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Resensies / Reviews

Die plek van die tradisionele Afrikaanse universiteit

Botha, Amanda, red. 2007. **Chris Brink: anatomy of a transformer.** Stellenbosch: Sun Press. 287 p. Prys: R175,00. ISBN: 978-1920109-80-6.

Resensent: A. Combrink
Kampusrektor, Potchefstroomkampus,
Noordwes-Universiteit

Chris Brink het na 'n naelbytstryd rektor en visekanselier van Stellenbosch geword. Sy termyn was gekenmerk deur 'n paar moeilike, dikwels kontroversiële sake, en sy besluit om die Universiteit te verlaat om 'n visekanselierspos by die Newcastle Universiteit in die Verenigde Koninkryk op te neem, het tot heelwat spekulاسie gelei. Dit is soos volg gereflekteer in 'n artikel in die *Mail and guardian* (11 tot 17 Augustus 2006) wat in die boek opgeneem is (p. 178):

South African academy has been buzzing with speculation since Brink announced his decision last month. Did the 'heat and emotion' – Brink's phrase – generated by the language debate at Stellenbosch eventually impose too great a toll on him? And, if so, what does this suggest about South Africa's ability to cultivate and retain high-quality tertiary leaders?

Brink het inderdaad self erken dat die debat 'n rol gespeel het in sy besluit.

He concedes that there is 'a connection between my decision and the language debate' but insists it was no more significant than the other factors – including the feeling that 'I have done my bit' in putting Stellenbosch on a path of growing academic

achievement, and that the university now needs a consolidator (p. 179).

Dit is natuurlik so dat Brink deur die algemene publiek onthou sal word vir die taaldebat. Maar is dit al? En waarop sinspeel die titel *Anatomy of a transformer*?

Die boek bestaan uit verskillende afdelings wat saamgetrek word om die sentrale tema van Brink as transformeerder. Die voorafgaande sake sluit stukke in deur die kanselier (wyle Elize Botha), die voorsitter van die Raad (Edwin Hertzog) en die redakteur, Amanda Botha. Afgesien van die kort curriculum vitae van Brink, is daar ook die belangwekkende *Stellenbosch University: Vision Statement 2012* wat die toon aangee vir die res van die boek. Botha stel in haar Inleiding dat: "In addition to the written contributions included here to convey an image of Chris Brink, it was decided also to strike a more personal note ... I hope this publication will express, with appreciation, what Chris Brink managed to do during his short time at Stellenbosch."

Die visiestelling (p. xiii) – vyf stellings wat op die vingers van een hand getel kan word – is 'n belangrike uitgangspunt vir die boek, en daar word telkens weer daarvoor gereflekteer. Binne die konteks van die universiteitswese in Suid-Afrika staan die saak van transformasie sentraal, en daar word oor 'n wye spektrum daarvoor gedebatteer. Brink se benadering is 'n verantwoordelike een: "The idea that the transformation of the University amounted to the process of realising the goals set out in our Strategic Planning Framework" (p. 3) en dit word die leitmotif vir die boek.

Die eerste hoofafdeling van die boek het te make met 'n abstrakte refleksie oor hierdie sake: Transformasie as demitologisering, die idee van "die Afrikaanse universiteit", en die stand van die Universiteit. Dit word gevolg deur 'n volgende hoofafdeling waarin belangwekkende toesprake van Brink opgeneem is. Dit begin met 'n persoonlike visiestelling vir die Universiteit (p. 42) waarna hy stel dat hy inderdaad, na ses jaar, kon sê dat sy ontleding van die universiteit akkuraat was, en sy visiestelling in die kol.

Die sake wat in die verskillende onderafdelings aandag kry, sluit in: sy persoonlike taalvisie, sy houding oor ontgroening (waar sekere van die probleme wat deurentyd op veral Afrikaanse kampusse kop uitsteek, aandag kry), 'n dokument saamgestel deur die rektore van die Afrikaanse universiteite oor Afrikaans, die hele saak van diversiteit, kwaliteit en die eise daaraan verbonde, verskeie refleksies oor

vordering met Visie 2012 en baie belangwekkend, die voorwoord tot die Self-Evalueringsverslag van die Universiteit vir die HOKK-oudit.

Die interessantste dokument in hierdie afdeling is waarskynlik die brief aan die senaat oor risiko's wat saamhang met die taalbeleid. Hierin betoog hy breedvoerig hoe die Universiteit blootgestel kan word aan groot risiko's indien daar nie saamgestem word oor die instelling van Engels, óók as onderrigtaal, nie. Die implikasies vir akademiese verskraling word opgeweeg en in verband gebring met die huidige stand van akademiese uitnemendheid by die Universiteit. Brink kom tot die gevolgtrekking dat geen ander weg moontlik is as die Universiteit sy profiel wil behou nie. Hierdie afdeling word afgesluit met sy bedanking, en verskeie reaksies daarop uit verskillende geleedere.

Die derde hoofafdeling bevat essays deur verskillende skrywers wat invullings doen oor Brink as persoon, as akademikus, as akademiese leier en transformeerder, en as mens ('n baie persoonlike gedig deur sy vrou is in die boek (p. 63) opgeneem as deel van die refleksie op die mens, en dit word ook in die bydraes in hierdie afdeling verder geneem). Verder is ook 'n lys onderhoude – grootliks met 'n positiewe toon. Die persoonlike aanslag word afgesluit met 'n essay deur sy vrou, Tobeia, wat 'n perspektief probeer daarstel oor wat sy sien as die reaksionêre aanslae op hom as individu en as akademikus, maar wat, volgens haar, hom net sterker as 'n sterk en gefokusde leier gevestig het.

