with regard to this problem, the Christian reformational worldview and the philosophy of Christian higher education go hand in hand. Dualism and secularism could be combatted with the Christian reformational worldview and the philosophy of Christian higher education.

4.4 Western secularism

Many of the books mentioned above mention the problem of Western secularism, but Professor Van der Walt's recent publication, *Transforming power: challenging contemporary secular society* (Van der Walt, 2007), is dedicated to addressing the question of secularism exclusively. He picks out the popular themes of private and public religion in Western theological and religious discourse and describes the growth of private religion and the declining influence of religions in the public sphere. The public nature of religion is gradually being replaced by the new world religion, that is, secularism, which rules everywhere. In this book, he discusses "how to transform the increasingly secular culture and social life today" (Letšosa quoted in Van der Walt, 2007:vi). The devastating effect of secularism is not only felt in the West, but also in the non-Western world.

There is an important aspect of secularism which I want to add to Professor Van der Walt's views in this area. The symbiotic relationship between classical Western culture and Christianity produced

the following very important and influential social factors: the rising power and influence of advanced science and technology, democracy, and capitalism in the world; the fall of Western ethnocentrism (culture), colonialism and Christendom; the emergence of modern philosophies; and the revival of neo-paganism (Turaki, 2006:20-24). Western modern philosophies (secularism, pluralism, relativism and modernism) have contributed immensely to the fall of Western ethnocentrism and Christendom. Similarly, the rise of the forces of Western global civilisation (democracy, advanced science and technology and capitalism) has also become a modern tool for waging global religious and cultural wars that are weakening the influence of religion. However, I must add that there is a strong revival of neo-pagan religions in the West and in the non-Western world. These days we are seeing the revival of militant Islam in its confrontation with the West, especially the United States of America.

We observed that at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Western colonialism and ethnocentrism became weakened and eventually crumbled. Christendom was the first to fall long after Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation and the rise of nation-states in Europe. However, Christianity still dominated the religious and cultural life of Europe and the West in general. After the colonial era in the mid-twentieth century, both Western culture and Christianity shared the embarrassment and guilt of Western colonialism and the economic and political exploitation of the colonies. Christianity was not critical enough of the evils of colonialism and the economic and political exploitation of the colonies. In fact, it benefited from them (Son, 2001:10). The fall of colonialism also led to the fall of Western ethnocentrism (cultural superiority), especially through the works of cultural anthropologists who introduced pluralistic and relativistic views of culture and values (Son, 2001:10-11).

Modern philosophies have great power and influence in shaping, moulding, defining and conditioning the role and place of religion in Western society. Charles Colson describes the Western postmodernist mentality in the following words:

... today's culture not only is post-Christian but also is rapidly becoming postmodernist, which means it is resistant not only to Christian truth claims but to any truth claims. Postmodernism rejects any notion of a universal, overarching truth and reduces all ideas to social constructions shaped by class, gender, and ethnicity ... In postmodernism, there is no objective, universal truth; there is only the perspective of the group, whatever the

group may be: African-Americans, women, gays, Hispanics, and the list goes on. In postmodernism, all viewpoints, all lifestyles, all beliefs and behaviors are regarded as equally valid. (Colson & Pearcey, 1999:23.)

Given the power and influence of these modern philosophies (secularism, pluralism, relativism and postmodernism), religion has no central role to play in Western society. The place, role and status of religion in Western society have been relegated to the periphery. Son (2001:14-15) describes this change in the following words:

Unfortunately, however, the secularization process in the West has pushed the Christian faith as well as other related values also to the periphery. Art, literature, drama, music, etc., that have their origin in religious rites and enjoyed relatively high appreciation in the past, have all been pushed to the peripheries as luxuries of life, while money, physical force, political power, labour, and leisure have become the necessities of life and ascended to the center. The Enlightenment rationalism, development of natural science and technology, and the accompanying materialism and hedonism have deposed the faith that reigned on the cultural throne and usurped it.

4.5 A comparative analysis of Western and African cultures

Professor Van der Walt took the challenge posed by white racism and apartheid very seriously, all the while remaining sensitive to the fact that the African context is multi-ethnic/racial, multi-religious and multicultural. Africans, both whites and blacks, do misunderstand, misinterpret and misrepresent the cultures of the other. He addressed the issue of cultural diversity in Africa from a Christian perspective. The following of his works have been devoted to this subject: *Cultural diversity in Africa: embarrassment or opportunity* (1991c); *Afrocentric or Eurocentric? Our task in a multicultural South Africa* (1997); *Culture, worldview and religion: a perspective from the African continent* (2001b:23-38); *Understanding and rebuilding Africa* (2004); and *When African and Western cultures meet: from confrontation to appreciation* (2006).

These books promote a better understanding of cultures and identity between the whites and blacks in Africa. They also address the crisis of values and worldviews which affect both Christianity and African development. The transformation of Africa by the colonial powers and missionaries' activities has generated and accelerated many socio-political, cultural and religious changes and crises that need to be addressed. In his Preface to Professor Van der Walt's

book (2006) Emmanuel Ayee listed many of the burning issues in Africa that the book deals with. These include poverty, development, globalisation, leadership styles, different ways of viewing reality, the inferior position of women and the crisis of agriculture.

I observed that the primary objective of Professor Van der Walt's comparative cultural analysis is to offer solutions for dealing with cultural tensions, prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination. The best approach to cultural understanding is to study and evaluate "cultures in the light of a Christian worldview and philosophy" (Van der Walt, 1997; 2006). Ayee states that Professor Van der Walt sees culture in a positive sense "as a God-given opportunity for mutual enrichment and empowerment" (Ayee quoted in Van der Walt, 2006). The comparative method of cultural studies aims to help both whites and blacks in Africa to see the strengths and weaknesses of each other's culture. This understanding will foster mutual respect and cultural enrichment.

5. Conclusion

This article does not claim to have done justice to Professor Van der Walt's corpus of Christian scholarship. I have selected merely some parts of what I consider to be the most important features of his contribution to Christian scholarship in Africa. I have stressed the point that Professor Van der Walt is a bridge builder in Africa, bridging the gap between the whites and blacks in Africa during the days of apartheid. He has left an enduring legacy of Christian scholarship in Africa which can be summarised as: addressing the issue of white racism, its ideology of apartheid, and its devastating effects upon both the blacks and whites; criticising Western dualism and secularism and offering solutions based on the Christian reformational worldview and the philosophy of Christian higher education; undertaking extensive comparative analyses of Western and African cultures and offering solutions on how to address issues of cultural diversity, conflict and harmony; examining the issue of the impact of Western colonialism, dualistic Christianity and secularism on African Christianity, cultures, African identity, underdevelopment and leadership; and proposing solutions to the problems of racism/apartheid, dualism, secularism, crises of development, identity and cultures by formulating and using the Christian reformational worldview and the philosophy of Christian higher education.

Professor Bennie van der Walt, no doubt has built an enviable and enduring legacy of Christian scholarship in Africa. We thank God for giving us such a precious gift in the person of Professor Bennie van

der Walt. We join his compatriots, friends and well-wishers in celebrating God's faithfulness in his life!

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Key concepts:

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reformatoriese wêreldbeskouing
swart Afrikane
wit Afrikaners



Die sentrale plek van 'n lewens- en wêreldbeskouing

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Abstract

The central place of a life- and worldview

While taking into account the difference between a worldview and a lifeview this article focuses on the important foundational role of a life- and worldview – precisely because Professor Bennie van der Walt dedicated so much of his scholarly output to the implications of the Christian world- and lifeview. Within the latter context we find an important pillar safeguarding us against a biblicistic (or fundamentalist) misapprehension of the scope of the biblical message. God's law-Word for being a creature must be distinguished from the written Word which refers us to the former. An important outcome of the Christian life- and worldview is particularly found in the ideal of Christian scholarship – a theme with which Professor Bennie van der Walt continuously occupied himself. Because the after-effect of the Roman Catholic split of reality – in a sacred supernatural and a natural "secular" sphere – with the accompanying oppositions (such as church and world, faith and reason, sacred and secular, soul and body, and so on) – is still found within our protestant legacy, the rest of this article focuses on a perspective that can help us to transcend this dichotomy. The basic conception is that the directional antithesis between good and evil (redemption and sin) ought not to be twisted into a structural opposition within the good creational order of God for creatures.

Opsomming

Die sentrale plek van 'n lewens- en wêreldbeskouing

Met inagneming van die verskil tussen 'n wêreldbeeld en 'n lewens- en wêreldbeskouing, fokus hierdie artikel op die belangrike funderende rol van 'n lewens- en wêreldbeskouing – juis aangesien professor Bennie van der Walt soveel aandag gegee het in sy publikasies aan die implikasies van die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing. In laasgenoemde vind ons 'n belangrike steunpilaar waardeur ons gevrywaar word van 'n biblisistiese (of fundamentalistiese) misverstaan van die appèl van die Skrifboodskap. God se wet-Woord vir skepselwees moet onderskei word van die Skrif-Woord wat ons na eersgenoemde verwys. 'n Belangrike vrug van die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing vind ons juis in die ideaal van Christelike wetenskap – 'n tema waarmee professor Bennie van der Walt hom deurlopend besig gehou het. Omdat die nalewende Roomse tweedeling van die werklikheid – in 'n gewyde bonatuurlike en 'n natuurlik-“sekulêre” sfeer – met die daarmee gepaardgaande teenstellings (soos kerk en wêreld, geloof en rede, sakraal en sekulêr, siel en liggaam, e.s.m.) – steeds in ons protestantse erfenis aanwesig is, fokus die res van hierdie artikel op 'n perspektief waarin hierdie tweedeling te bowe gekom kan word. Die grondgedagte is dat die rigting-teenstelling tussen goed en kwaad (verlossing en sonde) nie verdraai moet word tot 'n struktuur-teenstelling binne die goed-geskepe orde van God se skepping nie.

1. Wêreldbeeld en lewensbeskouing

Wanneer 'n festschrift opgedra word aan 'n akademikus wat sy lewe gewy het aan die uitbouing en verspreiding van die ideaal van Christelik-wetenskaplike denke, is dit sekerlik geensins verbasend nie dat in hierdie arbeid van hom dikwels oor kernelemente van die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing besin is nie. Professor Bennie van der Walt is waarskynlik een van die mees prominente denkers binne die reformatories-wysgerige erfenis wanneer dit aankom op die vraag watter deurslaggewende rol 'n lewens- en wêreldbeskouing in die lewe van die mens speel – en in die besonder watter sleutelposisie die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing inneem (of behoort in te neem) in die lewe van Christene.

Allereers enkele opmerkings oor die ontstaan van die uitdrukking: *lewens- en wêreldbeskouing*.¹

Die term *Weltanschauung* (lewensbeskouing) word reeds in Immanuel Kant se *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (*Kritiek van die oordeelsvermoë*) aangetref (Kant, 1968 [1799]:92 e.v.). Die konteks waarin Kant hierdie term na vore bring, hou verband met sy siening van die oneindige. In sy *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*Kritiek van die suiwer rede*) (Kant, 1956 [1787]:461) stel hy in verband met die aard van ruimte dat dit nie 'n *compositum* is nie, want as bepalend ten opsigte van die dele daarvan is ruimte 'n *totum*. Die dele is slegs moontlik in die geheel en die geheel deur sy dele. Hiermee openbaar Kant 'n korrekte insig in die aard van die ruimtelike geheel-delerelasie (die totaliteitskarakter van kontinuïteit). Weliswaar beskou hy die getalsbesef van suksessie hier as 'n onvoltooibare ry wat nie as 'n totaliteit gedink kan word nie – dit is slegs moontlik in rede-ideë. Slegs binne die konteks van rede-ideë erken hy die moontlikheid om 'n eindelose suksessie as totaliteit te dink. Om die oneindige as 'n totaliteit te dink, berus op 'n vermoë wat die sintuiglikheid te bowe gaan – en juis in 'n *Weltanschauung* word dit gedink op 'n wyse wat die maatstaf van die sintuiglikheid oorskry. In sy *Kritiek van die oordeelsvermoë* argumenteer Kant gevolglik dat dit wat nie deur getalsbegrippe nie, wel deur die rede as 'n totaliteit gedink kan word.

Indien ons hierdie siening met die idee van die *universum* vergelyk, merk ons spoedig op dat in laasgenoemde dit ook gaan oor die gebruik van ons getals- en ruimtebesef. Dink slegs aan die Afrikaanse benaming *heelal*. Die twee geledinge daarvan is “geheel” en “alles” – waar geheel, soos ons pas opgemerk het, 'n ruimtelike konnotasie besit en “alles” 'n getalsbetekenis verteenwoordig. Wanneer die suksessie van 'n getallery tot 'n geheel saamgevat word, ontmoet ons die idee van die heelal. Hierdie term pas egter uiteindelik beter by verskillende wêreldbeelde – iets wat duidelik onderskei moet word van wat ons vandag eerder met die uitdrukking *lewens- en wêreldbeskouing* wil aandui. Mense met verskillende lewens- en wêreldbeskouings kan immers dieselfde wêreldbeeld deel.

2. Die eenheid en goedheid van die skepping

Een van die grondperspektiewe wat in die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing aangetref word, is gegee in die erkenning van die

1 Insake die verhouding tussen filosofie en lewensbeskouing, sien Wolters (1989:15-18).

eenheid en goedheid van die skepping. Daarmee word tegelyk af-skeid geneem van allerlei tweeslagtige of dualistiese lewens- en wêreldbeskouings. Die nalewende erfenis van die Rooms-Katolieke tradisie is hier prominent, veral omdat daarin kernelemente van die dualistiese Griekse erfenis beliggaam is.

Vroeg in sy akademiese loopbaan het professor Bennie van der Walt 'n betrekking in Filosofie by die Universiteit van Fort Hare aanvaar. Hy moes onder andere 'n kursus in antropologie aanbied en het 'n kopie van sy Antropologiediktaat aan my gestuur. Wat my nou nog van hierdie diktaat bybly, is sy skerp kritiek op die tradisionele dualistiese interpretasie van Genesis 2:7 oor die mens. Volgens die tradisionele interpretasie is die mens se *liggaam* uit die stof van die aarde gevorm, en die *siel* in die liggaam geplaas sodat die (stoflike) liggaam "besiel" kon word. Hierteenoor het Van der Walt verduidelik dat 'n korrekte lees van hierdie teks nêrens enige grond bied vir hierdie drievoudige dualistiese (siel-liggaam) interpretasie nie. In die eerste plek word uitdruklik in Genesis 2:7 gestel dat dit die mens is (en nie bloot die mens se liggaam nie) wat uit die stof van die aarde gevorm is. In die tweede plek ontvang die mens die asem van die lewe (en nie slegs die mens se liggaam nie), sodat dit derdens die mens is wat 'n lewende wese word en nie bloot die liggaam van die mens wat "besiel" word nie.

Binne die Griekse kultuur vind ons die ondergrond van hierdie dualistiese mensbeskouing gemanifesteer in dit wat Aritoteles later sou aandui as die teenstelling tussen vorm en materie – 'n aanduiding wat deur Dooyeweerd gebruik is om die religieuse grondmotief van die Griekse kultuur onder woorde te bring. Alhoewel Bram Bos die wyse waarop Dooyeweerd die ontstaan van hierdie grondmotief verantwoord krities bevraagteken deur voorkeur te gee aan wat hy bestempel as die *titaniese sin-perspektief*, is hy van mening dat die uitvoerige analise van die ontwikkeling van hierdie motief in die Griekse denke (Dooyeweerd, 1949; sien Dooyeweerd, 2004) 'n geldige perspektief bied op die inherente dialektiek van die Griekse denke (Bos, 1994:220).

Die invloed van die Griekse vorm-materiemotief op die middeleeuse Rooms-Katolisisme blyk allereers daaruit dat die verhouding tussen natuur en genade gesien is ooreenkomstig die relasie tussen materie en vorm. Die natuurlike lewe van die mens, wat sy hoogste vormvervolmaking in die staat vind (gerig op deugszaamheid), dien as die blote materie-voortrap vir die hoër vorm van die kerk wat as bonatuurlike genade-instituut die mens tot ewige geluksaligheid moet voer. Die praktiese effek van hierdie grondmotieftweedeling

van die lewe het lewensbeskoulike beslag gekry in talle teenstellings wat ons vandag nog al te goed ken: sakraal (heilig) versus profaan (wêrelds/aards); roeping versus beroep; kerk(-instituut) versus wêreld (nie-kerklike lewensvorms soos staat, bedryf en universiteit); teologie versus filosofie; geestelik versus tydelik; gewyd versus alle-daags; ewige lewe versus tydelike lewe; siel versus liggaam; geloof versus rede; en so meer.

'n Treffende voorbeeld van die Roomse dualisme vind ons in die feit dat haas alle reformatore van die sestiende eeu ten gunste van die kontinuering van die Ou-Testamentiese renteverbod was – met een uitsondering: Calvyn! Hy was die enigste reformator wat beseef het dat daar niks in die skepping van God is wat minderwaardig is of wat as sodanig sondig geskape is nie. God die Vader, wat in sy almag alles geskep het, het 'n goeie skepping daargestel – 'n skepping wat God dra deur die woord van sy krag (Heb. 1:3) en 'n skepping wat die eer van God vertel en die werk van sy hande verkondig (Ps. 19:2). Die mens is geskape as kroon van die skepping en is deur God (as medewerker van God) met eer en heerlikheid gekroon (Ps. 8:6; vgl. ook Heb. 2:6-8). Deur die toedoen van die sonde is alles wat God geskape het egter afgetrek in diens van daardie afgod wat die mens se hart bemeester het en waaraan die mens sigself in gewaande ootmoed oorgegee het.

3. Die beskawingsvormende krag van die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing

Die gevolg van die sondeval is derhalwe dat elke goeie skeppingsgegewe gawe aan die mens deur die sonde in sy hart in ongehoorsaamheid aan en afvalligheid van God misbruik (kan) word. Geen enkele sondige misbruik van 'n skeppingsgegewe gawe van God aan die mens hef egter ooit die godgehoorsame en korrekte gebruik daarvan op nie. Hoe skuldig die mens ook al mag wees aan ekonomiese wanbesteding en vermorsing, of aan haat en nyd teenoor medemense, die mens bly kragtens God se Skepperswil steeds geroepe om met rentmeesterskap in spaarsaamheid om te gaan met die (beperkte) ekonomiese middele van die skepping (w.o. die kosbare en onvervangbare hulpbronne van die aarde), of om in liefde en met eerbied teenoor ander mense op te tree. Daarom was dit volkome Bybels-verantwoord dat Calvyn weer die aard van ekonomiese arbeid in ere herstel het. Volgens Calvyn is elke beroep 'n roeping – 'n godgegewe taak wat goed of sleg ten uitvoer gebring

kan word. Calvyn het deur die opheffing van die renteverbod² en die in ere herstelling van die ekonomiese terrein van die skepping baanbrekerswerk verrig teenoor Luther, Zwingli en ander reformatore wat van deurslaggewende belang was vir die hele ekonomiese ontwikkeling van die Westerse beskawing gedurende die afgelope vier eeue. Die ekonomiese bloei van die protestantse lande van weleer – dink byvoorbeeld aan die “goue eeu” wat Nederland in die sewentiende eeu beleef het – is 'n regstreekse gevolg van die feit dat Christene opnuut en met verantwoordelikheid hulle ekonomiese roeping nagekom het. Hulle het dit nagekom sonder om langer hierdie terrein as minderwaardig en as behorende tot die laer natuurlike (wêreldse) lewe van die mens te beskou (vgl. Goudzwaard, 2009).

4. Die negatiewe effek van die humanistiese lewens- en wêreldbeskouing

Weliswaar sou die moderne afval van God, wat die mens sentraal stel (vergoddelik), naamlik die Humanisme, hierdie gesonde ekonomiese ontwikkeling weer ombuig en diensbaar maak aan die sondige neiging van die mens – aan sy selfsug en (geldgierige) materialisme. Die vaders van die moderne kapitalisme het onverbloemd die leer verkondig dat ekonomiese heil en voorspoed vir alle mense slegs vir hulle beskore sal wees wanneer almal toegelaat word om onverhinderd en optimaal in gierigheid hulle eie belang na te jaag.

Aan die begin van die twintigste eeu het Max Weber (1970) bekendheid verwerf met 'n geskrif, *Die protestantse Ethiek en der Geest des Kapitalismus* (*Die protestantse etiek en die gees van die kapitalisme*). (Dit is oorspronklik gepubliseer in 'n sosiaal-wetenskaplike tydskrif in 1904 en 1905.) Hierin het hy die puriteinse werkywer en soberheid van leefstyl waardeur as een van die ontstaansfaktore van die moderne kapitalisme en dit tegelyk ook gesien as 'n gevolg van die lewensbeskoulike aard van die Reformasie (die Protestantisme). Die puriteinse werksetiek van die Engelse werker het hy treffend beskryf as binne-wêreldse askese (*innerweltliche Askese*). Daaruit blyk egter hoedanig hy nog die aard van die Christelike lewensbeskouing in Roomse terme verteken. Sedertdien het verskeie gesaghebbende studies verskyn waarin aangetoon is dat die grondgedagtes van Calvyn allermens beskou kan word as 'n vertrekpunt

2 In sy proefskrif oor die ekonomiese sienings van Calvyn gee Diepenhorst (1904) ook 'n uitgebreide analise ook van die renteverbod.

van die humanistiese klem op eie belang en gierigheid wat aan die wortel van die Westerse kapitalistiese materialisme te vind is.

Ter versagting moet opgemerk word dat Weber sêlf waarsku teen 'n ál te simplistiese benadering wat sou wou beweer "that the spirit of capitalism ... could only have arisen as the result of certain effects of the Reformation, or even that capitalism as an economic system is a creation of the Reformation" (Weber, 1970:91). Op dieselfde bladsy voeg hy daaraan toe: "In itself, the fact that certain important forms of capitalistic business organization are known to be considerably older than the reformation is a sufficient refutation of such a claim".

Die uitbuiting en eksesse waartoe hierdie humanistiese selfsug aanleiding gegee het, het die werkers tydens en na die industriële omwenteling (aan die einde van die agttiende en begin van die negentiende eeu) verlaag tot 'n vlak van weerloosheid en uitbuiting – sodanig dat dit aanleiding gegee het tot die sosialistiese reaksie van Marx se kommunistiese lewensbeskouing. Die twintigste eeu is tot op 'n groot hoogte gekenmerk deur die ideologiese stryd tussen die kapitalistiese materialisme van Amerika en die sosialistiese materialisme van Rusland en China. Sedertdien is die bykomende magsmonstering van die Islam beleef met die uitstulping daarvan in terrorisme-aanvalle.

5. Calvyn se denke: 'n gemengde erfenis

Onlangs het Van der Walt in twee uitgebreide en diepgrypnde artikels 'n kritiese waardering van die werklikheids- en mensbeskouing van Calvyn gepubliseer (vgl. Van der Walt, 2009a en 2009b; asook Strauss, 2009b). Hoewel Calvyn nog in vele opsigte onder die invloed van on-Bybelse opvattinge was, het sy herwaardering van die eenheid en goedheid van die skepping spoedig daartoe aanleiding gegee dat die protestantse Hervorming nie bloot tot die kerk en godsdienste in engere sin beperk kon word nie, maar inderdaad die religieuse wortel van die mens se bestaan raak en van daaruit na alle sektore van die menslike samelewing vernuwend behoort deur te werk. Die gevolg was dat die benaming *Calvinisme* na vore getree het om hierdie lewensomvattende Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing aan te dui. Uiteindelik, met die herlewering wat deur Abraham Kuyper teweeg gebring is, het dit gedien om die Christelike lewensoriëntasie te onderskei van sowel die Rooms Katolisisme as die Humanisme as lewensbeskouings.

Veral Kuyper het opnuut aandag gevra vir die lewensomvattende betekenis van die wet van God – mede in die lig van die feit dat die

kerklike tradisie hierdie uitdrukking beperk het tot die tien gebooue. Dit is veral die erkenning van die radikale en integrale aard van die Bybelse skeppingsmotief wat in hierdie problematiek skerp onder die soeklig kom – gefokus op die aard van God se wil. Die Christendom worstel tewens die afgelope 2 000 jaar met hierdie sentrale vraag van ons Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing, naamlik hoe ek my lewe moet inrig. Die antwoord is uiteraard natuurlik volgens die wil van die Here! Maar die vraag bly presies *wat* die wil van die Here in ons alledaagse lewe is.

6. Die wil van die Here

Die antwoord is skynbaar eenvoudig wanneer ons bloot sou vra wat die Skrif sê. Dit is 'n standaard praktyk binne ons Christelike tradisie dat hierdie vraag daarop dui dat die Bybel inderdaad die riglyne/beginsels/rigtingwysers vir ons lewe bevat en dat 'n antwoord op die vraag na wat die Skrif sê slegs gevind kan word deur op bepaalde (kon-)tekste te let. Is die Bybel dan nie tereg deur die Reformasie as die norm van ons geloofslewe waardeer nie? Die lastige vervolgvraag wat hierteenoor opgewerp kan word, is natuurlik die vraag of die Bybel inderdaad uitsluitel gee oor elke faset van ons moderne en gekompliseerde lewe. Sê die Bybel werklik iets konkreet oor die kernenergie wat in die atoom verskuil lê of oor die katastrofale misbruik wat die mens daarvan kan maak? Sê die Bybel iets oor apartheid? Sê die Bybel iets oor menseregte? Wat van die problematiek van inflasie, tegnokrasie of die mag van die moderne organisasiewese en kommunikasiemedie? Watter tekste sal ons na vore moet bring om oor hierdie en talle ander hedendaagse probleme uitsluitel te kry?

Anders gestel: is dit geregverdig om die afleiding te maak dat indien daar geen toepaslike teks in die Bybel oor 'n spesifieke saak gevind kan word nie, die Bybel géén gesag oor daardie saak of terrein van die lewe besit nie? Op hierdie punt skemer iets belangriks deur. Indien die gesag van die Bybel inderdaad daarvan afhanklik was dat daar oor elke denkbare faset van die lewe en vir elke moontlike situasie 'n direk-toepaslike teks bestaan het, sou dit vanself impliseer dat die Bybel nie gesag dra oor die volle lewe van die mens nie, want dit kan eenvoudig nie ontken word dat daar talle sake is waaroor ons geen direkte tekste in die Bybel vind nie. Hierdie impasse toon aan dat ons moontlik slagoffers kan wees van 'n valse (en on-Bybelse!) verwagting van wat die Bybel presies is en aan ons bied.

Juis die probleemstelling waarmee ons begin het, maak dit moontlik om die knelpunt in hierdie valse verwagting van wat die Bybel eintlik is, bloot te lê.

7. Die orde vir en ordelikheid van die skepping

As praktiese voorbeelde sou ons kon sê dat die hemelliggame in hulle beweging beantwoord aan die wil van God? Is dit 'n deel van die wil van God dat swangerskap by die mens normaalweg nege maande duur? Beantwoord logies-korrekte argumentasies aan die wil van God? Sou ons kon sê dat God van ons verwag om spaarsaam te wees, om bedagsaam op te tree, om stylvol te handel, om opreg te wees, en so meer?

In die Ou-Testamentiese wysheidsliteratuur word die insig waarom dit hier gaan, geplaas binne die kader van die wysheid van *God* wat oor die skepping uitgegiet is. Die wet wat God vir al sy skepsele gestel het, is inderdaad sy wil vir skepselwees – in die reformatories-wysgerige tradisie word ook gesê dat die skepping gegrond is in die soewereine skepperswil van God (vgl. hierby die digterlike lofprysing van Op. 4:11: "... omdat U alles geskep het; deur u wil het alles ontstaan en is dit geskep").

Dit is sekerlik onmoontlik om die "wil van God" in hierdie fundamentele sin van Skepperswil te vereenselwig met die Bybel as geskrif. Die implikasie is dan egter dat "Skrif-beginsels" nie kan saamval met die skeppingswye wiekslag van God se kosmosomvattende skeppingswet nie. Allereers is dit duidelik dat die wet van God méér is as wat in die Bybel opgeteken is. Daarom het Kuyper in eg reformatoriese sin van meet af beklemtoon dat daar by die wet van God nie bloot aan die tien gebooue, die Mosaïese wet of die sedewet en seremonies gedink moet word nie, omdat die volle skeppingsorde in die visier gekry moet word. Kuyper stel dat die wet van God nie slegs die "[T]ien geboden; ook niet enkel de Mozaïsche wet, of de wet der zeden en ceremonieën" is nie, maar ook "dat gansche samenstel van wetten in al het creatuurlijke vertoonen, waardoor al wat God schiep, op de aarde, boven de aarde en onder de aarde, bestaat" (aangehaal deur Veenhof, 1939:30). Vanuit hierdie perspektief gesien, kan ons aanvaar dat God inderdaad sy wet gestel het vir skepselwees (vgl. onder meer Ps. 148 en 119). Elke skepsel toon die onderworpenheid daarvan aan God se wet deur ooreenkomstig die maat van die wet op te tree – dit wil sê deur wetmatig te funksioneer. Die insettinge en bevele wat God vir die menslike lewe gestel het, besit egter nie die aard van natuurwette nie, want dit is normerend; dit tree die mens tegemoet as behorensiese (beginsels

of norme). Daarom ken ons as gevolg van die sondeval naas reëlmatige menslike optrede ook onreëlmatige handeling (anti-normatiewe daad). In Jesaja 28:26 e.v. verneem ons byvoorbeeld dat God die mens kennis gee oor hoe om alles na behore te doen: swartkorn en korn word met 'n stok uitgeslaan; graan word gemaal vir brood; en so meer. Danksy die ordelikheid van dinge kan ons op die spoor kom van die orde wat God daarvoor gestel het. God leer ons dat ons moet ag gee op sy wil vir hulle bestaan – 'n perspektief wat dikwels ook deur 'n voormalige kollega van professor Bennie van der Walt, professor Benoon Duvenage, beklemtoon is.

Wat opvallend is, is dat hier geen uitleg van 'n bepaalde Bybelteks op die spel is indien ons tot kennis van die aard en hantering van korn en graan wil kom nie. God maak hierdie kennis moontlik deurdat Hy in sy voorsienige trou sy wet handhaaf. Indien ons gevolglik sou vra hoe ons tot kennis van die wet vir 'n atoom kan kom, moet die antwoord uit die voorafgaande lig wat die Bybel daarop werp, duidelik wees: nie deur een of ander teks in die Ou en/of Nuwe Testament te ondersoek nie, maar wel deur vanuit die ordelikheid (wetmatigheid) van atome tot 'n insig te kom in die godgestelde wet vir atoomwees.

8. Normatiwiteit en antinormatiwiteit

Omdat die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing nie alleen op ons Bybelse skeppingsgeloof berus nie, maar ook erns maak met die sondeval, kan die bykomende vraag gestel word of antinormatiewe gedrag enige bydrae kan lewer tot ons strewe om God se Skepperswil vir die mens se lewe in sig te kry. Sal elke vorm van antinormatiwiteit nie juis op die teendeel dui nie? Allermens, want enige menslike gedrag kan slegs as antinormatief waardeur word indien dit gemeet word aan een of ander norm of beginsel waaraan dit nie alleen onderworpe is nie, maar waarteen dit ingaan.

Indien ons byvoorbeeld die normatiewe eise van logiese denke wegdink, verdwyn die moontlikheid om 'n drogredenasie te herken in die *onlogiese* aard daarvan. Onlogiese denke verander nie in enigiets anders nie – dit bly 'n vorm van denke. Met ander woorde, slegs indien daar implisiet 'n appèl op die godgestelde logiese norme vir ons denke uitgeoefen is, kan gesê word dat 'n spesifieke argument onlogies is. Die sondige ongehoorsaamheid van die mensdom ontkom derhalwe nooit aan die godgestelde beginsels waaraan dit steeds onderworpe bly nie – dit kan hoogstens in ongehoorsaamheid daarop parasiteer!

Wie in die lig van die voorafgaande beredenering daarom vanuit hierdie Skrifgefundeerde perspektief besef dat God ons deur die ordelikheid van sy skepsels verwys na die wet-Woord vir sy skepsels, hoef 'n mens ook nie langer in 'n verleentheid te verkeer wanneer dit gaan om 'n prinsipiële verantwoording van die taak van die wetenskap aan 'n universiteit vanuit die perspektief van die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing nie. Die Bybel verwys uiteraard na talle gestaltes van gehoorsaamheid wat eweseer op die godgestelde wet-Woord vir die mens appelleer.

In die kontemporêre postmoderne tydsges word 'n poging aangewend om enige appèl op 'n omvattende godgestelde orde te relativer. Middleton en Walsh (1995:76-77) wys tereg daarop dat dit op 'n wyse geskied waardeur die eie sekerheid subtiel veilig gestel word. Hulle stel die vraag: "Do postmodernists consider their own worldview as simply one option among many?" Die antwoord is:

Not at all. Postmodernity, as the master discourse which guides our understanding that all stories are mere human constructs, does not appear on the table. It *is* the table on which all the other dishes are served.

Hoewel Smith skerp krities oor die postmoderne tydsges dink en eksplisiet die pleit voer vir 'n "creational hermeneutic", grens sy gedagte van 'n "plural notion of truth" aan die relativisme (Smith, 2000:83).

9. Die ideaal van Christelike wetenskap – vrug van die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing

Die ideaal van Christelike wetenskap is nie 'n vrug van een of ander wetenskaplike insig nie, maar die resultaat van die motiverende aard van die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing. Tereg skryf Dooyeweerd (1997-I:157):³

To the Calvinistic life- and world-view, as developed by Dr A. Kuyper in the Netherlands since the last decades of the nineteenth century, belongs undoubtedly also the radical Christian view of science. But how is this new view of science born? Not from a philosophic or systematic tendency, but rather in the midst of a concrete situation of life. The pressure of the

3 Hierdie uitspraak weerlê Wolterstorff se opmerking dat volgens Dooyeweerd "one's religious convictions belong exclusively to the realm of the pre-theoretical" (Wolterstorff, 1989:80).

scholastic notion of science on the one hand, the necessity for defence against the ruling Humanistic view of science on the other, stimulated young neo-Calvinism to a consideration of its religious calling in the realm of science.

Natuurlik is die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing glad nie die enigste geesteskrag wat in die Westerse beskawingsgeskiedenis werkzaam is nie. Daarteenoor – en dikwels parasiterend daarop – staan ook ander lewensbeskoulike geestestromings. Een van die belangrikste probleme in hierdie erfenis is in die gangbare – nalewend-Roomse – tweedeling van die lewe te vind. Die kernvraag is of die Bybel 'n tweedeling van die lewe in 'n laer wêreldse (natuurlike) lewe (die nie-kerklike lewensterreine) en 'n verhewe geestelike (kerklik-institutêre) genadesfeer erken.

Die sentrale boodskap van die Bybel is immers die koninkryk (*basileia*) van God (sy heerskappy oor alles – vgl. Ps. 103:22 en veral die vier Evangelies waar die term *basileia* ongeveer 100 keer voorkom). Aanvanklik dui die koninkryk van God op die volle reikwydte van God se heerskappy in Christus oor die sondelose skepping. Ná die sondeval dui dit op God se heerskappy oor gelowiges en ongelowiges, en sedert Christus se kruisiging en opstanding wys dit enersyds heen na die komende ryk van God, terwyl dit andersyds dui op die heerskappy van God in die herbore harte en lewens van verlostes. Daar waar Christus-herbore mense in gehoorsaamheid aan God se wil lééf – of hulle nou eet of drink of enigiets doen – daar het die koninkryk reeds gekom.

Die skepping omvat sowel alle skepsels wat God geskape het as die orde van God vir skepselwees – die skeppingsgegewe wet-Woord van God waarna die Bybel as egte en betroubare Skrifgeworde Woord verwys. Tot die skeppingsorde behoort nie alleen die wette vir die natuur nie (vgl. Ps. 148), want ook die verordinerings, insettings en bevele van God (sy wet-Woord) wat elke faset en lewensvorm van die mens normeer, is as skeppingswil van God gegee – dit bevat God se koninkrykswil vir menswees – soos saamgevat in die grondwet van die koninkryk: die eis van liefdesdiens aan God en die naaste met die hele hart. Vanuit hierdie wortel-wet vertak die gedifferensieerde verskeidenheid verordinerings wat God vir die verskillende fasette van die menslike doen en late gestel het. Let egter daarop dat hierdie verskeidenheid insettings nie uit die allesomvattende sin van die liefdesgebod afgelei kan word nie – dit bied telkens slegs 'n gedifferensieerde spesifikasie daaraan. Wanneer die gebod tot naasteliefde eis dat 'n mens jou naaste moet liefhê soos jouself, impliseer dit nie dat jy jou buurvrou op dieselfde wyse

moet liefhê as jou eie vrou nie! Die spesifikasies van God se wet-woord vir die verskillende fasette van die mens se lewe kan eenvoudig nie uit die sentrale liefdesgebod afgelei word nie.

10. Die onderskeidenheid van struktuur en rigting

Die teenstelling (antitese) tussen sonde en verlossing (kwaad en goed) dui 'n rigting-onderskeid binne die goeie orde van God se skepping aan. Die sonde verskaf aan die moontlikhede van die skepping 'n afgodiese rigting – dink aan onlogiese denke, vermorsende optrede, onregmatige handeling, ongeloofsvorming, in die orentbring van afgodiesgerigte state, bedrywe, gesinne, geloofsverbande, en so meer. Daarenteen maak die verlossing in Christus ons juis vry van die skeppingswye heerskappy van die sonde en roep ons op om op elke terrein van die skepping af te wyk van die kwaad en uit vrees vir die Here in gehoorsaamheid aan sy wil te lewe (vgl. Job 28:28; Pred. 6:16 en Rom. 12:21). Christene en nie-Christene leef nie in twee verskillende wêreldes (“terreine”) nie, maar in een en dieselfde skeppingsorde van God. Wat Christene en nie-Christene van mekaar skei, is nie die skepping waarin hulle (gemeenskaplik) leef nie, maar juis die teengestelde rigtingkeuses van waaruit hulle leef. Christene en nie-Christene doen gevolglik dieselfde soort dinge – maar hulle doen hierdie dinge verskillend en telkens vanuit hulle onderskeie rigtingoriëntasies.

Ons ontkrag die volle Bybelse betekenis van skepping, sondeval en verlossing indien ons hierdie rigtingonderskeid tussen sonde en verlossing (kwaad en goed) met die goedgeskape struktuur van die skepping vereenselwig. Onvermydelik lei dit tot 'n on-Bybelse tweedeling (dualisme) wat die sonde met 'n bepaalde “gebied” (terrein) van die skepping vereenselwig (byvoorbeeld die nie-kerklike lewensvorms soos die staat, bedryf, volk, skool en universiteit as die *wêreld*) en wat die verlossing met 'n ander terrein vereenselwig (byvoorbeeld die kerk wat as Christelike geloofsverband die keersy vorm van die natuurlike sondige wêreld). In radikale teenstelling tot elke dualistiese siening leer die Bybel juis ondubbelsinnig dat ons op elke terrein van die skepping moet afwyk van die kwaad deur God se wil te gehoorsaam. Verlossing beteken dus nie die wegbeweeg van enige terrein van die lewe nie, maar juis die héénbeweeg na elke terrein – om dan vervolgens op elkeen van hierdie terreine af te wyk van die kwaad deur die koningskap van Christus te proklameer. Daarom kan ons sê dat waar alle nie-Bybelse lewens- en wêreld-beskouings op die een of ander wyse die onderskeid tussen die goedgeskape struktuur van die skepping en die rigtingteenstelling

tussen goed en kwaad verontagsaam, die Bybelse perspektief die enigste is wat bestempel kan word as die motief van die onderskeidenheid van struktuur en rigting. Smith (2004:197) verwys na sy jeugvorming wat in die greep was van "Protestant fundamentalism" – met dualisme as hoofkenmerk.

11. Tekorkomings van 'n kerkinstituutsentrisme

Omdat die posisie van die kerk in die lewe van die mens dikwels nog waardeur word vanuit die tradisioneel-Roomse twee-terreineperspektief, is dit kernelemente van die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing waaroor tot duidelikheid gekom moet word.

Indien ons sou opmerk dat die Bybel enersyds in 'n sentrale en omvattende sin oor die liefdesgebed praat – die liefde tot God en mens met die hele hart – en andersyds gedifferensieerd liefde (en geloof) naas ander vertakings van die lewe stel, is dit duidelik dat liefde in die sentrale sin (as wortel) nie kan saamval met enige vertakking van die lewe nie. In onderskeiding van daardie Bybelgedeeltes waar pertinent na die sentrale sin van die liefdesgebed verwys word (vgl. Matt. 22:37-40; Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18), tref ons talle gedeeltes aan waar liefde in één lyn naas ander fasette van die werklikheid geplaas word. Vergelyk slegs die uitsprake in Galasiërs 5:22 en 1 Timoteus 6:11 waar ons lees van die "vrug van die Gees" en daar dan onderskeidelik melding gemaak word van: "liefde, blydskap, vrede, ...", en so meer en van dit waarna ons moet streef: "geloof, liefde, volharding, minsaamheid". Let terloops daarop dat dieselfde verskynsel met betrekking tot die woord *geloof* voorkom. Soms word geloof gebruik in die sin van die totale hartsoorgawe van die mens aan God en soms word dit – soos in 1 Timoteus 6:11 – gebruik ter aanduiding van 'n deug wat naas en in onderskeiding van ander deugde nagestreef moet word. Indien ons die woord *geloof* in 'n sentrale sin gebruik, is die term *religie* verkieslik, want dit appelleer op 'n allesomvattende binding van die hart – 'n totale diens aan God of aan 'n afgod. Die term *geloof* – en ook *godsdienst* in 'n engere sin – kan gereserveer word vir 'n bepaalde uitgang uit die hart wat duidelik onderskei moet word van ander uitgange uit die hart – denke, liefde, spaarsaamheid omvat tewens nie al my lewensverhoudings nie. Telkens tree ek immers (weliswaar sonder om op te hou om kerklidmaat te wees) in ander hoedanighede op – byvoorbeeld as Christenouer, Christeneggenoot, Christendosent, en so meer. Indien die nuwe wortel van Christenwees – sy herborenheid in Christus as loot van die Ware Wynstok – vereenselwig word met 'n vertakking van sy bestaan (naamlik lidmaatskap van die kerkinsti-

tuut), moet ons – ter wille van konsekwentheid noodwendig saam met Rome die hele lewe van die mens verkerklik in plaas van ver-Christelik.⁴ Marshall wys daarop dat die argument soms gebruik is dat aangesien die boodskap van die evangelie lewenswyd is, die kerklike prediking daarvan impliseer dat die kerklidmate in hierdie hoedanigheid in die samelewing moet optree. Hierdie siening “conveys the implicit assumption that whatever the gospel requires should be done the clergy. This view of the church ... has led ... to an increasingly political clergy” (Marshall, 1984:143-144).

Indien die verlossing (wedergeboorte) nie bloot ’n sektor of terrein van my lewe betref nie, maar inderdaad vanuit die hart (die wortel) alle vertakings van my lewe omvat, kan hierdie primêre wortelbegrepenheid van die verlostes (wedergeborenes, uitgeroepenes) in Christus as die nuwe volk van God (die herbore mensheid in Christus) ook nie saam met Rome vereenselwig word met één van die vele skeppingsgegewe lewensverbintenisse van die mens, naamlik die kerkinstituut nie. Ek tree nie in die huwelik, gesin, staat of universiteit op as “kerkinstituut-herbore lidmaat” nie, maar deurgaans as Christus-herbore eggenoot, vader of dosent. Ook in die kerkinstituut kan ek slegs optree as Christus-herbore lidmaat.

Wanneer die Nuwe Testament met beeldrykheid verwys na die gesamentlike verbondenheid van die verlostes in Christus – byvoorbeeld as bruid van Christus, die uitgeroepenes (*ekklesia*) of as die liggaam van Christus – moet ons telkens uit die konteks vasstel of dit gebruik word bloot ter aanduiding van ’n bepaalde (sy dit relatief ongedifferensieerde) vertakking van die lewe van die wedergeborenes (byvoorbeeld wanneer hulle godsdienstig verkeer het), en wanneer dit in ’n Radikale (tot die wortel-deurdringende), Sentrale (rakende die middelpunt van die mens se lewe rakende) en ’n Totale (allesomvattende) betekenis gebruik word en wel ter aanduiding van die herborenhed tot koninkrykdiens op elke terrein van die lewe van die nuwe mensheid (as ’n koninklike priesterdom, ’n uitverkore geslag, ’n heilige volk – vgl. 1 Pet. 2:5, 9). Hierdie totale wortelbetekenis is byvoorbeeld te vind in Efesiërs 1:22 en Kolossense 1:18, asook Matteus 16:18. Dieselfde geld byvoorbeeld van die openingsuitsprake van Paulus se sendbriewe waar telkens in ’n radi-

4 Let daarop dat die herborenhed in Christus, hoewel dit die hart van die individuele mens opeis, nie ’n bloot-individuele aangeleentheid is nie. Deurgaans beklemtoon die Bybel dat hulle wat in Christus herbore is gesamentlik aan die herbore mensheid behoort – die nuwe uitverkore volk van God, die lote van die Ware Wynstok.

kale, sentrale en totale (d.i. RST-) sin van die volk van God (die uitverkorenes) gesprek word. Vergelyk ook 1 Petrus 1:1 e.v. waar in die eerste vier verse drie RST-aanduidings aangetref word (met name: vreemdelingskap, uitverkorenheid en wedergeboorte). Ongelukkig vind ons in die nuutste Afrikaanse Bybelvertaling telkens dat die woord *ekklesia* in dergelike sentrale kontekste ongekwalfiseerd met die woord *kerk* vertaal word. In sulke kontekste sou dit verwarring kon vermy het indien dit meer letterlik vertaal word, byvoorbeeld met die woord *uitgeroepenes*. Daarmee sal die gevaar vermy word dat die leser ten onregte die sentrale verbondenheid aan Christus identifiseer met die kerk as instituut (as één lewensverbintenis naas en in onderskeiding van ander wat almal gesamentlik in die nuwe mensheid verwortel is).

'n Aanhaling van Paul Schrotenboer, voormalige sekretaris van die Gereformeerde Ekumeniese Sinode, is hier toepaslik. Dit handel oor die onderskeiding tussen kerkinstituut en die nuwe volk van God en dit belig tegelyk die relatief-ongedifferensieerde aard van die Nuwe-Testamentiese samelewing:

We must distinguish between the people of God, the body of Christ, the new Nation, the holy people, the pillar and ground of the truth and the institutional church today. This is a necessary distinction. However, the New Testament did not make this distinction for there was yet no such thing as an 'institutional' church, as distinct from God's people's activity in labour, commerce, education, and the state. To an extent they were busy communally as Christians in all their ways of living (more consistently than Christian people are today). But these differences were not yet institutionalized. These 'areas' did not yet exist as distinct societal zones. The lines between church and school were not yet visible. Church and home was also much more closely related, judging from the fact that the people of God were sometimes identified as the church that met in a certain man's house. The people of God was then at a very early stage. Right from the start they were organized, but they did not have a distinct organization for worship, for their cultic activity. (Schrotenboer, 1971:110.)

Wanneer ons byvoorbeeld verneem van ons eenheid in Christus, dui dit daarop dat herborenheid geen enkelvoudige relasie betref nie. Die Nuwe Testament lê steeds klem op die gemeenskaplike verbondenheid van die herborenes in Christus – vandaar die gemelde uitdrukkings soos *ekklesia*, liggaam van Christus, en so meer. Telkens wanneer hierdie en soortgelyke aanduidings in die Nuwe Testament gebruik word, dui dit op daardie één allesbeheersende

verbintenis in die lewe van elke Christen wat alleenlik bestempel kan word as Radikaal, Sentraal en Totaal (RST).

Elke ander verbintenis waaraan die mens kan deelhê, is, alhoewel verwortel in hierdie sentrale RST-verbintenis, steeds gedifferensieerd ('n vertakking van die wortel) (D), periferaal (staande op die rand en nie in die sentrum van die lewe nie) (P) en gedeeltelik (parsieel) (G). Teenoor die een primêre RST-verbintenis van menswees (Christenwees of nie-Christenwees) staan derhalwe 'n veelheid DPG-verbintenisse (Christen eggenootwees, geloofsgenootwees, studentwees, en so meer – kontra nie-Christen eggenootwees, geloofsgenootwees, studentwees, en so meer). Slegs indien die kerkinstituut (soos Rome leer) my lewe radikaal, sentraal en totaal omvat, sou dit kwalifiseer om as die egte RST-verbintenis van my lewe beskou te kan word. Dit is egter allermins die geval, want hoewel ek in ander DPG-verbintenisse (soos vaderskap, staatsburgerskap, volksgenootskap, en so meer) nie ophou om kerklidmaat te wees nie, tree ek nooit in enigeen van die nie-kerklike DPG-verbintenisse in my hoedanigheid as kerklidmaat op nie – selfs die predikant moet deurlopend in ander hoedanighede optree, byvoorbeeld as eggenoot, ouer, staatsburger, Afrikaner, koper, kunswaardeerder in die teater, taalgebruiker in die sosiale verkeer, en so meer. Omgekeerd geld natuurlik dieselfde perspektief: hoewel ek nie ophou om Afrikaner, dosent of eggenoot te wees wanneer ek polities of kerklik-godsdienstig besig is nie, tree ek nogtans nooit op staatkundige of kerklike terrein as (d.w.s. in my hoedanigheid as) Afrikaner, dosent of eggenoot op nie – slegs as burger van die staat.

Die geneigdheid wat in ons teologiese tradisie bestaan om die Bybelse koninkryksewagelie instituut-sentries te misdui, kontinueer nie alleen 'n wesentlike Roomse element nie (met die twee-terreineleer wat daaruit voortvloei), maar bly ook in gebreke om erkenning te verleen aan enige kollektiewe (gesamentlike) RST-aanduiding in die Bybel (soos wat byvoorbeeld vermeld is in Ef. 1:22 en Kol. 1:18).

Hoewel professor J.A. Heyns tereg handhaaf dat die wedergeboorte tot burgerskap van Gods koninkryk primêr is, identifiseer hy ten onregte alle kollektiewe RST-aanduidings met die kerkinstituut. Gelukkig doen hy dit op inkonsekwente wyse (vgl. Strauss, 1980:256-259). Hierdie foutiewe identifikasie het hom in Junie 1987 tydens 'n televisiedebat een Sondagaand met dr. Willie Lubbe in 'n ernstige verleentheid laat beland. Hy het naamlik sy besorgdheid uitgespreek oor die ontstaan van die Afrikaanse Protestantse Kerk wat hulle afgeskei het van die liggaam van Christus. Dr. Lubbe het onmiddellik gereageer deur Heyns daarop te wys dat hulle nie die liggaam van

Christus verlaat het nie, maar slegs afskeid geneem het van die NG Kerk!

Sedert die reformasie worstel protestantse kerkgenootskappe met die vraag hoe ontkom kan word aan die tradisioneel-Roomse vereenselwiging van die kerkinstituut met die liggaam van Christus – maar val tog telkens terug in presies dieselfde slagat.

Teen die voorafgaande agtergrond is dit nou moontlik om twee vrae te formuleer wat die onhoudbaarheid van elke instituut-sentrisme en elke twee-terreineleer aan die lig sal bring – en wat ons tegelyk in staat sal stel om die trefkrag van die Christelike lewens- en wêreldbeskouing tot sy reg te laat kom.

Aan die wortel van die nalewend Roomse twee-terreineleer word normaalweg die vereenselwiging van ons (kollektiewe) herborenheid (in Christus, as lote van die Ware Wynstok) met die kerk as lewensvorm (as instituut), aangetref. Die volgende twee vrae sal help om ons te laat verstaan dat die Bybel geensins ondersteuning bied vir 'n twee-terreineleer nie. Is die sonde 'n terrein van die skepping? en Hoe moet ons die grense van die “kerk” omskryf? Met betrekking tot vraag een is die Bybelse perspektief duidelik: geen enkele terrein van die skepping is as sodanig sondig geskape nie – hoeseer die sonde-afval van God op elke skeppingsterrein gestalte aanneem. As 'n bepaalde terrein as sodanig sondig sou wees, moet ons uiteraard bereid wees om hierdie “sondige terrein” aan te dui. Is dit die terrein van ekonomies besigwees – soos Rome nog gedink het? Of is dit die terrein van wetenskaplik besigwees soos die revolutionêr-utopiese denkers van die twintigste eeu dink (denkers soos Herbert Marcuse, Claus Koch en Robert Jungk)?

'n Bevestigende antwoord op hierdie vrae sou beteken dat verlossing impliseer dat Christene bevry is van die betrokke *sondige terrein* en vrygemaak is om “weg te beweeg” van hierdie sondige terrein en “heen te beweeg” na die “terrein van die verlossing”. Laasgenoemde word dikwels vereenselwig met die kerkinstituut of met moraliteit. Wanneer die kerklike praktyk so al te gemaklik verwys na die “sondig wêreld daarbuite” verraai dit onmiskenbaar 'n on-Bybelse tweedeling.

12. Nogeens: struktuur en rigting

Die Bybelse teenstelling tussen kwaad en goed (vgl. weereens Job 28:28) beliggaam die perspektief dat die goed-kwaad teenstelling 'n rigting-teenstelling binne die goedgeskape orde van God se skep-

ping is. Indien die sonde egter op elke terrein van die skepping gestalte aanneem, beteken dit vanself dat die wiekslag van die verlossing eweseer skeppingswyd is. Anders gestel: nóg die sonde, nóg die verlossing is "terreine" van die skepping, want albei verteenwoordig 'n hartsgerigtheid by die mens wat radikaal, sentraal en totaal is (RST) en wat gevolglik 'n skeppingswye betekenis besit. Dit veronderstel dus geen leer van twee-terreine maar wél 'n Bybelse perspektief op één domein, die skepping (die koninkryk van God) waarbinne twee rigtings – afvallig en God-gehoorsaam – voorkom.

In die getuienis van die Gereformeerde Ekumeniese Sinode oor menseregte uit die jaar 1983, lees ons die volgende teregwysing aan dualistiese wêreldbeskouings:

Dualist worldviews always misconstrue the biblical idea of antithesis. The antithesis then gets defined not in terms of a spiritual warfare which is being waged in every sector of life, but along structural lines. It places one set of societal structures off against another – for example, church against state, a mission station against a political party. Christians then end up fighting the wrong battles. (RES, 1983:76.)

'n Antwoord op vraag twee sal duidelik aantoon of ons denke inderdaad in die greep van die sentrale Bybelse grondmotief van skepping, sondeval en verlossing is, dit wil sê of ons erns maak met die onderskeidenheid van struktuur en rigting. In beginsel is daar immers slegs twee antwoorde op die vraag na die grense van die "kerk" moontlik.

