

The “Life and Work” of South African Historiography

by

Justin William Taylor

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Magister Theologiae in the  
Faculty of Theology

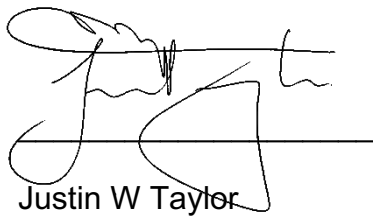
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Supervisor: Prof G A Duncan

June 2016

## DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation which I hereby submit for the degree Magister Theologiae at the University of Pretoria is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.



Justin W Taylor

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. THE COMPLEXITY OF THE CHANGING HISTORIOGRAPHY WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA	4
1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT	9
1.2.1. STATEMENT OF SUB-PROBLEMS	9
1.2.2. HYPOTHESIS	10
1.2.3. DELIMITATION OF RESEARCH SCOPE	10
1.2.4. ASSUMPTIONS	12
1.2.5. IMPORTANCE OF STUDY	13
1.3.1. THE DATA AND TREATMENT OF THE DATA	15
1.3.2. THE DATA REQUIRED; ITS LOCATION AND MEANS OF OBTAINING IT	16
1.4. CONCLUSION	16
<b>IS HISTORIOGRAPHY A PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINE?</b>	<b>17</b>
2.1. INTRODUCTION	17
2.2. THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN DEVELOPING A HISTORIOGRAPHY	18
2.3. BLACK THEOLOGY'S CONTRIBUTION TO CONFESSIONAL HISTORIOGRAPHY	23
2.4. AFRICA'S ROLE IN HISTORY	28
2.5. THE DANGER OF DEATH	29
2.6. CONCLUSION	31
<b>THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THREE MAJOR SOUTH AFRICAN CHURCH DOCUMENTS</b>	<b>34</b>
3.1. INTRODUCTION	34
3.3. THEOLOGY OF <i>RAS, VOLK EN NASIE</i>	36
3.3.1. OLD TESTAMENT	37
3.3.2. NEW TESTAMENT	38
3.3.3. <i>RAS VOLK EN NASIE</i> UNDERSTANDING OF CHURCH AND STATE	39
3.3.4. THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCHES AND SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT	40
3.4. <i>THE KAIROS DOCUMENT</i>	40
3.4.1. THEOLOGICAL FORMATION WITHIN <i>THE KAIROS DOCUMENT</i>	42
3.4.1.1. STATE THEOLOGY	42
3.4.1.2. CHURCH THEOLOGY	43
3.5. <i>THE BELHAR CONFESSION</i>	45
3.5.1. ACCOMPANYING LETTER	46
3.5.2. <i>BELHAR CONFESSION</i>	47
3.6. CONCLUSION	49
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>THE ANTIAPARTHEID STRUGGLE AS REPRESENTED IN <i>LIFE AND WORK</i></b>	<b>51</b>



<b>4.1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>4.2. EDITOR</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>4.3. 1975 – 1980</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>4.4. 1980 – 1985</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>4.5. CONCLUSION</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>115</b>

## SUMMARY

South Africa has had three periods of historiographical change. As South Africa has transitioned from colonialism, to apartheid, to democracy, historiography has been influenced by those in power. Post-1994 and with the onset of a democratic government, the Nation sought to create a new historiographical framework. However, as this attempt to build a National historiography developed questions could be raised as to whether this historiography was inclusive of a variety of sources?

This dissertation looks at three areas regarding South African historiography. First, the current role of Churches in South Africa in fostering historiography. Second, the theological framework of “*Ras, Volk en Nasie*”, the “Kairos Document”, and the “Belhar Confession”. Third, the depiction of South Africa by the Church of Scotland’s National magazine “*Life and Work*” during 1975 – 1985.

By looking at this time period, the thesis shows that as various strands of theology developed in South Africa, these changes had connotations within the Church of Scotland. *Life and Work* shows a distinct change in attitude towards the Dutch Reformed Church and the Black Consciousness movement.

It argues that underrepresented stories about South Africa allow for a holistic historiography. Churches in South Africa have an opportunity to use their position within society to develop this holistic historiography and thus, historiography becomes a practical theological issue.

## ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
BC	Belhar Confession
B.C.C.	British Council of Churches
CoS	Church of Scotland
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
FEDSEM	Federal Theological Seminary of Southern Africa
KD	Kairos Document
L&W	<i>Life and Work</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
RVN	Ras, Volk, en Nasie
SACC	South African Council of Churches
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
W.A.R.C	World Alliance of Reformed Churches
W.C.C.	World Council of Churches

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank all those who made this thesis possible. I have - even at a young age – been blessed to have incredible people support and encourage me. I am a firm believer in the concept of Ubuntu and therefore, I am a product of the world around me.

I wish to thank the Church of Scotland for their generous support. Those who helped at *Life and Work*. They have opened their achieves and have helped with sourcing documents for me. I also wish to thank the congregations of Wardie Parish Church and Inverleith St Serfs for all their hospitality and generosity.

I also wish to thank my family. They have always been a great support and blessing. I wish in particular to thank my parents: for believing that the even at the age of 24 I still was not outside the bounds of education.

Last, I want to thank my supervisor and close friend Graham Duncan (and his wife Sandra). I will be forever indebted to his grace, wisdom, and understanding. Thank you, Prof, for supporting me through this. I owe a huge part of my passion and career to you. I hope one day to be able to repay you for all you have given me.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

After twenty years of democracy in South Africa, one could easily fall into the laziness of struggle retirement. With the end of Apartheid in 1994, the struggle could be seen as over and life as we perceive it an unfolding into our combined history. It is (was) easy to focus on the future. South Africans are united by looking forward to the future. In the future we could find unity. Questions that rung true in 1994 still ring true today. Questions like: What could South Africa have become or where would we be? However, by focusing on the future we could lack a critical reflection on the interpretation of our historical past.

As a White South African<sup>1</sup>, I have experienced a sense of denial of our past. There may be a number of reasons such as: White people might be too ashamed of their past to critically engage with the past or a feeling that it is not our current history. However, questions from other ethnic groups within South Africa also have their own reasons for accepting the current status quo of historiography in South Africa. The larger question is whether the current historiography is an accurate representation of the multiple cultural groups within South Africa?

---

<sup>1</sup> The reason for including my historical background into the study is because although I grew up in the cultural paradoxes that formed before and post 1994, I have both an insider and outsider understandings of both historiographical approaches used by the education system. As Voster has said “that both distance and participation have something to offer for responsible historiography, and that one can benefit from both (relative) historical distance and participatory memory” (2013:2)



I remember as a young child growing up during 1994. The nation was immersed in a plethora of emotions. There was the sense of excitement as we could now bury the past, whilst at the same time dreaming of a new future, together, as one. However, there was also the fear that the violence present in KwaZulu Natal would spill over and white people would be the massacred by the blacks.

Contrary to the perception of the latter fear, violence never happened. The democratically elected government under the African National Congress (ANC) used the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as a means of ensuing justice for the atrocities committed under Apartheid. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission used a narrative approach to understand the context of each story. This placed the individual stories in the larger historical narrative of apartheid.

However, this was an approach of the TRC and not a mandate. The objectives of the TRC were

The objectives of the Commission will be to promote national unity and reconciliation in a spirit of understanding which transcends the conflicts and divisions of the past by:

- establishing as complete a picture as possible of the causes, nature and extent of the gross violations of human rights which were committed during the period from 1 March 1960 to the cut-off date including the antecedents, circumstances, factors and context of such violations, as well as the perspectives of the victims and the motives and perspectives of the persons responsible for committing such violations, by conducting investigations and holding hearings;
- facilitating the granting of amnesty to persons who make full disclosure of all the relevant facts relating to acts associated with a political objective and which comply with the requirements of the Act (Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act);
- establishing and making known the fate or whereabouts of victims and restoring the human and civil dignity of such victims by granting them an opportunity to relate their own accounts of the violations of which they are the victims, and recommending reparation measures in respect of them;

- compiling a report providing as comprehensive an account as possible of the activities and findings of the Commission and containing recommendations of measures to prevent the future violations of human rights.

(Omar, 1997)

In hindsight, the TRC could not have solved all the issues that were present in South Africa. It could only open up the wounds by allowing for understanding to be included into our national historical interpretations of events.

A truth commission cannot overcome a society's division. It can only window out the solid core of facts upon which society's arguments with itself should be conducted. But it cannot bring these arguments to a conclusion. All that a truth commission can achieve is to reduce the number of lies that can be circulated unchallenged in public discourse.

(Ignatieff, 1996)

The TRC offered the nation an opportunity to unite in our confession and repent; it offered hope for a united South Africa. However, by uniting our historical narrative it did not explain how the future of this narrative would be presented.

What shape would historiography take? Who would be the ones that would represent this history and what perspective would it take? Most importantly, would this historiography represent the multiple views and facets of all those within the “rainbow nation”?

As a pupil within the schooling system of South Africa, I grew up within two historical periods. I attended school from 1989 to 2001. I remember in 1995 watching a movie about Shaka Zulu. Shaka was the greatest Zulu chief and warrior who revolutionised the way that Zulu’s fought. He was and still is revered within the Zulu nation. On further reflection I can now see that these lessons were schizophrenic in their view of Shaka.

The teachers were all white. They were trained in apartheid teacher colleges under apartheid hysographical approaches to history. Shaka was portrayed as a warrior but not as someone to revere but rather someone who perpetuated the Apartheid narrative of *Swart Gewaar*. Blacks were people to be feared not admired.

One of Shaka's inventions was a short spear. This was invented to help stab the enemy at close range. I distinctly remember being praised by the teacher for saying "that this was not a new invention but rather should be seen as an obsolete one". The British and Boers had knives for this purpose. How effective was a shortened spear really? Especially when the whites had guns.

This story cannot be quantified within all South African schools but, it does allude to the difficulties faced by teachers who were taught one historical understanding of history and then were forced under a new government to rethink their teaching of history. It also points to the reinterpretation within the recent historiography in South Africa as, a new perspective has and is being written.

### **1.1. THE COMPLEXITY OF THE CHANGING HISTORIOGRAPHY WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA**

South Africa finds itself in a very unique situation. In relation to the rest of the world it has only lost its colonial political influence recently whilst, in relation to the liberation decolonisation of Africa it is premature to say that South Africa became independent before 1994. The uniting of the various states in 1910 or its change of status to a sovereign republican nation in 1961, only passed governance from one colonial power

to another. Although these changes allowed for greater independence from Britain, it was in reality the transference of power from one European colonial power to those of European descent. It was not the transference of power/governance to those of African descent. The same can be said about Australia and New Zealand. The British did not give the land back to the Aborigines or Maoris respectively but rather gave it to those of European descent who had settled there. Thus, although governance and sovereignty might have seemed to have changed, in reality things stayed the same. Racial prejudice, white governance etc. remained the source of oppression for the majority of the population.

South Africa could therefore be seen as the *laat lammetjie* (late baby) of colonial independence in Africa and World Wide. Like those countries who have gone before it, South Africa still feels the grip of colonialism. Presently (2016), the majority of wealth, land, education and resources belong to those of European decent.

As South Africa moved through these various stages of governance, historiography has been affected. History has been recorded from a certain perspective. This has been interpreted and reinterred depending on who has been in power.

“The origins of most nations shrouded in obscurity or symbolised by semi-mythical figures, but both your security and the myths offer nationalists the means to portray the nation as an object of reverence. The mysteries of a nation thus resemble the mysteries of a religion, both historians have often noted in the descriptions of the structural similarities between nationalism and religious faith.

(Burns, 2006:30)

With the above mentioned understanding of history being written and used to reinforce the social identity; South Africa went through three major changes with regards to historical understanding and writing.

First, the British established a colonial power at the Cape (1806-1910). The English used the Cape to extend its empire. It did this throughout the world by creating colonial communities and subjugating those under her power. This is evident when one looks how history was recorded “which concentrates on particular people and processes founded in the distinction between ‘reality’, the material occurrence of events, and ‘representation’, the terms in which the story is told and acted on” (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991:34). This meant that Blacks and those not of European descent were underrepresented in the historiography (McEwan, 2003).

Second, the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism from the Anglo-Boer Wars to the fall of Apartheid (1880-1994). This section covers the rise of Afrikaner, who oppressed by the British came to power on South Africa till the eventual fall of apartheid. This attempt at the writing of history was advanced by the state and the *Broederbond* (Grundlingh, 1993).

“Nationalist historiography referred to it as the First Language movement in the nineteenth century, none of which made language an end in itself. The furtherance of Afrikaans was a means to a religious or political objective. It was promoted in a bid to appeal to the lower classes; thus, the so-called language moment attempted to mobilise larger sections of the population towards a specific goal. This revision also led to re-evaluation of the – until then – unquestioned close connection between the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* (Association of True Afrikaners) and the Afrikaner Bond. As a result of the role and significance of the *Genootskap* had to be scaled down considerably, since its sole purpose of bringing out an Afrikaans Bible was directed at reaching the white and ‘coloured’ lower classes on a religious level.”

(Marx, 2009:96)

This change in government meant that Afrikaners rewrote their history. “The National Party prescribed to the historians which themes were acceptable and which not” (Grundlingh, 1993:2). Not only did the Afrikaner historian change the British narrative (Grundlingh, 1993:2) but in the 1930’s some historians changed from an “old anti-British framework, [whilst] others have shifted the main attack from Britain to the Africans”(Thompson, 1962:133). This continued throughout Apartheid and was used both locally and internationally.

Third, the rise of Black Consciousness to the democratic election of the ANC government (1960-Present). This started in the 1960 after the Sharpeville Massacre (Gqola, 2001:130). The ANC and the Pan African Congress were banned (African National Congress, 2001)

Black Consciousness installed a sense of unity and pride amongst those who were oppressed (Mzamane, Maaba, & Biko, 2004:128).

“We understood Black Consciousness as a new way of life, and attitude of mind which would enable Blacks to rid themselves of the inferiority complex accruing out of living in a racist country that brutalised them for centuries. It was a frame of mind through which Blacks would reject or value based system that [made] them foreigners in a country of their birth. It was held that psychical liberation was an important component of the process of physical liberation. Thus, our African names which were hidden were capable of sparking light, if used became the pride of the day”

(Mangena, 1989:12)

Black Consciousness united the youth of townships like no other movement before. It was not the ANC or the PAC that united Blacks but rather a common cause (Boraine & Tutu, 2014:19; Muiu, 2009:75). In 1976 the Soweto uprising (Paulin & Woodhouse,

2008:1149) and the death of Steve Biko solidified the Black Consciousness Movement.

This movement continued through the 1980's where South Africa became ungovernable (Ekwe-Ekwe, 2011:53) with the democratisation of South Africa.

The last two stages were born out of oppression.

Afrikaners, before they came into power, were oppressed in the Boer Wars. Many women and children were killed as the British executed a scorched earth policy. This united the Afrikaner people under one common enemy.

Not all Afrikaners had left the Cape in order to get away from British rule. It was not the communal narrative to much later in Afrikaner history (Van Heyningen, 2009). This was also compounded by the Rand Revolt in the 1920's (Seekings, 2007) which saw Afrikaner national identity solidified. In 1948 the oppressed becomes the one in governance.

The Afrikaner government in a reversal of roles became like the oppressive British colonial power. The British - still holding considerable control of the economic state – were pushed to become spectators in terms of Governance. Blacks – who have consistently been on the receiving side of oppression in South African history – took on the role being oppressed like that of Afrikaner. Many atrocities happened during Apartheid and in 1990 we saw a reversal of roles again in the country. Those who were the oppressed became the government. Afrikaners are pushed to the side but still had control over the economy.

The paradigm of governance has/is through – no fault of those in power – those who have been oppressed. The question as we journey away from 1994 is the government able to create a new path or will it fall in to the same pitfalls that preceded them.

## **1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The purpose of this thesis is to examine (using the field of church history) the involvement of the Church of Scotland's (CoS) denominational magazine's "*Life and Work*" (L&W) in the anti-apartheid struggle from 1975-1985. Throughout apartheid's history there were many international groups that protested against its implementation (for e.g. The United Nations, World Council of Churches, The Academic Boycott of South Africa). This international pressure (Secular, Para-ecclesiastical and ecclesiastical) isolated the country from the international community. South Africa although isolated was by no means an island. International influence weighed heavily on the Apartheid Government.

### **1.2.1. STATEMENT OF SUB-PROBLEMS**

There are many sub problems that will need to be investigated further in order to establish the larger aforementioned problem.

These are:

- The role of communism and Scottish interpretations thereof.
- The larger Anti-Apartheid Movement in the United Kingdom.
- Relation of the CoS with other denominations – e.g. SCIAF (RC), Scottish Episcopal Church.
- The relationship between the CoS and Margret Thatcher's government.



- The Scottish society's links with other churches and para-church bodies.
- Differing attitudes within the Church of Scotland, e.g. Moral Re-Armament and others.
- Societal consequences of the CoS membership as a result of their imposed sanctions.

### **1.2.2. HYPOTHESIS**

As limited research has been undertaken at the point of writing this proposal, it is difficult to ascertain what the outcomes will be with any surety. However, a preliminary analysis has shown that the CoS had an active involvement in the Anti-Apartheid struggle. Not only did the CoS have an effect on the local parish and larger church body's outlook on Apartheid but it's influence extended into the larger British Council of Churches, British Parliament, International politics, the World Council of Churches and strengthen the Anti-Apartheid movement.

This points to an extensive influence that needs to be explored with deeper analysis as to what the nuances are and as to how they effected the CoS involvement.

### **1.2.3. DELIMITATION OF RESEARCH SCOPE**

The proposal will be delimited in scope by focusing on Three areas.

First it will focus on the period 1975-1985. The reason for this delimited scope is because of the context of both the United Kingdom and South Africa during this period.

In South Africa:

- Apartheid was reaching its pinnacle and eventual collapse during this period.

- Numerous presidents were during this period.
- Black consciousness and liberation theology was at its strongest.
- The armed struggle by the African National Congress was taking place.
- Economic, sporting and political sanctions were being imposed.
- Theological statements were being produced by both sides of the conflict (e.g. Ras Volk en Nasie, Belhar Confession and the Kairos Document).

#### In the United Kingdom

- You have a change in government during this period.
- The influence of Margaret Thatcher on the Scottish society.
- The CoS general assembly was the unofficial parliament of the Scottish people.
- The rise of communism and the interpretation thereof was influenced during this period.

By delimiting the scope to these dates, one would hopefully gain a fuller sense of the complex relationships that developed not only between South Africa and the United Kingdom but also the relationship between Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom.

Second, the scope will be delimited in scope by religious institution. Other denominations were present in Scotland during this time (e.g. Episcopal, Catholic, Methodist and Congregationalists) the focus of this study is the CoS.

Third, the CoS has many branches within its approach to apartheid and South Africa. The reason for the delimitation of scope to *L&W* is twofold. First, *L&W* was the mouth

piece of the CoS and second, *L&W* also shared public opinion within its reader's columns.

#### **1.2.4. ASSUMPTIONS**

Within any text, there is a disparity between the author's frame of reference and the readers. In dealing within two different regions of the world (i.e. Scotland and South Africa) there is bound to be a conflict between perceptions and interpretations.

It is therefore imperative from the outset of this document that some assumptions are dealt with from the outset.

First, the model that I will be operating within is the conflict model. The conflict model suggests that social structures (and in the case of this document; the anti-apartheid movement) are created through the conflict of people.

This can be broken down in to further subsections. Namely: Critical-Race Theory, and Conflict Theory. All of these theories will form the backbone of this document.

Second, in approaching the subject matter this document will use a two-fold approach: The Empirical, and Existential method.

The empirical method gains knowledge through direct and indirect observations and experience. This entails using research and questions. This document will use A.D. de Groot's empirical cycle as an approach to the subject matter.

The existential approach draws on the interpretation of those involved in the event. The researcher aim is to allow others to reflect on their own experience and in so doing come to mutual understandings of the event.

If the both the model and approach are achieved this document hopes

- to describe the historical situation between CoS and South Africa.
- Explain what made the CoS react in the way that it did.
- To allow for a general framework for which future discussions can take place about the role of other bodies in the Anti-Apartheid movement.
- Evaluate the variety of factors and their influence in the CoS reaction.
- That this document would postulate further research into faith-based responses to conflict.

All research needs to be done in a theory-praxis dialect. It requires a constant reflection between theory and praxis and where doing allowing for changes to be made. By doing so the researcher allows for a greater the evidence to have a greater influence on the outcome of the document.

This document will use both the inductive and deductive approach. When dealing with the data (written form) and the various narratives (personal experiences) the two approaches have to be in a symbiotic relationship.

### **1.2.5. IMPORTANCE OF STUDY**

South Africa, since the onset of its modern democracy in 1994, has become a dynamic macrocosm of various cultures and ethnic groups. By developing new collective interpretations of its historical narrative it has allowed for the redefinition of

microcosmic interpretations of cultural values and historical interpretations. This was an effect of the Apartheid government period of South Africa (1948-1994), when the government monopolised the historical narrative towards the focused development of Afrikanerdom. This is the development of White Afrikaner Nationalism.

