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Resensies / Reviews

Christian worldvewish reflection of religion

Van der Walt, B.J. 2008. **Man and God: the transforming power of Biblical religion.** Potchefstroom: Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 520 p. Price: R180,00.
ISBN: 1-86822-270-5.

Reviewer: R. Coletto
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The book is a second print of the text originally published in 1997. It is a very “accessible” (i.e. non-specialistic) introduction to philosophy of religion from a reformational point of view. Perhaps one should rather say it is a Christian-worldvewish reflection on religion with a very practical intent and a broad scope. This will become clearer as we look at the content of the book.

After a short introduction, the book is articulated into four sections. Section 1 is an introduction to the theme of religion in the history of philosophy. After a definition and description of philosophy (essay 1) and of religion (essay 2), this section deals with questions like: Which scientific disciplines are interested in the study of religion? (essay 3); Which methods are adopted? (essay 5); Which trends are particularly influent in philosophy of religion? (essay 4). The author also explores the nature of religious language (does it convey anything “real”? – essay 7) and tries to “classify” the main “types” of religion and religious experiences (essay 6).

Section 2 provides a “Foundation” by focusing on the written revelation (essays 10, 11, 12), and by sketching an ontological model, in which “God, law and cosmos” (essay 13) are related to each other. Then the human being is introduced in the (ontological) picture

(essay 15). The practical nature of the text emerges more clearly when the author deals with issues of religious diversity, equality and religious freedom (essay 9). This theme is obviously very relevant in the globalisation context in which we live.

Section 3 constitutes an “Application” of the previous sections and explores a broad range of topics. Here one will find for example a discussion of the issue of evil and suffering in the world (essay 17), or the nature of God’s intervention in history (essay 19). Religion is related to the themes of authority and power (essay 21), economics and politics (essay 22), the possibility of Christian politics (essay 23) and Christian scholarship (essay 24).

The last section opens a dialogue with several interlocutors, mainly philosophical and theological traditions which are particularly influential in today’s debates. But this doesn’t mean that the discussion remains locked into the present, without awareness of its historical roots. Essay 28, for example explores how the relationship between faith and knowledge has been understood in the history of the Christian community. This provides an essential background for those who wish to approach, for example the contemporary debate concerning “theology and science”. In this context, the clarifications concerning “natural theology” are helpful as well (essay 27).

A specific chapter is dedicated to the theme of “spirituality”. Here the author tries to capture the essential traits of reformational spirituality (essay 35). The theme of spirituality is attracting worldwide attention at present and I believe *Koers* is surely going to offer several contributions on it, in future issues.

But the author does not only address Christian interlocutors. He interrogates secularism in contemporary culture (essay 30) and denounces the “intolerant” attitude (when it comes to practical issues) of some movements presenting themselves as more tolerant than others (essay 34). He also explores the relationship between religion and ideology (essay 29).

To summarise, *Man and God* offers 35 essays containing stimulating reflections on religion. It is especially recommendable to students of theology, philosophy and the humanities in general. It would have been more interesting to students in the natural sciences, I suppose, if section 3 contained a more direct discussion on issues like “religion and (natural) science”, or “theories and beliefs” just to make an example. Of course the whole background constituted by sections 1 and 2 is relevant for the natural sciences as well, but the

only essay which comes close to the topic is “Christianity and scholarship” (essay 24), which, however, does not deal explicitly with the natural sciences. At the same time essay 31 on the “New age movement” is nowadays a bit less relevant, as this movement (very active and attractive to many a few years back) has lost much of its initial appeal.

The book, however, is not only recommendable to students. There is the amateur as well, of course, and there are also many lecturers and practitioners in the so-called special sciences (e.g. psychology, economics) who often struggle to see how our “beliefs” may have any relevance for their specific fields of study. In this area, even some introductory texts may prove to be rather challenging, simply because the issues under discussion may not be too familiar to a mathematician or an economist. This is why an accessible introduction is particularly helpful. In some cases one would also like to have an introduction from a Christian point of view, not to avoid other perspectives at a later stage, but because one would like to start from what is more familiar and makes one feel more comfortable. Finally, there are also those who come from a non-Christian background but are intrigued to know more about themes like religion, philosophy, religious freedom, religious conflicts and so on. To all these potential readers, and for all the reasons mentioned above, this book is recommended.