Ons kan allereers 'n grensaanduiding gee wat verwys na die aard van die kerk as samelewingsvorm in onderskeiding van ander samelewingsvorme (soos die staat, die bedryf of die universiteit). In hierdie geval word 'n struktuurgrens aangegee. Alternatiewelik kan ons die *kerk* omlyn deur 'n rigtinggrens aan te dui. In hierdie geval word die fundamentele rigtingteenstelling wat sedert die sondeval binne die orde (struktuur) van die skepping bestaan, aangedui – met name die rigtingteenstelling tussen die ryk van God en die ryk van die duisternis. Dit betref met ander woorde die antitese tussen diégene wat deel het aan die uitverkore volk van God en dié wat nie daaraan deel het nie.⁵

5 Hierdie tweede grensaanduiding het te doen met die RST-dimensie van die skepping, terwyl die eerste een die DPG-dimensie op die visier het.

Wanneer die kerk as instituut ('n DPG-verbintenis) met die RST-verbondenheid van die nuwe mensheid in Christus vereenselwig word, blyk dit dat ons denke in die volgende probleme verstrengel word. Dit impliseer onherroeplik dat die betekenis van die verlossing, wat 'n radikale, sentrale en totale rigtingappèl vir alle lewensterreine inhou, verskraal en ingeperk word tot één terrein van die skepping, naamlik die enger kerklik-godsdienslike terrein, die terrein van die kerk as instituut.

Die kritiese vraag is natuurlik watter kerklike denominasie (selfs binne die protestantse tradisie is daar talle verskillende kerkgenootskappe) nou gesien moet word as die eintlike liggaam van Christus? In die kerk as instituut kan daar nog "hipokriete" wees. Kan dit ook die geval wees in die liggaam van Christus? Hoewel die Reformasie Rome se vereenselwiging van die liggaam van Christus met die (Roomse) kerk as instituut afgewys het, leef iets van hierdie Roomse erfenis tóg nog wanneer ons meen dat die liggaam van Christus slégs in die kerk as instituut tot uitdrukking kan kom, sonder enige besef van die feit dat Christenwees (Christus-herbore menswees) in elke faset van die lewe gestalte behoort te kry – gehoorsaam aan die RST-eis van die koninkryk: die liefdesdiens aan God en die naaste met die héle hart in al sy lewensuitings.

Die alternatief is dat ons denke in die greep van 'n onbybelse tweedeling kom waarin die verlossing geïdentifiseer word met 'n bepaalde terrein van die skepping, te wete die terrein van kerk en godsdiens. Dit lei dus daartoe dat die rigtinggrens tussen goed en kwaad gesien word as 'n struktuurgrens, waaruit dit ewe vanselfsprekend volg dat teenoor die terrein van die verlossing die terrein van die sonde staan, sodat verlossing nie op 'n radikale hartsverandering dui nie, maar op die vermyding van een skeppingssterrein deur na 'n ander skeppingssterrein te beweeg.

13. Kerk en wêreld

Wanneer 'n twee-terreineleer verdedig word, bestaan daar verskillende opsies:

- 'n Totale tweedeling kan gepredik word – dan ontmoet ons asketisme en 'n kloostermentaliteit; 'n afsluiting in die heiligdom van die vermeende eksklusiefverloste terrein van die skepping, met veragting en vermyding van alles wat daarteenoor staan as sondige wêreld.

- 'n Milder siening kan verdedig word – een waarin die “kerk” nie só “vreemd” aan die wêreld geag word nie, maar juis die roeping besit om as voorbeeld van versoening (die ruimte van God se bemoeienis met die skepping) sy Lig te laat deurstraal oor die verskillende terreine van die sondige wêreld (soms gerugsteun deur Kuyper se siening van die kerk as organisme).
- Laastens kan hierdie (kwasi-platoniese voorbeeldgedagte) só radikaal opgevat word dat ons geroepe geag word om die eenheid van versoening wat ons in die kerk beleef sigbaar tot uitdrukking te bring – ook in elke ander sektor van die samelewing (opnuut 'n kwasiverkerklikking van die hele lewe).

Wie derhalwe begin het deur te aanvaar dat daar geen terrein van die skepping is wat as sodanig sondig is nie, het afskeid geneem van die siening dat sonde en verlossing terreine van die skepping is. Dit behels dus niks minder nie as die erkenning van die onderskeidenheid van struktuur en rigting. Juis hierdie basis maak dit dan onmoontlik om die afgrensing van die kerk as lewensvorm (instituut) te vereenselwig met die sentrale rigtinggrens wat tussen die uitverkore volk van God en die afvallige mensheid bestaan.

Wie die kerk in sentrale sin omlin deur die aangee van 'n rigtinggrens, appelleer op die skeppingswye en lewensomvattende betekenis van die verlossing in Christus wat nooit vereenselwig kan word met één sektor van die skepping (soos die kerk as lewensvorm/instituut) nie. Wie andersyds die kerk omlin deur die aangee van 'n struktuurgrens, dui alleenlik op 'n bepaalde terrein van die skepping wat nooit as sodanig die betekenis van die verlossing kan uitput (sonder om ons denke in 'n natuur-genade-dualisme te laat vasloop) nie.

Aan die begin van die twintigste eeu was sommige Duitse filosowe van mening dat Filosofie eintlik 'n teorie van lewens- en wêreld-beskouings moet wees.

Aan die begin van hierdie artikel is opgemerk dat die ideaal van Christelike wetenskap nie deur die wetenskap self na vore gebring is nie, aangesien dit 'n vrug van die Christelike lewens- en wêreld-beskouing is. Sonder om nader op die volle implikasies hiervan in te gaan (vgl. Strauss, 2009a), word ten slotte kortliks gewys op die wyse waarop die miskenning van die onderskeidenheid van struktuur en rigting binne die wetenskap beslag gekry het.

Wolters wys daarop dat die ontwikkeling van die Westerse wysbegeerte deurlopend 'n slagoffer was van dit wat hy bestempel as 'n

“metafisiese soteriologie”, d.w.s. 'n *wysgerige saligheidsleer*. Benevens die taak om te analiseer en om toepaslike onderskeidings omtrent die verskeidenheid in die skepping te maak, het die gangbare filosofie telkens daartoe oorgegaan om filosofiese denke te sien as 'n weg tot saligheid, tot 'n deugsame lewe (Plato); as 'n lewenswyse wat tot die goeie lei (Plotinus); om tot rasionele selfvervolmaking te kom (Descartes); om deur middel van wysgerige denkaktiwiteite die werklikheid te verander (in 'n hemel op aarde, die werkersparadys – Marx), en so meer. Die rol wat talle dergelike wysgerige stromings vervul, is immers daarop gerig om die bron van die kwaad êrens (d.w.s. op een of ander terrein) in die werklikheid te lokaliseer en om die mens dan heen te lei na 'n domein van veiligheid, integriteit en selfs verlossing.

Hierteenoor lokaliseer die Bybel geensins die sonde in 'n terrein nie – maar wel in die afvallige rigting van die menslike hart. Verlossing is eweseer 'n rigtingaangeleentheid – soek die koninkryk van God – op elke terrein. Vanuit hierdie lewensbeskoulike diepteperspektief is die opvallende gegewe dat ons sowel in die Filosofie as in die vakwetenskappe telkens gekonfronteer word met wat ons 'n surrogaat-verlossingsappèl kan noem. Die bevrydingsweg wat voorgelê word, roep ons op om van één terrein van die skepping te beweeg na 'n ander een, byvoorbeeld na die “ryk van die vryheid/deugsamheid/selfvervolmaking/goedheid/otonomie”. Dit beteken dat die rigtingteenstelling tussen goed en kwaad deurgaans in strukturele terme verstaan word, dit wil sê met bepaalde teëgestelde terreine vereenselwig word. Vir die Griekse wysbegeerte is die kwaad byvoorbeeld in die stoflike (die materie) gesetel; vir die eksistensiefilosof van die twintigste eeu in die samelewingstrukture wat die individuele vryheid van die mens bedreig; vir die neo-Marxis en die sosiologiese konflikteorieë (vgl. Hegel *et al.*) in die gesagstruktuur van lewensvorme; vir ander denkers in die vermeende noodwendigheid van 'n natuurwetmatige oorsaak-gevolgrelasie (kousaliteit) en vir nóg ander in die skyn van vryheid waaroor die mens vermeend sou beskik. Hierdie afvallige styl van wetenskapsbeoefening – in die wysbegeerte en in die vakwetenskappe, skilder volgens Wolters steeds die weg tot die goeie, tot die sin van die lewe en tot vryheid – kortom die weg tot saligheid – as die ontvlugting vanuit één terrein van die skepping en wel deur te beweeg na 'n ander terrein van die skepping: byvoorbeeld deur te wil beweeg na rasionaliteit, na vorming, na die kollektiewe geheel (van die volk, die staat of die kerk), na vryheid, en so meer.

Met innerlike noodwendigheid berus elkeen van hierdie heilsweë op 'n onderwaardering van 'n goed-geskepe deel van die skepping; op 'n depresiëring van iets in die skepping ('n grondtrek reeds van die antieke dwaling van die gnostisisme), terwyl tegelyk gekom word tot die vergoddeliking (verabsoluttering) van iets anders in die skepping – die vertrekpunt van alle afgodediens wat aan 'n skepsel die eer wil toebring wat slegs aan die Skepper kan toekom.

Wolters (1981:10-11) konkludeer tereg:

It is in this feature of traditional philosophy, which I have called 'metaphysical soteriology' (and which has been blunted, but not completely eradicated, in most Christian philosophies) that its religious nature comes most clearly to the fore. In my view, it ought to be a mark of a philosophy which seeks to be as radical as the Bible that it renounces this whole enterprise, and simply accepts, as a point of departure, that every creature of God is good, and that sin and salvation are matters of opposing religious directions, not of good and evil sectors of the created order. All aspects of created life and reality are in principle equally good, and all are in principle equally subject to perversion and renewal.⁶

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Kernbegrippe:

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Humanisme

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Roomskatolisisisme

skepping, eenheid en goedheid van
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two realm doctrine



Religion in education: is there yet another solution?

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Abstract

Religion in education: is there yet another solution?

As colleague and co-worker of Professor Bennie van der Walt, the author has been in a position for several decades now to apply some of Bennie van der Walt's philosophical and theological insights in the field of education. Professor Van der Walt's recent discussion and critique of secularism and of religious tolerance enables the author to analyse the educational situation in South Africa and elsewhere with particular emphasis on policies about religion in/and education. These investigations lead him to conclude that most education systems seem to resort to secular public-private and worldly-sacral dualistic policies for addressing the problem of potential religious conflict in schools. After considering the Dutch policy of (increasing) pillarisation and the South African policy of banning confessional aspects of religious education to the private spheres of citizens' lives, he proposes a solution based on the concept of institutional religious and life-conceptual identity. This approach can also lead to religious tolerance among learners in schools (as mooted by Bennie van der Walt and others) while circumventing the pitfalls of secularism.

Opsomming

Godsdiens in die onderwys: Is daar nie tog 'n ander oplossing nie?

As kollega en medewerker van professor Bennie van der Walt was dit vir die outeur verskeie dekades lank moontlik om sommige van Bennie van der Walt se filosofiese en teologiese

insigte op die terrein van die onderwys toe te pas. Professor van der Walt se onlangse bespreking en ontleding van sekularisme en godsdienstige verdraagsaamheid stel die outeur in staat om die onderwyssituasie in Suid-Afrika en elders te ontleed, met besondere nadruk op beleid rakende godsdienste in die onderwys/die skole. Hierdie ondersoek lei hom tot die gevolgtrekking dat die meeste onderwysstelsels terugval op sekularistiese openbaar-privaat en wêreldse-heilige (sakrale) dualistiese beleide om die probleem van potensiële religieuse konflik in skole te voorkom. Na 'n oorweging van die Nederlandse beleid van (toenemende) versuiling en van die Suid-Afrikaanse beleid om die kofessionele aspekte van godsdienste-onderwys na die private sfere van mense se lewens te verban, doen hy aan die hand dat 'n nuwe beleid geskep moet word wat op die idee van institusionele godsdienstige en lewens-beskoulike identiteit gebaseer is. Hierdie oplossing kan ook tot godsdienstige verdraagsaamheid onder leerders in skole lei (soos deur Bennie van der Walt en andere in die vooruitsig gestel), terwyl dit die voetangels van die sekularisme ontduik.

1. Introduction

Since my appointment as a lecturer in Education at the former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education in 1975, I have enjoyed the privilege of working closely with Professor Bennie van der Walt. At that time, he was the Director of the Institute for Reformational Studies (IRS). Soon after my move to a lectureship in Philosophy of Education in 1976, I was drawn into the activities of the IRS, and remained involved until I took leave of my office as Dean of the Faculty of Education at the end of 2000. Together with Van der Walt and the other members of the Board of the IRS (and all of its successors) I experienced all the successes, trials and tribulations of that Institute. As a Board member I was aware of the valuable work done by Van der Walt and his staff in the interest of the advancement of Christian scholarship in general, and particularly in Africa. I kept abreast of his work also after my move to Port Elizabeth in 2001 (as a staff member of the "new" North-West University). Bennie has always been a prolific writer, and has kept up that reputation even after his retirement. In recent years, he has been publishing a succession of scholarly articles, and also the occasional book.

I have always found Bennie's theological-philosophical publications useful for my work in education. Since his insights have always been readily transposable to other scholarly fields, many of them served as fundamental ("principlal") pointers for education (both in the

sense of schooling/teaching-learning and “up-bringing”). During my own career, I have made extensive (implicit as well as explicit) use of his philosophical views (along with those of other reformational thinkers).

For the purposes of this article, I found his series of three articles in recent volumes of the *Journal for Christian scholarship* on secularism and his ideas on religious tolerance of great import. I was glad to find that he had included these articles on secularism in his book *Transforming power: challenging contemporary secular society* (Van der Walt, B.J. 2007:221-296). His depiction and critique of secularism are useful for coming to grips with the situation in post-1994 South Africa. In his discussion he takes the views of De Krijff, Dekker and Tennekes (1992) and others about secularism somewhat further. His critique of secularism is one of the most exhaustive and penetrative that I am aware of. But let me first outline the problem that this article deals with.

2. The problem

In pre-1994 South Africa, approximately 85% of the population regarded itself as adhering to the Christian faith, living according to a Christian life- and worldview, and subject to church hegemony. This religious majority tacitly condoned the apartheid government's Christian approach, and non-Christian minorities were either tolerated, or their voices disregarded (cf. Behr, 1984:27-28; Schutte, 1984:36-37; Wnuk-Lipinski & Fuchs, 2006:41-42).

As far as education was concerned, pre-1994 South Africa could not be regarded as a secular society, in other words a society in which life is dualistically divided into public and private domains – with religion confined only to the private realm (Van der Walt, B.J., 2007:265). The National Education Policy Act (Act 39 of 1967) stipulated that school education for whites would be Christian in warp and woof. Similar Acts for black, coloured and Indian education were in force up to 1996 (Behr, 1984:163 ff.). The National Party apartheid government (1948-1994) enjoyed sufficient support within the white community (at least for the first three to four decades of its time in power) for persisting with Act 39 of 1967, although the implementation of the Act had to be adapted frequently to meet the demands of the swiftly changing political situation, especially from 1976 onwards.

With the advent of democratic government in South Africa in 1994, everything changed. A major change as far as education was con-

cerned, was the removal of enforced Christian education in public (state) schools. If one understands the term *secular* in terms of Sinclair's (1999:1342) definition, namely as relating to worldly as opposed to sacred things, not concerned with or related to religion, not within the control of the church, (with regard to education, etc.) having no particular religious affinity, then it is possible to say that the post-1994 statutory changes constituted a step in the direction of secularism. The umbilical cord between public education and Christianity in general, and the Christian churches in particular, was cut in the process of the post-1996 overhaul of education in South Africa.

Only one aspect of school education remained unresolved at that time, namely religious/religion education in schools. After long deliberation and consultation, a *Policy on Religion* was promulgated only in 2003. In the Preamble to the *Policy*, the then Minister of Education (Kader Asmal) averred that South Africa was not a secular state, because Government accepted that religion had a role to play in the (public) schools. In view of this, Government opted for a co-operative model between state (public education) and religion/religious institutions. However, analysis of the *Policy* reveals that only religious observances and Religion Studies (a scientific/academic school subject) would enjoy a place in public schools, but not *confessional religious education*. The latter was regarded as pertaining to the parental home and to the respective religious denominations – not the public or state school. The fact that particularly the *confessional* aspects of religious education were relegated to the private realm can be regarded as a step towards secularism.

Sinclair (referred to above) and the Minister of Education, Asmal, seem to hold a different view of secularism than, for instance, Bennie van der Walt and Stuart Fowler. For Asmal, the fact that Government sees a place for an academic subject like *Religious Studies* and for *religious observances* in schools serves as proof that the official approach is not secularist. In his opinion, the fact that *confessional religious education* is relegated to the private sphere of parental homes and churches (mosques, temples, synagogues) does not detract from this truth. Fowler does not agree with this, and Van der Walt goes so far as to regard secularism as a new religion bent on ousting the Christian religion from the public sphere, among others the public schools. According to Fowler (2001:132)

[t]he definite feature of secularism is not the *denial* of God or of the sacred but the *separation* of the secular and the sacred, of everyday knowledge and religious faith. Secularism does not

banish all belief in God. It recognizes the validity of religious faith as a legitimate option for the individual but assigns this faith to a spiritual sphere of human experience separate from the secular sphere of everyday affairs. It makes belief and disbelief in God equally irrelevant to the practice of everyday life – in agriculture and farming, in politics, in commerce and industry, in sports and recreation and in academic disciplines other than theology. In these areas, autonomous human authority reigns supreme.

Van der Walt (B.J., 2007:233) sees secularism as a religion in its own right, one that aims at replacing Christianity in all walks of life.

... faith (in the broader sense of all-encompassing religion) is not limited to the church and cannot be. Whether secularism is willing to recognise it or not, our religious orientation determines our total life, because God created us as religious beings ... secularism itself would like to be much more than merely restricting religion to private life. It pursues the ideal (at least in the public field) of being the dominant faith.

These two definitions of secularism differ from that of the Minister. It is, however, possible that the Minister was merely sugaring the secularist pill for the adherents of mainstream religions in South Africa, including the Christians. Whatever the case, Chopra (2009:189) draws a clear line between the position of the Minister on the one hand, and that of Fowler and Van der Walt on the other:

On the one hand, we have the secular world and the rule of law.
On the other hand, we have the Christian world and the rule of God.

This brings us to the crux of the problem. With respect to religion in education, on which side of the line should Christian educators take a stand? How should confessional religion education be approached in a democracy? Should it, in secularist phraseology, be regarded as a "private matter", i.e. an aspect of education that does not belong in the public sphere such as a public school, but rather to the "private sphere" of the parental home and the particular religious denomination? Should it be brought into the public sphere by making use of a mechanism like pillarisation, such as we find in the Nether-

lands? Or is there yet another way of resolving the problem of religion in education?¹

This is not a fictitious or academic problem. Certain scholars (educationists)² have positioned themselves in favour of the rule of law, and resultantly insisted that the Minister of Education was correct in banning confessional religion to the private sphere of parental home and church (cf. Roux, 2003; 2006a; 2006b; Ferguson & Roux, 2004; Roux & Du Preez, 2005). They insist that the *Policy* (2003) is not only correct, but should be conscientiously applied for promoting secular values such as democracy, religious tolerance and diversity literacy. Other Christian educationists have positioned themselves on the side of the rule of God, convinced that his rule cannot be restricted to only the private spheres of people's lives but should be recognised and confessed also in the public sphere, including the public or state schools (cf. Fowler, 1991:79-80; Abdool *et al.*, 2007; De Klerk-Luttig & Van der Walt, 2008; Valenkamp, 2008; Van der Walt *et al.*, 2008; Wolhuter *et al.*, 2009).

In the rest of this article, I shall approach this problem from several perspectives. After looking at how the problem has been approached in some other countries, and in South Africa since 2003, with reference to the respective philosophies behind the different stances, I explore the possibilities of finding another solution to the conundrum of religion in/and education (schooling).

3. Two European solutions

Since 1917, the Dutch system has been making provision for institutions associated or affiliated with the various religious denominations to openly and freely function as *if they were* public institutions. A long struggle during the eighteenth century for the so-called religious and life-conceptual freedom of education and

1 A debate about whether confessional religious instruction should be included in the formal curricula of schools or not has been raging in South Africa since the promulgation of the *Policy* in 2003. The debate has typically taken two forms. On the one hand, educational law experts have been debating whether the stipulations of the *Policy* could be reconciled with stipulations in the Constitution as well as the South African School Act, both of 1996. On the other hand, philosophers of education and theologians have been debating the advantages and the disadvantages of the inclusion of confessional religious instruction in public schools. Kruger (2009) gives an excellent overview of the latter debate in the popular press.

2 Among them self-declared Christians or those with a Christian background.

schooling led to the promulgation of Section 194 on education in the Constitution of 1848. This Section (Section 192 in the 1917 Constitution, now Section 23 in the 1983 Constitution) is still in force today. According to Sub-section 23.1, the state is responsible for the provision of education to all; education is a basic social right. Sub-section 23.2 stipulates education/schooling to be “free”; in other words, parents and school communities possess the freedom and right to choose for themselves education (schooling) that is in agreement with their own religious and social orientation. The state retains supervision of such “particular” or “private” schools, the teachers there must be competent and show proper conduct. Section 23.3 stipulates much the same for public schools. Even these schools are expected to “respect the religious or life-conceptual convictions of everyone involved”. Sub-section 23.7 stipulates that particular or private education/schooling that complies with the stipulations of the Act “will be funded by the public treasury based on the same norms as for public schools”. In other words, particular or private institutions and public or state institutions are being equitably funded by the state (Förrer & Van Hardeveld, 1992:23). According to the Constitution, parents, communities and their schools enjoy three forms of freedom: freedom of religious and life-conceptual direction, freedom of institution (such as a school, college or university) and freedom of setting up and managing an institution (learning method, appointment of staff, management, the role of parents and other stakeholders, religious education, finances and so on) (Förrer & Van Hardeveld, 1992:26).

A group of like-minded institutions, in other words institutions that share the same religious or lifeview identity, forms a particular “identity pillar” and can consist of schools, higher education institutions, educational and management services, radio stations, newspapers, churches and so on. All of these pillars enjoy the same public privileges, subject to exactly the same statutory stipulations³ (Sturm *et al.*, 1998).

Each citizen enjoys the freedom to decide for him-/herself about the religious identity of the school which their child attends. They freely decide for themselves whether they wish to place their child in this or that school, each with its own institutional religious/confessional

3 Despite these measures, Dutch society is not entirely peaceful and strife-free, as can be observed in the newspapers (cf. also Dijkstra *et al.*, 1997; Van Deursen, 2005).

identity, ranging from orthodox reformed-Christian through Catholic and liberal to Orthodox-Muslim, liberal-Muslim, transcendental-meditation, Red Cross and Plato school pillars, to mention only a few⁴ (Miedema & Vroom, 2004:8). The state does not decide on behalf of the citizenry whether some schools should be public and therefore publicly funded, and others private or independent (as in South Africa). The state does not prescribe a school's institutional religious, confessional or life-conceptual identity and the role that religion should play in a particular school and its programmes. Parents can freely decide for themselves what they want in terms of their dual education system (particular and public) and still enjoy equitable state funding (cf. Netherlands, Section 54 et seq. for the funding of public schools, and Section 124 et seq. for the funding of particular or private schools).

Germany uses a hybrid structure. In eight of its federal states, religious education in schools is divided for Catholic, Protestant and for the minority of Muslim learners. The state, the parents as well as their religious denominations have a say in the type of confessional religious education offered in a particular school. In the ninth state, the federal city-state of Hamburg, only one form of religious education is offered, namely inter-denominational, inter-religious, multi-religious or dialogical education. According to Weisse (2003), this approach has been necessitated by the great diversity of religions, faiths, confessions and lifeviews among the two million citizens of the state.

4. The post-2003 South African approach

What has just been described with reference to the Dutch and the eight German sub-systems is foreign to the educational situation in (for instance) the Republic of South Africa, the United States of America, South Korea and the federal state of Hamburg (Germany). Since 1996, when the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was promulgated (Act 108 of 1996), it was hailed as one of the most progressive in the world. The inclusion of a *Manifesto of Human Rights* (Chapter 2 of the Act) was particularly welcomed in view of the apartheid past of the country. As indicated above, a whole surfeit

4 There has of late been a tendency towards further differentiation within pillars, e.g. different kinds of Catholic schools within the Catholic pillar. The "pillars" are in effect becoming smaller and therefore more in number, a circumstance that tends to place much more emphasis on the institutional identity of each individual school. This is a function of the growing diversity in Dutch society.

of legislation followed the promulgation of the Constitution for purposes of reforming the apartheid state into a liberal democracy. In terms of the new Constitution, the Higher Education Act (101 of 1997) as well as the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996), institutions that wished to have a specific religious, confessional or life-conceptual institutional identity, had to become private or "independent". As such, they are not funded as if they were part and parcel of the public sector. The South African *Norms and Standards for School Funding* document (RSA, 1998) therefore distinguishes between "Public Funding of Public Schools" (Section 4) and "Subsidies to Independent Schools" (Section 6). Whereas in the Netherlands the latter are being funded as an integral part of the entire system, in South Africa they may be considered for subsidies, depending on the extent of compliance with certain requirements.

The South African state, in the form of the Government of the day, tends to be prescriptive with respect to every aspect of education. This can possibly be ascribed to the fact that the state authorities, in the form of the national Department of Education, has set itself the task of eliminating all possible causes of strife within the citizenry. One of its measures was the banning in 2003 of all forms of confessional religion to the private sphere (RSA, 2003). As indicated, public schools may focus only on teaching religion as an academic subject and provide opportunities for the equal, free and equitable practising of religious observations.⁵

What do all of these measures tell us about the degree of secularism in South African education?

- South Africans have only recently (1994) come out of an age of struggle (against apartheid) and some of them have not yet overcome their wariness of other religions;
- South Africans therefore still need the state to remove all possible causes of strife, such as religious affiliation, by following the secularist strategy of relegating them to the private sector;
- this de facto privatisation of religious and ethical values (i.e. to the parental homes, churches, mosques, temples, synagogues and so on) may have contributed to the high levels of crime and violence. In Colditz's (2008:8) opinion, the violence and general

5 School premises and facilities may be made available for this on an equal and equitable basis (RSA, 2003).

indiscipline prevailing in South African schools today could be a reflection of what is occurring in the broader society. In an effort to address this problem, the Ministry of Education recently contemplated the introduction of a formal pledge that learners would have to recite in schools, as well as a *Bill of Learner Responsibilities*;⁶

- the so-called Laïcité philosophy⁷ that underpins the educational systems of (for instance) France and the United States of America is regarded as the best for the as yet immature citizenry of South Africa. In other words, citizens need to live in two separate life-domains in the hope that that will remove all causes of strife from the public domain;
- the fact that most South Africans, by far, belong to religious affiliations is of no significance. They have to be satisfied with public schools and other institutions with no apparent religious affiliation apart from the religion of secular humanism, or alternatively face the burden of a double tax in private/independent schools.⁸

The upshot of this secularist approach is that of the 27 000 schools in South Africa, 24 974 are today supposedly life-conceptually neutral public or state schools, and the rest (only approximately 4%) of them private or independent (Colditz, 2008:2). Most of the latter are associated with some or other religious denomination. Public or state school parents and school communities tend to leave the fate of the schools in the hands of the state and its apparatuses, which in many respects does not possess the skills for the efficient running of schools. Only about 10% of these schools can therefore today be regarded as functional, according to Colditz. The relatively small number of private or independent schools are functional and efficient because of the constant involvement of all the stakeholders.

The banning of all forms of confessional religion and ethics as stipulated in the *Policy on Religion in Education* (RSA, 2003, sections 54 et seq.) has taken place despite the fact that both the

6 To date not much has come of these plans, probably because of accusations that Government was planning to indoctrinate its school-attending citizens by means of these machinations.

7 I.e. the strict divide between the public and private sectors as well as between the "secular" and the "sacral" realms of life.

8 Payment of official tax as well as the private or independent school fees.

Constitution (section 15) and the SA Schools Act (section 7) guarantee freedom of conscience and religion in public schools. The condition, however, is that such religious observances are conducted on an equitable basis, and attendance by learners and staff is free and voluntary.⁹ The banning is also a deviation from a position taken in a White Paper (RSA, 1995), namely that parents had the inalienable right to choose the form of education they deemed best for their children, irrespective of whether it is provided by the state or not. This right to choose also included the religious foundations of such education (RSA, 1995:21, 75).

According to the *Policy on Religion and Education* (RSA, 2003), however, parents and learners do not enjoy the freedom of choosing which schools they will support and attend. They are expected to place their children in schools where they can learn to become religion and diversity literate, and get along with others right from the outset. This necessitates the absence of all forms of confessional religious education in public schools.

5. Is there another solution?

Whereas the Dutch education system is comprised of a (steadily increasing) number of school pillars and the current South African education system is comprised of only two de facto school pillars (public and independent), it can be contended that in a true democracy there should be no such pillars along religious fault lines. Learners of all religions should be able to go to one and the same school. At the same time, secularism should have no place in a true democracy. How can this be achieved?

According to a recent Ipsos-Markinor survey (2008), if South Africa were a village comprising of a hundred inhabitants, 73 of them would be Christians. Of this number, 52 would belong to Protestant or Catholic churches, and the other 21 would belong to the Zion Christian Church/the Church of Shembe or another African Independent Church. Slightly more than two would be Muslims, around two Hindus. The rest of the population would belong to indige-

9 On 31 August 2009, Advocate Paul Colditz, the Chief Executive Officer of the Federation of South African School Governing Bodies, stated on the radio station RSG that school governing bodies still tended to determine their own policies on religion based on the stipulations of the Constitution and the SA Schools Act (RSA, 1996a; 1996b), since they regarded the Policy on Religion in Education as in contravention with these two acts.

nous/animist/other religions (Tellingier, 2006:257). South Africa is therefore a truly multi-religious society. This religious diversity will also be reflected in the educator and learner populations of the schools, but the location of a particular school will determine its unique religious demographics. How does one accommodate this religious diversity in a school without either banning confessional religious education from the school or running the risk of religious conflict within schools? How can one accommodate the religious diversity in schools without on the one hand resorting to the Dutch system of pillarisation which results in keeping learners belonging to different religious affiliations apart in different pillars, or on the other hand resorting to the secularist dualistic approach currently followed in South Africa (public and independent schools)? Strietman (2005: 19) is correct in saying that a true democracy functions on the basis of unprejudiced respect for the differences among people and their motives, whether secular or religious, and that these differences *cannot be hidden away in the little cubicles of their particular (separate) existences* (emphasis – JLvdW).

The notion of *institutional identity* seems to be key to the solution. Institutional identity, in brief, refers to the religious, confessional and life-conceptual orientation of a school and the manner in which it informs, shapes and influences the pedagogical culture of the school (Bakker, 2004:101; De Wolff, 2000; De Wolff *et al.*, 2002; 2003; Van der Walt, J.L., 2007). All definitions of institutional identity seem to have two elements in common: identity is that which makes an institution such as a school unique in itself, and that which makes it different from all other similar institutions (Van der Walt, J.L., 2007:182).

Parents (of especially small children) should enjoy the freedom to choose for themselves a school whose institutional identity would be most amenable to their personal faith and religious or spiritual convictions. After having established a firm faith base¹⁰ in and for the learners, the school should enable them to reach out to others in the school belonging to different faiths, denominations, religions or spiritual traditions. For this second step to be successful, a person obviously needs to be religion and diversity literate. This interaction with adherents of other religions consists of two phases, as Abdool *et al.*, (2007:554-556) recently showed. The first phase is the in-

10 Referred to below as the "truth/Truth", a prerequisite for tolerance of others and their religious views.

formation exchange phase, during which children are led to become acquainted with the hard facts of all the religions represented in the school itself, and in the broader South African society. The second phase comprises engagement with others at the deepest spiritual level. The purpose of this second phase is to gain comprehension of the other's concept of spiritual meaning, of the other's deepest spiritual convictions. This inter-religious dialogue, interaction and engagement should not only help the participants understand and accept the differences among themselves, but should also have the potential of binding them all together as citizens of the same political unit (such as the South African nation). Of course, as Matsaung (2003:81) found, the success of this process depends on the availability of well-resourced classrooms and well-trained educators who will be able to guide the learners through all the pitfalls of potential religious conflict.

According to Abdool *et al.* (2007:555), a learner should be sufficiently mature to be able to meaningfully engage with (the adherents of) other religions. It is not pedagogically justifiable to expose a small child to other traditions before he/she has been steeped in the tenets of his/her own religious tradition.¹¹ It would only lead to confusion in their young minds, and will be contra-productive. A child's proper understanding of his/her own religious tradition will lead to a more favourable understanding of others as well.¹²

The European Ministers of Education (2003: section 11) correctly declared that "managing diversity is not a problem in schools alone, but concerns the whole of society, particularly with regard to policies implemented in the social, family and migration fields". Especially for small children, the religious environment should be as homogeneous as possible in order for the teaching-learning process to proceed unencumbered by religious and spiritual tensions. To expose a small child to the religion and diversity literacy approach right from the outset as argued by Weisse (2003:207-208) would therefore not be pedagogically justifiable. This explains why, for instance, Roux and Du Preez (2005:279) found that, despite the enforcement of official policy, in some South African schools a "confessional ap-

11 The truth foundation referred to in footnote 10.

12 Besides this, schools are teaching-learning institutions, not in the first place "germ cells of societies (where) children and adolescents can learn from a model to live together" (the words of a German Muslim mother, quoted by Weisse, 2003:191).

proach, especially in the Abrahamic religions, may occur. This approach manifests mainly within Christian denominations". Parents in Norway also successfully challenged the system of a compulsory school subject that teaches Christianity, other religions and secular worldviews on an equitable basis. They also used the argument of the identity confusion that their children would be suffering as a consequence of such a religion and diversity literacy program (Hagestaeter & Sandsmark, 2006:278). As children grow older and become religion, life-conceptually and diversity literate, they can and should be allowed greater freedom for interaction with adherents of other faiths.

The approach just outlined is in line with the *United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights* (UN, 1948), which declares the freedom to manifest one's own religion or belief in school education as a basic right (section 18). *The United Nations' Convention on Civil and Political Rights* (UN, 1966) also stipulates that parents have the liberty "to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions" (sub-section 81.4).

According to Ter Avest (2008:9), this approach does not only recognise the confessional differences among people and groups in schools, and does not only prepare small children for contact with adherents to other religions but also educates more mature learners for religious and diversity literacy, for citizenship education in a changing social environment. Thiessen (quoted in Jansen, 2008:15) agrees with her in saying that such "religious schools" rather than neutral schools can contribute to social cohesion. Religion and life-conceptual literacy is required for learners and adults to explore all the differences among people living together, *each after his or her own religious/confessional/life-conceptual tradition*, in order to be able to appreciate how they are more alike than they might originally have supposed. The phrase in italics refers to pedagogical freedom in terms of institutional (school) identity, also in the context of growing "glocal" diversity.

This brings us to another perspective presented by Van der Walt (B.J., 2007:201-210), namely how to achieve religious tolerance. He concurs with the conclusion drawn above: even when one believes in the uniqueness of one's own faith, one still has to live daily among a variety of other religions. The question is: How? After a discussion of various forms of tolerance, including "truth without tolerance", "tolerance without truth" he arrives at the most appropriate formula: "tolerance based on Truth", exactly what has been proposed above. A Christian educator, whether parent or teacher, can only base

tolerance of other religions and their adherents on Truth with a capital T, in other words, for Christians God's infallible revelation. The Bible, as God's Word-revelation, teaches that both religious conviction in Biblical Truth and tolerance of other religious views are possible. Being convinced of Biblical Truth is the foundation of tolerance. Van der Walt (B.J., 2007:212) quotes the following poignant words from Marshall (1991:8):

(Tolerance) means letting others exist freely while seeking when necessary to oppose them by word. It means dealing with our religious differences by the sword of the spirit, not the sword of the state.

According to Thiessen (Jansen, 2008:15), tolerance can only be expressed in terms of relations. Tolerance therefore presupposes out-reaching: the willingness to develop relationships with people holding different views that have to be tolerated. Tolerance, according to Kotzé and Du Toit (2006), is as important as trust for the building of social capital, and therefore for civil society. The accrual of trust does not mean that a civic community will be entirely conflict-free, for the citizens of a democracy have strong views on public issues, but they will be tolerant of their opponents. Without tolerance, there will be no widespread contestation, an essential ingredient of democracy. Because of the deep divisions among South Africans, tolerance along the lines demarcated by Van der Walt above will not be possible in the short term, which explains why it has to be entrenched in law.

6. Recommendations and conclusion

Given the long history of the dualistic public-private Laïcité philosophy in well-established democracies such as France and the United States of America, it would be futile to hope that the democracy in South Africa would mature in the short term to the levels described in the previous section. Several steps to rectify the situation should, however, be considered. Firstly, all schools should be declared state-funded institutions in order to place them in a position to go ahead with their core work, namely teaching-learning, and to save them from spending time and energy on searching for funds. Secondly, each of them should be expected to define its own institutional (religious/life-conceptual) identity so that parents, teachers and learners can know which of them to associate with. Thirdly, each citizen should enjoy the freedom of association with the school of his/her choice. Fourthly, each school should enjoy the freedom of determining its own policy on religion, especially with respect to the

confessional aspects. Fifthly, each school should take special measures to steep the *young* learners in the precepts of their respective own (home) religions, and finally, each school should take special measures to guide the older and more *mature* learners in engaging with other religions and their adherents. Special attention should be given to the inculcation of tolerance of others and their religious differences. This tolerance should be based on what each of the learners sees as “the” Truth for him/her.¹³ Each school has to fill the values that it adheres to with lifeview content. In the case of a school with a reformational institutional identity, such content will flow from the Truth as embodied in the Bible as the inscripturated Word of God.

The secular public-private/worldly-sacred dualisms inherent in the Laïcité approach has no place in the approach just outlined. Parents, teacher-educators and learners will all live their lives as total and integrated persons in and with respect to their schools; the need for relegating all forms of confessional religion to the private sphere of their lives will have dissipated. And finally, because of enjoying the privilege of living in a (rather more) mature democracy, South Africans need not fear the differences prevalent in the growing diversity of their society because they enjoy opportunities for maturing in religious and diversity literacy as a prerequisite for engaging other religions/faiths and their adherents. In other words, they have learnt to understand, tolerate and get along with others belonging to different faiths and religious convictions. They have also learnt to respect religious and confessional difference in the context of diversity and pluralism, a condition that is on the increase worldwide (Goodstein, 2005; Westerman, 2004:1; Cocks, 2007; Pigott, 2007; Hitchens, 2007). Social cohesion can be promoted by developing tolerant behaviour; it cannot be promoted by pressing all people into the same religious (i.e. secular) frame of mind (Thiessen quoted in Jansen, 2008:15).

13 Tolerance should not be based on a set of values that is largely devoid of life-conceptual content (Swartz, 2006; Zecha, 2007) such as we currently have as guiding lights for education in South Africa: democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism and non-sexism, ubuntu (human dignity), an open society, accountability (responsibility), the rule of law, respect and reconciliation (Ministry of Education RSA, 2001). None of these values has any religious or lifeview content. Justice, for instance, only gains meaning when interpreted from a specific religious or lifeview perspective. Justice in a Biblical context differs from justice in a pragmatic, secular context.

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religie
sekularisme
skoolonderwys



De strijd om de richting van de Westerse cultuur

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Abstract

The struggle around the direction of Western culture

Herbert Marcuse is the most important representative of the cultural revolution of the sixties of the twentieth century. He represents resistance against the scientific-technological ideal of the Enlightenment. His ideal of freedom has, nevertheless, the same roots.

Since the Enlightenment Western culture has been characterised by a struggle between the freedom ideal and the scientific-technological control ideal. To lessen the tension we need a cultural transformation. Therefore we need an enlightenment of the Enlightenment. In the old cultural paradigm, nature is seen as lifeless and, given that framework, is exploited by unbridled manipulation. Today we see how the technological-economic development threatens "life" itself, to the point of destroying it. A responsible cultural development summons a representation of culture that depicts earth as a garden tended by humans. The garden has to be developed in the perspective of a city garden, where righteousness, love and therefore protecting life are the main principles. To follow such guidelines implies a spiritual and philosophical struggle in the direction of a transformation of Western culture.

Samenvatting

De strijd om de richting van de Westerse cultuur

Herbert Marcuse is de belangrijkste vertegenwoordiger van de culturele revolutie van de twintigste eeuw. Hij vertegenwoordigt de weerstand in de Westerse cultuur tegen het wetenschap-

pelijk-technisch ideaal van de Verlichting. Zijn vrijheidsideaal heeft niettemin dezelfde wortels.

Sinds de Verlichting wordt de Westerse cultuur beheerst door de strijd tussen deze twee idealen. Om de strijd te verminderen en de spanning in de cultuur te laten afnemen, is een transformatie van de cultuur noodzakelijk. Daarvoor hebben we een verlichting van de Verlichting nodig. In het oude cultuurparadigma wordt de natuur als levenloos gezien en, gezien dat ethisch kader, uitgebuit door grenzenloze manipulatie. Vandaag zien we hoe de technisch-economische ontwikkeling op grote schaal het "leven" bedreigt en vaak al vernietigt. Een verantwoorde cultuurontwikkeling vertegenwoordigt een cultuurparadigma dat de aarde in ontwikkeling ziet naar een grote tuinstad in het perspectief van gerechtigheid en liefde. In die toekomstige cultuurontwikkeling moeten economie en technologie het leven dienen. In dat perspectief de cultuur ontwikkelen, betekent een geestelijke en filosofische strijd in de richting van een transformatie van de materialistische Westerse cultuur.

1. Culturele revolutie

Er wordt nog steeds veel gesproken over wat er in de zestiger jaren in de Westerse wereld gebeurde. Dat was de tijd dat Bennie van der Walt en ik samen studeerden aan de Vrije Universiteit van Amsterdam. Het was de tijd van wat we een culturele revolutie noemen.

In 1967 gaf ik voor het eerst colleges wijsbegeerte binnen het kader van de Wijsgerige Vorming aan de Vrije Universiteit. In de Centrale Interfaculteit was ik vanaf die tijd ook voorzitter van de commissie die zich met organisatie en inhoud van dat onderwijs binnen alle faculteiten bezighield.

Tot 1968 was het min of meer vanzelfsprekend dat dit onderwijs gestempeld werd door de inbreng van reformatorische filosofen als Dooyeweerd, Vollenhoven, Van Riessen en Zuidema. Die vanzelfsprekendheid werd sinds 1968 steeds meer aangevochten. De oorzaak daarvan was niet in de eerste plaats dat het merendeel van de studenten niet meer van christelijke huize was, al speelde dat wel mee. Ook van buitenaf was er sprake van veel invloed. Wereldwijd was sinds 1968 de studentengeneratie in verzet gekomen tegen de hoofdstroom in de cultuur. Niet voor niets wordt 1968 dan ook wel het jaar van de revolutionaire studenten genoemd. De grote leider van het studentenverzet was de filosoof Herbert Marcuse. Zijn boeken, *Eros and civilization* en *One dimensional man*, werden door vele studenten met instemming gelezen. Ook voegden ze de daad

bij zijn filosofisch woord: de cultuur moest daadwerkelijk revolutionair veranderen.

Studenten van de Vrije Universiteit namen onder invloed van deze beweging geen genoegen meer met de gangbare wijsgerige vorming, die christelijk geïnspireerd was. Voortdurend waren er conflicten over de inhoud en het aantal van de colleges. En voortdurend moesten er aanpassingen plaats vinden. Het gedrag van studenten in die tijd was allesbehalve aangepast. Ze kwamen op klompen naar de colleges en daagden de docenten voortdurend uit en gaven er blijk van alles te willen vernieuwen. Daaruit bleek dat ze hun leermeester Marcuse trouw wilden zijn.

Nú kennen vele studenten Marcuse zelfs niet meer van naam, maar zijn invloed is sinds die tijd in denken, doen en laten van velen in de universiteit en daarbuiten toegenomen. Vele veranderingen en de gevolgen daarvan gaan terug op wat er ruim 40 jaar geleden in de Westerse cultuur plaats vond.

Laten we eens terug kijken. Ik zal proberen duidelijk te maken dat Marcuse in de lijn van de Verlichting zich enerzijds er tegen verzet en anderzijds die Verlichting ook radicaliseert.

2. Herbert Marcuse

Wie was Marcuse? Hij promoveerde in 1932 op de filosoof Hegel bij de filosoof Martin Heidegger. Heidegger wordt wel de belangrijkste filosoof van de twintigste eeuw genoemd. Hij was als existencialisist een kritisch bezinnend denker. Een hoofdlijn in zijn filosofie is zijn visie op de technologie. Door die technologie is de mens van het zijn, van de natuur, en van zijn eigelijke wezen – zijn existentie – vervreemd. Heidegger blijft volledig het antwoord schuldig op de vraag naar een uitweg. Hij lijkt beheerst te worden door het noodlot. Het kwaad van de ongeremde technologie kan door geen mens gekeerd worden. De mens geeft er zich zelfs aan over en wordt er het slachtoffer van en verliest daarmee zijn vrijheid.

Marcuse neemt met deze onderdrukking van de mens geen genoegen. Hij interpreteert de Hegelse dialectiek als een revolutionaire. De mens zelf zal voor een ommekeer, een revolutie moeten zorgen. Hij richt zijn revolutionaire kritiek op economische en politieke machthebbers, een elite die wetenschap en technologie in dienst neemt om zijn macht te versterken. Marcuse's alternatieve toekomstvisie is die van de vrije mens, die zich verzet tegen elke macht en elke vorm van gezag. In die toekomst is de mens niet

langer de ééndimensionale, de alleen maar werkende, arbeidende mens, de mens ook met een vaststaande onderdrukkende sexuele moraal, maar de mens die vrij en gelukkig is. Prestatie moet ruimte maken voor genot. Eros wordt bevrijd en macht maakt plaats voor zeggenschap. Op een revolutionaire manier moet deze visie in praxis worden omgezet. In een permanente omkering van de maatschappij wordt via de democratisering van elke vorm van samenleven de zelfbeschikking van iedereen tot leidraad. Met ander woorden de bestaande cultuurtrend moet worden doorbroken. De authenticiteit van elk mens moet in de praktijk van alle dag een kans krijgen. Op die manier komt er ruimte voor de bevrediging van het menselijk bestaan, voor levensgenieting en het uitleven van levensdriften, die nu maar al te zeer in de verdrukking zijn gekomen. Niet voor niets wordt 1968 dan ook wel verbonden met de seksuele revolutie.

3. Een uitzonderlijke revolutie

De studentenrevolte was een uitzonderlijke revolutie. Deze beweging vond niet in het centrum van het maatschappelijk leven plaats. Het revolutionair subject was niet de arme arbeidersklasse, zoals bij Marx. Neen, de studenten van ouders, die geld hadden, en die vanwege hun studie vooruitzichten hadden op een goede baan, namen geen genoegen met de maatschappij, met de ééndimensionale maatschappij van werken, van economie en technologie; ze wilden meer aandacht voor vernieuwing in zeggenschap – directe democratie! – en voor een nieuwe beleving van de seksualiteit. Die zou niet langer alleen op voortplanting en binnen het huwelijk moeten plaats hebben, maar zich in het botvieren van lusten moeten ontplooiën in alle mogelijke andere richtingen. En in het culturele leven zou in plaats van de beheersing de verbeelding aan de macht moeten komen.

Veel te weinig wordt ingezien hoezeer deze culturele revolutie in verband staat met de technische ontwikkeling. Zonder een technologisch fundament zou de culturele revolutie niet hebben plaatsgevonden. Medische technologie maakte anticonceptie mogelijk, waardoor seksualiteit werd losgemaakt van de voortplanting. Een volgende stap was dat deze losmaking werd verheerlijkt in de vorm van alle mogelijke seksuele belevingen. Niet voor niets kwamen huwelijk en gezin sinds de jaren 1960 en 1970 dan ook ongekend onder druk te staan. Daarnaast zorgde aanvankelijk de TV – later versterkt door de computer en internet – ervoor dat culturen werden opengebroken. Technologie en economie zorgden samen voor een

zielloos materialisme. In Nederland verdween de verzuiling – de inrichting van de maatschappij naar de verschillende levensovertuigingen. Bovendien ontstond er wereldwijd een cultureel relativisme en zelf een religieus relativisme. Niets verdiende meer zich met “waarheid” te verbinden. Dat betekende ondertussen dat een duidelijke cultuuriëntatie verdween. Het geheel gaat meer lijken op een draaikolk waarin mensen worden meegesleurd en ook bedreigd. Voor die bedreiging is de technologie zeker zo verantwoordelijk als voor de beleefde bevrijding. Denk maar aan de wereldomspannende bedreiging die uitgaat van de kernbewapening en van natuurverwoesting en milieuschade en dientengevolge vandaag door klimaatwijzingen en het uitsterven van vele planten en diersoorten. Ondertussen heeft het geestloze materialisme gezorgd voor religieus ontheemde mensen met nog steeds enorme pretenties in wetenschap en technologie, maar ook in de beleving van hun vrijheid en genot.

4. Geestelijke achtergrond

Het lijkt er op dat we met 1968 met een discontinuïteit in de cultuurontwikkeling te maken hebben. Niets is minder waar. In 1968 komt meer aan de dag wat al lange tijd, ondergronds, in de Westerse cultuur doorwerkte. En na 1968 houdt de cultuurevolutie niet op. Die gaat ook vandaag nog ongehinderd door, zij het dat wel steeds meer tegenbewegingen zich laten gelden, zonder overigens de hoofdtrend van de cultuur te keren.

Om op dat proces een goed zicht te krijgen, is inzicht nodig in de culturele spanningen die in de Westerse cultuur alle lange tijd aanwezig zijn, maar die sinds 1968 verhevigd worden ervaren en beleefd, en soms zelfs revolutionair uitgedragen. Daarvoor oog krijgen, vraagt aandacht voor de religieuze uitwerking van de Verlichting in de Westerse cultuur.

5. Wat is dialectiek van de cultuur?

Wat wordt er met de dialectiek van onze cultuur bedoeld? De spanning tussen enerzijds enorme macht in wetenschap, economie en niet te vergeten technologie en anderzijds de menselijke vrijheid die er aan ten grondslag ligt, maar er ook door wordt bedreigd.

Dooyeweerd zag de oorsprong van de Westerse dialectiek in de pretentie van de zichzelf genoegzame mens, van de mens die autonoom is, van de mens zonder God. In het verlengde daarvan wordt de wereld aanvaard als een antropocentrische, gesloten wereld en de geschiedenis als een louter menselijke geschiedenis. Omdat in

onze cultuur de openheid naar de transcendente God is dichtgeslagen, is de mens, in welke variaties dan ook, slechts of uiteindelijk alleen aangewezen op de *diesseitige* werkelijkheid. De Westerse mens tracht de idee van de zelfverheerlijkende autonomie waar te maken in de wetenschap en later te bevestigen in de techniek. De gedachte vat post dat mens en wereld door middel van de moderne techniek tot voltooiing gebracht kunnen worden. Deze ontwikkeling heeft machten opgeroepen die de spanningen in de wereld gigantisch groot maken. Het ideaal van ongekende materiële welvaart mag dan deels vervuld zijn, tevens is duidelijk geworden dat dit ten koste gaat van de menselijke vrijheid, van het leefmilieu, en dat wij ons met de welvaart op een vulkaan bevinden, die op uitbarsten staat. De Westerse cultuur is een cultuur die in zichzelf verdeeld is. De verabsoluteerde vrijheid komt op gespannen voet te staan met de verabsolutering van de wetenschappelijk-technische beheersing, en omgekeerd. Die spanning werkt zich in de geschiedenis uit.

6. Twee verlichtingsidealen

De Verlichting wordt gekenmerkt door twee idealen: het wetenschapsideaal en het vrijheidsideaal. Deze idealen hebben veel positiefs tot stand gebracht. Te denken valt aan de vele materiële ontwikkelingen op gebied van gezondheidszorg, werkgelegenheid, wetenschap en technologie en bevordering materiële welvaart. Ook de deelname in allerlei vormen van onderwijs is mee aan de Verlichting te danken. Toch lopen we met de radicalisering van de Verlichting momenteel vast. Dat komt omdat wetenschap en vrijheid steeds meer losgemaakt zijn van hun oorsprong en zodoende verabsoluteerd zijn. We krijgen te maken met de ontsparingen van het wetenschapsideaal en het vrijheidsideaal. Beide idealen missen een metafysische samenhang en een transcendente oorsprong. Het wetenschapsideaal verbindt zich met technologie en economie en zorgt voor een op economische groei gerichte ontwikkeling, die materieel veel resultaat brengt, maar in haar spoor vele ecologische en sociale problemen veroorzaakt. De ethiek van de huidige cultuur is ten principale – vanwege de keus voor de fundering in de Verlichting (alleen) – gefundeerd in wetenschappelijk-technische beheersing en economische groei enerzijds en anderzijds in een vrijheid die van geen verantwoordelijkheid, van geen orde en gezag wil weten.

Om wat meer zicht te krijgen op de ernst van de spanningen in de huidige cultuur zullen we meer aandacht moeten geven aan de consequenties van beide Verlichtingsidealen. Daarna zullen we aan-

dacht geven aan een oplossingsrichting voor de geschetste problemen.

6.1 Het vrijheidsideaal

De individuele vrijheid, die door de Verlichting geprezen wordt, heeft in haar ongenormeerde vorm veel schade toegebracht aan een zinvol geordende samenleving. Vrijheid wordt in onze cultuur steeds meer een anarchistische vrijheid; vrijheid wordt losgemaakt van gezamenlijke, maatschappelijke vrijheid, van haar zedelijke grond en van haar zedelijke opdracht. Vrijheid wordt steeds meer gezien als vrijheid los van verantwoordelijkheid, en dan wordt ze inhoudsloos en dus leeg en tot een bedreiging. De gevolgen van de zestiger jaren uit de vorige eeuw met het aanhoudende verzet tegen traditie, gezag en waardenbinding hebben onze maatschappij in onbalans gebracht. De waarde van en achting voor de menselijke persoon lijdt daardoor schade. Ongemerkt heeft er een uitverkoop van de eigen cultuur plaats gehad, die zijn weerga niet kent. De heksenketel van het relativisme speelt nog velen parten. Sommigen spreken zelfs van de dictatuur van het relativisme. Vrijheid in de vorm van onverschilligheid en liederlijkheid constateren we overal. Huwelijk en gezin worden niet meer als dragende grond van een gezonde maatschappij aanvaard. Ondertussen zitten velen met deze trend in hun maag.

6.2 Het wetenschappelijk-technisch beheersingsideaal

Aan de Verlichting hebben we ook het wetenschappelijk-technisch beheersingsideaal te danken. Het is zelfs door het vrijheidsideaal opgeroepen. Maar tegelijk wordt de vrijheid er door bedreigd. Onder invloed van de begeerte om alles naar de hand van de mens te zetten en zo aan zich te onderwerpen, penetreert en richt de moderne techniek, die op de wetenschap gebaseerd is, heel de cultuur. De cultuur wordt daarmee een "technische cultuur". De techniek zet op alles een stempel en alles wordt van de techniek afhankelijk. In verbinding met de economie wordt de cultuur ééndimensionaal. Wetenschap en techniek en met haar de rationaliteit kunnen verwoestend worden, wanneer ze van hun wortels worden losgemaakt en het *machenkönnen* tot de enige maatstaf maken. Het eigenlijke probleem, waarvoor wij vandaag staan, is de blindheid van de rede voor de niet-materiële dimensie van de werkelijkheid. Dat heeft ernstige gevolgen.