As the post 1994 government developed a new historical motif, some have felt a bias towards a governmental understanding of history. Before 1994, in South Africa the historical records were written by those in power. This subjected history to being written from a male, white, and conservative theological perspective. In post 1994, history was now being written from a new perspective; that of the Black South African. In particular history was being reformed by the perspective of the African National Congress (ANC). The church has been side-lined and its role in the new historical motif as well as its role in the Anti-Apartheid struggle has been diminished (Boesak 2005:135). The authors of the New Kairos Document (2012) (warned the current government (ANC) not to forget the role that churches played on the ground whilst many of them were exiled from South Africa. In essence the authors of the New Kairos document were calling for a broader inclusion of various historical trends within the redefinition of South African history.

There is no doubt that the various churches within South Africa played an important role, for good or bad, in the apartheid narrative. Biko (1978:45) suggests that the churches' role regarding the redefinition of historical interpretations is not limited to just the apartheid era but rather developed with the colonisation of the Cape. However, there is another area of the historical narrative that seems to be neglected within the current South African historical interpretation.

### **1.3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **1.3.1. THE DATA AND TREATMENT OF THE DATA**

The design plan for this dissertation is as follows: First, an attempt to collect current articles or books written on the subject

Although little has been written (thus leading to a lack of secondary sources) about the topic, primary sources are readily available. The majority of available material can be found within three sources

The CoS produces a church magazine known as "*Life and Work*". This selection of material has both articles and letters written on behalf of the CoS regarding South Africa and the Anti-Apartheid movement in Scotland.

The CoS has kept all its minutes and resolutions from its committees, Woman's Guild and General Assembly. These documents are readily available.

Second, using the oral historical approach to interview four important figures from the CoS with regards to their involvement in the anti-apartheid struggle.

Third, to search all relevant archives, documents etc. from the interviews and books. (This, of course is related to 1) and 2) and may be incorporated into them as may 1.4.1 below,

Fourth, an analysis of the documentation.

### **1.3.2. THE DATA REQUIRED; ITS LOCATION AND MEANS OF OBTAINING IT**

A preliminary search has revealed that at present there are no formal academic interpretations of this area of research. This means that most of this dissertation will be dealing with primary sources. To gain access to this information field work will be needed. As I am living in Edinburgh I will be able to interview those who were involved in the CoS anti-apartheid committees. It will also allow me to access the archives of the CoS General Assembly and subcommittee minutes. This would allow me to see decisions taken and give me background into those who were involved. Third, I will also have access to the CoS archives with regards to publications. This includes the CoS congregational magazine *Life and Work*.

### **1.4. CONCLUSION**

The aforementioned situation that South Africa has experienced within just over a century has implications to how historiography is represented and understood. Historiography as will be discussed in the next chapter consists of multiple voices. These voices include the Church. Therefore, this thesis will focus on historiography from three distinct perspectives. First, it will look at the role of the South African Churches in developing a current model of historiography. Second, it will look at the South African Churches historical understandings of theology of Apartheid. Third, it will look at an international Churches understanding of apartheid.

## CHAPTER 2

### IS HISTORIOGRAPHY A PRACTICAL THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINE?

#### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

In 1994 the ANC came to power. The history books and hermeneutics were changed as a new history developed. Twenty years into democracy South Africa is trying to come to terms with its past and present, or Marx and Engels say

Men make their own history but not of their own free will; not under circumstances they themselves have chosen but under the given and inherited circumstances with which they are directly confronted. The tradition of the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the minds of the living.

(1991: 95)

Historiography in South Africa cannot be divorced from its past. Whites are trying to come to terms with their change in history whilst Blacks are trying to reinterpret their past. This is only two racial demographics in South Africa but South Africa is a melting pot of perspectives and understandings regarding its history.

However, is it not right that we just accept the status quo. As historians do we allow the current construction of South African historiography to be excluded. I as a white Christian historian have to understand my history within this broader story. How does the church and in particular church historians understand their role in constructing this new identity? McEwan also asks the same question

“It is important, therefore, to consider how exclusionary and discriminating patterns are reproduced through attempts to construct national memory-archives and what measures can be taken to create a more inclusive process of restoring collective memory. This requires a reconsideration of citizenship as a concept that is usually explained only in terms of legal and



formal rights, since it also confers belonging and embeds the notion of recognising individuals' social standing and historical agency.” (2003:241)

Historians also need to recognise the bias in the national historiography as politics and history are intertwined. The South African State has in the past been in control both of the National development of historiography. In South Africa the “state and civil society organisations are attempting to build post-apartheid archives that could be described, in theoretical terms, as postcolonial” (McEwan, 2003:242) and the really serious problem arises when a regime endowed with a monopoly of political power tries to extend this monopoly to the interpretation of history and to impose a prefabricated total interpretation as a substitute both for the living experience and memory of citizens and for the empirical research of historians. Totalitarian regimes cannot endure without producing a total lie, and, conversely, a total lie can be imposed only by a totalitarian regime. (Hassner, 2009:73)

## **2.2. THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN DEVELOPING A HISTORIOGRAPHY**

In 2012 the ANC celebrated its centenary. Members of Kairos South Africa, published a new version of the *Kairos Document* directed at the ANC. The following section is a small snippet of the document

We do so, knowing that many members of the ANC are also part of the Christian community, and this document is therefore written for our collective reflection. We also do so, knowing that many Christian leaders were involved in the formation and nurturing of the ANC over the years, and we therefore continue to feel a sense of responsibility for its existence and what it does... We want to confess that, in these last 100 years, the Christian Church has been divided on the question of colonialism and apartheid. It would be dishonest of us to say that the whole Church opposed colonialism and apartheid, while in fact only a part of the Church did that. A substantial part of the church in South Africa has therefore not always been with you and other liberation movements in the struggle, but some of us

have been part of these struggles, and the Kairos document and the World Council of Churches Lusaka Statement of 1987 were the most emphatic expressions of that solidarity and unity with the oppressed people of South Africa... The Christian community has of course played a significant role in the liberation of our country and also in the ANC, and it is only apt to remind ourselves of the role that Christians have played. It is in this respect that we want to reaffirm and reassert the role of Christians in the past, present and future of our country.

(Kairos Southern Africa, 2011:1-4)

The above section holds together three concepts that are important for understanding the prophet role of the church with in South African society.

First, The Church has been part of South African society since before the Dutch first set foot on South African soil when the Portuguese were colonising from the fifteenth century. The church has been right behind them (Forster, 2010). Every era of South African history can be aligned with the Church<sup>2</sup>. “Because Christians have been so numerous and politically influential, Christian doctrine, language, and sentiment are also interwoven in the social and cultural history of South Africa” (Elphick, 1997:1). However, the church has been left out of South African historiography (R. Elphick, 1997:2).

The Church can be seen in the TRC report on religion in South Africa (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, 1998). It is imperative that when dealing with Christianity and the Church in South Africa we realise the extent of ecumenical relationships. Therefore, the Churches presence is not just limited to the missional churches but must also include African Initiated Churches which in southern Africa emerged from the last decades of the nineteenth century.

---

<sup>2</sup> This will be dealt with in the next chapter

It is also important to see the impact that the Church has in South Africa. In the Census of 2001, 79.8% of the South African population identified themselves as Christian.

As Elphick rightly points out (Elphick, 1997:1) the church has had both bad and good influences. It could even be seen as a Jekyll and Hyde Character. In many aspects its Jekyll and Hyde persona has followed it through its history in South Africa. No more so is this true than the 1948 rise of the National Party to power. The Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) created political policy and justification for apartheid whilst at the same time other churches and individuals were opposed to their involvement. People like Trevor Huddleston, Dennis Hurley Beyers Naude, and Albert Luthuli.

As Apartheid into the 1970 and 1980s progressed the DRC and Hervormde Kerk continued to legitimise Apartheid. With the DRC producing *Ras, Volk, en Nasie* as attempt to theologically justify Apartheid. However, Black Consciousness swept the country and leaders such as Frank Chickane, Desmond Tutu, Allan Boesak and Nico Smit were reinterpreting a new liberation theology for South Africa.

Second, the historical role the church has allowed it to be contextual. This has both an historical and a future orientation.

It is commonly acknowledged that an understanding of the past is fundamental to an understanding of the present. The analysis and interpretation of history provide an essential context for evaluating contemporary institutions, politics, and cultures. Understanding the present configuration of society is not the only reason to study the past; history also provides unique insight into human nature and human civilization. By demanding that we see the world through the eyes of others, that we develop a sense of context and coherence while recognizing complexity and ambiguity, and that we confront the record not only of human achievement but also of human failure, cruelty, and barbarity, the study of

history provides us with a richly-textured, substantive framework for understanding the human condition and grappling with moral questions and problems. History is essential to the traditional objectives of the liberal arts, the quest for wisdom and virtue.

(Luttmer, 1996)

From the above mentioned comment we can see that the Church in South Africa is uniquely poised to help contextualise both past, present and future. As an institution, it existed long before the political state of South Africa. It has experienced its own power struggles, massacres, racism and corruption. It has dealt with political change. As Küng says “The history of theology and the church, too, was predominantly written by the victors at the expense of the losers along dogmatic and political lines” (2010:15). Although contextually different the church has a breadth of literature and tradition on which to draw. It can therefore, through honest engagement offer a larger prophetic voice to the South African community with regards to a global paradigm.

The Church has also been an integral part of South Africa’s history. It has been part from the beginning and has also had to own up to its indiscretions. Granted that it has sometimes failed in recent years to deal with its own racism (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, 1998:88). The reality is Churches in South Africa represent almost 80% of the population. It represents multiple communities and therefore, multiple contexts. It therefore, has the opportunity to help form a collective historiography and second, contextual understanding for our present situation.

The Church is struggling to find its voice in the Democratic South Africa. However, this chapter will continue to look at the prophetic opportunity that the church possesses.

Third, the Church finds itself in a unique position. James 5:16 (NRSV)

Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.(James, 2007)

The writer in James calls us to confess our sins to one another. I feel that there are a two important understandings that might illuminate how confession will help the church become prophetic.

The church as was shown in the *TRC* documents has much to account for. The church cannot become prophetic until it owns its past. By doing this it can own its own present day racism. Growing up in the Methodist Church in South Africa I never once heard my church apologise for anything that had happened during apartheid. It was too eager to forget the past and not do the hard yards of reconciliation. It is only when we confess our sins and put them out in the public sphere can we create lasting unity. It makes the Church more contextual.

The Church also has a gift that it can either choose to use or let slip away. Confession when brought out to the open creates a larger understanding of historiography. It changes perceptions, understandings, and gives clarity to our context. It in turn becomes a place where we knit the fabric of our society together. We create a new historical understanding or as Head says: ““Confessionalisation... may have been only one version of a broader process of social and ideological transformation”(1999:342). Confession is therefore not to be seen as a negative thing but rather a positive. It is an opportunity to find restoration and healing.

This idea of creating a new inclusive historiography comes from the complexity of historiography as mentioned in the previous chapter.

The next section of the chapter will focus on how the South African Church can function as a prophetic voice based on the rich tradition of Black Liberation Theology found in South Africa.

### **2.3. BLACK THEOLOGY'S CONTRIBUTION TO CONFESSIONAL HISTORIOGRAPHY**

To help the black and white people in South Africa to understand what is meant to live in a world forged by our “pseudo-innocence”, a childishness that distorts our reality, closes our eyes to matters we find to horrendous to contemplate, causing us to make a virtue out of powerlessness, weakness, and helplessness. It is and innocence that leads to a hopeless utopianism - either an idealisation of the present bed situation, or escapism into a “better” world other than the present one. This pseudo-innocence cannot come to terms with destructiveness in oneself or in others and hence it actually becomes self-destructive. It is this innocence which uses the “ideal” to blind people so that they do not see the atrocities of the present. It blinds, paralyses, and cunningly uses all means at its disposal to cover up and rationalise guilt and sin.

(Boesak, 1976:3-4)

Black liberation needs all parties involved. In the democratic South Africa historiography needs to be a shared experience. It needs all people of whatever race, gender, or religious orientation to be part of the discussion. This does not mean that we try to force historiography/confession into a particular framework but rather we allow people to confess openly their understanding of South African history. It is only then that we can break down the pseudo-innocence to a genuine wholeness. Biko in his paper produced for a SASO Leadership Training Course in December 1971, offers us a paradigm in which neutral confession can take place.

We have defined blacks as those who are by law or tradition politically, economically and socially discriminated against as a group in the South African society and identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realization of their aspirations.

This definition illustrates to us a number of things:  
Being black is not a matter of pigmentation - being black is a reflection of a mental attitude.

Merely by describing yourself as black you have started on a road towards emancipation, you have committed yourself to fight against all forces that seek to use your blackness as a stamp that marks you out as a subservient being.

From the above observations therefore, we can see that the term black is not necessarily all-inclusive, i.e. the fact that we are all not white does not necessarily mean that we are all black. Non-whites do exist and will continue to exist for quite a long time. If one's aspiration is whiteness but his pigmentation makes attainment of this impossible, then that person is a non-white. Any man who calls a white man "baas", any man who serves in the police force or security branch is ipso facto a non-white. Black people - real black people - are those who can manage to hold their heads high in defiance rather than willingly surrender their souls to the white man.

Briefly defined therefore, Black Consciousness is in essence the realization by the black man of the need to rally together with his brothers around the cause of their oppression - the blackness of their skin - and to operate as a group in order to rid themselves of the shackles that bind them to perpetual servitude. It seeks to demonstrate the lie that black is an aberration from the "normal" which is white. It is a manifestation of a new realization that by seeking to run away from themselves and to emulate the white man, black are insulting the intelligence of whoever created them black. Black Consciousness, therefore takes cognizance of the deliberateness of the God's plan in creating black people black.

It seeks to infuse the black community with a new-found pride in themselves, their efforts, their value systems, their culture, their religion and their outlook to life. The interrelationship between the consciousness of the self and the emancipatory programme is of a paramount importance. Blacks no longer seek to reform the system because so doing implies acceptance of the major points around which the system revolves. Blacks are out to completely transform the system and to make of it what they wish. Such a major undertaking can only be realized in an atmosphere where people are convinced of the truth inherent in their stand. Liberation therefore is of paramount importance in the concept of Black Consciousness, for we cannot be conscious of ourselves and yet remain in bondage. We want to attain the envisioned self which is a free self.

(Biko, 1987:48-49)

It is not through the loss of our identity but rather the upholding of the paradigms each person holds. "The focus on shared history, which attends to the way in which divisive histories are interwoven, holds much promise for South African church historiography

(Vosloo, 2009:62). South Africa throughout its history has marginalised others and not embraced its diversity. It is therefore vital that we allow a variety of voices at the table.

Vosloo commenting on Paul Ricoeur's methodology states: "that otherness enlarges and enriches identity, a conviction coupled with his reminder that we are also another for another, as for instances expressed in the title of his book *Oneself as Another* (2009:62). These ideas, which have found numerous expressions in the work of a wide variety of scholars over the last few decades, also hold promise, in my view, for the methodology of doing church history in South Africa today. It suggests that we can understand our own complex histories better in conversation with others and through an openness to their histories. Moreover, this entails the realization that our respective histories are often interwoven and thus we are "othered" in the others' histories. (Vosloo, 2009:62)

"(A) healthy ecumenical focus actually requires that you take your own particular identity even more seriously. However, an understanding of our inter-woven memories and histories requires, in fact, that we resist the temptation to think in isolation about what we regard as our past and our history. Therefore, hospitality is also a virtue that is valuable in our attempt to deal with the easy in a responsible manner." (Vosloo, 2009:63)

When sitting at the table in mutual understanding, we allow those who are sharing their perspective to share their stories. They have a need to embrace their histories and to confess their hurts and pains. There is also the person who hears the story and is challenged to reinterpret their histories; to search their blind spots. "the self returns



to itself after numerous hermeneutic detours through the language of others to find itself enlarged and enriched by the journey” (Kearney, 2004:2). It needs participants to identify prejudices and blind spots.

“We seemingly live in a world where there is, on the one hand, historical amnesia and an unhealthy loss of memory, while, on the other hand, processes of commemoration are often abused in the service of harmful ideologically-driven projects of identity construction. In the process the lack of engagement as well as our misguided engagement with the past invites and incites polarization and violence”

(Vosloo, 2009:56)

As Boesak speaks of Pseudo-innocence, Vosloo speaks of historical amnesia. As South Africa rewrites its history, seeks restoration for the past, and seeks an inclusive history; we should be aware of the importance of creating a holistic historical perspective. As Christie says “South Africa is a country where the notion of ‘fractured’ memory is given new meaning. Memory is not fractured here; rather it is splintered, rent apart, torn into a multitude of pieces” (2000:8).

The church with its wide contextual influence in South Africa has the opportunity to unite South Africans in finding our collective history. It will not only force to the church itself to reflect on its past role and how it functioned within South Africa but will also allow for deeper present day authority and relevance. McEwan suggests “Images of the past commonly legitimate the present social order through shared memory. Memory is material – it serves a purpose, and this is of considerable significance in contemporary South Africa” (2003:743). Asmal, & Roberts suggest

In moving away from the discredited governing consciousness of the past, we will need to build a new, shared and ceaselessly debated memory of that past. Without sustained remembrance and debate, it will be difficult to

develop a new South African culture with its various strands intertwined in constructive friction, rather than in mere conflict and mutual strangulation. This talk of shared memory must not be misunderstood or mystified. It is not the creation of a post-apartheid volk or a stifling homogeneous nationhood; nor of a new fatherland. Nor is it merely the equivalent of every individual's mental ability to retain facts and arguments at the front of her consciousness. Such analogies between individual and collective memory are unhelpful. Rather, shared memory, in the intended sense, is a process of historical accountability.

(1997:9-10)

This said, the discipline of Church History becomes a practical theological issue and in so doing has the “ability to contribute towards a responsible engagement with the Christian past in a culture of historical amnesia and harmful memory” (Vosloo, 2009:55).

Black theology through its hermeneutic of liberation offers us an important mandate. “Understanding the South African reality as it really is must be done from the perspective of the oppressed; black theology, like other liberation-orientated theologies, insists on the preferential option for the oppressed (Martey, 2009:97)”.

Black theology takes seriously the view of the outcast. McEwan seeing women as outcast says “The fundamental issue for archiving the present in South Africa is ensuring that those previously denied agency, including black South African women, play a full part in the documenting of their lives, in constructing what might be termed a postcolonial archive”(2003:743).

By using this the church can listen to those who society has not heard. It opens up the dialogue to a more holistic history and to understand which stories we have missed and which need to be heard. It also allows for the church to use its influence to make vocal the voices of those who may not be in the conversation.

Bonhoeffer writes the following based on his understanding of the church representing the view of the outcast.

“There remains an experience of incomparable value. We have for once learned to see the great events of world history from below, from the perspective of the outcasts, the suspects, the maltreated — in short, from the perspective of those who suffer. Mere waiting and looking on is not Christian behaviour. Christians are called to compassion *and* to action.”  
(Bonhoeffer, 2010:17)

#### **2.4. AFRICA’S ROLE IN HISTORY**

Thomas Oden states in the introduction to *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind* that “Africa played a decisive role in the formation of Christian culture” (2007:9) in regards to the early church history from a European/Western perspective. However, this understanding - although true - fails to take into account the role Africa has taken in shaping modern day understandings of Christianity.

The South African liberation struggle was a multi-faceted, multi-organisational, and multi-national response from not only those in South Africa but also, from those outside its borders and political sphere.

This dissertation will focus on how a small section of the Church of Scotland was influenced by the political struggle in South Africa. The international community rallied behind South Africa and embraced a newly democratic South Africa. These international voices are important to the construction of a South African historiography.

If the Church and South Africa were to embrace the stories from outside and allow it to be part of the ongoing struggle of construction, then not only will South Africa be the richer for it but also it will allow the international community to learn once more from Africa.

It has the potential to open up conversation, reflection and repentance in international communities and thus let the marginalised voice of Africa be heard on the world stage. Africa is not finished teaching; it is still part of the on-going struggle lesson.

## **2.5. THE DANGER OF DEATH**

South Africa stands at a tipping point regarding historiography. There are many people both locally and internationally who were involved in the antiapartheid struggle that are starting to die. Every time a person dies (or in some cases develops dementia), the person and their influence on the story dies with them.

Most historiography is constructed in the absence of those who were involved. It is constructed by historians removed from the event. However, “we need to remember that even “original sources” do not tell the complete story and even the best archives offer us a limited window on the past” (Vosloo, 2009:56).

South Africa in many cases was robbed of Black Historiography by both the British and Afrikaner governments. We have lost the treasure chest of community history. Although some of these stories were kept alive through oral history a large section has been lost. A case in point is the disappearance of mission archives to Europe where

they are inaccessible to African students to construct their own history. Another case is the attempt of a USA university to relocate the ANC archive from the University of Fort Hare to the USA where they could be 'better' cared for in the early years of the third millennium(Garaba & Ngulube, 2010).

