Doing theology in the post liberation era of Southern Africa

by

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DECLARATION

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Declares that

DOING THEOLOGY IN THE POST LIBERATION ERA OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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(Signature)
SUMMARY

The Study of Theology plays a crucial role in the construction of a sound theology in this post liberation era of Southern Africa. This exercise is conformed to the academic learning and creates an environment where theology can dialogue with other disciplines. It helps in the critical reflection on the issue of God and human beings as the object of theology in African context.

The study of theology and the doing of theology are methods which bring praxis and theory together. The doing of theology is the daily work of a pastor in a congregation. It is an exercise that put theological theories into practice. This is a methodology that guides the process of developing a contextual theology in Southern Africa. It is a process of taking theology from classroom to the congregations the community. The study of theology and the doing theology are soul mates. They work hand in hand to address contemporary situations. Human beings should know their physical organic environment. They are the object of theology. People experience God from natural science. Liberation theologies e.g. Africanist, Black and Women/Feminist theologies should use new approaches in order to meet the post liberation error challenges.

The wholesome approach is another alternative to be used by these theologies. The approach is based on the interconnectedness of God, human beings and physical organic universe (Theanthropocosmic principle). The principle of Theanthropocosmic helps to direct theology in Southern Africa to be contextual and universal. Some new contextual theologies are born because of the theanthropocosmic approaches to modern challenges. The modern society is build under principles of democracy, good governance, peace and tranquility. The major role of theology is to ensure that the society enjoys those principles.
Theology is directed to a group and individuals. The social, political and economical challenges should be approached as a group. The wholesome approach is an appropriate method to address challenges imposed by globalization ideologies. The increase rate of poverty in Southern Africa brings up other social illness in communities e.g. corruptions, crime, diseases. There is a need to engage theology in economic globalization. The concept of Botho calls everyone in the community to participate in the fight against these social illnesses in the society. Theology is obliged to restore economic justice. The Church is encouraged to participate in the cultural liberation and renewal. She is compelled to do mission work in this paradigms of cultural changes. African renaissance is an urgent thing to be implemented order to overcome challenges imposed by globalization in Southern Africa.

Key terms

Post Liberation; Botho; Contextual; Doing Theology; Dualism and Universalism of theology; New Kairos; Healing; Object of theology; Modern theologies in Southern Africa; Theology of A luta continua; African renaissance
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Introduction

The main task of theology is to reflect on how human beings live out their faith. Theology should address dilemmas people find themselves in. These include issues of faiths, traditions, cultures, morality etc. It should address people’s questions and situations. It is important that theology reconciles the dynamics of time. Therefore the past, the present and the future should be systematically analysed to determine people’s situations in matters relating to their faiths. This thesis will find out possible ways to show theology is able to deal with the dynamics of time and the challenges that today people find themselves in.

Theology has gone through different development stages before it became an academic discipline. It became a field of study during the Twelfth Century. There were branches which emerged out of this field of study. Those were Biblical Studies, Speculative Theology and Apologetical Theology. Attempts were made during that century to develop theology into an academic discipline. St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) states that theology is an intellectual discipline borne out of the meeting of faith and reason. Therefore, issues of faith should be taken not only as religious matters, but also as things which are academically valued. This research work will trace back this development of theology into academic discipline and how it influences the present day.

The proliferation of African Independent Churches in Southern Africa had both negative and positive impacts on the study and the doing of theology. The thesis will discuss critically both negative and positive impacts of the African Independent Churches in the region. The contribution of these churches to the post liberation theologies has widened the theological scope of many churches in the region. Their critical reflection in theology and how they influenced the faith of people in the region after liberation era will also be discussed.

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1 Gaybba 1984,22
2 Gutierrez 1973,5
The Study of theology and the doing of theology are methodologies which can direct us on how to deal with crucial issues affecting people. The studying of theology is an exercise that takes place in a classroom. That includes the formal theological training at universities, seminaries and colleges. The doing of theology is an exercise done by clergies and others at congregations and in the community. It is the day to day work of the clergy. These methodologies should guide theology in the post liberation era in Southern Africa in order to see to it that theology reflects critically on the contemporary ethical, social and spiritual lives of the people living in the region. These methods help theologians to go into the world in the search of answers to people’s concerns and questions. In this work these approaches will play a prominent role in dealing with theological issues and crises people encounter. We will find out how these methodologies can enable theologians in Southern Africa to meet people’s needs.

Liberation theology played an important role in human history, especially for the oppressed and the marginalised. Now theology faces new challenges in Southern Africa due to societal, economic and political changes. Any theology in this region should speak imaginatively of and respond creatively to God who meets us as people at the centre of life. God is not far away from the people, but close to His creation. In his writings, Villa-Vicencio calls for a post-exilic theology that would be of an interdisciplinary nature, emerging at the interface between theology and law, economics, political science and related disciplines. A lot of work will be done to find out methodologies on how to integrate theology into other disciplines in the region.

Theology seems to be losing its focal point as a science confined to the religious sphere, but only because it is finding its place within the totality of human activity, arts and science that reflect on and create activities. The need to address life in Southern Africa from a theological perspective is very urgent. The thesis will bring together other disciplines into dialogue with theology.