Terwijl de mens denkt zijn cultuur met een grenzeloze ontwikkeling van techniek en economie veilig te kunnen stellen, is er de enorme

dreiging dat datgene waarop het menselijk bestaan rust, kapot wordt gemaakt. De brutalisering van de huidige technische ontwikkeling bedreigt de duurzaamheid van de natuurlijke omgeving en van de biosfeer.

Vanwege de verabsolutering van het technische denken gaat er veel van de werkelijkheid verloren. Wat niet binnen het technische model past, wordt veronachtzaamd of vergeten. De werkelijkheid wordt als het ware gezien als een technisch geheel, dat wij door de techniek vervolgens kunnen verbeteren. Deze overspannen technische denkwijze vertaalt zich in een technisch wereldbeeld. Ze is een constructie van mensen en werkt als een cultuurparadigma. Het technische wereldbeeld heeft de ontwikkeling van de Westerse cultuur in toenemende mate gestempeld en stempelt ook de huidige globalisering. Het zijn vooral de technisch-economische machten die daarvan de drijfkrachten zijn en tegelijk ademen we allemaal de lucht van deze technische mentaliteit in. Aan deze heerszucht komen we door de hebzucht van het consumentisme allemaal tegemoet. De eerder genoemde ongeremde vrijheid – de andere pool van de Verlichting – wordt door het materialisme eerder versterkt dan geremd.

6.3 Primaat van het wetenschappelijk-technische beheersingsideaal

Dat het wetenschappelijk-technische beheersingsideaal het steeds weer wint van de andere pool van de culturele dialectiek, namelijk het vrijheidsideaal, komt omdat dit ideaal gebruik maakt van de objectieve cultuurmachten, die zich manifesteren in nieuwe wetenschappelijke en technische mogelijkheden, zoals systeemtheorie, informatica, computertechniek en genetische manipulatietechnieken. De economische machten versterken dat proces bovendien. Een cultuuromslag is, hoezeer de kritiek ook toeneemt, bijna onmogelijk. De oorzaak daarvan ligt vooral bij economische machten die geen maat weten te houden, en bij de massa als consument omdat die de bestaande hoofdstroom in de cultuur steeds weer bijvalt, omdat ze gelooft in en hoopt op nog meer zegeningen van wetenschap en techniek.

7. Ernst huidige dialectiek

Het is noodzakelijk te benadrukken dat in dit historisch proces de culturele dialectiek steeds ernstiger vormen aanneemt. De moderne techniek en het gebruik van haar mogelijkheden komen tot ongemene groei en nemen een despotisch karakter aan. Door de wetenschappelijk-technische beheersing van heel de wereld wordt niet

alleen de mens in zijn vrijheid beknot, maar dreigen grondstoffenbronnen te worden uitgeput, de natuur te worden verwoest en het milieu te worden vervuild. Recent is er ook veel aandacht voor klimaatveranderingen. De ongeremde wetenschappelijk-technische dynamiek tergt natuurlijke, ecologische, energetische en sociale grenzen, waardoor botsingen ontstaan, die bij gebrek aan voldoende concrete uitwegen voor de spanningen ook razendsnel in conflicten kunnen uitmonden (Van der Wal & Goudzwaard, 2006:223). In ontwikkelingslanden heersen door de invloed van de globaliserende technische en economische ontwikkeling meer dan eens gevoelens van politieke onmacht, gecombineerd met een aanhoudende economische tenachterstelling. Dat wordt meestal al snel als een rechtstreekse vernedering ervaren. Met andere woorden, de wetenschappelijk-technische cultuur van het Westen zet via de globalisering andere culturen onder druk. De dialectiek manifesteert zich gemakkelijk in een conflict tussen culturen, volkeren en naties. Er kunnen zich culturele rampen ontladen en er kunnen zich politieke catastrofes voordoen.

8. Uitweg

Over het algemeen valt men in onze cultuur het motief van de Verlichting nog steeds bij. Diepgaande kritiek op de "technologische cultuur" kan echter niet om de Verlichting heen. Kritiek op het te zeer wetenschappelijk-technisch omgaan met natuur en maatschappij betekent dat men niet kan volstaan met absolute vrijheid en absolute beheersingsmacht.

We ontnemen onszelf in de geest van de Verlichting maatstaven om tot goede afwegingen en oordelen te komen als we de geestelijke bronnen van de joods-christelijke traditie afzonderen en ons beperken tot de 200 jaar oude geestesbeweging van de Verlichting. Ik zeg duidelijk *beperken*. Dat is dus geen afscheid van de cultuur van de Verlichting, maar wel van de verabsolutering ervan. Inderdaad is de Verlichting een deel van de Europese vrijheidsgeschiedenis. Ze leeft echter meer en meer van vooronderstellingen en grondslagen die niet van de lange culturele geestes-geschiedenis afkomstig zijn. Als daar geen aandacht meer voor is, zal met het verdwijnen van een rijke geestelijke geschiedenis ook de Verlichting zelf in een heilloze crisis gestort worden. Op grote schaal kunnen we constateren dat het cultuurexperiment met alleen een fundament in de Verlichting is mislukt. We kunnen momenteel overal de tekenen daarvan zien: sociale ontbinding in een doorgeschoten individualisering en daarmee verbonden grenzeloze vrijheid en bedrei-

ging van natuur en milieu zijn tekenen aan de wand. De Verlichtingscultuur zit in het moeras. Materieel steenrijk zijn maar geestelijk straatarm getuigt van metafysische lichtzinnigheid en ontbeert een hoognodig bezielend ideaal. Zonder zo'n geestelijk ideaal wordt de paradox steeds groter tussen een op consumptisme gerichte maatschappij en de noodzakelijke eis duurzaamheid te bevorderen. De gouden kalfvisie zal steeds meer teleurstellen. Verlichting dreigt om te slaan in verblinding.

8.1 Verlichting van de Verlichting

Om de geestesgeschiedenis van onze cultuur weer helemaal recht te doen, zullen we achter de Verlichting terug moeten gaan. Om de blijvende positieve betekenis van de Verlichting daarbij tegelijk te behouden, kunnen we ook zeggen dat we in onze cultuur een verlichting van de Verlichting nodig hebben. Erkenning van God als oorsprong en de mens als verantwoordelijk beeld van God, die een goddelijke roeping heeft om de werkelijkheid als schepping van God – ook door wetenschap en technologie – te ontsluiten, maakt de zin van wetenschap en techniek ondergeschikt aan de goddelijke zin van de geschiedenis: het koninkrijk van God. De cultuur kiest dan weer voor een religieus fundament met transcendente verankering omdat de religie van de materie als consequentie van de verabsoluteerde Verlichtingsidealen ons op nationaal, Europees en wereldniveau voor steeds grotere problemen plaatst. Religie en spiritualiteit blijken steeds meer nodig te zijn voor een duurzame samenleving. Vanuit de religie worden weer – lange tijd veronachtzaamde – fundamentele kwesties aan de orde gesteld. Wat is het wezen, de zin van het mensenleven, van de cultuur, van de technologie en van de economie? Vanuit deze fundamentele vragen, vanuit de religieuze wortels van de Europese cultuur, worden de lijnen doorgetrokken naar alle cultuurvormende sectoren.

Wat we onder invloed van het Christendom hebben geleerd, blijft zeer actueel: de werkelijkheid is *geschapen* werkelijkheid, naastenliefde en barmhartigheid, menselijke waardigheid, mensenrechten en mensenplichten, bescherming van het leven, gemeenschapszin, publieke gerechtigheid, sociale rechtvaardigheid, vrede in de maatschappelijke, onderlinge verhoudingen, de juiste balans tussen gezag en ontzag, vrijheid in verantwoordelijkheid, oriëntatie op de toekomst. Dus verantwoorde cultuurontwikkeling. We hebben geleerd dat de sterken moeten opkomen voor de zwakken, de gezonden voor de zieken, de jongeren voor de ouden en omgekeerd. We erkennen de betekenis van verscheidenheid in verantwoordelijk-

heden en dat allen gelijk zijn voor de wet. En dat we een scheppingsmandaat hebben: in ons werk de schepping ontwikkelen en bewaren tegelijk. Cultuurwerk dus in dienst van al het leven. Gaan we deze weg van heroriëntatie niet, dan ontwortelen we steeds meer. We bouwen weliswaar torens van Babel, maar op drijfzand.

Kortom, op grote schaal kunnen we constateren dat het cultuur-experiment met alleen een fundament in de Verlichting is mislukt – hoeveel we er overigens ook aan te danken hebben. Een wending in de cultuur is vereist waardoor spanningen en dreigingen afnemen. Een vaste basisoriëntatie is nodig – of anders gezegd: een meta-historisch en moreel kompas. Dat leidt tot vernieuwing van de cultuur en daarmee van haar politieke, sociale, economische en culturele projecten.

Die nieuwe cultuurrichting is de richting van de scheppingsdynamiek, de dynamiek van de gerechtigheid, die de mens door zijn zonde perverteert. De cultuurdialectiek parasiteert op de scheppingsdynamiek, maar kan die niet ongedaan maken. In Christus is immers die dynamiek der gerechtigheid hersteld. Daarin ligt het bevrijdende perspectief van de cultuur. Van de mens wordt omkering en heroriëntatie gevraagd; dat is afstemming op die dynamiek der gerechtigheid; in persoonlijke en gemeenschappelijke verantwoordelijkheid; in alle levensuitingen: individueel, gemeenschappelijk en cultureel. Vereist is een noodzakelijke paradigmawisseling van de “technologische cultuur”.

9. Kuhn's paradigmatheorie

Om die paradigmawisseling enigszins helderder te maken, geef ik ter toelichting als voorbeeld Thomas Kuhn's paradigmatheorie voor de ontwikkeling van de wetenschap. Kuhn heeft vanuit de feitelijke ontwikkeling van de wetenschap duidelijk gemaakt dat wetenschappelijke theorieën uiteindelijk in sociologische, psychologische, economische en zelfs religieuze termen verklaard kunnen worden. Daarmee wordt niet alleen de continue groei van wetenschappelijke kennis verklaard, maar vooral ook de sprongsgewijze ontwikkeling. De continue ontwikkeling van de wetenschap vertoont stabiliteit en overeenstemming tussen wetenschappers. In geval van een crisis in de wetenschapontwikkeling leidt dit tot wisseling van het raamwerk, het paradigma, waarbinnen de wetenschap wordt ontwikkeld. Pas de totstandkoming van een nieuw paradigma kan de breuk herstellen en een nieuwe periode van normale wetenschap inluiden. Ondertussen zijn met zo 'n paradigmawisseling de waarheidsaanspraken van de wetenschap behoorlijk gerelativeerd (Kuhn, 1962).

Kuhn leert dat er in crises in wetenschappelijke theorievorming ineens grote en fundamentele vragen worden gesteld. Het oude wetenschapsgeloof schudt op zijn fundamenten. Oude vanzelfsprekendheden gaan op de helling. De gemeenschap van wetenschappers kalfd af. Unanimititeit brokkelt af. Waarden consensus verdwijnt. De *tacit knowledge* van gelijkgezinden wankelt. Kortom, het oude paradigma heeft zijn beste tijd gehad. Een nieuwe ontwikkeling breekt baan (Koningsveld, 2006:110 e.v.).

Zou Kuhn's visie op paradigmawisseling in de wetenschap een analogie kunnen vormen voor een noodzakelijke verandering in het cultuurparadigma? Een analogie leert ons iets, maar heeft ook haar beperkingen. Zo is wetenschap slechts een tak of onderdeel van de cultuur. De cultuur omvat zoveel meer dan wetenschap. Maar juist omdat onze cultuur meer en meer als "technologische cultuur" of "wétenschappelijk-technische cultuur" wordt gezien, geeft dat aanleiding om ons toch door Kuhn te laten inspireren.

10. Transformatie van de "technologische cultuur"

Daarom: zou zich zoiets – relativering van het bestaande cultuurparadigma en transformatie ervan – ook niet in de huidige cultuurontwikkeling kunnen voordoen? Binnen het overheersend cultuurparadigma van het Westen hebben we met veel problemen te maken. Deze problemen trachten we momenteel meestal op te lossen met dezelfde middelen en methoden die zij hebben opgeroepen. De oplossingen blijken, vooral met steun van de economie en de politiek, onderdeel van de problemen van onze cultuur te zijn. Zo langzamerhand leren we inzien dat dit niet langer kan. Is de kans aanwezig dat we in de crisis een weg vinden naar een nieuwe cultuurfase waarin de problemen van de "technologische cultuur" echt kunnen worden teruggedrongen?

Een culturele revolutie of culturele omslag naar analogie van een wetenschappelijke revolutie zal gepaard gaan met spannende discussies, die uiteindelijk teruggaan op wat men gelooft en voor waar houdt. Hier komt de rol van de religie om de hoek kijken. Vanuit die religie of religies worden verschillende vormen van cultuurkritiek, i.c. technologiekritiek geleverd. De uitdaging is om met een ander cultuurparadigma te komen dat de cultuurdialectiek vermindert en dat de bestaande problemen en dreigingen beperkt of zelfs oplost. Dat is niet eenvoudig, want vertegenwoordigers van het oude cultuurmodel geven niet snel op. Met een zekere verbeterheid houden ze er aan vast. Dat zijn tegenkrachten van economische, politieke en culturele aard. Maar tegelijk wordt naarmate de bestaande ontwik-

keling zich doorzet, de zwakte ervan steeds duidelijker. Zien we dat niet in de toenemende wereldbedreigende gevolgen van het huidige wetenschappelijk-technisch-economisch denken?

10.1 Het conflict tussen industriële en biologische landbouw

Toch, er zijn mogelijkheden. Een concreet en actueel voorbeeld van cultuurverandering is de strijd die de biologische en ecologische landbouw – al of niet met succes en al of niet met afdoende argumenten – voert tegen de industriële landbouw. Die industriële landbouw roept steeds meer problemen op. Aandacht daarvoor en oplossingen ervan krijgen meer en meer kansen, temeer als steeds meer tegenstanders van de industriële landbouw en meer en meer medestanders van de biologische landbouw aan het woord komen en binnen de nog vage omtrekken van een nieuw paradigma ook meer successen worden geboekt. Omgekeerd zie je verdedigers van de industriële landbouw pleiten voor ecologisering van de landbouw. Beide ontwikkelingen geven aan dat bestaande groeiende problemen onder ogen worden gezien en dat nagegaan wordt hoe nieuwe, duurzame wegen kunnen worden in geslagen (Simons, 2007:63, 240 e.v., 374 e.v.).

10.2 Cultuuromslag

Een dergelijke omslag zou de hele “technologische cultuur” moeten betreffen. We zien dat vanwege de opdoemende problemen politiek en economie al meer belangstelling krijgen voor cultureelalternatieven en duurzame ontwikkeling en maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen. Het sociaal-economische klimaat wordt gunstiger voor drastische veranderingen. Zo geven recente rapporten vanuit het bedrijfsleven richting de politiek aan dat er meer aan het milieuvraagstuk en de klimaatwijziging moet worden gedaan. Maar ook een recent VN-rapport over het klimaat van een wereldwijde samenwerking van 2 500 wetenschappers, die de mensen met hun techniek, economie en consumptie als de belangrijkste oorzaak aanwijzen van de grote uitstoot van broeikasgassen, met alle risico's van dien, werkt als katalysator voor nieuwe cultuurontwikkelingen.

Aandacht voor klimaatswijziging, zeespiegelstijging, verschuiven van klimaatgordels, verstoring van ecologische systemen, verlies van biodiversiteit, nieuwe tropische ziekten, enzovoort doen een appèl op een verandering in het cultuurethos. Clinton's en Al Gore's acties evenzo. De jarenlange invloed van Greenpeace moet eveneens niet worden onderschat. Meer en meer gaan de ogen open voor een ander cultuurparadigma. Meer en meer ziet men in dat de

moderne maatschappij met haar patronen van produceren, beheersen en consumeren inherent, en niet toevallig, onduurzaam is (Van de Wal & Goudzwaard, 2006:8 e.v.). Het bestaande cultuurpatroon wordt door dat alles ondermijnd. En naarmate de politiek echt werk maakt van duurzaamheid, bijvoorbeeld door de introductie van het verzorgingsbeginsel, en duurzaamheid dus niet tot een toverwoord of mythe laat verworden, roept de heersende cultuur steeds meer twijfel op. De politiek kan zo positief meewerken aan een verandering in de cultuurgezindheid van velen. Als daarenboven ook de consument gaat inzien aan welke gevaren hij bij nieuwe benaderingen ontsnapt en dat de kwaliteit van zijn leven, zijn welzijn, wordt bevorderd, zijn de voorwaarden gunstig voor een cultuurcrisis. Een hoognodige cultuuromslag ligt in het verschiet, met meer aandacht voor het leven van toekomstige generaties en voor de rijkdom van talrijke, gevarieerde medeschepselen, dus voor echte duurzaamheid. Met meer aandacht ook voor gerechtigheid tegenover de ongerechtigheid van de huidige globaliserende ontwikkeling.

Van belang is dus dat de na- of post-industriële cultuur de problemen en dreigingen van de industriële cultuur vermindert en helpt oplossen. Dat zal een leerproces van kleine en grote stappen moeten zijn. Een proces waarin aan het woord komt wat vergeten werd of dreigde vergeten te worden. Ik denk dat de verhoogde belangstelling voor religies op dit moment hier ook álles mee te maken heeft. Vanuit die religies worden weer, lange tijd veronachtzaamd, fundamentele kwesties aan de orde gesteld. Wat is het wezen, de zin van het mensenleven, van de cultuur, van de technologie en van de economie? Vanuit deze fundamentele vragen – vanuit de religieuze wortels van culturen – worden de lijnen doorgetrokken naar alle cultuurvormende sectoren. Naar analogie van Kuhn's woordgebruik kunnen we hier spreken van een *gestalt switch*, een *ommekeer* of *revolutie*. Het gaat om een *sprong*. Terecht, want het is *time to turn*. Een wending in de cultuur is vereist waardoor spanningen en dreigingen afnemen.

10.3 Inhoud nieuw cultuurparadigma

En hoe zou het nieuwe cultuurparadigma er dan uit moeten zien? Wat is de essentie ervan? Het moet wezenlijk van het voorgaande verschillen en toch het oude opnemen in een transformatieproces. In het oude cultuurparadigma wordt de natuur als levenloos gezien en binnen dat kader uitgebuit door onbegrensde manipulatie. Daarom: werden tot voor kort in het technisch paradigma, natuur, mens, milieu, planten en dieren bekeken vanuit een technische blik,

het zogenaamde *machinemodel*, nu zal de bescherming van het léven bij cultuurvorming het allesbeheersend gezichtspunt moeten zijn. Wetenschap en techniek en economie zullen het léven in alle gevarieerdheid en vormenrijkdom niet mogen vernietigen, maar er juist van in dienst moeten staan. Technologie en economie zullen in dit perspectief meer aan hun zin kunnen beantwoorden. Het tuinmodel is daarvoor passend. Binnen dat wordt het leven niet bedreigd, maar verrijkt. Wetenschap en technologie in dienst van het leven, persoonlijk en gemeenschap, en met bescherming van planten en dieren en de biosfeer, geeft een wending in vele aandachtsgebieden van de cultuur.

De ontsluiting van de schepping komt in het perspectief van de levende tuinstad te staan. In dat perspectief is er zorg voor milieu en natuur. Behoud van het leven en welzijn gaan boven groei van materiële welvaart.

Het oriëntatiekader in de cultuur met leven en liefde als grondcategorieën en het bevorderen en versterken van recht en gerechtigheid als opdracht, heeft aandacht voor boven-subjectieve normatieve grenzen. Hierdoor nemen cultuurspanningen af en wordt een evenwichtige, duurzame, vreedzame en ook rijk gevarieerde ontwikkeling mogelijk. Maat weten te houden, zal de cultuurspanningen en dreigingen doen afnemen. Een meer duurzame, rechtvaardige, globaliserende ontwikkeling is mogelijk, wereldproblemen en wereldomvattende dreigingen worden terug gedrongen. Dat is de inhoud van de strijd om de juiste richting voor de globaliserende wereldcultuur, waarvan de oorsprong de Westerse cultuur is.

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A Christian mission of glocal culture within riven societies in God's world

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Abstract

A Christian mission of glocal culture within riven societies in God's world

Globalisation today seems to be an implacable force at work trying to homogenise world cultures into the same format. Huntington's well-known thesis sees a clash coming between Christian Western civilisation and the rest of the world.

This article argues against Huntington that civilised cultures with different identities have comparable structural features. Because contrary cultures are all human constructs with good and bad mixed in, they can, like human relatives, learn from and correct one another rather than demonise others.

It is posited that the deepest antagonism disturbing the world is not a Christian West versus the rest, but is largely the struggle between two tyrannical ideologies: a post-Christian capitalistic secularism and a theocratic fundamentalism. A biblical Christian mission of glocal culture formation (global awareness and local action) is offered as an alternative vision for our worsening dilemma.

This biblically-rooted diaconal way to be redemptively busy in salvaging cultural activity proffers concrete hope. The life work of Bennie van der Walt is cited as an example, and a few illustrations of glocal artistry provide evidence that such a Christian mission can be deed as well as talk.

Opsomming

'n Christelike missie van glokale kultuur binne gebroke samelewings in God se wêreld

Globalisering blyk 'n onverbidelike krag te wees wat wêreldkulture homogeniseer tot dieselfde formaat. Huntington se welbekende hipotese voorspel 'n botsing tussen die Westerse Christelike beskawing en die res van die wêreld.

Hierdie artikel argumenteer teen die siening van Huntington dat beskaafde kulture met verskillende identiteite vergelykbare strukturele eienskappe besit. Omdat teenoorstaande kulture menslike samestellings is, met goeie en slegte eienskappe, kan hulle, soos 'n familie, by mekaar leer en mekaar reghelp, eerder as om mekaar te benadeel.

Dit word hier gestel dat die diepste vyandigheid wat die wêreld bedreig nie dié van die Christelike Weste teen die res is nie, maar grootliks die stryd tussen twee tiranniese ideologieë is, naamlik post-Christelike kapitalistiese sekularisme en 'n teokratiese fundamentalisme. 'n Bybels-Christelike missie van glokale kultuurvorming (globale bewustheid en lokale aksie) word aangebied as 'n alternatiewe visie vir hierdie verslegtende dilemma.

Die Bybels-gefundeerde diakonale manier om bevrydend besig te wees met die bewaring van kulturele aktiwiteite, bied konkrete hoop. Die lewenstaak van Bennie van der Walt word as voorbeeld hiervan voorgehou en 'n paar voorbeelde van glokale kuns voorsien die bewyse dat sodanige Christelike missie woorde sowel as dade kan wees.

1. Foreword

It is with gratitude to Bennie van der Walt for his and Hanneltjie's long years of service in bringing good news to bear upon cross-cultural matters in the continent of Africa that I chime in with these reflections on our task to give away any knowledge we may have for the healing of the nations still to come (Rev. 22:2). Although my habitat is North America and Europe, the current reality of "globalisation" tends to face us all with problems similar to the ones treated in *When African and western cultures meet – from confrontation to appreciation* (2006), and in *Transforming power: challenging contemporary secular society* (2007). In this article I put forward an outlook I have called a "glocal" approach, as an orientation not only to critique our worldwide troubles, but also as a redemptive way to pick up our human task in a post-Christian age in God's world. Bennie van der Walt, as I know and read him, has in his teaching

and philosophical enterprise practised listening to varied ethnic Christian voices in nearby countries, and has also been serving whoever is within earshot with *The liberating message: a Christian worldview for Africa* (1994) – precisely what I mean by “glocal” activity.

2. Our historical setting: a global outlook vs globalisation of culture

The biblical perspective, I believe, charts a global outlook and cultivating reach, since this whole world belongs to God who created all creatures. Every child in need, anywhere, is my neighbour (Luke 10:25-37), and our inescapable deep human vocation is to be responsible for instituting shalom around us, wherever we call home, with whatever gifts we have. But globalisation, as I understand it, is an idolisation of global purview and tends to disregard, override or sidestep other pertinent geographic and societal realities, as if they are unimportant details. The internet is a transnational globalised system which is not so much here or there as it is nowhere in particular, but it can touchdown everywhere there is a Bill Gates terminal. Such a globalised setup, like the World Bank, seems to think wholesale, but not retail, and has a curious impersonal anonymity.

Whether globalisation is a cancerous predatory growth or a benign development with enormous potential, or both, it is critical to realise that globalisation is an utterly complex historical phenomenon,¹ not something inevitable. Globalistic institutions are human constructions, and are not to be judged apriori as an “axis of evil” or as the world’s saviour. “Axis of evil” talk is always cheap, exculpating oneself and oversimplifying the troubled knot of human misery and yearning for well-being which the poor of the earth breathe, casting our human struggles into a war of “us” against “them”, with “them” as the scapegoat.

Unfortunately we Christians are as “sinful” (that is, wasteful, heartless, self-righteously crooked), despite our good pious intentions, as

1 UN Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan (1999:27) catches the complexity well when he states:

Throughout much of the developing world, globalization is seen not as a term describing objective reality, but as an ideology of predatory capitalism. ... Globalization is presented as a foreign invasion that will destroy local cultures, regional tastes, and national traditions. ... In ... reaction, globalization is made the scapegoat of the ills which more often have domestic roots of a political nature.

those who serve lords other than Jesus Christ. That fact of fallible and sometimes perverse Christian activity is partially why globalisation is an incredibly complex matter, fraught with a living history of mixed good and evil that we existentially inhabit and are called upon to reform, to move into more normative channels, so that we humans may be blessed throughout the world rather than cursed.

3. The historical persistence of different cultural identities

Why is there such turmoil at large in the past decades, despite the strong push to homogenise the peoples of the world into one rational, globalised culture?

3.1 Huntington's thesis on the intrinsic clash of civilisations?

Samuel P. Huntington developed his provocative thesis (1993) on "The clash of civilizations?" and posed that the different world civilisations he lists – the Judeo-Christian Euro-American Western, the Roman Catholic Latin American, the Russian Orthodox, the Islamic, Sub-Saharan African, Sinic-confucian, the Hindu, Buddhist, and Shinto Japanese civilisation – are each rooted in a fundamental faith which shapes a difference in culture and tradition for that civilisation. Each different world- and lifevision of the different underlying faith commitments affects that believing peoplehood's decisions on the God-human connection, the individual person and group relation, the nature of a household, the notion of rights and responsibilities, social equality and hierarchy, the role of language, artistry and machines, a proper diet, and everything else.

Huntington states that the West's attempt to shanghai the rest of the civilisations to be in its Western image – for example, every autocratic state in the world should forthwith become Jeffersonian democratic – has fueled resistance and resentment globally. Benjamin Barber captured the problem of West and the rest with his book entitled *Jihad versus McWorld* (1995). Huntington thinks that the Islamist and Chinese civilisations will probably join to oppose Western civilisation; so the Euro-American-Australian "West" should accept its character as a unique culture rather than pretend to be universal, and hunker down for survival in a sea of civilisational antagonisms (Huntington, 1996a:43-46; 1996b).

3.2 An alternative thesis: all differing cultures with an identity are nevertheless mixed human constructions

It is very tricky for a Euro-Canadian academic not to be Eurocentric in delineating cultural identities, just as anyone who discusses “races” easily seems to become racist. Dare one ask, “Is an Afrikaner an African?”. It makes a big historiographic difference whether you give priority to the statement, “Columbus discovered America”, or to Aztec Moctezuma’s judgment, “The Spaniards invaded our land”. Once you have sat quietly in a traditional outdoor wooden Japanese toilet sheltered alone by trees and hear rain falling gently on the leaves up above – the best place to write haiku poetry, says Tanizaki (1977:3-6) – you cannot help but be shocked at the bold, brightly lit, sterilised, white porcelain bowl and chrome fixtures in an efficient sanitised Canadian bathroom.

That is, civilisations have different identities down to their details, but all cultures are human, accessible to other educable humans, who may still keep their own outlook and preferences. Also, a civilisational culture is neither monolithic nor defined by one single stereotypical feature. As Kwame Anthony Appiah (1992:ix) says: a person should know where you are coming from, what faith tradition is your primary experience, but one can participate fully in one’s several coloured identities – Asanta, Ghanian, African, Christian, and Methodist. Every civilisation is hybridic. And maybe just as a genuine community can put up with dissidents too, a more sound civilisational culture will be flexible, modifiable, able to harbour variables without forfeiting its unifying ethos.

3.3 Certain constants appear to be in the cultural contours of every civilisation

A geopolitical location and mother tongues are basic to every particular culture. Your home territory may be oil rich and water poor, and Arabic may be considered a sacred language: those places and language ingredients enter into a lifestyle, and may entail wars to defend your culture’s natural resources, and fatwas against blasphemy. In every culture the buck also stops somewhere on what life means and how we folks should deal with our basic sexual drives and need for security. Buddhist monks, for example, may teach the people to shun the *dharmā* of daily enticements which may be perennial but are unreal, and your karma lies in adapting to the inscrutable *koanic* wheel of reincarnational drifting that does somehow afford a nirvana escape. Every culture also legitimates the way its members practise their livelihood. So the council of elders or sha-

man prescribes or performs the rituals which bless the hunt or seeding the crop, and thus orders and sanctifies the communal endeavour.

That is, the culture, the cultivated fruits of a motley grouping of humans who belong together civilisationally mostly because they serve the same lord – lord Krishna, Buddha, Jesus Christ, the spirit of the ancestors, or follow the way of the prophet Muhammad or Confucius: all the different cultures have factors which are comparable and therefore, it seems to me, not inherently conflictual. Cultural features may be contrary, but not contradictory.

There are, moreover, apparently a couple of temporal stages many cultures normally go through, back and forth, from a rather unquestioned fixed societal setup of authority figures who are fairly directly in charge of whatever goes on in the many zones of communal life. Cultures move from such a settled, tradition-laden stasis to a more differentiated elastic setup of varied institutional authorities with specialised training. The change from an oral story-telling culture to one of literacy and written records is another significant intracultural change, and is not to change from an uncivilised society to civilised people – that is the Humanist myth of evolutionary progress. The bureaucratic scribes in a literate culture could be less humane in their civil service than a tribal elder who would be considered illiterate.

Another example: when the close knit interdependence of people who barter in a subsistence economy, whether it be a Confucian, Christian or animist culture, becomes a cash economy with money, a drastic depersonalisation of economic relationships takes place within that culture – it tends to loosen connections between people. Sometimes a decentralised culture like the European feudal system of lord and vassal, knights and castle, moves toward centralised monarchies, as if a clear integrational force was needed to keep the societal network from dissolution. Royal law replaced local and canon law, and the formation of nation states within European civilisation gradually took place.

3.4 Quite different cultures are human relatives to one another

Huntington (1996a) is correct in positing that an unarguable religion-faith is at the root of the various world civilisations, and such fundamental faiths usually have a jealous claim on persons. But Huntington is mistaken to hint that civilisational cultures are absolute

in excluding others. In my judgment, since civilisational cultures are all fashioned by human creatures in the same world, their cultivations are, therefore, humanly related and, like ethnicity, relative – human relatives to one another.

When a given culture is in the throes of changing internally toward more diversified professionalisation of its facets, or struggling to hold onto an earlier or anticipated centralising faith power, their interaction with other civilisational cultures, which possibly are also at different stages of cohesion, may be stressful, even blameworthy. Relatives often fight. There is, however, no excuse on the world scene, for a civilisational Armageddon, where one cultural community dehumanises, that is, demonises an other human cultural community. To frame cultural matters starkly as “us” against “them” is to play God, and for humans to play God is evil and deeply destructive.

4. Differing tyrannies: capitalistic secularism and theocratic fundamentalism

You don't have to be Hegelian to admit that in the increasing domination of Western culture over other civilisations since 1450 AD, and the current problem of borderless globalisation, Christian paterinity is unmistakable. The legacy of Roman Catholic missionaries exploring the Americas and Asia, and later Protestant denominational missions settling into Africa to plant churches, did not bring Jesus pure and simple, but dressed the church in Western attire, sanitation (“cleanliness is next to godliness”), medicine, trade, and colonial rule.

After the European Enlightenment a spirit of *sapere aude* (dare to know) without limits à la Faust, and after the Victorian Industrialisation powers that used the poor like fodder for machines, was all mixed into the template of “the Christian West” – it became questionable how biblical the label “Christian” is. Dachau and Auschwitz, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are all events of global rank which happened under auspices of “the Christian West”. True, the colonial empires of England, France, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Spain and Portugal collapsed between 1945 and 1975, but both the good and the bad which have germinated in one's deeds live on for three or four generations after one has departed. Today, however, “ethnic cleansing”, multiple genocides, kamikaze suicide bombings born out of sheer desperate hatred, do not seem to have to take lessons from “the Christian West”.

The dangerous impasses on our hands, culturally too, cannot be solved by finding a single scapegoat. Rather, we need to consider the underlying battle going on between two major, cross-cultural principalities.

4.1 Good capital and the post-Christian ideology of capitalism

Capital is needed by poor people and poor countries to start up businesses and projects that generate employment and livelihoods. Capital or wealth is a good thing when it is given to ensure that economic activity can supply resources to serve the needs of people. But when capital is diverted into principally making more capital for those who manage to lend the reserve wealth, then the whole enterprise shifts into becoming capitalism. In a capitalistic system, where you have moved beyond barter, even beyond cash exchange to a credit economy, market transactions are not focused on the actual labour-intensive production of goods and services for people, but on how to increase the profit for those with wealth.

Early capitalism unfortunately breathed in the competitive ethic of a Darwinian vision: only the fittest survive. As capitalistic praxis became corporate in nature, oligarchic managers directed commercial operations in their firm to get bigger and cheaper in order to increase the competitive edge, obtain a larger market share and profit for all the stock holders. Capitalistic businesses tend to produce more and more of their product or service with a cost cutting efficiency, if possible, in order to develop a virtual monopoly in their area. Capitalists believe the market should be "free" to let those who deserve to be competitive winners, be winners, as in sports. The fact that there are few winners and many losers, and that economic war for profits cannot produce economic peace, does not faze an ideological capitalist whose one holy passion is success: the luxury, leisure, and happiness monied wealth can buy.

Consumerism – buy (on credit) what gives you pleasure – fits like a hand in the glove of capitalism, which has come to be synonymous with Western civilisation. The trouble is, as capitalism goes global, the circle of losers becomes greater. It is as if the "working poor" captives and undernourished children in Western cities, often unacknowledged by economic planners, are exported around the world along with the "labour-saving" Western technical devices of aid, damning even more of the two-thirds world populaces to excruciating, slow-poisoning, killing poverty (Rifkin, 1995: 128-140). The ironic retribution upon the free-wheeling Western capitalism for

its Midas power to commodify whatever it touches – “every man has his price” – is the desperate attempt by millions of impoverished people to migrate en masse to “the Christian West” for just a little piece of the apple pie, which no-holds-barred capitalism preaches it bakes daily.

The worst thing about such globalised capitalism is that its allure is driven by a secularist faith which pretends to be “Christian”, promoting freedom, although it is devoutly post-Christian, if not anti-Christian, in its covetous spirit of do-it-for-yourself-at-the-expense-of-others. This unholy spirit is incorporated in the systemic sacrifice of the economically weak to the economically stronger, which the law of capitalism exacts. The benign civil religion of America – the melting-pot *e pluribus unum* – which privatises any faith except the *common faith* espoused by John Dewey of entrepreneurial democratic pragmatism, covers the capitalistic ruthlessness with a veil of choice: feel free to choose for or against this (American) way and standard of life, and may the devil take the hindmost. That ploy, however, formulates the egregious secularisation of the biblical Christian faith, because what is central to the Bible – “serve God by loving and upholding your neighbour!” – is made peripheral, a private affair. And what is peripheral or even wrong in following Jesus Christ – “look out first for number one!” – is made central to one’s concern, the crux of legitimate public action. Actually it might be more honest to print on the backside of US dollar bills, “In free trade we trust”.

4.2 Fundamental faith and Islamic fundamentalism

There are, however, millions in the world who find the covert tyranny of post-Christian capitalistic secularism insufferable. Since they religiously trust in God, Allàhu akbar, God’s special channel of grace, the Prophet Muhammad (c. 570-632 AD), they know assuredly that Allah’s dictated revelation and the Prophet as *uswa hasana* (the beautiful model for living) specifies the blessed way for life and for death. The Qur’an with the *sunnah* command and prohibit exactly what God’s servants must do. Why should we Muslims (“the submissive ones”), ask the followers of Muhammad, and others who together make up 85% of the world population, kowtow to this 15% elite who teach rapacious greed, promote flagrant immoralities, idolise a fickle capital market relativism, and treat us as ingénues – they sold Indians alcohol and guns for furs and land; now they try to buy our soul with Hollywood films and obsolescent weapons to get oil.

We believe human life holds together and should not be split into sacred and secular pieces. Faith is not a little private matter, but faith-obedience is to be fully public, embodied in law (*shariah*), politically acknowledged and, if necessary, supported by military means. Nobody has the right to undermine the fundamentals of our faith and subject us as Islamic nations with a theocratic tradition of clerics and mullahs to a Secularism that reduces human life to a godless technocratic regime with religious nomads drifting aimlessly around for the next fix or curious internet fad ...

Millions of humans hold to this position.

Islamist fundamentalism rooted in the radical Muslim philosopher Sayyid Qutb's thought – he was executed in Egypt by Nasser in 1966; Sayyid's brother probably taught Osama bin Laden – found in the massive commentary (Qutb, 1999), lays the groundwork for a theocratic rule which assumes a caliph who, like the Roman Catholic pope in the Vatican state, would rule the dispersed nation – in Iran, Iraq, Algeria, Turkey or Indonesia – as Muhammad's successor and God's vice-regent on earth. A caliphate is political in nature, with possible global application, but is not necessarily offensively aggressive, except in defense of the faith.²

4.3 Economic and political tyrannies together delineate the cultural climate we inhabit

The capitalist secularism I have tried to delineate, epitomised, for example, in recent American governmental practice, is economic in nature, is exercised globally and is vigorously aggressive commercially, with near political weight, co-opting much opposition, but is not always able to control the "enronic" outcomes.

When economic measures go tyrannical based on human greed, the materialistic menace produces the misery of great poverty – women, children and men destitute of home and food and even hope. When a political setup goes tyrannical based on human will to power, the political dictatorship's coercive might can produce henchmen and abject slaves under threat of violence, even torture. Economic despotism is different from political autocracy, but either tyranny makes for a hell of a human life. It is one sad thing to practice economic

2 Cf. Qutab, "Forging a new nation" (1999, 1:127-129), and "No compulsion in religion" (1999, 1:324-330).

tyranny, but it may be even worse, I dare say, to act like a political bully, because military intervention and destruction of human societal life is more ruinous, by instilling lawless fear, than the terrible pain of economic helplessness.

It has seemed as if the government of the USA in the recent past has been fusing the authoritarian capitalistic global market practices it spearheads with a revivalist political agenda to match. The old American Monroe Doctrine (1823) declared to the world: "We, the United States of America, are in charge of this Western American hemisphere – stay away!" The new George Bush Jr. Doctrine (2002) went global: "There must be a regime change in Iraq. The United States is authorized to launch pre-emptive military strikes when it deems fit" (cf. United States of America, 2002: article 5, p. 13-16). US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is reported to have said after Iraq was invaded, "We did not come here to set up a theocracy!" Suppose, however, that Hussein's secular Baath Party ruling with a Sunni Muslim minority is out of working order, and a fundamentalist Shi'ite majority of Iraqi votes for theocratic Muslim rule. When something close to that was about to happen in Algeria with the Islamic Salvation Front (1991), a military junta disallowed the election in 1992, and the US government painfully tried to keep its options open. Political democracy is only good when its exported version gives certain predetermined results (Quandt, 1999; 2002).

It seems to me that the United States of America has thought its particular political tenets and well-intentioned actions of manifest destiny to incarnate God's will on earth and to be universal, sovereign, beyond international law. And the former President Bush's "axis of evil" mindset is precisely the same thought pattern which informed Ayatollah Khomeini's "the great Satan" discourse: they just pick different enemies who have to be annihilated. That is the real clash on our hands, not between civilisations, as Huntington supposed, but between oversimplifying fundamentalisms. This is the capitalistic secularism into which various Asian civilisations are inscribing their Hindu, Confucian, Buddhist, Shinto, Jewish and traditional beliefs, because you cannot buy into "modern" technology and weaponry without becoming secularised. The capitalistic (multi-deity or godless) secularism swerving into American political democratic fundamentalism is diametrically at odds with the godly theocratic fundamentalism which is being cornered to defend its very identity and the existence of presecularised life true to Muhammad, without Islam's having the fire power to match mighty America's secularism. (The USA is the number one exporter of armaments to

the world.) So maybe it takes pure violent martyrdom for the weaker fundamentalists and *Les Damnés de la terre* (Fanon, 1961) to take on the stronger fundamentalists in order to inherit what will be left of the polluted earth.

5. Glocal culture as redemptive gambit

One wonders what could be a biblically Christian response to such a complicated, oversimplified and dangerous impasse. Evangelical Christian fundamentalists can be as unself-critically adamant in their tunnel vision as the most rigorous Shi'ite Muslim ayatollah, Israeli Zionist, or hardcore multinational corporate capitalistic bureaucrat. Ideological fundamentalists of whatever sort always have infallible knowledge of what to do: stay on the collision course you have been pursuing, even if it means the endless cycle of judgemental, vengeful retaliation.

5.1 An obedient biblical direction

The Old and New Testament Scriptures posit a different direction to take: give food and drink to the enemy (Prov. 25:21-22; Rom. 12:9-21); let your forbearance be evident (Prov. 15:1-4; Philip. 4:4-7); may merciful just-doing be the guideline for all your deeds (Micah 6:6-8; Gal. 5:25-6:2).

Given the status quo of social, economic, political and cultural affairs around the world, I think Goudzwaard (1979) is right when he says that we people need a radical change of heart, a deep inner structural reformation of the approaches we habitually take to our human problems. External tinkering, revising a few economic priorities, attending to diplomatic niceties, and inviting foreign dance and theatre troupes to our festivals, will not be truly redemptive in the long run. And by "reformation" Goudzwaard means more than have important CEOs become born-again Christians, because if the infrastructure of a corporation is geared to Mammon, no personal pieties of the head manager changes what is wrong. Our cultural, commercial and national leaders need to become conscious that our very way of governing, doing business, and fashioning culture is in the grip of powers bigger than us humans, and such principalities are evil. Insecure militarism, consumptive profiteering, overpaid "star"-vanity, seem to be infecting our defense budgets, start up enterprises, and involvement in professional sports, museum or pop

culture. Why do so few see that believing in better and faster technology to improve our human lot is simply a superstition!³

It has not been helpful in cultural analyses of the last few decades to demonise Saddam Hussein, George Bush, Bill Gates, McDonald Inc., or Punk Rock and the Rolling Stones. Our biblical calling is to exorcise the nameless protean legion of violence, greed and fame which are embodied in our cultural, economic and governing systems (Eph. 6:10-12).

Christ once explained to his disciples who were nonplussed that they could not heal a boy of a spirit which drove him inexplicably into catatonic silence and then into helpless paroxysms (sounds almost like the antics of the stock-market). Christ said certain evil dominations of human endeavours can only be overcome by "prayer and fasting" (cf. Mark 9:14-29, using Syrian manuscripts on verse 29). That means: would-be world reformers need to undergo both a vow of holiness and change of lifestyle. Such a challenge catches the seriousness of the Scriptural injunction to love your global neighbour. If we are serious about changing what is systemically accursed about our disintegrating "Christian Western" civilisation, we need to re-conceive our very daily praxis so that the weak will survive, the poor shall feast, and humble dedicated artists will be honoured (cf. Luke 14:7-24). That entails that perks everywhere will hit the fan.

5.2 The task of communal glocal action

A way to orient current global operations with biblical vision and take up a genuinely Christian mission that could get an historical foothold now rather than wait for a future millennium is to develop a

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- 3 The radical, deep-going kind of change needed in the orientation of our leadership is noted by Goudzwaard (1979:240) who holds that "norms" have been replaced by "goals":

The idea of *beginnings*, of points of departure, implicit in 'principles' (Latin: *principia*), is replaced by that of ends, or objectives, as S.U. Zuidema pointed out. He argued that in our time *beginselen* (principles) have been replaced by *eindselen* (ends).

Also, as Gerald Vandezande (1999:32) has put it: if an economy of grace and gratitude were to replace the economicistic approach of greedy competition, economic growth would not be conceived in terms of *more* and *bigger* (the way cancer grows) for "us", but rather in terms of equitable, sustainable development which serves legitimate human needs and contributes to the environmental and societal well-being of all people

communal consciousness of glocal culture, and follow what I indeed think is a creatural historical norm: regenerate, speciate, and diacornate in one's field of cultivating God's world (Seerveld, 1996:56-59). It is not enough to say, "Jesus is the answer. Let's pray."

It is a biblical vision that we humans inhabit God's world and, along with our environmental terrain amid its fauna and animals, we have first of all local responsibilities to our earthly and societal habitat of neighbouring creatures. Journeys and guests open us up to other traditions, places and peoples, and that is normal. This biblical vision is not idealistic, but is describing what is creaturely available and normative. Yes, the set-up is marred by stupidity and malice. But the biblical vision of interconnected peaceable creatures is not the skewed Darwinian vision of constant struggle where the winner takes all as a matter of fact, and is also not the view of a rigid, stratified world that curtails opportunities to revise relationships for deeper shalom.

It is a Christian mission for humans to bear fruit in God's world during their earthly stay of two generations or so, God willing, beginning in your own locality, branching out as you through faithful seasoning receive broader openings and tougher assignments (Matt. 25:14-30 ff., 20-23). It is not Christian to suppose you must "save the world" – that is an imperialist presumption. Christ's followers worldwide are only asked to redeem what is entrusted to them wherever they be, and to show a saintly hospitality to strangers, that is, be cosmopolitanly open and receptive, even vulnerable to what is not your particular cup of tea, and to let your own service be educated, modified, and embraced by whatever worthwhile foreign culture comes to invigorate your way.

That is what I mean by *glocal culture*: your deeds are neither parochially chauvinist, nor a bricolage of being nothing in particular, but you are globally aware and act locally. By *global* I mean you have a biblical vision of the cosmic reach of God's grace and a sure sense of what is normative in multiple areas of human culture. By *local* I mean you are driven to enact restorative just-doing indigenously, so that the hallowing of any community's deed at home and abroad have a homespun integrity and identity to it, albeit open to all comers (Seerveld, 2009:302-308).

6. Pertinent examples of glocal cultural activity

If regenerative historical activity, in whatever field, highlights rootage of human activity in the whole global setting of God's creaturely

good world, and if specifying distinct interrelational connections facilitates normative development of human societal prospects, the diaconate mandate anchors how we humans may try to retrace our taking wrong turns and somehow undo cumulative misdeeds with a new start. The diaconal feature anchors the Christian mission in forging opportunities with local colour.

Thus glocal culture rests in the globality of a God-ordered multi-faceted world and simultaneously affirms the fact that we humans are native somewhere for a certain time and should not pretend to be omnipresent masterminds. Glocal culture is a liberating project for followers of Jesus Christ who would be redemptively busy in a world society riven by ruthless fundamentalistic forces bent on making every one of us captive. Followers of Christ do not need to worry about the final outcome of our communal endeavours.

6.1 The biblical Christian mission in the world: not narrowly ecclesial, but glocally diaconal

It would be a pity to restrict the historical mission of Christ's followers in God's wide world to churchly activity, since Christians are meant to be faithful in worldwide glocal activity.

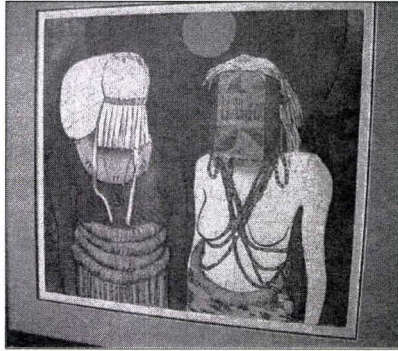
Christ's body at large is meant to be like communal yeast in the very texture of commercial, political, social, communicative, educational and artistic endeavours, as professionals who know how to set generous economic policy, make restorative political judgements, offer joyful cultural ideas that have a radically reconciling, forgiving, wise hope-bearing thrust. This project is precisely what Bennie van der Walt has carried out while teaching and publishing for fellow Africans from the Institute for Reformational Studies (1974-1999) when it operated at the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. The very antithesis to such embedded glocal Christian activity is to act as if your faith is a purely private prayerful matter. Such privatised faith action, it seems to me, is to betray Jesus Christ with a devotional kiss.

To think and act as if missional means acting like an evangelist or chaplain is a severely truncated vision of the believing community's task. Christians are best pictured, says the Bible, not as preaching clerics, but as being waiters and waitresses who together are found, when Christ returns, serving up unadulterated cultural food to their neighbours in God's global household (Matt. 24:45-47), including giving bread to the outcasts and God's enemies who may deserve

anathemas, overcoming evil with good (Ps. 139:19-24; Matt. 5:38-49; Rom. 12:9-21).

6.2 Examples of glocal art-making culture illustrating the mission of Christ's body

Illustration A: Die inisiantie (1987/1991)



When I visited a shanty town near Potchefstroom, South Africa, in 1995, I was struck by the fact that guard towers could not obliterate the spark of laying down a green grass path in the rocky dirt as aisle to the communal outhouse one walked to in order to relieve oneself, reaching for a touch of human dignity. And more than 20 years ago South African Titia Ballot quietly explored in an engraving entitled *Die inisiantie* (1987/1991) how women could perhaps bridge the gap of animosity between races there: the white woman wears the native beads awkwardly like chains with the fetish wrongly covering her face, while the black woman wears a Huguenot cross upside down and an Afrikaner *kappie* (bonnet) on backwards: we come together unhandily, but we are struggling to understand one another under the round hot bulls-eye of an unforgiving African sun.

Illustration B: Platform 1 (1992)

George van der Walt's large engraving, *Platform 1* (1992) documented the complexity facing "the new South Africa": the shambles of a classical ancient Greek ionic column next to a cement transportation platform going nowhere, crisscrossed by a fragment of train tracks; a field of wooden coffins (instead of crosses?) stretches into the distance, attended by a lone spectator with an old fashioned car under a hint of barbed wire and billowing white clouds (or flames?) – but there is a clothes line spanning the breadth of the scene with a pair of washed socks hung up to dry, and one of the other cloths on the line looks like a white flag announcing a truce. This piece of art celebrates the homespun little realities of a person's local habitation, but puts the daily details into the global context of apartheid, a memento tire necklace, disruptive change, travel, and maybe ... a down-to-earth hope.

Illustration C: I cannot speak my language (1970)

There is a sculpture by an anonymous Inuit carver, *I cannot speak my language* (1970s?), which has abalone mother-of-pearl tears dangling like earrings on the whole head half hewn from the block of creased stone, as if there is an overwhelming sadness to being cut from one's moorings to face the present state of affairs. After I learned that the Finnish singer Nina Astrom spends time singing in women prisons located in Russia, Scandinavia and Canada, the tears of this sculpture shone for me like diamonds. Nina gives her voice to those women locked away and forgotten by society so that the hardness, anger, and sadness, the tears, they know and have been unable to show are miraculously given a voice to cry out, "We are human too, in this abusive society!"

Illustration D: Caritas (2003)



Dutch Britt Wikstrom's three-quarter life-size bronze sculpture, *Caritas* (2003), rests in a major hospital for cancer patients in Chicago: severe illness, almost like imprisonment, closes down your world and exposes you in your most vulnerable secrets to anyone who tries to help. The firm gentle lines and wonderful enveloping embrace of putting a cloak around a patient's shoulders makes compassion visible, tactile, the care-giver bent at the knee intimates almost a prayerful solicitude. Everything is slow motion, so basic to the timing of *Caritas*. And the patient's response to being patiently clothed is one of wonderful, grateful reception that itself gives strengthening in return. Exceptionally strong about this sculpture, in my judgement, is that the piece has no hospital heroics, no emergency theatrics, and it does not push the question of "Why the

evil of sickness!?” but simply, powerfully presents a tender *pas de deux* tribute to the promise of mutual human care filled with unutterable thankfulness

To me such glocal artistry is deeply Christian, because it is not conceived in self-indulgence and is not practiced to get media fame, but is practised the way God meant art to be: a nuanced glocal give away bearing a breath of real hope. Sound imaginative activity and artistry, amateur or professional, will always be glocal, born out of a local habitation and sensitivity while aware of the global creatural realities that face us humans.

Whatever nationality one be, which situates you in a local habitat, as a professional artist with a biblical vision of God’s creatural world, and one who is driven by the Christian mission to serve one’s neighbour with the healing rule of Jesus Christ, you simply make artworks. Then you find an audience in the prisons and hospitals, next door, art galleries and out of the way places, so that the tough love you volunteer artistically, will have the impact of setting people free – free with a glimmer of the Lord’s finally making human lives, society and the world at large whole (Isa. 61; Luke 4:14-21).

These few artworks give graphic voice to how I understand Bennie van der Walt as selflessly and professionally carrying out the philosophical task as a glocal educational ministry these many years. Along with a convicting vision of God’s creatures worldwide and an intimate knowledge of the shaping work the Lord revealed in Jesus Christ has given us humans to embody historically such endeavours, Professor B.J. van der Walt has never shirked from being the little child of faith who loves the nearby neighbour – of whatever ethnic background and no matter what the faith-conviction. He has been giving away the bread of biblical wisdom (Eccles. 11:1-6) instead of the stones of arguing discontent. I pray that he and his loved ones receive a full measure of grateful return on their labours for our Lord.

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glokale kultuur



Towards authentic development

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Abstract

Towards authentic development

This article explores the basis of the current definition of social development and deficiencies in this definition. In this context the power of today's global commercial empire is explored with well-documented evidence of the damage being done to human well-being in the interest of profit.

An alternative definition of development is proposed concluding with a profile of a developed society. It is suggested that, on the basis of the current definition, there is little hope of African countries ever becoming "developed". On the other hand, while there are still challenges to be faced, the proposed alternative profile offers a realistic possibility of being achieved.

Opsomming

Op pad na egte ontwikkeling

Hierdie artikel verken die onderbou van, sowel as die leemtes in 'n (tans) algemeen-aanvaarde definisie van sosiale ontwikkeling. Die mag van die hedendaagse kommersiële heerskappy word binne hierdie konteks opgevolg met goed-gedokumenteerde bewyse van die skade wat menslike welsyn berokken word in die belang van winsgewendheid.

'n Alternatiewe definisie van ontwikkeling word voorgestel met die profiel van 'n ontwikkelde gemeenskap as die slotsom. Die stelling word gemaak dat die huidige definisie van sosiale ontwikkeling min hoop bied vir Afrikalande om ooit "ontwikkeld" te wees. Terwyl daar nog uitdagings is om te oorkom, bied die voorgestelde alternatiewe 'n realistiese moontlikheid waarna gestreef kan word.