South Africa cannot allow the same mistake to happen again. "The important role that oral history can play in "funding the archive" has often been highlighted in the discourse on South African church historiography" (Vosloo, 2009:57). It also allows archives to be interpreted as "Archives are not merely receptacles of the past; concepts of history themselves are shaped by archives. The relationship between power and knowledge is crystallised within the material and metaphorical spaces of archives; the question of who has the power to make, record and interpret history is an important one in contemporary South Africa and one that informs current attempts to build collective memory"(McEwan, 2003:742).

The church and the historian's job is to build up archival reserves. Reflecting on Paul Connerton (1989:1-4), Christies suggests "The way that collective memory is stored, then, is not simply a technical formation but one that bears directly on legitimization of power relations and what that means. The question of control [of the archives] is a crucial political issue".(2000:6)

This means that it is of importance that the church and historians work together in the documentation of these pasts, conceived as 'hidden history', seeks to democratise the historical record, create an archive for the future and an alternative form of historical documentation. They raise questions about the chronologies, periodisation's and narratives of South African social histories, the 'domination versus resistance' model

they have employed and the practices and processes of the authoring and translation of memory through oral text into 'history' (McEwan, 2003:747)

It is important that historians try to capture these voices before they are lost forever. If collection happens we will allow future generations to assess apartheid and the new national historiography. This can only be done with space for both to develop. As Keegan suggest that

'in the narratives of ordinary people's lives we begin to see some of the major forces of history at work, large social forces that are arguably the real key to understanding the past, which and exclusive focus on the lives and activities of 'great men' not only obscures, but also misrepresents. The social and economic history contained in the oral records ... found no trace in the history texts until very recently, no [trace] in the historical consciousness of most people; and yet its significance in reformulating and extending our understandings of the origins of modern-day South Africa is, I believe, a considerable.

(1988:168)

## 2.6. CONCLUSION

One could argue that when the TRC was formed this allowed for recollection and new historiography to develop in South Africa. Why should the church and church historians be involved in rehashing the past? If Vosloo is right and I think he is, "Traumatic events previously experienced can create wounds or scars which influence our willingness and ability to engage with the past (Vosloo, 2013:5)". Should we not just allow the TRC to be the end on national confession. However, Ignatieff, challenges this notion saying

"A truth commission cannot overcome a society's division. It can only window out the solid core of facts upon which society's arguments with itself should be conducted. But it cannot bring these arguments to a conclusion.

All that a truth commission can achieve is to reduce the number of lies that can be circulated unchallenged in public discourse.”

(1996)

If Ignatieff is correct South Africa needs a new forum in which public discourse needs to be engaged and challenged. Current South African historical discourse has shown that South Africa still is a racially divided society.

The church through using its gift of confession allows for non-bias and engaged conversation to happen, the development of new historiography could allow for a new identity to develop. The South Africa Church could become more contextual and relevant. It would also allow for current paradigms to be challenged. The ANC would this not be the custodian of historiography in the country but rather it would become a community driven project. The community – consisting over every generation - needs to deal with its own past, but this should not be done by promoting myths or by using politically motivated interpretations of history to attack opponents (Schulz, 2009:7).

The job of the church and historians is therefore to create a knowledge archive that future generations can call upon. That the stories of as many people are heard and understood in this new historiography.

The church through using its gift of confession has the ability to create a new identity for those involved. Or as Ignatieff suggests

The idea that reconciliation depends on shared truth presumes that shared truth about the past is possible. But truth is related to identity. What you believe to be true depends, in some measure, on who you believe yourself to be. And who you believe yourself to be is

mostly defined in terms of who you are not ...The truth that matters to people is not factual nor narrative truth but moral or interpretive truth

(1996)

If this is done right the Church and historians could be able to continue to have influence in the international understandings of history.

The next section will deal with three different documents that were used during apartheid.



## CHAPTER 3

### THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THREE MAJOR SOUTH AFRICAN CHURCH DOCUMENTS

#### 3.1. Introduction

During 1975 to 1985 three theological documents, which in my view are major and relevant to my study, emerged from the South Africa apartheid context. Each document came at different times and emerged with a clear understanding of the Bible and the hermeneutic of Interpreting it.

In 1974, the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) deliberated on the theological justification for apartheid. In 1976 *Ras, Volk, En Nasie* was published based on that meeting. Though this was not the first time they met, it was the first time that a comprehensive theological document was published in any language other than Afrikaans.

The second document is *Kairos Document (KD)* published in South Africa in 1985 by a small group known as the Kairos Theologians. This document was published anonymously and as a restructuring document written by Black liberation theologians in South Africa. They met under the banner of the Institute of Contextual Theology in order to formulate a prophetic response to their contextual situation (de Gruchy & de Gruchy, 2005:196). Of all the documents that have been published, the *Kairos Document* has been the most used anti-apartheid document internationally.

The third document is the *Belhar Confession*. It was written by the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in Afrikaans (translated to English in 1986) after the Belhar Synod in 1982. Influenced by Karl Barth's definition of what comprised a reformed confession (Naudé, 2010:81). It also combined the Black Consciousness Movement especially relating to Black pride (Sonneborn, 2010:54). The *BC* became the first confession adopted by the church within the Dutch Reformed tradition<sup>3</sup> since the seventeenth century (de Gruchy & de Gruchy, 2004:194).

### **3.2. RAS VOLK EN NASIE**

The DRC in South Africa can trace its lineage to before the foundation of colonial rule in South Africa. The formation of the DRC formed in Holland during the Protestant Reformation. Ideologically the relationship of between church and state was developed in regards to Neo-Calvinism (Dubow, 2009:219) and neo-Fichteanism (Vorster, 2010:151).

The DRC arrived in 1658 when Dutch missionaries were set to minister to the settler (Byrnes, 1996:139). The objective of these missionaries was not to expand the faith but rather was to minister to sailors as they passed through the port.

When the British took over the Cape the DRC retained its status as the Church of the colonial government (Brown, 1972:2). The DRC gained autonomy in 1824 (Moorrees, 1937) and practiced a conservative view of Calvinism (de Gruchy, 1990:4)

---

<sup>3</sup> This is the broader tradition of the Dutch Reformed Family of Churches

In 1881 the DRC formed the “Dutch Reformed Mission Church” (*Sending Kerk*) for coloureds, 1910 the DRC formed the “Dutch Reformed Church in Africa” for blacks. And in 1951 Indian Dutch Reformed Church was formed for Indians (Byrnes, 1996:142).

The loss of power and the unity of political governance left the Afrikaner people vulnerable. As De Gruchy suggests

The years after 1910 were years of intense struggle for the Afrikaner people. A struggle for identity in a land which they had lost through war but which they regarded as their own, a land dominated by a foreign government, economy and culture. In 1914 the National party was launched in Bloemfontein, with the conviction that the way to regain what had been lost by conquest through the development of a separate nation (volk) within the Union, stressing its own distinct language, traditions, religion, and institutions

(1990:28)

The DRC worked with the *Broederbond* in developing the Afrikaans state and people (Lapping, 1987:108) and this blurred the lines between State and Church (Bosch, 1986:207). The DRC was the NP in prayer (Giliomee, 1979:240) and eventually led to the two organisations being intertwined.

In 1950 the DRC held a mission conference which paved the way for the Group Areas Act.

The Synod met in 1974 and this formed the basis for the book *Ras, Volk en Nasie*.

### **3.3. THEOLOGY OF RAS, VOLK EN NASIE**

The following section is a brief overview of *Ras, Volk en Nasie*.

The DRC believed it was the leading authority for race relations in south Africa (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:7) and in so doing lead others to the will of God. This document was an attempt to use reformed theology to justify apartheid (Dubow, 2009:222; Ellingsen, 1988:244)

### 3.3.1. Old Testament

The Old Testament (OT) is the foundation of their theology. The majority of the book focuses on Genesis 10 and 11 and believes that both chapters are part of the same narrative.

In Genesis 10 unity of humankind is emphasised with Noah being the source of all nations.

“The genealogical table of people is therefore of importance not only from the point of view of ethnic diversity, but also to the basic unity of all generations and humanity as a whole”

(Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:13).

Genesis 11:1-9 on the other hand is to show how sinful humans are and how they are reliant on God (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:14). The earth has one language and *Yahweh* divides the nations (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:15). This explains the mixed genealogy found in Genesis 10.

God’s act of separating nations based on language creates diversity as a command, separates families, but should be seen as blessing as it achieves God’s plan (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:17-18). Unity therefore is not based on language which surpasses them (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:19).

The calling of Abraham and the life of the chosen people should be seen against the background of the cultural situation of the Near East in those times, which was characterised by a relatively unitary culture and by

population migrations and admixtures of a fairly large scale. In Biblical times, the Near East was, marked by an open situation in respect of inter-race and inter-people relationships, and in respect of cultural cross-fertilisation

(Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:21)

Racial diversity is therefore what God wanted, but we are equal before God. Therefore, unification was to found in God's promise to Abraham in Acts 17:27 (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:21).

Israel is also an example of how God wanted people to be separated. For just as Israel came into contact with many cultures in the Ancient Near East, God had kept them pure and holy (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:21).

### **3.3.2. NEW TESTAMENT**

In the NT within the Roman Empire there were diverse ethnicities to be found (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:29). Christ unites us to each other but "People had the right to an independent existence and survival, but their mutual relationships had to be determined by this common objective and the all-prevailing principle within the kingdom" (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:29).

The NT upholds that all people are equal (Acts 17:26; Rom 3:9; John 1:14; Matthew 28:19) (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:30). To love one's neighbour is equated to equality, unity and solidarity of all people (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:30). The NT shows that separate development is allowed if it makes a stable and ethical society (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:32). The neighbour therefore, allowing them to develop fully whilst protecting their individuality (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:34).

### **3.3.3. RAS VOLK EN NASIE UNDERSTANDING OF CHURCH AND STATE**

*RVN* also develops a church polity which ministers and congregations are to obey. The DRC recognises the diversity of membership of the body of Christ.

The Church is the God ordered state and like the state has its own authority, structure and functions (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:69). However, the church can participate in the formation of social and political beliefs (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:55).

The Churches explicit task: is preach the gospel and strengthen the faith of all in spheres of life, including those in power (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:69). The Church occasionally stands against popular opinion which cannot be justified by scripture (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:63). It is important to note here that the DRC has just justified Apartheid with scripture when it made this comment. This would mean that the international community and those who are part of the liberation movement in South Africa are outside of the will of God and the church needs to stand against them.

The DRC role in South Africa is complex because of the diversity of people. Communities are multifaceted systems, who can share similarities, however, these similarities are artificial (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:65).

The DRC believes the government is also instituted by God and have responsibilities outside of the sphere of the church thus, Churches need to respect government.

The state is seen in the following manner:

“It is the duty of the state to preserve order within its own particular areas of jurisdiction, to reconcile and regulate the legal interests of the various groups for the sake of public order, to combat evil and preserve justice. For without this, an orderly society is not possible (1 Tim. 2: 2-4). In all this the state should act in accordance with Biblical norms, i.e. love of God and neighbour as guide-line for public administration of justice (2 Chron. 19: 6). The state may use institutions of power and even the sword to keep in check the pervasive influence of sin (Rom. 13: 4). While this system of authority is essential for the regulation of various aspects of everyday life, it may never degenerate into a totalitarian system in which the state usurps the sovereignty of other institutions in their own particular fields in order to regulate all aspects of human existence. The golden rule of sovereignty for each institution in its own sphere, of justice and of love, should be sufficient to preserve the state from revolutionary chaos and political absolutism and tyranny.

(Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:70)

### **3.3.4. THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCHES AND SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT**

*RVN* argues that separate development is both biblical and commanded (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:71). The idea of homelands is not sinful but needs to be reworked. Especially regarding migrant labour, the economic dependency of whites on black labour, the destruction of black family life (Dutch Reformed Church, 1976:73-76). Thus *RVN* argues that homelands should become independent and self-sustaining in order for Blacks to stay in their homelands.

### **3.4. THE KAIROS DOCUMENT**

The *KD* starts with contextualising the South African situation. The historical situation within the South Africa had rapidly changed in the 1970 and 80s.

The Black Conscious Movement was at the height of its influence. Church leaders of this movement were being arrested and detained by the state; whilst internationally there was a reversal of what was happening in South Africa. The DRC was being ostracised from the larger church body whilst liberation theologians were being recognised. Desmond Tutu had received Nobel Peace Prize (Nobel Committee, 1984) and Allan Boesak became President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

The armed struggle was also becoming part of South African township life with the Soweto Uprising (1976), the death of Steve Biko (1977), the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the formation Security Police counter-insurgency unit (Watson, 2007:98) and even Soviet surveillance (Trenear-Harvey, 2011:xvi) all happening within the span of ten years.

Politically there was also many changes. In 1977 the Natal Homelands were setup. In 1983, a new Constitution allowed a tricameral parliament for Coloureds, Indians and Whites (Seekings 2000:2). John Vorster, disgraced former Prime Minister died. In 1984 over 7,000 people attended an Afrikaner Volkswag rally in Pretoria (Kalley, Schoeman & Andor 1999:488). Pieter Willem Botha became the State President and with Foreign Minister, RF (Pik) Botha, visited Austria, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Italy, Portugal, Switzerland and West Germany (Kalley, Schoeman & Andor 1999:489). The Government declared a state of emergency (Seidman 2009:264). In 1985, Mandela rejected an offer for his release. P. W. Botha declared a state of emergency in 36 magisterial districts (Waldmeir 1988:70) and delivered his 'Crossing the Rubicon' speech at the opening of the National Party conference (P. W. Botha, 1985).



Internationally the NP was losing its standing. In 1977, the United Nations Security Council placed an arms embargo on South Africa (United Nations Centre Against Apartheid 1981:7). In 1981 the United Nations condemned and then placed more sanctions on the South African State.(United Nations Centre Against Apartheid, 1981). In 1982 the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid launched the International Year of Mobilisation for Sanctions against South Africa (United Nations General Assembly, 1981).

The Kairos Theologians believed that the time was right for the church to challenge the policy of Apartheid but what was needed was a new biblical theological model (Kairos Theologians 1985:1). Unlike the *RVN* the *KD* had some distinguishing features. First, it was developed within the community rather than being forced upon them by the government (Kairos Theologians 1985:1). Second, it was formed from personal experience of those involved in the black community. Third, it was commented on by outside organisations. Fourth, It was signed by 150 theologians from various churches within South Africa (Kairos Theologians 1985:1-2). Fifth, the document was to remain an active document which constantly needed revision (Kairos Theologians 1985:1)

### **3.4.1. THEOLOGICAL FORMATION WITHIN *THE KAIROS DOCUMENT***

The *KD* focussed on two theological foundations that it perceived to be the bedrock for this new theological interpretation, namely, state theology, and church theology.

#### **3.4.1.1. STATE THEOLOGY**

The South African Government had used its theological understandings not only to support its state but also to underpin capitalism and totalitarianism regime (Kairos Theologians 1985:3). This could be seen in four areas.

First, because God was liberating his people from unjust leaders, using Romans 13:1-7 to justify the state is heretical. Rather, the state is a servant to God and not to Satan (Kairos Theologians 1985:4). If the state was oppressive then God's people could not serve it.

Second, the apartheid state was using laws to further its own agenda. The state is corrupt and unjust and therefore the church cannot follow the state's laws. (Kairos Theologians 1985:5).

Third, the use of the term communism is a misrepresentation of those opposed to the state and their theology. (Kairos Theologians 1985:5-6).

Fourth, the state has used God to create its unjust laws and policies (Kairos Theologians 1985:6). They have distorted society's understanding of who God is (Kairos Theologians 1985:6). Their God is an idol, evil and blasphemous (Kairos Theologians 1985:6).

#### **3.4.1.2. Church Theology**

Many Churches, especially those who spoke English had a tepid response to apartheid. This meant that their theology was shallow and counterproductive (Kairos Theologians 1985:6).

The church (both English and Afrikaans) called for reconciliation but misinterpreted the situation (Kairos Theologians 1985:7). The church had to see the state as totally wrong because it attacked “defenceless” people by means of violence (Kairos Theologians 1985:7). Thus this was an issue of justice and injustice (Kairos Theologians 1985:7). Reconciliation was futile unless the issue of injustice was addressed and abolished (Kairos Theologians 1985:7).

It in order for true and lasting reconciliation to take place the state needed to seek justice and repentance (Kairos Theologians 1985:8). If this was not done Christians had the biblical mandate to confront the state; “biblical theology of direct confrontation with the forces of evil than a theology of reconciliation of sin and the devil” (Kairos Theologians 1985:8)

If the Church wanted reconciliation, it had to change its understanding of justice. Blacks could no longer be subjugated to white understandings of justice (Kairos Theologians 1985:8). Churches cannot expect reform as long as it is an oppressor (Kairos Theologians 1985:9). The church needs to meet the needs of those who are oppressed rather than stay comfort of the oppressor.

The church can dismiss all forms of violence. The state used violence to enforce their governance whilst blacks only responded in self-defence (Kairos Theologians 1985:10). By having chaplains to the state organisations the church supported violence (Kairos Theologians 1985:11). The church could no longer maintain its neutrality but rather had to choose a side.

The church was divorced from the situation of South Africa. It was more focused on individual salvation rather than societal salvation (Kairos Theologians 1985:12). The Church had to therefore rethink its theology.

In order to rebuild a new theology, the *Kairos Document* suggested five ways to achieve this. First, a reinterpretation of the situation in South Africa (Kairos Theologians 1985:12-13); second, a reinterpretation of scripture from the side of the oppressed (Kairos Theologians 1985:13-14); third, the tyranny of the state (Kairos Theologians 1985:14-16); fourth, the church needed to live and preach a message of hope to the oppressed (Kairos Theologians 1985:17); fifth, the church was challenged to act its theology out by choosing the side of God (Kairos Theologians 1985:17-19).

### **3.5. THE BELHAR CONFESSION**

To understand *the Belhar Confession* both the national and international contexts are important.

As social group Coloureds experienced many changes within South Africa from 1948 to 1982. In 1948 the DRC squashed a rebellion by the DRMC when Rev. I.D. Morkel, preached the rejection of the Apartheid system (Botha, 1984:69). 150, 000 Coloureds were forcibly removed from their homes in Natal and the Cape (Trotter, 2009:49).

The DRC were seeking unity regarding its racial policy. Unity in the DRC and her mission churches was becoming a contentious in the 70's and 80's. In 1976 the DRC church published *RVN*. The DRC said:

All compulsory and demonstrative manifestations of unity ought to be rejected, for these may seriously disturb the established order in church and society... the pluriformity of churches which is related to, and the

consequence of, the diversity of peoples, may be diversity within the same church as body of Christ. But then the unity will have to be manifested in one way or another... Disruption of the church arises when the unity of the church is threatened by sinful division, while pluriformity is justified by the teachings of the bible...genuine meaningful Christian unity can only be founded on Jesus Christ, and his word. Church unity can never be sought and found in anything but the gospel. A mere amalgamation of churches as they exist today would be a monstrosity ... To make complete uniformity of conviction on every *jot or tittle* among all churches a prerequisite for unity would be to expect far too much.

(1976:49-51)

The DRC understood unity through the invisible unity of Christ but also through the visible unity of believers. The DRC emphasised invisible unity as primary and so doing vetoed a proposal to unify the Dutch Reformed African Churches in 1975.

In 1961 the DRC relaxed regulations and the mission churches were allowed to meet and discuss church polity issues within their own synods. The DRC still controlled the outcome of the synod as no creed or church order could be changed unless agreed by both the DRMC and the DRC (Botha, 1984:74).

### **3.5.1. Accompanying Letter**

As with many confessions within the church, the *Belhar Confession* came with a letter. This letter was broken into four sections. First, the context of both church and society in South Africa. Second, the authority, motives and subject of the confession were explained. Third, the BC did not want to accuse “specific people or groups of people or churches” but rather focus on “questionable doctrine” (DRMC, 1982:1-2). The fourth section looks at the implications of the confession (DRMC, 1982:2).

### **3.5.2. *Belhar Confession***

The main themes of the *Belhar Confession* are unity, reconciliation and justice. However, this section will only focus on unity.

Unity is central to the *Belhar Confession*. However, this is not based on pseudo-unity but rather a unity that is both visible and invisible. The confession is therefore spoken in third person plural.

The Statement “We believe in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit. This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end” (*Belhar Confession*, 1986). The relationship between DRMC and the DRC is present throughout the document. In the first section of the document the authority and the protection of the Church are juxtaposed against that of the DRC. The DRC finds her protection by building theological and political structures around itself. The DRC although the mother church is not the protector or authority over the mission churches

The theme of unity continues throughout the document as it appeals to the unity found in the Universal Church and Unity that is to be found in the unifying work of Christ. Christ is the true unifier. Unlike the DRC who suggested that it was God’s intention to created individual tribes.

Unity is thus seen as a gift. In *RVN* the DRC (1976:50) states “According to the apostle, unity of the church is a gift, but at the same time a gift should never be accepted as a matter of course. It should be assiduously sought and protected if it is not to be lost”. The DRC however have built theological structures and policy that seeks to create unity by division. The *Belhar Confession* directly challenges this notion. You cannot create unity through the oppression and separation of one group from another.