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3 Ruele 2005,59
4 Villa-Vicencio 1992,8
5 Ruether 1972,2
The formation of African Independent Churches was to address issues affecting the nation from a contextual perspective. For instance, theology should teach that the present political and socio-economic order is provisional, destined to disappear at the returning of Christ, giving place to a new order. Nevertheless, we must struggle constantly against all ills which seriously undermine human society and prevent human beings from living fully reconciled with others and with God. We will discuss how African Independent Churches are yearning for spiritual, economic and political liberation.

During the 20th century, Christian theology in Southern Africa was dominated by the struggle against apartheid ideology. Therefore, for many years the theological agenda of Southern Africa was virtually confined to this single issue arguing against the acceptability of the ideology on theological grounds. The western theologians understood that the theological interaction with apartheid was very similar to those liberation theologies that were struggling for freedom and justice e.g. South-America.5

Yet with the ending of apartheid in the early 1990s, Christian theology is now obliged to return to engage with the more traditional task of interacting with local culture.6

Various circles from the heydays of Liberation, Africanist, Black and Womanist/Feminist theologies have become part of the global theological discourse. Theology in the region has now entered into a new era with different challenges which need realistic approaches. That is why it is important to reflect critically on how to study and do theology in the post liberation era of Southern Africa. It is the task of theology to make sure that theologies which were done during the liberation struggle are made relevant to contemporary lives. This thesis will discuss the relevance of these theologies. For instance, does Black Theology ideology still address only the black people’s situation today?

6 Ibid., p.127
The first of these various emphases is about the object of theology. The core issue is to define theology. The definition will help to establish whether theology solely reflects about God, or whether human experience or the physical organic environment the sole access point to the experience of faith. Liberation, Africanist, Black and Womanist/Feminist theologies brought a whole composite and inclusive emphasis into the late twentieth century theological debate on the contextual historical nature of theology. The strong contribution of these theologies is that we have three avenues of experience in our daily life experience; namely, the experience of God, the experience of being human and the experience of the physical-organic environment. Within the composite patterns of the societal and communal experience of God, the human and the physical organic environment are experienced within human doings and actions.

Theology has to be done in contexts of societal and communal experience. Traditional theologies have been accused of masquerading as templates for universality that only had to be applied to the colonial ecclesial contexts. The hermeneutics of suspicion used by Liberation, Africanist, Black and Feminist theologies and traditional theologies were devised and established in Western and European contexts. They have been simply transferred and superimposed onto African communities and societies in which they operate in many instances as oppressive and repressive tools that went hand in hand with colonial political and economic endeavours. Thus, traditional colonial theologies were, on the one hand, not aware of the relativity of their own contexts on where they originated from, and on the other hand they were completely unaware that they, in many instances, were oppressive to the core.

The thesis will find how Liberation, Africanist, Black and Womanist/Feminist theologies use their notion of wholeness, wholesomeness of human life and the creatureliness of the whole of reality. The strong dualisms of the modern world such as Western and African, Church and world, sacred and secular, white and black races, male and female e.t.c were treated as oppressive schemes that amounted to approaches in which both parts were
viewed as hard lumps that could not coalesce while one of the two was designated as totally superior in quality of experience and contribution to the world.

Theology is a science which takes care of human beings’ physical and spiritual needs in a specific context as wholeness. Therefore, many theologies arise from different contexts addressing specific issues within a certain society. These theologies which address issues that affect people and their environment shall be dealt with. There are also proposals on what should be done to make some theologies relevant to today’s situation. The discussion will also look into theological methods which are applicable to the physical organic environment and people in Southern Africa. There are some theories in the region which seem neglected, but which can be vital to the modern world. These include Botho, the Kairos Document, Open Letter, etc. These theories are still relevant today. The thesis will widen the modern perspective of doing and studying theology in the region and concentrate on more practical solution to issues of faith affecting people’s lives.
CHAPTER ONE

THE STUDY OF THEOLOGY

This chapter discusses the theories of studying theology in Southern Africa and methodologies that can be used to influence theological reasoning in the region. The emphasis on the study of theology is how we can integrate what is taught at universities, theological colleges and seminaries into the practical life of the congregation. The traditional theologies on God as the object of theology and human beings as the subject shall be analysed in line with the African understanding of God. The relationship of God with human beings and nature has been neglected by theologians in the region. There will be a critical discussion on how theology is directed to God, human beings and nature.

Africans are a religious people. According to them, God and nature have more influence in their spiritual lives. This will lead us to the concept of theory and praxis as methods which should direct theology. The African perspective on God shall be analysed carefully to demonstrate how it can help people to understand their faith. Theology is still an essential field of study in Africa and should be taken seriously.

1.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING THEOLOGY

Traditional theologies used to focus primarily on God, and they were highly regarded as academic disciplines in Southern Africa. In the colonial period pastors and priests were treated as representatives of God on earth and were classified as community leaders, spiritual leaders, advisers to the Kings in political and social matters etc. Colonialist ecclesial and theological training was highly respected by black African communities. Nevertheless, there was a colonialist sting in the tail of a theology that focused on God and left the communal and individual experience of human beings as well as the experience of the physical-organic nature, out of the patterns of faith experience.
Liberation, Black and Womanist/Feminist theologies were very critical of the colonial theology. The reason was that the theology in question solely focused on God as the object of theology. If we are operating from a hermeneutics of suspicion which these theologies learned from Marx and Freud who asserted that traditional theologies which had God as its sole object originated from European context, then it would not be surprising that most of these theologies did not adapt into the African context. These theologies could not suit the African contexts. There was thus a need to study theology from the African worldview.