1. Introduction and personal prelude

I first met B.J. (Bennie) van der Walt at the international conference held at Potchefstroom in 1975 where the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE) was established. This was the beginning of a friendship that has endured every adversity to this day. He is one of my closest friends and most valued colleagues.

We have shared a passion for the people of Africa, supporting them in their endeavours to build effective social, political and educational structures for today's world with a critical eye; on the one hand critically retaining the good from traditional African cultures and on the other hand, critically selecting the good from Western cultures. I trust that what follows may be effective in taking a further step in this direction.

2. The concept of development

2.1 History

18 years ago, the Kenyan academic, B. Wanjala Kerre, in an article on the critical role of the development of science and technology in Africa, said the following (Kerre, 1992:376):

While Africa cannot isolate herself from the rest of modern civilization, it is quite obvious that modern cultural values which have been borrowed from the West can no longer promise humanity a balanced and humane lifestyle.

Instead, Kerre (1992:376) advocates, Africa ought to "take a leaf from her own past and forge an identity" based on moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social norms underpinned by traditional African values such as the importance of family, "individual and social responsibilities", "respect for human life", "love for children", and "sharing". He continues: "The good life in the African context will therefore be one where besides access to food, shelter, clothing, and medical care, the individual will have cultivated a balanced view of the self in his moral, spiritual and intellectual dimensions of life."

In so doing, he linked creativity in developing science and technology with a wide range of social values as essential to an authentic African development. After eighteen years, little has changed. Africans have become much greater users of technology, but have done little to create new technology; and they continue to replicate the cultural values of the West.

There are no doubt a number of factors that contribute to this, but none more fundamental than the definition of development in relation to human societies. Currently the two major internationally recognised sources are the World Bank Development Report (World Bank, 2009) and the United Nations Development Report (United Nations Development Programme, 2009). For both of these, the key indicator of development is per capita financial wealth of the society shown by GDP and/or GNP.

The United Nations Human Development Report does provide a broader range of statistics but these remain quantifiable and do not significantly affect the development ranking. Thus the qualities of the good life identified by Kerre are ruled out by this definition of development. Even on this quantified definition of development it should be noted that the statistics show gross wealth and tell us nothing about the distribution of the wealth within the society.

2.2 The global commercial empire

For the first time in history today's world is dominated by a global commercial empire that promotes around the world a culture and lifestyle based on that of the "developed" societies. It is this cultural force that serves as the mainspring for the limited idea of development as quantifiable wealth. This empire uses all the power of today's technology, with its ability to generate eye-catching images for every form of mass media to promote their products as desirable. They are held out as the key to a good life. Unless people are very discriminating, or the product is not to their taste, buying the product becomes irresistible. Who does not want a good life?

Before long, this desire becomes a need; desire becomes a necessity. Clapp (1998:190, 191) summarises very well:

... the consumer is schooled in insatiability. He or she is never to be satisfied, or at least not for long. The consumer is taught that persons consist basically of unmet needs that can be requited by commodified goods and experiences. Accordingly, the consumer should think first and foremost of himself or herself and meeting his or her felt needs. The consumer is taught to value above all else freedom, defined as a vast array of choices.

McKibben (1998:46) points out how the meaning of Christmas has been turned on its head by the values of this prevailing culture. Instead of celebrating the birth of "One who told us to give everything to the poor", we celebrate by "giving each other motorized tie racks".

Perhaps the most damaging effect of this commercial empire is the education of people to be consumers and not producers. It promotes the idea that, if you can buy food ready to put in the microwave and onto the table, why go to all the trouble of making it yourself. This is not to say that this is never a useful thing to do, but when it becomes a pattern of life, it robs us of the joy of producing. This is not to say that this commercial empire brings us no good. To say that would be absurd. But if we become immersed in the cultural values of consumerism, as McKibben (1998:47) says, "we are being cheated of the truest happiness".

2.3 The alliance of commerce and state

Clapp (1998:1) adds another dimension to this cultural picture when he points out that two institutions have an unprecedented dominance in the shaping of public life – the space shared by all – in today's societies. These two institutions are the state and the market. In particular, it is the alliance between these institutions that enables the ever-increasing dominance of the global commercial empire and the inadequate model of development it promotes.

"Market" in this context means something very different from the place where people engage in buying and selling goods, such as that which characterised much of traditional Africa and still exists in many African towns. It refers to an institutionalised market consisting of an integrated network of commercial organisations dedicated to the creation of wealth by promoting increased consumption of their goods and services.

Lundin (1993:40, 41), following Philip Reith, refers to this culture as a therapeutic culture that promotes "the efforts of the autonomous self to discover fulfilment independent of the restraints of precedence and community". The central goal is to manipulate life's circumstances in order to achieve the individual's sense of wellbeing (Lundin, 1993:5, 6). In other words, in terms of Lundin's reference to Rorty (1991:201), it is a culture where the good life is one where the individual is able to manipulate the world "in order to get it to do what I want".

The State is allied with the commercial empire through its role in facilitating that empire's activities, all in the name of ensuring the country has a strong "economy". This has turned the original meaning of *economy* on its head. The original meaning was "the careful, or *thrifty management* of available resources". Today it means "the consumption of available resources" with the goal of

ever-increasing consumption as “economic growth”. The consequence is an ever-increasing depletion of resources.

3. Quality of life and development in Western societies

3.1 Western societies

A range of other sources indicates that financial wealth does not lead to the quality of life that we would expect of a society that has achieved a high level of development. One need only look to the escalating rate of suicides and obesity-related health problems that characterise modern Western societies to confirm this. Statistics provided by the American Foundation for the Prevention of Suicide (2007) claim that, in the past 45 years, “suicide rates have increased by 60 percent worldwide”. What is more, the World Health Organisation reports (2006) that lifestyle factors have generated a global epidemic of health and life threatening obesity.

Additional evidence that points to the inadequacy of a quantitatively-based model of development is provided by the numerous surveys over recent years that have reported that being rich does not make people happy. In a recent US study of college graduates to track the relation between the attainment of goals and psychological health, the following conclusion was reached (Niemiec *et al.*, 2009:306):

The relation of aspiration attainment to psychological health was found to differ as a function of the content of the goals. Attainment of the intrinsic aspirations for personal growth, close relationships, community involvement, and physical health related positively to basic psychological need satisfaction and psychological health. In contrast, attainment of extrinsic aspirations for money, fame, and image was unrelated to basic psychological need satisfaction and related slightly negatively to psychological health.

The above-mentioned evidence highlights the inadequacy of the use of quantitative data based on the financial wealth of a society as a benchmark of social development. A truly developed society will be one that offers its people a satisfying quality of life. As the philosopher, A.C. Grayling (2008), remarks: “The true equation between happiness and wealth is this: that happiness is wealth. Unlike wealth in the form of money and possessions, such happiness can never be quantified [...]”.

3.2 The Iraq invasion

The inadequacy of the quantitatively-based model of development is not only apparent when we look at quality of life in so-called developed nations, as indicated in the previous section, but also when we consider the application of this ideal of development to the still developing world. The Iraq invasion, which will be dealt with presently, and the treatment of the inhabitants of Diego Garcia effectively illustrate the deplorable consequences of pursuing development of this kind.

In January 2010, the Netherlands Commission of Inquiry into Iraq (2010:530, 531) found that the military action of the US and Britain “had no sound mandate under international law”. It also found that the political support of the Netherlands benefited the US by increasing global support for the actions of the US.

Meanwhile, in an ongoing inquiry on the same issue in Britain, Chapman (2010) reports:

Devastating evidence at the Iraq inquiry yesterday revealed that every senior legal adviser at the Foreign Office believed the conflict was in breach of international law. Sir Michael Wood, then the Foreign Office’s senior legal adviser, warned ministers again and again that to go to war without approval from a UN Security Council resolution would constitute a ‘crime of aggression’ in international law.

Unlike the Dutch inquiry, which was a judicial inquiry headed by a senior judge, the British inquiry is not judicial. All the members are drawn from the Privy Council, an elite body which is generally composed of persons who are or have been prominent figures in the political world. Doward (2009) reports that Came Ross, the UK’s former Iraq expert on the UN Security Council, fears that the inquiry

... would fail to establish a true account of how and why the UK opted to join the US in taking military action. [...] Ross says he believes the inquiry ... will produce little in the way of illumination because it suffers from ‘an insidious intent’ to establish that ‘our democracy, parliament and government function as they should’.

The inquiry will be chaired by Sir John Chilcot, a former staff counsellor for the security and intelligence agencies who sat on the government’s Butler inquiry into the use of intelligence in the build-up to the Iraqi war. “That Sir John Chilcot served on the Butler inquiry is like trying the same crime twice with the same judge and

jury – not a credible standard for truth-seeking”, Ross writes. He warns: “Many of those giving evidence will have a deep interest in confirming the government’s narrative, for they are deeply implicated in having implemented it.”

Doward (2009:2) also reports senior figures in the legal world in the UK as fearing that the inquiry “will do a job for the government”. This, of course, is not to say that the Iraq regime was not repressive but only that the invading nations were violating international law by taking military action. Their action was comparable to that of an individual citizen who takes the law into his own hands by killing someone whom he suspects of murder. However, any international law is a lame duck since no law is effective unless there is power to enforce it. With the massive imbalance of power that characterises this world the most powerful nations will always be able to do what they like. This makes any “international law” an unjust law since it is effective only when applied to the weak.

3.3 Stealing a nation

The story of the forcible dispossession of the Chagossian, or Ilois people, by the US and Britain is perhaps the most damning evidence of the abuse of power in defiance of law and disregard for human rights of any of those that could be told. The story has been well told by John Pilger (2006) a noted investigative journalist who meticulously documents his reports by first-hand accounts. Noam Chomsky (2007:ii) describes his work as “a beacon of light in often dark times”.

The Chagossians inhabited the small island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Composed of African slaves and Indian indentured labourers, over the generations of their life on the island they blended into a single people with a distinctive single language – a variant of French Creole. They had housing, and employment with ample food and were planning to develop a tourist industry when their island was stolen from them and they became a displaced people on the far-off island of Mauritius, where they had only slum housing, no jobs and no cultural affinity with their new “home”.

Why? For no reason other than the military interests of the US, the great power that presents itself as the champion of freedom and democracy. As Pilger (2006:40) puts it:

During the 1960s and 1970s British governments, both Labour and Tory, tricked and expelled the entire population of the

Chagos, a British colonial dependency, so that their homeland could be given to a foreign power, the United States, as the site for a military base. This 'act of mass kidnapping' was carried out in high secrecy, along with the conspiracy that preceded it. For almost a decade, neither Parliament nor the US Congress knew anything about it, and no journalist revealed it. When the base had been established, a group of 'defence' correspondents were flown out by the Ministry of Defence and reported as expected, as if no-one had ever lived there; BBC news-readers still refer to US aircraft flying out to bomb Afghanistan and Iraq from the 'uninhabited' island of Diego Garcia.

Pilger interviewed a Chagossian woman, Lizette Talate, about her experience of these events. She had been in a film made by the British Colonial Office before these events took place showing the idyllic circumstances of the people in its colony on Diego Garcia. Pilger writes (2006:45-47):

'Maybe only the English can make a film that showed we were an established community, then deny their own evidence and invent the lie that we were transient workers. That's why they couldn't legally throw us out of our own homes; they had to terrify us into leaving or force us out.' 'How did they terrify you?' 'They tried to starve us. The food ships stopped arriving, and everything was scarce. There was no milk, no dairy products, no oil, no sugar, no salt. When they couldn't starve us out of our own homes, they spread rumours that we would be bombed, then they turned on our dogs.' The Chagossians love their dogs; they are inseparable ... 'At first they tried poisoned fish balls', said Lizette. 'That killed a few and left many in terrible agony. Then they paid a man to walk around with a big stick, beating them to death, or trying to.' 'What year was this?' 'Spring 1971. It was very hot. American soldiers had already begun to arrive to build the base. They backed several of their big vehicles against the brick shed where the coconuts were prepared; hundreds of dogs had been rounded up and imprisoned there. Then they gassed them through a tube from the truck's exhaust. You could hear them crying.'

Those who refused to leave were summoned to the Administrator's office and told they had no choice because their 'removal' was 'legal' under the rules of the new colony. This was a big lie. A senior judge, Lord Justice Sedley, noted years later that 'legal powers designed for the governance of the islands [were misused] for the illicit purpose of de-populating them'. The assembled people were told they would be loaded onto ships and deported. There is a photograph of this meeting.

A white man wearing shorts and long socks is standing on the steps, addressing the crowd; children are looking up at the adults, who look stunned. Several appear to have dropped down with shock; others seem stricken with grief. 'Magistrate Todd delivered the news,' said Lizette. 'There was a sort of hint that what they did to our dogs they were going to do to us. They were without pity.' Along with 180 others, Lizette and her family were forced onto the vessel, *Nordvaer*, which had plied between the Chagos and Mauritius and the Seychelles, transporting copra and taking supplies back to the islands.

The uneventful coming and going of this ship had helped give the Chagossians their best-known name, *Illois*, meaning 'islanders'. As a means of transporting this number of passengers across 2 500 miles, it was hopelessly inadequate. They were allowed to take with them only minimal personal possessions; they had to leave behind their furniture, which they had bought with savings from their work in the plantations, and their precious chickens and ducks, donkeys and goats ... horses took pride of place on the deck of the *Nordvaer*. For five days, the horses were fed and the people were not. The men were herded onto the bridge and had to stand or crouch in very rough weather; the women and children were made to sleep in the hold on a cargo of fertiliser. People vomited and suffered diarrhoea; two women miscarried.

In 2007, 47 years later, (Carey, 2007:44-48) after a prolonged legal battle in the British courts, the Court of Appeal ruled unanimously that these events constituted a fundamental breach of human rights and deprivation of liberty with an order giving them the immediate right of the Chagossians to return to their homeland on Diego Garcia. This order was made effective immediately denying a request for a delay by the lawyers of the Government.

Despite this, might still prevails over law for those who are powerful enough – in this case it is the law of one nation and not international law. The US military base holds Diego Garcia and the people to whom it belongs by right of law remain in exile.

4. Profile of a developed society

As opposed to the dominant Western model of development which attaches minimal value to personal well-being, a model drawing from traditional African values would offer the advantage of creating room for considerations of this kind. Some of the key elements of such a model would be the provision of an authentic communal life and the affirmation of faith as a healing, enriching factor in human life.

Whereas modern Western societies are essentially individualist, traditional African societies are strongly communal with a community being seen as a collective of individuals who join together for mutual benefit. Vincent Donovan, an American missionary who spent extended periods living with Masai communities in Tanzania, refutes the common misconception that African communal life suppresses individuality when he writes (Donovan, 1978:142):

When I came into contact with African communities for the first time, one of the things I noticed about them was the lack of competition within a community. No one really tried to stand out in a community, perhaps did not even want to [...] Everyone would point out the greatest athlete, or the best dancer and rested hopes on such gifted people to bring honour to the village or community [...].

Traditional African societies' ability to attach value to individuality without the accompanying burden of competitiveness enables the formation of lasting communal bonds. By comparison, Donovan (1978:141) writes: "The strange, changing, mobile, temporary disappearing communities of America can leave one without any experience of what community is". Not until he went to Africa, he asserts, did he come to know what a real community is.

In addition to offering more lasting communal bonds, African values are also conducive to the affirmation of faith's significance for human life. There is little doubt that humans do need to have faith in some source of meaning that transcends everyday life. There are those, indeed, who are content to be carried along with the current, but those who make a difference in the world identify the faith that gives enduring meaning to their lives. As Wentz (1987:13) aptly observes: "Because we are more than biology, more than physical function, we are open to the possibilities of understanding ultimate order and meaning for our existence. Humans are creatures who are not satisfied with function; they seek meaning."

This may be faith in one or another traditional religion, but it may also be faith in a secular source of meaning. We might think of the eminent Oxford mathematical physicist (Penrose, 1989:428) who finds the ultimate source of meaning in a Platonic world of ideas, at least in his mathematical activity, the area in which a large part of his work takes place. Or we could think of the philosopher, Richard Rorty, who sees culture as the source of ultimate meaning. He argues (Rorty, 1991:13-14):

Our acculturation is what makes certain options live, or momentous, or forced, while leaving others dead, or trivial, or optional. We can only hope to transcend our acculturation if our culture contains (or, thanks to disruptions from outside or internal revolt, comes to contain) splits which supply footholds for new initiatives. Without such splits – without tensions which make people listen to unfamiliar ideas in the hope of finding a means of overcoming those tensions – there is no such hope.

But, given the history of religions, which is all too often a history of social conflict, how can the affirmation of a faith in ultimate meaning, whether religious or secular, be a healing factor? The answer to that must be in mutual respect for the other's faith. And it can be an enriching factor if we are ready to listen to the faith of others. As a result we can learn to work together in harmony to build a better more life-enriching society.

Of importance is that we do not simply remain within the walls of our faith. Rather, we need to deliberately go out with confidence, identifying our faith and engaging in friendly interaction with those of other faiths. I deliberately say "interaction" rather than "dialogue" since we are often able to engage in verbal exchanges if we first interact by actions.

We should be the first to extend the hand of friendship, and neighbourly love, to those who are of another faith, or confess no faith at all. The one commandment by which we show the reality of our faith is "you shall love your neighbour as yourself. For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another" (Gal. 5:13-14).

It is only the path of the Samaritan that will enable us to bring spiritual light to the world's darkest corners. All our churches, Christian schools and universities, will bring no light unless they have wide open doors to interact with all our neighbours. In themselves they are good, even essential, to preserve the integrity of our faith. But if they become enclosed spaces and we do not regularly go out of these spaces to interact with those who do not share our faith, our light remains hidden under the "bushel basket". Indeed those who lead in all of these Christian institutions should encourage all within them to engage with the world around them.

Our Lord said:

No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Matt. 5:15, 16.)

Note that it is first of all the “good works” done in the Saviour’s name that bring light to this world. In this way the Christian is called to action to assist in authentic social development. It is not good enough to say: “I am just one person without power so what’s the use”. If enough little people act they can make a difference in the larger picture.

5. Conclusion

This article suggests that the current practice of using quantitative measures of national wealth is inadequate as an indicator of social development. It fails to take into account the quality of life that a society provides for its people. Rather than trying to “catch up” with the “developed” societies of the West, African nations should pursue a more authentic model of development that focuses on personal well-being.

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sosiale harmonie



Traces of neo-Calvinism in France and Italy

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Abstract:

Traces of neo-Calvinism in France and Italy

This article deals with the history of the neo-Calvinist movement in France and Italy. The efforts of the Dutch Reformational movement to communicate with French (mainly reformed) Christians are highlighted. A brief overview of the achievements of the few French scholars involved in this development is sketched and their publications are mentioned, together with a few conferences and organisations. Neo-Calvinism reached Italy as well, via the input of French lecturers and publications. The few developments of neo-Calvinism in Italy are recorded as well. Also, the gradual drift towards vantilian and reconstructionist positions (in both countries) is detected and discussed. An evaluation of these developments is provided, together with a few final considerations and questions which should help learning lessons from the past and preparing better strategies for the future.

Opsomming

Spore van neo-Calvinisme in Frankryk en Italië

Hierdie artikel handel oor die geskiedenis van die neo-Calvinistiese beweging in Frankryk en Italië. Die pogings van die Nederlandse Reformatoriese beweging om met Franse (hoofsaaklik reformatoriese) Christene te kommunikeer, word belig. 'n Kort oorsig van dit wat enkele Franse geleerdes in hierdie ontwikkeling bereik het, word geskets en hulle publikasies word genoem, asook enkele konferensies en organisasies. Die neo-Calvinisme het Italië bereik as gevolg van die

pogings van Franse dosente en publikasies. Die enkele ontwikkelings van neo-Calvinisme in Italië word ook weergegee. Die geleidelike beweging na Van Tiliaanse en rekonstruksionistiese posisies (in albei lande) word ook uitgewys en bespreek. 'n Evaluering van hierdie ontwikkeling word gegee, asook enkele finale oorwegings en vrae wat behoort te help wanneer lesse uit die verlede geleer moet word en beter strategieë vir die toekoms voorberei word.

1. Introduction

The Society for Calvinist Philosophy in the Netherlands (now Society for Reformational Philosophy) has completed 75 years (1935-2010) of activities, a period in which it has successfully promoted Christian philosophising in five continents. This is an occasion for celebration and thankfulness, and to reflect on the history of the neo-Calvinist movement (with special attention to its reformational¹ branch). The latter is not only interested in philosophy, of course. During its life it has been busy with education and politics, art and agriculture, labour, business and so on. Nevertheless, one can surely say that the Society for Calvinist Philosophy has played a strategic role for the promotion of Christian scholarship all over the world.

This article deals with a small section of this history: the “traces” of neo-Calvinist scholarship in France and Italy.² Nevertheless, it is gratefully dedicated to Professor Bennie van der Walt, ambassador of Christian Scholarship in five continents. In my opinion, Van der Walt’s openness to the international dimension of this mission, his knowledge of the (worldwide) field, his readiness to cross cultural barriers and his effectiveness in popularising and spreading refor-

1 I use the term *reformational* to indicate scholars, texts, ideas, approaches particularly tuned in with the philosophy of Dooyeweerd, Vollenhoven and their successors. The term *vantilian* refers to scholars and approaches tuned to the work of Cornelius Van Til. *Reconstruction/ist* refers to the particular branch of authors/views related to Rousas John Rushdoony, Gary North, Greg Bahnsen and so on. Finally, the term *neo-Calvinist* (synonym of *kuyperian*) includes all the above-mentioned groups.

2 All translations appearing in this text, whether from French, Italian or Latin are by the author. The bibliographic details in the original languages are given in the final “List of references”, while to facilitate the reading, English translations (of titles, journal names, etc.) are provided in the text. Translations are neglected when the meaning of the (French) phrase/s can be easily guessed by English and Afrikaans-speaking readers.

mational ideas all over the globe are unsurpassed (and I suspect it will remain so for quite a while).

In the following article I will focus especially on the reformational and vantilian movements, while I will leave aside the more recent "traces" of the Plantinga-Wolterstorff school of thought (also known as "Reformed Epistemology"). This choice has a few reasons. Firstly an English article by Di Gaetano (2005) supplying information on the reception of this philosophical school in the Italian context has already seen the light. Secondly, this movement does not yet have, to my knowledge, a broad support base in the protestant communities of France and Italy. Finally, some of the representatives of this school would not regard themselves as "full members" of the kuyperian philosophical family, and this should be respected.

The choice of focusing on France and Italy is also due to several reasons. First of all I myself have lived in Italy up to the age of 36 and I have, therefore, "first-hand" experience of some of the events recalled here. Secondly, the developments of neo-Calvinism in these two countries are inter-related and lastly, I am not aware of any document already written on this topic.

The main questions underlying the presentation of this history are: what can be learnt from those past events? What are their causes? Can they help clarifying the dangers and the needs for the future promotion of Christian scholarship? I will not provide clear-cut answers, but I will attempt a few hypotheses and suggestions. My strategy will consist in sketching a history of neo-Calvinism in these two countries, then I will also attempt an interpretation and evaluation.

2. What has neo-Calvinism to do with France and Italy?

Where can one trace the first contacts between Dutch neo-Calvinists and French or Italian individuals or communities? When the reader tries to recall any significant contact, the first reaction may well be one of perplexity. Were there any contacts at all? Thinking a bit deeper though, some might remember that Groen van Prinsterer wrote several texts in French. But that was before Kuyper. Is that all? And what about Italy?

Yet, an early connection emerges when the question is reversed: did French-speaking Calvinists have anything to do with the Dutch Reveil which is the cradle of neo-Calvinism? One more touch: to find this early connection one has to add to the picture the (francophone)

city of Geneva. Following this path one discovers that, among the persons who influenced Groen van Prinsterer and made him the leader he became, there were several French-speaking ministers, the most important of whom was Henri Merle d'Aubigné, from Geneva.

The latter was appointed Chaplain of the royal Dutch court in 1823 (Freeke, 2001:129). It was through the preaching and personal advice of this minister (and of a few others) that Van Prinsterer was encouraged to persevere in his faith, to resist both secularism and liberalism, to consolidate his belief and finally to become the precursor and mentor of Abraham Kuyper.

Merle d'Aubigné had been strongly influenced by the Swiss Reveil which had its centre in Geneva. He attended the community of La Pélisserie, situated in Bourg du Four, which was the centre of such fervid spiritual reveil.

Here the link with Italy emerges as well. It was here, in the 1850s, that a small community of Italian exiles was introduced to protestant ideas and was converted to the new faith. When the events allowed them to return to Italy, they were the founders of the Chiese Libere (Free Churches) shaped on the model of Geneva's Free Churches (Maselli, 1974:35-52). It was precisely among the "descendants" of those churches, 120 years later, that a strong interest for neo-Calvinist ideas emerged. In the 1970s traces of neo-Calvinism appeared in small sectors of Italian evangelicalism, also through the input of French protestants of reformed convictions (see section 6.1 and 6.2 below).

These links should be sufficient at least to see that the events we are going to explore are not simply or totally unrelated. From now on we will limit our research to the period following the establishment of the Society for Calvinist Philosophy, i.e. from 1935.

3. Reformational outreach towards France

For the first few years after the establishment of the Society for Calvinist Philosophy, there was almost no single text written by (Dutch) reformational scholars in a language other than Dutch.³ As

3 There were, however, texts written in other languages by (non-Dutch) reformational authors. See for example Marcel (1937), *Scotus' conception of the law*, published in the Netherlands. Outside of the Netherlands there were of course texts in Afrikaans. It is also interesting to take note of Kuyper's article

Dengerink (who speaks French quite well) observes, during the 1930s there was only one such text – written in German in 1939 (Dengerink, 1994:109).⁴ The years after 1946, however, saw a renewed interest for exporting into new countries the ideals of reformational scholarship. In 1947, Dooyeweerd's first article in English was published (Dooyeweerd, 1947). Originally, it was a lecture delivered to French students in Amsterdam and it was published in French one year later (Dooyeweerd, 1948). In the 1950s Dooyeweerd travelled to the United States and South Africa and held several conferences.

He travelled to France as well. In 1951 and 1952 he participated in the Franco-Dutch meetings of the Chateau de Paron, organised by the Société Calviniste de France. Other visits followed. Some of his lectures became articles and were published in French. The following examples do not aim at historical completeness, but are illustrating the new "missionary" awareness of the Dutch reformational movement.

A lecture held in 1953 at the universities of Aix-en-Provence and Marseille was published in French one year later in *Philosophia reformata*⁵ (Dooyeweerd, 1954a). There Dooyeweerd commented on the views of the famous Christian philosopher of Aix-en-Provence, Maurice Blondel (*The problem of Christian philosophy: a comparison between Blondel's philosophy and the new reformed philosophy in the Netherlands*).

Several other articles were published by *La revue réformée*,⁶ starting from "The secularisation of science" (Dooyeweerd, 1954b), which reflects a report presented at the Sixth International Reformed Congress in Montpellier. Then followed *Philosophy and theology* (Dooyeweerd, 1958a), originally a lecture delivered in 1957 at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Paris. *Progressive and re-*

(1907) written for the French public: *The separation*. This article deals with the separation of church and state in France and was published in the *Journal des débats*.

4 Dengerink omits the author of the article, but gives a few bibliographical details: "Das natürliche Rechtsbewusstsein und die Erkenntnis des geoffenbarten göttlichen Gesetzes". *Antirevolutionaire staatkunde*, 13:157-182.

5 This journal is the official organ of the Society for Calvinist Philosophy in the Netherlands.

6 Journal of the Free Faculty of (reformed) Theology of Aix-en-Provence.

gressive movements in history (Dooyeweerd, 1958b) was first presented in 1957 at the Faculty of Letters of the same university.

The *Five conferences* (Dooyeweerd, 1959) were held at the Social Museum of Paris in December 1957. This text, in five parts, constitutes a good introduction to Dooyeweerd's philosophy (about its further translation into Italian see section 6.2 below).⁷ Apart from Dooyeweerd, two publications in French were delivered by Mekkes (1953; 1965), one by Zuidema (1953) and one by Vollenhoven (1953).⁸

In 1965, when a honorary volume was dedicated to Dooyeweerd (De Gaay Fortman, 1965) one could see that reformational philosophy was not simply a Dutch "business" anymore. Of the 29 contributions dedicated to Dooyeweerd, ten were written in a language other than Dutch and six of these were in French. Some of the French texts were written by Dutch authors (which testifies of their interest for the francophone public). The volume, however, included the contributions of some French authors as well. Among those who shared Dooyeweerd's views was André Schlemmer (1965), a medical scholar who wrote *Medical science and the unity of man*. Among the colleagues was Jacques Ellul (1965), a member of the Église Réformée de France (Reformed Church of France).⁹

4. French responses: the first phase

The French protestant community did not remain indifferent to neo-Calvinist ideas. France is a country in which the Reformation was repressed in the massacre of the night of St. Bartholomew (23-24 August, 1572). Thousands of Huguenots were killed and Calvinism could never "recover fully". However, a (numerically modest) protestant community is still present today. Concerning the French evan-

7 Translated in English, the titles of the five conferences are: The so-called autonomy of theoretical thought; The basis of Greek philosophy; The basis of scholastic philosophy; The basis of humanist philosophy; The new task of a Christian philosophy.

8 *Transcendental critique of theoretical thought* (Mekkes, 1953); *Time* (Mekkes, 1965); *Reformed conception of life* (Zuidema, 1953); *The developments of Aristotle: a study on the history of philosophical problems* (Vollenhoven, 1953).

9 It is a pity that another outstanding French philosopher, Jean Brun of the University of Dijon who was also a reformed Christian and wrote extensively on Christianity and philosophy (cf. Brun, 1988), never took the time to explore reformational philosophy properly and to interact with it (Brun, 1986).

gelicals, the theological faculties of Vaux-sur-Seine (multi-denominational – Paris area) and Aix-en-Provence (reformed – Marseille area) remain the best outposts of theological reflection.

One of the first traces of reformational scholarship can be found in the writings of Auguste Lecerf (1872-1943), a man of remarkable personality,¹⁰ from Paris. The third chapter of his famous *Introduction à la dogmatique réformée* (Lecerf, 1938) deals with “Calvinism and philosophy”. There the reader may be surprised to discover that long before Dooyeweerd lectured in France, Lecerf (1938:41) mentions “les philosophes réformés Dooyeweerd et Vollehoven” and shows familiarity with their ideas. Even more surprising is the fact that he discussed the two reformational philosophers before 1938, in a series of scattered articles which were published posthumous with the title *Calvinist studies* (Lecerf, 1949). Those studies were the object of intense dialogue with the famous French philosopher Étienne Gilson (1884-1978) who argued with Lecerf from a Roman Catholic point of view, in his *Christianity and philosophy* (Gilson, 1936). With this, reformational thinking was brought to the attention of the “top level” philosophers of France.

It was Pierre Charles Marcel (1910-1992), a student and “fervent disciple” of Lecerf, who established an even more solid relationship with the Dutch reformational movement. Marcel studied at the Free University of Amsterdam during 1937-1938 and later dedicated two doctoral theses (Marcel, 1956; 1960) to the philosophy of Dooye-

10 The father of Auguste Lecerf was an atheist who participated to the revolutionary experience of the Paris' Commune in 1871 and later had to find shelter in England for political reasons. There he married a woman of Italian descent who, according to Courthial, “rarely ever mentioned the name of God”. Still an adolescent, for curiosity, one day Auguste entered a church during a service, and when the pastor asked whether anyone would feel ready to give his life to Christ, he felt he was called. Back in Paris, a few years later, he found among the second-hand books of a “bouquiniste” in the Paris’ “quai” (the waterfront along the Seine river), a copy of Calvin’s *Institution*, which he bought. At the age of seventeen (to the disappointment of his parents) he asked to be baptised. A few years later he was already a reformed minister. While completing his theological studies he managed to resist the liberal opinions of his lecturers. Eventually, he became the head of the Theological Faculty of Paris. Even more important, the “last of the Calvinists” (as initially he had been ironically called) became the leading figure of a large movement returning to the sources of a truly reformational life view. To support this movement Lecerf also founded the Société Calviniste de France.

weerd.¹¹ The two theses were presented to the Faculté de Théologie de Montpellier.

Marcel was a towering figure among French evangelical-reformed theologians. As editor (or co-editor) of *La revue réformée* (which he himself founded in 1950) he promoted the publication of several of Dooyeweerd's articles. At the same time he (Marcel, 1937; 1981) contributed to the development of reformational scholarship via the pages of *Philosophia reformata*. Since the middle 1950s, and until 1991, his name appeared in the list of *vaste medewerkers* (close collaborators) of this journal.

Last but not least, he cooperated with Jan Dengerink (professor of Reformational Philosophy at Utrecht and Groningen) to the establishment of the International Association for Reformed Faith and Action (IARFA) which played a significant role for the promotion of reformational principles all over the world. This was done especially through conferences and through an excellent (popular) journal: the *International reformed bulletin*.

Marcel wrote outstanding theological texts (Marcel, 1983) from a truly reformational point of view, even when the times became more difficult for reformational scholars. It is a pity that, due to the language barrier, his writings could not be appreciated by a larger international public. As the reformational movement in the 1970s was struggling with a few theological problems and recognised its need for more "theological expertise" (Zylstra, 1975:32), it is also a pity that this skilled theologian could not participate more directly in those debates.¹² Even today, his name is not often mentioned among those who contributed to the elaboration of reformational theology.¹³

11 The title of the 1956 thesis is: *The transcendental critique of theoretical thought: prolegomena to the philosophy of the idea of law of Herman Dooyeweerd*. The 1960 thesis has the title: *The theory of the law-spheres. Introduction to the theory of the structure of temporal reality within the framework of Herman Dooyeweerd's philosophy of the idea of law*.

12 I have in mind the debates concerning the nature of the three "forms" of the Word of God, reported for example in Downs (1974). When Zylstra spoke of insufficient theological competence he was referring to that debate as well.

13 This is often the case: German-speaking reformational authors like A. Varga von Kibed (Munich) or J. Bohatek (Vienna) have surely suffered the language barrier. The same can be said of Afrikaans speaking authors (like H.G. Stoker),

5. French responses: the second phase

5.1 The vantilian turn

During the 1970s the French climate became less favourable to the reformational movement. Gradually the precise and deep knowledge of Dooyeweerd's philosophy was replaced by a vague acquaintance with his views. From the late 1960s some sectors of the vantilian movement in the USA gradually distanced themselves from the reformational school. In 1971 with the publication of *Jerusalem and Athens* (Gehaan, 1971) the disagreements between the two schools became more tangible. The years 1978-1984 are crucial: vantilian and reconstructionist authors gradually gain the centre-stage in the interests and sympathies of the French evangelical theologians. Initially, in several journals they are simply associated to the reformational scholars, but later they seem to "substitute" them (the possible reasons for the "turn" are discussed in Section 7 below). The (more solid, in my opinion) reformational sources are gradually neglected and after 1990 almost completely excluded. No open discussion, debate or publication marked the shift.

Unfortunately, the vantilian movement does not have the resources to support Christian scholarship in an integral way. In a few decades though it has occasionally produced texts which are somehow related to extra-theological issues, its strong points remain mainly in apologetics and dogmatics. For the rest, the movement has to offer interesting insights into theology of science, of politics, of education, some theological philosophy and so on. It is, however, difficult to quote vantilian academics who made relevant contributions outside theology. The movement is therefore, in my opinion, not properly equipped to support the project of Christian *scholarship*. One crucial reason is that it tries to promote it while remaining on theological grounds (Coletto, 2009a; 2009b).

The reconstructionist movement (which stemmed from the vantilian movement), though providing more extra-theological literature, produced a rather controversial type of Christian scholarship. The movement supports, for example, the application of the Mosaic penal code in modern America, a policy to be eventually exported more internationally. Many scholars argue that (at least in some respects) it is alien even to the Calvinist tradition (Van Til, 1986).

but fortunately English was fairly familiar to Afrikaans-readers and Afrikaans was fairly understandable to Dutch readers.

5.2 Voices in the vantilian turn

A theologian who can be regarded as a typical representative of this second phase is Pierre Courthial (1914-2009). Some among our senior academics may still remember his contribution to a conference held in Potchefstroom (Courthial, 1976). He was interested in the works of Dutch theologians in general (Courthial, 1983), but two specific articles testify of his interest for the neo-Calvinist movement. One article explores Groen van Prinsterer's legacy (Courthial, 1988). The other displays the history of the kuyperian movement from Van Prinsterer to Rushdoony (Courthial, 1980).

My impression is that Courthial (1995) cultivated important reformatory intuitions while he also suffered some lack of clarity concerning issues of scholarship and encyclopaedia. Sometimes one has the impression that, in his writings, the reformatory movement is regarded as "part of" a (supposedly broader) reconstructionist movement. One may notice for example, that in the article dedicated to neo-Calvinism he labels the latter as "Christian reconstruction". One may also have the impression that the younger reconstructionist movement, in Courthial's opinion, replaces and includes in itself the previous (reformatory and vantilian) movements.

Another interesting figure of this period is Aaron Kayayan (1928-2008), a pastor of Armenian origins living in Paris. In 1976 he started a radio ministry supported by the Christian Reformed Church in North America. It was a French branch of the "Back to God Hour" ministry, which was also designed to reach the many francophone countries of Africa. The ministry, based in Paris, was called *Perspectives Réformées* and in addition to the radio-broadcasting it published a journal (also called *Perspectives réformées*) which could be distributed in those countries as well.¹⁴

Quite soon, Kayayan began to show a keen sympathy for the reformatory tradition. Even before the beginning of the radio-ministry he

14 The reader should not imagine that journals like *La revue réformée*, *Studi di teologia* or *Perspectives réformées* worked according to the system of South African "accredited" journals. In most cases those journals did/do not just accept the submission of articles by whoever author. The publications were selected by an editorial board that promoted certain views. In some cases, articles considered relevant were translated into French or Italian. The point is that the articles appearing in a certain issue, volume or period, reflect the preferences of the board of editors. This is why it is important to find out which authors were published.

wrote an article to present the philosophy of Dooyeweerd (Kayayan, 1971: *The Christian philosophy of Herman Dooyeweerd*). He was for many years a "correspondent" of IARFA for France, and contributed to the organisation of the 1978 Conference of Aix-en-Provence.

In 1982 Kayayan and his ministry moved to the United States. The official reason had to do with administrative problems, but unofficially it was known that the French reformed community was not sufficiently supportive of the neo-Calvinist leanings of the ministry.¹⁵

Whatever the case, if we take for example the volumes 1978-1984 of *Perspectives réformées* (the "crucial" years of the turn) and search for neo-Calvinist contributors, the following pattern emerges. In 1978 a whole issue is dedicated to a text by Hughes (1978), a scholar of dooyeweerdian sympathies. In 1984 the two schools are mixed, with a preference for reconstructionism. In fact, Rushdoony is present with four short articles (1984a; 1984b; 1984c; 1984d) in the same issue (1984(2)). Spykman (1984) and Schrotenboer (1984) represent the reformational school with one short article each. The following issue (1984(3)) is entirely dedicated to Rushdoony (1984e), the topic being *The reformed apologetics by Cornelius Van Til*. A list of publications by Van Til and Rushdoony completes the issue.

This offers a vivid illustration of the vantilian turn. But did Kayayan contribute to such a turn or did he simply adapt to it? Was it perhaps an effect of the move to America? From the introductions he wrote to the different issues of the journal, it seems that his support of Van Til and Rushdoony was quite spontaneous. It is also possible that these editorial choices may be due to the particular nature of this ministry, for which Kayayan needed relatively "accessible" literature, not the deeper studies from the reformational group. It is interesting, however, that the change of attitude occurs exactly at the time in which we have situated the crucial phase of the "vantilian turn". Gradually, and unfortunately, the reformational authors disappeared from the later volumes of *Perspectives réformées*.

Finally, let us consider the position of Alain Probst, a philosopher from Paris who obtained his doctorate from La Sorbonne with a thesis on dooyeweerdian philosophy by the title: *The structure of*

15 It is also interesting to know that from 1998 the son of Aaron Kayayan, Eric, continues from Pretoria this ministry (now called Foi et vie réformées – "Reformed faith and life") which promotes a neo-Calvinist approach.

created reality (Probst, 1974). Probst studied reformational philosophy at a deeper level than the two above-mentioned pastors. In addition (and this made him a particularly dear friend) he was one of the most eccentric characters among French Calvinists. Our correspondence stretched from 1986 to 1996 and included several personal visits.

"There were quite a few of us", he once wrote "who knew almost 'by heart' the five conferences of Dooyeweerd"! (Probst, 1986.) However, he was also an admirer of Van Til. For example he wrote for *Studi di teologia* an article on the *Apologetic and philosophical system in Cornelius Van Til* (Probst, 1983b).

Surely he used to argue that the *maitres* of neo-Calvinist philosophy constituted a single group: Lecerf, Dooyeweerd and Van Til (Probst, 1983a). Yet the question whether this attitude was "genetic or acquired", so to speak, never abandoned me completely. In other words, it was not clear whether this "equalisation" was not a necessary sacrifice in the particular context in which he found himself, a context in which appreciating the vantilian school was more or less "compulsory" and only on that basis one was allowed to mention the dooyeweerdians. Several of the personal letters he wrote after 1990 allude precisely to this problem (e.g. Probst, 1995a). He also noticed how *La revue réformée* had taken a "new direction" from the early 1990s. In his view, the new course (I would say: the further exclusion of reformational authors) was also linked to the death of Pierre Marcel in 1992 (Probst, 1995b).

5.3 Preliminary evaluative considerations

During the first phase of the vantilian turn reformational philosophy was not totally ignored. On the contrary, important articles were still produced (e.g. Marcel, 1981). The Dutch "missionary" efforts towards France did not stop either, they continued and not only by means of publications. In this context I would like to mention the Conferences organised by the Association for Reformed Faith and Action (IARFA) in Aix-en Provence in 1978 and in Cret Berard (Lausanne area) in 1984.

Unfortunately, however, the climate was already changing. One may observe, for example, that the only French speaker at the 1978 Conference of Aix was André Coste (1978), a physicist working for the Nuclear Energy-Authority in France. The theologians were not contributing. This is an intriguing aspect on which we will return in section 7.

Likewise, *La revue réformée* was abandoning its initial enthusiasm for reformational authors and gradually retired into a theology-only harbour. Authors like Goudzwaard, Schuurman, Wolterstorff and many others who could have been discussed, were simply ignored. Finally, should one consult the tables of contents of the last 15-20 years of *La revue réformée*, one finds virtually no article by or about reformational scholars.¹⁶ Marcel and Probst were still occasionally published, but the references to their *reformational* background were, for some reason, very nuanced indeed. Up to now, vantilian and reconstructionist authors “pop up” regularly (in the tables of contents) to remind the audience what the “philosophically correct” direction is.¹⁷

We will be able to offer more evaluative notes after turning our attention to the Italian side of our research.

6. The infiltration of neo-Calvinism in Italy

6.1 Historical background

The Reformation could not take place in Italy, due to the harsh repression of the counter-reformation. Many Italian ecclesiastical leaders did join the Reformation (e.g. F. Turretini sr., P.M. Vermigli and others), but often they had to leave Italy and find shelter in countries like Switzerland or France.

The most consistent “remnant” of the reformed faith in Italy is supposed to be the Chiesa Valdese (Waldensian Church), whose headquarters, so to speak, lie on the Italian side of the border with France (Turin area). Its beginnings date back to the twelfth century, when Pietro Valdo started to read the gospel and began preaching in the local language.¹⁸

16 One can mention only a couple of (almost “unavoidable”) exceptions in the issue 1995(4) (two articles in commemoration of Dooyeweerd’s 100th birth-year). The article by Paul Wells (2007) on “reformational” political theory deals with Calvin and Althusius, but does not mention reformational authors.

17 Interestingly, a series of eight articles was recently published by Jacob Klapwijk (1997; 1999a; 1999b; 1999c; 2000a; 2000b; 2000c; 2000d) in the French academic journal *Hokhma*, which hosted some neo-Calvinist writings before (e.g. Courthial, 1980).

18 Pietro Valdo (converted about 1150) was *the first* of a series of candidate-reformers (e.g. Jan Huss, John Wycliff) who preceded Luther and Calvin. This is

The Waldensian Church suffered huge persecutions during the medieval phase of its life and finally joined the Calvinist Reformation, after the synod of Chanforan of 1532 (Conte, 1983). With the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), Louis XIV started the persecution of the Huguenots and convinced Amedeo II of Savoy to do the same with the Calvinists of Piedmont. It is interesting to note that, as a consequence, some of them later emigrated to South Africa!¹⁹

Yet the more recent history of the Waldensian Church is (at least from a doctrinal point of view) less "heroic". Whatever the case, the penetration of neo-Calvinism in Italy occurred without its help. Amazingly, however, neo-Calvinism was introduced in Italy by a few evangelicals who were surely not expected to perform that task. We are speaking about some sectors of a Chiesa dei Fratelli (Church of the Brethren) in Northern Italy, a descendant of those Chiese Libere (Free Churches) which (cf. section 2) are related to the Free Churches of Switzerland.²⁰ The introduction of neo-Calvinist views in Italy is due especially to the work of Pietro Bolognesi (born 1946).

6.2 Further focus

After the Second World War, the churches of the Brethren in Italy were not very sympathetic towards theologians or academics in general. Their members were mostly from the popular class and the emphasis was on communal church governance, personal piety with

why the Waldensian Church regards itself as *Mater Reformationis* (Mother of the Reformation).

- 19 Some of the persecuted Waldensians went to the Netherlands (via France) and were later offered to settle in South Africa, to work for the Dutch East India Company. Arriving in South Africa, however, they were no more distinguished from the French Huguenots. The transcription of their surnames resulted in all sorts of misspellings. Most probably, argues Sani (1990:11-19), this is how Viglione became "Viljoen", Botta became "Botha", Lombard/o became "Lombaard" and so on. As a consequence, Sani (1990:11-19) observes, the percentage of Italians in the first settlements of the Cape could have constituted up to 15% of the initial white population (600-1 500 persons between 1688-1710). This means that the "volume" of Italian blood in the veins of the present Afrikaner nation may be higher than one would expect!
- 20 The Italian Fratelli, as Maselli (1974:32 ff.) demonstrates, are not a derivation of the Plymouth Brethren or of the Darbyst movement. Though there have been contacts between these parties, the Italian Brethren were initially influenced by the Swiss Reveil and then had a rather independent development.

scarce interest for the broader cultural implications of the gospel. The initial contacts with Swiss Calvinism had long been forgotten.²¹

Yet during the 1950s and 1960s a few individuals in the area of Bologna developed reformed convictions (at least in their soteriology, but probably in a wider form). Among them, Pietro Bolognesi decided (early 1970s) to complete a course of theological studies in Paris, at the Faculté Libre de Théologie Evangelique de Vaux-sur-Seine (Paris area). At that stage his initiative was probably unique. He studied under Henri Blocher, and was systematically exposed to reformed-baptist views. He also met the ideas of Dooyeweerd, Vollenhoven and other neo-Calvinist philosophers.

When Bolognesi returned to Italy, he started a missionary work in Padua (1975). He was also one of the lecturers of the Istituto Biblico Evangelico (IBE) in Rome (now IBEI). There he tried to promote the views which he had absorbed in France, especially through the pages of *Studi di teologia* (old series: 1978-1988), which was then a journal of IBE. Eventually, the reaction from IBE and from the local churches was quite severe and Bolognesi had to withdraw from teaching (1988). This was the loss of an important contact with the young students, the future leaders of several denominations.

What remained was a few, small congregations in the Lombard Plane. The combination of reformed-baptist-brethren doctrines in those churches would surely be considered a bit "eccentric" by orthodox reformed pastors and theologians. Yet, as far as their basic doctrines and their worldview were concerned, they felt they were "reformed". It is in those communities that the project of a new theological centre emerged: the Istituto di Formazione Evangelica e Documentazione (IFED – founded 1988), to be located in Padova (Padua) with *Studi di teologia* (*nuova serie/new series*, from 1989) as official journal.

It is especially in those pages that Bolognesi as editor, translated and published several articles promoting a neo-Calvinist type of worldview. Probably IFED's most important contribution towards reformational scholarship was the translation (by the present author) and publication (by *Studi di teologia*) of the "Five conferences" of Dooyeweerd (1994) with the title: *The new task of a Christian philo-*

21 The first communities of the Brethren, in several countries, were quite familiar with Calvinist views. In England, for example, Rowdon (1994:4) writes that he "could not find a single arminian among the first Brethren".

sophy. In addition, the same journal published articles of Probst and Courthial, but also of the more “classical” reformational thinkers, like Hendrik Hart, W.S. Reid, Calvin Seerveld, Hans Rookmaker, Jan Dengerink, Hebden-Taylor or Edward Fackerell.

At the same time, *Studi di teologia* published a wide range of vantilian authors: Van Til himself and often John Frame, Poythress and Edgar. The reconstructionists Rushdoony and Bahnsen appeared as well. Gradually, a small group of people acquainted with (or at least aware of) neo-Calvinist thinking was growing within and around IFED. Apart from the present author, one may mention the names of Paul Finch, and later Leonardo De Chirico and Giuseppe Rizza.

6.3 The vantilian turn in Italy: a *déjà vu*.

Unfortunately, once again the inclination towards exclusive monopoly (to the detriment of reformational authors) presented itself in Italy as well. The vantilian “turn” in Italy coincides with the French turn, though its effects were a bit delayed. The first signals of a change of attitude started after a visit to the Netherlands by Bolognesi, during which he attended the second Symposium (1982) of the Society for Reformational Philosophy.

Like the French developments, slowly but surely the vantilian turn took hold in Italy. True, an important text by Dooyeweerd (1994) was still published for the first time in Italian and introduced to the evangelical public. However, the editorial presentation by Bolognesi made it clear that it was not the direction to go. The following issue of *Studi di teologia* was finally dedicated to the true hero, Cornelius van Til.²² As it happened with *La revue réformée*, vantilian and reconstructionist authors continued to be published, while the dooyeweerdian authors disappeared²³ around 1996, the year in which, due to disagreement about IFED’s policies, Coletto decided to leave IFED and Padua.

6.4 Other contributions from Italy

Apart from IFED, one can notice a few other traces of interest for dooyeweerdian scholarship in Italy. (Interestingly, all the authors

22 *Studi di teologia (new series)*, 7(1), 1995, issue n. 13.

23 Up to the present, the only exception is an article by Schrottenboer (2002).

mentioned in this section are members of the Fratelli).²⁴ One of the earliest traces dates back to 1975, when Massimo Rubboli, then professor at the University of Florence, wrote an interesting essay with the title: *The role of religion in Herman Dooyeweerd's philosophy* (Rubboli, 1975). Later on, he also spent one year at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto. He does not regard himself as a neo-Calvinist thinker (Rubboli, 1987), but it is interesting that he knew about that particular institute and studied there.

On the spur of Rubboli's work a student from Parma, Paola Pagani, wrote a thesis at the University of Bologna with the title: *Philosophy and religion in Herman Dooyeweerd's thought* (Pagani, 1985). In more recent times G.C. di Gaetano has presented a thesis at the University of Chieti with the title: *The Christian philosophy of Herman Dooyeweerd* (e.g. Di Gaetano, 1995), which was followed by other articles (Di Gaetano, 1999)²⁵ and one paper presented in English at the 2005 Symposium of the Society for Reformational Philosophy in the Netherlands (Di Gaetano, 2005). This article is placed in Steve Bishop's website for reformational philosophy (cf. Di Gaetano, 2005) and it offers further information on the interaction of a few Italian academics with the School of Plantinga, Wolterstorff, Alston and others. The fact that this article is available on the internet opens another chapter of this history, and brings new hopes with it. In fact, with diffused access to internet it may be possible that the contact with neo-Calvinist ideas and circles might be facilitated even for individuals living in "previously disadvantaged" areas.

7. Reflections and questions

Having detected some of the few "footprints" of the neo-Calvinist movement in France and Italy, a few reflections are in order. The kuyperian movement was split, unfortunately, to the detriment of its reformational branch which had first introduced reformational philosophy in these two countries. What can the causes be? What can be learnt? Apart from Italy and France, I trust the following notes could be relevant in other contexts as well.

24 The majority of the Italian Assemblies of the Fratelli, however, did not welcome the neo-Calvinist turn of some of the Assemblies of the Lombard Plane and from 2006 the latter group withdrew from the Brethren and formed the Evangelical Reformed Baptist Churches of Italy (CERBI). It reminds one of the lack of support experienced by Kayayan's ministry in his own denomination.

25 The translated title reads: *Who's the man: rediscovering the Dutch philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd* (Di Gaetano, 1999).

Perhaps one should start by noticing that the vantilians were mainly theologians and pastors. The latter, often feeling “on top” of the Christian enterprise (especially in countries where protestantism is a small minority-group), were often suspicious of organised Christian action “outside” the (institutional) church, suspicious of non-ecclesiastical leaders and of extra-theological studies.

In addition, pastors and theologians sometimes reject a lifeview which is more integral and biblical because they are used to worldviews dominated by the nature-grace dualism. In a recent article I (Coletto, 2009a:31-33) tried to show how a vantilian worldview is often prisoner of a nature-grace dialectics, for example when it comes to theorising about and practicing Christian scholarship. According to an old diagnosis by Vander Stelt (1978:220-270), the roots of the problem lie in the influence of Scottish common-sense realism, which afflicted Presbyterian North American theology from the beginnings. Van Til opposed several tenets of Scottish realism, but Vander Stelt hints that his approach may still be affected by the same disease.

On the other hand, however, one may ask whether the lacunae are all on the side of the vantilians. Perhaps the reformational group uses a type of language which is not so adequate. It appeals to abstract concepts which are not easy for everyone to grasp. The vantilians, on the contrary, keep speaking a language which is more familiar to theologians and pastors. It is the language of the Bible, of the quoted verses: they tend to refer to the biblical basis justifying their positions.

To this argument, however, one may object that when reformational thinking is presented in more “biblical” and accessible language, it is sometimes equally neglected or opposed. I have especially in mind the contribution of B.J. van der Walt, who has done a tremendous work to popularise reformational ideas. This issue reminds one of the gospel words: “we played the flute for you and you did not dance. We sang a dirge and you did not mourn” (Matt. 11:16-17).

Another possible reason for limited reformational success may be that the vantilians are perceived as more *orthodox*. Perhaps the debates over the word of God in the early 1970s created the impression that the doctrinal orthodoxy of the reformational movement was weak. Yet it is difficult to imagine that this may still be a serious obstacle. The reformational movement might have shown some

inclination to explore new theological avenues, but it cannot, in my opinion,²⁶ be considered as particularly heterodox. And then, is Rushdoony so orthodox? Why is the proposal to execute adulterers or blasphemers in the present dispensation not perceived as problematic? One has the impression that there is something “mysterious” about these issues and that behind a formal recognition of the merits of the reformational movement, there may remain some sort of hidden hostility. Perhaps a special effort should also be made to understand the real roots of this eventual hostility.