Central to the understanding the *Belhar Confession* is the doctrine of sin. It helps to have a contextual understanding of what sin is from an African context. Bate suggests

“white theology, in its attempt to be universal, has defined what sin is for all people and thus for black people. This definition is legalistic in character; understanding sin as transgression of law ... In scripture ... sin is expressed in terms of the breakdown in relationships between God and human beings as well as between human beings themselves. Sin then refers to a breakdown in relatedness expressed in phrases such as “umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu” (a person is a person through and by other people)  
(1991:38)

The *BC* challenges the theology built on developed to separate people and it must be purged from all church structures. It must be challenged at all levels including from local church structures to government.

The role of communion is a contentious issue. It is one that if one doesn't understand what happened at the World Alliance of Reformed Churches conference that same year (1982) would easily be missed.

At the opening worship service, the DRMC refused to take communion as it was hypocritical. In South Africa they could not share the Lords table with the DRC why

should this be any different internationally. The Minutes or the W.A.R.C. say “our refusal to participate, anticipates the day when we shall all – Black and White – *drink from one cup and eat from one loaf*”<sup>4</sup> (World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 1983:55). The DRC and Hervormde Kerk were called to appear on 20<sup>th</sup> August to attend “open hearing on apartheid in the South African Churches”<sup>5</sup> (World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 1983:18). On 23 August a letter was read out to the assembly from Rev. Beyers Naude.

At the W.A.R.C. the DRC did defend its position

Dr. Pierre Russow of the NGK (DRC), spoke against the statement pointing out that his Church accepted 95% of the reformed faith. He wondered if the council was willing to take the step which would declare the NGK to be a “leper church”. He spoke of heresy which was present in other churches...  
(World Alliance of Reformed Churches, 1983:35)

It was also at this meeting that Allan Boesak was elected President of the W.A.R.C..

### 3.6. CONCLUSION

The three documents shown in this chapter had a profound influence within South Africa and worldwide. They were all based around the theme of unity but in essence they each viewed it from a specific angle.

Although *RVN* was the earliest of the three it called for unity not only within the DRC but also among other churches in South Africa. By trying to use reformed principles it presented a theological argument based on reason.

---

<sup>4</sup> My italics

<sup>5</sup> Although detailed records of this section were not kept, based on the outcome of the conference one can assume that it was extremely embarrassing for the DRC.



The *Kairos Document* was largely directed at the neutrality of the English churches. They perpetuated the current system by their inability to act. This meant that they were unified with apartheid government. However, the *Kairos Document* asks them to choose sides, to seek unity with the oppressed.

The *Belhar Confession* is creating unity by breaking away from the DRC. It is seeking unity with a larger body of reformed theologians and is challenging the preconceptions of the DRC on a practical line.

Each document has its own theological positions and hermeneutic.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE ANTIAPARTHEID STRUGGLE AS REPRESENTED IN *LIFE AND WORK*

#### 4.1. Introduction

The Church of Scotland (CoS) produces a monthly magazine called *Life and Work* (*L&W*). *L&W* according to the CoS website

Life and Work was established in 1879 by Archibald Hamilton Charteris (1835 to 1908), who was professor of biblical criticism at Edinburgh University. The magazine was inspired by his work on the Church of Scotland's Committee of Christian Life & Work, which he initiated and led.

Hugely committed to Church causes, he later founded the Woman's Guild and the diaconate in order to harness the energies of women in the Church. He formed the diaconate from his experience of similar orders in protestant churches in Europe, where he travelled widely.

In its early years, Life and Work ran various supplements, including the Guild supplement and the Young Men's Supplement. The only one still running is the Gaelic Supplement, which was begun in 1880 and is read by Gaels all over the world. In its history, the Gaelic supplement has had only five editors, and is currently edited by the Rev Dr Roderick McLeod, minister of Cumlodden, Lochfyneside.

In 1929 when the United Free Church of Scotland reunited with the Church of Scotland Life and Work was subtitled The Record of the Church of Scotland in recognition of the United Free Church publication, The Record, but this reference was dropped in 1996 when the magazine was relaunched in full colour.

(Church of Scotland, 2016)

*L&W* is still part of the Church of Scotland today.

Very little has been written about this magazine and its place within Church of Scotland and an even smaller amount if anything has been written about South Africa within its pages. The only book that the author could find was by Robert Kernohan titled

*Scotland's Life and Work* (1979). The book focuses on different editors up to 1972. It does however, fall outside of the scope of this dissertation and therefore will not be explored thoroughly.

With regard to South Africa, Kernohan's book suggests that South Africa was a regular topic in the early years of the magazine. *Life and Work* was started in the year of the Anglo Boer War (1979:1). He says

At the time the Boer War seemed a great war, the first since Waterloo really to touch the life of the British people.

As things turned out it was soon to be overshadowed by a very different and much greater war. And as things turned out in South Africa itself, the people who appeared to have lost the war were soon well on their way to winning the peace and creating the new united South Africa after their own fashion. ...

It was also to bring problems of conscience and involvement for the churches: It was, after all, a Scots Presbyterian, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, who coined the phrase about 'methods of barbarism' used against the Afrikaners whose descendants today are so frequently accused of methods of barbarism by ecumenical and other church groups. Yet it was Scots Presbyterians with such names as Murray and Robertson who maintained and renewed the Dutch Reformed Church after British occupation of the Cape.

(Kernohan, 1979:55-56)

The above shows aspects that are important for the relationship between Scotland and South Africa. First, Scotland had a history with the British Empire. The Scots fought with the British and were often important figures in the South Africa War (Anglo Boer War) 1899-1902. Second, the Church of Scotland had a long term relationship with the Dutch Reformed Church. The Church of Scotland staffed a significant number of the Dutch Reformed Church posts and some of the most influential Dutch Reformed Ministers came from Scotland i.e. Andrew and John Murray, Alexander Smith, William Ritchie Thomson, John Bennie, Henry Sutherland, Colin Mackenzie Fraser, George Morgan, James Edgar, Robert Shand, John Cassie, Thomas Reid, Alexander Welsh,

John Pears, (Sass, 1957:16). Thus, Scotland had a history with both the state and the church in South Africa.

The following chapter will look at the narrative that was found in the Church of Scotland's magazine *Life and Work*. It will attempt to look for any changes in thought and relationship. It will do this by looking at the various issues of the magazine and speaking to the editor during 1975 – 1985.

#### **4.2. Editor**

There have been many editors of *Life and Work* over its history. Robert Kernohan became the editor of the magazine in 1972 till 1990. Below is a brief biography and interview.

Kernohan was born 1931 in Glasgow. He attended Glasgow University and also received a degree in Modern history from Oxford University. He was London Editor for the *Glasgow Herald*. In 1990 he took early retirement and left the magazine. The following article was published in the *Herald Scotland* in 1990 concerning his retirement:

THE editor of the Church of Scotland magazine *Life and Work*, Mr. R.D. Kernohan, is to take early retirement this year, having become exasperated by recent trends in the Kirk. Bob Kernohan will be 60 next January and has been editor since 1972.

The monthly magazine has continued to hold its circulation above 100,000 and is still in profit.

Mr. Kernohan yesterday confirmed that his resignation had been accepted by the board of communications and, pending approval by the personnel committee, will take effect later in the year. He will concentrate on freelance writing and broadcasting.

"It's time to go," he said. "I meant to stay a few years and have been happy for 17, or at least was until the anti-Thatcher frenzy began in 1987." Mr. Kernohan was often criticised by left-wingers within the Kirk.

Those critics, he says, "have turned me from an old Conservative into a reluctant Thatcherite. Only the glorious revolution in eastern Europe and the year of culture have revived my enthusiasm this year. I find myself entirely out of sympathy with the political line of Church boards and committees, and have had enough of other quarrels that have nothing to do with politics, such as the fundamentalist versus liberal divide, the policy on Church unions, or the reluctance of the Kirk to welcome Billy Graham."

Mr. Kernohan studied at Glasgow University and Balliol. He was with the *Glasgow Herald* from 1957 to 1967, latterly as London editor, before becoming director of the Scottish Conservative Central Office. He was Tory candidate in Pollok in 1964, and is the author of several books, including the *Life and Work* centenary book in 1979.

Mr. Kernohan joined *Life and Work* after a long succession of ministers as editors, culminating in the controversial sacking of the Rev. Leonard Bell. He has consistently achieved a high profile for the magazine in the public debate of issues.

The job entails being in the crossfire of a number of controversial issues.

A current example, which Mr. Kernohan emphasizes has no connection with his decision to retire, is the dispute which has arisen with the organisers of a conference in Dunblane in April on "pastoral approaches to lesbian and gay people". An advertisement for subscribers was refused by *Life and Work*.

That decision is attacked by organiser Ian Dunn, in the pre-conference mailing, as springing from Mr Kernohan's hostility to homosexuality. He writes: "Homosexual oppression relies on silence and fear.

Mr Kernohan responded: "The decision was not mine, but a reiteration of previous policy. We used to look at adverts relating to homosexuality on an individual basis, accepting those offering information and rejecting those which proselytised, but that broke down when a group emerged calling themselves Gay Christians with a view of morality which caused outrage in some Church members. Thus the committee was obliged to decline adverts for the Gay Christian movement or similar bodies.

"It's not the subject that is banned, but advertising from a body which is flaunting the standards of morality predominating in the Church. It may go on, but that is no reason to condone it, rather as one would disapprove of a club of Christian adulterers."

(Unknown Author, 1990)

On the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015, the following interview with Robert Kernohan was recorded. Below is a short summary of what was said in the meeting.

Robert Kernohan felt that he was in an unusual position as editor of *Life and Work* because he was not a minister. Before his time at *Life and Work* he gained a strong interest in Africa with particular focus on Rhodesia and Central Africa.

He first visited South Africa in 1965 as part of a public relations exercise by the Government of South Africa. He became a freelance writer after leaving the Conservative Party and was offered a job in South Africa but he didn't want his children to join the army so he turned it down. However, he continued being a political writer for a South African newspaper in a freelance capacity. His second, visit came in 1972 when he used the "South African Foundation Industry" as his main contact to gain contact into South Africa.

When he became editor in 1972 he realised that Africa would hold more trouble because of his own personal views. He found that this however, was a larger social problem in the UK. One could more easily in his opinion speak about local issues than issues about Africa.

Regarding the Church of Scotland, Kernohan felt that there was little link between South Africa and the Church of Scotland when he became editor. Most people believed that Apartheid was wrong – in particular petty apartheid seemed to cause great dissonance – but there was no unanimous decision with regard to what to do.

The Church rather was more concerned with the Rhodesia issue of the 1960's and the BIAFRA civil war that had taken place in Nigeria.

As editor of *Life and Work*, Kernohan felt that it was not his job to write many articles or give his opinion. Rather it was to foster a larger dialogue of various views in the Church.

One of the big issues from his readers was the W.C.C. Special Fund to Combat Racism, which the Church of Scotland did not endorse, but gave the treasurer powers to collect money on behalf of the fund. He felt that the W.C.C. was an ineffective body that only considered a handful of people's interests.

One of the hardest issues for Kernohan was dealing with Church of Scotland Committees. He felt that committees were trying to push their own publications into the magazine. He was often seen as an autocrat because of his editorial stance. He felt that part of the problem was that these committees tried to stifle criticism in the church. One of the problems faced by Kernohan was the push from some of these bodies to include more coverage from the W.C.C.

As editor he also came into contact with many of South Africa's top thinkers. On both sides of the spectrum, he was particularly taken back by Allan Boesak's understanding of the future of South Africans that included Afrikaners.

In 1984 he took a trip to South Africa at the expense of *Life and Work*. He felt things were changing in South Africa. What he wasn't aware of was the dominant change

coming about with regard to Afrikaner nationalism. It was only later on when he was invited in the late 1980's to the South African consulate and heard them speak of a Human Rights movement that he felt the country was changing.

When he came back from South Africa in 1984 he felt pessimistic and thought that only a major clash and an inevitable blood bath would bring about change. He had the opportunity to visit the homelands.

The above is just a short introduction to who Robert Kernohan is. The interview is available as a CD (Taylor & Kernohan, 2015). The introduction forms the basis for the next section of the assignment which will focus on the substance of South Africa within *Life and Work*.

#### **4.3. 1975 – 1980**

Rev. Graeme Brown, leader of the Iona community; was the theological President of the Federal Theological Seminary at Alice for three years from 1975. He published a single page article titled "Time Against Race". At the time of his writing this article, he had just been refused readmission into the country. The article is divided into three sections: an introduction; the various churches' response to racial division; and the introduction of Black Theology as a catalyst for change. Overall, the article gives the perception of the development and positive movement of Black Consciousness.

Brown began his article by speaking about the rise of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM). He speaks about Black people as "Stallions" finding that they now have Power. He says



the clenched fist raised in salute - the gesture of defiance of the black power movement - is a not unfamiliar site in student circles in South Africa today. It is a sign of the almost inevitable reaction against the wide power structures by which the country is controlled. Small children are taught to raise the clenched fist and shout "Power!" for some it is the English word with which they are most familiar. (1975:22)

In the second part of the article he focuses on the reaction of the various churches regarding racial division. Although the "Churches in South Africa inevitably reflect the trends in contemporary society and can be divided into "separatist" and "multi-racial" Churches" he concedes that the Dutch Reformed Church is struggling to accommodate people. "The Dutch Reformed Church, for example, is organised on racial lines and is likened by some of its members to a "family" with a "mother" church (for whites) and "daughter" churches (for African, Indian and Coloured people). Meeting of the races for worship does not generally take place in this "Family". There is dissent in the daughter churches as an Indian Minister Rev. E. Mannikam, is discussing leaving the church because of the DRC inability to sit around the same table during worship. 100 ministers from the Dutch Reformed Church in Africa stated "we can no longer hold our peace against the ideology of separation of races on the basis of colour" (Brown, 1975:22).

Brown then turns his attention to other churches who are trying to seek unity. For example, the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, the Bantu Presbyterian Church and the Tsonga Presbyterian Church. The problem is that "union has been rejected by large numbers of black Christians on the grounds of the race attitudes of whites". The hope was that a united black Church could "enter in dialogue with Christians on equal footing" (Brown, 1975:22).

In his eyes the “Anglican, Methodist and Congregational Churches, which have a non-racial composition, seek to effect a fairer distribution of power among these members of all races”. Brown talks of how Blacks have held top positions in these churches, which violates the “almost sacrosanct Convention in South Africa and that a black may not hold authority over white”.

Brown then turns his attention to the development of Black Theology in South Africa. He says it is “Theology, which has recently become as popular among blacks in South Africa as in the United States, is not only an attempt to express the Christian faith in terms which blacks can understand but is a search for new symbols by which to affirm black humanity”.

This theology is uplifting the community but it is also engaging white theologians “Professor C.W.H. Boshoff, for example, has urged that the Church would heed the cry of the child which is black theology and see what is the cause of the scream”.

He then goes on to warn that the situation in South Africa is changing and unity needs to be at the forefront or else the consequences could be dire.

Modern readers of this article need to remember that this is just after the 1974 DRC synod where *Ras, Volk en Nasie* was published. This is before the 1976 uprising and the death of Steve Biko. Already unity is being challenged in the church. It is also interesting that both the TRC and the *Kairos Document* challenged the English churches to more action. In this article Brown applauds what they are doing and how they are instigating the change. The issue of communion and joint worship was also

an issue from before 1982 W.A.R.C. meeting. This shows that already there was a local and international awareness of this discrepancy in the DRC's theology.

Exactly a month after the article by Brown a brief report appeared in the April addition of *Life and Work* in the "Church at Large" section entitled "Protest in S.A. Takeover".

The article spoke "a protest against the South African Government's takeover" (Unknown Author," 1975:12) of the Federal Theological Seminary at Fort Hare which was a multi-denominational theological seminary in South Africa. The Seminary was built on land acquired from the Church of Scotland.

In the article, the Rev. John Waddell (Commission of Assembly by the Overseas Councils convener) expressed his 'sympathy for the Bantu Presbyterians and other Churches involved. According to Mr. Waddell, the takeover, officially claimed to be part of provision for expansion at Fort Hare University, was insensitive and in "disregard of a solemn undertaking carried out in a most callous fashion". He claimed that the "real reasons" might involve a desire for confrontation with the Churches, fear of "the contagion of freedom", or pursue of the South African government's policy of education in ethnic groups' (Unknown Author, 1975:12).

In this article we can see that already the Church of Scotland is starting on the group level to take sides with the Bantu Presbyterian Church, its partner church in South Africa, and that the government is unjust in governance.

In June 1975 another article relating to South Africa was published in *Life and Work* under the “The Church at Large” section. This time instead of dealing with South Africa directly the article looked at how money from a “Special fund to combat racism of the World Council of Churches (Unknown Author, 1975b:14)” was being dispensed.

Among the activities which the funds are to support, the W.C.C. list “political education in South Africa and other means”

Southern Africa took the bulk of this fund with \$83500 going to the “African National Congress (Rhodesia)” \$83500 going to the “South West African People’s Organisation” the “African National Congress (South Africa)” and “Pan African Congress (South Africa)” receiving \$45000 respectively (Unknown Author, 1975b:14).

In July 1975 another article entitled the “B.C.C. Attack on South Africa” appeared in the “The Church at Large” section of *Life and Work*. In it leaders of the British Council of Churches (which included the Church of Scotland) issued a statement ‘attacking the South African Government for “use of repressive laws” against the Christin Institute of Southern Africa’ (Unknown Author, 1975c:12).

The Government has accused them of “promoting the political, social, and economic attitudes of the World Council of Churches”. The parliamentary committee of the state had accused Beyers Naude of promoting “black-dominant socialist” views and has thus frozen the funds given by the W.C.C. The parliamentary committee accused the W.C.C. of supporting violent action (Unknown Author, 1975c:12) .

The B.C.C. argued that it was a non-violent institution. ‘They say that the action against the institute makes it “difficult to believe the genuineness of the South African Government’s so called détente policy” and compare it to the Soviet policy of working towards détente while denying human rights to Christians and others” (Unknown Author, 1975c:12).

To label someone in Europe as part of the Soviet in the 1970s and 1980s carried with it an extremely negative connotation. This was a turnaround as the B.C.C. argued it was the government that had socialist/communist agendas rather than the Christian Institute of Southern Africa.

South Africa fell out of the limelight for some time after its flurry in 1975. However, the theme of racism, liberation and unity, were very much part of *Life and Work*. In November 1975, the editor of *Life and Work*, Mr. Robert Kernohan published a full page editorial on “Liberation and Unity” in his editorial comments.

In his introduction he identifies the need for the World Council of Churches as they were meeting for their 5<sup>th</sup> Assembly in Nairobi later that month. The theme of the meeting was “Jesus Christ frees and unites”. Mr Kernohan felt that it would be better if it was “only he frees and unites” as this would show how Jesus Christ brings truth to humanity through salvation (Kernohan, 1975:5).

In the second section, Kernohan believes that there is a double standard in the W.C.C. as it preaches non-violence to the rich but then supports organisations that perpetuate violence in the name of liberation who just happen to be poor and oppressed. Thus,

he feels that the W.C.C. has focused on liberation rather than reconciliation. He ends this section saying: “let us pray that the Nairobi Assembly will take its stand against that violence: not just “institutional violence” but the really mangling, bereaving, violence of war and terrorism’ (Kernohan, 1975:5). Kernohan fails to see the relationship between poverty and oppression because his theology is largely other worldly and justifies his conservative political stance by evading responsibility for oppression and its consequences.

In the next section he focuses on solidarity. Kernohan feels that people have not sought solidarity. They have not been introspective and these liberation movements have done the opposite of uniting. He ends this section saying: “but ultimately Christian liberation is about God’s grace, not human rights. The oppression of sin, would we all bear, is more pervious than the worst of human tyrannies. The liberation movement of that brings no delusion meant does not divide mankind but reunites us with God. It is in that sense of that Jesus Christ frees and unites” (Kernohan, 1975:5). Again, Kernohan fails to see that there can be no global solidarity without a common aim and vision. He also fails to recognise the solidarity that exists among the oppressed.

Although South Africa is not mentioned in depth in this section it is alluded to. It also points to Kernohan’s conservative politics. Although not trained as a theologian he cannot see the point of violence.

In January 1976 a small section was devoted to the incoming moderator T.F. Torrance forthcoming visit to South Africa. The article suggest that this is to gain wide opinion

of the situation in South Africa whilst he also visits various churches, and missions of the Church of Scotland (Unknown Author, 1976:9).

Although this might seem insignificant, it is important for two reasons. First, the General Assembly Moderator is only in term one year in Scotland. To take a month out of that year to travel to South Africa is a long time but also points to the importance that this was taking in the Church of Scotland. Second, the Student Uprising would happen this year as well as the publication of *Ras, Volk, en Nasie*. This would give context to these events within the Church of Scotland.