The study of theology will lead us to the issue of whether theology is a science or not. The assumption is that studying theology belongs to the universities. Liberation theologies should also conform to the fact that theology as a science belongs to academic discipline. Therefore those theologies like Black/African theologies and Womanist/Feminist theologies should behave like other sciences. The issue here is how these theologies can continue address people’s contemporary issues and still keep the academic standard.

Any theology, whether it is in the traditional reflection, contemplation or speculative mode or in the modern theory and praxis modes, should not directly neglect the experience of being human as well as the natural environmental experience. It seems that negligence on the human experience is very common in theology. It is therefore vital that theology should start its analysis from the experience of people and their physical organic environment.

It has already been indicated that theology went through stages in order to become an academic discipline. It was around the 13th century when theology emerged as an academic discipline and able to stand alongside other disciplines. That is confirmed by the establishment of theology in some institution. For example, during the first half of the 13th century a faculty of theology was founded at the University of Paris.  

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7 Gaybba 1984,14-15
Theology started to behave like other academic disciplines in the universities. It was quite vital that theology became an academic discipline, because it avoided a scenario where it would only be confined to Christians.

Theology as an academic discipline started to have specialization during the 13th century. This can be understood as a collection of sub-disciplines. Those sub-disciplines in theology were dogmatic theology, moral theology, pastoral theology; biblical theology etc. Today theology is divided into practical theology, systematic theology and biblical theology. The development of theology never stopped throughout the centuries. This is because it must behave like other disciplines.

The study of theology should not only take place at universities, colleges and seminaries. It should also be done at the grassroot level. The study can take place during different gatherings in the community and the Church. It is the responsibility of pastors, priests, and deacons to teach congregants about God, the bible and how people can face today’s life challenges. This practice is tantamount to what is taught in theological classrooms. It is important that people at the grassroots also learn how to read and interpret the Bible for themselves. The practice will encourage everybody to participate in the formulations of theological ethics and theories. It is now getting clear that people at the grassroots are the main sources of theology. Therefore, there is an urgent need to engage them in the study of theology. The study of theology at that level can be done at an affordable cost. This is because pastors, priests and deacons can teach people theology at their congregations and other gatherings. Of course, the level of study would be the same as the one at universities and seminaries.

The study of theology can sensitize people of different faiths on issues of national importance. It has been difficult for people of different faiths to work together, share ideas and collaborate on issues of national concern. This scenario is caused by little theological knowledge on issues of faith. If people at grass-roots have knowledge about other faiths it

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8 Gaybba 1984,16
may create an environment for dialogue between people of different faiths. Such an exercise can bring harmony in the community.

The study of theology can help to bridge the gap between the uneducated and the educated people in the society on faith issues. There is a perception that theology belongs to the academics only. This is the perception that informs the thinking that pastors and professional theologians are the only people who are better placed to reflect on God and interpret holy books. This kind of thinking could have been influenced by the fact that some people are paid to think about God full-time as professional theologians. That perception has contributed a lot in the segregation of non-theologian from professional theologians and ultimately limited non-theologians’ contributions in theological discourse. This misconception consequently affects the input that theology can contribute in the society. It can send a wrong signal to the people that whoever does not think about God on full-time basis must take a back seat.

All people in the society must learn theology at any level depending on their abilities. To that end, a distinction between genuine concrete non-scientific experience of faith and theoretical experience of faith should be clarified. This distinction shall help to identify the levels of theology that are suitable for different people. The main issue here is to create an environment where theologians and non-theologians can have equal claim to the fullness of the truth about God and faith matters. The involvement of everybody in the study of theology would help in the process of coming up with a sound theology that is contextual and addresses people’s issues.

1.2 Theology directed to God, humanity and nature

Theology has been taken seriously as an academic discipline and its importance was overstated at certain periods in history. The training of pastors or priests took place at universities, colleges, and seminaries. This made theology to be closely associated with

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9 Van Niekerk 1980,93
10 Ibid., p.93
11 Gaybba 1988,98
other academic disciplines in universities. There is no doubt that theology needs other disciplines in order to be considered as an academic discipline. Therefore it is compelled to behave like other disciplines.\textsuperscript{12} An academic discipline must have certain standard requirements which should meet university levels. These disciplines are not narrow minded, but open for debate, criticism and dialogue. Theology was one of the fields of study which were not open to such discourse. The word of God was taken as true and final. However, for theology to be regarded as an academic discipline it should be open to criticism, debate and dialogues. It should also address humanity and nature in a holistic approach. Therefore theology should be directed not only to God but also to humanity and nature.

Theology is sometimes classified as a branch of philosophy which deals with metaphysics of God. It is important to study God because many faiths believe in God or a Supreme Being. In most African societies, the Supreme Being is conceived as One, Creator, Almighty, Provider, Supreme, Eternal and Comforter.\textsuperscript{13} The Supreme Being is believed to have all answers for humanity. Africans are known to conform to the idea of abundant life given to them by their Supreme Being. The study of theology enables theologians to critically reflect on the abundant life that is provided by the Supreme Being. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Protestant theology known as liberal theology was open to the bourgeois spirit.\textsuperscript{14} That included freedom of belief, freedom of conscience and freedom of association. These were considered presuppositions for the freedom of theology. This freedom created by theology is very limited in African beliefs. Therefore African religion may not create such liberty.