Ironically, yet sadly, after marginalising other members of the neo-Calvinist family, the vantilians have often been marginalised in their own denominations, both in France and Italy (cf. fn. 24). On the moment they have retreated into a few safe harbours, but there is no forecast of big advances or of significant contributions in extra-theological fields.

It is my impression that the reformational “party” has maintained a more loyal, inclusive and open attitude. But perhaps it is not yet sufficiently sensitive to the difficulties of communication. This may be particularly true of the communication with theologians and pastors. It is astonishing to realise, for example, that one of the most effective answers to Van Til’s (1971:89-127) very fundamental objections to Dooyeweerd’s philosophy lies untranslated in an old issue of the Dutch academic journal *Radix* (Griffioen, 1988). A simple translation into English would have given the new generation of vantilians, in many countries, a chance of reconsidering the reformational position.

I would like to conclude this section with a question which is probably the most important one: would it be possible for the future, to think and act in more “ecumenical” ways? Would it ever be possible, for the neo-Calvinist families, to be united on the great deal they have in common rather than insisting on what divides?

8. Conclusion

In a sense the history of the neo-Calvinist movement in France and Italy is not one of success, especially when one considers the reformational branch. Nevertheless, one should express one’s thankfulness for the results that could be achieved. After all, there is something to mention in a context in which, numerically speaking, the

26 See section 4 of my forthcoming article (Coletto, 2010).

protestant community is rather marginal. And then, is this present article not written by an Italian philosopher in the *reformational* tradition? We have also noticed that even today a few authors keep alive the flame of neo-Calvinist thinking both in Italy and France. To achieve better results, however, I believe a more cooperative attitude would be necessary.

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Reflections on a Christian view of human communication

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Abstract

Reflections on a Christian view of human communication

This article defines human communication as community building and describes the various functions of communication in life. It argues that a number of other human activities are presupposed in communication without which communication would not be possible. These activities are its inherent functions. Community building is described as the authentic function of communication. Without it communication would not be what it is. Lastly, there are several social activities that depend on communication for their existence. These are what communication is for. Such functions form the adherent functions of communication. Next the article describes a set of norms or criteria for distinguishing good communication from bad. Then follows a description of some models of communication found in the literature. These are seen as less than full descriptions of actual human communication. A few of these models reduce communication to one or more of its inherent functions. One honours the authentic function but none of them do justice to the adherent functions of communication. In addition, the article briefly describes and evaluates mass media communication. Because of its monological nature this communication can only produce one-way messages from sender to receiver. It thus gives the sender an unfair advantage of influence over the receiver. Dialogical communication remedies that problem and is to be preferred because in it the influence is mutual between the sender and the receiver of a message. However, it fails to account for the influence of such communication on third parties

not involved in the dialogical relationship. The article, therefore, favours what it calls a triological form of communicating. In closing the article briefly describes social networking as the latest form of human communication.

Opsomming

Reflektering op 'n Christelike uitkyk op menslike kommunikasie

Hierdie artikel definieer menslike kommunikasie as gemeenskapsopbouing en beskryf verskeie funksies van kommunikasie. Daar word geargumenteer dat 'n aantal ander menslike aktiwiteite in kommunikasie vooronderstel word waarsonder kommunikasie nie moontlik sou wees nie. Hierdie aktiwiteite is inherente funksies. Gemeenskapsopbouing word beskryf as die outentieke funksie van kommunikasie. Daarsonder sou kommunikasie nie kon wees wat dit is nie. Laastens is daar ook verskeie sosiale aktiwiteite wat van kommunikasie afhanklik is vir hulle voortbestaan. Dit is waarvoor kommunikasie daar is. Sodanige funksies vorm die adherente funksies van kommunikasie. Vervolgens beskryf die artikel 'n stel norme of kriteria om goeie kommunikasie van slegte kommunikasie te onderskei. Daarna volg 'n verduideliking van sommige van die kommunikasiemodelle wat in die literatuur gevind kan word. Dit is egter nie volledige beskrywings van werklike menslike kommunikasie nie. 'n Paar van hierdie modelle reduseer kommunikasie tot een of meer van die inherente funksies van kommunikasie. Een erken die outentieke funksie, maar geeneen laat reg geskied aan die adherente funksies van kommunikasie nie. Verder beskryf en evalueer die artikel kortliks massamedia-kommunikasie. As gevolg van die monologiese aard van hierdie kommunikasie kan slegs eenrigtingboodskappe vanaf die sender na die ontvanger gestuur word. Dus word 'n onregverdigde voordeel aan die sender verleen ten opsigte van die beïnvloeding van die ontvanger. Dialogiese kommunikasie dien as oplossing vir die genoemde probleem en word daarom verkies, omdat hiermee die invloed tussen sender en ontvanger wedersyds gelyk is. Hierdie model hou egter nie rekening met die invloed daarvan op 'n derde party wat nie direk by die dialogiese verhouding betrokke is nie. Hierdie artikel verkies dus wat genoem word 'n triologiese vorm van kommunikasie. Ten slotte beskryf die artikel kortliks sosiale netwerking as die mees onlangste vorm van menslike kommunikasie.

1. Reflection on the nature of human communication

This article is a *reflection* on communication only. It has the character of thinking out loud and is offered in appreciation to Professor Dr. Bennie van der Walt who has done so much to promote cross-

cultural communication in Africa. The article utilises the philosophical framework developed by Dooyeweerd (1953), and especially his idea that reality has a modal horizon that allows our theoretical analysis to conceptualise a multiplicity of unique, mutually irreducible, yet interconnected aspects. Within this general philosophical framework I am very much in debt to the insights of the late P.A. Verburg, who during his life was professor of Linguistics at the State University of Groningen, the Netherlands.

This article deals exclusively with communication as a human activity and begins by asking what human communication is. To my understanding, communication is the activity of community building. Another way of saying this is that communication includes every human activity that fosters our communality, as distinguished from our individuality. The work of communication is the work of *communification* (Latin: *ficere*: to make). In communication people seek to have things in common. The communicative side of life is the human drive of individuals to become one with other individuals. The process of communication is sharing, and its product is multi-unity.

Communication is the human activity in which two or more communicators express themselves to one another with the intent of sharing themselves with one another. Communication is expression that fosters communality. The activity of communication is a necessary condition for the existence of interhuman relations and for the existence of communities, including social entities such as friendship, marriage, family, organisations, et cetera, thus loosely what we mean when we indicate *society*. The fostering and maintenance of communality or society requires the activity of communication. Communication is the human activity by two or more co-communicators of forming and maintaining social entities or groupings such as interhuman relationships and communities.

Both culture and society are dependent on human communication. They are the products of human communication in the sense that culture and society consist of a set of rules and conventions which people formulate, maintain and change in the course of communicating with one another. Culture and society would cease to exist the moment people would stop communicating with one another.

Habermas (1981), a prominent hermeneutic philosopher, has written extensively on how social rules and conventions come into being, how they are maintained and how they can be changed. He argues that rules and conventions originate in, and are maintained by dialogue, or the activity of communication. His main point is that if

dialogue can call rules and conventions into being and can maintain them, it can also change them. Following his insight we can therefore say that communication offers us the opportunity to call good social conventions into being and to maintain them, while at the same time it gives us the ability to edit bad conventions out of existence.

2. Reflection on how communication functions in human life

Another way to define communication is to describe how it functions in human life or how it relates to other human activities. To do that there must, first of all, be distinguished between “functions of” and “functions for” communication.

Many human activities are functions of communication. Conversely communication itself functions as part of many other human activities; it is for these other activities. Another way of saying this is to say that communication has an *authentic* function, *inherent* functions and *adherent* functions (Verburg, 1951; 1965; 1971; see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Communication functions in human life as ...

Concrete things/activities	Qualifying function	
		(Verburg)
Religious institutions (church, party, ideological camp)	Faith keeping	
Marriage/family	Caring	Adherent function (for)
Public relations/government	Political	
Industrial organizations for example within	Economic	
Socio-cultural institutions (of any kind) occurs within	Social	
Communication (forming of communities)	Communicative	Authentic function (is)
Referring/expression	Lingual	
Interpretation/judgment thinking/imagining awareness/memory	Intellectual	

Perceptual forming emotional reaction sensation/affect (who are capable of)	Psychological	Inherent function (of)
by 2 (or more) Organisms (communication is embodied)	Biological	
via a Physical medium (excludes telepathic communication)	Physical	
Between 2 (or more) persons (excludes <i>intra</i> personal communication)	Numerical	

2.1 Authentic function of communication

The question about the unique function of communication in human life is answered by describing its authentic function. This is done in section 1 above.

2.2 Inherent functions of communications

A second way of describing communication is to analyse what communication entails, what other human activities are implied in communication, and what its inherent functions are. What do we presuppose when we say that people communicate with one another? We assume the existence of at least two individuals who are numerically distinct and who both have the capacity to communicate with one another. This formulation implies that intrapersonal communication ("talking to yourself") is an analogous way of talking about communication only, i.e. it looks like it, but is not communication.

When we say that people communicate we further assume that people interact with one another via some physical medium or another. People must in some way or another be physically in contact with each other to communicate. This formulation excludes telepathic communication. Thirdly we assume that communication is always "embodied". It presupposes the presence of at least two distinct organisms with nervous systems which function with a minimum of adequacy. Thus, my formulation entails that disembodied communication is no more possible than disembodied thought.

Next, we presuppose that human beings who communicate are capable of psychological functioning. That is to say, the definition entails that they must be capable of sensation, i.e. they must be in some kind of psychological contact. They must also be capable of emotional reaction and perception to be able to communicate.

Furthermore, we presuppose that communicators are capable of intellectual functioning, i.e. that they have such cognitive abilities as awareness and memory, thinking and imagining as well as interpretation, judgment and valuation.

Finally, communication presupposes the capacity for lingual functioning, i.e. the capacity for "symbolic objectification". This is the ability of communicators to refer to the concrete entities and events of their world in terms of symbols such as words, gestures, signs and images. It also includes the ability to express these symbols.

A less exact way of describing what communication entails is to say that it presupposes at least two organisms, who are in physical contact with one another, who are stimulated, who sense, perceive, are aware, who remember, who think, who judge and who speak. All of the human characteristics described above are presupposed in human communication. However, all of these together do not yet describe communication. What must be added is communication itself, these activities must be done with the intent of forming society.

2.3 Adherent functions of communications

Until now, the human functions involved in communication have been described, including its own authentic function in human life, without which human life would not be what it is. In short, the human activities inherent in communication have been described as well as which human activity *qualifies* it, i.e. what human activity uniquely describes what it is. The adherent functions of communication refer to those human activities that are made possible by communication. They are what communication is for. They are those human functions of which communication is itself an inherent function. Adherent functions imply communication. Without communication they would not be possible. Typical examples of the adherent functions of communication would be its inherent functioning in social activity, in commerce, in the (fine) arts, in the justice system, in relationships and communities formed to practice neighbourly love and in relationships and communities in which human beings confess an ideology or a religion. The Greek word for *confession*, (*homologia*) means "saying the same thing as". This suggests that confession has a built-in urge to form community.

The human activities which form the adherent functions of communication are not themselves communicative activities, but communication is embedded in these activities. People never just communicate. They always communicate as part of, and as expression of

their being with one another, working together, dealing justly with one another, loving one another and sharing their beliefs with one another, et cetera.

3. Norms for judging the process and products of communication

How do we know whether a given communication process is good or bad? The first thing to note is that people *do* regularly distinguish between good and bad communication. We say, quoting the Bible, that bad communication or conversation makes for a bad character. We talk about the negative influence of peer pressure, about the media making inroads into the church, and into family life. We say that advertising on television creates a mass consumer mentality, or that it fosters common denominator tastes. We speak of negotiating in bad faith and of a breakdown in communication. We note that sometimes people talk past one another, and we speak of one-sided conversations, of people fighting with one another without regard for its effect on innocent third parties, et cetera. We consider many forms of actual communication that are bad for people's lives, but how do we judge these activities in communication terms? In what way are these bad forms of communication? To make this judgement we must have norms, or criteria for communication. Where do we get them? At this point I can make some suggestions only. These need to be worked out in more detail to be useful for judging forms of communication.

For example, we can use biblical norms. I can think of three biblical metaphors that can function as norms. There is first of all the metaphor of the Christian community as the "body of Christ", which forbids all power tripping forms of communication. In the body of Christ we are called to recognise only one person as the authority, Christ the head of the body, and to treat one another equally as members of that body. According to this metaphor good communication is egalitarian and inclusive.

The second biblical metaphor is confession or *homologia*, the root meaning of which is "saying the same thing". I believe this metaphor points to the fact that, whereas bad communication often divides, good communication promotes unity.

The last metaphor is one which St. Paul often uses at the beginning of his letters, when he writes to his readers, "I urge you", or "I plead with you", or "I admonish you", or "I exhort you ...". These are all translation of the one Greek word, *parakalein*, which literally means

“to call near”. It is St. Paul’s overriding passion to call his readers near(er) to Christ, based on his conviction that in Christ all things, including humanity, hang together. Thus, for St. Paul, good communication ultimately can only be Christ-centered communication.

We do not need to use religious language to norm communication. We can also use creational norms. We can distinguish between good and bad communication by distinguishing between community and uniformity as the result of communication. Good communication recognises the importance of individual differences. The result of communication should be a unity in diversity, not sameness. The product should be com-unity rather than uni-formity.

This was an example of a creational norm at the group level of communication. At the level of (inter-)individual communication the norm for distinguishing good from bad communication could be the distinction between authenticity and manipulation. This norm dictates that communication should be genuine, without dissimulation. It should not be aimed at getting the better of one’s communication partner.

Finally, to distinguish good communication from bad we can utilise norms related to the direction of the flow of information in communication. In monological communication one person or party sends a message and the other receives it. The danger of this form of communication is that the sender may have undue influence over the receiver of the message. This is why some people (e.g. Buber, 1955; 1958) have argued that good communication should be dialogical. Dialogical communication is a form of communication in which both parties send and receive messages. In this form of communication it is more likely that the influence between the communicators is mutual. However, even dialogical communication cannot avoid adversely affecting certain individuals. In many forms of dialogue there are third parties, who are not part of the dialogue but whose lives may be profoundly affected by the dialogue. This is why I believe that all forms of communication should be triological. That is, the conversations two parties may have or cease to have, the alliances they make or break; or the decisions they agree on in the course of their dialogue should not hurt third parties who are not part of their conversation or alliance. Obvious examples of situations where this is a concern are parents divorcing, people gossiping, and collusion in business deals. These are some of the communication norms that I believe can help to distinguish good communication from bad.

4. Norms for judging models of communication

There are many descriptions of communication in the literature. Using these as models to describe communication can provide us with insight. They can also lead us astray. Are these models adequate descriptions of what actually goes on when human beings communicate? How do we judge? I believe we can judge their adequacy by using the authentic, inherent and adherent functions of communication as norms or criteria. When we do that, we note that perhaps all of these models are reductionistic descriptions of communication. They tend to define communication in terms of one of its inherent functions. Let's have a look at them.

4.1 Transmission model of communication

The transmission model of communication (Carey, 1989) is the oldest and probably the most reductionistic. It describes the process of communication as a (physical) signal emission-detection process. In this view communication is like the operation of a telegraph, or telephone system. This model is of historical interest only. As a model of communication it is not used any more.

4.2 Information processing model of communication

What has taken its place is an information processing model (Shanon & Weaver, 1949). It is by far the most popular model today. In essence this model is a computer analogue, in which a sender encodes a message and sends it via a channel, where at the other end a receiver decodes it.

4.3 Interaction model of communication

Next is the interaction model of communication (Wiener, 1950; 1961). This model recognises that in communication the receiver influences the sender via feedback. The theory goes as follows: A sends a message via a channel to B. However, B does not receive the message as it was sent, due to noise in the channel. B feeds back his imperfect reception of the message to A, whereupon A modifies the message taking in account the feedback he receives from B, until B gets the message as it is sent by A. When this happens, the noise in the channel is said to be reduced to zero. This is the model of the philosophy of Cybernetics or Systems theory. This model also holds that communications between people and people, between people and machines, and between machines and machines are fully interchangeable. Norbert Wiener, the father of

Cybernetics theory states (Matson, 1967:16): "When I give an order to a machine, the situation is not essentially different from when I give an order to a person." It will be clear that this view reduces human communication to a mechanical process that is done better by machines. The critique of this view by Jacques Barzun, (Matson, 1967:105) another communication theorist, is, therefore apt. He wrote: "Greater love of the machine cannot be conceived than that man should think his own mind inferior to the thing he has made."

4.4 Transaction model of communication

There is also a transaction model of communication (Matson, 1967: 209). This model recognises that there is a mutual influence between the sender and the receiver as the interaction model has noted. It adds to this that the influence between the sender and the receiver goes on simultaneously and not successively.

4.5 Interpersonal relations model of communication

The interpersonal relations (IPR) model (Rogers, 1961) recognises that both the sender and the receiver in human communication are persons or subjects. This theory argues that factors inside the communicators and how they view their worlds decisively, determine the communication process. Communication is essentially an interview, an exchange of viewpoints and no more. The emphasis here is on the personhood of the communicators. This model stresses that people who communicate have something to say.

4.6 Dialogue model of communication

The dialogue model of communication (Buber, 1955; 1958) emphasises what goes on *between* the communicators. Like the transaction model it holds that communication is a relation, but unlike the transaction model, it stresses that communication is a relation between subjects or persons. Communication is an intersubjectivity, an activity of relating in which the communicators participate.

5. Critique of these models of communication: reductionism

It seems to me that all of these models are reductionistic descriptions, and therefore inadequate descriptions of actual human communication. This reductionism is clear in the case of the information processing and the transmission models. These reduce communication to its machine analogue. Their fundamental error is that they do

not recognise that machines only communicate when there is someone at either end of the process who has something to say or to understand.

This fact is more clearly noted in the interaction and the transaction models, and it is especially stressed in the IPR model, where the emphasis is on two persons expressing themselves. However, even these models are reductionistic. They cannot explain why people would want to express themselves or have something to say. The authentic function of communication explains that people express themselves to one another in order to form or to modify communities. By not including the authentic function of communication in their model the interaction, the transaction and the IPR models reduce communication to its inherent functions.

What about the dialogue model? With its emphasis on intersubjectivity it does seem to include the authentic function in its description. It too is reductionistic however, because it cannot account for the different kinds of communication that exist. It does not explain why people form communities, because it does not include the adherent functions of communication into its model. People communicate in order to work together, run a country together, to show neighbourly love to one another, to keep the faith together. Since these different functions occur in different institutions, they require different kinds of communication. The way people communicate in marriage, for instance, is quite different from the way they communicate at work – or at least the way they communicate should be different.

To summarise: the transmission and information processing models reduce communication to some of its inherent functions. The interaction, the transaction and the IPR models reduce communication to all of its inherent functions. And the dialogue model reduces communication to its inherent functions plus its authentic function. Consequently, none of the current models gives a full description of communication as it actually occurs in human life.

6. Mass media communication

A definition of mass communication can be as follows:

Mass communication is any communication that uses graphic, electronic, speech, print or nonverbal devices designed to communicate with large groups of people who are not immediately present. Mass communication is mediated, rather

than face to face communication. Its chief aim is to create, gather and to deliver messages, to express worldviews and to interpret data in terms of these worldviews. The role of mass media communication is to promote communality and the product of this process is a shared outlook on life.

In distinction from face to face communication, mediated mass communication lacks the personal presence of co-communicators. It consists of one, or a few communicators sending messages to many, to a mass. It is, therefore, monological and it creates an audience. It requires a specific type of message. It emits a climax type of message, that is, it overdramatises, it sensationalises, and it stylises the message content. It also requires audience analysis. That is to say, it requires an analysis of the needs, the wants and the preferences of a variable audience. It gears its messages to these needs and produces common denominator values.

Mass communication is necessarily dependent on technology. This dependence imposes its own inherent restrictions on mass communication. These restrictions entail that this medium can only communicate by means of news flashes or news clips, and by headlines, maximum impact images, the ad jingles, and disconnected discourse with multiple repetitions. All these discourage a leisurely examination of the message. Mass communication controls much of the flow and content of the information it presents. Therefore, in distinction from other forms of communication, it has a major social impact on its audience.

Via its products, such as advertisements and programs, via its technologies, such as television sets, radios, stereo sets, records, CDs, and computers, and via its popular culture manifested in hits, films, designer clothes, hair styles, fashion accessories, fads, life styles, et cetera it defines our culture often as a consumer culture. Furthermore, by its selective coverage of social problems it sets the agenda for our society. No individual or group can place an issue on the public agenda without media coverage. For all these reasons the mass communication media function as gatekeepers of public opinion. Mass communication media inform and train us and, therefore, educate us. They also define what teaching and learning is. They shape our beliefs, our values, our view of others, our view of ourselves and our view of society as a whole. They define social conflicts and how these should be resolved.

Mass communication media unduly influence the other social institutions of our lives – those of family, marriage, government, business

and the way people communicate in those institutions. Mass communication media influence family conversation, and political behaviour due to coverage of government figures. It influences the way business is run by the public attitudes it constructs.

Finally, the mass communication media are a commercial enterprise, at least in North America. They are economically sponsored. Those who sponsor the media want to sell a product. Ultimately psychographs determine what will be shown, heard or written about. Moreover, the ratings and the circulation figures will determine whether something continues to be shown, heard or written about.

Because they have an undue monopoly on the flow of information, the mass communication media are frequently involved in debates about freedom of expression, of publication, and of the press over against prior restraint, or prepublication censorship based on what is acceptable to the public. On the one hand the mass communication media are required to refrain from creating sedition, from libel and from slander, and in addition they must be objective in their reporting. On the other hand there is the public's right to know and the need, for example, for the media to be the fourth estate, i.e. to be a check on, a watchdog of, and an adversary with respect to government. Again, this does not give the media a license to publish anything. The private lives of public figures, be they politicians, movie stars, the victims or the accused of crimes must be protected. Where to draw the limits is, however, often not an easy matter to decide.

7. Some suggestions of a Christian response to mass communication media

From the foregoing it will be clear that mass media communication is by nature linear and monological rather than dialogic or interactive. Most of the people involved in mass media communication are recipients of its messages. They do not send messages, they can only respond to the messages they receive. They are like ethnic minorities in a majority culture. The chances are higher that they assimilate the messages of the mass media communication than that the latter should change its messages to suite its recipients. The influence of the mass media communication is currently pervasive in our lives. It is an intrusive influence and its messages are by now embedded in our very souls. How should Christians respond to this influence?

We can reject the media. This is the way of the Amish. These Christians have banished all forms of modern communication from their communities. The result, however, is cultural isolation.

We can also accommodate ourselves to them. This approach uses the media for Christian purposes, e.g. televangelism. The problem with this approach is that it leaves the media as such largely untouched. This way of relating to the media also means that the gospel will have to be accommodated to the media.

My preferred response is that we transform or reform the media. This approach is taken by Christians who study and critique the existing media, who produce healing alternatives to them, and who support people who do this reforming work for a living.

8. Current model of communication: social networking

An entirely new form of communication, called social networking (Pew Research Center, 2010:32-43) is currently becoming popular, especially among young people.

Supported by a vast array of computer information and communication technologies such as e-mail, mobile phones, google, skype, facebook, myspace, blogging, twitter, and YouTube this form of communication represents a revolution in mass communication practices. It is an inherently interactive form of communication and it gives consumers a much greater freedom of choice to express their individual preferences about what is offered than was possible with earlier information and communication technologies like television, print and other visual or auditory media.

More than ever before expressions of personal preference are beginning to dictate what is offered in the traditional media as news, entertainment, consumer products and even truth. Consumers are continually contacted and consulted about their views on these matters, and they readily voice their opinions about the value of whatever is being offered. Moreover, they do so communally. Via blogging they band themselves together into virtual communities of preference. This goes so far as that the truth or value of any issue debated in the public domain is now no longer decided by some socially accepted external criterion but is entirely determined by the number of individual expressions of preference. Moreover, people are spending a considerable amount of their time online each day informing one another about their preferences and their opinions.

This form of communication is too recent a phenomenon for anyone to be able to properly reflect on it and do justice to it. A few remarks in closing will have to suffice. The model of communication that best fits social networking is the interpersonal relations model, and like this model, it has its strengths and its weaknesses. It certainly has increased the frequency with which people personally relate to one another albeit online rather than face to face. But one gets the impression that the communicating that occurs does not go beyond an exchange of personal opinions and preferences. At its best, therefore, social networking produces only interviews between the communicators. Social networkers tend to have an aversion longer lasting social institutions. It is doubtful, therefore, whether real contact is ever made between the communicators or that something common is created like a revision of a societal structure via social networking. Thus, it falls short of meeting the criteria we set out for communication at the beginning of this article as the activity of community building.

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Key concepts:

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Kernbegrippe:

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gemeenskapsbou
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monoloog
sosiale netwerking



***Hermeneia*: 'n teologiese gesprek oor hermeneutiese vrae met drie Suid-Afrikaanse teoloë¹**

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Abstract

***Hermeneia*: a theological discourse on hermeneutical issues with three South African theologians**

There is an interdenominational Council among the Afrikaans churches that meets from time to time to discuss topical matters. This article contains a revision of a presentation on hermeneutics given during such a meeting in 2009. In the article some introductory remarks are made on hermeneutics and subsequently the author critically investigates – for the sake of discussion – the hermeneutical models set up by three theologians from three churches. Right through it is apparent what a great role hermeneutics plays in the interpretation of Scripture – and should play. Since it is particularly topical and significant one theme from theology, namely Christology, is subjected to a more thorough investigation. Finally the author

1 Hierdie artikel is 'n omwerking van 'n voordrag wat op 3-4 November 2009 buite Potchefstroom gelewer is tydens 'n byeenkoms van die Tussenkerklike Raad van Afrikaanse Kerke. Dit word met dank aan Bennie van der Walt opgedra vir die reuse bydrae wat hy gelewer het op die terrein van (veral Afrika se) Christelike filosofie en teologie. In sy geskrifte keer hy telkens terug na die vraag van 'n juiste Skrifverstaan en die betekenis van die openbaring (veral ook die belangrikheid van die sg. "natuuropenbaring") asook die bepalende rol wat vooronderstellings en lewensbeskouing by ons Skrifverstaan speel (vgl. Van der Walt, 1989:74-96; 1992:52-68; 1994:56-89; 1999:87-120; 2008a:13-48; 2008b: 635-663; 2010a:48-78; 2010b:1-29).

proposes some guidelines which in his opinion could contribute to a better understanding of Scripture. The polemic nature of the article has to be understood against the background of the history of its origin.

Opsomming

Hermeneia: 'n teologiese gesprek oor hermeneutiese vrae met drie Suid-Afrikaanse teoloë

Onder die Afrikaanse kerke bestaan 'n Tussenkerklike Raad wat van tyd tot tyd ontmoet om oor aktuele onderwerpe 'n gesprek te voer. Hierdie artikel bevat 'n verwerking van 'n voordrag oor hermeneutiek wat tydens so 'n ontmoeting in 2009 gelewer is. In die artikel word enkele inleidende opmerkings oor hermeneutiek gemaak, waarna die outeur – ter wille van die debat – die hermeneutiese modelle van drie teoloë uit drie kerke krities ondersoek. Deurgaans blyk watter groot rol hermeneutiek by Skrifinterpretasie speel – en behoort te speel. Vanweë die besondere aktualiteit en belangrikheid daarvan, is een tema uit die teologie, naamlik Christologie, aan 'n dieper ondersoek onderwerp. Ten slotte doen die skrywer enkele riglyne aan die hand wat syns insiens tot 'n beter Skrifverstaan kan bydra. Die polemiese aanslag van die artikel moet teen die agtergrond van die ontstaansgeskiedenis daarvan verstaan word.

1. Inleiding

Dat die hermeneutiek vandag in die sentrum van die teologiese debat staan, behoef geen lang betoog nie. Vanselfsprekend hang dit daarmee saam dat die Bybel, as Woord van God, 'n sentrale plek in die teologie, die kerk en die Christelike lewe inneem. Die vraag is onontwykbaar: presies wat sê God vandag vir sy kerk? Sê Hy dieselfde as wat Hy 1 600 jaar gelede vir Augustinus en 500 jaar gelede vir Calvin, asook die kerk van destyds, gesê het, of sê Hy vandag nuwe en ander dinge? Hoe kan ons as moderne mense die Bybel reg verstaan vir ons tyd en vir ons wêreld? Is dit hoegenaamd moontlik?

In hierdie verband kan gedink word aan resente debatte oor die vrou in die amp, homoseksualiteit, kloning en die veel ernstiger vraag na die opstanding van Jesus. Kan die hermeneutiek ons help om 'n sinvolle weg te vind tot 'n verantwoordelike Skrifinterpretasie en Skrifverstaan?

Met die oog op sodanige debat het ek dit goedgevind om met drie teoloë, een uit elk van die drie Afrikaanse kerkgemeenskappe, in

gesprek te tree. Die drie teoloë vertolk nie noodwendig die standpunte van die drie kerkgemeenskappe nie. Vanweë die sentrale belang daarvan vir die Christelike geloof, word ook op een kerndebatspunt, naamlik die Christologie, gefokus. Op hierdie wyse word gepoog om 'n bydrae te lewer tot die sinvolle voortgang van die interkerklike gesprek in die besonder, asook die beter verstaan van die Bybel in die algemeen.

As inleiding en agtergrond tot die gesprek word in breë trekke kortliks enkele inleidende opmerkings oor die term *hermeneutiek* gemaak. Die term is afgelei van die Griekse *hermeneuein*, wat beteken "om te interpreteer". Dit hou waarskynlik verband met Hermes, die boodskapper van die gode wat die (geheime) boodskappe van die gode aan mense moes oordra en verduidelik (Mudge, 2002: 250). Nie verniet nie word Paulus in Listre *Hermes* genoem (Hand. 14:12). Ook in die Nuwe Testament lees ons daarvan, byvoorbeeld in Lukas 24:27 waar Jesus die Ou Testament vir die Emmausgangers *diermeneusen* (Latyn: *interpretabatur*) (vgl. ook die verhaal van Filippus en die Etiopiër in Hand. 8:30-31, asook Petrus en Cornelius in Hand. 10:34). Die Ou Testament, en eweneens die Nuwe, vra om geïnterpreteer te word – korrek geïnterpreteer te word. Foutiewe interpretasie lei nie net tot groot misverstande nie, maar ook tot afgrondelike misstande. Dink maar aan die Skriftuurlike fundering wat aan die ideologie van apartheid verskaf is en watter nadelige gevolge dit vir die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing gehad het.

'n Werkbare definisie vir hermeneutiek is die volgende:

In its most general meaning, 'hermeneutics' designates that discipline whose object is the theoretical clarification of the issues involving human understanding. More narrowly, hermeneutics deals with the understanding of written, most often historically distant texts. The discussion within the field of hermeneutics focus on a network of topics including understanding, explanation, analysis, meaning and meaningfulness, interpretation, experience, textuality, appropriation, language, and historicity. The goal of hermeneutical reflection is to present a theoretically clear and responsible account that describes, informs, and at points guides the human situation of understanding as interpretation. (McCarthy, 1992:219; vgl. Smit, 1998:302.)

Verskillende groot name kan in hierdie verband genoem word, soos die volgende (vgl. Smit, 1998:300-301):²

- Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) met sy klem daarop dat ons eers 'n teks reg verstaan indien ons die bedoeling van die skrywer daarop reg verstaan.
- Wilhelm Dilthey (1844-1911) met sy aksent daarop dat ons die historiese distansie van nou en destyds moet oorbrug deur 'n inlewing in en rekonstruksie van die historiese situasie van destyds.
- Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) met sy hantering van die hermeneutiese sleutel: die interpreteerder leef in 'n voortdurende sirkel van voorverstaan, verstaan en steeds weer nuwe verstaan.
- Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) met sy aanspraak daarop dat waarheid slegs te vind is in 'n dialogiese proses van gesprek met die werklikheid, 'n gesprek tussen teks en interpreteerder, en dat ware verstaan voltrek word wanneer die twee horisonne ontmoet en versmelt.
- Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005) met sy aksentuering van die transformatiewe krag van 'n teks. Kennis van die waarheid laat ons nie onveranderd nie, maar daag ons uit tot 'n nuwe wyse van lewe en hoop.
- Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976) met sy ontmitologiseringsprogram waarin hy afskeid neem van die mitiese wêreldbeeld van die Bybel. Moderne mense wat met moderne tegnologie werk, kan nie meer in bonatuurlike dinge, soos byvoorbeeld die liggaamlike opstanding van Jesus, glo nie. Met sy eksistensiële interpretasie probeer hy die Nuwe-Testamentiese boodskap vertolk: die mens word opgeroep om weg te beweeg van 'n nie-outentieke bestaan van gevallenheid na 'n outentieke bestaan van genade (vgl. Van Wyk, 2002:608-610).

Deur die eeue is die Bybel op verskillende maniere verstaan en is daar van verskillende interpretasiemodelle gebruik gemaak (bv. letterlike, allegoriese, morele en anagogiese modelle). Oor die sentrale boodskap van die Bybel was daar egter deur die eeue groot konsensus, naamlik God se verlossende liefde in Jesus Christus en die

2 Vergelyk veral in hierdie verband Thiselton (1980; 1992), Kaiser en Silva (2007) asook Mueller-Vollmer (1986).

vernuwende werk van die Heilige Gees. Die *Aufklärung* van die agtiende eeu sou hierin 'n radikale verandering teweegbring. Rasionaliteit en rasionalisme het toe die maatstaf vir alles geword en die gedagte van 'n "openbaring" van God is onder enorme druk geplaas en bevaagteken. Die siening dat die Bybelse boodskap duidelik is, het sy vanselfsprekendheid verloor en die vraag na die juiste verstaan van die Bybel het dringender geword. Geen wonder nie dat daar in die twintigste eeu 'n opbloei van hermeneutiese modelle plaasgevind het. Vir die Christelike geloof is dit immers van deurslaggewende betekenis om 'n Bybelteks reg te verstaan en reg te beleef. In die boek *Initiation into theology* (Maimela & König, 1998), word in die tweede deel aandag bestee aan verskeie hermeneutiese modelle, soos byvoorbeeld die evangeliese hermeneutiek (Klein), 'n swart hermeneutiek (Kiogora), feministiese hermeneutiek (Ackermann), Afrikavroue hermeneutiek (Oduyoye), Afrika hermeneutiek (Du Toit), Afrika Pentekostalistiese hermeneutiek (Anderson), Pentekostalistiese en Charismatiese hermeneutiek (Herholdt), ekologiese hermeneutiek (Van den Brom) en postmoderne hermeneutiek (Herholdt). Die postmodernisme voer aan dat daar geen vasstaande betekenis van Bybeltekste en geen ewige waarhede moontlik is nie, omdat die waarheid histories en kontekstueel bepaald is.

McCarthy (1992:221-223) voer aan dat in die debat oor hermeneutiek die volgende aspekte uitgekristalliseer het:

1. *Alle menslike verstaan is interpretatief.* Om te verstaan, is nie vanselfsprekend nie en bestaan nie uit selfevidente waarneming nie. Empirisme en positivisme het as verstaansmodelle die toets gedop.
2. *Die 'hermeneutiese sleutel' is een aanvaarbare manier om interpretatiewe verstaan te beskryf.* Hierdie model voorkom subjektivisme deurdat dit interpretasie definieer as 'n interaktiewe spel tussen interpreteerder en objek van interpretasie. Dit bring mee dat alle verstaan oopstaan vir revisie.
3. *Alle menslike verstaan is histories bepaald.* Sowel die interpreteerder as die objek van interpretasie (het) bestaan in 'n bepaalde historiese situasie wat in 'n juiste verstaansproses verreken behoort te word.³

3 Vergelyk Tracey (1994:54): "For one of the most basic *continuities* operative throughout theological paradigm-shifts is the reality of an interpretation of both tradition and situation."

4. *Alle menslike verstaan is taalkundig bepaald.* Taal speel in enige verstaanproses 'n bepalende rol, waarby ingesluit word die verstaan van die bronteks en die taal van die interpreteerder.
5. *Die objek van 'n hermeneutiese verstaan kan ten beste beskryf word as 'n "teks".* Die hermeneut het gewoonlik te doen met 'n bepaalde teks wat hy/sy moet interpreteer.
6. *'n Intrinsieke deel van interpretasie bestaan in aplikasie.* By die verstaan van 'n teks is dit belangrik om die draagwydte daarvan op die hedendaagse wêreld in te sien en te begryp.

Hierby noem McCarthy (1992:223-224) nog drie sake wat verdere aandag verdien, naamlik om te verstaan is altyd onderhewig aan misverstaan of sistematiese verdraaiing – ons subtiële vooronderstellings moet telkens uitgespel en onder kritiek gebring word;⁴ pluraliteit is karakteristiek van vandag se verstaansproses; en dubbelsinnigheid van interpretasie plaas druk op die proses van aplikasie.

In die jongste tyd het daar drie belangrike studies oor hermeneutiese vrae in Afrikaans verskyn, geskryf deur outeurs uit elk van die drie Afrikaanse kerkgemeenskappe, waaraan ek vervolgens aandag bestee.

2. Hermeneutiek in praktyk: drie lesings van die Bybel

2.1 Dirkie Smit (*Neem, lees! Hoe ons die Bybel hoor en verstaan* (2006))⁵

In hierdie boek posisioneer Smit hom ondubbelsinnig binne die reformatoriese tradisie en handhaaf hy die groot belydenisstukke van die Christelike geloof. Hy doen dit egter binne 'n nuwe teologiese raamwerk wat erns maak met die moderne teologiese en hermeneutiese problematiek. Groot dele van die boek word aan hermeneutiese vrae bestee.

Die eerste deel van die boek is histories van aard en gee aandag aan die vraag hoe gelowiges die Bybel deur die eeue gelees het: die

4 Vergelyk die volgende opmerking van Tracey (1994:40): "The fact is that no interpreter enters into the attempt to understand any text without prejudgements formed by the history of that person's culture."

5 Verwysings in 2.1 wat net 'n bladsynommer bevat, kom uit Smit (2006).

Vroeë Kerk, die Middeleeue, die Hervorming, Calvin, die Verligting en vandag, met 'n slotgedeelte oor die Bybel en ekumene. Deel twee is sistematies van aard en behandel die kernvrae wat in die hermeneutiek gestel word. Deel drie gee aandag aan etiese kwesies en hoe die Bybel in hierdie verband hanteer behoort te word. Deel vier is prakties van aard en kan byna as preekgedagtes oor die Bybel getipeer word. Die boek word afgesluit met 'n slotdeel wat as 'n soort bronverwysing beskou kan word.⁶

In sy omvattende benadering van die hermeneutiek, waarvan ons slegs enkele hoofmomente ter sprake bring, gee Smit aandag aan verskeie sake: die outeur van 'n teks, die konteks van die outeur, die teks self, die latere lesers van die teks en die konteks van die lesers. In kort, die wêreld agter die teks, die teks self en die wêreld voor die teks kry aandag.

In verband met die lesers merk hy op dat niemand 'n teks onbevooroordeeld lees nie en dat elke leser vanuit bepaalde vooronderstellings – en 'n voorverstaan – lees.

[D]ie vooroordele, die vooronderstellings, die verstaansraamwerke waarmee ons na die Bybel kom as ons dit lees en daarna luister, word op baie komplekse, ingewikkelde en dikwels onbewuste manier gevorm. Ons lees nie so onbevangen as wat ons dalk dink nie. (p. 75; vgl. ook p. 70.)

Geen leser kan sy voorverstaan, sy netwerk van insigte, oortuigings, belange, waardes, verwagtings, keuses en prioriteite ontloop nie (p. 130-136). Die groot meesters van suspisie het ons immers geleer watter rol ander subtekste in die lewe kan speel, byvoorbeeld Marx (die rol van ekonomiese belange), Nietzsche (die rol van mag) en Freud (die rol van die onbewuste) (p. 84-85).

Maar:

Die erkenning van ons eie subjektiewe betrokkenheid as lesers ... kan daarom nie gelykgestel word aan totale willekeur en intellektuele chaos, aan die totale afwesigheid van waarheid, sekerheid, betroubaarheid, korrektheid en objektiewe feitelijkheid nie. (p. 82; kursivering – DS.)

Smit handhaaf die Skrif as kanon, as betroubare en gesaghebbende Woord (p. 153). Hy handhaaf ook dat die teks, alhoewel skynbaar

6 Dit val op dat die name van Bavinck en Berkouwer hier ontbreek.

stom, "n sekere voorrang het bo die konteks en dié voorrang nooit mag verloor nie, behalwe as 'n mens kans sien om in absolute relativisme te verval" (p. 144).

'n Duidelike verrekening van die konteks is van groot belang (p. 119), maar dit mag nie op so 'n wyse geskied dat dit die teks uitkanselleer nie. In hierdie verband moet besondere aandag aan die (literêre) genre gegee word, aangesien dit die wyse bepaal waarop woorde verstaan moet word (p. 118).

Smit beklemtoon herhaaldelik dat die Bybel ten diepste die Boek van die kerk is (p. 153). Ten diepste is die uitleggers van die Woord nie vakeksegete nie, maar die gemeente. "Die 'epistemologiese voorrang' behoort aan die gemeente, aan hierdie daders van die woord" (p. 164). 'n Omgang met die Bybel wat geen waarde het vir die opbou van die geloof en die kerk nie, moet as nutteloos afgewys word (p. 148). Vandaar dat Smit ook, teen die gevaar van 'n individualistiese omgang met die Bybel, wys op die groot waarde van 'n ekumeniese lees van die Bybel.

Die Bybel kan slegs gelees word in die ryke, volle gemeenskap van die één katolieke kerk – die wonderbare en komplekse koinonia waarvan die Nuwe Testament praat. (p. 108; kursivering – DS; vgl. ook p. 192.)

Smit kies duidelik vir 'n gereformeerde hermeneutiek (p. 167-181), maar beslis 'n hermeneutiek wat 'n oop oog het vir die moderne hermeneutiese vrae. Die klassieke Triniteitsleer word onbevange bely (p. 171, 177, 178, 180, 298), asook die liggaamlike opstanding van Jesus (p. 146, 169, 172-176). Die diepste inhoud van die Bybel word omskryf as "die openbaring van die drie-enige God en die feit dat Hy mense roep en deel maak van sy werk" (p. 170). Teologiese hermeneutiek dui op 'n soort lees wat die "implisiete beslissings" in die kanon self respekteer.

Dié implisiete beslissings behels onder meer dat God drie-enig is, dat die lewende Drie-enige God deur die Bybel praat en daardeur bekend word, dáárin dat Hy mense roep, hulle vernuwe om deel te word van hierdie roeping, en belowe dat sy Woord en roeping nie leeg sal terugkeer nie, maar in vervulling sal gaan. (p. 171; vgl. ook p. 239.)

Smit wy ook 'n gedeelte aan hermeneutiek en etiek (p. 187-198) asook aan die veelbesproke vraagstuk van homoseksualiteit. Wat laasgenoemde saak betref, kom hy nie tot 'n konklusie nie, maar verwys weer na die saamluister van die kerk na die boodskap van

die Bybel. "Waar die soort sáámluister kerke gaan bring rondom die vrae van homoseksualiteit is nog nie naasteby duidelik nie." (p. 228.) Vroeër (p. 85) het hy al opgemerk dat gelowiges dikwels hoogs emosioneel reageer oor 'n saak soos homoseksualiteit, maar onbevoë is oor sake soos ekonomiese onreg wat duidelik in die Bybel veroordeel word.

Opsommend kan gestel word dat Smit 'n belangrike bydrae ten opsigte van die moderne hermeneutiese vraagstukke gelewer het, sonder om die laaste woord daaroor te probeer sê. Terwyl hy enersyds erns maak met die Bybel as normatiewe teks, probeer hy andersyds om die vrae wat vanuit die hermeneutiek gestel word, deeglik te verdiskonteer.

2.2 Gert Malan (*Om die Bybel (beter) te verstaan* (2008a))⁷

Hierdie studie verskil in hierdie opsig van die ander twee deurdat, volgens die voorwoord van T.F.J. Dreyer, die Kommissie van die Algemene Kerkvergadering van die NHKA, "met instemming" daarvan kennis geneem het en dit (op daardie stadium) "aanbeveel as 'n boek wat ampsdraers en lidmate kan begelei tot 'n verantwoorde Skrifbeskouing en Skrifverstaan."⁸

Malan se boek is in twee dele verdeel. Deel een handel oor Die Bybel en deel twee oor Skrifbeskouing. Verder is 'n bylaag ingesluit wat handel oor die Skrifbeskouing van die NHKA soos (op daardie stadium) saamgestel deur die Kommissie van die Algemene Kerkvergadering.

In die eerste deel word vertel hoe die Bybel tot stand gekom het, dat dit uit 'n biblioteek van twee testamente bestaan, en dat noukeurige leeswerk nodig is om die tekste reg te verstaan. Deel twee is die belangrikste deel en bring die volgende sake ter sprake: Skrifbeskouing, veranderde tye vra nuwe formulering, waarheidsbeskouing, die gesag van die Bybel, eksegeese en hermeneutiek, dogmatiek, die belydenisskrifte (veral die NGB) en fundamentalisme. Hierdie gedeelte word afgesluit met belangrike aanwysers hoedat ons moet dink oor verlossing, die sin van die lewe, God se sorg, gebed, sterwe, lyding, die straf van God, siekte, die wil van God, groot doop

7 Verwysings in 2.2 wat net 'n bladsynommer bevat, kom uit Malan (2008a).

8 Vergelyk die positiewe waardering van hierdie boek deur W.C. van Wyk (2008:7).

en onderdompeling, homoseksualiteit, huwelike en egskeiding, belydenissake, die wederkoms en ewigheid, die *Da Vinci code* en die Evangelie van Judas.

Volgens Malan is die Bybel nie die Woord van God nie, maar moet dit telkens weer die Woord van God wórd (p. 46, 57, 71, 74).⁹ Wat is die Bybel dan? Dit is "die uiteindelijke skriftelike neerslag van gelowige mense se geloof in God en die verkondiging oor God *onder bepaalde omstandighede*" (p. 34; kursivering – GM). Die Ou en Nuwe Testament bevat tekste oor hoe gelowiges in Bybelse tye oor hulle verhouding met God gedink het (p. 36). Inspirasie beteken nie dat die Bybel*tekste* geïnspireer is nie, maar dat die Gees die Bybelskrywers geïnspireer het (p. 46).¹⁰ Die gesag van die Bybel is ook nie geleë in die teks nie, maar in die *boodskap* van die Bybel, naamlik dat Christus Verlosser en Versoener is (p. 44, 45, 75). Die gesag van die Bybel is nie in die woorde geleë nie, maar in 'n Persoon (Christus) (p. 59). Christus is die wese en sentrum van die verkondiging (p. 44) en die kerk verkondig nie die Bybel nie, maar Christus (p. 45).

In ons verstaan van die Bybel moet ons daarmee rekening hou dat daarin 'n ander wêreldbeeld gebruik word (p. 36). Bonatuurlike dinge kan nie (meer) ons wêreld beïnvloed nie (p. 38). Moderne mense dink vandag anders oor God en die bese as premoderne mense; premoderne mites is uitgedien (p. 38). Die mitologiese taal van die Bybel moet ontmitologiseer (dit wil sê geïnterpreteer) word.¹¹ Hierdie benadering impliseer dat weer besin moet word oor die verstaan van belydenisse oor die maagdelike geboorte van Jesus en sy opstanding (p. 58).¹²

Hoe moet 'n mens dan die boodskap van die Bybel verstaan? 'n Mens moet gebruik maak, nié van die objektiewe of subjektiewe waarheidsbeskouing nie, maar van die relasionele (p. 40-43), want

9 Hoewel sy naam nie genoem word nie, is dit duidelik dat die skrywer hier aansluiting vind by die Skrifbeskouing van Karl Barth.

10 Malan sluit hier aan by die inspirasieteorie van Schleiermacher.

11 Malan sluit hier byna volledig aan by Bultmann se ontmitologiseringsprogram (met sy geslote wêreldbeeld). Ander Hervormde teoloë wat in bepaalde opsigte by Bultmann aansluit, is Van Aarde en Pelser (vgl. Van Wyk, 2002:610). Vergelyk ook Malan (2000a:237-258).

12 Vergelyk hier die artikel van Malan (2000b:1107-1118).

... wat geskryf is, was 'n geloofsperspektief wat in 'n gegewe situasie aan medegelowiges meegedeel is. Wat geskryf is, is gestolde geloofsinterpretasie van gebeure met die oog op verkondiging in 'n bepaalde konteks ... Die waarheid in die geskrewe gedeeltes is nie bedoel as historiese, aardrykskundige, wetenskaplike en feitelike waarhede nie. Dit is *geloofswaarhede, relasionele waarhede*. (p. 42; kursivering – GM.)

Dit is duidelik dat Malan probeer om die gevaar van relativisme te vermy, want hy noem uitdruklik dat die Bybel “bron en norm” van ons nadenke oor ons verhouding met God moet dien (p. 56, 62).

Wat van hermeneutiek en eksegeese? Hermeneutiek handel oor die proses om te verstaan wat die aanvanklike bedoeling en inhoud van die eerste skrywers aan die eerste hoorders was in hulle besondere historiese konteks en na die moontlike toepassings daarvan vir vandag, met ander woorde om 'n brug te slaan tussen verlede en hede (p. 62). Dit val op dat die outeur hier telkens beklemtoon dat die teks die uitlegger moet domineer (p. 53), dat die teks in die dialoog tussen eksegeet en teks voorrang geniet (p. 53, 54). Daarby is dit belangrik dat die vooronderstellings en voorverstaan van die eksegeet telkens bevraagteken en desnoods gewysig sal word (p. 53).

Malan spreek hom sterk uit teen fundamentalisme en sy metgesel *foundationalism* (p. 59, 67-75).¹³ Dit gaan in die Christelike geloof immers nie oor 'n samestemming met kerklike dogmas nie (p. 73, 76). Die Bybel is ook nie 'n bron van onfeilbare historiese feite nie (p. 74) en daarby kan 'n finale boodskap nooit vasgestel word nie (p. 74).

Die laaste gedeelte, wat handel oor praktiese voorbeelde, is van bepaalde betekenis, want hierin word verduidelik hoe die ontmitologiseringsprogram werk.

Die groot vraag is wat verlossing beteken. Verlossing word nie eerstens verstaan as verlossing van sonde nie, maar omskryf as die herstel van die verhouding met God en die medemens deur Christus

13 Dit val op dat die skrywer nie 'n aparte onderafdeling bestee aan die teenpool van fundamentalisme nie, naamlik kriticisme/modernisme/rasionalisme. (Ook by teoloë uit die GKSA is daar skerp kritiek teen fundamentalisme, vgl. Vorster, 2008.)

(p. 76).¹⁴ "Dit beteken 'n leefwyse volgens God se liefde, die liefde wat Jesus kom demonstreer het en waartoe gelowiges bevry word" (p. 76). Geloof beteken ook om te kies (vir Christus) en gekies te word (p. 43). Hierdie heling deur Christus geld vir tyd en ewigheid (p. 76). Dit val op dat die outeur telkens 'n eskatologiese dimensie behou: ons is in lewe en in sterwe geborge in God (p. 78); die herstelde verhouding tussen God en mens kan nie deur die dood ongedaan gemaak word nie (p. 82). Daar word gewaarsku dat Christene nie van ontvlugtingsdenke gebruik moet maak nie, want die sin van die lewe is dat God ons (hier en nou) liefhet en ons in Christus Jesus syne maak, vir tyd en ewigheid (p. 83). Maar, die ewige lewe begin reeds hier op aarde (p. 83).

Volgens die outeur kan antwoorde op die vrae oor die maagdelike geboorte en opstanding van Jesus "moeilik gegee" word (p. 82; vgl. ook p. 58).¹⁵ Uiteindelik gaan dit oor die betekenis van hierdie belydenis met die oog op 'n sinvolle lewe (p. 82).

Hoewel die bestaan van boosheid nie ontken kan word nie (dit bestaan immers in die mens self), moet gesê word dat denkbeelde oor die Satan en die hel deel vorm van die premoderne en mitologiese wêreldbeeld (p. 82).

Wat homoseksualiteit betref, moet verreken word dat die Bybeltekste uit 'n premoderne tyd stam en dat ons vandag eerder vanuit die liefde van Christus moet redeneer.

Dit is duidelik dat hierdie ontmitologiseringsprogram aanleiding moet gee tot 'n dubbele Skrifverstaan: 'n klassieke verstaan vir die gewone lidmaat en 'n postmoderne verstaan vir die predikant/teoloog (p. 54). Hiervoor moet daar ruimte bestaan (p. 35), maar wel só dat die gaping verklein en predikante lidmate begelei om geloof "in eksistensiële terme" te verstaan (p. 85).

Wat gebed betref, vind die skrywer dae van verootmoediging vir postmoderne mense problematies: dit impliseer 'n houvas op God

14 Slegs een keer word daarna verwys dat Jesus die straf van God oor die mense se sonde wegneem (p. 16).

15 Vergelyk weereens Malan (2000a; 2000b). Vergelyk in hierdie verband Flip Schutte se afskeid van die klassieke Christologie en opstandingsgeloof (Jackson, 2008; Schutte, 2006:1513-1526, en meer uitgebreid Schutte, 2008). Schutte het as predikant van die NHKA bedank. "Veral met Kerstyd en met Lydenstyd het dit vir hom moeilik geword om eerlik te preek, sê hy" (Jackson, 2008:17).

(p. 77-78). Duiweluitdrying behoort ook tot 'n premoderne werklikheidsverstaan (p. 79).

Dit is duidelik dat Malan in sy Skrifbeskouing sterk aansluiting vind by dié van Barth en in sy teologie grotendeels die ontmitologiseringsprogram van Bultmann onkrities oorneem.¹⁶ Waar Barth die begrip *openbaring* met vrymoedigheid gebruik, het dit egter by Malan verdwyn en is dit vervang met die begrip *ervaring*: die Bybel bevat die geloofservarings van mense met God. Die onkritiese aanvaarding van Bultmann, wat volgens my beste wete tans geen navolgers in Duitsland het nie, roep talle vrae op, veral rondom die Christologie. Selfs 'n (gematigde) kritiese teoloog soos die Nederlandse Hervormde teoloog H. Berkhof, aanvaar die liggaamlike opstanding van Jesus as wesenlike deel van die evangelie: "Daarom staat en valt het christeljk geloof met de opstanding" (Berkhof, 1990:305).¹⁷

Ons hoor wel baie van Christus [Hy neem sonde weg (p. 16), bewerk versoening (p. 43, 45, 75), verlos (p. 44, 76), lewer 'n goeie voorbeeld (p. 76), herstel mense se verhouding met God en medemens (p. 76)], maar 'n ondubbelsinnige teologie van die kruis en opstanding ontbreek. Die diepsinnige Pauliniese teologie word nie eksplisiet ter sprake gebring nie. Die hóé van die versoening en verlossing word nie duidelik uitgespel nie.