Examining social security in Norway and South Africa

Olivier, M. & Kuhnle, S., eds. 2008. Norms and institutional design: social security in Norway and South Africa.

Stellenbosch: African Sun. 297 p. Price: R175,00.

ISBN: 978-1-920109-59-2.

Reviewer: T. Neethling
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Ever since philosophers, such as Thomas Hill Green (1836-1882), started to support a government that would take *positive steps* to improve the lives of people through specific policies, the welfare state and the idea of social security have become of scholarly

importance. This book focuses on the critical elements and criteria which are necessary in an institutional framework to ensure the provision of effective and efficient social security in South Africa. The editors endeavour to obtain answers to the following questions: What are the norms and standards which should guide the (re)-designing of principal institutional arrangements for social security provisioning and service delivery? Why should some standards be chosen rather than others? Why and how are certain norms/standards/institutions justified above the use of others? To what extent are seemingly successful arrangements in other countries or regions applicable in the South African and broader regional (Southern African) context? What lessons are learned from experiences of European countries, particularly from the Scandinavian experience in Norway?

The introductory chapter interprets the concept of the welfare state, outlines the development of Scandinavian welfare states and highlights some of their major characteristics which relate to the underlying values of the Scandinavian welfare state construction. This is followed by 22 chapters in three parts which are divided in a *normative framework*, a *conceptual framework* and an *institutional framework* to cover analyses of various aspects relating to the aforementioned questions.

Part 1, dealing with the normative framework in chapters 1 to 10, starts with the concept of the welfare state, outlines the development of Scandinavian welfare states and describes the values crucial to the construction of such a state. Issues pertaining to a normative framework for social policies; some elements of the prevailing constitutional framework in South Africa impacting on effective and social security provisioning in South Africa; lessons, positive and negative, from social security provisioning in other Southern African states; good governance and social security provisioning; and poverty in Norway and South Africa are also dealt with.

The next five chapters in Part 2 deal with the conceptual framework of social security provisioning. This part of the book explores issues relating to international normative standards and pension provision; historical relations between voluntary organisations and government in Norway; and the realisation of rights to social security. The last two chapters offer some interesting African views on the concept of social security with reference to solidarity, *Ubuntu* and the welfare state, and also the concept of informal social security in African societies.

Part 3, consisting of chapters 16 to 23, deals with the institutional framework and starts with chapters on the South African social security landscape, as well as relevant principles, norms and standards pertaining to the adjudicative context of efficient and effective social security provisioning in South Africa. This part of the book also covers themes relating to the Norwegian old age pension scheme and social care services to the elderly; disability provisioning in South Africa; policies for families with children in Norway; child support and protection in South Africa; and unemployment protection in South Africa.

The point of departure in this book is the creation of the welfare state as “the ultimate goal in attempts to improve human well-being” (p. 80). For some South African politicians and scholars the welfare state probably remains an attractive policy option. It would, however, be extremely difficult to implement such a model in South Africa. A fundamental precondition is an economy and broad tax basis which makes the financing of social security schemes possible. This makes the welfare state indeed a remote possibility in South Africa. In view of this one cannot but feel that South Africa and Norway are in essence two non-comparable entities in terms of their socio-economic and political context. The highly egalitarian and developed Norwegian society and the country’s political-economic framework differs vastly from that in South Africa and this also concerns social security to a very large extent. After all, South Africa performs more like the typical lower middle-income country where social indicators are concerned and the most salient characteristic of its political economy is that of inequality in terms of the distribution of wealth. Having said this, this does not mean that this publication is fundamentally unsound as a project that is intended to examine possible lessons for South Africa from the Scandinavian experience. Success stories should be examined and some of the authors in this publication duly acknowledge the point that the Scandinavian/Norwegian experience cannot be taken as a blueprint for South Africa as Norway and South Africa followed different paths in developing social security.

Furthermore, the book covers a wide range of issues relating to social security in Norway and South Africa. But much of what is written is discussed in a legalistic and administrative framework and context. In view of this, it could be argued that the editors left some important and contentious issues in the contemporary South African political context basically untouched. Sound arguments exist for social security in a market system and observers also generally

agree that for a developing country, South Africa has a relatively well-developed social security system and the required constitutional framework. However, the post-1994 political context has been characterised by competing ideological positions, specifically a social-democratic welfare ideology versus a neo-liberal, supply side oriented economic policy. For some South Africa's social security system has been the only successful and broad-based anti-poverty strategy. Others contend that over-expenditure in the sphere of social security and under-expenditure of genuinely developmental social welfare initiatives are the order of the day. These ideological positions continue to underpin much of mainstream South African bread-and-butter politics and future policy options.