Die laaste afdeling bevat meer terugskouende essays oor wat hy bereik het, binne die konteks van sy eie herkoms as tradisionele Afrikanerkind.

Die boek bevat boeiende stof, en kan gesien word as 'n mylpaal binne die denke en herdenke oor die plek van veral die tradisionele Afrikaanse universiteit binne die radikaal nuwe tersiêre omgewing waarin ons onself bevind. Die keuse van bydraes, veral op persoonlike vlak, is dalk te eensydig, maar die prentjie wat na vore tree is dié van 'n rektor met 'n missie, met die vaste oortuiging dat bepaalde dinge gedoen moet word om die Universiteit te transformeer ter wille van 'n wye reeks imperatiewe – van die akademiese (kwaliteits-) imperatiewe tot die sosio-politieke en ander oorewegings. Die boek is die moeite werd om te lees, omdat dit 'n breër en meer volledige perspektief bied op sekere belangrike debatte wat noodwendig deur die pers gesensasionaliseer is en wat gemoedere baie hoog laat loop het.

A new methodology approaching metaphorical language in science

Botha, M. Elaine. 2007. **Metaphor and its moorings: studies in the grounding of metaphorical meaning.** New York: Peter Lang. 282 p. Price: SFr. 82,00. ISBN: 978-3-03910-457-4.

Reviewer: H. Goede
School for Biblical Sciences and Ancient Languages,
Potchefstroom Campus, North-West University

Professor Botha boasts an impressive publication record on metaphors and the theory of metaphors. This publication is the culmination of her research into this fascinating and most important field of study. The author formulates the purpose of the publication as follows:

The project explores the significance and impact of [...] embodiment theories of metaphor on some traditional formulations of the relationship between science and religion and introduces a methodology based on the distinction of a number of universal domains of meaning discernable in both human embodied experience, cognition and reality (p. 6).

In Part one the said embodiment theories are described with specific reference to the works of Lakoff and Johnson.

In Part two the new methodology, namely metaphorical hermeneutics is introduced in order to counteract both subjectivism and materialism. Metaphorical hermeneutics approaches reality from the standpoint that metaphors mediate our understanding and interpretation of reality. This new methodology is based upon ontological and anthropological distinctions found in the Philosophy of the Cosmomic Idea of Herman Dooyeweerd. These distinctions lead to the conclusion that meaning is grounded in non-analogical (or original) modal meaning, i.e. the core meaning of an irreducible aspect of reality, rather than in a literal grounding. And metaphors mediate access to these ontic analogies. This function of metaphor is crucial to the work of science since metaphorical models are constitutive elements of scientific theorising.

In Part three the author claims that there is a clearly discernable influence and presence of religious convictions in scientific theorising,

and that metaphor mediates between religion, metaphysics, and science. The author describes “root-metaphors” that operate in myths, religion, worldviews, and in science, and their role in the development of ideology in the negative sense of the word. A case study follows, applying the proposed methodology to the work of the nineteenth century philosopher physicist Michael Faraday. The author also discusses Scriptural metaphors and their role in Christian scholarship. In Part four the author addresses a number of issues interrelated to the role of metaphor in science namely the cognitive claims of metaphor and the relationship between metaphorical models and scientific realism. Finally the author turns to embodiment and the grammar of creation.

The question is whether the author achieves the stated purpose of the publication. To my mind she does. Part one’s description of the various theories of metaphor based on embodiment provides a good overview of the subject-matter. Having categorically dispensed with the traditional distinction between literal and metaphorical meaning, she succeeds in translating these theories into philosophical terms relevant to the methodology expounded in Part two. The philosophical foundation of the methodology is sound, augmenting the stated shortcomings of current embodiment theories. The author certainly succeeds in her quest to provide ontic moorings for metaphoric meaning.

Part three contains the most valuable contribution of this publication, namely metaphor as mediator for the fiduciary dimension of reality in science. Governing and controlling worldviews and ideologies enter the world of religion, metaphysics, and science by way of metaphor. Conversely, an analysis of the metaphors used in religious, metaphysical, and scientific language points to the underlying worldviews and ideologies. Her analysis of the works of Faraday, and specifically his use of the metaphor of force, clearly indicates how the metaphor mediates between his religious convictions and his scientific theorising.

The author’s discussion on the clusters, roots, and hierarchies of metaphors in Scripture is thought-provoking. She says: “Biblical metaphors need to be articulated in a wider metaphysical framework or Biblical worldview in order to be of use in the theoretical work of scholars in the disciplines” (p. 212). These metaphors need to be related to metaphors of everyday language, religious experience, and scientific theorising. Such an approach as part of Biblical scholarship is potentially very fruitful and indeed necessary. As the author notes: “... an appeal to literal language in Biblical exegesis is

inadequate to stem the tide of relativism ushered in by postmodernism” (p. 232). Literality is indeed as problematic as metaphoricality.

The author concludes Part four by describing her position on the moorings of metaphorical meaning as “qualified realism” (p. 251). She recognises the existence of a creation order which we approximate by way of metaphorical models. The moorings of metaphorical meaning are to be found in the correlation between our fallible grasp of this creation order and our articulation of it by way of metaphor and analogy. This publication provides a sound philosophical argument for this conclusion. I would recommend it to all scientists with an interest in how metaphorical language operates in scientific theorising, and also to linguists interested in the philosophical foundations of metaphoric meaning.