People from different faiths experience and understand God in different ways. Their expression of God depends on their specific religion, culture, traditions and social values. A critical observation indicates that different tribes in Africa have similar beliefs. They believe in one God or Supreme Being. In addition, they believe that ancestors are

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid.,p.97
\textsuperscript{13}Amanze 2002,21
\textsuperscript{14}Moltmann 1988,8
immediate mediators between them (people) and God. The study of God is essential and should be done at academic level. The way people experience God in their physical organic environment should be carefully studied. Theology is directed to God, humanity and nature. There are limited chances that can separate theology from reflecting upon these three at an equal level. Therefore theology will continue its critical reflection on God, humanity and nature at an equal level. It is also important to find out how African religion allows freedom to theologies freely on religious issues on the continent.

1.2.1 God as the object of theology

Traditional theologies argue that God is the object of theology and the world belong to other sciences. This theory was greatly propounded by theologians in Southern Africa. Theology mainly concentrated on the concept of God, humanity and the world. Theologians who regarded God as the only object of theology were termed orthodox theologians.

The traditional theology has the inherent problem that God is nearly always viewed as the main focus point of theological reflection either through the realm of God’s revelation, the church or through being human as being created by God or through the natural cosmic world equally created by God. When any phenomenon, fact, thing or idea is brought into a relationship with God in one’s reflection the majority of God respecting people, call such an enterprise theology.

God is the creator of everything. All things come from God and go back to God. God stands outside all the categories of the created order and is not describable by them.

15 Amanze 2002,22
16 Van Niekerk 1980,102
17 Van Niekerk 2006,6(TIC310-C 105)
People cannot consider God from how he is, but rather how he is not.\textsuperscript{18} The traditional theologies held the position that the doctrine of God is theologically fundamental, prior to everything else and determines what can be said about incarnation. Knowledge about God is found in the scriptures. The scriptures are perceived to be inspired by God. Taking God as the object of theology drives us to a situation where we will relate everything concerning God, or in relation to God as theology. This means, anybody who talks about God is engaged in theology. Therefore we have many theologies like Black theology, African theology, Feminist theology, Theology of HIV/AIDS, the Kairos theology etc. This means that everybody is a theologian as long as they talk about anything related to God. During the nineteenth century theology concentrated much on humanity. Theologians of that era were therefore known as liberal theologians. Those who put their focus on the world were classified as scientific theologians.\textsuperscript{19} They were only associated with academic theology at universities. Therefore, the theory of God as the object of theology dominated the teachings of missionaries in Africa. That of course limited the scope of theology in the region.

African traditional religion major’s doctrine is the belief in the Supreme Being. The Supreme Being is the source of life and everything that human beings need. The Supreme Being created the universe out of nothing.\textsuperscript{20} The creation exercise continues as new things keep coming up in the universe. It is believed that the Creator also sustains, keeps and upholds the things he created. This means that God continues to look after the universe including its inhabitants without ceasing.

The idea of the Supreme Being providence in the universe confirms that African Traditional Religion takes God as the object of theology. The Supreme Being plays a judicial role among people. It is believed that God rules over the universe is perfect justice. Therefore, God judges all things justly, distributes all things justly, rescues the oppressed and punishes the wrongdoer.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{18} McEnhill and Newlands 2004,21
\textsuperscript{19}Van Niekerk 1980,101
\textsuperscript{20}Mbiti 1991,49
\textsuperscript{21}Ibid.,p.52
African people look up to the Supreme Being as the Father and the Mother. God is understood as a head of the family. The Supreme Being also controls nature and its activities. That is how God is revealed to humanity. In African traditional religion the physical environment is considered sacred. There are sacred places for worshiping God. These places are very important in people’s daily lives. It is believed that God is present in all activities that human beings do. The participation of God shows that God is good towards all people and all things. God’s goodness never ends. People in Africa believe that God has self-knowledge. Human beings only have to listen to what God wants. This understanding indicates that God is the object of theology in African traditional religion. Human beings can know God and the world if God reveals Himself to them. Of course they should know themselves. God knows what human beings and the world need and how they should live together. Nevertheless God can be known by God alone. The concept of God as an object of theology has substance in African traditional religion. It is possible that African theologians may be influenced by this theory.

1.2.2 Human Beings as the Objects of Theology

The twentieth century’s theologies tend to differ little with the idea of theology that portrays God as the object of theology. It started to go deep and find out how human beings are related to God and vice-versa. What should be dealt with is:

...can human self-understanding and human world-view really be separated? Can we understand ourselves without at the same time understanding our world? Does not existentialist interpretation lead into the constrictions of bourgeois private existence?23

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22 Mbiti 1991,55
23 Moltmann 1988,14
These theologians were not only concerned with human understanding and interpreting life but also with our world view as part of human history of the extension and deepening of hermeneutics. Human beings experience things from the world they live in. They do not live in a vacuum. Human beings cannot claim that they understand themselves and God while they don’t understand their physical organic environment. They should first understand themselves and then their environment. God is also experienced in their physical organic environment. There is a natural relationship between human science and natural science. Therefore it is difficult to separate the human self-understanding and the human world-view.

*Human science and natural science are expressive of an expanding and contracting rolling threesome (triad) which emits vestiges and traces of God, human self and natural physical-organic environment in each field of everyday human experience as well as in each theoretical and reflexive process, thus in both the human sciences and the natural sciences. We have attempted to capture this operational strategy which should function and operate in each science through the anthropocosmic principle.*

The study of theology should not be limited only to God and human beings, as is done in traditional theology. The Christian theology should also not be limited to the soul or human existence only. Due to the fact that it affects not only men and women, but also their environment and the cosmos, it is obliged not to reflect only upon the cosmic environment. God is the controlling power.