In the final analysis the editors express the hope that this publication will contribute not only to the scholarly debate on the issues discussed in the different chapters, but also to the current and future frameworks of the policy dimensions of reforming social policy. This said, the book is indeed a welcome contribution to the academic knowledge base. The value of the book lies in the wide spectrum of Scandinavian and South African scholarly perspectives on social security issues which are offered. Scholars, policy-makers and other functionaries in search of a better and deeper understanding of South Africa's social security context and challenges may certainly benefit from it. The editors present a publication that discern important relationships among the relevant issues, generate imaginative possibilities for policy action, and operate easily in the conceptual realm from a reader's point of view.

Reformatories betrokke: op weg na 'n werklikheidsbeskouing

Van der Walt, B.J. 2008. *Anatomy of reformation: flashes and fragments of a reformational worldview*. Potchefstroom: Institute for Contemporary Christianity in Africa. 582 p. Prys: R170,00. ISBN: 1 86822 036 2.

Resensent: H. Hoogstad
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Bepaalde wêreldbeskoulike en filosofiese strominge en hulle interaksie kan treffend afgelees word in die historiese ontwikkeling van die konsep *worldview*/lewens- en werklikheidsbeskouing. Binne die (reformatories-) Christelike tradisie is hierdie konsep en die inhoud daarvan oor eeue op eiesoortige wyse ontwikkel. Te midde van die laaste paar dekades se postmoderne problematisering van 'n *worldview* het die begrip *werklikheidsbeskouing* gefokusde aandag ontvang in sleutelpublikasies van prominente denkers.

Op eie bodem word dringend gevra na die praktiese relevansie van die evangelie vir politieke, sosiale, ekonomiese, kulturele en etiese lewensareas, merk Bennie van der Walt op. Hoe kan wegbeweeg word van 'n slegs-Sondag, kerkgesentreerde geloof na 'n alomvattende geloofsraamwerk met relevansie vir die hele lewe? Volgens die outeur is 'n omvattende Christelike lewens- en werklikheidsbeskouing nodig om hierdie vraag (telkens weer) te kan beantwoord.

Van der Walt is 'n Christelike filosoof-teoloog en vanuit hierdie agtergrond begin hy die wortels van 'n Christelike werklikheidsvisie verken. *Anatomy of reformation* bied nie 'n volledige, sistematiese ontleding van 'n reformatoriese visie nie. Soos die subtitel van die boek aandui, word hier slegs flitse van die geskiedenis en fragmente van die beginsels van 'n reformatoriese lewens- en wêreldbeskouing gebied.

Hierdie publikasie se belangrikheid is tweërlei: dit gee op toeganklike wyse kernmomente van die reformatoriese "gesprek" met ander interpretatiewe vormgewings aan die werklikheid weer en volg die implikasies hiervan vir die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing op. Die samestelling van die boek bied tweedens 'n blik op 'n "work in pro-

gress”, wat die aard van ’n werklikheidsbeskouing weerspieël. Hierdeur word die leser betrek om self, as gespreksgenoot, te vernuwe.

Anatomy of reformation is in 1981 vir die eerste keer gepubliseer as deel van ’n trilogie. Die goeie ontvangs van die ander twee volumes (*Heartbeat, taking the pulse of our Christian theological and philosophical heritage* en *Horizon, surveying a route for contemporary Christian thought*), plaaslik en oorsee, het hierdie werk deels geïnspireer. Hierdie boek is egter veel minder tegnies van aard en is vir ’n breë leserspubliek toeganklik. Dit is inderdaad ’n sterk punt van die boek dat interessante feite gemaklik en bondig weergegee word. Die kern van komplekse idees word sonder oorvereenvoudiging, helder weergegee en konkreet op probleemsituasies toegepas.

So ’n lywige, populêr-wetenskaplike boek en saamgestelde volume stel belangrike eise aan die outeur. Slaag die boek daarin om die leser se aandag deurlopend gefokus te hou op die sentrale tema en logiese verloop? Tot ’n groot mate, wél.