Guidelines for future South African scenarios in the current political turmoil

Segal, Nick. 2007. *Breaking the mould: the role of scenarios in shaping South Africa's future*. Stellenbosch: Sun Press. 95 p. Price: R150,00. ISBN: 978-1-92-0109-92-9.

Reviewer: J.F. Cronjé
School of Social Government Studies,
Potchefstroom Campus, North-West University

Lots of studies, reports and other scientific work from a variety of disciplines preceded the 1994 democratic South Africa in order to “predict” what will happen in a “new South Africa”. Also, quite some academic and scientific work with the “new democracy” as their focus emerged post-1994 – the primary aim was to “explain” what happened.

Against this background, there must definitely be a place for “scenarios”, and it is exactly this angle that Segal with his analysis of different scenario models has taken to make his contribution towards the ongoing political, economical and social turbulence in South Africa.

A brief overview of scenarios as planning device is being given in Chapter 1: from the context of the American military after World War II to the use of scenarios by Royal Dutch/Shell. The use of scenarios by Shell forms an important basis for the scenarios being offered in this book. Pierre Wack, a French economist being hired by Shell, played a critical role in two of the three South African scenario projects covered in the book and Adam Kahane, a senior member of Shell's scenario team in the post-Wack period, facilitated the third.

The basic characteristics of scenarios are also being put to the fore in this chapter:

- Scenarios are tools to facilitate
- Scenarios can be used as advocacy tools
- Scenarios as tools for generating awareness with a view to building understanding and perhaps eventually consensus
- Scenarios are exercises in intellectual enquiry

In Chapter 2 the author deals mainly with the political and socio-economic circumstances in the country in the 1980s and addresses the High road/Low road scenarios. These scenarios started in the early 1980s by the Anglo American Corporation against the background of political instability in South Africa, high levels of poverty and unemployment and poor economic growth.

As stated by Segal (p. 14):

The bulk of the effort [these scenarios] was focused on the formulation of global scenarios, based on analysis of key 'drivers' such as demography, technology and societal values, of developments in what were then regarded as the three main actors on the world's economic stage (Japan, USA and USSR), and also of what were the ingredients of success for 'winning' nations and for world-class companies.

Clem Sunter, in the Chairman's office as secretary to Exco, first presented the scenarios inside Anglo and its associated companies in 1986. Later on, these scenarios were presented to "wider" audiences which included the Cabinet, government departments, "homeland" governments, political parties and clubs and associations across the country. The great majority of audiences were white.

There was no doubt that these scenarios made some contribution to the creation of the New South Africa; despite a sort of “national awareness”, it can be isolated as one of the positive factors that encouraged the government eventually to embark on the political transition.

The Nedcor and Old Mutual scenarios originated basically within the context of a still unstable South Africa after F.W. de Klerk’s famous speech of 2 February 1990. Backward and forward negotiations, violence as well as political and social turbulence characterised this period. At the same time, massive changes also occur in the world order with the ending of the Cold War, the growing forces of globalisation, the continuing advances of the economies of East and South East Asia, et cetera.

Before getting to the Nedcor en Old Mutual Scenarios, Segal gives an overview of the economic history of the ANC (Chapter 3): from the ANC’s economic philosophy (set out in the 1955 Freedom Charter), the input of the Economic Trends Research Group (ET), the idea of nationalisation as an essential part of the reconstruction in the 1990s to the RDP and GEAR programmes.

The driving force behind the Nedcor/Old Mutual Scenarios (Chapter 4) was John Maree who had been appointed chairman of Nedcor early in the 1990s (also executive chairman of Eskom since 1985). The two firms put a formidable team together (Pierre Wack was involved again) and commissioned some kind of futures study. The draft final report was presented to Nedcor/Old Mutual in December 1990. It was decided that the report – due to the general high standard thereof as well as the delicate and strategic focus points – had to be disseminated widely. The “wider” presentations included: the country’s leadership across the full political spectrum and including leading players in the business and other communities, the Cabinet, the ANC’s national executive committee, the Inkatha Freedom Party, Cosato and other key individuals and groups. A presentation was also made to the World Bank in Washington DC.

The goals of this study were to (p. 37):

- Establish a basis for understanding South Africa in the 1990s and for developing appropriate business strategies.
- Provide a sound, well researched basis for discussing the South African environment with other key players who had the capacity to influence that environment.

Unlike the Anglo American exercise, the main focus of this work was on South Africa rather than the global economy. Two key conclusions were reached (p. 37-38):

- A successful political transition involved far more than simply a transfer of power.
- Since South Africa was starting from a position of secular decline in the economy, widespread poverty, steeply skewed income distribution and rising violence, alongside a fixed commitment to change the political system, there was an overriding need for economic and social transformation if democratisation was to be sustained – indeed, the need was urgent and had to be met before the transition to democracy, not after.

The impact of the Nedcor/Old Mutual exercise was significant; in the words of Segal (p. 40):

The range of its enquiry was impressive, as was the rigour and the imagination brought to its analysis of South Africa's deep-seated economic and social problems, much of which remains opposite today.