Saam met Malan is ek van oortuiging dat ons in ons Skrifverstaan veel meer rekening moet hou met die eie aard van die Skrifgesag, met die verskillende Bybelse en buite-Bybelse kontekste, die diverse literêre genres, die belangrikheid van taal, die Christologiese sentrum, ensovoorts, maar ek is nie oortuig daarvan dat dit alles moet uitloop op 'n totale ontmitologiseringsmetodiek nie. Hierdie metode ontkom nie daaraan om uiteindelik met 'n sterk gereduseerde evangelie te werk nie.

Die epistemologiese model waarmee Malan (onbewustelik) werk, is dié van 'n naïewe rasionalisme (inklusief geslote wêreldbeeld) waar

16 Daar is min van die kritiese vrae wat Barth (1953) aan Bultmann gestel het (vgl. ook Thiselton, 1980:283-292). Vir 'n bespreking van die standpunt van Bultmann, vergelyk Van Wyk (2002:607-612) asook die bronverwysings.

17 Malan se studie is ver verwyder van die teologie van byvoorbeeld Engelbrecht (1978).

aan die mens se rasonale denke uiteindelik primaat verleen word bo die openbaring van God (vgl. hier Matt. 16:17 en Gal. 1:11).¹⁸

2.3 Gerrie Snyman (*Om die Bybel anders te lees: 'n etiek van Bybellees* (2007))^{19, 20}

Snyman lewer 'n boeiende betoog dat ons die Bybel vandag anders behoort te lees. Dit word uit sy verhaal egter duidelik dat hy hom nie langer meer tuis voel in die klassieke reformatoriese verstaan van die Bybel soos onder andere in die NGB 3-7 verwoord nie (vgl. ook GKSA, 1988:508-523; Breed *et al.*, 2008:45-67); ook nie met dié van teoloë soos byvoorbeeld Calvyn, Bavinck en Berkouwer nie. In sekere opsigte vertoon sy standpunt groot ooreenkomste met dié van Malan.

In dertien hoofstukke word die hooftema breedvoerig, en telkens herhalend, soos volg aan die orde gestel: "want die ander sien ons nie raak nie"; "hoekom 'n ander soort lees regtig nodig is"; "homoseksualiteit en 'n heteroseksuele ideologie"; "'n etiek van (Bybel)-lees"; "geweld en die Bybel as wapen"; "die mite van 'n letterlike lees"; "kanon en die inspirasie: die status van die teks"; "die Bybel en mag"; "lees met 'n 'ander' in gedagte"; "die Bybelteks as ander"; "om goed met *goeie redes* te kan lees"; "om die Bybel anders te sien"; "Bybellees en die Bybel as sosiale en kulturele verskynsel".

Snyman is daarvan oortuig dat die wyse waarop die Bybel gebruik is om apartheid te ondersteun, en tans aangewend word teen vroue in kerklike ampte (veral in die GKSA) asook teen homoseksuele persone, 'n beskawings- en vertrouensbreuk in die kerk en teologie veroorsaak het. Ons kan eenvoudig nie meer die Bybel op die ou naïewe manier lees nie. 'n Ander manier van Bybellees het noodsaaklik geword – 'n kontekstuele manier waar rekening gehou word met die konteks van die Bybelskrywer, asook met die teks en met die konteks van die eerste en latere lesers. Gevolglik verset die skrywer hom teen elke vorm van simplistiese, fundamentalistiese en onsensitiewe vorm van Bybellees wat die klassieke en gereformeerde teologie kenmerk. Hy verwerp 'n *emiese* lees van die Bybel

18 My eie epistemologiese model sou ek as 'n komplementêre model wou beskryf wat (in aansluiting by Augustinus) soos volg geformuleer kan word: ek glo, om te verstaan; en ek verstaan, om te glo.

19 Vergelyk J.H. van Wyk (2008:685-707).

20 Verwysings in 2.3 wat net 'n bladsynommer bevat, kom uit Snyman (2007).

en kies vir 'n *etiese* lees as gevolg waarvan dit moontlik word om deur middel van buite-Bybelse inligting aan te toon dat waardes wat in die Bybel voorkom, nie godsopenbaring is nie, maar "gewoon gemeenskapswaardes [is] wat in die Bybelverhale goddelike gesag verkry" (p. 182). Die kritiese Bybelwetenskap lewer sins insiens vrugbaarder en sinvoller resultate as die klassieke (reformatoriese) benadering.

In die boek word herhaaldelik daarop gewys dat die Bybelteks nie direk toeganklik en duidelik en outomaties 'n welwillende teks is nie (p. 127, 153). Bybellees is 'n komplekse saak wat meesal ideologies beïnvloed word. Snyman formuleer sy standpunt soos volg:

Dit [sensitiewe Bybellees] is 'n komplekse proses wat ten beste in terme van verskillende verhoudings beskryf kan word: tussen die skrywer en die teks, die skrywer en die wêreld van waaruit geskryf word, tussen die leser en die teks, die leser en die wêreld waarbinne gelees word, die leser en die skrywer, die teks en ander tekste, die teks en die historiese wêreld waarna die teks verwys, die leser en die verhaalwêreld, die leser en die historiese wêreld, die skrywer en die verhaalwêreld, die skrywer en die historiese wêreld. Kortom, die skrywer, die teks, die leser en die Ander. (p. 149-151; vgl. ook p. 187.)

Ongetwyfeld het die studie van Snyman baie belangrike gesigspunte na vore gebring. So is sy afwysing van 'n slordige en simplistiese Skrifgebruik sonder meer belangrik. Verder is sy aanduiding dat die verskillende kontekste by die verstaan van 'n bepaalde teks ver- reken behoort te word, van die uiterste belang. 'n Teks moet altyd binne sy "teologiese" en kultuurhistoriese kontekste gelees en ver- staan word. Dit is ook belangrik dat die leser sal weet dat bepaalde ideologiese vooronderstellings 'n belangrike, en soms deurslagge- wende rol kan speel wanneer 'n teks gelees word (soos by apartheid gebeur het). Daar moet ook rekening gehou word daarmee dat 'n bepaalde (oppervlakkige) manier van Bybellees verskriklike en on- menslike gevolge kan meebring (en weereens kan na apartheid ver- wys word).

Die boek roep egter ook 'n aantal kritiese vrae op, waarvan ek enkele noem.

Die eerste handel oor die vraag wat Snyman se epistemologiese vertrekpunt is. Klaarblyklik kies hy (soos Malan) vir relasionisme, want daar bestaan geen vasstaande objektiewe waarhede nie (p. 58-59). Die standpunt "daar bestaan geen vaste waarhede nie" is egter selfweersprekend. Dit is bedoel as waarheidsuitspraak – wat

egter nie (kan) bestaan nie. Snyman verdiskonteer nie die kritiese vrae wat teen die relasionele waarheidsbeskouing ingebring is nie (Van Wyk, 1989:25; 2001:88-91). Dit is waar dat, meer as ooit tevore, die moderne mens onder die besef gekom het van die onafheid, voorlopigheid en beperktheid van ons menslike kennis, maar dis foutief om vanuit die *beperktheid* van ons kennis te konkludeer tot die *onegtheid* daarvan.

Myns insiens gaan die skrywer (onbewus) uit van 'n naïewe rasionalisme.

Die tweede vraag is of die Bybel hoegenaamd nog nodig is. Snyman oordeel dat

... die teenwoordigheid van waardes en norme in die Bybelverhale, en daargestel deur die Bybelskrywers, nie beteken dat die lesers moet aanvaar dat die Bybel 'n onskuldige boek is en dat die leser altyd goedertrou moet wees nie (p. 72).

"Die lewensetiek van die antieke wêreld kan nie bindend wees vir die leser van die 21ste eeu nie." (p. 74.) Is die Bybel dan nog nodig? Ja tog, maar dan moet ons dit lees "vanuit 'n ander stel waardes" (p. 106). Waar kry 'n mens dit? Antwoord: In die Suid-Afrikaanse Grondwet, wat as "hermeneutiese raamwerk" kan dien (p. 2). Maar waar kom die Grondwet aan sy waardes? Klaarblyklik moet daar iewers 'n (vaste) vertrekpunt wees? Dit val op dat die skrywer die gedagte van (voortgaande) Godsopenbaring afwys.

Die vraag wat onbeantwoord bly, is of die Bybel nog hoegenaamd nodig is. Besit die Bybel enige (normatiewe) meerwaarde ten opsigte van ander literatuur?

Derdens kan gevra word of dit teologies houdbaar is om (soos Marcion) die God van die Ou Testament en die God van Nuwe Testament radikaal teenoor mekaar te stel.²¹ 'n Deurlopende tema in die Ou Testament (soos in die Nuwe) is tog dat God barmhartig,

21 Snyman hou vol met hierdie standpunt. Vergelyk sy siening oor die besluit van die 2009-algemene sinode van die GKSA oor die vrou in die amp:

Persoonlik dink ek die GKSA kon nie 'n ander besluit geneem het nie, want 'n godheid wat diskrimineer tussen mense vorm die basis van hulle [sic] geloofstelsel. Die besluit toon 'n hermeneutiese noodwendigheid. (Snyman, 2009:9.)

genadig, lankmoedig, vol liefde en trou is (Eks. 34:6; Ps. 86:15; Ps. 103:8; Ps. 145:8; Jona 4:2; Joël 2:13; Neh. 9:17).²²

Die vierde vraag lui: Waar pas Christus in? Dit wil voorkom of Snyman die Ou Testament totaal buite sy vervulling in Jesus Christus om lees (vgl. Luk. 24:44 en Hand. 28:23), wat nie moontlik is nie. Christus is God se laaste en hoogste Woord (Heb. 1:1-2) en wie die Christologiese dimensie by voorbaat by die hermeneutiese proses uitsluit, sal nooit 'n Bybelteks kan ontsluit nie.

Hierby lyk dit asof die skrywer probleme ervaar met die klassieke versoenings- en verlossingsleer, aangesien hy "die teologie van 'n plaasbekledende Jesus as 'n meganisme ervaar wat my eie verantwoordelikheid uiteindelik vernietig" (p. 19). Is die "verhaal van 'n treurige mensheid wat 'n Verlosser nodig het om by God vergiffenis vir sondes te kry" vir die skrywer nog geloofwaardig (p. 187)?

Vyfdens kan gevra word waar die Heilige Gees inpas. Die skrywer is baie huiwerig om na die werk van die Heilige Gees in die hermeneutiese proses te verwys, omdat dit eerlike debatvoering strem en dikwels as ontsnappingsmeganisme gebruik word wanneer moeilike tekste geïnterpreteer moet word (p. 32, 68, 188, 141, 152). Toegee, dit gebeur inderdaad, maar om die werk van illuminasie deur die Heilige Gees op nonaktiwiteit te plaas, is teologies onhoudbaar (1 Kor. 2:10-15).

Vraag ses vra of fundamentalisme noodwendig tot apartheid moet lei. Natuurlik is daar voorbeelde van ortodokse teoloë wat 'n nasionalistiese (en apartheids-)standpunt daarop nagehou het, byvoorbeeld E.P. Groenewald, J.D. du Toit en H.P. Wolmarans. Maar daar is ook voorbeelde van ortodokse teoloë wat 'n maatskappy-kritiese standpunt oor apartheid ontwikkel het soos byvoorbeeld W.D. Jonker en Beyers Naudé.²³ Aan die ander kant lewer die teologie-geskiedenis ook voorbeelde van kritiese teoloë wat puur nasionalisties gedink het (bv. Adolf von Harnack). 'n Ortodokse Skrifbeskouing en

22 Spangenberg *et al.* (2009:167) stem hiermee saam: "Die idee dat die God van Israel 'n toornige God is, hou met 'n selektiewe lees van die Ou-Testamentiese boeke verband." Snyman verskil dus hier van sy kollega Spangenberg.

23 Bennie van der Walt (1995) is ook 'n duidelike voorbeeld van 'n teoloog-filosoof wat nie-modernisties dink en apartheid verwerp het.

-verklaring hoef nie noodwendig op diskriminasie (teen mense) uit te loop nie – selfs nie ten opsigte van homoseksuele persone nie.²⁴

Klaarblyklik is méér (as kritiese of ortodokse teologie) nodig om ons van ideologisering te vrywaar. Ek kan in hierdie verband aan niks beter dink as dat die Gees van God in 'n mens se hart (en gewete) inwerk ten einde die evangelie van die koninkryk in sy volle reikwydte te begryp en in die samelewing uit te leef nie.

Ten slotte kan opgemerk word dat, hoewel Snyman ons oë vir 'n hele aantal probleme ten opsigte van die klassieke verstaan van die Bybel geopen het, sy voorstelle egter meer vrae oproep as wat dit antwoorde bied.²⁵

3. Die Christologie as brandpunt

Dit is uit die talle teologiese geskrifte wat tans in Suid-Afrika verskyn, sonder meer duidelik dat die Christologie in die brandpunt van diskussie staan.²⁶ Omdat die Christologie die "middelpunt" van die ganse dogmatiek (lees: teologie) (Bavinck, 1929:254) uitmaak, is dit belangrik om aan hierdie aspek besondere aandag te bestee. Indien die Christologie wegval, val die bodem van die teologie uit.

Oor die *lewe* van Jesus en oor die belangrikheid van die navolging van Hom (wat iets anders is as *nabootsing*), bestaan daar in die Christendom en in die reformatoriese tradisie groot eenstemmigheid

24 Vergelyk in hierdie verband die eksegeese van twee "ortodokse" teoloë soos S.D. Snyman ten opsigte van die Ou Testament en A.B. du Toit ten opsigte van die Nuwe Testament. Snyman (2006:968-981) bevind dat die homoseksuele persone waarna Levitikus (en die Ou Testament) verwys, op manlike heteroseksuele persone dui wat in homoseksuele praktyke (veral in familieverband) betrokke raak. Du Toit (2007:161-171) argumenteer dat die onnatuurlike relaties waarna Paulus in Romeine 1 verwys, op heteroseksuele mans en vroue dui wat hulle aan homoseksuele praktyke skuldig maak. Só besien, handel hierdie tekste dus oor iets anders as die moderne vraagstuk van homoseksualiteit.

25 Vergelyk in hierdie verband die (redelik onkritiese) boekresensies van Lombaard (2008:11), Malan (2008b:1106-1108) en Van Deventer (2008:155-159).

26 Dink hier byvoorbeeld aan die debat tussen Neels Jackson (2009), Adrio König (2009) en Julian Müller (2009). Vergelyk in hierdie verband die talle Jesus-/Christus-studies wat die afgelope dekade deur Suid-Afrikaanse teoloë gepubliseer is: Janson (2001), Van Aarde (2001), König (2001), Du Plessis (2005), Wessels (2006), Craffert (2008), Schutte (2008), Spangenberg (2009); Joubert (2009). Vergelyk verder ook Jonker (1977), Du Toit (1997), T. van der Walt (2006).

– dit wil sê oor die dát, al is daar verskil van mening oor die hóé. Die huidige debat gaan oor die vraag na die betekenis van die kruis en die opstanding van Jesus. Was sy dood 'n soendood en 'n oorwinning oor die sonde? Was sy opstanding 'n liggaamlike opstanding, met 'n leë graf, en daarmee 'n oorwinning oor die dood? Of was die kruis dalk die laaste sien van 'n protesterende en rebellerende profeet en sy opstanding 'n gefabriseerde mite van die vroeë Christendom?

Die jongste debat fokus veral op die vraag na die liggaamlike opstanding – of Jesus wêrklik opgestaan het. Is dit dalk mitologiese taal wat ontmitologiseer moet word? Hoe antwoord bogenoemde drie skrywers op hierdie vraag?

Daar kan min twyfel daaroor bestaan dat Smit die werklike opstanding van Jesus, waarna hy dikwels verwys, aanvaar. Malan laat in 'n seker sin die vraag onbeantwoord, hoewel die ontmitologiseringsprogam van Bultmann wat hy navolg, daarop 'n duidelike antwoord gee: die kruis van Jesus is 'n historiese gebeurtenis, maar nie die opstanding nie. Die opstanding is nie iets wat in die tuin van Josef plaasgevind het nie, maar in die subjektiewe ervaring van die dissipels. In die opstandingsgeloof het die dissipels tot uitdrukking gebring hoe betekenisvol die kruis van Jesus was. Jesus staan in die *kerugma* op, en dan gaan dit nie oor historiese feite nie, maar oor 'n geloofsbeslissing. Wat belangrik is, is nie die vraag of Jesus in die tuin opgestaan nie, maar of hy in mense se harte leef.

Snyman bring in sy boek nie die opstanding ter sprake nie.²⁷

Die nuwe hermeneutiese besinning het in hierdie verband 'n belangrike waarheid onderstreep, naamlik 'n kontekstsensitiewe eksegeese. My oordeel is dat dit juis hierdie waarheid is wat die liggaamlike opstanding van Jesus besonder benadruk. In hierdie verband kan op die volgende aspekte gewys word:

- Die Nuwe Testament bring die opstanding ter sprake teen die agtergrond van verskille daaroor onder *Joodse teoloë*: terwyl die Fariseërs die opstanding van die dooies aanvaar het, is dit deur die Sadduseërs radikaal verwerp (Hand. 23:6). Die Sadduseërs

27 Dit is bekend dat by die Nuwe Hervorming die liggaamlike opstanding van Jesus wegval. Die opstanding word hier metafoeries verstaan: die dissipels het daaronder verstaan dat Jesus se visie en lewenswyse in hulle voortleef en voortgesit word (vgl. Van Wyk, 2003:356-359).

het slegs die Pentateug as Bybel aanvaar, waarin geen opstandingsverhale verskyn nie. Hulle was vrydenkend en het ook die bestaan van engele en geeste en die verwagting van 'n messias ontken. Die Fariseërs, hierteenoor, het naas die boeke van Moses ook aan die oorgelewerde uitleg van die Wet vasgehou en het ook aan die liggaamlike opstanding en 'n lewe na die dood geglo. *Die debat oor die liggaamlike opstanding is dus nie 'n nuwe nie maar 'n baie ou debat.* Die modernisme van die agtiende eeu het 'n nuwe stimulus aan die debat gegee, maar dit is nie 'n volkome nuwe saak nie.

- Die Nuwe Testament bring die opstandingsgeloof ter sprake teen die agtergrond van die destyds heersende *Griekse filosofie*. Talle briewe van Paulus waarin die opstanding ter sprake kom, is aan Griekse gemeentes gerig waar die denke van die groot Griekse wysgeer, Plato, goed bekend moet gewees het (vgl. 1 Tess. 4:13-14; 1 Kor. 15). Plato het net van 'n onsterflike siel gewees wat in 'n liggaam as tronk ingekerker is en wat by die dood weer na sy oorsprong ontsnap. Van 'n opstanding van die liggaam was daar in hierdie filosofies-idealistiese denke geen sprake nie. Op die Areopagus in Atene redeneer Paulus met Epikureëse en Stoïsynse wysgere wat aandagtig luister tot by die punt van die opstanding van Jesus en dan begin hulle lag (Hand. 17). Hierdie wysgere het naamlik 'n stappie verder as Plato gegaan. Hulle het die verganklikheid van sowel die siel as die liggaam geleer. Paulus kon dit vir premoderne én (post)moderne mense soveel makliker gemaak het deur eenvoudig die opstanding metafories te verklaar het. Maar hy het nie, want dit was 'n wesenlike deel van die evangelie (1 Kor. 15).²⁸
- Die tendens om die opstanding slegs metafories te verstaan (in spirituele sin, as wedergeboorte) het alreeds ten tye van die Nuwe Testament voorgekom en dit is toe duidelik afgewys (2 Tim. 2:17-18). In hierdie verband word die name van Himeneus en Filetus genoem (Ridderbos, 1967:211). Die gnostiek, ook Christelike gnostiek, kom dus 'n ver pad.
- Dit is insiggewend om na teoloë uit die Oosters-Ortodokse tradisie, wat nie die *Aufklärung* met sy rasionalisme meegemaak het nie, in hierdie verband te luister. Stylianopoulos (2008:29,

28 Die ontmitologiseringstendens het dus nie eers in 1941 met Bultmann begin nie, maar was reeds sigbaar in die Joodse teologie (Sadduseërs), die Griekse filosofie en die vroeë Christelike gnostiek.

34) waarsku dat Oosterse teoloë nie die foute van die Westerse liberale teoloë moet herhaal nie

... such as demythologisation of scripture, rejection of the historical reliability of the Gospels, separating the Jesus of history from the Christ of the Church, and programmatic hermeneutical suspicion regarding the truth of the theological and moral witness of the Bible.

- Verreweg die meeste groot teoloë in die kerkgeskiedenis het, op grond van die Skrifgetuïenis, die liggaamlike opstanding van Jesus uit die dood bely – Irenaeus, Atanasius, Augustinus, Thomas Aquinas, Luther, Calvyn, Bavinck en Barth. Moderne teoloë lei in hierdie verband dikwels aan 'n "historiese bewussynsloosheid".²⁹ Hulle hou nie voldoende rekening met die hoofmomente van 2 000 jaar se teologie en geloofsgetuïenis nie.
- Hierby moet natuurlik gevoeg word die eksplisiete en eenparige getuïenis van die Nuwe-Testamentiese skrywers, veral die apostels (vgl. Hand. 1:21). Die graf was *leeg*. Die boodskap van die liggaamlike opstanding van Jesus vorm inderdaad 'n wesenlike deel van die evangelie. Trouens, dit was die heel eerste vorm van die evangelie wat verkondig is (König, 2009a:117-127; König, 2010:102-106). Daar moet dus gesê word: waar dit wegval, of geontmitologiseer, of gespiritualiseer, of (bloot) gemetaforiseer word, val die evangelie weg. "Onthou altyd dat Jesus Christus, 'n nakomeling van Dawid, uit die dood opgewek is. Dit is die evangelie wat ek verkondig." (2 Tim. 2:8.) "As jy met jou mond bely dat Jesus die Here is, en met jou hart glo dat God Hom uit die dood opgewek het, sal jy gered word." (Rom. 10:9.)

Die vraag kan natuurlik gestel word of Paulus in sy groot hoofstuk oor die opstanding nie na 'n "geestelike liggaam" verwys wat opgewek sal word nie (1 Kor. 15:44). Inderdaad wel, maar die *sooma pneumatikon* is 'n **sooma pneumatikon**, dit wil sê 'n verheerlikte liggaam, totaal gevul en beheers deur die Gees van God (Ridderbos 1966:604-617). Die opstandingsliggaam is nie 'n spook, 'n gees of 'n engel nie. Daar is enersyds diskontinuiteit, soos ook in die geval van Jesus se opstandingsliggaam, maar andersyds is daar ook 'n duidelike kontinuïteit. Ons nederige liggame word verander om soos die verheerlikte liggaam van Christus te wees (Fil. 3:21). Wie lig-

29 Vergelyk in hierdie verband die lang bronnelys wat Spangenberg *et al.* (2009) aangee, maar sonder 'n enkele vermelding van 'n boek van Augustinus teen wie Spangenberg hom voortdurend verset.

die verheerlikte liggaam van Christus te wees (Fil. 3:21). Wie liggaamlikheid, en dus realiteit, ontken, met ander woorde wie ten opsigte van die eskatologie bloot spiritualisties dink, val terug in die ou dwaling van die gnostisisme.

Die graf was leeg. Jesus het waarlik opgestaan as oorwinnaar oor sonde en dood (Rom. 4:25). Dit is die evangelie. König (2009a:121) is volkome korrek wanneer hy opmerk dat die kruis én die opstanding van Jesus die "hart van die evangelie" uitmaak.³⁰

4. Voorlopige konkluderende opmerkings

Sonder twyfel speel hermeneutiek 'n bepalende en selfs deurslaggewende rol by die juiste verstaan van die Bybel. By die drie gespreksgenote het dit ook duidelik aan die lig gekom. As algemene riglyne, asook in die lig van bostaande, meen ek dat die volgende rigtingwysers vir 'n verantwoordelike Skrifverstaan vir vandag oorweeg kan word:³¹

- In die Christelike geloofstradisie geniet die Bybel (die Skrifopenbaring) as betroubare en normatiewe teks 'n epistemologiese voorrang bo enige ander teks, nié op grond van die erkenning van 'n formele Skrifgesag nie, maar omdat die *inhoud* van die Bybelse boodskap oorredend, bevrydend en rigtinggewend is.³²

30 Dit is ondenkbaar om 'n boek oor die opstanding te skryf sonder enige indringende bespreking van 1 Korintiërs 15 en die leë graf – soos Müller (2006) probeer doen het. Müller (2009:13) weier om hom ondubbelsinnig oor die leë graf van Jesus uit te spreek, omdat hy dit as "misterie" beskou. Vergelyk in dié verband die skerp kritiek van Van der Walt (2006:643-649) teen Müller. Vir positiewe bydraes oor die opstanding (behalwe in een geval), vergelyk Gaum (2004). In sy boek oor Jesus skets Spangenberg *et al.* (2009:363, 366, 367) 'n hele aantal Jesusbeelde om te eindig met 'n 21e beeld van "Jesus as Joodse profeet en wysheidsleermeester". Hierin volg hy sy mentor Kennedy (2006) na. Dit is egter 'n radikaal-gereduseerde Jesusbeeld wat die logiese gevolg is van 'n sekulêre Skrifbeskouing. Ek sou wou vra: Waarom soveel moeite met die Bybel doen as die Bybel 'n gewoon godsdienstige boek is en waarom soveel aandag aan Jesus bestee as Gandhi waarskynlik 'n beter opsie is? Gandhi was ook 'n profeet, het ook voorbeeldig gelewe, het ook 'n martelaarsdood gesterf en het meer waarskynlike politieke sukses behaal. Geen wonder nie dat Durand (2005:107) tot die konklusie kom dat ons in die Nuwe Hervorming (waarvan Spangenberg deel is) met 'n "alternatiewe geloof" te doen het.

31 Vergelyk J.H. van Wyk (2002:613-614; 2008:703-704).

32 Vergelyk in hierdie verband veral die twee studies van Berkouwer (1966; 1967).

- Die Bybel is 'n gelóófsboek (NGB 7) en mag dus nie as 'n wetenskaplike handboek gebruik (misbruik) word nie. Dit is nié 'n boek wat bedoel is om eksakte uitsprake oor die geskiedenis, geologie, argeologie en paleontologie te maak nie. Hierdie beginsel is uiters belangrik vir die debat oor skepping en evolusie.
- Sonder om in 'n *sacrificium intellectus* te verval, moet bely word dat die verliggende werk van die Heilige Gees onmisbaar is by 'n juiste verstaan van die boodskap van die Bybel. Alle verantwoordbare hermeneutiese en verstaansreëls moet ingespan word om 'n teks te verstaan, maar die werk van die Heilige Gees bly onvervangbaar.
- Aangesien Jesus Christus God se laaste en hoogste Woord aan die wêreld is (Heb. 1:1-2), mag geen enkele teks in die Bybel buite om en los van Hom geëksegetiseer word nie. Dit geld vir alle vraagstukke waarmee die kerk deur die eeue geworstel het soos slawerny, die plek van die vrou in die kerk, homoseksuele persone, stamselnavorsing, kloning, ensovoorts.
- Dit is van die uiterste belang dat by die verklaring van die Bybel deeglik rekening gehou sal word met die verskillende kontekste waarin 'n teks verskyn: die kulturele konteks van destyds, die kulturele konteks van vandag en die "teologiese" konteks van die betrokke Skrifgedeelte. Sekere tekste is duidelik tydgerig en konteksbepaald (bv. die hoofbedekking; 1 Kor. 11:5). Die gereformeerde eksegeese het in hierdie opsig dikwels gefaail, omdat alle tekste eenvoudig op dieselfde vlak hanteer en aangehaal is.³³
- Hoewel die sentrale boodskap duidelik is (*claritas*) en die Bybel dus deur elke individuele gelowige bestudeer kan word, is 'n saamverstaan en ekumeniese lees van die Bybel noodsaaklik. "Saam met al die gelowiges" kry ons begrip van die wydte en verte en hoogte en diepte van die liefde van Christus (Ef. 3:18; vgl. Hand. 15 en 1 Tim. 3:15). Dit was juis ons ekumeniese betrekings met buitelandse kerke wat uiteindelik daartoe gelei het dat ook Afrikaanse kerke apartheid as dwaling afgewys het. *Hierdie waarheid impliseer ook dat die interkerklike gesprek*

33 Vergelyk die volgende uitspraak van Bavinck (1928:428):

Lang niet alles, wat in de Schrift staat opgeteekend, heeft normatief gezag voor ons geloof en leven. Veel van wat door God geboden en ingesteld is geweest, of door profeten en apostelen is voorgeschreven en verordend, gaat ons niet rechtstreeks meer aan en had op vroeger levende personen betrekking.

tussen (slegs) die Afrikaanse kerke sy sin en betekenis hoe langer hoe meer verloor en dat dit noodsaaklik geword het om die “jonger” kerke ook by hierdie gesprek te betrek.

- Teoloë behoort altyd bewus te wees van die kenteoretiese voorlopigheid van ons kennis. Alle menslike kennis dra ’n voorlopige karakter. Ons ken ten dele. Ons moet egter nie uit die beperktheid van ons kennis konkludeer tot die onegtheid daarvan nie.
- Teoloë moet voortdurend daarmee rekening hou dat ons (dikwels onbewuste) vooronderstellings ’n groot rol by Skrifinterpretasie speel en dat hierdie vooronderstellings dus geartikuleer en desnoods gekritiseer behoort te word.
- Daar is onteenseglik elemente van *diskontinuiteit* tussen die boodskap van die Bybel aan sy eerste lesers en sy latere lesers (inklusief, postmoderne lesers), maar daar is ook ’n onvervangbare *kontinuiteit* – ten minste wat die essensie van die evangelie betref.
- Teoloë behoort in hulle eksegeese ’n groter sensitiwiteit vir *taal* en verwoording aan die dag te lê – sowel vir die taal van die brontekste as vir die moderne taal waarin die brontaal “vertaal” (vertolk) moet word. Betekenisinhoud van woorde verskil en word hoofsaaklik bepaal deur die konteks waarin daardie woorde verskyn.
- Eksegeese is ’n eksistensiële saak wat geloofsoortuigings van gelowige mense diep raak. Eksegete moet dus verantwoordelik met Skrifuitleg omgaan, sodat hulle eksegeese nie geloofsondermy-nend nie, maar geloofsversterkend sal werk. Dit moet diensbaar wees aan die groei van die kerk en die koms van die koninkryk van God.

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Moraliteit, die opdringerige en die voorwaardelike

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Abstract

Morality, the obtrusive and the conditional

The secularist (immanentist), historicist and pluralistic nature of current thinking disables the articulation of transcendental conditions for morality. It is ostensibly especially the constancy of a structure for morality, as transcendental condition, for morality that is disputable. However, an aggressive immanentism sees to it that a transcendent origin for morality does not even appear on the agenda of late modern thinkers, which makes the latter probably an equally serious marginalisation of transcendental considerations. In this article the (sometimes unconscious) experience of some philosophers that a constant structure for morality obtrudes itself upon us, is highlighted. A further claim is that a similar obtrusion can be observed about a coherent diversity of moral sources (i.e. sources which find themselves in a transcendental position with regard to each other). The "most daring" argument is for a transcendental transcendent origin for morality.

Opsomming

Moraliteit, die opdringerige en die voorwaardelike

Die sekularistiese (immanentistiese), historistiese en pluralistiese aard van huidige denke bemoeilik die artikulering van transendentale voorwaardes vir moraliteit. Oënskyklik is dit veral die konstantheid van 'n struktuur vir moraliteit wat as transendentale voorwaarde vir moraliteit in die spervuur is. Maar 'n aggressiewe immanentisme wat veroorsaak dat 'n transendente oorsprong vir moraliteit glad nie eers op die agenda

van laat-moderne denkers mag verskyn nie, is waarskynlik net so 'n akute uitsluit van transendentale oorwegings. In hierdie artikel word gewys op die (soms onbewustelike) ervaring van sommige filosowe dat 'n konstante struktuur vir moraliteit ditself wel aan ons opdring. 'n Verdere aanspraak is dat 'n soortgelyke opdringerigheid bemerk kan word ten opsigte van 'n samehangende verskeidenheid morele bronne (d.w.s. bronne wat hulle transendentiaal t.o.v. mekaar bevind). Die "gewaagste" argument is vir 'n transendentale transendente oorsprong vir moraliteit.

1. Inleiding

Die Amerikaanse pragmaties Richard Rorty se etiek word deur De Wachter (1990:225-228) beskryf as "morele positivisme"; dit is 'n redusering van moraliteit tot net die "wat is" daarvan. Hierdie redusering en die gepaardgaande partikularisme, subjektivisme en relativisme laat die "is" van moraliteit sonder die leiding van 'n "behoort". Dit waarvan Rorty beskuldig word, dui waarskynlik op 'n kontemporêre tendens: 'n werklikheid van behorensiese transendentiaal aan (agter) voorhande morele keuses word nie erken en verreken nie. Hierteenoor sal onder andere geargumenteer word dat 'n transendentale "behoort" moeilik in die naam van morele positivisme uitgeskakel kan word.

Hierdie argument vir hernude klem ook op die morele behore, neem kennis van Klapwijk (1995) se waarneming van "de opdringerigheid van het universele" te midde van die etiese pluralisme van ons tyd. Die bedoeling is om die waarneming uit te brei na 'n raaksien van nie bloot 'n universele¹ "behoort" vir moraliteit nie, maar ook ander opdringerighede; die verstikkende immanentisme van ons tyd sal met die opdringerigheid van nie net "behoort" nie, maar onder andere ook van "samehang" en "oorsprong" bevraagteken word.

Die argument sal egter 'n stappie verder gaan as net die gebruik van die term *opdringerigheid* en die spanning wat dit skep tussen *is* en *behore*, na 'n tipering van moraliteit met konsepte soos *konstantheid* en *transendente oorsprong* asook veral 'n *voorwaardelikheid*. Die vraag sal wees of die opdringerigheid van konstantheid en die tran-

1 Omdat die term *universele* heelwat bagasie saambring uit die geskiedenis van die filosofie, sal eerder gebruik gemaak word van konsepte soos *konstantheid* en *duursaamheid*.

sendente ons behoort te neem na 'n ontologie van *spanning* of na 'n ontologie van *voorwaardelikheid*.

Hierdie doelstellings kan ook vanuit 'n ander hoek benader word. 'n Eerste aksie in filosofiese analise is sekerlik die betroubare identifisering van dit wat voorhande is, sodat dit geanaliseer en gekritiseer kan word. Dan is die tipies filosofiese volgende tree 'n tree terug om 'n wyer perspektief te kry. Dit kan onder andere gedoen word met die vraag of dit wat voorhande is daar is vir 'n vlietende moment en of daar ook 'n bestaandeel bestaan wat *duursaamheid* en 'n identiteit van *goedheid* daaraan verleen. Met 'n tweede perspektiefsoekende retirering kan 'n derde vraag gevra word, naamlik na die *oorsprong* van sowel die voorhande as die duursame. As antwoorde op hierdie vrae ontwikkel filosofiese verskeidenheidsidees, struktuuridees en oorsprongidees. Dit is debatteerbare en meestal hoogs kontroversiële idees en nie positiewe "feite" nie, maar tog idees wat verdedigbaar is. Daarby is dit idees wat gebruik word as voorwaardelikhede wat die identiteit van die "feite" wat ons raaksien wel beïnvloed, kondisioneer en moontlik maak.

Van hierdie vrae en idees word hieronder soos volg aan die orde gestel:

- Eerstens, hoe moet geoordeel word in die vraag na 'n konstante (duursame) behore in moraliteit? As antwoord word bevestig dat die konstante (universele) 'n opdringerigheid vertoon wat nie deur die kontemporêre relativisme geïgnoreer kan word nie. Meer nog, hierdie opdringerigheid moet as voorwaardelikheid herken en erken word.
- Tweedens, met die waarneming van opdringerigheid as verskynsel word meerdere moontlike voorwaardes vir moraliteit, en nie net "konstantheid" nie, gesuggereer. Hiervolgens behoort die volgende vraag byvoorbeeld ook gevra te word: Hoe moet geargumenteer word ten opsigte van die oorsprong(e) van die morele behore? As antwoord word die idee van 'n samehangende veelheid positiverende of kontekstualiserende bronne verken. Rasionaliteit, die interpreterende en kreatiewe self, vormgewende gemeenskappe en natuurlike aanlegte kan byvoorbeeld tot kontekstualiserende en positiverende oorspronge vir moraliteit gereken word.

Die idee van positiverende oorspronge kan egter kwalik bedink word sonder die idee van 'n transendente oorsprong transendentiaal aan hierdie pluraliteit. Met die Rede, Samelewing of

Natuur word so 'n transendente geïgnoreer en word vir 'n suiwer immanente kyk na morele oorspronge gekies. Tog dra laasgenoemde posisie 'n weerspreking met hom saam: 'n Bron wat ditself in hoofletters sien, veronderstel 'n immanente bron wat opsigself geen ander oorsprong het nie. Dit beteken dat laasgenoemde ditself tog sien as iets apart van ander kontekstualiserende bronne. Hiermee egter word die idee van 'n volledig immanente aard vir moraliteit egter ondermyn. Meer spesifiek: 'n opdringerigheid maak dit vir moderne mense moeilik om finaal afskeid te neem van 'n transendentale transendente. Die vraag kan tereg gevra word of ons nie met laasgenoemde by 'n ontiese voorwaardelikheid aangeland het nie.

- Derdens, in die laasgenoemde tweede tema word gewag gemaak van 'n samehangende veelheid van bronne vir moraliteit. In die wese van die verskynsel *voorwaardelikheid* is die koppeling met ander syndes, hetsy waarnemings waarvoor die voorwaardelikheid geld, of ook koppelings met ander voorwaardelikhede. Die voorhande en die transendentale vrae en idees daarvoor kan met ander woorde selde afsonderlik van mekaar behandel word. Daar kan per keer wel op die voorhande of 'n enkele transendentale idee gekonsentreer word, maar dan sal die ander telkens opduik as voorwaardelik vir die artikulering van dit wat behandel word.

2. "Lesings" van die "morele temperatuur" van ons tyd

2.1 Die laat-moderne² kontekstualisme

Hierbo is gestel dat 'n eerste vraag sou inhou om 'n oordeel oor die status van die konstante in moraliteit te fel. As aanloop tot 'n antwoord kan aangesluit word by De Wachter (1990:207-212) se beskrywing van die vroeëre modernistiese etiek as 'n fundamentalistiese poging om morele beginsels te legitimeer vanuit 'n enkele gesigspunt, fondament of bron (die "Self", "Natuur", of "God"). Teen hierdie rasionalistiese fundamentalisme reageer die twintigste-eeuse nadenke oor die etiek. Die rasionalistiese fondament (wat 'n antwoord gee op die oorsprong-, verskeidenheid-, én samehangsvrae) is gesien as iets wat die onstabiliiteit van partikuliere praktyke transendeer. Die veronderstelling was dat die Rede vanuit hierdie fondament of oorsprong die vaste beginsels sou konstrueer wat die

2 Die konsep *laat-modern* is myns insiens 'n beter beskrywing van wat populêr veronderstel word onder die term *postmodern*.

swakhede van die partikuliere situasie te bowe gaan. Die grenslose optimisme van die Verligting en die belofte dat die mensdom ditself kan vrymaak van dogma deur middel van die Rede, het egter vervaag. Ons is tans in 'n tyd van kontekstualisering. Dit beteken dat ook die rede vir sy oorsprong en bestaan afhanklik is van die sosio-kulturele konteks. Dit impliseer verder dat daar geen groeiende rasionalisering van die etiek was nie, eerder 'n stuwende historisering wat neerslag vind, eerstens in die hermeneutiese denke en haar meeloper die kommunitarisme, maar ook in die neo-Nietzscheanisme en sy medepligtige die postmodernisme. Albei sien die fundamentalistiese etiek as 'n onaanvaarbare poging om morele teorieë op 'n enkele onbevooroordeelde en rasioneel, ongekontaminateerde fondament te bou. In die twintigste eeu het die belofte van so 'n etiek ontspoor. In die tyd van kontekstualisering kan rasionaliteit nie los gesien word van sy konteks nie – moraliteit hang af van 'n bepaalde groep, historiese situasie en interpretasie.

Die “fundamentalisme” onderliggend aan dit waarteen die laat-modernisme reageer, is 'n weerspieëling van die poging om alle vooroordeel uit die behore te weer deur 'n nie-afgeleide waarheid te identifiseer wat as vaste fondament kan dien waarop 'n “behoregebou” tot stand kan kom waarvoor daar nie twyfel is nie. Volgens Wolterstorff (1979:24-25) moet so 'n fundamentalistiese fondament uit 'n stelling bestaan wat geken kan word sonder om enige afleidings te maak ten einde by die betrokke stelling uit te kom. Daarteenoor, so argumenteer Fumerton (2005:1), kan 'n nie-fundamentalistiese stelling gedefinieer word as een wat as waar beskou word omdat dit afgelei is van ander stellings wat as waar beskou word, aangesien ook hulle afgelei is van stellings wat as waar beskou word. My kennis (vaste oortuiging) oor hoe Julius Ceasar dood is, berus byvoorbeeld op my kennis (vaste oortuiging) dat die tekste waarin ek oor hierdie gebeurtenis lees, betroubaar is. Hierdie anti-fundamentalistiese weergawe van kennis kan natuurlik op sy beurt oordryf word en tot 'n vorm van kontekstualisme verword. Tog gee dit iets weer van die idee van 'n werklikheid waarin op transendentale wyse gevra kan word na die voorwaardes vir die bestaan en/of waarneem van die voorhande. In die lig hiervan veronderstel 'n transendentale posisie 'n etiek waarin behore- en oorsprongsaansprake onontkombaar deel van die groter werklikheid is.

Die morele kontekstualisme waarna De Wachter verwys, is oënskynlik verwant aan hierdie transendentale posisie, want dit maak staat op 'n aantal nie-rasionele sosiale aspekte (d.i. kontekstuele invloede) wat 'n bepaalde morele behore skep. Die vermoede is eg-

ter dat ook die kontekstualisme nie by die volle konsekwensie van 'n transendentale ontologie uitkom nie, omdat dit die morele behore tot 'n suiwer immanente netwerk wat ons moraliteit konstrueer, beperk.

Laat-moderniste se antwoord op die oorsprongsvraag, veralgemeenend gestel, kom daarop neer dat moraliteit gedetermineer word deur die sosiale en biotiese konteks. Hierdie antwoord verteenwoordig 'n verset teen die vroeëre siening dat die individu met sy rasionele vermoë 'n rasonele morele universum kan (ontdek, maar veral) konstrueer. Die laat-moderne ontkenning van 'n outonome rasonele en 'n subjekgedrewe moraliteit as antwoord op die oorsprongsvraag beteken egter nie dat hierdie laat-moderniste hulle tot die idee van 'n transendent-gegewe morele norm wend nie. Laasgenoemde sou vir hulle neerkom op 'n terugkeer na die premoderniste se fiktiewe metafisika en gediskrediteerde skeppingsidee. Hierdie verwerping van metafisiese of individuele agente vir die morele behore laat nie ruimte vir morele oorspronge veel anders as die "natuur" of menslike groeperings nie. Laasgenoemde laat-modernisme van veral 'n sosiale konstruktivisme veronderstel onmiddelik twyfel dat 'n morele behore met 'n standhoudende, konstante of duursame gelding wel onderskei kan word. Die laat-moderne diskoers lyk nie tot veel meer in staat te wees as relativistiese plek-, tyd- en mensgeproduseerde morele voorskrifte nie. Dit laat die vraag na 'n meer omvattende prentjie van die voorwaardes vir ons morele gedrag steeds onbeantwoord.

2.2 'n Bewustheid van "iets meer"

'n Eerste indruk van die Kanadese filosoof Charles Taylor is dat hy nie te ver is van 'n omvattende standpunt waarin die konstante en oorsprong van moraliteit nie beperk word tot 'n blote immanentisme nie. Hierdie indruk bevestig Taylor (2007) baie eksplisiet in sy onlangse boek *A secular age*, waarin hy (Taylor, 2007:771) onder andere stel dat baie aspekte van ons religieuse verlede nie sommer afgeskaf kan word nie, want "there is something genuinely important and valuable in it". Dit gaan vir Taylor (2007:728-733) in genoemde boek onder andere daaroor om diegene wat tans intellektueel 'n prominente rol te speel het, maar ook 'n bekering ondergaan het, se denke van nader te bekyk. Hy beskryf hierdie bekerings as bewegings uit die immanente perspektief na een waar "God, good and evil are now taken as serious realities". Hierin word die grense van die huidige sekularistiese en immanentistiese paradigma oorgesteek en word 'n posisie ingeneem in 'n "groter orde" waarin God en kerk 'n prominente rol speel.

'n Oppervlakkige evaluering sal waarskynlik op Taylor (1985b:189, 291-292) se Aristoteliëse en kommunitariëse uitgangspunt fokus, naamlik dat die mens 'n "sosiale, inderdaad 'n politieke dier is omdat hy nie self-voorsienend alleen" is nie. Hiermee sal die versoeking ook groot wees om Taylor bloot as 'n sosiale konstruktivis te tipeer. Dit is nietemin belangrik om raak te sien dat Taylor nie so maklik te reduseer is nie.

In *The secular age* verset Taylor (2007:742-743) hom byvoorbeeld teen die sisteem wat deur die moderne kultuur en samelewing geskep is en wat bestaan uit 'n stel reëls, 'n stel dissiplines wat sorg dat ons die reëls internaliseer, en 'n stel rationeel gekonstrueerde organisasies wat seker maak dat ons doen wat die reëls vereis. Die rede vir hierdie sosiale konstruktivisme is dat die moderne wêreld bang is vir kontingensie en dat laasgenoemde daarom onder 'n "web van beheer" gebring moet word. Taylor stel wel duidelik dat hy nie dink dat ons sonder juridiese en morele kodes kan leef nie, maar hy dink dat dit belangrik is om te sien dat dit nie al is wat daar is nie en dat hierdie kodes, indien oorbeklemtoon, selfs dehumaniserend en vervreemdend kan werk. Die teenpool wat volgens Taylor (2007: 739, 742) dus ook beklemtoon moet word, is 'n "sense of mutual belonging". Anders as in die geval van 'n stamverwantskap behoort daar egter in die Christendom aangesluit te word by 'n "ons" wat gebaseer is op "the kind of love which God has for us, which we call agape".

Dit is duidelik dat Taylor hom wel van twee basisse wat oorsprong aan moraliteit gee, wil laat bedien. Aan die een kant is hy kommunitariëer wat die skeppende krag van 'n "ons" hoog ag; aan die ander kant sien hy in 'n skeefgeloopte sosiale konstruktivisme 'n miskennis van die belangrikheid wat daar in die gegewe normatiewiteit van die sentrale religieuse liefdeswet (*agape*) geleë is.

Hierdie vashou aan twee oënskynlik teengestelde bronne veroorsaak dat Taylor (1985a:35-37, 112-113; 1989a:5) die siening verwerp van diegene wat ons morele doelwitte sien as iets wat eksklusief deur die natuur voorgeskryf word, asook diegene wat hierdie doelwitte sien as die produkte wat mense op outonome wyse self kies. Die mens as subjek, sê hy, bestaan in 'n "wêreld van betekenis wat hy nie altyd baie mooi verstaan nie". Ten einde hier te bestaan, moet die mens hierdie betekenis wel probeer verstaan deur dit te interpreteer. Hoewel hierdie interpretasie op sy beurt deels ons ervaring van moraliteit skep, is dit tog ook in 'n belangrike sin "iets wat aanvanklik onsamehangend, verwarrend en swak geformuleer is". Taylor maak in sy denke dus ruimte nie alleen vir die

kommunitariese en die hermeneutiese nie, maar ook vir die kreatiewe self, die natuurlike en selfs vir beginsels (betekenis) en ander bronne.

As opgemerk word dat Taylor omvattend dink, is dit ook belangrik om raak te sien dat hy wel heelwat klem lê op die artikulerende self as bron vir moraliteit. Hierdie self word as noodsaaklik gesien, omdat mense gewoonlik slegs 'n "dowwe verstaan" van die moreel goeie het. Laasgenoemde moet dan geartikuleer word ten einde "die morele punt van dit wat ons intuïesies vir ons voorskryf", te stel. Morele bronne sal ons dus bemagtig wanneer ons artikulasie van die punt wat hulle maak, vir ons 'n duideliker beeld van die morele behore gee. Sonder artikulasie loop ons die gevaar om alle kontak met die moreel goeie te verloor (Taylor, 1989:26-27, 77-78, 92, 95-97).

Kritici³ beskuldig Taylor daarvan dat hy slegs die storie van idees vertel, maar dat ons nie hoor van die sosiale belange wat die moraliteit van ons tyd vorm nie. Verwant aan hierdie kritiek is die aanvoeling van sommige kritici⁴ dat Taylor se idee van artikulasie hoofsaaklik van 'n bewustelike, rasionele en linguïstiese aard is. Taylor sou kon baat by 'n idee van artikulasie wat nie altyd en streng van hierdie geaardheid is nie. Liefdesverhoudings sal byvoorbeeld nie bestaan as die liefde wat mense vir mekaar het, nie ook uitgedruk word op maniere wat die verbale, rasionele en selfs bewustelike, te bowe gaan nie. Indien die volle spektrum van ons morele bronne nie vertel word nie, bly weergawes soos dié van Taylor, kwesbaar vir die beskuldiging dat dit eensydig is en nie die samehang tussen alle morele oorspronge ernstig opneem nie.

Dit is egter belangrik om daarop te let dat Taylor nie die artikulerende self sien as 'n skepper uit die niks nie, maar eerder as 'n soort sekondêre bron. Ter wille van hierdie tipering sal Taylor meer oor die self se posisie as transendentale bron moet veronderstel as 'n blote outonome subjektivisme. Taylor (1985a:238-239, 247; 1989:526-527) maak daarop aanspraak dat hy poog om die subjektivisme te oorstig. Hy wil graag die self in verbinding stel met 'n "groter realiteit" (Taylor, 1989:59-60; 1991a:3). Hy (1991b:242-243, 245-246) poog egter tegelykertyd om ook 'n "nie-realis" te wees,

3 Vergelyk byvoorbeeld die kritiek van Adeney (1991:208, 210) en Skinner (1991:135, 143-145; 1995:44-45).

4 Vergelyk die kritiek van Flanagan (1990:37, 43-47, 51-53) en Löw-Beer (1991:228-229).

soos hy dit noem. Tog voeg hy by dat hierdie posisie waarskynlik nie baie duidelik is nie, want die konsep “nie-realisme” is op ’n reaksionêre wyse steeds afhanklik van een of ander metafisiese realiteit wat ons ervaring oorstyg. Hy is daarom “ongemaklik bewus daarvan” dat hy ’n posisie sal moet inneem tussen die Platonisme met sy mens-onafhanklike entiteite en die subjektivisme. Dit is so, sê Taylor (1989:57-59; 1995:2-4), omdat dit nie geregverdig is om van ’n posisie van nie-realisme te beweeg na een waarin gesê word dat die moreel goeie nie so werklik is soos enige ander deel of aspek van die wêreld nie. Morele konsepte soos waardigheid, dapperheid of brutaliteit gee immers vir ons ’n insig in wat dit beteken om in die werklikheid as ’n mens te leef.

In *The secular age* is hierdie ambivalensie steeds teenwoordig, hoewel in ’n meer direkte konfrontasie met sowel sekulariste as ortodokse teïste. Teïste wat beswaard is oor die huidige sekularistiese marginalisering van ’n hoër en omvattende orde, sê Taylor (2007: 733-734), se kritiek is gewoonlik gemik teen die moderne vergoddeliking van die menslike subjek. Die teenmiddel sou die herstel van ’n objektiewe realiteit wees soos dit byvoorbeeld in die Thomistiese filosofie gevind word. Die klag is verder dat die moderne subjektivisme ’n ontkenning van morele grondslae beteken en dus die oorsaak is dat die moderne wêreld al dieper en dieper in wanorde wegsink. Taylor (2007:735) se teenargument is dat die aanspraak nie gemaak kan word dat die Middeleeue ’n tydperk was waarin Christelike waardes of die eise van ’n Christelike lewe volkome gereflekteer is nie. Taylor is daarom oortuig die aardse stad en die stad van God “can never be totally in true with each other”.

Dit is die oordeel van sommige kritici⁵ dat Taylor neig in die rigting van die subjektivisme terwyl andere⁶ suggereer dat hy ’n voorstander van ’n morele realisme is. Wat die geval ook al is, hy vind dit moeilik om morele realisme en morele subjektivisme met mekaar te versoen. Habermas (1993:71-74) is waarskynlik korrek dat Taylor nie die beeld van ’n filosoof in konflik kan ontsnap nie. Hierdie konflik, sou bygevoeg kon word, is die broeiplek vir ’n dualisme waar artikulasies, maar ook die buite-geartikuleerde beginsels vir moraliteit erken word, maar nie samehangend bedink kan word nie. Hier-

5 Vergelyk die kritiek van Poirier (1993:221-222), Rosen (1991:189), en Schweiker (1992:563).

6 Vergelyk die kritiek van James (1995:7), Larmore (1991:158), Schneewind (1991:422), Waldron (1990:325) en Wolfe (1990:628).

die sluimerende ontkoppeling tussen die “wat is” en die “wat behoort”, kan die oorsaak wees van ’n morele konteks tans sonder leiding aan die een kant, en aan die ander kant, van legitieme morele eise wat impotent en sonder effek, in die hedendaagse samelewing geword het.

Ten spyte van die feit dat Taylor nie veel verder vorder as ’n ontologie van konflik nie, kan waarderend opgemerk word dat hy een van die bekendste stemme in die kontemporêre filosofie is en dat dit daarom insiggewend is dat hy nie bereid is om die bewustheid van die transendentale konstantheid van die morele behore te laat vaar nie. Daarmee saam is daar by hom ook die suggestie dat die immanente nie op haar eie die volledige skepper van ons morele werklikheid kan wees nie. Hierdie perspektief op moraliteit verdien egter om geartikuleer te word met ’n sterker poging om die spanning tussen subjektivisme/kontingensie/die immanente aan die een kant, en ’n konstante transendent gegewe moraliteit aan die ander kant, te oorkom as wat Taylor wel doen.

2.3 Die opdringerigheid van konstantheid

Die “onduidelikheid” van die aard van die transendentale werklikheid wat Taylor herken, is waarskynlik toe te skryf aan die feit dat onafhanklik-gegewe morele beginsels wat kan dien as die duursame grondslae waarop ’n morele werklikheid gekonstrueer kan word, tans nie baie gewild is nie. In sy ekstreme en eensydige vorm kan die kontemporêre reaksie ’n immanentistiese kontekstualisme genoem word. Die probleem met die kontekstualisme is dat dit uiters vatbaar is vir partikularisme, subjektivisme, relativisme en historisme, wat moraliteit uiteindelik sonder enige normatiewe gesag laat. Tog, soos Taylor hierbo suggereer en Klapwijk hieronder uitwys, is dit feitlik onmoontlik om ontslae te raak van die opdringerigheid van die idee van morele duursaamheid. By Taylor is daar ’n dreigende dualisme tussen morele realisme en subjektivisme. Hierdie dreigende ontkoppeling beteken dat die vraag na samehang nie vermy kan word nie. Dit is veral laasgenoemde wat Klapwijk (1995:180) interesseer in sy opstel oor die “Ethisch pluralisme en de opdringerigheid van het universele”.