Die rangskikking van die onderskeie hoofstukke in ses hoofdele maak logies sin binne die raamwerk van die boek. Die voetnote by sommige hoofstukke help om ’n bepaalde konteks aan die geselekteerde materiaal te bied. Sodanige voetnote by meer van die hoofstukke sou ’n duideliker oriëntasie kon moontlik maak. Die samehang van die hoofstukke sou meer lesersvriendelik voorgestel kon word deur ’n saambindende draad, deur byvoorbeeld voor elke deel en/of hoofstuk die samehang weer vas te knoop en grafies uit te lig. ’n Duideliker sigbare verdeling van die hoofgedeeltes van die boek sou ’n leser ook makliker kon lei in die verkenning van die tema.

Die vertrekpunt van *Anatomy of reformation* is Christus se woorde en daede om vas te stel wat sy houding teenoor die religieuse, sosiale en politieke neigings van sy tyd was. Hy het nóg asketies, nóg konserwatief of revolusionêr hiermee omgegaan, toon Van der Walt aan. Christus is die wegduider vir ’n totaal nuwe, reformatoriese benadering. In navolging hiervan behoort gelowiges se betrokkenheid in die werklikheid nie soseer bepaal te word deur dit waarteen hulle worstel nie, maar moet gekenmerk word deur ’n positiewe hernuwing van die wêreld.

Deel 2 (hoofstukke 6-8) het ten doel om die leser te inspireer met die bekendstelling van drie hervormers en voorlopers van die Reformasie: John Huss, Ulrich Zwingli en John Knox. Juis omdat hierdie minder bekende hervormers is, is die feitelike gegewens van hulle lewens en idees besonder interessant. Van der Walt handhaaf ’n

baie gemaklike verteltrant en sy entoesiasme is duidelik voelbaar. So 'n ooglopend "nie-neutrale" posisie mag sekere lesers egter ongemaklik laat. In die lig van die boek se tema vind die resensent so 'n spesifiek "inspirerende" deel sinvol – ook die outeur se unieke mededelingswyse hiervan.

Die derde deel (hoofstukke 9-11) weeg verskillende Christelike betrokkenheidsmodelle teen mekaar op om vas te stel hoe 'n Christen in die wêreld teenwoordig behoort te wees: *bo* die wêreld (Rooms-Katoliek), *langsaaan* die wêreld (Luthers), *teenoor* die wêreld (Anabaptisties) of *in* die wêreld (Calvinisties). Hierdie veralgemenings kan die indruk skep dat hier met breë kwashale geverf word, maar Van der Walt verdien lof vir die wyse waarop hy die leser in staat stel om 'n greep te kry op 'n moeilike en komplekse tema. Die historiese plasing van elke model dra hiertoe by, asook die duidelike vergelykingskriteria waarvan hy gebruikmaak om, vir die doeleindes van die boek, die betrokkenheidsmodelle ter sprake grondig te motiveer. Calvyn se model word vervolgens reformatories waardeur: Van der Walt wys Bybelvreemde invloede en spirituele neigings van die Renaissance hierin uit sodat die unieke Bybelse benadering wat in die grootste deel van Calvyn se werk te vinde is, duideliker sigbaar word.

Hierdie waardering gaan voort in deel vier se fokus op die kontemporêre kerklike toneel. Die outeur se analise van die tekortkomings in Suid-Afrika se kerkpraktyk, asook konkrete voorbeelde en praktiese riglyne vir die taak van reformasie, is waardevol. Die toneel wat geskets word aan die begin van die negentigerjare is bykans twintig jaar later, nie aan ons werklikheid vreemd nie en is steeds uiters relevant. Tog sou hierdie materiaal met vrug verwerk kon word om 'n skerper eietydse beeld te skep.

Die voorlaaste gedeelte (hoofstukke 16-19) verskuif die aandag na ander lewensfasette met 'n behoefte aan reformasie, spesifiek die sosio-politiese. Konsepte soos *idolatrie*, *ideologieë*, *reformasie* en *ander vernuwingskonsepte* word ondersoek om 'n vergelykingsbasis vir verskillende modelle van sosiale betrokkenheid te bied. Hoofstuk 19 konkretiseer die voorafgaande deur probleme soos geweld en burgerlike ongehoorsaamheid binne die huidige Suid-Afrikaanse situasie in terme van regte en pligte, asook magte en beperkings van die regering en sy subjekte, te benader. Hierdie herdruk van die 1991-uitgawe is steeds aktueel, maar van die toepassings kon gerus herverwerk word – veral vir die huidige sosiale en politieke opset.