1.2.3 God and Human Beings as the Objects of Theology

The notion of God as the object of theology was highly contested by nineteenth century German scholar Friedrich Schleiermacher who maintained that all propositions of

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24 Van Niekerk 2006,5 TIC310-C Faith ,Philosophy and Science, Tutorial letter 105/2005
25 Moltmann 1988,15
Christian dogmatics must be interpreted either as descriptions of the conditions of human life, or as conceptions of divine attributes, or as statements on the nature of the world.\textsuperscript{26} He argued that the doctrine of Trinity was not an immediate utterance concerning Christian self-consciousness, but only a combination of such utterance. Moreover, he continued to call for a reinterpretation of the traditional doctrine of Trinity and expressed some approval for a qualified form of modalism.\textsuperscript{27}

Schleiermacher’s theology has influenced many theologians of his time. The main reason could be that his theological thinking has brilliance and elegance, relating Church, community and human spirit in general with a constantly refreshed awareness of absolute dependence on the divine and was exactly the recipe to excite the enthusiasm of a generation which saw the rise of the early Romantic Movement.\textsuperscript{28} Of course, a theology which reflects on the church, community and people’s self-consciousness is an ideal for modern people. Nevertheless, he was criticized by some other theologians like Hegel and later by Karl Barth for putting the human self-consciousness first when dealing with people’s faiths. The twentieth century theological thinking brought new theological insights formany and this shaped the twenty-first century thinking.

The traditional theology classified the world with humanity and God was considered far away from the two. Theology and humanity are below with other sciences. Therefore theology was concerned with God and humanity. However, if God is classified as the object of theology, it may imply that God cannot be the object of other sciences. The reason is that the subject-object relationship is a structured relationship. It is structured exactly like other subject-object relationships.\textsuperscript{29}

The traditional theology will always tryto guarantee their conservative position whenever a dialogue with other sciences or disciplines may arise. That may not be good for the academic debate and contemporary critical analysis. There are no doubts that this kind of

\textsuperscript{26}Van Niekerk 1980,117  
\textsuperscript{27}McEhill and Newlands 2004,237  
\textsuperscript{28}Mc Ehill and Newland’s 2004,238  
\textsuperscript{29}Van Niekerk 1980,116
theology had influence in Southern Africa. Theologizing in this manner consequently resulted in theology being irrelevant to the people. Such kinds of theologies include the theology of a pie in the sky. These are theologies that promise people a better life in heaven and quick returns if people get born again.

The study of theology should not only be confined to universities, colleges and seminaries. It should also concentrate on the cosmic, social and political changes. The study of theology should use a wholesome approach when dealing with contextual issues. Of course one issue to be dealt with is whether theology is self-substantiating as raised by Van Niekerk that,

If unlike all other sciences, theology is in fact self-substantiating, can one still insist that it belongs at universities? If it is a science, as it professes to be, it must be able to participate in scientific dialogue. If it really wants to be theological it must get together with sciences and find some mutually acceptable concept of science.30

Theology should not be in splendid isolation and look down on other sciences as irrelevant; instead it should take them as partners. There is no problem if theology belongs to the universities. There is wide fear in the Church that the theology taught at universities may put Christian faith in danger. The scientific dialogue means that theology will be vulnerable to criticism. This may cause a doctrinal problem as some faiths are infallible. It is not only the Christian faith that will face challenges but also other religions as well. There could be a lot of things which science may want to be proved beyond reasonable doubt which religious faiths cannot do.

However, theology will have to strive to be accepted by other sciences in an academic world. Where sciences cannot give solutions theology is obliged to respond.

30 Van Niekerk 1980, 116-117
interview with Rev Cosmos Moenga of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Botswana, he argued that,

...seminary theology is the best Christian theology compared to the university theology. I do not doubt theology taught at universities and I respect it. Nevertheless I will prefer those students from universities should not be ordained straight into the ministry. They should go first through internship and pastoral training before going to congregations. But students from theological seminaries and colleges are not only trained academically but also spiritually. When I say “spiritually”, I mean to be pastor or deacon. Such training is not adequate at the universities. Therefore I am convinced that university theology is not very much adequate to ministers who go to congregations and either to those who will teach in seminaries and universities.31

The confusion is that there is a breakdown of communication between universities and denominational theological seminaries and colleges. This takes us back to the debate of whether theology is a science. This means that if it is a science it should be taken as an academic discipline at universities and theological seminaries.

If theology professes to belong with other sciences, then the concept of God as the object of theology will lose consistency. Nevertheless, this move will consequently enable theology to be integrated into the cultural climate of today. This move is happening today. The study of theology will also not only conform to universities, colleges and seminaries but also to society and the world.

31 Moenga in an interview in Gaborone, August 2006
1.2.4 Theology of Nature

The theology of nature or cosmology is one of the most important theologies. This theology has contributed a lot to the debate about understanding God and his relation to living things. God can be seen in nature. Nature is created by God. Most theologies have concentrated on God and humanity without giving attention to the natural physical organic environment. The natural physical organic environment contributes a lot in daily human experiences and human faith. Nature is divine. It is clear that physical organic environment has been neglected in these modern theologies.

God is the creator of the universe. The universe was created for a purpose. This means that natural physical organic environment is also God’s creature. Everything God created helps in building relevant theology.