The main difference between the Mont Fleur scenarios was that *Mont Fleur* was a project essentially of civil society. This scenario is being dealt with in Chapter 5. The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung approached Pieter le Roux, a liberal Afrikaner from a conservative background, to drive the project which main objective was to look into South Africa's economic future. Le Roux met with Adam Kahane, who formed an integral part of the team. They consulted with the ANC (through Mbeki), Tito Mboweni, Saki Macozoma, the Pan African Congress (PAC) and the SACP (one participant). The absence of the Inkatha Freedom Party was later much regretted. Cosato wasn't much interested. The team reduced their initial scenarios to four:

- *Ostrich* – existing government “puts its head in the sand”;
- *Lame duck* – due to all kinds of sunset clauses and other checks and balances, the government is severely incapacitated;
- *Icarus* (mythical Greek figure whose feathers, stuck together with wax, melted close to the sun) – the dangers of macroeconomic populism;

- *Flight of the flamingoes* – a large number of birds that take a good while to get air-borne but eventually do so and fly together steadily and purposefully in the same direction.

Although some people wanted to rubbish these scenarios as being intellectually slight and that they didn't confront the socio-economic legacy of *apartheid*, Segal states (p. 49) that "At another [level] they were well regarded as substantial, as cleverly capturing the then current political uncertainties and economic realities, and also as illuminating the fundamental choices facing the country."

Segal also points out five "mutually reinforcing factors" (p. 51-52) for the success of projects/scenario exercises that were identified from the *Mont Fleur* exercise: timing, venue, process, simplicity and team composition.

In 2003-2004 another scenario project took place at *Mont Fleur*. This was the brainchild of London-based Peter Wilson, executive director of the African Leadership Institute and was an attempt to repeat the "original" *Mont Fleur*. The principal objective was to determine where South Africa stood ten years after the original *Mont Fleur* project. The project, known as *SA2020*, generated four scenarios about how South Africa might look in 2020:

- *Dead end* – explored the possible outcome of self-serving leadership, uncurtailed corruption and rampant individualism;
- *Sharp right turn* – the implications of a South Africa focusing only on achieving high economic growth;
- *Slow puncture* – the possible outcome of South Africa's choosing to beat the same path rather than adopting a bold vision and decisive leadership to reduce inequalities;
- *All aboard the dual carriageway* – how South Africa as a country could challenge its approach to growth and development and choose a bold path that would enable all to climb aboard the dual carriageway to a better life.

Due to various reasons, this scenario exercise went passed unnoticed and didn't make much impact; in a sense it was the very anti-thesis of the original exercise. The author makes a few points on this failure (p. 56-57).

After the investigation of these four "projects", Segal made seven main points (p. 59-63) regarding scenarios as analytical tools:

- First: While there might be in principle a “correct” way, each scenario exercise is unique.
- Second: Part of the attraction of the scenario exercise is the potential to combine intellectual and experiential approaches.
- Third: The power of the technique lies in its capacity to look dispassionately at issues and options and to allow logic and commonsense to explore the answers.
- Fourth: To be successful, the exercise must have legitimacy among the groups it is targeting.
- Fifth: The style of public dissemination of scenarios is crucial to their impact.
- Sixth: Linkages between different scenario exercises might be useful; one project for example, can lay the foundation for another one.
- Finally: The biggest question of all must be asked at the end of the day: would South Africa be a different place without the scenarios?

To offer guidelines for the planning and conduct of future scenario exercises, the author gives some very useful pointers (p. 66-69): The clarity of purpose; the timing; legitimacy in the eyes of target audiences; important role of the facilitator; design and organisation of the project; administration of project; size and composition of the team; methodology; duration of the exercise; and how should the scenarios be disseminated.

In conclusion, it is clear that scenario exercises can play an important role in studying and understanding political, economical and social change in a society. In Segal’s own words (p. 62-63):

... my clear sense is that in their different ways each [of the scenarios] helped break the then prevailing paradigm and consequently made a difference. Their impacts were not evenly spread, but were nevertheless real. Societal change is brought about by many factors, sometimes simultaneously and sometimes not, and the scenario projects studies here must be seen a catalytic rather than causal factors in this process.

Nick Segal did an excellent job to analyse these scenarios and also, as indicated above, give useful guidelines for similar future work.

Similar studies can be invaluable for the future of our country given the current political turmoil as well as the high levels of uncertainty regarding the economy. Target groups that might benefit from this book – as well as from similar future work being described in the book – will be political parties, government officials, companies and corporate officials, NGOs, academics and last but not least, everyone with an interest in the social sciences and in the future of South Africa.

Lastly, the book reads easy, is well and in a logical way structured and the technical layout is neat.

Constructive or destructive violence? Revisiting genocide, necklace burnings and family murders

<p>Praeg, Leonhard. 2007. <i>The geometry of violence: Africa, Girard, modernity</i>. Stellenbosch: Sun Press. 174 p. Price: R175,00. ISBN: 978-1-920109-75-2.</p>

Reviewer: F. Vreÿ
Department of Military Strategy,
Stellenbosch University

Can violence that results in utter human suffering have a constructive thesis? Praeg utilises sacrificial violence as a root concept to investigate particular events of violence on the African continent. Sacrificial violence stems from the theory of René Girard on a logic common to forms of collective violence. Aspects of Girard's theory are employed throughout the discussion on different forms of violence and rest upon three foundations: a human desire to be mimetic or imitative, projecting group violence upon an arbitrary victim and using ritual and myth to prevent violence from reoccurring (p. 17). Praeg orders genocide, necklace burnings and familicide along a horizontal and vertical continuum to demarcate their deeper meaning over time and in context. Geographically, Praeg selects three patterns of violence from the African continent to operationalise sacrificial violence through happenings in Rwanda and in South Africa in particular.