In May 1976, the Overseas Council Secretary for Staffing placed an article in *Life and Work* looking for help in South Africa. The then secretary, Rev. Ian Moir was quoted as saying: “Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, the black South African leader, stated recently that it was not too late for a ‘white’ change of heart. ‘I implore the whites to turn away from the kind of future the government’s present policies are creating’ he said. Christians from Scotland. I was invited by the Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa to share in helping to bring about change and reconciliation in that country” (Unknown Author, 1976b:28). The Overseas Council were looking for a medical superintendent to help in Tugela Ferry Hospital in the Kwazulu Bantustan. They also sought a minister to work in the Lovedale district. The section reads

“A minister is required for work in the famous Lovedale district, where the famous college is soon to be bought by the government to be developed by the Ciskei Bantustan as a major teacher training college. There will be opportunities for chaplaincy work among the students and the Bantu Presbyterian Church is hoping to develop a lay training centre. Money is available from the sale of the Lovedale Bible School, taken over by the government recently. There will be an opportunity for parish work in neighbouring rural congregations”

(Unknown Author, 1976b:28)

The *Life and Work* had vested interests in South Africa because the Church of Scotland had substantial properties there and was still sending medical personal and ministers to South Africa.

In the same issue of *Life and Work*, the letters column had one selection for just letters regarding reader's response to the editorial page written in November. The section was entitled "W.C.C. – and Africa". Below are some extracts from letters

In one letter Prof. Rev. James Whyte (Convenor, Inter-Church Relations Committee) criticised the editorial for showing his commitment to the W.C.C. He says

Whatever, therefore, the personal or political attitudes of the editor of *Life and Work*, when, as editor of the Church's magazine, he criticises (or praises) the World Council or the British Council of Churches, he has no business to forget that the Church for, and to which he speaks is a committed member of these bodies. If an editor cannot accept the limitation on his editorial freedom, he is not being loyal to the Church of Scotland  
(1976:29)

Kernohan replied to Whyte saying

Loyalty to the Church of Scotland, or Christ's catholic Kirk or which it is a province, does not demand that every member share the opinion of Professor Whyte and the editor of "Life and Work" that our Church should remain a member of a fallible W.C.C.. There is a right of private judgement there. As for the public judgement of editorial comment in "Life and Work" it was, and will remain, that the Kirk's loyalty to its Head must demand of the W.C.C. a scriptural, evangelical Christian commitment and a single, fearless standard of Christian judgement and love in dealing with all the tyrannies of this world, black, white, and red.  
(1976:29)

This is the only letter in the whole section that challenged Kernohan's understanding of the W.C.C. and the only one that he replies to directly in the edition. The rest of the letters are in favour of what Kernohan has suggested regarding the misalliance of the W.C.C. with liberation movements. However, this might not be that the readership was in favour of Kernohan's view but rather an editorial judgement that he made to support his view after the heated exchange found in the letter of Prof Whyte. It has to be



remembered that at that time Scotland was predominantly socialist in politics while the CoS appeared to be rather conservative. It also has to be remembered that Kernohan controlled what was published.

Interestingly enough South Africa is only mentioned once in passing. Whilst Mozambique and Rhodesia form the content of two of the letters.

Although *Life and Work* produced small articles regarding South Africa, the August 1976 *Life and Work* featured a full length main article by Rev. Dr. Malcolm Mackay. This is probably the first edition that would have been able to deal with the June 1976 uprising.

Rev. Dr. Mackay was a Former Australian Cabinet minister, former secretary to the Australian Council of Churches, a visitor to the General Assembly of Scotland in 1976. He wrote this article before the June uprising when he was in South Africa. This was of particular interest because the Moderator Rev T.F. Torrance would be visiting the country in the following month. The article was spread over two pages and broken into five sections.

First, Mackay uses the introduction to show black voices that he encountered (Mackay, 1976:10). The first a black M.P. says “I find it hard to believe there is a God when I think how the men who brought us our faith have treated us”. He then uses the words of a black Dutch Reformed Minister saying “What do you think it feels like to grow older and to know that when I am too tired to work anymore I will have no house, no property of my own – it is against the law for me to own land”. Mackay says the following

... and then picture became quite clear. Until very recently the whites had deliberately kept the blacks unskilled, unable to acquire property and indeed unable to compete with white tradesmen or semiskilled labour. They were regarded unfit for ordinary human intercourse but to be stabled and fed in minimal conditions necessary for their optimum performance as servants. Not quite slaves – but far from it either.

He continues saying that this is not the case in the homelands. That in the homelands black people are trained and used but he produced no evidence to support this statement.

Second, is his conversation with a Cabinet Minister who believed change was happening but the time-scale was the issue (Mackay, 1976:10-11). There is an interesting section where he writes about the Dutch Reformed Church and in particular *Ras, Volk, en Nasie*. He says

The greatest surprise, and it was a pleasant one, was the regard to the attitude of leading members of the Dutch Reformed Church. It was from this sector that some of the most intransigent attitudes in support of apartheid had once derived. Books written purporting to find Biblical justifications for the concept. Bitter reprisals were taken against those who dare to step outside the confines of the status quo. No doubt there are still plenty of Dominees who have sympathies with the ultraconservative, but I did not discover them.

On the contrary, talking with groups of theological students, younger ministers, professors of theology and retired ministers - a wide cross-section - I found the universal recognition that change was overdue. Some men indeed indicated readiness to stand out against all attempts to intimidate or silence them. Yet, through it all, I had the impression that they felt there was more time available for change than I gathered when talking to black, coloured or Indian leaders.

Third, he spoke with black men about “facing the full discrimination of their hurts and injustices but with firm and certain convictions about the true scale of values” (Mackay, 1976:11). In Mackay’s understanding black people were not communist and inherently do not seek violence. Black people have a deep Christian conviction. They were ready

to suffer and compromise. Black people had every right in Mackay's eyes to harbour bitterness and hatred. He said:

in their situation I would not only be angry and determined to fight such obvious injustice, as they were, but I would also be bitter and full of resentment, which I have conquered.

Fourth, he focused on the hurt and the pain that was present in both Blacks and Afrikaners. The question was raised if this situation was not a result of the colonial and mistreatment of the British towards the Boers.

Fifth, he believes that time is short and the whites have either to change or face violence (Mackay, 1976:11). However, he believes South Africa provides hope for the world because it has the potential to change and it all begins with repentance and apology. He says:

“Nothing is so powerful as an idea when it's time has come. It is my conviction that the riches of character, of faith and of morality - which are more evident in South Africa today than any other nation I know on earth - will be the tinder which can be set afire with a new way of change. It is for this miracle of change in human hearts and minds that I as a Christian and called to work and pray... the greatest power in the world is not an army or the atom. Mao is hopelessly wrong when he says that all power grows out of the barrel of a gun. There is a power which can melt the cold hearts of men, and it is offered to South Africa today”.

The above article is fascinating as it not only debunks the apartheid rhetoric that blacks were communist but also it also showed them as peaceful and seeking a peaceful resolution. The decision on whether violence was to be used was not in the hands of blacks but rather in hands of whites. Whites were at fault and had the choice to move towards reconciliation. The problem is that it might be happening at to slow a pace.

After this article was written the June uprising happened. It is still interesting with reports of that day that violence was not again coming from blacks but rather was from whites.

In the September 1976 of *Life and Work*, there was another section of where two letters from readers were published. Lesley Rigg commentating on the article in August shed light on the Government's implementation of the Homeland states. She felt that it did not represent the population dynamic both geographically and economically. She raised the following point

many sincere Christians, troubled by these facts, still say that anything preferable to violent revolution. Not having lived through a World War, I am perplexed that so many felt they could take up arms then, but condemn the struggle for freedom in Southern Africa today as "subversion and terrorism". The Church must let its conscience speak

(1976:7).

In the second letter some 30 pages later the author stated that it was more a communist understanding that Africa would fall in if blacks took power. He also believed that we should support the Government of South Africa because they stuck with Britain through both World Wars (Lawson, 1976:37).

The November issue of 1976 was the precursor to the Moderator's article about South Africa which was to be published two months later. The editor in the Newsdesk (formally known as Church at Large) section wrote a short summary piece entitled 'Risk of "Immense Eruption" in South Africa – Moderator'. In this section the Kernohan gives a summary of what the Moderator has said since he came back from South Africa (1976b:8). Moderator Torrance has asked British Government and the W.C.C. to recognise the Ciskei despite opposition from Churches in this regard, contrary to the policy of the CoS Overseas Council and the General Assembly.

Torrance who was invited by the DRC believed that “there had not been sufficient theological criticism of the way apartheid and separate development had operated”.

Kernohan focused on three points from the Moderator’s visit

Most black people are against violence. But many blacks want to create “the kind of trouble which will force attention from the whites”, many of whom do not know what black social conditions are like and have “tunnel vision”.

There is a need for Church unity and combined effort in South Africa. The Moderator, who was guest of the Bantu Presbyterian Church, criticised “some Scotsmen” in the mainly white Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa for concentrating, on “running their own congregations rather than the outreach of the Gospel and “going forward with others”. He spoke of being appalled and ashamed”.

Black Christians “put first things first in Christ” and even criticised missionaries who seemed “more concerned with social issues”, Apartheid should be tackled in the light of the new freedom in Christ.

In January 1977, The Moderator of the Church of Scotland’s General Assembly published his article in *Life and Work* regarding his visit to South Africa the following year. The article took up two pages and was entitled “The Moderator in South Africa” with the subheading “The Rt. Rev. Professor Tom Torrance reported on his recent visit to the land where the wind of change is gathering force” (Torrance, 1977:14-15).

Torrance divides the article in seven sections. In his introduction he focuses on his childhood growing up in a missionary family and his engagement with the Bantu Presbyterian Church. The Bantu Presbyterian Church excites Torrance as they look on missionaries with great fervour. He says

I was very excited by the way in which Bantu Presbyterian Church in particular look back upon their origin. They look back upon the first missionaries, who brought them light in their heathen darkness, with the enormous reverence and thankfulness. The succeeding missionaries, too,

were very highly revered and I must say that this whole attitude toward the Church of Scotland and others help them was both humbling an exciting”  
(Torrence, 1977:14)

He points out that Bantu Presbyterian Church was the first missionary church to gain independence but they still organise themselves on the same Presbyterian principles as the Church of Scotland. One of the challenges faced by this church is that because of apartheid Black people do not have the funds available to support both the Church and local church.

In the second section Torrance suggests that some European practices do not fit into the South African context. Presbyterianism and in particularly running a Presbytery meeting in at the South African context does not work in the same way as in Scotland. This is because it is a foreign concept to them. He believes the Church of Scotland should allow them to develop their own way and traditions even if that looked Episcopal in structure.

In the subsection he focuses on the positives that European culture brings to the church. One of them is the reformed liturgical tradition. He continues by saying to the reader that the Bantu Presbyterian Church is no longer her daughter church but a sister church. You don't feel the black consciousness as a problem. He says

In talking to the Federal Seminary outside Pietermaritzburg I pointed out that the consciousness theology that developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century looks straight into the “German Christians” and to the Nazi movement in Germany; and the German culture, the German blood-and-soil-consciousness theology was extremely damaging thing to the Christian Church.

There can be no black theology any more than there can be a white theology. There are distinctive African ways of thinking and these have to be encouraged and these are basically what I have spoken of as relational and structural ways of thinking and these precisely the ways in which in any case we have now learned to think in modern times.

(Torrance, 1977:14)

Torrance continued by saying that the Bantu Presbyterian Church is paradoxical in nature. One side they see themselves as an independent church - Torrance questions whether the Church of Scotland should continue to send missionaries as it has done in the past – whilst, it feels it needs the Church of Scotland and therefore wants to create a joint church, the model in which he was brought up in China many years earlier.

If this is the case Torrance feels that Church of Scotland missionaries are “not to go out to be pastors of others or the mission station back to work with them and another Presbyteries in order to help them develop quite definitely an aggressive, in a proper sense, missionary outlook”(Torrance, 1977:14).

Torrance turns his gaze upon the larger social problem in South Africa. He feels that it could be summarised as of “developing polarisation of nationalism, black and white”. Afrikaners are narrow minded but this is because they have to work within Government legislation. He felt that Chief Buthelezi was more balanced when it came to seeing the racial problem from both sides. He says

the white opposition in South Africa seem to me really to be empty of anything very positive or creative. I was deeply disappointed by their whole outlook. While they are desperately opposed to apartheid they really have nothing of significance that is genuinely creative or positive to offer for the future

(Torrance, 1977:15)

The next section Torrance focuses on helping the Transkei as it has become an independent homeland in South Africa. He believes what the Transkei needs is Christian support especially now that they are recognised as they are seen as an independent state by the South African government but not recognised internationally.

The next section focuses on why he feels they should be supported. He believes with the Transkei would turn either secularist or Marxist. Britain also has a day to pay homage to them.

I believe that we in Britain have a particular debt here because some of them are quite clearly embittered, with Britain in particular, because we were the people who first incorporated them into the Cape Colony; and it was the South Africans who finally – in their way – acceded to their request, made again and again, to become independent. If we still refuse to recognise them we are simply throwing them back into the arms of South Africa, and therefore are doing our best, even against our intentions, to make them a puppet Government of South Africa; the opposite must be the case. Now if our Government cannot do that it is all the more important the Christian Churches should maintain strong friendship and strong support for the people of the Transkei so that they may develop in the kind of way that we and they would like.

(Torrance, 1977:15)

He continues this section by saying that he feels that the Churches in South Africa and Transkei should unite. Western Churches need to step back and stop imposing theological and polity paradigms onto the Churches. Churches should use their influence to encourage unity within South Africa so that a united Church could heal the apartheid wounds. He is totally unable to critique the homelands system

In his last section he concludes by Torrance challenged the D.R.C. he says

I have proposed to the Dutch Reformed Church that they should call a conference of all the Churches to consider how best they might together promote the gospel of reconciliation and then how best they might together combat those policies which have pushed people away from Christ and damaged the gospel.

This will not perhaps take place as quickly as I had hoped but I believe that we can help them do that and we cannot help them to do that, if all we do is condemn the D.R.C. They, have after all, had a great missionary tradition; we must support them, and it is the kind of missiologists that I met in Durban, Westville, who are largely Dutch Reformed people, who can be our greatest support. Those who are the leaders of the mission Church, the



“sending Kirk”, can be of the greatest support to such a venture; now if we can support them in every way I believe that here would be enormous change which would affect not only the church and the missionary situation but the whole socio-legal and socio-political situation.

(Torrance, 1977:15)

It is amazing to think that Torrance actually believed that his theological challenge could sway the DRC – incredible arrogance! In the General Assembly of 1982 he actually referred to a meeting he had with the DRC ‘behind closed doors’ to discuss these issues. A SA missionary, Graham Duncan asked him on the floor of Assembly why the doors had to be closed? In this he was supported by another minister of the RPCSA (the name of the Bantu Presbyterian Church was changed to the Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1979) who was studying in Scotland, Rev Charity Majiza.

It is interesting that this article is contrary to the article by Rev. Brown. Torrance had spent a month in South Africa where Brown was there for three years. Brown felt that black consciousness was a good thing where Torrance equates it to Nazi Germany. Brown sees the opposition as creative whilst Torrance sees it as destructive and with nothing to offer.

Torrance also makes one reference to Government in the whole article. Why was Torrance not saying anything about the political situation especially since he had been there after June 1976. He also validates the homeland project which the B.C.C. and the W.C.C. had condemned. He continues by saying that all international Churches should support the unification of the Churches in South Africa.

He also then admits that he feels that the Churches should support the D.R.C. “in all ways”. This is a fascinating comment as in future years the Church of Scotland went on to change this position at the W.A.R.C.

The above understanding seems to be slanted towards a non-critical response to the South African situation. Is this because Torrance does not want to damage possible talk relations – where he had offered to be the mediator - or is it because he only saw what the government wanted him to see or was it because he didn’t fully grasp the situation.

Prof Torrance’s position was paradoxical. He was a highly respected theologian who had a distinguished ministry. He came from a missionary which had historic ties with China and medical mission in Israel. However, as Moderator of General Assembly he was not a spokesperson for the Church of Scotland. That role was fulfilled by the Churches Boards and committees. He was only able to speak in his private capacity and here is the paradox; many assumed he was speaking for the church during his period as Moderator.

In the same edition on page 34 in a small section entitled “News From All Quarters” the following two small articles appeared.

Church and Nation convenor the Rev. A. Arnot Fleming sent a telegram to the South African Prime Minister, Mr John Vorster, expressing “dismay” at the arrest of members of the staff of the South African Council of Churches and the Christian Institute of Southern Africa. It urged their release of “at least” that charges be made public. Another telegram to the Rev. Beyers Naudé of the Christian Institute expressed sympathy and “admiration for the courageous stand”.

The British Council of Churches has passed a resolution supporting the Government’s non-recognition of the Transkei

(Unknown Author, 1977:34)

The two snippets seem to contradict the Moderators article. However, they were tucked in the back of the *Life and Work*. Could this have been because the editor agreed with Torrance but wanted to seem impartial?

In the 1977 November issue of *Life and Work* a small snippet was written in the Newsdesk section.

The members of the Glasgow University divinity faculty have written to the South African Ambassador calling for an inquiry into the circumstances of the death in detention of the South African “*black-consciousness*<sup>6</sup>” leader Steven Biko. The letter also said the signatories were “deeply disturbed by the number of deaths in detention in South Africa.”

An earlier statement from the World Council of Churches General Secretary Dr Philip Potter claimed that Mr Biko “was victim of a systematic policy of torture and killing” and that “the apartheid system’s deepest allegiance is to death not life.” The statement said that “Christians round the world have expressed their outrage at the unexplained death of South Africa’s outstanding black leader.

Among other protests were one from the officers of the British Council of Churches.

(Unknown Author, 1977b:9)

The above comment shows us something about the editorial views on both Black Consciousness, and also the W.C.C. and B.C.C. The only section that is in inverted comma’s that is not a direct quote is the black-consciousness adjective of Steve Biko. In previous issues we have seen how the editor and Moderator did not support black-consciousness. I am of the opinion that he has done as a sarcastic measure to highlight the infiltration of this movement among Scottish students. These are not any students; these students are training at a theological faculty of the Church of Scotland. The hidden question could be “is this the type of leaders our colleges are creating”?

---

<sup>6</sup> My italics

The second section focuses on the W.C.C. and the B.C.C. The editor has been in heated exchanges before about these organisations. They have not shown the breadth of the protests but have isolated it with two organisations. Is the editor trying to diminish the reputation of the two organisations?

In December 1977, *Life and Work* published a news article on the Church and Nation statement regarding South Africa (:12). In it the Church and Nation Committee are said to have issued this statement to criticise the actions of the South African government. The South African government had decided to ban numerous organisation and individuals connected with them. The article also mentions the death of Steve Biko and the support of Church and Nation for the Christian Institute.

A separate snippet is also on the same page reads

The South African Council of Churches has published a report "Investment in South Africa." It includes a code which "we think should become obligatory for bodies investing in South Africa" the only price given is the local one of 50c

(Unknown Author, 1977d:12)

The issue of South Africa fell silent in *Life and Work* from 1977 to 1980 apart from an advertisement for a Missionary in Charge at Lovedale Institution. Rhodesia and the changing face of Africa were now more predominant. There was some correspondence in the form of letters written to the magazine.

In June 1978, Alfred Wilson wrote to *Life and Work*. He spoke of two stays that he had in South Africa. He says

I have worked alongside and talk to a considerable cross-section of the indigenous population throughout the whole of Southern Africa, and have very good reason for believing that the general run of folk in the Republic of South Africa have more to make life worth living, and are better provided for than their counterparts in any of the newly emerged African states.

In this unequal world, the process of educating backward peoples is a long one, and needs to be done gradually.

Incessant nagging by those who do not have to bear responsibility of government is ill-advised and unhelpful. The present South African Government deserves sympathy and understanding in its exceedingly difficult task.

(1978:30)

Dr James Stewart, Principal of Lovedale Missionary Institution had made similar comments a hundred years earlier.

Under the influence of some of the forms of natural religion - it may be that of fetishism, or that of any other name or kind, the African is a very slightly evolved man, especially as compared with men of many other races. This black believer in his own natural religion of fear and grotesque faith, of dread of witchcraft, and strange practices to protect himself from its influence, is in consequence and at times rather an incomprehensible creature. ... the spiritual man was sleeping, the new religion took him by the hand and led him out of a land of thick darkness, gloom, and horror – filled with malevolent shades and dreaded spectral powers – and brought him into the clear, sweet light of a simple belief in a God of goodness and love, such as Christianity reveals

(Stewart 1894:42-43).

In the same section G.E. Wingate says

I am quite disgusted with the display of pro-Communist anti-South Africa attitudes. It seems some people long for death and destruction to both black and white in South Africa.

(1978:30)

We can see from the above letters that the changes in South Africa and the rhetoric behind the Black Conscious Movement were still being labelled as Communist. For many people the idea of what the South African government was doing could still be justified. If one looks at these letters would think that black people in South Africa were seen as better off than in the rest of Africa.

#### **4.4. 1980 – 1985**

1980 saw many changes in South Africa and internationally. Both the *Belhar Confession* and the *Kairos Document* were written during this period. The DRC and the Hervormde Kerk were also expelled from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

P.W. Botha came to power, the antiapartheid movement grew, and Desmond Tutu won the Nobel peace prize.

After two years of complete silence *Life and Work* published a two-page article by Rev. J.B. Mirrilees. Rev. Mirrilees was a Church of Scotland minister who ministered in South Africa from 1953- 1958. He returned to South Africa for three months and wrote this article.