In die sesde en laaste gedeelte (hoofstukke 20-24) word hierdie konkretisering verder gevoer met 'n fokus op 'n reformatoriese benadering in die wetenskap, spesifiek in die geskiedenis (hoofstuk 21), ekonomie (hoofstuk 22) en die geskiedenis van filosofie (hoofstuk 23). Ten slotte verken Van der Walt hoe 'n reformatoriese Christen die wil van die Heilige Gees kan herken wanneer hy/sy met moeilike besluite gekonfronteer word (hoofstuk 24).

Die boek sluit af met 'n kort naskrif waarin die leser voorsien word van belangrike bronne wat in 'n verdere persoonlike bestudering van die tema van nut kan wees. Vir die geïnteresseerde leser sou ek Van der Walt se nuwe werk, *The eye is the lamp of the body: world-views and their impact* (2008), ten sterkste aanbeveel vir 'n meer sistematiese behandeling van die reformatoriese werklikheidsvisie.

Anatomy of reformation verken 'n omvattende en relevante tema op 'n unieke wyse. Van der Walt se gretige, dikwels humoristiese mededeling van prikkelende feite bied goeie afwisseling vir die komplekse filosofiese en teologiese idees wat hy op toeganklike wyse met 'n potensieel wye leserspubliek deel. Filosofe, teoloë, vakwetenskaplikes, Christene en diegene wat worstel met 'n mens se betrokkenheid by die werklikheid sal *Anatomy of reformation* 'n boeiende verslag vind van 'n vakkundige se verkenning van sy wortels en taak in die werklikheid.

Die totstandkoming van Suid-Afrika in breër Europese konteks geskets

Schoeman, Karel. 2008. *Patrasiërs & prinse: die Europese samelewing en die stigting van 'n kolonie aan die Kaap, 1619-1715*. Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis. 436 p. Prys: R300,00. ISBN: 978-1-86919-157-3.

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Karel Schoeman (gebore 1939) is inderdaad een van Suid-Afrika se produktiefste en mees bekroonde skrywers – 'n besonder begaafde en kreatiewe persoon, en een van die min Afrikaanse outeurs wat

werklik nasionaal (en ook internasionaal) grootsheid verwerf het. Van hom het reeds talle romans (*By fakkellig* (1964), *Spiraal* (1968), *Na die geliefde land* (1972), *'n Ander land* (1984) en *Verliesfontein* (1998)), novelles, dramatekste en historiese werke verskyn. Onder laasgenoemde tel byvoorbeeld *Bloemfontein: die ontstaan van 'n stad, 1846-1946* (1980); *Bloemfontein in beeld, 1860-1910* (ca. 1987); *Early slavery at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-1717* (2007) en die talle boeke in die *Vrijstatia*-reeks bronnepublikasies. Sy werk is reeds by talle geleenthede bekroon, onder meer met die Hertzogprys vir prosa (1970, 1986 en 1995), die Recht Malanprys vir nie-fiksie (1983 en 1998), en die SAUK-prys vir beste televisiedrama (1990). Hy ontvang ook 'n Staatspresidentstoekening, naamlik die Orde vir Voortreflike Diens (Silwer, 1999), asook 'n eredoktorsgraad van die Universiteit van Kaapstad (2000) en ook van die Universiteit van die Vrystaat (2004).

In *Patrisiërs & prinse: die Europese samelewing en die stigting van 'n kolonie aan die Kaap, 1619-1715*, beskryf Schoeman op voortreflike wyse die sewentiende-eeuse wêreld waarin Jan van Riebeeck en sy tydgenote in Europa grootgeword het – uiteraard met spesiale verwysing na Nederland. Hierdie wêreld vorm die agtergrond waarteen die Verenigde Oost-Indiesche Compagnie (VOC) in April 1652 'n verversingspos aan die Kaap de Goede Hoop gestig het. Hierdie boek is die eerste deel van 'n vyfdelige reeks oor die vroeë blanke vestiging aan die Kaap. Die titels van die hieropvolgende publikasies is *Handelsryk in die Ooste: die wêreld van die VOC, 1619-1688*; *Kolonie aan die Kaap: Jan van Riebeeck en die vestiging van die eerste blankes, 1652-1662*; *Burgers & amptenare: die vroeë ontwikkeling van die kolonie aan die Kaap, 1662-1679*; en *Here & boere: die kolonie aan die Kaap onder die Van der Stels, 1679-1712*.