Die vraag wat Klapwijk (1995:181) homself afvra is of ons ervaring van ’n pluraliteit asook ’n partikulariteit van morele maatstawwe noodwendig beteken dat daar geen sprake is van ’n duursaamheid of konstantheid in hierdie maatstawwe nie. Indien ons wel oordeel dat daar so ’n konstantheid is, wat sou dan die verhouding van

laasgenoemde tot die pluraliteit en partikulariteit wees wat ons ook in moraliteit ervaar?

Klapwijk (1995:182) argumenteer tereg dat daar in die geskiedenis heelwat voorbeelde (bv. Socrates, Plato en die verskillende natuurreg-filosofieë) van diepgaande kritiek op 'n subjektivistiese normopvatting is (w.o. die besware teen morele verval en maatskaplike disintegrasie) sodat die idee van 'n reële, objektiewe basis vir norme en waardes ernstig opgeneem kan word. Tegelyk wys Klapwijk (1995:182) ook die metafisika af as so 'n basis, omdat die metafisika ditself op arbitrêre wyse losmaak van die menslike ervaringswêreld. Anders gestel, die metafisika wil verder gaan as wat menslike ervaring reik. Tog, sê Klapwijk (1995:183), selfs as ons ons konsekwent “op het standpunt der ervaring” stel, het ons die ervaring dat konstante norme (“universele norme”) hulle steeds aan ons opdring.

Klapwijk (1995:184-185) beskou konstante norme as 'n transendentale voorwaarde vir ons ervaring en beskryf dit soos volg:

[Daar] dringt zich in die menselijke ervaring misschien toch een vreemd, geheimzinnig, weerbarstig moment van universaliteit aan ons op, iets wat we wellicht niet doorgronden maar wat ons toch doet begrijpen waarom mense steeds weer op zoek gaan naar zoiets als 'universele norme' en hierbij voor de verleiding der metafysica bezwijken?

Nog anders gestel, dit gaan hier om 'n transendentale openheid vir iets wat nie sonder meer in ons ervaring verskyn nie, maar wat ditself tog op die een of ander wyse aan “onze ervaring opdringt omdat het in haar verondersteld is als een prealabele conditie”. Klapwijk suggereer, myns insiens tereg, dat om die saak so van albei kante te bekyk (ervaring aan die een kant en transendentale openheid aan die ander kant), die verste is wat ons kan gaan. Hyself (Klapwijk, 1995:191) stel dit soos volg: “Wijsgerig gesproken lijken we aan een grens gekomen te zijn”.

Klapwijk (1995:188) meen egter wel dat ons 'n blik kan kry op “de subjectieve toeëigening van het universele en van zijn *integratie* binne die menselijke samenleving”. Dit doen Klapwijk (1995:189) onder andere en veral met die konsep positivering. Laasgenoemde beskryf hy as reëls wat ditself aanpas by 'n bepaalde tydsorde en maatskappyvorm maar dan normatiewe krag behou omdat dit 'n verdeling en vermaatskapliking is van algemene uitgangspunte. Op 'n ander plek sien hy (Klapwijk, 1995:200-201) hierdie vermaat-

skapliking en historiese integrasie as deel van 'n kontekstualiseringsproses wat verseker dat die duursame normbeginsel êrens land in 'n "Sitz im Leben". Tog, soos in die slotopmerkings geargumenteer sal word, kan daar myns insiens tog wel nog verder gegaan word as net 'n beklemtoning van die opdringerige, deur in 'n ontologie van voorwaardelikheid die spanning inherent aan die idee van die opdringerige uit te daag.

3. Die opdringerigheid van die transendente

3.1 'n Sosiaal-konstruktivistiese perspektief

Die laat-moderne fiksasie op die kontekstualiseringsproses herberg in ditself die gevaar dat die opdringerigheid van die transendentale verduister word. De Wachter se aanklag hierbo dat Rorty hom skuldig maak aan 'n eksklusiewe fokus op die "wat is" van moraliteit, beteken inderdaad dat Rorty die slagoffer van so 'n verduistering is. Rorty is egter nie 'n eenduidige denker nie en daar is by hom ook sprake van 'n opdringerigheid van voorwaardelikhede wat hy, toegegee, nie noodwendig aan die groot klok sal wil hang nie.

Rorty (1993:27-33; 1999:77-81) gaan uit van die standpunt dat daar geen individuele menslike aspek soos die rede is wat die oorsprong van 'n universele moraliteit kan wees nie. Op tipies kontekstualistiese en naturalistiese wyse argumenteer hy dat moraliteit haar begin het in die natuurlike geneigdheid van mense om vir ander gesinslede om te gee. Wanneer hierdie natuurlike geneigdheid deur mense evolueer na nie-gesinslede kan ons van die ontstaan en bestaan van moraliteit by 'n persoon praat. 'n Mens sou kon stel dat Rorty die funderingsfunksie van moraliteit weliswaar nie in die rasionele vermoë nie, maar in die biotiese en/of sosiale aspekte van menswees setel. Rorty (1993:58-60; 1999:73-76) herhaal hierdie uitgangspunt as hy stel dat moraliteit bloot net meer doelbewuste sosiale gewoontes is wat hulle oorsprong het in sosiale instellings, praktyke en die morele taal wat in sosiale omgang gebesig word.

Die menswaardigheid van 'n persoon, sê Rorty (1991:192, 197, 199-202), is byvoorbeeld iets wat afgelei word van die waardigheid wat 'n bepaalde gemeenskap besit. Hiervolgens het 'n kind wat in 'n bos rondwaal en wat nie met enige gemeenskap verbind kan word nie, geen menswaardigheid nie. Dit beteken egter nie dat die kind soos 'n dier behandel mag word nie, want deel van die tradisie van die Westerse gemeenskap is dié van die Judeo-Christelike aanname dat 'n vreemdeling sonder waardigheid deur die gemeenskap ingeneem en met waardigheid beklee moet word.

In hierdie verduideliking van Rorty oor die evoluering van moraliteit wys hy, soos reeds gesuggereer, twee funderings aan. Eerstens suggereer hy dat 'n naturalistiese evolusieproses die oorsprong van moraliteit is. Hy wys egter ook baie prominent menslike groeperings aan as die skepper van moraliteit. Om die waarheid te sê, alhoewel Rorty by die evolusionisme aansluit in sy verduideliking van die oorsprong van moraliteit, is daar by hom 'n ontkenning van 'n naturalistiese determinisme en 'n aansluiting by 'n sosiale konstruktivisme. Etiek is die produk van 'n konstruerende gemeenskap. Kan Rorty dus getipeer word as 'n sosiale konstruktivist? ⁷ Meer nog, maak dit hom 'n relativist? Rorty suggereer wel dat daar 'n bepaalde permanensie aan die volwasse produkte van 'n sosiale tradisie kleef, maar hy is baie duidelik daaroor dat 'n evolusieproses die skeppende gemeenskap voortdurend bybly.

Daar is ook verdere spannings in Rorty se posisie wat aandui dat hy dit moeilik vind om hom volledig te assosieer met die keuse vir 'n ekstreme en bloot evolusionistiese sosiale konstruktivisme.

Hy maak byvoorbeeld ruimte vir 'n soort "universele" individu as morele fundering wanneer hy (Rorty, 1993:73-75, 77-78, 84) daarop aanspraak maak dat die ideale samelewing konsensus sal hê dat almal 'n kans moet kry om hulself te skep. Alhoewel hierdie uitspraak probeer vashou aan die samelewing as die uiteindelijke bron, is die idee van 'n "self-skeppende ironist" vir Rorty 'n belangrike veronderstelling ten einde 'n gemeenskap te verkry wat in die rigting van groter hoop ontwikkel. Dit beteken natuurlik dat Rorty ruimte maak vir 'n individuele konstruktivisme bo en behalwe sy sosiale konstruktivisme. Rorty suggereer dus twee ander bronne (die individu en 'n evoluerende natuur) naas sy hoofokus op konstruerende gemeenskappe as bronne van moraliteit. Belangriker, hy sien die ironiserende individu sowel as die evolusieproses as noodsaaklike voorwaardes vir sy hoofvisie van 'n sosiaalgekonstrueerde moraliteit. Daar is met ander woorde by Rorty sprake van 'n opdringerig-

7 Volgens Gascoigne (2008:183) is Rorty se oorsprongsidee vir morele norme Darwinisties en hy verwerp die moderne poging om normatiewiteit op metafisiese wyse te legitimeer. Hierdie idee word aangevul met 'n sterk sosiale konstruktivisme; dit is *mense* wat die reëls bepaal waaraan ons verantwoordings verskuldig is. Morele reëls spruit nie voort uit die "feite van die wêreld" nie en ook nie uit die "logika van taal" nie. Norme moet dus nominalisties gesien word en nie as korresponderings met die natuur, die menslike wêreld, moraliteit, die estetiese, ensovoorts nie. Dit is bloot maniere waarop mense probeer om met die wêreld saam te leef ("ways of coping with the world").

heid van meerdere kontekstualiserende oorspronge wat getipeer kan word as 'n opdringerigheid van transendentales.

Dit is egter nie net ten opsigte van sy oorsprongs-idee dat Rorty 'n kompleksere posisie inneem as 'n positivistiese fokus op net dit wat voorhande is nie. Hy onderskryf wat getipeer kan word as die idee van "omgee-vir-ander". Hierdie "omgee-vir-ander" word 'n morele behore met 'n sterker permanensie en wyer gelding as wat sy konstruktivisme hom eintlik toelaat. Hierdie indruk is baie prominent sigbaar in sy (Rorty, 1993:xiv-xvi, 73-75, 146; 1999:82) aanspraak dat die liberale kultuur van die Weste op 'n pad van morele progressie is en dat die uiteindelijke doel hiervan is om steeds groterwordende sensitiwiteit vir pyn te genereer. Daar is dus sprake van 'n spanning in Rorty: die prominensie van die konsepte *omgee-vir-ander*, *menswaardigheid* en *nie-wreedheid* is die reste van 'n onderskeid tussen "wat is" en "wat behoort te wees" en dus 'n teken van die opdringerigheid van die transendentale. Hierdie aanspraak bly egter konstruktivisties, want die konstantheid van 'n sensitiwiteit vir pyn lyk na die produk van 'n evolusionêre proses wat ditself via die saamleef van mense produseer.

Daar kan tereg aan Rorty gevra word waarom 'n sensitiwiteit vir pyn en nie ander waardemutasies soos die wil tot mag, veralgemeen word nie. In ons kultuur, wat 'n obsessie met kompetisie het, sal die wil tot mag tog 'n selfs groter kans op oorlewing hê as sensitiwiteit vir die pyn en die waardigheid van ander mense. Die punt is dat Rorty waarskynlik veel meer kieskeurig is oor die opdringerige transendentale waaraan hy gehoor gee, as om bloot dit wat die prominentste voorhande is, aan te gryp as deurslaggewende behore. Vir so 'n kieskeurigheid moet die idee van 'n transendentale struktuur vir moraliteit 'n groter indruk op Rorty gemaak het as wat hy bereid is om te erken.

3.2 Sinisme oor die sosiale konstruktivisme

Sosiale konstruktivisme is die prominente indruk waarmee Rorty se oorsprongs-idee ons laat. Hiermee verwoord hy 'n algemene tendens in kontemporêre denke. Daar is egter sommige kontemporêre denkers wie se skeptiese aanpak nie net 'n verwerping van 'n metafisiese behore en die Rede (soos in die geval van Rorty) veronderstel nie, maar ook 'n kritiek van die idee dat moraliteit 'n sosiale oorsprong het soos wat die sosiale konstruktivisme voorstel. 'n Voorbeeld van so 'n kritiese kyk na die sosiale konstruktivisme, is die Poolse denker (woonagtig in Brittanje) Zygmunt Bauman. Hy

verdink die rede, maar ook sosiale groeperings van 'n blote magsmotief in die toepassing van moraliteit.

Bauman (1994:8-10, 12, 14, 40-41, 63-67) glo dat moderne samelewings 'n "morele parochialisme" bedryf met die pretensie dat dit 'n universele etiek voorstel. Politieke wetgewers verkondig byvoorbeeld die "uitsonderinglose gesag van 'n enkele stel wette", en vir (moderne) filosowe geld voorskrifte wat "elke mens dwing" sonder inagneming van enige kommunale lojaliteite. Hierdie veronderstellings beteken dat die rede waarom morele eise nagekom moet word, in hulle universaliteit geleë is. Vir hierdie rede moet hulle ook ontdek, of ten minste kollektief geskep word. Tog, sê Bauman, ondermyn filosowe hulself deur hulle finale stem aan sosiale ingenieurs te gee wat die natuurlike instinkte van die mensdom probeer verander eerder as om gehoor te gee aan dit wat universeel is. Politici, sê hy, weerspreek hulself deur te stel dat hulle nie voorkeur sal gee aan die etiese kode wat hulle verkies nie, maar dat hulle dan tog probeer om in die naam van 'n mensheidomvattende etiek, alles wat hulle sien as "lokale skeeftrekkings", uit te roei.

Bauman is dus skepties oor die pogings van sosiale instellings soos filosofie en die staat om die "konstruktiviste" van 'n universele moraliteit te wees. As alternatief neem hy (Bauman, 1994:11, 13-14, 50, 53-54, 62, 73-78; 1995:10) 'n oënskynlik radikale antitransendentale posisie in waarvolgens morele verskynsels gesien moet word as "nie-universaliseerbaar nie" en as "sonder enige fondament". Hy kan dit egter nie vermy om te stel dat "wat dan nou eintlik moreel in moraliteit is", die "ryk van persoonlike outonomie" en die "morele impuls" is nie. Hy is wel van mening dat hierdie morele impuls nie universeel kan wees nie, omdat dit "subjektief, ontwykend, en nie-reëlmstig" is. In die voetspore van Levinas beskryf hy hierdie impuls as "die wees vir die ander ... of die ander nou vir my is of nie". Die ander is daarom nie 'n eis wat betaal moet word nie en sy/hy het geen mag oor my nie. Dit is ek wat vir myself die verantwoordelikheid vir die ander moet gee.

Hierdie formulering van Bauman is dubbelsinnig. Hy verwerp nie die konstantheid van die morele behore totaal en radikaal nie, omdat hy steeds aanspraak maak op 'n gegewe morele impuls en omdat hy skepties na 'n behorelose sosiale konstruktivisme kyk. Alhoewel hy stel dat die morele impuls nie-universaliseerbaar is nie, suggereer dit nietemin 'n standhoudende identiteit ("wees vir die ander") aan die morele. Dit is ook nie asof Bauman die idee van morele bronne totaal verwerp nie, want hy glo wel in die outonome individu; die term *impuls* suggereer tog iets van die "natuur" as bron. Verder, ten

spyte van Bauman (1994:73, 75-78) se ontkenning dat die ander 'n mag oor my het, merk hy tog op dat die ander 'n "outoriteit" vir my is en dat die "morele self" "wakker word" met die "sien van die ander". Hy gaan selfs so ver as om te stel dat daar 'n "ambivalensie is in die hart van moraliteit" waarmee hy in der waarheid erken dat hy dit moeilik vind om 'n moraliteit sonder oorsprong te bedink.

Ten spyte van sy antimetafisiese posisie neem Bauman onwillekeurig 'n posisie in waarin daar duidelik sprake is van 'n terugkeer van die transendentale. 'n Simpatieke beoordeling kan wees dat Bauman versigtig is om hom op 'n enkele fondament vir moraliteit te verlaat en dat sy begrip van die morele behore poog om nie-reduksionisties te wees. Die groot waarde van sy bydrae is egter die feit dat hy ontken dat die verhouding tussen 'n morele bron en morele subjek in magsterme gedefinieer moet word. Dit lyk asof hy hierdie verhouding, soos Levinas, wil hervorm in die rigting van 'n etiese verhouding. Daar sal hieronder weer verwys word na hierdie sentiment.

3.3 'n Evolusionistiese perspektief

Rorty het gesuggereer dat moraliteit sy oorsprong in 'n sosiale konstruksieproses het (vgl. bo). Ter wille van 'n kritiese kyk, is die idees van Bauman oor die ontstaan en ontwikkeling van moraliteit bekyk. Rorty wys egter ook die evolusieproses van die mens as oorsprong vir moraliteit aan. Ter wille van 'n duideliker formulering van hierdie standpunt en die vraag of selfs hierdie oënskyklik suiwer immanente posisie die opdringerigheid van die transendentale kan vryspring, kan kortliks aandag gegee word aan die argument van een van die voorste populariseerders van die evolusionisme, Richard Dawkins.

Dawkins (2007:245-246) gee toe dat emosies soos honger, vrees en seksuele lus makliker deur die teorie van natuurlike seleksie verklaar kan word as die mededoë (*compassion*) wat ons met 'n kind het wat huil, 'n ou weduwee wat eensaam is, of met die onbekende slagoffers van 'n tsunami. Hy noem dat teenstanders van morele evolusionisme gewoonlik verwys na die sogenaamde selfsugtige geen in die teorie van evolusie en dat hulle die konklusie maak dat die moreel goeie nie versoenbaar is met hierdie geen nie. Dawkins (2007:246-247) ontken egter dat die selfsugtige geen 'n normatiewe moraliteit onmoontlik maak. Hy verduidelik dat 'n onderskeid gemaak moet word tussen die eenheid van natuurlike seleksie (d.i. die eenheid waar selfbelang ter sprake is) en entiteite soos 'n organisme, 'n groep, 'n spesie of 'n ekosisteem. Laasgenoemde entiteite is

nie dieselfde as die selfsugtige geen nie, want hulle maak nie kopieë van hulself nie en hulle kompeteer nie in 'n poel van selfkopiërende entiteite nie. Selfkopiëring en gevolglike kompetisie is wat gene doen en wat noodsaak dat hulle selfsugtig ingestel moet wees.

Dawkins erken wel dat gene individuele organismes programmeer om selfsugtig te wees. Hierdie gene is egter pragmaties en verseker in bepaalde situasies hulle eie selfsugtige voortbestaan deur die organismes te beïnvloed om altruïsties op te tree. 'n Eerste sodanige situasie is waar 'n geen ditself tot so 'n mate kopieer dat verwantskapaltruïsme die norm word. Die beste voorbeeld hiervan is mense wat altruïsties teenoor hulle kinders optree. Die tweede geval is resiprokale altruïsme (jy krap my rug, dan krap ek joune). Laasgenoemde beginsel lê aan die wortel van alle handel. Daar is ook altruïsme waarmee 'n organisme dominansie of superioriteit wil adverteer deur 'n opoffering te maak wat nie werklik sy dominansie in gevaar stel nie (Dawkins, 2007:247-251).

'n Kritiese opmerking wat ten opsigte van hierdie argumente van Dawkins gemaak moet word, is dat hy nie die indruk kan ontkom dat selfsug wel die leidende motief vir sy etiek bly nie. Volgens Dawkins kan altruïsme (wat hy gelykstel aan morele gedrag) wel voorkom omdat dit 'n funksie kan hê in die oorhoofs-selfsugtige doelstelling (oorlewing) van die mens. Die selfsugtige mens bly dus die transendentale voorwaarde vir enige morele gedrag.

Die vraag is hoe hierdie selfsugtige voorwaarde van altruïstiese gedrag aanleiding kan gee tot 'n algemene moraliteit en nie beperk bly tot die gevalle wat hierbo genoem word nie. Ook hiervoor het Dawkins (2007:252-253) 'n antwoord. Universalisering vind plaas wanneer 'n evolusionêr-ontwikkelde gedragspatroon of -reël op 'n misplaaste wyse optree (*misfire*). So byvoorbeeld is die seksuele drang se bedoeling prokreasie. Moderne mense het egter maniere om prokreasie te verhoed deur byvoorbeeld 'n geboortebeperkingspil. Laasgenoemde het egter nie die effek dat die seksuele drang verminder word nie. Die drang begin dus onafhanklik optree van die aanvanklike evolusionistiese doel daarvan. Dieselfde gebeur met morele gedrag. Altruïstiese gedrag was aanvanklik net gerig op naby-verwante mense en diene wat die potensiaal het om die guns terug te bewys. Hierdie voorwaarde bestaan in baie gevalle nie meer nie, maar die reël om altruïsties op te tree wel – moraliteit is 'n misplaaste oorblyfsel (*misfiring*) van die aanvanklike impuls.

Dawkins (2007:255-257) gaan selfs verder en beskryf moraliteit as 'n universele sisteem wat evolusionêr ontwikkel het, maar benede

ons bewuste funksioneer, net soos ons gebruik van taal 'n universele sisteem het wat onder ons bewuste bestaan. Wanneer Kant argumenteer dat 'n rasonale wese nooit as 'n middel tot 'n doel gebruik kan word nie, formuleer hy dit as 'n "morele absolute". Dawkins se suggestie is dat Kant dit as 'n transendente gegewe sien, maar dit is eintlik niks meer as iets wat deur evolusie in ons ingeplant is nie.

Die duidelike konsekwensie van laasgenoemde is dat Dawkins die opdringerigheid van 'n normatiewe struktuur vir moraliteit nie kan ontkom nie. Nog meer interessant is dat hy met die idee dat moraliteit 'n misplaaste oorblyfsel van die evolusieproses is, poog om tot 'n mate die evolusieproses as transendentale oorsprong vir moraliteit te versag of selfs te versluier. Die rede hiervoor is waarskynlik sy aanvoeling dat die selfsugtige aard van die evolusionisme baie moeilik kan deug as transendentale voorwaarde vir 'n etiese aspek wat Dawkins self in suiwer altruïstiese terme definieer.

'n Deontologiese verklaring soos dié van Kant vir die oorsprong van die morele behore sou meer naatloos inpas by 'n altruïstiese beskrywing van moraliteit. Dit is egter 'n perspektief wat Dawkins se immanentistiese paradigma weerspreek. Hy (Dawkins, 2007:259) takel daarom die argument van baie Christene dat indien daar nie 'n God is nie, ons nie enige rede sal hê om moreel op te tree nie. Sy bedoeling is dus om God as transendentale voorwaarde vir moraliteit, te weerspreek. Sy teenargument is dat indien mense moreel optree net omdat hulle God se goedkeuring en beloning wil kry of straf wil vermy, ons nie met moraliteit te doen het nie, maar met 'n oordie-skouer-loerdery, 'n blote paaiery van God en 'n poging om ons eie beeld by God te poets. Dawkins se oordeel is dat so 'n motivering vir moraliteit maar taamlik misrabel is.

'n Mens sou daarop kon wys dat hierdie argument, indien sommige Christene dit wel huldig, eintlik die selfsugtige motief van oorlewing as begroning het. Dit verskil gevolglik nie veel van Dawkins se eie beskrywing van die motief vir moraliteit nie, behalwe dat hy nie morele gedrag sien as 'n poging om 'n kwaai god te oorleef nie, maar as 'n poging om in 'n ongenaakbare situasie van evolusionêre kompetisie wat transendentaal aan mense se behandeling van mekaar lê, die oorhand te hê. Hy slaag dus nie daarin om 'n groter waardigheid aan die motief vir moraliteit te koppel deur 'n evolusionistiese oorsprong daaraan te gee nie.

So asof hy aanvoel dat sy transendentale motief vir morele optrede nie te stewig staan nie, gee Dawkins (2007:260-261) toe, ten spyte

van sy geloof in 'n evolusie-ingebooue morele struktuur in alle mense, dat mense immoreel optree as hulle nie gepolisieer word nie. Hy noem die voorbeeld van 'n polisiestaking in Montreal waarop 'n toename in misdadigheid gevolg het. Hy gaan egter onmiddelik tot die aanval oor en stel dat die meerderheid mense van Montreal in God (ge)glo (het), en vra dan waarom die vrees vir God nie gekeer het dat hierdie toename in misdadigheid plaasvind as daar nie aardse polisiemanne is nie. Natuurlik sal Dawkins op grond van sy teorie dat alle mense 'n sterk morele impuls en onderliggende struktuur deur middel van die evolusieproses ingekry het, dieselfde vraag moet antwoord: Waarom keer die evolusie-ingebooue morele struktuur nie dat mense misdadig optree as daar nie polisiemanne is nie? Die vraag kan dus gevra word of die evolusionistiese verduideliking van die oorsprong van moraliteit ons enigsins verder gebring het as 'n teïstiese perspektief waarin vrees en selfbelang 'n hoofrol speel?

Anders gestel: Dawkins ervaar wel die opringerigheid van 'n transendentale oorsprongsvraag vir die morele behore. Hy vind 'n antwoord, dit wil sê 'n transendentale oorsprongidee in 'n suiwer immanente evolusieproses. Vir Dawkins is hierdie immanentisme 'n sterker moontlike voorwaarde vir moraliteit as 'n transendente verduideliking. Dit is egter 'n konklusie wat dieselfde spanning huisves as wat hy in 'n teïstiese paradigma meen op te merk, wat sy aanspraak op 'n transendentlose transendentale begin van moraliteit op heelwat losser skroewe plaas as wat hy sal wil toegee.

3.4 Onvergenoegdheid met die immanentisme

Een van die duidelike tendense in die denkers wat hierbo behandel is, is die indruk dat ons tyd neig in die rigting van antimetafisiese sentimente. Dit is inderdaad duidelik dat die ervaarbare aard van konstante morele norme gerespekteer moet word. Die konstantheid van norme dui egter ook op hulle transendentale aard, wat beteken dat hierdie norme nie so direk ervaarbaar is nie. Daarby moet ook in gedagte gehou word dat norme met 'n proses van "positivering" bemiddel word. Hierdie positivering veronderstel positiverende agente. Dit is opmerklik dat Rorty en Bauman ook veronderstel dat wat hulle as belangrike morele eise sien, soos sorg-vir-ander en wees-vir-die-ander, 'n natuurlike impuls is wat deur 'n samelewing gepositiveer moet word. Interpretasie (soos Taylor uitwys) en rasionaliteit (dit is ons erfenis van die vroeëre Modernisme), meen ek, is ander sodanige positiverende agente.

Op hierdie punt kan 'n onderskeid gemaak word tussen transendentale idees oor oorsprong van 'n *genoegsame* en oorsprong van 'n

noodsaaklike aard. 'n Genoegsame voorwaarde vir die feit dat 'n mens byvoorbeeld nie kan slaap nie, sou wees as 'n rockorkes die heelnag voor jou slaapkamervenster oefen. Dit is egter nie 'n noodsaaklike voorwaarde nie, want 'n sterk slaappil sou hierdie voorwaarde moontlik ongedaan kon maak. 'n Noodsaaklike voorwaarde sou byvoorbeeld wees om te stel dat 'n rekenaar nie sonder elektrisiteit kan funksioneer nie. Elektrisiteit is egter nie 'n genoegsame voorwaarde vir die rekenaar om te funksioneer nie, want daar sal ook 'n aantal ander voorwaardes in plek moet wees, byvoorbeeld iemand wat weet hoe die rekenaar werk, dat die hardeware en sagteware van die rekenaar bymekaar aanpasbaar is, ensovoorts.

Wanneer gepraat word van die opdringerigheid van die duursaamheid van die morele behore, die opdringerigheid van meerdere positiverende morele agente, en die opdringerigheid van die transendente as die oorsprong van moraliteit, word nie soseer bedoel dat ons met noodsaaklike voorwaardes vir moraliteit te doen het nie – veel eerder met voorwaardes wat genoegsame rede moet verskaf vir morele optrede. In die geval van die transendente oorsprong van moraliteit word hierdie genoegsaamheid bevestig deur twee induktiewe beperkings waarvoor 'n suiwer immanentisme te staan kom.

Ekstreme sosiale konstruktivisme glo, volgens Kukla (2000:ix, 4), dat die samelewing die skepper en nie die blote ontdekker is van alles wat bestaan nie – dat denke oor moraliteit dus nie moet poog om morele norme te ontdek nie, maar dit eerder moet skep. Volgens Kukla (2000:160) is die grootste probleem met hierdie ekstreme hipotese 'n ingeboude weerspreking: As “feite” eintlik nie bestaan nie omdat dit deur 'n bepaalde sosiale konteks geskep word, kan die konstruktivisme self, nie as 'n “feit” gehandhaaf word nie. Meer nog: as alles deur 'n samelewing geskep word en dus immer aan't verander is, behoort 'n weerspreking van laasgenoemde (bv. deur 'n opdringerige konstantheid) ook net deur die samelewing verklaar te kan word as iets wat nie bestaan nie. So 'n klaarspel met dit wat nie inpas by die konstruktivistiese perspektief nie, is egter nie houdbaar nie. Kukla se konklusie is dat “die wêreld wel bestaan”. Anders gestel: daar bestaan wel dinge buite die skeppings van 'n samelewing om – die morele behore waarskynlik ook. Hierdie afleiding kan selfs 'n entjie verder geneem word deur te stel dat daar waarskynlik dan ook ander bronne vir moraliteit as net die samelewing bestaan.

Die soort outonoom finaal skeppende (fundamentalistiese) bron wat deur die rasionalisme, sosiale konstruktivisme en die evolusionisme verkondig word, het die probleem dat dit vasgevang word in 'n ver-

dere drogredenasie, naamlik dié van oneindige retirering. Binne 'n ekstreme sosiale konstruktivisme loop hierdie drogredenasie soos volg: As dit 'n feit is dat alle feite deur sosiale groepe gekonstrueer word, moet hierdie metafeit ook 'n sosiale konstruksie wees, wat op sy beurt beteken dat laasgenoemde meta-metafeit ook 'n sosiale konstruksie moet wees, ensovoorts (Kukla, 2000:68). Kukla (2000: 79) suggereer dat hierdie drogredenasie nie 'n finale argument teen die konstruktivisme hoef te wees nie. Tog, sou 'n mens kon uitwys, dit bevestig 'n moeilik ignoreerbare ongemaklikheid met 'n radikale konstruktivisme.

Een manier om hierdie ongemaklikheid te hanteer, merk Kolakowski (1988:30-31) op, is die strategie van vele hedendaagse filosowe om die soeke na die *Ultimum* te sien as 'n "wanton hunting for chimera", of 'n "Sisyphian effort" as gevolg van die "never-ending curse" dat die voorwaarde of logika vir die noodsaaklike bestaan van die *Ultimum* in die *Ultimum* self gevind moet word. Immanentiste probeer die oneindige spiraal van 'n soeke na die *Ultimum* te ontsnap deur bloot te stel dat, omdat 'n finale of hoogste bron wat ditself kan begrond, onmoontlik is, moet die soeke na so 'n bron as sodanig gestaak word. Tog meen Kolakowski (1988:31-32) dat ten spyte van hierdie poging om die probleem te ontduik,

... the search for the ultimate foundation is as much an unremovable part of human culture as is the denial of the legitimacy of this search ... The point is not merely that the most arduous and arid metaphysical investigations are not vain as they might have a real ... impact on the course of world affairs and ... human life ... The point is rather that it is impracticable to eradicate from the human mind the desire of truth in the common sense of this word.

Hierdie waarneming van Kolakowski sê veel, ook in die geval van ekstreme sosiale konstruktiviste. By laasgenoemde is die verleiding groot om die samelewing tot 'n almagtige skeppende bron, ook en veral van moraliteit, te verklaar waarteen individue hulself kwalik op grond van enige ander oorweging kan verset.⁸ Indien hierdie waarneming aanvaar word, sal natuurlik aanvaar moet word dat die samelewing as finale bron ook ditself sal moet fundeer. Ander oën-

8 Rosen (1991:191-192) stel hierdie moontlikheid blatant wanneer hy die fondament vir 'n morele orde nie transendent nie, maar in die sosiale werklikheid sien. Sy motivering is dat ons in die geval van die samelewing te doen het met 'n subjek, veel meer magtig as onself, wat moraliteit kan afdwing.

skynlike kandidate vir so 'n bron wat uit die analise van Rorty, Bauman en Taylor na vore tree, is die Natuur, die Samelewing, Kultuur en die Rede – met die suggestie dat almal as 'n soort finale bron gesien kan word. Maar 'n bevestiging van enige van hierdie bronne as die finale bron kan kwalik deurgevoer word in die lig daarvan dat dit oënskynlik onmoontlik vir hierdie bronne is om hulle eie finale fundamente te wees indien die omringende pluraliteit van bronne, wat op gelyke status aandring, in ag geneem word. Die praktyk tans is om die duiwel van rasionalisme uit te dryf net om dit te vervang met sosiale konstruktivisme. Van hierdie kontekstualiste leer ons dat die rede nie die fundamentele bron vir moraliteit kan wees nie – dat interpretasie en die gemeenskap eweneens belangrike bronne vir moraliteit is. Dit beteken dat moraliteit waarskynlik 'n veelheid van bronne, maar ook 'n nie-immanentisme as voorwaardes veronderstel ten einde by 'n genoegsame begrip van ons morele oorsprong uit te kom.

4. Slotgedagtes: die moontlikheid van 'n ontologie van voorwaardelikheid

'n Transendentale filosofie stel vrae oor die voorwaardes vir die bestaan van dinge en ontwikkel as antwoorde op hierdie vrae transendentale idees. Hierdie werkswyse geld ook vir nadenke oor moraliteit.

Die logiese beginpunt vir so 'n transendentale ondersoek is om te vra na dit wat voorhande is. As antwoord behoort 'n idee ontwikkel te word van 'n verskeidenheid wat opgemerk word, asook die samehang wat binne hierdie verskeidenheid bestaan. Om 'n transendentale verskeidenheidsidee te ontwikkel, is iets wat in ons sekulêre tyd gemaklik gebeur – veel gemakliker as 'n samehangidee. Die vlietende en kontingente staan in die etiek vir heelwat kontemporêre denkers voorop as eerste voorwaarde vir die verskeidenheid – soos in die voorafgaande analises opmerklik was. 'n Voorwaarde wat nie hierbo bespreek is nie, maar wat verwant is aan die vlietende en waarskynlik ook 'n groot aanhang onder kontemporêre etici sal vind, is 'n toleransie vir 'n gematigde relativisme⁹ as 'n manier om die pluraliteit van morele standpunte te hanteer.

'n Samehangidee en verwante idees oor konstantheid en oorsprong is vir kontemporêre denkers minder maklik om te visualiseer. Een

9 Taylor, (1991a:13-14, 17) noem dit 'n "kind of soft relativism".

van die doelwitte van bogenoemde ondersoek was byvoorbeeld om te soek na 'n onderliggende konstante. So 'n konstantheid is inderdaad opgemerk, maar dan as iets wat ditself as 't ware opdring te midde van die beklemtoning van die vlietende en plurale.

As gevolg van die beheptheid met die vlietende en pluraliteit is die indruk wat ons tyd laat, naamlik van 'n genadelose immanentisme, ook heel verstaanbaar. Hierdie perspektief manifesteer ditself onder andere in 'n uitsluitlike fokus op immanente konstruerende bronne vir die morele. Onder laasgenoemde tel veral 'n vermeende almagtige "samelewing" en 'n suiwer immanente "evolusieproses". Weereens kan 'n opdringerige transendente *Ultimum* opgemerk word – 'n opdringerigheid wat die immanentisme uitdaag.

Vir 'n transendentale filosofie is die vrae na dit wat voorhande is en wat dan tot idees oor opdringerighede soos morele verskeidenheid, vlietendheid asook kontingensie lei, belangrik, asook opdringerige vrae oor die oorsprong en samehang van morele verskynsels.

Die verhouding tussen die moreel voorhande, en voorwaardelikhede (soos die vlietende, kontingente en verskeidenheid) aan die een kant, en opdringerighede (soos samehang, konstantheid en oorsprong) aan die ander kant, word in vele kringe as 'n fundamentele spanning ervaar. Dit is immers die geval in omtrent al die denkers waarna hierbo gekyk is. De Wachter tipeer Rorty byvoorbeeld as iemand wat 'n konstante behore met 'n soort positivistiese en naturalistiese pragmatisme probeer wegwens. Toe Rorty self ondersoek is, het dit geblyk dat daar wel 'n sterk poging tot so 'n wegwens is, maar dat konstanthede en morele oorspronge hulself tog in Rorty se denke opdring. Hierdie opdringerigheid kan gesien word as bewys van die teenwoordigheid van 'n fundamentele spanning. Volgens De Wachter (1990:226-227)

... heeft moraal niet louter nood aan verworteling in het herkenbare, de aanvaarding van wat is, maar behoeft zij een minimale spanning tussen zijn en behoren, een spanning met iets wat wij als goed te *erkennen* hebben.

Die onwillekeurige toetrede van laasgenoemde spanning by immanentistiese filosowe soos Rorty, en 'n ongekwalfiseerde aanvaarding van die spanning ('n moontlikheid by De Wachter) skep die indruk van 'n ontiese status vir die spanning. So 'n status maak ons egter die gyselaar van die immanentisme in die sin dat die noodsaak vir transendentale voorwaardes vir moraliteit erken word, maar teen

die agtergrond van die immanentisme as 'n bedenklike erkenning aangevoel word.

De Wachter kwalifiseer die spanning wat hy wil handhaaf. Hy (De Wachter, 1990:227) stel naamlik die "hier gestelde eis kan ook omschreven worden als de eis van persistentie van een waarheids-ethos". Met *persistentie* kom hy in die buurt van Klapwijk se "opdringerigheid van het universele". Die feit is dat *persistentie* en *opdringerigheid* steeds uitgaan van, en 'n fundamentele posisie gee aan die spanning. Dit is egter 'n tree vorentoe om die teenwoordigheid van voorwaardelikhede soos konstantheid en 'n transendente oorsprong te erken. Met laasgenoemde moontlikheid word die spanning nie uitgewis nie. Inteendeel, dit kan die spanning selfs verhoog. Maar die erkenning van 'n spanning sit die saak minstens op die agenda van kritiese ondervraging. Daar behoort voorts gevra te word of daar wel spanning moet wees tussen die "wat is" en die behore. Die onontkombaarheid van die spanning kan uitgedaag word en 'n ontologie van voorwaardelikheid in plaas van 'n ontologie van spanning kan oorweeg word.

In laasgenoemde is die uitgangspunt spanning, wat daaraan 'n ontologiese status gee. In 'n ontologie van voorwaardelikheid word die spanning nie noodwendig vermy nie, maar die uitgangspunt is dat die bepaalde voorwaardelikhede nie in spanning met mekaar en die voorhande is nie. Spanning volg as die voorhande byvoorbeeld ditself nie deur die voorwaardelikheid laat rig nie. Die behore wat byvoorbeeld vir morele keuses geld, sal nie in spanning wees met 'n morele praktyk ('n "wat is") waar laasgenoemde ditself deur die behore laat lei nie. Wanneer die behore en die "wat is" in 'n fundamentele spanning geplaas word, verander die status van die "wat is" egter na 'n alternatiewe behore. Ten spyte van die spanning word die denkfout dus gemaak om die onderskeid tussen behore en "wat is" te nivelleer. Dit is onder andere wat gebeur in die gediskrediteerde postivistiese praktyk om induktief 'n behore uit die voorhande af te lei.

Die bedoeling van 'n ontologie van voorwaardelikheid is onder andere om die verhouding tussen bronne en die subjekte waarvoor die morele behore geld, te tipeer as een van voorwaardelikheid in plaas van een van spanning. Bauman dui aan dat die samelewing geneig is om 'n arbitrêre en integriteitlose almagtige bron te wil wees, juis omdat allerlei magsbelange en magsbegeertes daarin 'n rol speel. Hy poog daarom om die spanningsgedrewe magsverhouding tussen morele bron en morele subjek te hervorm na 'n etiese verhouding. Hierdie poging kom ooreen met 'n denkrigting wat die huidige relati-

visme wil teenwerk deur, volgens Gascoigne (2008:184), vir 'n legitimering van norme te kies "that is essentially ethical in nature".

Wolters (1995:44-45) sluit by hierdie sentiment aan wanneer hy argumenteer dat een van die groot *malaises* van die Westerse denke die "dilemma van Platonisme versus historisme" is. Hierdie spanning word geskep deur die Platoniese aanname dat daar supra-historiese metafisiese substansies bestaan. In 'n teenreaksie ontwikkel 'n relativistiese ontkenning van alle konstanthede in die dominante voorwaardelikheid. Vanuit 'n skeppingsperspektief poog Wolters om hierdie dilemma te ontgom deur 'n meer dinamiese en relationele kyk moontlik te maak op wat tradisioneel as die metafisiese en substantiewe aard van duursaamheid gesien is. Wolters (1995: 41, 45) stel voor dat gebruik gemaak moet word van die konsep *konstantheid* waaraan die Bybelse konnotasie van *emet* (wat min of meer "vaste getrouheid" beteken) verleen moet word. Hierdie is eerder 'n etiese as 'n metafisiese konsep, wat beteken dat die konsep anders verbind is aan die bron vir duursaamheid as dié van rasionele noodwendigheid wat binne die metafisiese tradisie geld, of die magsrelasie wat deur individuele en sosiale konstruktivisme veronderstel word.

Wolters (1995:41) poog hiermee om die idee te vestig dat "supra-arbitrêre beginsels" 'n saak is van "betroubare vastigheid wat in die getrouheid van God gevestig is". Dit is hierdie verhouding waarop die vastigheid van God se morele voorskrifte gebou is. Daarmee kan die idee van metafisiese substansies wat ons van die Grieke geërf het en wat die hele fundamentalistiese tradisie in stand hou, waarskynlik vermy word.

Laasgenoemde opmerkings oor die konsekwensie van 'n ontologie van voorwaardelikheid vir die verhouding tussen die voorhande en voorwaardelikhede is sketsmatig en bloot enkele buitelyne van 'n idee. Aansluitend kan ook 'n enkele lyn getrek word van die nouverwante en toegespitste tema van die onderlinge voorwaardelikheid van die kontekstuele of positiverende bronne vir moraliteit. 'n Genoegsame voorwaarde vir moraliteit sou waarskynlik wees dat die veelheid van bronne 'n koalisie vorm wat aan moraliteit vorm gee. Met hierdie idee van die onderlinge voorwaardelikheid van kontekstualiserende morele bronne word klem gelê op die feit dat die bestaan van 'n morele bron ander bronne veronderstel en inderdaad 'n samewerkende verhouding met hierdie bronne veronderstel. Natuurlike impulse en gegewe norme moet byvoorbeeld met 'n samelewing saamwerk om 'n lokale moraliteit of etos te skep. Hierdie is egter 'n tema vir 'n verdere studie.

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Kernbegrippe:

modern/postmodern/laat-modern
 moraliteit/etiek
 opdringerige
 transendente/gegewe
 universele/konstante
 voorwaardelike/transendentale

Key concepts:

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 morality/ethics
 optrusive
 transcendent/given
 universal/constant



A reading of T.S.Eliot's *Ash-Wednesday*¹

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For now is the turning of the year ... the fowls of the air ...
'know their seasons', and make their just return. ... Every
thing now turning, that we also would make it our time to
turn to God in.

(Andrewes, Lancelot, 1619 in "Sermon for Ash Wednesday";
quoted in Kermode, 1975:179-188.)²

1. Introduction: the theme of *turning*

The title of this poem tells the reader that it will be a religious meditation. It helps to know that the main themes of Ash-Wednesday in the history of the church are those of repentance and renewal. From at least the fourth century the Western Church decided to set the Lenten season as 40 days before Easter. This is analogous to the 40 days of Christ's fasting in the desert (Matt. 4:2). The 40 days of Lent do not count the Sundays, and so Ash-Wednesday as the first day of Lent starts in the seventh week before Easter Sunday. In the early church, converts prepared for baptism during this time.

It will become apparent in the poem that the convert needs to turn his back toward what is transient and turn his face toward eternity. In

1 This article appeared in Hungarian and English in *Sárospataki Füzetek*, 2:47-64, 65-82 2008.

2 Eliot often read and quoted from bishop Andrewes (1555-1626), frequently using some of his phrases and word-plays in his poems. For Eliot's thoughts about Andrewes and some quotations, cf. Kermode (1975).

the spirit of true self-examination the Lenten project of Eliot reminds us that turning (conversion) is never once and for all, but must be undertaken time and again. It helps for our understanding to know that the Eliot writing these words is the newly baptised member of the Anglican Church (in 1927).³ Recalling what he had written until then, we could say that he is turning away from the life of those in the "wasteland" and the futility of those who live the lives of the "hollow men", who were more dead than living in a spiritual sense, with their "prayers to broken stone" and with the "hope only / of empty men". These earlier poems had expressed the situation of secularised humanity, wandering away from the meaning of life lived before the face of God. Now the poet offers God his "dead bones" and powerless state: "... these wings are no longer wings to fly / but merely fans to beat the air". This has been called poetic confession as psychotherapy (Brown, 2003), and Eliot might agree, as long as we understand the psyche to be the soul seeking God.

During the Lenten time believers are encouraged to meditate on their mortality, their sinfulness and their need for forgiveness, their spiritual path in life, and their blessings received from the Saviour. This is a time of self-examination, but also a time to renew their trust in God and their gratitude to Christ for having conquered sin and death. In the Bible and some antique cultures, ashes were used to symbolise frailty, mourning, sin and death, as well as repentance. Ashes were further associated with purification, since they were part of soap making and medical remedies. So in this way the anointing of the sign of the cross with strokes of ash on the forehead of believers during Lent spoke of a variety of aspects of repentance and renewal. During the anointing the pastor will often say such words as, "Consider yourself dead to sin and alive through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Eph. 2:1, 5); or: "Remember that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return" (Gen. 3:19). And so it is that the dying of the old self is a central theme in Eliot's poem, as well as the turning (conversion) to a new path. One of the passages referred to on Ash-Wednesday or during Lent is from the prophet Joel, which speaks of turning (back) to the divine call and finding God full of grace and compassion – also God shall turn toward us:

'Even now', declares the Lord,
'return to me with all your heart,

3 For an essay on Eliot's conversion, cf. Lyndall Gordon (1977).

with fasting and weeping and
mourning.'

Rend your heart
and not your garments.
Return to the Lord our God,
for he is gracious and
compassionate,
slow to anger and abounding in love ...

Who knows? He may turn and have pity ...
(Joel 2:12 ff. NIV.)

2. Part one

The opening lines from part one of the poem establish the theme of "turning", or what soon appears to be conversion, in the sense of both turning away from one thing and turning towards something else. The beginning of this poetic meditation shows the difficulty of this decision to turn, especially the need to decide not to turn back again. The poem opens abruptly, saying:

Because I do not hope to turn again
Because I do not hope
Because I do not hope to turn
Desiring this man's gift and that man's scope
I no longer strive to strive towards such things

We find here the typical repetition of Eliot, the varied cadence through differing length of lines, and the paradoxical statements.⁴ Which way are we turning? Are we striving not to strive? What is it that we do not hope, but then in our turning, now hope? Another characteristic of Eliot is the use of references, more or less to the saturation point. "This man's gift and that man's scope" rings of a line from Shakespeare.⁵ It is used here by Eliot to signify the high achievements of human culture.

4 "Because I do not hope to turn again" is a quote from the Italian poet Guido Cavalcanti (1255-1300). The meaning and setting in Cavalcanti are different: "Because no hope is left me, Ballatetta / Of return to Tuscany" – but Eliot liked to use such references and give them another *Umwelt*. For basic notes on the poem, see Michael Herbert (1982).

5 In Shakespeare's Sonnet 29 he uses the word *art* rather than *gift*. Once again, Eliot takes a reference and uses it in his own way.

It is noticeable that this poem, as can be said of many of his poems, is fragmentary, which helps demonstrate the general theme (the fragmentary soul in a fragmentary civilisation). This was part of the trauma situation of the post-war generation which was existentially seeking to overcome their feeling of a breakdown of culture (cf. Spender, 1975:108). Like others, Eliot was influenced by Conrad's *Heart of darkness*, which exposes the barbarian heart of modern culture. The 1920s had many "elegant sceptics", but Eliot shows in *Ash-Wednesday* that he has moved beyond the scepticism of his own *Waste land*, which had attracted so much attention (cf. Kenner, 1959). Eliot uses many voices in his poems in order to catch the variety of directions and meanings that are opening or closing for the "lost soul". The present poem adds new flavour to his work, and we feel that there is an inner reality here of the changing self. The "I" is no longer the individualist and ironic outsider, as in *Prufrock*, for example, who is bored with life and mocks himself. The new "I" in *Ash-Wednesday* is a serious pilgrim. The neurosis and fragmentation of life found in *The waste land* (completed in 1922) are in *Ash-Wednesday* (1930) turned into a spiritual struggle to find a better way. *The waste land* deals with the temporal city, and *Ash-Wednesday* turns toward the eternal city, reminding us of Augustine's concepts of *civitas terrena* and *civitas dei*.

As we enter into the details of the poem it is good to remind ourselves that the purifying steps of world-negation are not final goals in themselves. When Eliot denies the gifts and scope of human cultural potential, he is setting limits to human endeavours; this negation is to be raised to something better through new affirmations. It of course remains to be seen for all such conversions, whether they result in a dualism (not knowing how to relate the transient and the eternal), or whether they become more wholistic. The emphasis on the spiritual aspect is not meant as turning away from the good things of the world, but rather as turning away from the world defined as the ideological pursuit of good things that have been averted and distorted, whether power, money, pleasure, and so forth. In the same way recent writers analysing the ideologies of modern times and the global problems of poverty, environmental degradation, terrorism, and other issues, say:

... if today's paralyzing uncertainty and agonizing problems do indeed have deep, spiritual roots (roots that are ideological), then only a spiritual turn or reversal, a turn at the level of people's deepest longings and convictions, will be able to generate practical ways out of today's stubborn dilemmas.

Problem-management solutions articulated independently of such a turn will not be effective. (Goudzwaard *et al.*, 2007:58.)

The repeated use of the term *turn* in the quoted paragraph is very much in line with Eliot, who also wrote two books on faith and society and indeed had a keen nose for ideologies. So the poet-pilgrim hopes to press forward, distinguishing things that last from things more frivolous, and also distinguishing ideological blindness from a turning toward the good.

However, a contra-voice also warns the pilgrim that these steps in saintliness are limited:

Because I know that time is always time
 And place is always and only place
 And what is actual is actual only for one time
 And only for one place
 I rejoice that things are as they are and
 I renounce the blessed face

What we have here is the acknowledgement of the ambiguities of our life and spirit. The well-known theologian, Tillich (1968), expressed this in an impressive way. Tillich speaks of many kinds of ambiguities, which enter into our understandings and our actions. In relation to aesthetic expression, he says the following, which fits very well with Eliot's purposes: "... the aesthetic image is no less ambiguous than the cognitive concept and the grasping word" (Tillich, 1968:76). We are tied to time and place. There are actualities at hand and potentialities cannot always be reached. In his turning the poet seems to point to two paths. He does not wish to follow the old path, but he can only follow the new path a little way. He renounces the "blessed face",⁶ which for Eliot also means a turning from former values to new ones.

The first section of the poem began with the word *because* and this word is used another ten times in part one to start a line. This frequent "because" is a way of reasoning: arguments are presented by the convert as he meditates on the past, present and future. What are the choices, the limits, the goals, and the path to be taken? Eliot turns away from the futile life mentioned at the end of

6 This is usually seen as a reference to Dante's Beatrice. Dante was a spiritual and literary master for Eliot. However, the reference to Dante has a personal setting for Eliot, namely the breaking up of his marriage because of Vivienne's psychological state of mind and her eventual consignment to an institution.

The hollow men, which takes the well known children's song, "Here we go 'round the mullberry bush", and turns it into: "Here we go 'round the prickly pear". When we look back at Eliot's earlier poems we see that his ironic heroes often have a failure of nerve to confront their own "I" and their situation. They do not make meaningful choices. In *Ash-Wednesday* the pilgrim "I" needs to dispossess the world, while in his prose Eliot was trying to save the world, as it were, by questioning the direction of modern culture and suggesting deeper values. But in this poem the pilgrim "I" learns that in the journey toward the absolute, the "I" is unworthy and self-effort is not helpful (Kwan-Terry, 1994:132 ff.): "teach us to care and not to care / teach us to sit still", is the recipe for going forward.

Except for two question marks, this is the first stop at the end of a line in the poem. The first stop sign after thirty-nine lines. Eliot likes the flow of short and medium length lines, which twist and turn the meaning faster than the reader can catch at a first reading. Indeed, the first reading is meant to catch our ear for the music and general themes without in any way hoping to illuminate all the details. A study of the hidden meanings is useful so we can reread this poem with more insight, but we must not lose our delight in the cadence and dynamics. Then the poem can be read again at each new Lent with new impressions and new insights. These new insights are available because the multiple meanings and the high density of implications are not spelled out by the poet; the purposeful vagueness which hints at known symbols places these in a new setting, creating intended ambiguities. The poem then is like a bird with two wings: both the writer and the reader need to cooperate in spelling out some of the thoughts and their implications.

The suggestion of section one is that we are "to care and not to care". We are to care about that which has eternal value and not about what detracts us from this path. The prayer: "Teach us to sit still" refers to the passive way the soul prepares to accept God, as described by the Spanish mystic St. John of the cross (1542-1591).⁷ The last lines are a prayer from the liturgy of Lent:

Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death
Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.

7 Another reference could be to Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) who made the famous statement that "all the troubles of man come from his not knowing how to sit still".

It has been said about *Ash-Wednesday*,

Structurally, Eliot built the poem on a phrase from Bishop Andrewes about the 'two turnings' which Andrewes had declared were necessary for a 'conversion'. The one turning looked ahead to God; the other, appropriate for a penitential season, looked back to one's sinful past. The style of Eliot's poem is simple and lucid, but its meaning is complicated and difficult. *Ash-Wednesday* combines intense personal emotions, often obscure to the reader, with the formal use of liturgical texts. It is the story of Eliot's conversion, both public and private – with all his scepticism and doubts still there, offered to God. (Stone Dale, 1988:102.)

3. Part two

The second section introduces us to the stronger issues of repentance: the bones must die. At the same time dead bones revived to live again is a well-known theme from Ezekiel 37. Eliot works with this theme:

Lady, three white leopards sat under a juniper-tree
 In the cool of the day, having fed to satiety
 On my legs my heart my liver and that which had been
 contained
 In the hollow round of my skull. And God said
 Shall these bones live?

The leopards may be an echo of the three beasts at the beginning of Dante's *Inferno*, but they have their own role here. The white leopards are beautiful and the colour white in this poem makes them holy – for their work is to sanctify. There is no statement about blood colouring their necks and paws, even though they have done the work of cleaning the flesh off the bones. Apparently they have cleaned their own fur, too. All of this signifies a spiritual cleansing. The parts specifically mentioned are chosen to represent a variety of human aspects and skills: legs (activity), heart (emotion), liver (sensuality) and skull (thought). Other details are also carefully chosen: the white bones, white leopards and Lady in white, refer to purity. Only when we have died to the "flesh" may we truly live in a spiritual way. It is worth noting that dying to the flesh, in the biblical view, means more than controlling carnal desires. It also means rising above the sins of the "spirit", which are also called sins of the flesh – for example, jealousy, anger, and pride (Gal. 5:16 ff.). "Flesh" in the writings of the apostle Paul, for example, refers to humanity in rebellion against the will of God. So this includes what we might call

sins of the body, mind, and spirit.⁸ Another way of saying this is that "flesh" is the bodily existence in time, our finite and fallen life, while the "spiritual" is our orientation toward God, or the eternal and the redeemed life. In this understanding, "flesh" and "spirit" are not parts of our body, but rather two directions of our total existence.