*All creatures from the least to the most complex form an organic whole. In religious terms we all proceed from the Creator’s one and the same act of love. That means that there is a universal brotherhood and sisterhood among all believers. All creatures bear within themselves traces of the divine hand that shaped them, even if evolution was the way in which it happened.*\(^{32}\)

Therefore creatures should also be taken as sacraments. A creature also symbolises the presence of the inhabitants of the universe. There is no way that we can talk about theology and exclude nature. The omission of nature or the physical organic environment in theological discourse can contribute to the production of irrelevant theology. The physical environment helps in understanding humanity in relation to God.

According to the Jewish religion the land belongs to Yahweh (God). The physical environment can be affected by the social sinfulness of the inhabitants. The land was

\(^{32}\) Boff 1995,77
taken as the basis of life. It was also taken as a sacred place. In his request, Moses indicated to Pharaoh that God wanted the Israelites to be released from slavery so that they could go to worship their God in the promised land and have a feast for Him. (Exodus 5:1). We can see that God treats human beings together with his creation. Human beings and the physical environment should be in harmony in order for the worship of God to take place peacefully. Therefore, people must worship God freely in their own environment with the beauty of the earth. We read from the Bible that God wanted Israel to go to the Promised Land in order to worship freely without fear. In the African traditional religion the physical environment plays a major part in the worship life. Africans experience God when they enjoy the surrounding vegetation and wildlife.

The physical environment is also sacred. People should feel God’s presence as they worship within their areas. We have observed that the earth and its inhabitants are quite important as God’s creatures. Therefore human beings and science should subdue the earth as God has commanded in the Garden of Eden. (Genesis 1:28). People tend to use this verse to dominate the physical environment instead of taking care of it. The concept of subduing the earth has been misinterpreted by many people. As the physical environment plays a crucial role in the worship life of humanity, subduing the earth is a huge task God has given to people. It must be used properly. As African people live on subsistence farming, fishing, hunting and pastoralism; it appears that there is a great deal of emphasis on agricultural, fishing, hunting, and pastoral rituals.  

1.2.5 Theological Reflection on Human Involvement in the Natural Environment

There are beliefs which make it clear that the natural world in general is God’s creative act. The living things perceive the fact of being alive, the elementary, basic equipment necessary for life and the space in which to live as an endowment that is always preordered and given together with life itself. The gift of time and temporal reckoning into this basic experience as well are far more fundamental. The experience of the existing world with everything it displays, down to the very foundation where a constant

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33 Amanze 2002,24
fundamental event emerges helps human beings to respond to God’s providence. That event is essential for itself. It is not at the disposal of the human being, nor is it something they can create for themselves. It continually conveys life on human beings and the other living things around them and continually equips them with a favourable living space. Creation accounts include a perspective of the natural world and environment, the perception of the fundamental connection and indispensable conditions of existence. If we read carefully Psalm104, the miracle of the continual coming into being and existence of living things is an event over which they have no disposal and the indispensable equipment for living provided for it. In order to absorb the depth of this present experience of the world in its constancy as long as and wherever living things have life, God’s creative activity sees the natural world that confronts us in our own experience as being founded on the will, power, law and decree which is given to all and all history.

According to the book of Genesis in the first chapter, the simultaneous creation of all plants and animals at the beginning is a single creative event of animals and plants as man knows them now and has always known them without any genetic differentiation. Therefore, the first chapter of Genesis compared without scientific knowledge about biogenetics and the cosmos is not simply a difference in our degree of information. It is just as much the difference of approach and perspective in the perception of the natural world and environment.

The theology of creation which includes the Jawhwist and Priestly traditions portrays that the relation between the natural environment and human beings has existed from the time of creation. The narrative of the creation story in Genesis 1:11-12 and verse 22 does not content itself with demonstrating that the stable regions provided for living and living things themselves are in their existence and continuance based on creation and that everything simply lives amicably side by side.

On the contrary we have already seen from the beginning that some other traditions like Priest traditions also consider the problem of the relation of living things to one another, orto be more precise, the relationship between human beings and animals.
This relationship does not simply flourish as it will be in some illusory state of nature, nor is it simply left neutrally to the internal factors of the ecosystem. It is a meaningful relationship which must be shaped and ordered. Order promotes life. In this order, the human being plays an important role. Of course, the role is interpreted by the human being as to be the ruler and have dominion over the animals. There is a need to promote the relationship between human beings and animals. The relationship between animals, people and God is not a new phenomenon in African traditional religion. Africans do not separate nature from human beings.

1.3 Human Beings and the Physical Organic Environment

The human being has got a major role to play in creation. This role should not be taken for granted or be misused. Let us hear exactly what happened during creation.

Then God said, Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. ’So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air and over living things that move on the earth.

(Genesis 1:26-28)

If this passage is compared with the creation of animals in Genesis 1:20-25, it is noticeable that the Priestly tradition does not confine itself here to finding the reason for the miracle of human life’s existence, for the existence of men and women and finding it in their creation. (Genesis 1:27). On the contrary, from the very beginning, the text sees
God’s decision and the execution of it as a destiny, which is to be human being from that time on, forever people, are created to be in the image of God. This statement, as recent discussion has shown, is a titular and functional term rooted in the declarations about kingship. In the face of the fact that God’s creative activity is completed with the seventh day of creation, this term qualifies man to represent God to whatever lives beside him in the earthly and horizontal region of creation. This defines the central position human beings enjoy in the whole structure of the created world and it is a position which is designed to promote the permanent existence of life. This permanent existence of life is laid down for each individual living being at its creation. The dwelling together of all living things and the existence of man is to guarantee life.