The Rwandan genocide of 1994, necklace murders in South Africa during the mid-1980s and familicide among South African families are carefully traced by Praeg along conceptual and time lines. Different angles upon the selected violence phenomena are presented. Homicide, religion and crimes against humanity and humanism, as well as time and sacrifice represent some conceptual departures. In essence, violence against the human family through genocide, necklace burnings and familicide forms a central tenet of the publication. In each case, Praeg attempts to demonstrate the historic line, humanity, or the lack thereof, as well as the “utility” of violent campaigns for a future good. The methodology Praeg uses confronts the reader with a mental dichotomy of understanding why the events took place and sympathy for the victims, but very little sympathy for the perpetrators whose actions only assume some meaning through the elaborate context building attempted by Praeg.

Praeg defines violence in a way that leaves one to ponder the real value of violence, or the futility thereof. In essence, Praeg endeavours to expose the constructive and destructive profiles of violence – both as an attempt to bring about change (whether for the better, remains to be seen) or as a result of interference with traditional ways of regulating societies and those who live and work within them. When contemplating the triad of violence constructed by Praeg, one cannot but view the theories and explanation of events as being credible explanations and one has to question how often literature in fact exposes the reader to both the destructive and constructive domains. The reader is consequently left with some apprehension as to whether, if at all, the instigators and perpetrators of violence ever considered their actions and eventual outcomes along the deep theoretical explanations offered by Praeg. Tendering theoretical explanations for moving towards modernity along violent pathways – pathways reflecting a national and individual character, but with collective and individual violence at its heart – is therefore one way of understanding the purpose of the geometry of violence employed.

In a sense, the exposure of the roots of violence at times borders on the author himself seemingly being taken aback by the horror of events. Viewing the selected events as constructive forces competes with considerations regarding how something so violent, destructive and shattering can be progressive, constructive and a conduit towards a better future. Pathways towards modernity through some of the most abhorrent and extreme forms of collective and individual violence against humanity, the human family and the

individual remain difficult, if not painful to embrace. To mirror recent events as reminiscent of earlier phenomena that gave rise to some modern and prosperous societies brings into focus the question of whether this pathway is a necessary or merely optional alternative to African societies.

The deep analysis by Praeg does not make for easy reading. An interest in the topic at hand, as well as deeper insights into historic events and theories on violence could serve the reader well. The analysis compels the reader to read, consider and accept or reject, for the discussion raises much emotion in the reader. The details of the violent events described are just too shocking to merely accept them in the light of the theoretical explanations that follow. The selected events are often typified as a shock to the conscience of humanity (the “never again” thesis). Presenting these events as forces of progress is a stance that may therefore not be shared by those who lived through the genocide, necklace murders and familicide. A “never again” attitude, pressures for criminalisation and conceptions of “progressive forces” therefore seem to compete for attention. In some way, it is apparent that human society expects these kinds of violent events to be criminalised and eradicated and the author could have been more explicit in this regard.

Readers of *The geometry of violence* could well include those merely attempting to understand the meaning of the extreme violence portrayed by genocide in Rwanda, necklacing in South African townships and familicide within South African families. At a next level of understanding, the reader could be interested in seeking out a theoretical explanation for events in order to explore similar events or to project the analysis onto what might happen in future. Beyond the layperson and academic audience, feature the political and policy-making fraternities. These fraternities need to understand the forces at play and the necessity to prevent or ameliorate such forces in defence of the sanctity of human life and humanity at large. In general, two broad spheres of readers are bound to materialise, namely those who accept the theoretical explanations of a shocking triad of violent events, and the audience that rejects such atrocities and destruction in the name of progress.

In conclusion, it is necessary for South African society to be aware of the diversion into violence that looms over “unfinished business”, disrupted opportunities for change and responses by the basic family unit to the disruption of societal patterns and established rules that order society. Enforced cultural paradigms that do not always suit or satisfy needs and expectations of people are dangerous.

Spontaneous or orchestrated responses plunge societies and families into the deep and dark dungeons of violence described by Praeg. Leaders, intellectuals, and influential decision-makers all need to understand the totality of the geometry of violence as presented by Praeg. Selective understanding of only the historic line, or the constructive role of violence, or to lash out at perceived perpetrators holds the danger of repeating the deep destruction wreaked on Rwandans, South African society and the family structures that underpin communities.

Restoring human dignity in South Africa

Vorster, Nico. 2007. **Restoring human dignity in South Africa: Christian anthropology in a new dispensation.** Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom Theological Publications. 164 p. Price: R104,00. ISBN: 978-0-68955-175-8.

Reviewer: A.W.G. Raath
Department of Constitutional Law and
Philosophy of Law, University of the Free State,
Bloemfontein

The concept of human dignity stands central to the South African Constitutional dispensation, whilst it also figurates prominently in ethical and theological discourse. Given the actuality of the theme of human dignity, this publication is a most timeous work. This publication – in actual fact rather a monograph – addresses issues related to the theme of the restoration of dignity in South African society. The author looks into the topics generally attached to discussions on human dignity rather than focusing on the normative content and meaning of the illusive term *dignity*.

In the Preface the author firstly gives an overview of the constitutional development of the South African state from 1910 to the inception of the 1996-Constitution. In order to set the background for further discourse on the theme the author highlights some of the principles qualifying the South African constitutional dispensation as a Constitutional State, e.g. section 1(c), recognising the supremacy of the Constitution, as well as the rule of law, as one of the key-values of the South African Republic; section 8(1), stating that

fundamental rights should be protected in the Constitution by means of a Bill of Rights that is applicable to the entire law, et cetera.