On his return to South Africa, Rev. Mirrilees was shocked that blacks had more freedom to roam and work in South Africa than before he left. He found that a coloured organist playing in the church he was preaching in and was “satisfied that the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa now pays the same basic stipend to all its ministers – white black and Coloured” (1980:26). He did not say that all ministers were paid the same, however, for many white ministers were paid substantially more than the minimum.

He also found that in Cape Town banks, toilet facilities and buses no longer had segregation. Blacks and Coloureds also had access to better jobs.

Regarding the state of the country, whites he feels are threatened by the abolition of job reservation whilst blacks are being housed in very good accommodation by the government. The Coloureds can now buy their own homes. He believes that

“Mitchell’s Plain, outside Cape Town, is an outstanding example of a middle-class Coloured suburb. And in Soweto, near Johannesburg, though most of the Blacks live in seemly endless rows of drab, monotonous concrete boxes. I saw quite substantial houses being built for owner occupation. There are, I learned, at least six black millionaires in Soweto,

and I saw the kind of mansions they live in. But these are very much the exception”

(1980:27)

The above quote shows is a juxtaposition to what was being experienced in South Africa. The article makes it seem as if money is trickling down and blacks and coloureds are now sharing in the share of the economy. However, Mirrilees does not say how these people came to get this money. Was it through the exploitation of their fellow blacks or coloureds? Were they being pay rolled through the government. He also fails to ask the question “how do others see this wealth”? It is important to note that the average person in Britain does not understand housing and poverty in the same way that someone in a third world or developing country understands it. This comment creates more confusion about the South African situation than it answers.

The government had a big task ahead of it. As, “six million more black cities comparable to Soweto, which a million people, will be required before the end of the century”. This could be done if the government spent its money on development and not defence. South Africa also has a “high unemployment rate, especially among non-whites”. To cope with this South Africa would need to gain “something like 1500 jobs everyday”. As a consequence, to that he believes that crime is an issue in South Africa.

He goes on to paint a picture of white South Africans saying

But the picture is not all gloom. And the South Africans are by no means all selfish, callous, hard-hearted racist. Everywhere I went I was impressed and indeed humbled by the number of totally dedicated people I met.

(Mirrilees, 1980:27)

He ends his article with the following lines

“So long as there are Pass Laws, so long as full social and political rights are denied, so long as the inhuman migrant labour system continues... But how much longer will they wait”.

(Mirrilees, 1980:27)

Although Rev Mirrilees sees a remarkable change the same problem is happening as with Rev. Brown; change is slow and they are worried how long black people will wait for change.

In the next issue of *Life and Work*, the letters section featured responses to Rev. Mirrilees article. Ian Moir responded by lambasting his article. Ian Moir was the former Superintendent of Pholela High School, one of the foremost black centres of Education in Natal, and then Africa Secretary of the Overseas Council. Below is the original response

### **Cosmetics for black spots**

Mr Mirrilees' article "A Return to South Africa" says what most of us want to hear. We long for signs that apartheid is on the way out in South Africa and what he writes seems to be pointing in that direction. The truth, however, would seem to be harsher and far less palatable.

Through contacts with black South African Christians, correspondence and visits to their country, I find that the removal of petty apartheid restrictions holds little significance for blacks in South Africa today. These are seen as "cosmetic" changes and as part of a strategy to convince the world that things are improving in South Africa. How many blacks can afford to go into expensive hotels and theatres anyway? The

removal of "job reservation" could be significant only if it meant that a black man would stand an equal chance of getting a job in competition with white applicants. In real terms, however, it means that the South African Government is merely accepting a situation which has existed for many years. The railways and car industry, for example, have had blacks working in "white" jobs for a long time. Within South Africa the Government is desperately trying to build up a black middle class who will see their best interests served in supporting a white régime which offers them material rewards.

The main problem for us in Britain is to recognise that while petty apartheid is being removed, the South African Government is steadily making it more difficult for the blacks ever to have an effective voice in South Africa. All blacks are being forced to take out citizenship of one of the Bantustans or homelands. This means that the black population will be forced to surrender any claim to South African citizenship and

in time there will be no black South Africans, but only black citizens of independent countries called Transkei, KwaZulu, etc. In effect 80 per cent of the population will belong to 13 per cent of South Africa! This the blacks will never accept. New measures make it necessary for migrant workers in the white areas to have their work permits renewed every year. Their security of employment is more important to them than being allowed to sit on a park bench which used to be marked "whites only." Can we accept a country which brands all its critics as Communists and detains them indefinitely without trial? Have we forgotten that men of Christian principle such as Beyers Naude are still banned? Did Steve Biko die in vain?

It took a seven years' war and 30,000 deaths before 250,000 whites surrendered their privilege in Rhodesia. Do not let us imagine that the four million whites in South Africa will give up less easily.

(Rev.) IAN A. MOIR,  
Edinburgh.

(1980:7)



In the article Moir shows through his understanding that South Africa has not changed. It is the removal of petty apartheid. It thus negates what has been said by Mirrilees. He again pre-warns that violence could be the outcome if things do not change.

In July 1980 a full page article was placed in *Life and Work* titled “Change and Conscience in South Africa Today”. The article written by Peter Hannon was the first article to have a photo of a South African leader in it.

The article as shown in the above picture is about P. W. Botha’s first year as Prime Minister. Hannon is of the view that Botha is the hope of change in South Africa. He is seen as the mediator between “black nationalism and Afrikaner nationalism”(1980:16). It is mentioned that Botha passed the law allowing for black trade union and “has made moves towards equal pay and job opportunities”(1980:16).

According to Hannon, Botha believed Apartheid was dead and therefore Botha was trying to chart a way forward to ending it. This caused a right-wing group to form but on the whole he had the backing of his cabinet. The hardship for him would be getting the black majority on his side if he tried to keep the National Party united. However, in the black community perception of Botha was split between those who thought he was a “ruthless terrorist ready to sacrifice innocent lives” versus “a martyr for the liberation struggle”( 1980:16). Those in the Homelands were calling for open ended talks to negotiations.

Hannon quotes an unnamed Afrikaans professor who said

For generations our survival as Afrikaners has depended on our determination to go it alone, regardless of anyone else. It was only this spirit

into our apartheid policy when we came to power. Now suddenly we realise survival depends on consultation, and we don't know how to consult.

(1980:16)

He continued to offer three points on how the Church of Scotland might be able to help the Afrikaners through the consultation process. First, “accept that much of what happens here is our responsibility”. Second, “Southern Africans are not some peculiar breed with particular inclinations towards injustice”. Third, “can we search for how to work together with those forces within Afrikanerdom who struggle courageously for change?” (1980:16).

The above article indicates a real belief that South Africa was on the brink of change. The article was not focused on Black Consciousness but rather focused on the change in white thinking. Whites had a prime minister that although having decent people in his ranks has the backing of his cabinet. He has plenty of experience working with various groups and put in place changes in policy that will positively affect black people. The role of the Church of Scotland is one of mediator and friend to offer support as South Africa undertakes this journey.

This article affirms Rev. Mirrilees but goes against the letter of Rev. Moir who had long term experience within the South African context. This reveals the problem of those who had superficial experience of the situation and little exposure to black townships, hostels and villages.

The September letters section of *Life and Work* consisted of two letters written about Hannon's article. The first letter was written by former Moderator of the Church of Scotland Very Rev. Prof R. S. Barbour. In his letter Barbour warns the church that

although Hannon's letter was good it failed to mention that working with politically liberal people has not bought any resolution in South Africa. He says

no Afrikaner Prime Minister, however, liberal his personal views, can do anything other than make the preservation of party unity his priority. To split Afrikanerdom is the first and cardinal sin (as it would no doubt be with us if we were in the same position

(1980:6)

Barbour stressed that they should not feel consciously at ease by talking with liberals.

They should also be speaking with majority of the country.

What is interesting in this letter is that it is the first time that Desmond Tutu is mentioned at the negotiating table.

The second letter comes from Rev. John Duncan. He quotes an Anglican bishop who recently came back from South Africa as saying that "The Church is usually expected to perform the task of reconciliation, but sadly in South Africa it has got itself into a position where it was unable to do this" (Duncan, 1980:6). He was of the belief that reconciliation could only be made through first reconciling oneself to Christ and then to others. This meant that reconciliation must be nonviolent. He offers four things that people can do about the South African situation:

(1) We can accept and practice the Gospel of Reconciliation through the life of Christ ourselves. (2) we can pray regularly in private and in church for reconciliation and spiritual renewal amongst all races in South Africa. (3) We can encourage and support all those blacks and whites who are bringing people together through worship and witness, and through cultural, social and sporting activities. (4) We can recognise and welcome change and progress when it comes.

(Duncan, 1980:6)

Duncan's view is interesting because he feels that the church in South Africa is not a credible witness and has failed the people. He then speaks of personal piety rather

than any understanding regarding the atrocities in South Africa. The Afrikaners were all pietist's influenced by Andrew Murray – yet, they instituted apartheid!

The September 1981 issue featured two small snippets featured in *Life and Work*.

In the Newsdesk section the snippet headline was “Zambians Seek Support Over South Africa”. The snippet is about the Zambians Church’s open letter asking the Church of Scotland to support sanctions. To request that the British Government use sanctions. The Church was tired of violence being the norm in Southern Africa and they felt that this would end the problem.

What is interesting about this is that the Prime Minister of Britain was against sanctions. The Church of Scotland was being asked to lobby on their behalf. It is also the first time that sanctions are mentioned in the paper. What is found in these letters is often a stark contrast to what is being written in the articles.

The second snippet was about a South African youth worker, Silumko Tsotsi from East London coming to Iona during the summer.

Although the next article in November 1981 issue of *Life and Work* was not written about South Africa it was written about Racism. This was a prevalent issue in the UK at this time especially because of the 1981 race riots in the UK. The article was written by Very Rev. Dr. W. B. Johnston. Johnston was the previous year’s Moderator of the General Assembly and was a previous convenor of the Church and Nation Committee. At the time of writing this article he was chairman of the British Council of Churches.

Johnston asks why racism is present in people's views of UK and why it is present in their society. For him the answer is three fold. First, "It was a hangover of old imperialist and colonial ways" (1981:18). In this section he explains how racism did not exist outside of modern Europe. It is a by-product colonial expansion. Second, "racism is sometimes seen as the retention of safeguarding of privileges which are threatened. This view is focused in particular on two areas – those of immigration and of urban deprivation" (1981:18). In the former case this is laws that protect national identity – i.e. who is a citizen and who is not – and in latter case that people of colour do not share in the basic services enjoyed by whites. Third, "the most subtle but perhaps the most powerfully emotive fact of all is that we tend to see racism as a problem created *for us*, instead of realising that it is at least in a problem created by us. We think of our white society in this country as being uncomplicated and homogeneous until 'they' came and created the problem of race" (1981:18).

He gives says the Churches role

Lies with the understanding of the Church as the alternative society. In the church we are committed to the creation of a pluralistic society – the whole of the New Testament emphasises the nature of the Church as comprehending men, women and children of all races and conditions and classes. As our society (both in Europe and throughout the world) becomes more fragmented and polarised and as we therefore move steadily deeper into crisis, so the need for the Church to be and to show itself to be the alternative society becomes ever more urgent.

(1981:19)

Johnston feels that racism is a problem of all people in the UK whether it be local or international. The Church had an opportunity now to make a positive impact. Bodies like the W.C.C. and the B.C.C. have been misunderstood and therefore people should rally behind them.

In July 1982 an article entitled “The Gospel Compels us to Keep Contact” was published in *Life and Work*. Written by Rev. Duncan S Watson – a visiting fellow from Princeton Theological Seminary, and a senior lecturer in University of Durban-Westville in Natal – focused on the Churches relationship with DRC. This article was written before the World Alliance of Reformed Churches meeting in which the DRC was banned.

Rev. Watson wrote the article because he heard rumours that various reformed churches wished to excommunicate the DRC which he felt that was the wrong approach. He felt that this was against the Gospel teaching in special relation to the centrality of grace. He then goes on to remind the readers that this idea of excommunication was Catholic and went against reformed principles. This is not true for Calvin and other reformers used excommunication though in the form of deprivation of the saving graces of the Church, i.e. the sacraments.

He said:

We are not God. In the DRC Jesus Christ is proclaimed and the sacraments are celebrated, imperfectly to be sure they are there at the centre. (It is a worthy of note that the Black (Africa) Reformed Church associated with the DRC is a large and fast growing church, especially when compared with other mainline Churches. How can this be if the DRC us utterly defective in regard to the Gospel?) The DRC has strengths from which we can learn

(1982:26)

The Bible according to Watson is full of examples where God does not give up on his people. This is found in God’s relationship with Israel and how Paul does not give up on the synagogue. He believes by ostracising the DRC we fail to recognise them as Christian. The Gospel for him is about reconciliation through grace and not through

culture and race. He failed utterly to understand and interrogate the Reformation context which required strong measures to succeed against the monolithic Roman Catholic Church.

The second point he raises is that there are those in the DRC who are seeking change.

He feels that they should not be cut off. He says that they DRC are poor in two senses

The first is that amongst the people of the world Afrikaners are spoken of as pariahs. If they are seen to be such, are they then not, as outcasts, of special concern to the Christian world community, who need to stand alongside them? That may be asking and risking much but it is something the contemporary and greatly emphasised concern for the poor surely must imply (as Jacques Ellul pointed out in his book, "Violence," in reference to "unpopular" poor).

Naturally, one may object that many Afrikaners are in disfavour for very good moral reasons in that they have treated others as beyond the pale. That is true, but it reminds us of the more basic understanding of the word "poor". The poor as sinners. "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Christians are to be ambassadors of that Christ who reconciled the world to God not counting sin against it. All of us Christians still stand with the world in this respect. Of course, as Reinhold Niebuhr pointed out, there are bigger and lesser sins and many aspects of the apartheid policies which the DRC implicitly supports are major in their sinfulness. That, I think, Christians must quite clearly say to the DRC brothers and sister – but as brothers and sisters, not as enemies for it as enemies then we have cast the first stone and declared ourselves without sin.

(1982:26-27)

He then continues by saying that expelling the DRC would give weight to the thought that the "Church is going Marxist" and that their aim is to divide Afrikaners until they exist no more.

He therefore believes that it was against the Biblical and moral obligation that the church is to uphold. Again he fails to recognise that the DRC is a para political organisation and this he ignores. Sad that he eschews mention of Paul's 'principalities and powers' – could this have been selective amnesia!

It is interesting that Watson doesn't lay out the argument as to why they want to expel the DRC? Who are these people and what exactly is the theology division? He also fails to take account of the second exodus narrative where God sends the Israelites into exile.

It is interesting that the DRC must have known that the agenda of the W.A.R.C. before they went to the conference.

In the same article was a small box which contained the following snippet entitled "Disagreement on South Africa". Below is the snippet



(Unknown Author, 1981:26)

The above article represents the differing viewpoints of what and how to handle South Africa. The discussion happened at the General Assembly and this shows that Church's Overseas Council had moved to support those who were being oppressed. This is the first time that the churches position from an Assembly has been featured



as part of a full article. Torrance had been to South Africa on the invitation of the DRC. This might have impacted his response. He was not part of the Overseas Council at the time.

The October 1982, an article appeared in *Life and Work* about the W.A.R.C. meeting in Ottawa. The article was titled “Apartheid’s Shadow over Reformed Alliance” and was written by Bruce Cannon.

The opening line of the article reads ‘Ottawa 1982 will probably be remembered as the place and year when Reformed Churches finally lost patience with some of the white members of the family in South Africa. Two Churches were voted “into suspension”. (Cannon, 1982:10)‘.

Cannon talks about how the opening ceremony was a shock. Eleven Ministers from a delegation of South Africans – he does show that two of them were white – refused to take sacraments as a sign of protest against the apartheid regime. Cannon says that the protest made many delegates “unhappy” it showed that the issue was still a problem.

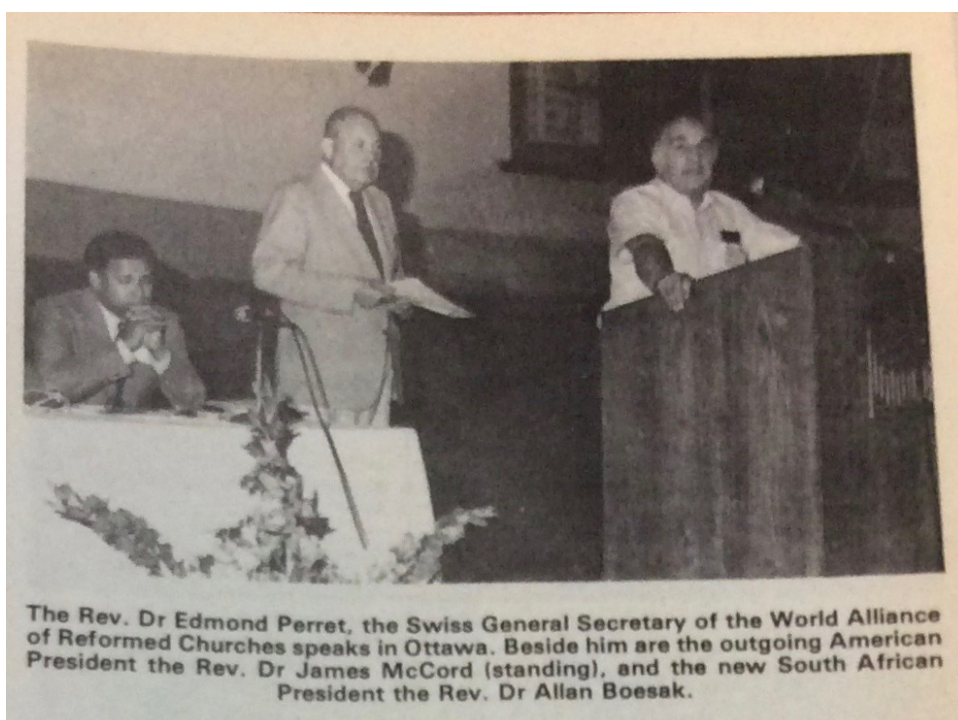
He then goes on to talk about how the meeting unfolded. He says that three subdivisions were set aside for the apartheid issue and an unscheduled public hearing was made were all parties could state their views on the matter. The three sub-division groups came together and called for the suspension of the Dutch Reformed Churches for their ‘moral an theological justification’ of apartheid’(1982:10).

The W.A.R.C. believed that Apartheid now risked tainting the reformed tradition. “The group further described apartheid as a sin, a travesty of the Gospel and a theological heresy” (1982:10).

Cannon suggests that the debate about suspension was both calm and balanced. The churches were both suspended until they could show that they had changed. This meant “No exclusion of blacks for services, support for those who suffered under apartheid, and unequivocal resolutions by the two Churches committing themselves to dismantling apartheid in both the Church and politics” (1982:10).

The council elected Rev. Allen Boesak as its President. In this section Cannon explains who Boesak was to the reader; his church affiliation, black theological stance and his role in the antiapartheid struggle.

Cannon then went on to discuss other matters that were raised in the meeting. The following photo appeared in *Life and Work*.



This is the first time that Allan Boesak is introduced into the magazine in any shape or form. Although painted as a proponent of Black Theology, Boesak is painted in a positive light. He is someone who has credentials and has the trust of those around him.

Cannon's depicts a very positive outlook on how the W.A.R.C. meeting in Ottawa was run. He at no point suggests that people felt bullied and that the decision carefully and meticulously arrived at by mutual consultation. Even the photograph that has been chosen for the article does not show Boesak in a negative light but rather as a thinker. This kind of article is a move away from the previous articles where the focus was predominantly on the DRC and the Church of Scotland's relationship with it. This article was now framing black theology and the black movement in a very positive light. In so doing the DRC were moved out of the limelight and seen as those who were wrong and had to be dealt with accordingly.

During December 1982 *Life and Work* featured two letters. The letters were written about the start of the Women's Guild action to boycott South African products. The Guild which is now called the "The Guild" was started in 1887 by Rev Dr Archibald Charteris. He felt that women's work in the church needed to be organized and started the Women's Guild (Wright, 1993).

In a letter written by Joyce McHarg, she openly criticises the Women's Guild for calling for an official boycott and providing a list of items that should not be bought (McHarg, 1982:38). The second letter written by Mrs Lucas Roberts again was upset with the Women's Guild for doing this. She felt it was the government's issue. She writes

In the last 13 years I have visited several parts of South Africa and the only place where I saw apartheid bad was in Cape Town. I travelled all over

Cape Province and things seem all right there. In the Transvaal everyone seems quite happy. Many of the Africans have cars or motor cycles. If they are so poorly paid how can they afford to buy them?

It states in one of the leaflets that the Africans who work in agriculture only receive in wages R15.40 (£9.80) per month. I disagree with this as I have spoken to quite a few and they all received a lot more. Admittedly the white people would not work at their rate. In the copper and coal mines they have quite a good wage, only our miners would want a great deal more. My son has been manager of copper mines and I know what I am talking about.