The main task assigned to the human beings is not the content of this definition or a description of humanity but its result, its active expression and fulfillment. The human being is not merely given the power to increase and the function of filling the earth. The blessing of God at the creation also promises him power and success in the subjection of the earth and in lordship over the animals.

The problem of this discussed declaration is that, in Genesis chapter one; it is not stated in a very specific or graphic form. The issue is what does the lordship over animals mean? This is of concern, as many people tend to misuse animals or ill-treat them. Still on the same issue, in Genesis 1:29-30 a reciprocal use of living things for the purpose of food is immediately excluded. The phenomenon of reciprocal attacks on the life of others is not yet considered. It only appears later in Genesis 9:1, bringing enactments which go beyond the first chapter of Genesis.

In the framework of the creation account, it is more a matter of a fundamental regulation in principle, which is not tested against the behaviour of living things as we experience it in reality. But as it is generally the case in Genesis1, it is measured against the sole promulgating initiative of the creating God.
The world was created and ordered by Him. The problem which seems to be settled is, as we have already indicated, the future dwelling together of living beings in the world of creation that has now been set up. The difficulty is the living together of man with other creatures in the world created by God.

This problem presents itself in such acute form because after the completion of the work of creation the creator no longer intervenes in it to give it design and form. The creator, who is God, consequently needs a governor to take care of the created world. The governor will act according to his intention, that is, according to the intention behind the world of creation set up by God. The concept of acting here means the context of the dwelling together of living beings, the continual establishment and enforcement of order. The priestly traditions understand order not as a rule that implies determination by some outside force or something that diminishes life, or even reduces living beings to slavery. It is the framework in which individual life develops, but it is also restricted for its own good and continuance, as well as for the good and continuance of the holistic approach.

The dominating function of the human being, according to Genesis chapter one, had an ambivalent character and a negative overtone from the very beginning. This ruling and domination function is understood completely in a positive manner. It is entirely included in the divine approval of the world as a whole which saw it as very good. It is an avocation that certainly does not give man the right of autonomous and autocratic imposition over the animals of the world for his own self-chosen purposes, detached from God. There is nothing of direct or indirect exploitation and extermination of animals of the world for certain human economic reasons. The human being rules in this sovereign office as God created for permanence.

Any exercise of rule on the part of human beings prompted by independent purposes arrived at apart from God or in deliberate separation from him and leading to damage or even destruction of the foundations of the animal world would be totally contrary to the intentions that priestly traditions argue. The human being is also God’s creature in the world. He/she alone is God’s steward for the whole created world.
The exercise of this sovereign office may certainly include laws of creation, the human being’s permission to draw on the domestic animals which were created for that purpose as working power in the tilling of the field. (Genesis 1:29-30)

Nevertheless, human beings should also preserve the life of animals. They should be protected from anything which may endanger their living. This is clearly stipulated in Genesis 6:19,20. Just like the human being belongs to the natural world of creation, in that he lives and carries on/out his life in the world, so his divine stewardship expresses itself precisely in the fact that he has to preserve the right to live and the contribution to life of the natural world and environment as a whole. The human being has to preserve the right to life of living things apart from him/her as well. According to Hans Lessings:

…the steady perspective that is peculiar to Yawhwist creation account especially, includes the fact that man and nature has a common history and a common future, and that man’s special position does not mean autocratic confrontation, but the active responsibility as God’s representative for the naturally created world. The function of man’s task as ruler is to guarantee the continuance of the created world as a whole laid down by God in the event of creation and to guarantee it for the benefit of all creation.34

It can be claimed that the statement of subduing the earth in Genesis 1:28 calls for special attention. It sees the human being’s relationship to the earth as being a relationship with a component part of creation and sees it as something that is expressly regulated and ordered. Nevertheless, it does not belong within the framework of the sovereign task of God’s image, which is here too, as in the case of the animals; the human being does certainly stand in need of God’s bestowal of capability and success in his relationship to the earth. This is the main task of the human being as the master of all animals of the earth.

34 Lessings 1999, 3
from the biblical perspective. If this task is not done properly, the human being would be committing a sin against God and creation.

The relationship and interaction between living organisms and their natural environment is biblical matter. In Genesis this relationship is reflected as interdependence and interaction of living organisms as from their creation and formation.

_Thus the heavens and the earth were completed on their vast array...The Lord God formed the man became a living being...Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, Eden and there he put the man he formed. And the Lord made all kind of trees grow out of the ground-trees that was pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...A river watering the garden flowed from Eden...it winds through the entire land of Havilah where there is Gold. The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work and take care of it. (Genesis 2:1-15)_

The above text indicates clearly that living things depend on non living things. They all need each other. Within this chapter there is a clear picture of how human beings and the physical organic environment are obliged to take care of one another. Human beings are integral parts of the environment indeed the very centre of ecology. They are also the managers of the natural resources upon which their livelihoods depend.

It is the task of human beings to take care of God’s creation and its inhabitants. There is a need to regulate and put strict measures on natural conservation. It was reported by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism in the Republic of Tanzania that,

...forests and woodlands cover around 40% of the total land area, and support the livelihoods of 87% of the poor population who live
in rural areas. Over 90% of energy used in Tanzania is wood fuel derived from the forests. Forests and woodlands are therefore crucial to the livelihoods of many Tanzanians.  