In *Patrisiërs & prinse* word die geskiedenis as 't ware “van bo af” beskryf in terme van vername mense, dit wil sê die adellike burgers/vooraanstaande persone (patrisiërs) en die koninklikes (prinse) se rol en optrede. In die eerste twee hoofstukke van die boek (“Nederland: die opkoms van die Republiek (1619-1651)” en “Nederland: die opbloeï van die Republiek (1619-1651)”), asook in hoofstuk 4 (“Nederland: die hoogtepunt (1660-1698)”), word die opkoms en hoogbloeï van die Nederlandse Republiek bespreek. Die Frankryk van Lodewyk XIV kom in hoofstuk 3 (“Frankryk: die Sonkoning (1661-1715)”) aan die beurt, met die klem op die toenemende oorheersing van Europa deur die Franse kultuur. Besonder boeiend is die hoofstukke wat gewy word aan die opkoms van die hoë burger-

stand in Nederland (hoofstuk 5: “Nederland: die patrisiërs (1619-1698)”) en die versameldrif wat deur dié stand se welvaart en die kontak met Nederland se kolonies moontlik gemaak is (hoofstuk 6: “Nederland: die versamelaars (1619-1698)”). In die laaste twee hoofstukke wys Schoeman tereg daarop dat Europa in die sewentiende eeu nog besonder naby aan die Middeleeue gestaan het (hoofstuk 7: “Europa: die Middeleeuse erfenis (1619-1715)”) en bespreek hy die soms skokkend primitiewe lewenswyse wat maar geleidelik nader aan dié van die meer moderne tydvak beweeg het (hoofstuk 8: “Europa: die breukvlak (1619-1715)”).

Patrisiërs & prinse (asook die opvolgpublikasies) moet saam met Schoeman se tweedelige *Armosyn van die Kaap* gelees word. Trouens, hulle vul mekaar baie goed aan. Die Kaap staan steeds sentraal in *Patrisiërs & prinse*, maar Schoeman slaag meesterlik daarin om die eerste sowat 60 jaar van blanke vestiging aan die suidpunt van Afrika in die korrekte tydskonteks te plaas en dit in die eietydse ontwikkelings in Europa sowel as in die VOC se handelswêreld te anker.

Die boek bevat 28 toepaslike illustrasies wat die teks toelig, en die register (p. 416-436) stel die belangstellende leser, sowel as die ernstige navorser, in staat om die teks maklik te ontsluit. Soos al Schoeman se ander boeke oor die geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika en verwante sake, getuig *Patrisiërs & prinse* ook van uitstekende en diepgaande navorsing. Let in hierdie verband op die omvangryke bronnelys (p. 389-413) wat ’n groot verskeidenheid en tipe bronne bevat, asook die 2 205 eindnote (p. 333-388).

Die geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika begin nie in 1652 (of 1910, 1961 of 1994) nie. *Patrisiërs & prinse* verskaf waardevolle kultuurhistoriese agtergrond oor die tyd voor die Europese vestiging aan die Kaap die Goede Hoop vir almal wat in geskiedenis belangstel. Dit is belangrik dat alle Suid-Afrikaners, van alle rasse, sal kennis neem van die land se veelbewoë en komplekse geskiedenis, asook van die breër Europese en wêreldgeskiedenis waarteen dit begryp moet word. Daar word met groot verwagting uitgesien na die volgende aflewering in Schoeman se vyfdelige reeks publikasies oor die vroeë Kaapse vestigingsgeskiedenis. Die ideaal is dat, nadat al vyf boeke voltooi is, ’n samevattende Engelse weergawe gepubliseer sal word, sodat ook die nie-Afrikaanssprekende gemeenskappe van Karel Schoeman se betekenisvolle navorsingsbevindings en insigte kan kennis neem.

Om God te vind langs die viswaters – Martin Versfeld se verheerliking van die alledaagse

Versfeld, M. 2008. *Klip en klei*. Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis. 124 p.
Prys: R130,00. ISBN: 978-1-86919-245-7.