The author adds that “(a)lthough the unjust political system of Apartheid was replaced by the rule of law in 1994, the effects of Segregation and Apartheid still affect South African society,” and that “(m)uch still has to be done to restore the dignity of groups that were oppressed for many years”. The author subsequently lists issues such as: respect for life; respect for democratic values; the disintegration of family networks; poverty; joblessness; poor education facilities; equal access to water, electricity and basic services; equal access to the economy and land reform, and many more.

The author also adds that these issues should be addressed without “marginalising minority groups and creating new forms of social oppression”. Among the “new” challenges, he mentions only one: “HIV/AIDS as a major threat to the dignity of South African society”, in so far as it affects mainly the economically active segment of society between the ages of 25 and 50, and therefore leads to the loss of skills in the labour market, children being reared by grandparents or making a life on the streets, and greater poverty.

The author then states the purview of his work as offering a Christian perspective on the concept of human dignity and makes a few suggestions for the restoration of human dignity in South Africa. His self-declared aim is not to attempt to provide a systematic theological treatise on human dignity or to address all the theological issues that pertain to human dignity. Neither to address all the problems experienced by the South African society, but to focus primarily on the South African context, though the topics are relevant for theology as a whole, and address societal issues “that are applicable to all societies”.

However, I need to assure readers that the body of the work does not address the legal mechanics of human dignity as merely a Constitutional issue, neither does it amount to another effort at “Apartheid bashing” together with all the politically correct paraphernalia albeit fourteen years after liberation; neither does it present the new South Africa as a utopian society in need of only a few minor “moral patches” here and there. Despite a rather “thin” Preface, the author ventures directly into a number of themes that have a direct or indirect bearing on human dignity as a broad moral category: social justice (chapter 1); the value of human life (chapter 2); genocide (chapter 3); sexuality and human dignity (chapter 4); church and

state (chapter 5); state neutrality and religious rights (chapter 6); transformation (chapter 7), and the problem of theodicy (chapter 8).

The discussion of the sequential themes is lucid and the author is well-read and addresses the various themes in a sound academic way without losing the practical implications of morally degrading practices from view. The conclusions at the end of the work need the serious attention of all individuals and societal institutions concerned with the degeneration of morals in South African society and the serious implications it has for all people in our country, viz. the legalisation of same-sex marriages, pornography and abortion on demand leads to a growing alienation between the values of the Constitution and the values of society, and endangers social cohesion; human rights will only become a truly universal concept if the importance of religion as a source of morality are recognised and incorporated in the human rights discourse; the inconsistency in the approach abolishing the death penalty, but widening the possibilities for aborting the unborn foetus; the traditional African concept of gender; the radical view on freedom of secularism; the utilitarian view of sex, and the postmodern view that sexual behaviour and marriage are social constructs; aggravate sexual promiscuity; and transformation also has created an environment within which corruption can flourish because of the preferential treatment that previously disadvantaged groups receive.

Two outstanding positive aspects of this monograph need to be emphasised: firstly, the wealth of sources from the reformed tradition consulted by the author, and secondly, the honest way in which the author highlights some of the most pressing moral problems faced by our society. On the negative side it has to be noted though that a stronger Preface with an integral perspective on the meaning, content and ambit of the concept of human dignity, within the totality of social morals, would have contributed much to come to grips with the elusive normative content of human dignity as a key-moral term in scientific ethical discourse.

This monograph is excellently suited to be used as a handbook in modules on theological and philosophical ethics at universities and educational institutions. It is also strongly advised that church denominations in our country obtain this work and study the appeals for stronger commitment by the churches in our society. May this work receive the attention it deserves at a time in our country's history where moral relativism and degeneration has virtually become institutionalised, thereby eroding the moral fabric our country is direly in need of.

***Sk'enke*: the gift of music in social construction**

Akrofi, E., Smit, M. & Thorsén, S-M. 2007. *Music and identity: transformation and negotiation*. Stellenbosch: Sun Press. 414 p. Price: R285,00. ISBN: 978-1-919980-85-0.

Reviewer: J.H. Kruger
School of Music, Potchefstroom Campus,
North-West University

Scandinavia have a presence and interest in South Africa dating back to the early years of colonial settlement. Their engagement with the African continent also includes musical performance. S.H. Pellisier, an Afrikaner, visited Sweden in 1912 where he observed local folk dancing. His admiration for Swedish nationalistic sentiment prompted him to introduce "Swedish games" on his return to South Africa. This was the first step towards the founding of Die Afrikaanse Volksang- en Volkspelerbeweging in 1941 (*The Afrikaans Folksong and Dance Movement*). This movement was to feature centrally in shaping the identity of those Afrikaners who came to dominate local politics soon afterwards and thus changed the now familiar course of South African history.

Relationships between Scandinavia and the Afrikaner apartheid government deteriorated to the point where Foreign Minister Roelof (Pik) Botha remarked during the 1980s that "the further north a European country is situated, the colder its attitude towards South Africa is". In contrast, the attitude of Scandinavia towards liberation movements was supportive. South African exiles not only found refuge in Northern Europe, but Scandinavians also actively supported the anti-apartheid movement.

Cultural exchange programmes between South Africa and Scandinavia have proliferated since 1994, and musicians, musicologists and music educators continue to travel up and down the twentieth longitude. The South African National Research Foundation and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency have funded many of these exchanges. *Music and identity: transformation and negotiation* is the result of their support for the Swedish South African Research Network on Music and Identity (SSARN).