You really have to live among these people to see how they live. Many live in quite nice houses and are quite smartly and fashionably dressed. The trouble quarter is Soweto which is a huge place, all blacks where they are always fighting amongst themselves.

I myself met an African woman who had given up her paid job as a head teacher to work with the Church for nothing to help the poor there. They are a very religious body or people and attend church regularly, some walking for a great distance to get there.

Myself I shall continue to buy South African goods. If we boycott them what good can it do? They would eventually be out of jobs if their products did not sell. And why should we be asked to refrain from buying Rowntree/Mackintosh products? That is silly, as what we buy here is produced here, not in South Africa,

(Lucas, 1982:38)

The editor of the magazine did not give an alternative view. The Church of Scotland had taken a joint agreement as in his magazine with the Overseas Council and the Women's Guild and as part of the W.A.R.C. to say that Apartheid was wrong.

The editor was known to be in line with Margaret Thatcher's understanding that boycotting was wrong.

From the W.A.R.C. article and decision of the Guild letters flowed in to *Life and Work* from various people. Some supporting boycotts whilst others totally against it. The General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa I.C. Aitken wrote to the magazine to tell the readers that they only had a limited understanding of the problems

of apartheid. He continues by saying that Apartheid separates people based on one group's decisions (Aitken, 1983:15).

The August issue in 1983 featured the following Prayer. It is interesting to note the change in boycotts to reflect Sportsmen, families, and companies. This issue has not connected on the periphery but has real life consequences for people. When you boycott South Africa produce are you not in turn boycotting your family in South Africa? If one had to boycott South Africa could you lose your job because your company was so heavily vested. Apartheid therefore had international consequences. How does a church boycott in a way that does not boycott the family relationships and jobs of its own parishioners?



## Prayers for South Africa

*I still have hope because this is God's world and He is in charge.*  
(Bishop Desmond Tutu)

Father of us all,  
before we can pray for South Africa  
we must ask forgiveness for ourselves.  
We have our own apartheid  
of race, class, and creed.  
As a developed country  
we have our privileges  
at the expense of the weak.  
Our hands are not clean.  
Forgive us.  
Human dignity and unity  
are Your will.  
But we see a people divided,  
and we see people oppressed.

We pray for the Government of South Africa  
under pressure,  
from the world,  
and within its own borders.  
May its leaders see Your way  
for the future.

We pray for white South Africans,  
afraid of black political power;  
for black South Africans,  
diminished by the laws of their country;  
for the Coloured and Indian communities,  
with minor privileges, yet restricted.  
May all be freed from their bondage.

We remember the sufferings of South Africa,  
people transported to "homelands",  
those in prison for conscience sake,  
white and black rejected in their communities  
because they speak peace.  
You are their strength.

We pray for companies with South African  
interests,  
for visiting sportsmen,  
for those of us  
with friends and relatives in South Africa.  
Help us all to be wise and just  
in the stand we take.

We share the travail of the Church in South Africa;  
the Dutch Reformed Churches,  
believing apartheid is Your way;  
the Reformed Presbyterian Church,  
denied its fulness  
as part of Christ's Church  
because of race;  
all Christian bodies,  
torn between acceptance and resistance.  
May the Church be a channel  
of Your truth,  
and Your healing power.

We thank You for the faithful witness  
of South Africans both black and white  
who still trust You  
and have hope,  
and who are Your light in the darkness.  
Bless Your people of South Africa.



(Unknown Author, 1983:19)

In December 1983 the editor of *Life and Work* published an editorial comment about South Africa entitled “Change in South Africa?” In the article he talks about the change in current South Africa. Kernohan believes things are changing for the better. He only has to look at the calibre of leaders “including Christian” coming from South Africa. The South African government is starting to see the human dignity of all South Africans and is changing laws and some of the DRC are showing “a real crisis of conscious”(1983:5). He does wonder how change will come to South Africa. Will the majority seek violence as much as those who have oppressed them? He believes that this seems a likelihood unless God can do something.

In the February 1984 issue of *Life and Work* a supplement was published from the Board of World Mission and Unity. The supplement was the first of its kind in *Life and Work* and was printed on pink paper (the colour itself may be significant, reflecting a socialist/communist agenda). The Supplement was about the W.C.C. conference in Vancouver in 1983. The introduction read

CHURCHES all around the world are now being challenged to take seriously this great claim voiced by The Vancouver Assembly of the World Council of Churches in the summer of 1983, when representatives of 400,000,000 Christians met.

They declared: in the past we committed ourselves and our churches to stay together, grow together and struggle together. Now we are called to live together

(Unknown Author, 1984:23)

The supplement was broken into six sections. South Africa featured under the peace-making section with two statements from Desmond Tutu and Allan Boesak

Tutu’s statement read

When one looks at the state of the world today, one says with relief “thank God I am not God!” When you stand in this place where so many of God’s children are gathered together, you say “thank you, God, that you are God!” It is one of the most wonderful things to belong to the Church of God.

(1984:26)

Boesak’s statement read

It is not true that this world and its people are doomed to die and be lost. This is true – for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty, death and destruction.

This is true – I have come that they may have life and that abundantly. It is not true that violence and hatred should have the last word, and that war and destruction have come to stay forever.

This true – unto us a child is born.

It is not true that we are simply victims of the powers of evil who seek to rule the world.

This is true – to me is given all authority in heaven and on earth, and lo I am with you even unto the end of the world

(1984:26)

In March 1984, the editor of *Life and Work* wrote a comment about a visit Allan Boesak had made to Edinburgh earlier that year.

During his visit Boesak, Kernohan reports that Boesak believed that not nearly enough pressure had been put on South Africa. Boesak then asked the church for “consistent, sustained action of the Church on behalf of victims of oppression... insisting there is no middle ground left” (1984:11). Boesak also focused on harder economic pressure as well as the failure of the DRC.

Boesak then went on to attack the homeland leaders. For him the homeland projects were also a key to dismantling apartheid. If they failed, the state could not hold together their separation policy. He also defended the South African Council of Churches as not a radical organisation but its hope for peaceful change.



Kernohan then places his own contribution where he says that he is going to South Africa.

What is interesting to note in this article by Kernohan is the positive nature. In the beginning the W.C.C. and the B.C.C. were agents of Marxism and were to be avoided. None of that rhetoric is present in this article. From April 1984 to to June Kernohan published four articles in *Life and Work*. These were the longest articles about South Africa ever published.

In April Kernohan published “From a South African Diary” where he focused on some of his observations of places he had visited. He first spoke about being stuck in immigration at Jan Smuts Airport because he was a journalist. He was there for seven hours before he was eventually allowed entry into the country. This was not however, Kernohan’s first visit to South Africa. He had previously been in South Africa over a decade before. In Johannesburg, he noticed that although the city had grown it was now more black. It still however, had separate entrances based on race. Hotels are laxer on international black tourists. He believes that although “radical black thinking is learning Marxist jargon and liking apartheid to capitalism in its denunciations, the big capitalists are on the side of change” (Kernohan, 1984b:21). He also believes that Nationalist Afrikaners also want a change in South Africa.

In Durban, he feels is more British and he found it to be more equal among races. In Pietermaritzburg, he visited the Federal Theological Seminary where he met two Scottish missionaries, Rev. Graham Duncan and his wife Sandra. Duncan was a teacher at FEDSEM and also Presbytery Moderator of the Black Reformed

Presbyterians. Mrs Duncan was busy studying in FEDSEM in order to identify with the black context.

He visited East London and also went to the Ciskei. In the Ciskei he was shown around by a government official (Joseph Nyosi) who impressed him with the development. He went to Fort Hare University and visited the church owned Lovedale Press where he found the facilities to be lacking.

In Cape Town he saw the tricameral parliament where they were debating the South African Council of Churches but he spoke to NP MP and they felt that change was coming. In Stellenbosch he went into the heart of “Afrikaans culture” and “Dutch Reformed theology” (Kernohan, 1984b:22). He was encouraged by the DRC Synod’s call for the removal of racial barriers in Churches, mixed marriages, and apartheid could be justified by scripture. It is here that Kernohan reflects of the Afrikaner people saying

All this must be part of an analysis of the new South African situation: indeed, it is at the heart of it. At this stage there is only room for a paradox. This is it that the Afrikaner people, often so rigid and forbidding in their collective stance, produce such warm hearts, kind welcomes, and fine minds as Stellenbosch can offer? Professor Willie Jonker gave me a chance to realise that what is happening in the DRC comes from the heart and conscience of the Church, not from any calculations of diplomacy or expediency

(Kernohan, 1984b:21)

In the Cape Peninsula he had the opportunity to speak to Coloureds and some lecturers from the University of the Western Cape. He also went to the Cape Flats where he sees poverty of the separation of people.

He then returned to Transvaal where he visited Pretoria. It was here that he met Rev Nico Smit who was changing the face of White Afrikanerdom as he was living in Mamelodi township and ministering in a black congregation. Kernohan was taken aback by Smits approach.

In the May issue of *Life and Work*, Kernohan published his second article on South Africa. Kernohan asks in his article whether South Africa has really changed since his last visit. The answer for him is Yes and No.

He believes that it has changed in the following ways. First, it has changed because of the introduction of the Homeland states. Second, it has changed with the Tricameral parliament. Third, economically black purchasing power now effects the economy. This means TV advertisements, and shopping stores are now catering to black buyers. Fourth, the equal pay for equal qualifications was allowing people to become more wealthy and thus have bigger influence.

He believes it has not changed in the following ways. First, blacks are still seen as developing within their own ethnic culture, Second, although there has been a shift economically for black people the disparity between what whites have and what blacks have is large. The homelands are still relatively poor.

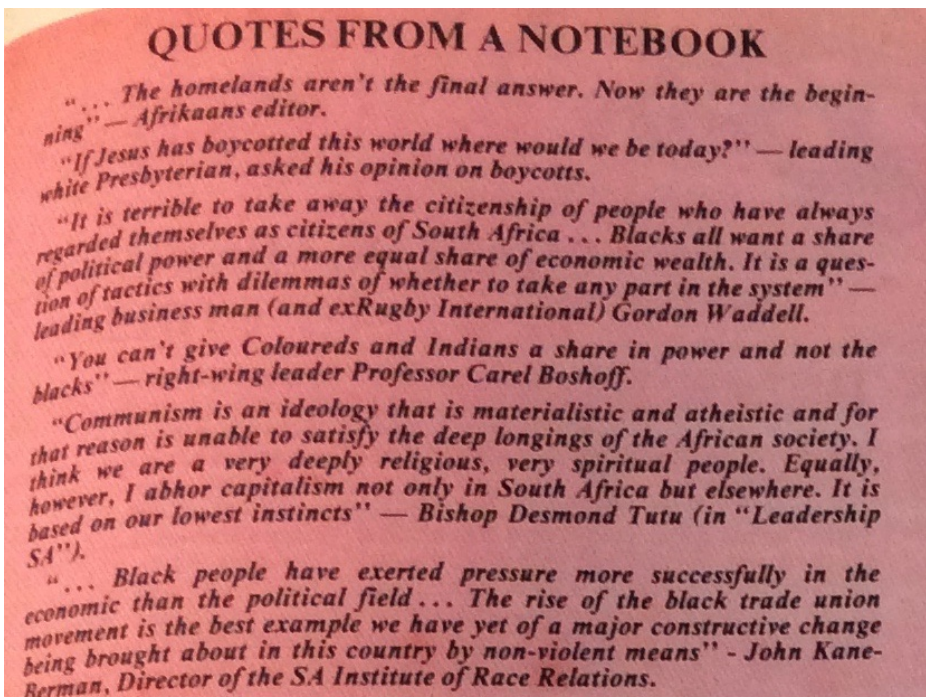
There are however, signs of hope are to be found in people like Laurens van der Post and Rev. Nico Smit. Both are Afrikaners who are turning the tide of perception and relations between black and white communities.

He quotes Nico Smit as saying to him

I thought, coming back to black Africans after a long time away, it would be the poverty that hurt most. But it isn't. It's the expressionless faces of the whites; the stance, the treatment as a function and not a person. "Why do they dislike us so much?" the blacks say to me of the whites – even "why do they hate us?"

(1984c:23)

The following snippet was in Kernohan's article



(1984c:23)

Kernohan's third article was published in June issue of *Life and Work*. In this issue Kernohan looks at how Afrikaners although changing the system still wish to cling to power. In so doing this cannot effect proper change.

For him the serious problem (1984d:16) in South Africa has both economic and military power to maintain the status quo. Black people he feels cannot fight this through violence but rather using their economic bargaining power to change the situation. He

feels that the sheer population and the resources that they consume will be South Africa's biggest problem. He believes water, food and work will be the breakdown of South Africa especially water.

It is important to note that when Kernohan visited South Africa, it was experiencing one of the worst droughts in its history. This would have shaped his understanding regarding resources.

Kernohan believed that the drought was unifying people as it was not about violence but about coming together to pray for rain. In Kernohan's eyes blacks lead a privileged life in South Africa. Education and medical services are above those of their neighbours but, what Afrikaners have failed to realise is that it is not what blacks want. "It is naïve to think that black homelands... could satisfy black aspirations" (1984d:17) and therefore Afrikaner nationalism will not work.

He then continues to speak about different forms of democracy that South Africa could choose to help with the transition. He believes a federal presidential system could work better. He compares how democracy has failed Africans. Communism he feels will suppress all opposition but the current South African system is creating an allure in blacks towards communism.

Kernohan published his last article in the July 1984 issue of *Life and Work*. He believed South Africa is changing. No longer is Afrikaner nationalism working and Apartheid as it is currently understood is changing. He does feel that the reason Blacks are choosing

violent tactics is for freedom. He believes South Africa is a global problem which needs a global response.

For Kernohan there are grounds for hope. He believed that economic growth will not ease the tension so he encouraged the readers to find things that organisations are doing to help economic change in South Africa. He believed that even though social changes were taking place in South Africa and blacks were becoming more wealthy the reality is that it is not about wealth. The church he feels does play an important part in this development. He believes that the South African churches are dominated by an agenda but he believes that it has an important place in South Africa, Churches in South Africa still need to bring people around the table for discussion and they have enough influence to do so.

For Kernohan there are two signs of hope for South Africa. First, “the continued role of Christians in Black leadership, even if the style and idiom have changed considerably since Albert Luthuli” (1984e:23). It is here that he recognises Desmond Tutu, Allan Boesak and Alan Hendrickse as inspirations in the community. Second, “in the white Dutch Reformed Churches... these Afrikaans-speaking Presbyterians (as they are in theology and Church order) are no more of one of mind than Scots Presbyterians, or for that matter the South African English-speaking Presbyterians with their direct descent from Scots colonial congregations” (1984e:23). The DRC is splitting as ministers are changing their views and are standing up against apartheid.

He then speaks about the failed attempts to unite the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa and the Bantu Presbyterian Church, this he feels shows how racism is tearing them apart where the churches theology should pull them together.

He feels that there are some dilemmas that South Africa needs to overcome. First, has the Afrikaans community moved too late? Second, can the future economy distribute wealth? Third, can nationalism and culturalism coexist? Fourth, can a new form of governance emerge that would not be the same oppressive nature as the previous government?

He believes that only God can work out these dilemmas.

Numerous smaller snippets and editorial comments were published however, two major articles were published in *Life and Work*. In May 1985 an article was published by Pater Hannon entitled “Symptoms of an Entrenched System’s Break-Up”.

Hannon asks why there is talk of change but yet violence has broken out across South African townships. He believes that the system is “schizophrenic” and is showing the signs of “breakup of any entrenched system” (1985:20).

He believes the current situation is because three problems. First blacks have been excluded from the White parliament. Second, President Botha is tackling the pillars of the apartheid system. Especially the idea that blacks are South African citizens. Third, the president is now approaching other political agencies of black leadership - these include the ANC and Nelson Mandela – as long as they renounce violence.

Hannon says that there are many voices speaking about the international communities' investment in South Africa. He quotes Mr Franklin Sonn (president of the teacher's union)

- Keep their investments here, reasoning that if they withdraw it will be the blacks who suffer first. But, he said, if this is made an excuse for continuing the status quo, then it is colonialist and unacceptable.
- Divest because some are so frustrated that they say, "Let us suffer even more for the moment if it will lead more quickly to eventual revolution and liberation." This Sonn regards as heartless to the masses and of doubtful practical effectiveness. Many who advocate will, in fact, pay no price themselves.
- Invest, but on the firm condition that the real issue is grappled with – how to bring pressure on the system to change. If pressure does not work, then there must be a readiness to disinvest, even at sacrifice.

(Hannon, 1985:21)

Hannon's article shows a shift in South Africa within *Life and Work*. First, it is the first time that Nelson Mandela is mentioned in this time period. Second, it is the first proper look at the divestment campaign as given by black leaders. Third, it is the first time that violence of the townships is mentioned. It is interesting to note the credibility that is now given to black opinion in *Life and Work*.

The last major article about South Africa from 1975-1985 in *Life and Work* was published in August in 1985 and entitled "Cracks in the Dividing Wall of Apartheid". The article was written by Rev. Blessing Finca who was a senior black South African Presbyterian minister of the Church of Scotland's partner church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa. This is the first article written by a South African in *Life and Work*.



He said that in Scotland people were not only interested in events in South Africa but also in how to interpret them. For him the main concern is to stay faithful to the gospel and not abandon it in the pursuit of freedom. The prevailing theology during colonial times was the inferiority of black people and this has continued in apartheid. He then pointed to Steve Biko and Nelson Mandela as people who have held the light for all to see. They have said it is the dismantling of apartheid that they want. Whites in South Africa have insulted blacks by controlling them through laws and decisions out of black people's hands (Finca, 1985:14).

They have believed black people are stupid and as a Government have failed to see how intellectual black people are. The government has also tried to use wealth as a weapon to diminish black political ambition and those who have not complied have been met with violence.

He then turns his attention to the Church in South Africa which he believes is in conflict. Both English and Afrikaans speaking churches have not challenged apartheid because they have benefitted from it. Within the black churches the South African Council of Churches helped them to find their voice. All the Christian liberation organisations that had been formed arose from the need to dismantle apartheid. Thus, the Church amongst black South Africans has been both a social and political help (Finca, 1985:14-15).

Even though the government has now called for talks, it must speak to leaders that oppose apartheid. It must speak to those in jail or who are in exile. He believes that real change is possible but the current system will lead to more bloodshed.

Finca challenged the Scots to adopt a strong boycott. This was taken up by the Women's Guild with considerable earnestness and energy.

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

*Life and Work* went through some changes during the period of 1975 – 1985 regarding their outlook of the South African situation. It is evident that the social changes in South Africa during this period changed the way people understood and responded to South Africa.

There was an introspection within Scottish society in the magazine; authors called for the readers to identify their own racism. This racism extended from the individual to societal level. Readers were challenged to identify how they fostered racism in their own communities. Within the larger social unit, they were encouraged to see how Scotland's involvement in the British Empire had caused the current situation in South Africa. The effects of colonialism were still being played out throughout the world and South Africa was no exception.

In the early stages of 1975 onwards in *Life and Work*, both letters and articles focused predominately on the relationship the Church of Scotland had with the DRC. This relationship was seen as important and should be maintained. People like Torrance fought in the General Assembly for this. However, as the paper moved into the 80's the relationship with the DRC changed. The articles and in some senses the editor allowed for a more reflective and critical view of the DRC. It was evident especially after the 1982 W.A.R.C. conference when the Magazine published an article stating

that cutting of the relationship with the DRC was unbiblical. This changed after the conference when the magazine published articles about the role of the DRC in South Africa.

The other issue was that people often had personal experience of coming to South Africa. In the early letters that were published in the magazine people often drew on their own experiences. One reader felt that black South Africans had a better life than most in Africa and that she did not see Apartheid in South Africa. It seems that there were two factions within people's understanding of South Africa. You had those who had experience in the white community who could not identify the failings of the system. Then there were those who spent time within the black situation and felt and understood what was happening from their experienced perspective.

Another clear issue was the magazines understanding and sceptics of the B.C.C. and the W.C.C. . Even in his interview, Kernohan felt that the W.C.C. was an irrelevant institution. This was evident especially on the Public Fund to Combat Racism. The W.C.C. and the B.C.C. were seen early on to be siding with the liberation movements and in some cases propagating violence as a means to change.

This impacted black theologians and the South African Council of Churches negatively as they were associated with this movement. However, as the South African story unfolded, the magazine started to change the way that these people were represented. No longer was the SACC seen as violent organisation but rather they were seen as an organisation who were using the gospel to liberate people in a responsible way. It allowed for figures like Boesak and Tutu to take centre stage and represent the black

voice overseas. This gave weight to numerous calls in the antiapartheid struggle. In particular, it gave weight to the boycotts of South African products. These people who were once seen as trouble makers were now seen as the proper voice in South Africa. The magazine even allowed a black person to publish an article in the paper. It is evident that as you read the magazine that the editor's position of these figures changed.

The change in black representation in the magazine also allowed for a change in the way political figures such as Nelson Mandela and the ANC were represented. The magazine was now portraying these people as victims rather than terrorists.