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Martinus Versfeld is wáárlík filosoof en die nege opstelle in *Klip en klei* is ég filosofies. Wie egter filosofie soos dit in die ivoortorings van universiteite bestaan daarin soek, sal *Klip en klei* vinnig neersit, terwyl diegene wat die akademiese filosofie nog altyd as 'n droë en irrelevante onderwerp beskou het, moontlik aangenaam verras sal word. Versfeld se skrywery is toeganklik, meesleurend en sonder pretensie en die opstelle in *Klip en klei* is almal deurtrek van gulhartigheid, lewensvreugde, geestigheid en wysheid.

Die imperialis, Kallikles, sou egter dieselfde aanklag wat hy teen Sokrates gerig het, op Versfeld van toepassing kon maak: "... jy praat net oor kos en drank en dokters en sulke kaf". Die opmerking tereg, want Versfeld skryf wél oorwegend oor dinge wat ooglopend weinig met die groot gedagtes van die filosofie te make het. In plaas daarvan om eksplisiet oor godsdienst, antropologie, metafisika en kenteorie te skrywe, skryf hy opstelle oor huise, kos, kook, kamp, bou, jag, visvang en om meubelstukke te maak. In *Klip en klei* vertel Versfeld byvoorbeeld hoedat hy sy eie huisie in die Kouga gebou het; hy gee raad hoe om braaihout te kies en palings te vang; hy deel verskeie resepte uit en oortuig oor die deugde van ruspes te versamel. Dit wat alledaags, konkreet en gewoon is, is dus vir Versfeld dít waarom die lewe eintlik draai. "Die hemel", skryf hy, "moet jou ou pyp insluit en jou ou huis en jou ou klere en jou ou vriende en jou ou vrou ..."

Al hierdie "gewone" dinge kan egter, volgens Versfeld, nooit nét ordinêr wees nie, want die werklikheid is spesifiek 'n *geskape* werklikheid "waarin alles soos 'n wonderwerk uit die niets uitstaan". Dit is in die lig van 'n radikale Godsbesef dat Versfeld die lewensin kan vind in iets so eenvoudigs soos die inlê van olywe. Deur homself en sy wêreld as skepsel te begryp, kan hy die oerbeginsel van die

Christendom, “A is A omdat God God is”, die ruggraat van sy lewensuitkyk maak. Wanneer hy daarom oor die gewone skryf, skryf hy daarvoor omdat sop en huise en motte alles heenwys na ’n Skepper wat die mens só geskape het dat hy die aarde kan bewoon, bewerk en geniet.

Die huise wat ons bou, die kos wat ons kook en die wild wat ons jag dui op die verskillende maniere waarmee ons met die skepping kan omgaan, en daarom ook op die verskillende wyses waarmee ons met die Skepper en ons medemens in ’n verhouding kan tree. Versfeld, ’n Katoliek, staan hierin nader aan die gereformeerde leer omtrent die allesomvattende aard van religie as wat baie Calviniste staan. Vir Versfeld is die vleeswording immers só kardinaal dat dit die Piëtistiese opheffing van die siel bó die liggaam – wat in die meeste godsdienste een of ander tyd gebruiklik word – ontmasker as ’n oortreding van die liefdesgebod. Liefde spits sigself immers toe op die konkrete en die sterflike, daarom dat die grootste liefdesbetoon in die geskiedenis ’n kruisdood is. Volgens Versfeld moet die mens nie tussen siel of liggaam kies nie, maar die keuse is eerder tussen werklikheid en abstraksie. Omdat God Meester is van die werklikheid kan die Christen nie anders as om in elke ding so na as moontlik aan die werklikheid te lewe nie. Bou die Christen byvoorbeeld ’n huis, moet hy/sy onthou dat dit “ook ’n soort vlees en bloed (is) waaruit jy die wêreld aanvaar en opbou” en daarom ’n manifestasie van jou diepste religieuse sienings. Só is daar vele wyses waarop die mens, bewustelik al dan nie, sy/haar diepste oortuigings uitleef en beleef. Al Versfeld se skrywes kom neer op verskillende gepaste wyses waarop skepsels hulself kan uitleef en die Skepping kan beleef: “Bou jou huis, kook jou kos, maak jou klere, vang jou vis. Op g’n ander manier sal jy God en die wêreld verstaan nie.”