The position of the study of the production and consumption of music remains ambiguous within science. Popularly viewed as a form of (often frivolous) entertainment, and a performance art that resists interpretation because of its imprecise, subjective meanings, music habitually is disregarded in the social sciences. However, the rise in the twentieth century of ethnomusicology and other areas of musicology influenced by the social sciences has progressed a long way towards changing this attitude. The work of local anthropologists like David Coplan, Deborah James and others affirms the crucial social function of music, as was the case with Die Afrikaanse Volksang- en Volkspalebeweging. A central premise of this approach is that culture is a process that constructs meaning, and that music is integral to the social practices and discourses by means of which this is achieved.

Music and identity brings together essays by 24 musicologists from South Africa, Namibia, Ghana, The United States, Australia, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Given the SSARN's emphasis on social development in South Africa, most contributions in this volume are by South Africans. The aim of the project that gave rise to this volume was to "develop research discourses around music, identity, and culture, shared between two areas of the world". The project brought together not only local and Scandinavian researchers but also expatriates, so that the scope of the essay extends beyond the two geographical regions. Given this dispersal, as well as the diverse backgrounds, fields of specialisation and areas of investigation represented in this volume, it understandably lacks thematic and theoretical homogeneity. In addition, contributors approach the identity concept from differing positions of expertise. Consequently some contributions unpack identity issues in detail while others explore them only tangentially.

Nevertheless, the volume is informative, and it contains a significant number of interesting contributions that address the all too familiar interface between the local, regional and global. A case in point is that of South African musician Johnny Dyani who died in exile in 1986. *Sk'enke* (from Afrikaans *skenk*) was his term for a musical product comprising "a mix of everything" (Opondo, p. 264). In broader terms, this concept points to "a hybridised and inherently transculturative process, which ultimately allows for freedom and sharing and improvising", "an ongoing condition of all human beings" (Opondo, p. 270). This theme brings together the experiences of South African kwaito musicians, Duakor fishermen from Ghana, Kenyan church musicians, Kurdish musicians from Stockholm, Herero musi-

cians from Namibia, and music students from Denmark. In Namibia, as elsewhere in the tourism industries of the world, “ethnic” musics have been commodified, with an attendant expectation “to span heritage yet simultaneously engage with global economics” (Mans, p. 239). This brings into play another core theme within identity studies, namely that personal and social positioning (also in musical performance) cannot be understood outside discourses of power (Opondo, p. 274). So the tonic solfa system (a simple form of pitch representation commonly in use in Africa) stands in a hierarchical relation to the staff notation system, while stylistic characteristics of music like vocal timbre, movement and rhythm all often mask complex forms of hegemony (Hammond, Lucia).

Essays in this volume that address the music of minorities, human diasporas and the disempowered point to the fact that subjects are not only there to be studied but also “to be taught” (Lucia, p. v). Musicology that addresses the musical construction of identity is decreasingly becoming science at an impersonal distance; instead, it is consciously conceived as science that attempts to transform and empower. Discussions in this volume generally offer arguments against cultural exploitation and oppression, and in favour of cultural equity, redress and development. This is especially the case in music education which, because of the diversity of learner populations, is a site where theories about culture and identity are worked out in challenging everyday situations. In a unique essay, Twani (Walter Sisulu University) describes the benign effect of choral performance on prison inmates in Umtata, South Africa. Such performance not only plays an important role in positively controlling the behaviour of the prison population, but it enhances self-esteem and promotes social reintegration: clearly, singing is not for the timid only.

Religious music as a site for social construction is discussed in four contributions. The experiences of denominations as divergent as the historical and independent churches of South Africa point to liturgical music as a central factor in religious identity formation. Kloppers in particular offers a hard-hitting discussion of the political factors shaping the nature of reformed church music.

This volume is ideally suited for undergraduate and graduate students in music and the social sciences. Its extensive bibliographies provide a useful means for further explorations in the field of music and identity. It is unfortunate that this extensive volume contains no index. In addition, the reproduction of musical examples is generally

poor. Nevertheless, the volume is an important contribution towards musicology and cultural studies.

Die geheimenis agter die mirakel

Van Schoor, M.C.E. 2007. Christiaan Rudolph de Wet: krygsman en volksman. Pretoria: Protea Boekhuis. 325 p. Prys: R200,00.
ISBN: 978-1-86919-172-6.

Resensent: N. Goetsch
Pretoria

Die onlangse herdenking van die Anglo-Boereoorlog en 'n meesleurende lied oor 'n sekere generaal het belangstelling by die meeste mense geprikkel – belangstelling in die harte van die manne en vroue wat bereid was om alles op te offer vir vryheid. Selfs jongmense, wat gewoonlik geskiedenis as vervelig beskou, wou meer weet. Hierdie boek oor Christiaan de Wet sal diesulkes beslis nie teleurstel nie. Dit is 'n volledige en boeiende biografie wat die geheimenis ontsluit van wat die hart agter die bandolier, so vreesloos laat klop het.

Die biografie begin, verfrissend anders, met die gedagtes van Kotie de Wet tydens Christiaan se geboorte. Die leser maak dus nie net kennis met Christiaan nie, maar ook met die twee geslagte vóór hom, hulle geskiedenis en omstandighede.