There have been a variety of movements, religious and philosophical which seem to place evil on the side of matter (our finite possibilities), and good on the side of spirit (including the mind). Eliot is using traditional language when he refers to the casting off of the flesh. This does not immediately imply that he is caught in a dualism of negating bodily life. Eliot is also known for pointing out the evil encroached in aspects of (degraded) human society and culture. Perhaps we can say that similar to Augustine, Eliot begins with the traditional dualism of flesh and spirit as found in Neoplatonism and Gnosticism, but goes on to express this in a reforming way, rather than merely in a simple dualism. Then we are dealing with existential understandings of ways of life, and not with separate ontological aspects. The difference has also been explained in this way: in the Bible the duality of choice is between the good heart and the bad one. This is a choice of the direction of our heart – for or against the will of God. That is the essence of both the Old and the New Testament. Over against the neoplatonic view, such as Plotinus' idea of sanctity as escaping from finite, contingent reality (thus leaving behind the material in order to reach the spiritual), the biblical view is that of a daily sanctifying, of historical contingent reality (cf. Taylor, 2007:275 ff.). There is no doubt that this poem expresses the more dualistic view (the material/spiritual dichotomy); but we may rescue Eliot by saying that this is a purposeful exercise in such spirituality, in order (like the continuous turning of the staircase) to move from the relinquishing of worldly things, to spiritual renewal, to a renewed sacral understanding of the world.

Like all his poetry, this poem is also rich in metaphor and loaded with references to various sources. He mixes these references in a very loose way and recreates his own story. In part two the key words point to a mood: bones, desert, disassembled, forgotten, rejected, and so forth. This is spiritual death by cleansing, a following of the way of repentance. On the other hand we also have words or phrases like: cool of the day, blessing, brightness, and so forth. The

8 For a discussion on such Pauline categories of heart, soul, mind, spirit, body and flesh, cf. Herman Ridderbos (1975:114 ff.).

poet makes some strange combinations: blessing of sand, and bones which shine with brightness and sing with joy. When all is said, the point is that these bones are redeemed by God. The word *atone* also appears in relation to the bones. Even the Juniper tree has meaning as the place of renewal for Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-8).⁹ The poem is a struggle for renewal, even though "I who am here disassembled / Proffer my deeds to oblivion", indicates a desire to rest in death.

Who is the Lady, so dominant throughout the poem? The first reference suggested by most commentators is "Beatrice, agent of Dante's salvation, and devoted attendant on the Virgin Mary in Paradise" (Herbert, 1982:42). Others suggest Dante's Matilde. Knowing Eliot, there could be multiple references, such as recalling Lady Philosophy in Boethius' *The consolation of philosophy*. This also fits, since Eliot likes to combine philosophy, mysticism and theology. By the end of the poem the Lady becomes: "Blessed sister, holy mother ... spirit of the garden ..." This is a feminine counterbalance to the desert, rocks, sand and abstract conflicts of the soul. Eliot needs the symbol of Lady, sister and mother in order to personalise the poem. Much of his poetry is highly intellectualised, dealing with ideas, and one of the ways he balances this is to introduce persons as symbols, and conversations as representative of different views and ways of dealing with the conflicting choices, and as possible ways of restoration. On this point, it can also be said that the Lady is partly his wife, Vivienne, and indeed the poem was originally dedicated to her. Eliot had great feelings of sorrow, despair and failure at this time as he saw no way to help her psychological state and save their marriage. He is both turning away from a Lady and turning toward the help of the blessed Virgin, but he knows he is in a state of ambiguity as to his personal path in life. His basic values and lifeview are at risk. This is a prayer and an urgent one at that.

The poet continues in a litany of his own paradoxical style while focusing on the ambiguity of the lost soul, as well as the hope of salvation:

Lady of silences
 Calm and distressed
 Torn and most whole
 Rose of memory

9 Another reference is to a juniper tree in the Grimm Brothers' fairy tales where a murdered child's bones under such a tree are miraculously restored to life.

Rose of forgetfulness
Exhausted and life-giving
(etc.)

Eliot's use of such paradox is found throughout most of his poetry. He wants the reader to imagine more than one possibility, to admit that we know little and that life is always in flux. In this particular focus on the Lady, who sooner or later is not Beatrice or any other symbol, but the Virgin Mary herself, we have the religious paradox of Virgin and Mother (of God). We have the further religious paradoxes of salvation through the suffering God, the way of the pilgrim as the way of arriving, the way of faith as the way of knowing, and the importance of the *via negativa* as preparation for moving from our torn condition to wholeness. Eliot uses the empathy of the Lady (sister, mother, etc.) to refer to divine grace as the necessary ingredient to find redemption. The "rose" in Dante and in Eliot can have the meaning of beauty, joy, and visionary memories or expectations. In Dante the rose is used to symbolise the communion of the saints, as in his *Paradiso* where the redeemed are gathered together as petals forming a white rose. Eliot later returned to this theme in *Burnt Norton*. Here, in *Ash-Wednesday* the rose is the special agent of salvation within the rose garden. Woven into this, however, are personal memories, as well as the *memoria sancta* which restores spiritual life.

Part two ends with the bones under the juniper tree happy and singing. In his puzzling way, the poet writes:

Under the juniper-tree the bones sang, scattered and shining
We are glad to be scattered, we did little good to each other,
Under a tree in the cool of the day, with the blessing of sand,
Forgetting themselves and each other, united
In the quiet of the desert. This is the land which ye
Shall divide by lot. And neither division nor unity
Matters. This is the land. We have our inheritance.

This may seem to be salvation through forgetfulness, but we already know that the question "Shall these bones live?", has a positive answer. What looks like death is a step toward salvation. The bones of Ezekiel 37:1-14 are also the bones which can say "this is the land" (Ezekiel 48:29). Eliot uses references as preferences. He is writing his own prophetic material, with a re-interpretive use of Ezekiel. The question is whether we have the land, or only have the sand. Bones may be happy to merely inherit the sand, but Eliot is also saying that the divine plan includes spiritual restoration, pictured bodily in Ezekiel 37, and in biblical New Testament terms

as bodily resurrection. However this may all turn out, Eliot is not content to end with the desert as inheritance. The desert in the Bible – in the history of Israel, the life of Jesus, the life of the early church – is the place of waiting for God, a time of temptation and renewal. The desert is not enough and the *via negativa* is not the whole story. Eliot also speaks in this section of the poem about the garden as a symbol of new life. The “cool of day” is a reminder of Genesis 3:8. He is not so much dwelling on the end, as on the “turning”, the beginning of the path forward, the first step of which is the renewal of the soul, and thus gradually the renewal of daily life. Tillich (1968:54 ff.) explains this theme as follows:

Man, in actualising himself, turns to himself and away from God in knowledge, will, and emotion. ... For Augustine, sin is the love which desires finite goods for their own sake and not for the sake of the ultimate good. ... Love of one's self and one's world is distorted if it does not penetrate through the finite to its infinite ground.

4. Part three

In this section the poet picks up the theme of turning in a new way:

At the first turning of the second stair
 I turned and saw below
 The same shape twisted on the banister
 Under the vapour in the fetid air
 Struggling with the devil of the stairs who wears
 The deceitful face of hope and of despair.

Here the poem uses strong end rhymes, especially emphasising the sound of “stair(s)”. This is the path of salvation, the up-hill climb of the pilgrim of faith, toward the holy place, indeed, toward God. These are steps of hope and despair in relation to the thoughts, values, and choices which come from one's own heart and from the world – the demon of doubt always accompanies the spirit of faith. The poet explored that in the *The hollow men* when he pointed at the disillusionment of never achieving a satisfying goal:

Between the idea
 And the reality
 Between the motion
 And the act
 Falls the shadow
 For *Thine is the kingdom*

Repeating a phrase from The Lord's Prayer in italics was a way of imitating a liturgical setting but for the hollow men it is secularised to the point of not knowing where to turn. The question was which kingdom has lasting value. In *Ash-Wednesday* he continues to juxtapose the choices:

At the first turning of the third stair
Was a slotted window bellied like the fig's fruit
And beyond the hawthorn blossom and a pasture scene
The broadbacked figure drest in blue and green
Enchanted the maytime with an antique flute.
Blown hair is sweet, brown hair over the mouth blown,
Lilac and brown hair;
Distraction, music of the flute, stops and steps of the mind
 over the third stair,
Fading, fading; strength beyond hope and despair
Climbing the third stair.

Lord, I am not worthy
Lord, I am not worthy

 but speak the word only.

The charms of "distraction" (fruit, colours, hair, flute music) are alternatives which can hold back spiritual progress.¹⁰ The holy colours are white and blue in this poem (as we shall also note in section four). The blue, green, and brown of part three are earthy colours, not the heavenly colours. *Lilac* may be the colour or the fragrance that symbolises past loves. It all adds up to the temptations of pleasures to lead us from the spiritual climb. Even the best attempts to integrate all aspects, material and spiritual, pleasures and duties, the enjoyable and the ethical – all such integration easily flounders on one side or the other. The poet holds forth the way of repentance and spiritual exercise; the way of the pilgrim, which must be light weight and not loaded down by the "cares of the world". If we renounce ourselves for something greater, we must also renounce all that made us who we were. This is the ascetic line which must not be lost by following (only) the aesthetic enjoyments.

However, in Christian doctrine, repentance must also be balanced by faith, hope, and love; and the joy of salvation should be balanced by the joy of creation. Even though catechisms rightly talk about

10 There is a reference here again to Dante, which includes the "third stairs" and sensuality as a misleading force. Cf. Herbert (1982:44).

“daily repentance”, this does not mean that every day is Ash-Wednesday. Eliot also knew that Ash-Wednesday and asceticism are not the whole story. It is a matter of turning in the right direction. Indeed, Ash-Wednesday is a step toward Good Friday, and also Easter morning.

The third section ends with a biblical reference to the words of humility found in Mathew 8:8 and used in the litany for Ash-Wednesday: “Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed” (KJV). In liturgical reference and for Eliot, we may read: “but speak the word only and my soul shall be healed”.

5. Part four

Once again, *violet* can refer to a flower or a colour. As a colour it is sometimes associated in religion with repentance, and as a flower with resurrection. There is also mention of “various ranks of varied green”, but all these references are bound together by “white and blue ... Mary’s colour”. Even the singular of “Mary’s colour” is interesting, since the white and blue are apparently one pattern of harmony for the poet. To understand this section we need to imagine a nun-like figure silently symbolising redemption in a garden setting. The continued reference to a female person brings associations of Beatrice, Mary, but also Eliot’s wife, Vivienne, to whom he originally dedicated the poem. Further, as his wife was hospitalised because of her psychological condition, the reference to “sister” could mean a nurse. There is a private meaning in the symbols for Eliot as he struggles with redemption, in the double sense of seeking healing in this life and beyond. The “silent sister veiled” refers to a religious person such as a nun, but could also refer to mourning. We must also realise that some have spoken of the veiling of truth and this was often personalised as Lady Philosophy (the Greek word for truth is *unveiling*). At the same time, one could speak more about the Lady or more about philosophy, and that is indeed done (cf. Bennett, 2008:313 ff. on Nietzsche’s philosophy). All of this enters into Eliot’s poem. In general the word *veil* also refers to hidden aspects of spiritual matters beyond our present understanding, as when Tennyson (quoted in Jump, 1974:104 – *In memoriam*, section LVI) says:

O life as futile, then, as frail!
 O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
 What hope of answer, or redress?
 Behind the veil, behind the veil.

The veil then is a symbol of holding back what is not yet revealed or unveiled. In the Bible a veil was seen as necessary because we are sinful and God is holy. Moses could not see God face to face (Exod. 33:20), and also needed to veil his face when he came down the mountain from the presence of God to speak to the people (Exod. 34:29-35). Yet when Christ arose, the temple veil was torn in two, making the way to God open (Matt. 27:51). The history of this multiple significance of *veil* echoes throughout the poem.

As we follow section four of the poem, Eliot wants us to focus on the pilgrim's way of redemption and to be mindful of the dangers of temptation which may lead us astray.¹¹ Still imagining the figure among the flowers,

... wearing

White light folded, sheathing about her, folded.
The new years walk, restoring
Through a bright cloud of tears, the years, restoring
With a new verse the ancient rhyme. Redeem
The time. Redeem
The unread vision in the higher dream
While jewelled unicorns draw by the gilded hearse.

Here we have the theme of redemption and restoration, the swift passing of youth, and the "be mindful" of death, although even that vision includes the glorious signs of jewels and gold ("gilded") ornamentation.¹² There are associations again with Dante (*Purgatory* 29), in the work of whom a chariot appears. The "high dream" may remind us of Tennyson, who says (*In memoriam*, section 1):

I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.

But in Tennyson we also have the heaviness of the road upwards (*In memoriam* section 4):

11 In this section of the poem there is a reference in Italian – *sovegna vos* – or, "be mindful", which comes from Dante's *Purgatory* 26:147. The contextual meaning is that we must be "mindful" of punishment for sinners.

12 Elizabeth Schneider (1975:121 ff.) explains this source as a poem by Conrad Aiken which Eliot echoes.

I falter where I firmly trod,
 And falling with my weight of cares
 Upon the great world's altar-stairs
 That slope thro' darkness up to God.

We have all these elements in Eliot's *Ash-Wednesday*: a turning from our "dead self", the upward path of stepping stones, the weight of the cares of the world, the darkness ("veil"), as well as the higher dream, and a new song.

But the fountain sprang up and the bird sang down
 Redeem the time, redeem the dream

Given the religious setting in a garden, this could remind us of the conversion of Augustine, who heard a voice in the garden like that of children singing *tolle lege*, which he interpreted as telling him to "take up and read" the Bible.¹³ The symbol of a fountain in the desert (garden) refers to life, especially to the new life of faith. At the beginning of the Bible the garden is a symbol for paradise, the good creation where Adam walked with God. At the end of the Bible we find a redemptive symbol in which the "tree of life" appears as given for the "healing of the nations" (Rev. 22).

There is a line in the poem from "Salve Regina" of the Roman Catholic Mass which speaks of our troubles in "this valley of tears", and says: "turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us ...". This means that there are our turning to God, as well as the divine turning toward us – a fountain of mercy springs up. In Christian theology it has always been said that God first turns toward us, and therefore we should re-turn toward God.

6. Part five

If the lost word is lost, if the spent word is spent
 If the unheard, unspoken
 Word is unspoken, unheard;
 Still is the unspoken word, the Word unheard,
 The Word without a word, the Word within

13 This is found in Augustine's account of his conversion in *Confessions*, book 8. Even the details are similar, for Augustine was struggling with the cares of the world, the desires of the flesh, and the text for his conversion was found when he read Paul's *Letter to the Romans* 13:13, 14. This talks about clothing ourselves with Christ as a new identity (and by Augustine's time could mean the new robe of baptism) and turning away from the desires of the flesh, listed by Paul as including drunkenness, lewdness, quarreling and jealousy.

The world and for the world;
And the light shone in darkness and
Against the Word the unstilled world still whirled
About the centre of the silent Word.

Section five begins with a theology of the Word. The references include the Gospel of John 1 which speaks of the "logos" which shines in the darkness. John 1:8 is a difficult verse to translate and the meaning can be that the world did not understand the word, but also that the world did not conquer the divine Word. In any case, the poet finds this expressed by the idea that "the word still whirled" against God, who as Creator set the world in motion. The whirling of the world against the divine Word is also part of the turning which is a central theme in this poem. There is a cosmological meaning (God as sovereign over the whirling planets) and a redemptive meaning (God who reveals love through Christ, the Word).

We must consider that even though this poem deals with the journey of the soul towards union with God, for Eliot there is a cultural meaning also. He (Eliot, 1988:304) later wrote in an essay on his view of culture:

If Christianity goes, the whole of our culture goes. Then you must start painfully again. ... To our Christian heritage we owe many things beside religious faith. Through it we trace the evolution of our arts, through it we have our conception of Roman Law which has done so much to shape the Western World, through it we have our conceptions of private and public morality.

As Western culture has indeed become more and more post-Christian and highly pluralist, since the time of Eliot, the relevance of this view he holds forth may be estimated more accurately as time passes. He could also say in the same essay that, "Only a Christian culture could have produced a Voltaire or a Nietzsche. I do not believe that the culture of Europe could survive the complete disappearance of the Christian faith." Things would change so drastically, he thought, that Europe would also become quite different.

Returning to the poem, the Word (capitalised as a reference to Christ, the Logos in John's Gospel) communicates that God is "for the world". "For the world" was an element used by theologians who were contemporary with Eliot, such as Barth, Bonhoeffer, and Tillich. Just as the poet here, they emphasised the dialectics of human alienation and divine grace, as well as the misunderstanding and misuse of God's "word". The phrase "unstilled world" contains the

thought of ever-moving, but also ever-rebelling against God. “Unstilled” is the opposite of the stillness to which the poet repeatedly refers, as a condition for hearing the voice of God. Eliot further plays with the idea of the revelation of the word, which may at times be wordless.¹⁴ This could remind us of the prophecy applied to Christ: “He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open his mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so He did not open his mouth” (Isa. 53:7). Eliot essentially says that we are too busy to hear the word of God:

No place of grace for those who avoid the face
 No time to rejoice for those who walk among the noise and
 deny the voice

Part of this section is notably full of rhyme, including internal rhyme within lines, such as: *found/resound*, *mainland/rainland*, *place/grace/face* and *rejoice/noise/voice*. This creates a musical quality, a background song of hope even though the words are often sombre: *lost*, *spent*, *unheard*, *darkness*, and so forth. The mixture of despair and hope continues throughout the poem and its music “... is capable of making an instantaneous impression purely through the beauty of its sound” (Matthiessen, 1958:114).

To express the idea that people – and Eliot includes himself – neglect and reject God, he writes:

Will the veiled sister pray for
 Those who walk in darkness, who chose thee and oppose thee

This could be a question as to whether the sister is willing, but it is also a petition: will the sister please pray for ... and the poet adds several categories. These include “children at the gate”, who are perhaps those close to the gate of the heavenly kingdom, but who “will not go away and cannot pray”. They are the innocents. Then there are also those who “offend” and those who are “terrified” and those who do not know how to “affirm” their faith.

The scene ends speaking of “the desert in the garden the garden in the desert”. This is the dialectic of doubt and faith, the struggle between choosing and opposing, and what he refers to as being “torn on the horn(s)” of a dilemma. We do not know how to avoid the temptations in the world, nor how to properly honour God. There is

14 Here we find word-plays also used by Bishop Lancelot Andrewes. Cf. Eliot’s essay, *Lancelot Andrewes* (Eliot, 1988:185.)

not only the pilgrim's progress (John Bunyan), but also the pilgrim's regress (C.S. Lewis).

There is a refrain used in full or in part three times in this section: "O my people, what have I done unto thee". This comes from the prophet Micah 6:3 and is part of the Good Friday liturgy, as words Christ could have said from the cross. The theological basis which resounds throughout this poem is that of God seeking those who are lost.

7. Part six

In the final section Eliot reminds us of the first lines of the poem, with a slight difference: "although I do not hope to turn again". What began as *because* and then became *cannot*, is now *although*. There is, he says, a *wavering*, but *although* means that the turn has been made, even if the turning is only a beginning:

Wavering between the profit and the loss
In this brief transit where the dreams cross
The dreamcrossed twilight between birth and dying
(Bless me father) though I do not wish to wish these things
From the wide window towards the granite shore
The white sails still fly seaward, seaward flying
Unbroken wings

The question of profit and loss refers to eternal values that need to be chosen during the brief transit of life. Shall we be care-burdened by worldly pleasures, or carefree like the sails in the wind? Shall the old eagle mentioned in part one, fly again?¹⁵ Here is a picture of nostalgia for the past, but also the knowledge that a choice must be made between our dreams. What was earlier a "slotted window" is now a "wide window", because the poet has settled his attitude as to the past.

The rest of the poem reads as follows:

15 The symbol of wings has many meanings for Eliot, for he knew about the medieval symbol of an eagle falling into the water and being renewed as relating to baptism. The eagle also appears in Dante, and Eliot refers in an essay to Homer and the other great pre-Christian poets as eagles that fly above the rest. In Christianity the basis is found in Psalm 103:5, and in Isaiah 40:31, "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles ..."

And the lost heart stiffens and rejoices
In the lost lilac and the lost sea voices
And the weak spirit quickens to rebel
For the bent golden-rod and the lost sea smell
Quickens to recover
The cry of quail and the whirling plover
And the blind eye creates
The empty forms between the ivory gates
And smell renews the salt savour of the sandy earth

This is the time of tension between dying and birth
The place of solitude where three dreams cross
Between blue rocks
But when the voices shaken from the yew-tree drift away
Let the other yew be shaken and reply.

Blessed sister, holy mother, spirit of the fountain, spirit of the
garden,
Suffer us not to mock ourselves with falsehood
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still
Even among these rocks,
Our peace in His will
And even among these rocks
Sister, mother
And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea,
Suffer me not to be separated

And let my cry come unto Thee.

The "lost heart" and the "weak spirit" try to turn back to the joys symbolised here by the sea and flowers and past memories. This is the *although* with which section six begins. He turns both to recall the past but also to hope for a more spiritual life. This is letting go in order to go forward. The past joys were not all wrong, but he must be willing to go beyond them. He must for a time be world-negating in order to affirm the highest values. But Eliot does not compromise here. He wants to say that the pilgrim's road is very difficult. We may feel that layer by layer Eliot is peeling away the onion of life and leaving us with nothing. This is, however, an exercise in repentance, a point of turning, and not yet the whole vista. "Let the other yew be shaken" could be read as "the other you". There is the danger that we let ourselves be mocked with "falsehood". We like to fool ourselves without really undergoing a conversion of our heart and life. We must learn, as he showed earlier, that we are "hollow men". The "blind eye creates ... gates" refers to false dreams which entice us: hopes, plans and ideas in which we seek an alternative salvation not

communicated by the divine word. "Three dreams" could be any three choices in which we seek our life meaning, such as family, work, or pleasure. Or in this poem the three dreams could be past, present and future, or even earth, purgatory/hell and heaven.

The order is reversed: dying is followed by (new) birth. The reference to "spirit of the river, spirit of the sea" is rooted in Eliot's childhood since he lived near the Mississippi and spent summertimes by the coast of Massachusetts. *Suffer* in older English had the meaning of *allow* or *permit*. So in the King James Bible we read: "Suffer the little children to come unto me ...". "Our peace in his will" is found in various classical theological references and in Dante. "Suffer me not to be separated" is found in an ancient hymn.¹⁶ "And let my cry come unto Thee" is also from church liturgy, as a response to the priest's words: "Hear my prayer, O Lord" (Ps. 102). We should not forget that the whole poem is essentially a prayer, though more complicated than ones we might usually whisper. Indeed, at his point of turning, the only answer to the wasteland experience and the dead end of the hollow men's experience, is prayer. Prayer is the turning point (Spender, 1975:134). It was a shock for the lost generation of that time to identify with Eliot's powerful description of cultural despair in his earlier poems, only to find him setting off in an entirely new direction – even if this was hinted at earlier. To take religious conversion seriously was a step too far for many of his admirers (Gordon, 1972:93). Striving for union with God, Eliot could say, is the way of forgetting oneself and becoming open to renewal. None of this is the easy evangelism of "come to Jesus and He will take away your troubles" (Schneider, 1975:116). Christianity for Eliot meant the narrow way of repentance. He could say in his essays, along with Pascal, that despair is a necessary "prelude to, and element in, the joy of faith" (Schneider, 1975:117; with references to Pascal & Eliot). If, in the categories of Dante, *The wasteland* was Eliot's *inferno*, then *Ash-Wednesday* is his *purgatorio*, his repentance and cleansing.

We have seen that a reading of the poem could more or less have a dead end in following all the references to their many-sources. Eliot himself said that poems must be read for their first impressions and music if they are to help us in a wholesome way. Having a deeper understanding through the references and word-plays, and the multiple meanings of unusual phrases, allows us to reread the

16 The hymn called *Anima Christi*, cf. Herbert, 1982:47.

poem, as some do at the beginning of Lent, in order to benefit from the central message and the rich unfolding of that message in surprising details and expressions. The poem is meant to be a turning point for the reader. It can be balanced by other poems Eliot wrote in these years, for example, the challenge to the *Magi* which gives them the question of the sweeping impact of the gospel on culture, but also *A song for Simeon*, which expresses the calmer joy of faith – for like Simeon in Luke’s Gospel, “Eliot had waited long years for the coming of Jesus” (Sencourt, 1971:140 ff.).

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Geskrifte van B.J. van der Walt / Publications of B.J. van der Walt 1960-2010

Die Ferdinand Postma-Biblioteek van die Potchefstroomkampus van die Noordwes-Universiteit beskik oor 'n gerekenariseerde lys (sowel chronologies as alfabeties) van B.J. van der Walt se publikasies vanaf 1960 tot ongeveer 2000. (Gaan na <http://www4-win2.p.nwu.ac.za/dbtw-wpd/textbases/puk-eeu.htm> en tik dan die outeursnaam in: Van der Walt BJ)

Mnr. Steve Bishop (e-pos: stevebishop.uk@gmail.com) se webtuiste (www.allofliferedeemed.co.uk/vanderwalt.htm) bevat 'n *geannoteerde* bibliografie van al Van der Walt se publikasies in *Engels*, sowel as 'n volledige lys van al die publikasies van die Instituut vir die Bevordering van die Calvinisme, later herdoop tot die Instituut vir Reformatoriese Studie.

Van die (Afrikaanse en Engelse) publikasies vanaf 2000 tot op hede volg hierna 'n lys – eers van die meer wetenskaplike asook meer populêre artikels en daarna 'n lys van boeke. (Boekresensies is nie ingesluit nie.)

At the Ferdinand Postma Library of the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University an electronic list (both chronological and alphabetical according to titles) of B.J. van der Walt's publications from 1960 to 2000 is available. (To access the list, go to <http://www4-win2.p.nwu.ac.za/dbtw-wpd/textbases/puk-eeu.htm> and type in the author's name: Van der Walt BJ)

The website of Mr. Steve Bishop (www.allofliferedeemed.co.uk/vanderwalt.htm) provides an annotated bibliography of all Van der Walt's publications in *English*, as well as a list of the publications of the Institute for Reformational Studies.
(E-mail: stevebishop.uk@gmail.com)

The following list contains Van der Walt's (Afrikaans and English) articles (of a popular as well as a more scholarly nature) from 2000 onwards, as well as a list of books. (Book reviews are not included.)

Wetenskaplike en populêre artikels in tydskrifte en versamelwerke (insluitend konferensiebundels):

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2009

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- Johannes Calvyn (1509-1564) se mensbeskouing: 'n Christelik-filosofiese waardering. *Tydskrif vir geesteswetenskappe*, 49(3):410-433.
- Johannes Calvyn (1509-1564) se visie op die werklikheid: 'n Christelik-filosofiese waardering. *Tydskrif vir geesteswetenskappe*, 49(3):365-396.
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- Tuis in God se wêreld: die essensie van 'n reformatoriese lewensvisie. *Woord en Daad*, 49(407):8-13, Herfs.

2010

- Wêreldwye belangstelling in Christelike wetenskapsbeoefening en Christelike hoër onderwys – hoe Afrika daarby kan baat. *Tydskrif vir Christelike wetenskap*, 46:111-132.
- Wêreldwye belangstelling in die Kuyperiaanse, reformatoriese lewensvisie – ook relevant vir Afrika. *Tydskrif vir Christelike wetenskap*, 46:43-60.

Moet nog verskyn / To be published:

- Besit waardes rigtinggewende normatiewe waarde? 'n Beoordeling van die Noordwes-Universiteit se waardeprojek. *Koers*, 75(2) 2010.
- Calvin and the spiritual trends of his time: the uniqueness of the 16th century Protestant Reformation. *In die Skriflig*, 44(4) 2010.
- Die unieke van Johannes Calvyn (1509-1564) se *philosophia christiana*, hoe dit verder uitgebou is en vandag vernuwe kan word. *Tydskrif vir Christelike wetenskap*, 46.
- 'n Evangeliese stem in Afrika: lewensbeskoulike agtergronde van die teologie van Tokunboh Adeyemo (01/10/1944-17/03/2010). *In die Skriflig*, 45(4) 2011.

Normatiewiteit op 'n cul-de-sac: 'n reformatoriese visie op wette, norme, waardes en deugde. *Tydskrif vir Christelike wetenskap*, 46.

Philosophical and theological influences in Calvin's thought: reviewing some research results. *In die Skriflig*, 44(4) 2010.

Vrae rondom outobiografieë en memoires: die filosofiese en praktiese uitdagings van histories-literêre werke. *Tydskrif vir Christelike wetenskap*, 46.

Boeke (nuwes en heruitgawes)/ Books (reprints and first editions)

1991. Anatomy of reformation: flashes and fragments of a reformational worldview. Potchefstroom: Institute for Reformational Studies. Reprinted 2008. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 582 p.
1991. More precious than gold: discovering the real wealth of Scripture. Potchefstroom: Institute for Reformational Studies. Reprinted 2010. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 277 p.
1994. The liberating message: a Christian worldview for Africa. Potchefstroom: Institute for Reformational Studies. Reprints: 2004, 2006. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 625 p.
1997. Man and God: the transforming power of biblical religion. Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. Reprinted 2008. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 510 p.
1999. Visie op die werklikheid: die bevrydende krag van 'n Christelike lewensbeskouing en filosofie. Herdruk 2000. Potchefstroom: Instituut vir Reformatoriese Studie. 612 p.
2001. Transformed by the renewing of your mind: shaping a biblical worldview and a Christian perspective on scholarship. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. Reprints: 2005, 2007, 2008. 198 p.
2003. The enchanting world of the Drakensberg mountains. Reprinted 2008. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 250 p.
2003. Understanding and rebuilding Africa: from desperation today to expectation for tomorrow. Reprints: 2004, 2006, 2008. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 554 p.
2006. When African and Western cultures meet: from confrontation to appreciation. Reprints: 2007, 2008. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 317 p.
2007. Transforming power: challenging contemporary secular society. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 441 p.
2008. The eye is the lamp of the body: worldviews and their impact. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 304 p.

2010. At home in God's world: a transforming paradigm for being human and for social involvement. Potchefstroom: The Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 565 p.

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By die aanbieding van artikels wat aan *Koers* voorgelê word, moet die aard van *Koers*-artikels beslis in ag geneem word wat die invalshoek, vertrekpunte, aanbiedingswyse, gevolgtrekkings, ensovoorts betref.

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 - Relevante en onderliggende (vak)filosofiese, etiese of morele kwessies wat verband hou met die onderwerp van die artikel kan dus in die argumentasielyn geïntegreer en aangesny word.
 - Die subtitel van *Koers* is "Bulletin vir Christelike Wetenskap". *Koers* se grondslag is Christelik, maar ruimte word gelaat vir gemotiveerde meningsverskil en diskussie.
 - *Koers* is 'n geakkrediteerde interdisiplinêre tydskrif wat navorsingsartikels uit alle vakgebiede publiseer. Artikels moet dus vakgerig wees, maar ook toeganklik vir 'n wyer teikengroep, dit wil sê 'n leserpubliek wat nie noodwendig op hoogte is met die spesifieke vakjargon en tendense binne 'n spesifieke vakdissipline nie. Artikels moet egter steeds voldoen aan wetenskaplike gehalte en die standaard vir navorsingsartikels wat in 'n geakkrediteerde tydskrif gepubliseer word.
1. **Ooreenkoms met skrywers: Alleenreg op publikasie:** Die voorlegging van 'n artikel aan *Koers* impliseer dat *Koers* alleenreg op die publikasie van die artikel het – sowel in gedrukte media as in elektroniese en ander media.

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4. **Formele vereistes:**
 - **Taalmedium:** Manuskripte kan in Afrikaans, Engels of Nederlands voorgelê word.
 - **Die manuskrip** moet in A4-formaat wees, in dubbelspasiëring, met ruim kantlynspasies en slegs op een kant van die bladsy gedruk. Die manuskripte moet taalversorg en finaal geredigeer wees.
 - **'n Rekenaarweergawe** van die artikel word by voorlegging verlang. Stuur die elektroniese weergawe van die artikel aan Susan.Lourens@nwu.ac.za (verkieslik as 'n *Word*-dokument).
 - Op die titelblad moet die outeur se voorletters en van, departement, universiteit en persoonlike e-posadres verskyn. Verstrek ook 'n privaat posadres, 'n telefoon- (sel-) en faksnommer.
 - **Nadat die keuringsproses afgehandel is** en die outeur die kommentaar verwerk het, stuur asseblief 'n rekenaarkopie van die hersiene artikel **en die outeur se begeleidende brief**.
 - **Lengte:** Vyftien (15) gedrukte bladsye ($\pm 6\ 100$ woorde) word as algemene riglyn gestel.
 - **Stylfasette:**
 - Die **titel** moet so kort en bondig as moontlik wees. **Genommerde opskrifte en subopskrifte** moet met Arabiese syfers met punte genummer word, byvoorbeeld 3. word gevolg deur 3.1, 3.1.1 en 3.1.1.1 (tot hoogstens die vierde vlak).

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 - Kursivering word as aanduiding van beklemtoning of van 'n woord of uitdrukking uit 'n ander taal gebruik.
 - **Grafiese voorstellings, sketse, diagramme, tabelle moet reeds rekenaarmatig voorberei en deel vorm van die finale dokument.**
 - ❖ Hierdie grafika kan in enige rekenaarpakket voorberei wees, maar moet in 'n **jpeg**-formaat gestoor wees.
 - ❖ Die grafiese lêers moet ook apart elektronies gestuur word. Die lêernaam moet duidelik aangetoon word.
 - ❖ Die lettertipe wat in die grafika gebruik word, moet aanpas by die lettertipe wat *Koers* gebruik (Arial) – verkieslik 12-pt grootte.
5. **Abstract:** Alle artikels moet van 'n taalversorgde *abstract* ('n opsomming in Engels) van ongeveer 200 woorde voorsien word. Direk daarna moet die **Afrikaanse vertaling** ingevoeg word – **ook die vertaalde artikeltitel**.
6. **Kernbegrippe:** Aan die einde van die artikel: voeg 3-4 kernbegrippe/baie kort frases in waaronder die artikel geïndekseer kan word. Gee ook onder *key concepts* die Engelse vertalings hiervan.
7. **Bladgeld:** By die voorlegging van 'n navorsingsartikel onderneem outeurs verbonde aan tersiêre inrigtings in Suid-Afrika om, indien die artikel vir publikasie aanvaar word, die voorgeskrewe bladgeldfooi (R120 per bladsy) te betaal. Outeurs kan gewoonlik die bladgeld van hulle inrigtings of navorsingsinstansies verhaal.
8. **Mede-outeurskap:** Artikels wat voorspruit uit verhandelings of proefskrifte: voor die voorlegging van die artikel moet die skrywer oorleg pleeg met die studieleier/promotor.

9. **Proefdruk:** 'n Proefdruk word vooraf aan die artikelskrywer gestuur om te proeflees. Neem kennis dat die wagtyd tussen voorlegging en plasing normaalweg 3-9 maande is. Die proefdruk word normaalweg elektronies gestuur. Veranderinge moet op die elektroniese kopie aangebring word in **vetdruk en rooi** (of in naspeurmodus), met 'n addisionele lys van bladsy-, paragraaf- en reëlnommers waarop aangedui word watter veranderinge waar aangebring is.
10. **Verwysingsmetode:** Die **verkorte Harvard-verwysingsmetode** moet gebruik word. Verwysings in die teks word soos volg aangebring: Anderson (1982:305), of (Anderson, 1982:305). By verwysing na werke van Klassieke en Middel-euse outeurs word die naam van die outeur, die Latynse/Griekse titel van die werk (kursief), en die boek, hoofstuk, paragraaf of reëlverwysing (in Arabiese syfers met punte tussenin) vermeld, byvoorbeeld:

Vergilius (*Aeneï's* 12.601); of
Cicero (*De Officiis* 1.13.2).

11. **Voetnote: Die gebruik van voetnote moet so ver moontlik beperk word.** As dit egter noodsaaklik is om van voetnote gebruik te maak, dui die voetnootnommer op die tersaaklike bladsy in die teks aan en verstrek ook die volledige teks van die voetnote onder aan die betrokke bladsye.

Verwysings na bronne wat in 'n voetnoot gegee moet word, word net soos in die hoofteks gedoen. **Geen voetnoot moet egter uitsluitlik vir bibliografiese besonderhede gebruik word nie.**

12. **Geraadpleegde bronne**

Bibliografiese besonderhede word in die lys van geraadpleegde bronne verskaf en nie by wyse van voetnote nie. Slegs werke waarna in die artikel self verwys word, moet in die lys van geraadpleegde bronne opgeneem en alfabeties gerangskik word.

Gebruik asseblief die outeur se van en **voorletters/name (skrywersnaam)** in die vorm soos dit op die titelbladsy van die boek of in die tydskrifartikel aangedui is.

Titels: Selfstandige naamwoorde word nie met hoofletters geskryf nie, behalwe in die geval van eiename – of in spesiale gevalle.

Boeke:

FOURIE, H.W. 1982. Stylfigure. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

ALFAU, F. 1988. *Locos: a comedy of gestures*. London: Viking.

In alle bibliografiese inskrywings moet die plek van uitgawe en die uitgewer van 'n publikasie vermeld word. **Titels is nie kursief nie.**

Tydskrif:

DU PLESSIS, W. 1982. Die regsetiese implikasies van buite-egtelikheid. *Koers*, 50(3):218-223.

Titels van tydskrifte word kursief geskryf. Geen aanhalings-tokens word gebruik by titels van tydskrifartikels nie. **Tersaaklike bladsynommers** moet verstrekk word.

Verhandeling/Proefskrif:

DE WET, M. 2002. Die voedingswaarde van geprosesseerde kos. Potchefstroom: PU vir CHO. (M.Sc.-verhandeling.)

Hoofstuk in 'n versamelwerk:

MASSIMO, J.L. 1970. Psychology and the gymnast. (*In* George, G., ed. *The magic of gymnastics*. Santa Monica: Sundby Publications. p. 31-33.)

By bydraes in versamelbundels moet die **tersaaklike bladsynommers** vermeld word.

Internetgebruik:

NUNES, J. 1997. Hypermedia as a learning tool. <http://www.shuf.ac.uk/~is/lecturer/ircont.html> Date of access: 14 Oct. 1998.

KANNEMEYER, J.C. 2005. Bestekopname van die Afrikaanse poësie. <http://www.litnet.co.za/seminaar/konrij.asp> Datum van gebruik: 7 Okt. 2005.

Koerantberigte

- In aanhalings uit *koerantberigte* waar die outeur onbekend is, is die inskrywing onder Anon.

Voorbeeld van skryfwyse **in die teks** van die artikel:

Onlangs is met verontwaardiging gestel dat “net die opspraakwekkendste gegewens in ’n roman die koerant haal” (Anon., 2005:11).

In die bronnelys:

ANON. 2005. Kritici peper die media. *Beeld*: 11, 17 Feb.

- Koerantberigte waar die skrywer wel genoem word:

Voorbeeld van skryfwyse **in die teks** van die artikel:

’n Briefskrywer het byvoorbeeld genoem dat ouers toenemend betrokke behoort te raak by hulle kinders se onderrig (De Klerk, 2005:9).

In die bronnelys:

DE KLERK, S. 2005. Ouers – dis julle taak! *Beeld*: 9, 23 Feb.

13. **Bladuitleg:** Titel van artikel en paragraafopskrifte – (nie hoofletters nie, behalwe waar hoofletters noodsaaklik is.
14. **Menings en kopiereg:** Menings wat in die artikels uitgespreek word, is telkens dié van die betrokke outeur en word nie noodwendig deur die Redaksie of die *Koersvereniging van Suid-Afrika* onderskryf nie. Kopiereg berus by die tydskrif.
15. **Bydraes en korrespondensie en intekengeld:** Intekengeld beloop R120/\$65 per jaar. Los eksemplare word verkoop teen R60 stuk. Alle bydraes en korrespondensie kan gerig word aan:

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STYLE SHEET

Nature of articles submitted to *Koers*.

When submitting articles to *Koers*, authors should keep in mind that the Editorial Board of *Koers* prefers a certain kind of article as far as point of departure, the presentation of data, the conclusions arrived at, et cetera, are concerned.

- **Typical *Koers* articles should have an integrated worldview as foundation, and should be predominantly reflective in nature. Articles should thus not merely be the presentation of factual or empirical research, but be embedded within a wider (philosophical) framework – articles should reflect a definite underlying worldview – an aspect that could feature, for instance, in the author’s point of departure, the stance he/she takes, or the conclusions drawn.**
 - Relevant ethical, moral or philosophical issues related to the topic of discussion could be integrated into the line of argumentation.
 - The subtitle of *Koers* is “Bulletin for Christian Scholarship”. The basis of *Koers* articles is thus Christian – but room is left for justified differences in opinion.
 - *Koers* is an accredited interdisciplinary scholarly journal publishing articles from all fields of research. Articles should thus be directed to the reader public of a specific discipline, but should also be reader-friendly enough to accommodate a wider reader public, i.e. a reader public not necessarily conversant with the specific jargon and trends within a certain discipline. Articles should, however, still meet the required standards for scholarly articles published in an accredited journal.
1. **Agreement with authors:** Right of publication: The submission of an article entitles *Koers* to exclusive right of publication, both in printed and in electronic and other media.
 2. **Nature of articles:** *Koers* is an interdisciplinary journal. Articles from all fields of academic research are therefore welcomed, with the proviso that **articles should contain a statement or point of view based in principle** (that needs not necessarily coincide with that of the Editorial Board).

3. **Refereeing:** All articles will be refereed by at least two independent referees. Refereeing is done with complete anonymity and confidentiality. Identities of authors and referees are not divulged. Authors should **not identify themselves** by for instance inserting their initials, surnames or name of university in footnotes or in phrases between brackets.
4. **Formal requirements:**
- **Language medium:** Manuscripts can be submitted in either English, Afrikaans or Dutch.
 - **Manuscripts** should be in A4 format, in double spacing, with generous **margins** and printed on only one side of the paper. The manuscript has to be finally edited with regard to language and general finish.
 - **A computer copy** of the article should be submitted for the initial refereeing process. The electronic article can be sent to Susan.Lourens@nwu.ac.za (preferably as a Word document).
 - The title page should have the following details: the author's initials and surname, department, university, personal e-mail address. Also supply a private postal address, a telephone (cell) and fax number.
 - **Once the refereeing process has been completed**, and the author has revised the article in accordance with suggestions, the revised manuscript and the **accompanying letter** of the author have to be submitted as an electronic copy.
 - **Length:** A length of 15 printed A4 pages (± 6 100 words) is set as general guideline.
 - **Facets of style**
 - The **title** should be as short and succinct as possible. Headings and subheadings should be **numbered** with Arabic numerals with full-stops in between, for example 3. is followed by 3.1, 3.1.1, et cetera (to a maximum of four numerals, thus 3.1.2.3).
 - **Articles should preferably be divided into sub-paragraphs with suitable numbered headings.**

- **Abbreviations** and lesser known acronyms are not acceptable in the body of the text. An acronym used very generally, such as SABC, is acceptable.
 - **Italics** should be used only as an indication of emphasis of a word or as an expression from another language.
 - **Graphs, sketches, tables and diagrams** can be created in any computer program, but must be saved in **jpeg** format.
 - ❖ **Graphs, et cetera should be integrated into the finalised document.**
 - ❖ These graphs, sketches and diagrams must be sent by e-mail – each graph with its own name stated clearly.
 - ❖ The font used in graphs, diagrams, et cetera should be in accordance with the font used in *Koers* (Arial) – preferable 12-pt size.
5. **Abstract:** All articles should be supplied with a language-edited abstract (summary in English) of about 200 words. Directly after the abstract: insert the **Afrikaans translation** of the abstract. Please indicate the title of the article **in English** (for the abstract) **and in Afrikaans** (for the *Opsomming*).
 6. **Key concepts:** At the end of the article: insert 3-4 key concepts/very short phrases to be used for indexing purposes. Also supply the **Afrikaans translation** under *Kernbegrippe*.
 7. **Page fees:** Upon submission of a research article authors of tertiary institutions in South Africa undertake, should the article be approved for publication, to pay the prescribed publication fee (R120 per printed page). Authors can, however, usually have the page fees refunded from the Research Committee of their respective institutions.
 8. **Co-authoring:** Authors submitting articles which originally formed part of dissertations/theses should consult their study leaders/promoters prior to the submission of the article.
 9. **Preliminary proof:** A preliminary proof of the article will be supplied to the author to proofread. Please note that there is normally a period of 3-9 months between submission and publication. The proof will normally be sent electronically. Changes

must be indicated on the electronic version in track changes or in **bold and red** and an additional list of changes, indicating page, paragraph and line numbers on which changes occur, must be sent as well.

10. **Method of reference:** The **abbreviated Harvard method** of reference should be used. References in the text are done as follows: Anderson (1982:305), or (Anderson, 1982:305). In referring to works by Classical or Medieval authors, the name of the author, the Latin/Greek title of the work (in italics) and the book, chapter, paragraph or line references (in Arabic figures with full-stops in between) should be provided, e.g.:

Vergilius (*Aeneis* 12.601); or
Cicero (*De Officiis* 1.13.2).

11. **Footnotes:** The **use of footnotes should be limited** as far as possible. Should it, however, be necessary to make use of footnotes, please indicate the footnote number on the relevant page in the text and give the text of the footnote at the bottom of each relevant page.

References in footnotes: the same as in the main text. **Bibliographical detail should not be included in footnotes**, but should be given in a bibliographical entry in the list of references.

12. List of references

Bibliographical details of references should be provided in the list of references and not by way of footnotes. **Only works referred to in the article** itself should be included in the list of references, and should be arranged alphabetically.

Please use the name of the author and the **initials/first names (authors' name)** as it is indicated on the titlepage of the book or in the article (journal).

Title: Nouns are not written with caps – only proper names of persons, places, et cetera.

Books:

ANDERSON, H.W. 1982. *Stylistics*. London: Macmillan.

ALFAU, F. 1988. *Locos: a comedy of gestures*. London: Viking.

The **place of publication and the publisher** should be stated.
Titles are not in italics.

Journals:

VAN NIEKERK, P.J. 1985. Capitalism or socialism: a spurious dilemma. *Koers*, 50(1):38-55.

Titles of journals are given **in italics**. No quotation marks are used with titles of articles in journals. Relevant page numbers should be stated.

Dissertations and doctoral theses:

COX, M.P. 2003. Drinking among university students. Pretoria: University of Pretoria. (M.A. dissertation.)

Chapter in a compendium:

MASSIMO, J.L. 1970. Psychology and the gymnast. (*In* George, G., ed. *The magic of gymnastics*. Santa Monica: Sundby Publications. p. 31-33.)

Contributions in collections (Acta/compendia): **the relevant page numbers should be stated.**

Use of internet:

NUNES, J. 1997. Hypermedia as a learning tool. <http://www.shef.ac.uk/~is/lecturer/ircont.html> Date of access: 14 Oct. 1998.

Newspaper reports:

- Quotations from **anonymous newspaper reports:** reference is made under **Anon.**

Example (in the text of the article):

It was recently stressed that "only sensational elements from new novels are highlighted in newspapers: (Anon., 2005:12).

In the list of references:

ANON. 2005. Critics criticise media coverage. *Sunday times*: 12, 24 Feb.

- Newspaper reports – **name of author stated:**

Example (in the text of the article):

Parents angrily responded to media reports on language tuition in schools (Roberts, 2005:13).

In the list of references:

ROBERTS, S. 2005. First language always the best language! *Argus*: 13, 14 March.

13. Layout:

Title of article and subparagraphs in the text of the article: lower case, except where capitals are essential.

Headings of paragraphs: do not use capital letters.

14. Copyright and opinions: Copyright remains vested in the journal. Opinions expressed in the articles are those of the author and are not necessarily subscribed to by the *Koers Society of South Africa*.

15. Subscription: Subscription is R120/\$65 a year. Single numbers: R60. All contributions and correspondence to:

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Oproep tot bydraes: Internasionale Koers-Konferensie oor *Wêreldbeskouing en onderwys*

In 2010 word die 75e publikasiejaar van *Koers: Bulletin vir Christelike Wetenskap* herdenk. As huldiging van die tydskrif se bydrae tot die bevordering van die interdisiplinêre akademiese debat en filosofies-begronde wetenskap, bied die *Koersvereniging* 'n internasionale konferensie oor *Wêreldbeskouing en onderwys* aan. Hiermee word alle lede van die akademiese gemeenskap, beleidmakers, onderriggewers en ander geïnteresseerdes uitgenooi om hierdie geleentheid by te woon en daaraan deel te neem. Deur akademiese dialoog te bevorder en toonaangewende navorsers in die veld byeen te bring, hoop ons om 'n positiewe invloed op onderwysverwante uitdagings, spesifiek met betrekking tot die Suid-Afrikaanse situasie, uit te oefen.

Die konferensie sal in Johannesburg en Potchefstroom, Suid-Afrika, gehou word vanaf 30 Mei tot 2 Junie 2011. Bydraes wat op die volgende temas fokus, is alreeds ontvang, maar referate wat verskillende aspekte van *Wêreldbeskouing en onderwys* belig, word nog verwelkom: transformasie en verantwoordelikheid; epistemiese raamwerke en uitkomsgebaseerde onderrig in Suid-Afrika; verbeelding; estetiese betrokkenheid en gemeenskapsverandering; taal en kognisie.

U word hiermee uitgenooi om 'n opsomming van 300 woorde voor te lê aan

Leandri.Kleinhans@nwu.ac.za / 20321783@nwu.ac.za

Sperdatums:

- Voorlegging van opsommings: voor of op 15 Januarie 2011
- Kennisgewing van aanvaarding van opsomming: 25 Januarie 2011
- Registrasie: voor of op 1 Februarie 2011 (registrasievorm beskikbaar op www.koers.co.za)
- Laatregistrasie: 2 Februarie-1 April 2011
- Voorlegging van finale referaat: 1 Mei 2011

Konferensiekoördineerder:

Leandri Kleinhans

+27 (0) 18 2991905

Leandri.Kleinhans@nwu.ac.za / 20321783@nwu.ac.za

Voorlopige program:

Die voorlopige program sal op die webblad (www.koers.co.za) gepubliseer word, sodra dit beskikbaar is.

Konferensiepakket sluit die volgende in:

- Alle vervoer van en na O.R. Tambo-internasionale lughawe, asook alle vervoer tussen plaaslike vergaderplekke
- Alle akkommodasie en etes
- Galafunksie
- Konferensiefooie en -registrasie
- Ekskursies na Cradle of Humankind, die Apartheid Museum en 'n wildsrit

Koste van konferensiepakket:

- Suid-Afrikaanse afgevaardigdes: R3 900 (spesiale tarief vir *Koers*-lede: R3 700)
- Suid-Afrikaanse studente R2 900 (spesiale tarief vir *Koers*-lede: R2 700)
- Internasionale afgevaardigdes: R5 500/\$760/€580 (spesiale tarief vir *Koers*-lede: R5 300/\$732/€559)

Neem asseblief kennis dat 'n addisionele fooi van R500 gehef sal word op laatregistrasies (ná 1 Februarie 2011).

Vir die nuutste inligting asook 'n registrasievorm, besoek asseblief die volgende webtuiste: www.koers.co.za

Call for papers: International *Koers* Conference on *Worldview and education*

2010 marks the 75th year of publication of *Koers: Bulletin for Christian Scholarship*. In honour of the journal's contribution to the promotion of interdisciplinary academic debate and philosophically-grounded scholarship, the *Koers Association* is hosting an international conference on *Worldview and education*. We hereby invite all members of the academic community, policy makers, educators and other interested parties to attend, and participate in this event. By furthering academic dialogue and bringing together leading figures in the field, we hope to positively affect the education-related challenges specific to the South African situation.

The conference will be held in Johannesburg and Potchefstroom, South Africa, from 30 May to 2 June 2011. Contributions focusing on the following themes have already been received, but we welcome papers that highlight different aspects of *Worldview and education*: transformation and responsibility; epistemic frameworks and outcome-based education in South Africa; imagination, aesthetic engagement and societal change; language and cognition.

You are hereby invited to submit an abstract of 300 words to Leandri.Kleinhans@nwu.ac.za / 20321783@nwu.ac.za

Deadlines:

- Submission of abstracts: on or before 15 January 2011
- Notification of acceptance of abstract: 25 January 2011
- Registration: on or before 1 February 2011 (registration form available on www.koers.co.za)
- Late registration: 2 February – 1 April 2011
- Submission of final paper: 1 May 2011

Conference coordinator:

Leandri Kleinhans
+27 (0) 18 2991905
Leandri.Kleinhans@nwu.ac.za / 20321783@nwu.ac.za

Preliminary program:

The preliminary program will be posted on the website (www.koers.co.za) as soon as it becomes available.

Conference package includes:

- All transport to and from O.R. Tambo international airport, as well as transport between local venues
- All accommodation and meals
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- Conference fees and registration
- Excursions to the Cradle of Humankind, the Apartheid Museum and game drive

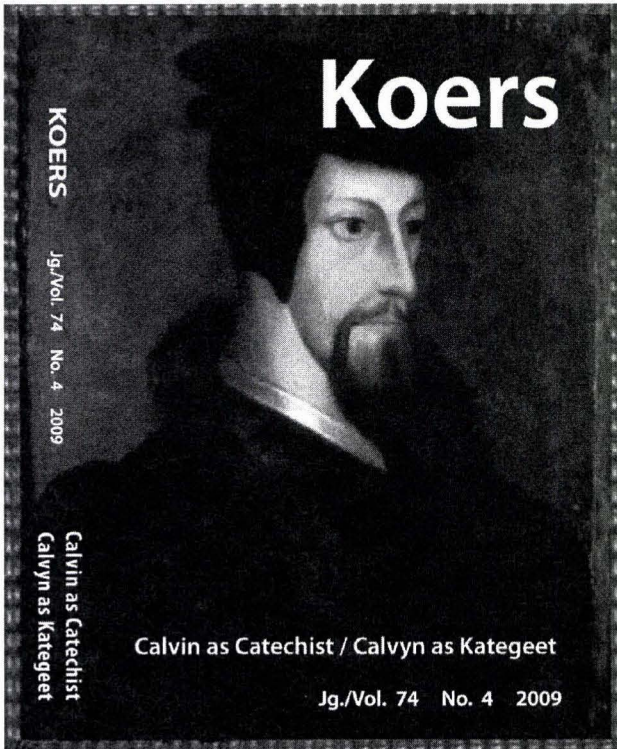
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- South African delegates: R3 900 (special rate for *Koers* members: R3 700)
- South African students R2 900 (special rate for *Koers* members: R2 700)
- International delegates: R5 500/\$760/€580 (special rate for *Koers* members: R5 300/\$732/€559)

Please note: an additional fee of R500 will be charged for late registration (after 1 February 2011).

For updates as well as the registration form, please refer to the *Koers* website: www.koers.co.za

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