In ’n wêreld wat deur die instrumentele en die pragmatiese oorheers word, is die *geskopenheid* van die werklikheid ’n bykans perverse gedagte, want Skepping veronderstel immers ’n liefdesurplus wat nie rym met wins of funksionaliteit nie. Die geskape werklikheid *is* omdat God dit *wil* en die Wil van God is goed. Daarom het elke ding sy plek en alle dinge hulle eie tyd, en “is dit die kuns van die lewe om te wees daar waar ons is, om aan die wêreld en aan ander mense teenwoordig te wees”. Waar die boek gebreke vertoon, soos byvoorbeeld herhaalde chauvinistiese stereotiperings van “vroulikheid” en sekere pejoratiewe waarteenoor die hedendaagse leser sensitief ingestel mag wees, vergoed *Klip en klei* die leser egter meervoudig deur bloot self dít te wees wat die nege opstelle met

soveel lewensvreugde predik – ’n verering en daarom ook ’n gulhartige viering van die goedheid van die Skepper en sy Skepping.

Access to social security

Becker, U.E. & Olivier, M., eds. 2008. Access to social security for non-citizens and informal sector workers: an international, South African and German perspective. Stellenbosch: African Sun. 237 p. Price: R175,00. ISBN: 978-1-920109-57-8.

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Access to Social security for non-citizens and informal sector workers: an international, South African and German perspective in essence deals with the issue of access to social security. Access to social security has in recent times been a social policy issue of national and international importance. In general, access to social security is often difficult to achieve and for some categories of persons, i.e. non-citizens and informal sector workers, such realisation is even more challenging. The book seeks to bring together legal scholars from mainly South Africa and Germany to discuss some of the present problems of access to social security for non-citizens and informal sector workers. The various contributions in the book give an overview of a broad variety of legal questions encountered in the different legal systems and which are further regulated by principles of international law that are applicable to the overarching topic.

The book consists of ten separate chapters, and it comprises 236 pages with contributions of nine distinguished contributors. Chapter 1 sets out the basic aim of the book and provides a basic introduction on the topic. It emphasises the fact that the publication, which focuses mainly on the South African and German legal systems, endeavours to examine the specific causes of the social exclusion of migrants (non-citizens) and informal sector workers from accessing social security benefits in the relevant legal environments. The chapter further investigates, discusses and evaluates some of the differences and similarities between the two mentioned legal systems and thereafter seeks to develop and propose “appropriate”

strategies for the extension of social protection to migrant workers and informal sector workers in the relevant jurisdictions. Chapter 2 deals with the issue of migrant workers in the modern age of globalisation and the right to social security from an international perspective. It is specifically stated that the global migrant workforce has increased significantly in recent years and although international migration can be a productive experience, many migrants are faced with severe challenges such as dirty, dangerous and difficult jobs (so-called 3-D jobs), poor working conditions, and inferior living conditions. Migrants also often lack access to civil and labour rights and social benefits. The chapter further highlights the role and importance and shortcomings of some international and regional human rights instruments in protecting the human rights of all migrant workers. The chapter concludes with the emphasis on a renewed attention by international role players (UN and ILO) to the issue of migrancy, and the role of bilateral and multilateral agreements to enhance social security provision and the proposal for inclusion of a minimum social assistance to migrant workers in applicable international legal instruments. In Chapter 3 the adjudication and enforcement mechanisms and administrative framework of social security from a South African perspective are analysed. The constitutional protection of the right to access to social security is highlighted and the importance of other provisions of the Bill of Rights and their implications are summarised. Chapter 4 in comparison deals with the German position relating to the institutional framework, legal instruments and legal techniques relating to the promotion of access to social security of non-citizens within the German jurisdiction. In chapters 5-9 issues such as the portability of social security benefits, important South African jurisprudence on social assistance to non-citizens, and South African and international perspectives on the promotion of access to social security to informal sector workers are discussed. The concluding chapter (Chapter 10) deals with exposition of the issue of promoting access to social security to informal sector workers from a German perspective, wherein the influence and importance of the German basic law (*Grundgesetz*) is emphasised.

The book is well written and the various contributors are generally recognised as experts within the legal domain of social security law. In view of recent developments in global migration patterns and the importance of both domestic and international legal provisions to the issue of access to social security, there is no doubt that the book adds significant value to the debate on and enhancement of access to social security for vulnerable groups such as non-citizens and

informal sector workers alike. The publication provides an interesting comparison between the legal jurisdictions of Germany and South Africa which are linked with the important requirements of international law. Although the book is in essence a comparative exercise, it should be beneficial for both legal scholars and students alike who work and practice within the domain of social security law.