Die agt hoofstukke waarin die boek opgedeel is, beskryf die fases en belangrike gebeurtenisse in Christiaan se lewe. Wat die boek egter meer as bloot nog 'n biografie maak, is die feit dat die leser soveel oor die Suid-Afrikaanse geskiedenis leer. Die hoofkarakter is wel Christiaan de Wet, maar die outeur het baie moeite gedoen om detail oor die agtergrond van gebeure te skets. Daar word byvoorbeeld nie net na sy transporttogte na die diamantvelde verwys nie, maar die totale gebeure aangaande die ongemagtigde annekasie en omstandighede op die delwerye word ook genoem. Geskiedkundige gebeure word kortliks, maar interessant beskryf. Dit is moeilik om slegs enkele interessante gebeure op te noem, maar die inligting oor die omstandighede en politiek in die twee republieke

voor die oorloë, De Wet se reis na Europa, Britse kompensasië aan die republieke en die aanloop tot die rebellie is veral interessant.

Hierdie werk is egter nie 'n geskiedenis-handboek in vermomming nie. Die outeur slaag daarin om die karakter van Christiaan de Wet te openbaar. Die Wet se krygsvernuf word uiteraard deeglik beskryf. Selfs die Britse pers beskryf hom as "the greatest military genius". Sy vermoë om telkens die kolonne te ontglip en te uitoorlê, frustreer die Britse leër en fasineer die internasionale publiek. Hy was nie net 'n leier in woord nie, maar ook in daad. Sy oproep was altyd "Kom burgers!" en dan was hy heel voor in die stormloop. Waar hy moes, het hy ook sy karwats ingespan. Die man met sy geweldige uithou vermoë en sin vir regverdigheid, het ook 'n ligte en gevatte sy gehad. Talle van sy spitsvondige opmerkings word in die boek aangehaal. De Wet het byvoorbeeld 'n veldkornet wat sy stelling verlaat het, gestraf en bygekom met dié woorde: "Ek moet dit doen, dit spyt my, maar dis nie ek, De Wet, wat jou slaan nie, dit is dié wet."

De Wet, wat homself nie as 'n spreker gesien het nie, was egter 'n gebore redenaar. Die boek haal gedeeltes en soms volledige toesprake aan. Sy toesprake was nooit lank nie, maar kort en kragtig soos sy statuur. Bykans elke toespraak was ryk aan pitkos en kragtige beeldspraak of 'n treffende gedagte. De Wet se toesprake verdien bestudering en woorde soos "Die liddietbom van 'n Christenvrou is gebed" en "Kerk in stand, volk in stand", is lank na sy heengaan nog aangehaal.

Christiaan de Wet se betrokkenheid en deelname aan vergaderings het hom bekend gemaak. Die feit dat hy egter daad by die woord gevoeg het, het hom bemind gemaak. Hy het nie gehuiwer om betrokke te raak nie. Hy het homself met 'n breë spektrum sake bemoei: landbou, onderwys, volksake, taalkwessies, politiek, ontwikkeling en wetgewing. Sy deelname en bydraes as burger, gevangene en minister word deeglik bespreek.

Die twee dryfkragte in Christiaan de Wet se lewe ontvang baie aandag, naamlik sy Christelike geloof en sy drang dat Afrikaners vry en verening moet wees. Die outeur lê telkens daarop klem dat die leser moet verstaan wat in sy gemoed omgegaan het. "Eers as begryp word dat die oorlog vir hom allesoorheersend 'n geloofsaak en nie 'n feitesaak was nie, kan die gees van Christiaan de Wet in sy volheid gepeil word." Soos die outeur opmerk, was die vraag van sy hele lewe: "Jou gehoorsaam of God?" De Wet se pogings en

drang dat die Afrikaner gerespekteer en verenig moet word en sy bydraes om sy volk op te bou, is prysenswaardig.

Omdat die boek *Christiaan de Wet se lewe* so volledig beskryf, kan die leser ook die groei in sy karakter waarneem. Dit is duidelik hoe sekere aspekte van sy lewe sy goeie naam skade berokken het en hoe hy deur sekere teleurstellings geraak is.

Christiaan Rudolph de Wet: krygsman en volksman is 'n volledige en goed nagevorsde werk. Die register is uiters behulpsaam en maak hierdie boek 'n waardevolle verwysingsbron. Die boek bevat soveel inligting dat die leser dit stadig en aandagtig wil lees, maar die boek is egter so boeiend dat dit moeilik is om die boek neer te sit. Die taalgebruik is van so aard dat dit maklik lees en verstaanbaar is. Die foto's wat in die boek verskyn, word deur die teks bespreek en sekere interessantheide word uitgelig. Die leser kyk nie net vlugtig daarna, soos in baie boeke die geval is nie, maar blaai telkens terug om die foto's van naderby te bestudeer. Dit is prysenswaardig dat die outeur nie 'n subjektiewe, foutlose beeld van De Wet probeer skep nie. Hy word nie opgehemel as 'n perfekte rolmodel nie. Kritiek word uitgespreek en ook beoordeel. Die outeur gee soveel inligting dat die leser De Wet se gedagteproses kan verstaan. Dit gaan nie regtig daaroor of De Wet reg of verkeerd was nie, maar wat die redes vir sy optrede was. Die leser ontdek dus waarlik wie Christiaan de Wet in wese was en wat in sy "gedagtes en hart geleef het".

Die boek sal nie net byval vind by diegene wat in geskiedenis belangstel nie. Daar is ook pitkos vir die teoloog, filosoof, leier en politikus – daar is lewenswaarhede en lesse om te leer; karaktereienskappe wat bewonder moet word en ook swakhede waarteen gewaak moet word. Hierdie boek is 'n wonderlike geskenk aan 'n ander of aan jouself. Enige boekrak kan baat by hierdie interessante werk.