It is clear that the magazine changed its perception over time. These findings should suggest a deeper study of the Antiapartheid struggle from the perspective of the Church of Scotland.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

South Africa has a complex history with different governments and role players adding to the overall historiography. During colonial and apartheid histories, many of those who formed part of the South African society had their historical influence diminished and if not underrepresented they were grossly misrepresented.

In the development of the new National historiography, those who are in governance cannot be tasked with sole governance of the historical narratives. All influences have to be represented. If not historiography runs the risk of creating a new Apartheid narrative. This narrative excludes others so that one historiographical interpretation owns the monopoly.

It is within this setting that the Church in South Africa has an important role to play. Churches in South Africa have been on both sides of the liberation movement. They have oppressed and liberated in the name of God. It therefore, provides a large base of historical knowledge in which historiographical contextualisation can take place. It is also better equipped to deal with South African history especially during the late 1970's to 1990 because it was not in exile. It was among those who suffered.

The Church also in South Africa still has a large reach. Many people still associate with the church. This association moves across denominational lines, gender lines, racial lines, economic lines and historiographical experiences. The Church has the potential to influence a large section of society.

Because of this extensive influence of society, the Church could use its gift of confession. Confession should not be seen as a negative but rather should be seen as the embrace of one's internal history. It is the sharing of one's experiences and interpretations. The Church could be a platform where this could take place.

It also has at its disposal a localised, contextual theology in the form of the Black Theology. Black theology at its essence is the liberation of those who are oppressed. This is not into the oppressive story that they are surrounded by but rather a new story that embraces their experiences, identity and understandings.

If the Church manages to use the tools available to it, it could have positive influences on the National historiography. First, it will allow for a broad spectrum of voices to be heard. Second, it can create healing between all groups. Healing can also take the form of the healing of harmful memories. It also has the ability to break down pseudo-truth. Giving those who claim to be in the right a broader perspective of the truth. This form of pseudo-truth is also a harmful memory in National Historiography. Third, it allows us to see our blind spots. Fourth, it defends the right of the outcast. Those whose voices are not heard and recognised.

The implications for this new National Historiography cannot only be limited to local contexts. They have the power to change community, social, national, continental and worldly outlooks. This would make the role South Africa and Africa plays in the global sphere of vital importance.

The danger is that if Churches do not act quickly, memories will fade and archives are will remain all that will be available. Those who experienced apartheid and the struggle against it will be lost and South Africa's historiography will lose an opportunity to hear their perspective. For as much as archives give us a picture into the past, it is the personal stories and experiences that give it flesh and blood.

The aforementioned role of the Church makes historiography a practical theological issue.

In this thesis three documents were explored for theological understandings during 1975 – 1985. *Ras, Volk en Nasie* was written by the DRC and showed how the church used theology in order to justify apartheid. *RVN* focused its understanding of the OT story of the Tower of Babel and that it was God's will to separate people. The NT focused on loving one's neighbour. Loving for the DRC was equated with separate development. *RVN* says that the Church has to inform the state but is does not have the same roles as the state.

*The Kairos Document* which was written within the Black Conscious Movement and the Institute of Contextual Theology focuses on two distinct points. It challenges the state by saying the apartheid state is unjust and therefore people need to stand up against it. It then challenges the churches in South Africa not to take a luke-warm stance regarding their approach to the heresy of apartheid. Churches are told that if they do not take a stand they are in fact standing with the state. They are told to stand up against the state and provide members with justification to do so as well.

The Belhar Confession came out of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church. It had an accompanying letter and although is quite varied in its approach this thesis focused on unity. Unity for the *BC* was not a pseudo-unity but rather challenged anything that came in the way of true unity that was found in Christ. An important aspect to understanding the *BC* is to look at the WARC meeting in Ottawa. In this meeting their understanding of unity was enforced and had larger global connotations.

These documents allowed for a deeper reflection and understanding on the Church of Scotland's understanding of the situation in South Africa from 1975 – 1985. Due to the delimiting of the scope of this dissertation the magazine *Life and Work* was chosen as the main source for this study.

In both the archives and the interview the following was discovered. First, Britain was looking internally as a society on its own colonial legacy. This was coupled with its own racial prejudices that it had demonstrated throughout the world. This was of particular importance when coupled with the race riots in 1981 in Brixton. Second, although the CoS enjoyed closed relations with the DRC this changed during the time period. At first the CoS seemed to want to support the DRC but as time progressed and the Ottawa Conference had passed relationships changed. Third, there was a disparity between those who had relatives in South Africa and those who were working in South Africa. This is particular relevant when one looks at approaches to the South African issue. Those who had relatives simply wanted things to remain as they were whilst those working within the black mission context were wanting things to change. Fourth, in the beginning of the time period the W.C.C. and the B.C.C. were not well respected by those in *Life and Work*. There was general mistrust and they were often



seen as funding communism/terrorism and not promoting peace. Fifth, there was a distinct change in the view of Black theology and those who were its spokespeople. During the start of the time period, the majority viewed it as a bad thing. It was often coupled with communism and destabilising the relationship that CoS had with South Africa. However, as the time period developed Black Theologians started to become more accepted and their views taken seriously. This changed the outlook of the magazine regarding the South African situation.

Historiography develops in conversation. As was stated earlier, that the three documents informed the understanding of *Life and Work*; however, the reading of *Life and Work* shed light on the three documents and stages in the Antiapartheid struggle. It is a symbiotic retrospective relationship. This is why it is vital that more voices and perspectives are encouraged within the formation of a new National historiography.

The relationship that the Church of Scotland had with South Africa during this period has been underrepresented in South African Historiography. There are still avenues regarding the Women's Guild, General Assembly decisions, local parish and presbytery's involvement, the Overseas Council, the Churches in Scotland joint response, and missionaries in South Africa, just to name a few.

This area of research is fruitful and could form the basis for a larger doctoral study.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### PRIMARY SOURCES: INTERVIEWS

Taylor, J., & Kernohan, R. D. (2015). Interview with Rob Kernohan. Edinburgh.

### PRIMARY SOURCES: ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

African National Congress. (2001). A brief history of the African National Congress.

Retrieved May 6, 2016, from <http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=206>

Aitken, I. C. (1983, February). South Africa. *Life and Work*, 15.

Barbour, R. S. (1980, September). First Post. *Life and Work*, 6.

Belhar Confession. (1986). Confession of Belhar | Reformed Church in America.

Retrieved May 10, 2016, from <https://www.rca.org/resources/confession-belhar?pid=304>

Botha, P. W. (1985). *Address by State President P W Botha DMS at the opening of the N P Natal Congress*. Durban: National Party. Retrieved from

[http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/action/media/downloadFile?media\\_fileid=1065](http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/action/media/downloadFile?media_fileid=1065)

Brown, G. (1975, March). Time Against Race. *Life and Work*, 22.

Cannon, B. (1982, October). Apartheid's Shadow over Reformed Alliance. *Life and Work*, 10 – 11.

Church of Scotland. (2016). Life and Work History. Retrieved May 4, 2016, from

[http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news\\_and\\_events/life\\_and\\_work/life\\_and\\_work\\_history](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/life_and_work/life_and_work_history)

Duncan, J. (1980, September). First Post. *Life and Work*, 6.

Dutch Reformed Church. (1976). *Human relations and the South African scene in the light of scripture*. Cape Town: Dutch Reformed Church Publishers.

Finca, B. (1985, August). Cracks in the Dividing Wall of Apartheid. *Life and Work*, 14–15.

Hannon, P. (1980, July). Change and Conscience in South Africa Today. *Life and Work*, 16, 36.

Hannon, P. (1985, May). Symptoms of an Entrenched System's Break-Up. *Life and Work*, 20–21.

Johnston, W. B. (1981, November). Racism - A Problem or an Opportunity. *Life and*

- Work*, 18 – 19.
- Kairos Southern Africa. (2011). Theological and Ethical Reflections on the 2012 Centenary Celebrations of the African National Congress. Retrieved May 5, 2016, from [http://www.methodist.org.za/sites/default/files/fileuploads/KAIROS\\_DOC.pdf](http://www.methodist.org.za/sites/default/files/fileuploads/KAIROS_DOC.pdf)
- Kairos Theologians. (1985). *The Kairos Document: Challenge to the Church : A Theological Comment on the Political Crisis in South Africa* (First). Soweto: Skotaville Publishers.
- Kernohan, R. D. (1975, November). Liberation and Unity. *Life and Work*, 5.
- Kernohan, R. D. (1976a, May). W.C.C - And Africa. *Life and Work*, 29.
- Kernohan, R. D. (1976b, November). Risk of “Immense Eruption” in South Africa – Moderator. *Life and Work*, 8.
- Kernohan, R. D. (1979). *Scotland's Life and Work*. Edinburgh: St. Andrews Press.
- Kernohan, R. D. (1983, December). Change in South Africa? *Life and Work*, 5.
- Kernohan, R. D. (1984a, March). Not Nearly Enough Pressure on South Africa. *Life and Work*, 11.
- Kernohan, R. D. (1984b, April). From a South African Diary. *Life and Work*.
- Kernohan, R. D. (1984c, May). South Africa: Now You See It Changing...Then You Don't. *Life and Work*, 22–23.
- Kernohan, R. D. (1984d, June). The Immovable and the Irresistible. *Life and Work*, 16–17.
- Kernohan, R. D. (1984e, July). What Evidence For Things Hoped For? *Life and Work*, 22–23.
- Lawson, A. (1976, September). Readers' Views On Africa. *Life and Work*, 37.
- Lucas, R. (1982, December). South Africa. *Life and Work*, 38.
- Mackay, M. (1976, August). Change - but How? *Life and Work*, 10–11.
- McHarg, J. V. (1982, December). South Africa. *Life and Work*, 38.
- Mirrilees, J. B. (1980, January). A Return to South Africa. *Life and Work*, 26 – 27.
- Moir, I. (1980, February). Cosmetics for Black Spots. *Life and Work*, 7.
- Nobel Committee. (1984). The Nobel Peace Prize 1984.
- Rigg, L. (1976, September). First Post. *Life and Work*, 37.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa. (1998). VOLUME FOUR Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report. Retrieved May 6, 2016, from <http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume 4.pdf>

- Torrence, T. F. (1977, January). The Moderator in South Africa. *Life and Work*, 14 – 15.
- United Nations Centre Against Apartheid. (1981). United Nations Centre Against Apartheid. Paris: United Nations Centre Against Apartheid.
- United Nations General Assembly. (1981). Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa. In *United Nations General Assembly*. New York: United Nations General Assembly. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/36/a36r172.htm>
- Unknown Author. (1975a, April). Protest at S.A. Takeover. *Life and Work*, 12.
- Unknown Author. (1975b, June). Who Gets What From The W.C.C. Special Fund. *Life and Work*, 14.
- Unknown Author. (1975c, July). B.C.C Attack on South Africa. *Life and Work*, 12.
- Unknown Author. (1976a, January). Next Moderator Will Visit South Africa. *Life and Work*, 9.
- Unknown Author. (1976b, May). Help Sought In South Africa. *Life and Work*, 28.
- Unknown Author. (1977a, January). News From All Quarters. *Life and Work*, 34.
- Unknown Author. (1977b, September). Protests at SA Death. *Life and Work*, 9.
- Unknown Author. (1977c, December). Church and Nation Statement on South Africa. *Life and Work*, 12.
- Unknown Author. (1977d, December). No Heading. *Life and Work*, 12.
- Unknown Author. (1981, July). Disagreement on South Africa. *Life and Work*, 26.
- Unknown Author. (1983, August). Prayers for South Africa. *Life and Work*, 19.
- Unknown Author. (1984, February). Jesus Christ is the Life of the World. *Life and Work*, 23 – 26.
- Unknown Author. (1990, March 1). Kernohan quits amid Thatcher “frenzy.” *Hearld Scotland*. Glasgow.
- Watson, D. S. (1982, July). The Gospel Compels Us to Keep Contact. *Life and Work*, 26 – 27.
- Whyte, J. (1976, May). W.C.C. - And Africa. *Life and Work*, 29.
- Wilson, A. (1978, June). Second Post. *Life and Work*, 30.
- Windgate, G. E. (1978, June). Second Post. *Life and Work*, 30.
- World Alliance of Reformed Churches. (1983). *Called to Witness to the Gospel Today: An Invitation from the General Council to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches*. Geneva: World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

## SECONDARY SOURCES: PUBLISHED LITERATURE AND THESES

- Bate, S. C. (1991). *Evangelisation in the South African Context*. Rome: Gregorian Biblical BookShop.
- Asmal, K., Asmal, L., & Roberts, R. S. (1997). *Reconciliation Through Truth: A Reckoning of Apartheid's Criminal Governance*. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers.
- Biko, S. (1987). *I Write what I Like*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- Boesak, A. A. (1976). *Farewell to Innocence: A Socio-Ethical Study on Black Theology and Black Power*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- Bonhoeffer, D. (2010). *Letters and Papers from Prison Volume 8 of Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*. (C. Gremmels & J. W. de Gruchy, Eds.). Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Boraine, A., & Tutu, D. M. (2014). *What's Gone Wrong?: South Africa on the Brink of Failed Statehood*. New York: New York University Press.
- Bosch, D. (1986). The Afrikaner and South Africa. *Theology Today*, 43(2), 203–216.
- Botha, C. J. (1984). Belhar - A Century-old Protest. In *A Moment of Truth: The Confession of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church* (p. 161). Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Brown, E. (1972). *A Historical Profile of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church) in South Africa*. Zululand: University of Zululand.
- Burns, R. M. (2006). *Historiography: Politics*. Oxon: Taylor & Francis.
- Byrnes, R. M. (1996). *South Africa: A Country Study*. (R. M. Byrnes, Ed.). Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress.
- Christie, K. (2000). *The South African Truth Commission*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Comaroff, J., & Comaroff, J. L. (1991). *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, Consciousness in South Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Connerton, P. (1989). *How Societies Remember* (Vol. 2). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- de Gruchy, J. W. (1990). *The Church Struggle in South Africa* (Second). Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- de Gruchy, J. W., & de Gruchy, S. (2004). *The Church Struggle In South Africa*.

- Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- de Gruchy, J. W., & de Gruchy, S. (2005). *The Church Struggle In South Africa*. London: Fortress Press.
- Dubow, S. (2009). Afrikaner Nationalism, Apartheid and the Conceptualization of "Race." *The Journal of African History*, 33(02), 209.
- Ekwe-Ekwe, H. (2011). *Readings from Reading: Essays on African Politics, Genocide, Literature*. Dakar: African Books Collective.
- Ellingsen, M. (1988). Social Ethics as a Problem for Church Unity: The Challenge of Apartheid. *Mid-Stream*, 27, 237–256.
- Elphick, R. (1997). Introduction. In R. H. Elphick & T. R. H. Davenport (Eds.), *Christianity in South Africa: A Political, Social, and Cultural History* (pp. 1–15). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Forster, D. (2010). The Role of the Church in Reconciliation in South Africa | Lausanne World Pulse Archives. Retrieved May 6, 2016, from <http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/themedarticles-php/1267/04-2010>
- Garaba, F., & Ngulube, P. (2010). Moving with the times in search of permanence: the digitization of "liberation struggle" archives in southern Africa. *Historia*, 55(2), 163–181. Retrieved from [http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0018-229X2010000200013&lng=en&nrm=iso&tlng=en](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0018-229X2010000200013&lng=en&nrm=iso&tlng=en)
- Giliomee, H. B. (1979). Afrikaner Politics: How the System Works. In H. Adam & H. B. Giliomee (Eds.), *The rise and crisis of Afrikaner power*. Virginia: D. Philip.
- Gqola, P. D. (2001). Contradictory Locations: Blackwomen and the Discourse of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) in South Africa. *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism*, 2(1), 130–152.
- Grundlingh, A. (1993). Social History and Afrikaner Historiography in Changing South Africa, Problems and Potential.
- Hassner, P. (2009). Beyond History and Politics. In H. Swoboda & J. M. Wiersma (Eds.), *Politics of the Past: The Use and Abuse of History* (pp. 71–80). Brussels: Socialist Group in the European Parliament.
- Head, R. C. (1999). Catholics and Protestants in Graubunden: Confessional Discipline and Confessional Identities without an Early Modern State? *German History*, 17(3).
- Ignatieff, M. (1996). Articles of faith. Retrieved May 5, 2016, from

- <http://archive.niza.nl/uk/publications/001/ignatieff.htm>
- James. (2007). *Holy Bible: NRSV, New Revised Standard Version*. New York: Harper Bibles.
- Kalley, J. A., Schoeman, E., & Andor, L. E. (1999). *outhern African Political History: A Chronology of Key Political Events From Independence to Mid-1997*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Kearney, R. (2004). *On Paul Ricoeur: The Owl of Minerva*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Keegan, T. J. (1988). *Facing the Storm: Portraits of Black Lives in Rural South Africa* (Vol. 3). Cape Town: New Africa Books.
- Küng, H. (2010). *Women in Christianity* (Revised). New York: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Lapping, B. (1987). *Apartheid A History*. Glasgow: Collins.
- Luttmer, F. (1996). Why Study History? Retrieved May 6, 2016, from <https://history.hanover.edu/why.php>
- Mangena, M. (1989). *On your own: Evolution of Black consciousness in South Africa/Azania*. Braamfontein: Skotaville Publishers.
- Martey, E. (2009). *African Theology: Inculturation and Liberation* (Vol. 1). Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- Marx, C. (2009). *Oxwagon Sentinel: Radical Afrikaner Nationalism and the History of the "Ossewabrandwag."* Münster: LIT Verlag Münster.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1991). *Selected Works: the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*. Moscow: Progress Press.
- McEwan, C. (2003). Building a Postcolonial Archive? Gender, Collective Memory and Citizenship in Post-apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29(3), 739–757.
- Moorrees, A. (1937). *Die Nederduitse Gereformde Kerk in Suid-Afrika 1652-1873*. Cape Town: Bybelvereniging.
- Muiu, M. (2009). *The Pitfalls of Liberal Democracy and Late Nationalism in South Africa*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan US.
- Mzamane, M. V., Maaba, B., & Biko, N. (2004). The Black Consciousness Movement. In *The Road to Democracy in South Africa: 1970-1980* (p. 963). Pretoria: Unisa Press.
- Naudé, P. (2010). *Neither Calendar Nor Clock: Perspectives on the Belhar*

- Confession*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.
- Oden, T. C. (2007). *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.
- Omar, D. (1997). Justice in Transition Booklet Explaining the Role of the TRC. Retrieved February 2, 2016, from <http://www.justice.gov.za/trc/legal/justice.htm>
- Paulin, C., & Woodhouse, K. (2008). South Africa. In *Nations and Nationalism: A Global Historical Overview: A Global Historical Overview* (p. 1863). Santa Barbra: ABC-CLIO.
- Sass, F. W. (1957). *The Influence of the Church of Scotland on the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa*. University of Edinburgh.
- Schulz, M. (2009). Preface: Never Again. In H. Swoboda & J. M. Wiersma (Eds.), *Politics of the Past: The Use and Abuse of History* (pp. 7–8). Brussels: Socialist Group in the European Parliament.
- Seekings, J. (2000). *The UDF: A History of the United Democratic Front in South Africa, 1983-1991*. Claremont: New Africa Books.
- Seekings, J. (2007). “Not a Single White Person Should Be Allowed To Go Under”: Swartgevaar and the Origins of South Africa’s Welfare State, 1924–1929. *The Journal of African History*, 48(03), 375–394.
- Seidman, G. (2009). Armed Struggle in the South African Anti-Apartheid Movement. In J. Goodwin & J. M. Jasper (Eds.), *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts* (Second, pp. 264–278). Oxford: John Wiley & Sons.
- Thompson, L. M. (1962). Afrikaner Nationalist Historiography and the Policy of Apartheid. *Journal of African History*, 3(1), 125–141.
- Trehear-Harvey, G. S. (2011). *Historical Dictionary of Atomic Espionage*. Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, Inc.
- Trotter, H. (2009). Trauma and Memory: The Impact of Apartheid-era Forced Removals on Coloured Identity in Cape Town. In M. Adhikari (Ed.), *Burdened by Race: Coloured Identities in Southern Africa* (pp. 49–78). Cape Town: Juta and Company Ltd.
- Van Heyningen, E. (2009). The Concentration Camps of the South African (Anglo-Boer) War, 1900-1902. *History Compass*, 7(1), 22–43.
- Vorster, N. (2010). Christian Theology and Racist Ideology: A Case Study of Nazi Theology and Apartheid Theology. *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, 7(19), 144–161.



- Vosloo, R. (2009). Quo Vadis Church History? Some Theses on the Future of Church History as an Academic Discipline. "Quo Vadis" Theology? *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa*, 100, 54–64.
- Vosloo, R. (2013). Remembering the Role of the Reformed Churches in the Struggle for Justice in South Africa (1960-1990): Some Remarks on the Promise and Pitfalls of Memory and Historiography. *Nederduitse Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif*, 54(3-4).
- Waldmeir, P. (1988). *Anatomy of a Miracle: The End of Apartheid and the Birth of the New South Africa*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Watson, W. (2007). *Brick by Brick: An Informal Guide to the History of South Africa*. Claremont: New Africa Books.
- Wright, D. F. (1993). Women's Guild. In *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (p. 928). Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.