The government of Tanzania has a clear policy on governing the forest management. The intervention by the state on nature conservation was initiated by the fact that there was a deleterious effect on deforestation, on water catchments, hydroelectricity, soil erosion, fire outbreaks and the status of biodiversity. It was also reported that the depletion of forest resources and increased Government intervention in places such as Tabora Region led timber merchants to start looking for alternative sources of hardwood. Due to that, the Moimbo woodlands and coastal forests of Southern Tanzania soon became targeted as awareness grew regarding the utilitarian uses of lesser known commercial timber. The Botswana government has started putting strong policies on natural conservation. The government established the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism with the objective of diversifying the economy. The destruction of natural environment has negative consequences on climate changes. For instance, continued floods in Mozambique have been shown to be the result of deforestation.

The exercise of environmental conservation does not only belong to the state. Everybody should participate in this exercise. People from different religious backgrounds are obliged to worship their Supreme Being or God and look after the physical organic environment they live in. They have to teach their followers about nature and how it is related to their faiths. It is the responsibility of states to incorporate environmental conservation programmes in school curricula from an early stage. Human beings and the natural physical organic environment should live together and compliment each other.

However, there is a very serious problem to deal with in African traditional religion on the issue of nature conservation. Wild animals are endangered because they are used for traditional muti for healing and other supernatural activities. It is unfortunate that in most

35 Miledge, Gelvas and Anrends 2007, 22
36 Ibid., p. 22
cases they are killed illegally. That can finish the family of important wild animals if the matter is not addressed. Traditional healers use substances from wild animals to do their daily work of healing and witchcraft. Other people sell the skins of these animals for profit. This illegal trading threatens wild animals. It was reported that in South Africa there are markets which sell parts of wild animals and one of them is the Mai Mai Traditional medicine market in central Johannesburg. They sell the following:

*smaller sections of leopard, cheetah and several skin, for use in capes, headbands and other adornments were available at the market. Skins and body parts of at least 40 other species of mammals, birds, reptiles and marine life, some of them endangered, including Cape pangolin, African rock python, honey badger, crocodile, hippo, giraffe and spotted eagle owl are also available. Vultures body parts and feathers, vervet monkey skins and hands, are also often sold at the market.*

It is not the task of the state alone to discourage these kinds of illegal market. The pubic should also participate to combat this crime. Traditional healers should be licensed to use wild animal’s body parts for their daily work.

### 1.3.1 How God’s Creation is Destroyed

Human beings can be destructive to nature. According to the Old Testament, this can result in social sin. It was believed that,

*failed harvests, fluctuations in yields, drought, and ecological disasters are the consequences of war catastrophes, which resulted in famines and plagues and could force ultimately represented contempt for Yahweh,*

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37 Cadman 2008,1
This scenario is vividly indicated in the book of Hosea 4:1-3. In the story Yahweh has a problem with the land. There are a lot of evil things happening in the land. There is swearing, lying, killing, stealing and adultery etc. This means, the land is mourning like its inhabitants e.g. birds, animals and beasts. Social sin can destroy the earth beyond repair. It has catastrophic consequences in the ecological sphere. A human sin does not only affect the individual who committed it but also the rest of the society, animals of the earth, sea and the environment. Such a catastrophic disaster destroys God’s creation plans and intentions that the human being should subdue the earth and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and every living thing that moves on the earth. (Genesis 1:28)

Today human beings are caught in the same trap as the people of the Old Testament. People today think that everything on earth can be manipulated. This kind of thinking affects the ecological system of God’s creation. There is a modern superstitious belief in the almighty power of human beings which leads to the delusion that everything is possible and that everything can be manipulated. This is done by means of science and technology; human beings have fulfilled their longing for power and have subdued the earth. The interpretation of Genesis 1:28 seem to have misled many people. People today exploit earthly resources and destroy the natural environment. Foreign people are subjugated and perpetrators force their own ideologies and their own economic systems on to their victims.

Marginalized people are compelled to vacate their ancestral lands due to the economic interests on the land by those who believe to possess power. In Botswana, one of the marginalized groups challenged the government’s decision to relocate them from their ancestral land and took the matter to the country’s High Court. The issue emanated from

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38 Uehlinger 1995, 46
the Government’s decision to relocate the Basarwa tribe from the Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve in the western part of Botswana to a place called New Xade.

_The High Court ruled in December that the Botswana government’s eviction of the Basarwa was “unlawful and unconstitutional” and that they had the right to live on their ancestral land inside the reserve. The court also ruled that the Basarwa had the right to hunt and gather in the reserve, and should not have to apply for permits to enter it._

This court ruling came after a long period of disputes between the First People of the Kgalagadi, who represented the Basarwa tribe, and the Government of Botswana. A decision such as the relocation of indigenous people against their will is classified as a social sin against God’s creation. God does not want humanity to abuse power which they have over the animals and the rest of creation.

There is no doubt that the modern desire for power and more power is nothing but a desire for self-deification. For instance this desire for power has resulted in annihilation. There is a need for alternatives within these existing power hungry structures. The issue is who should now take care of the dominion of the earth and subdue it.

### 1.4 Theology in Southern Africa Today

African people are religious people. They believe in God or Supreme Being. This God is very similar with the God proclaimed by missionaries. In his writings Bujo says that it is no longer disputed that the faith in God found in Black Africa was and is for the most part monotheistic. Africans understand God as the creator of the universe and human beings. God is the source of life and God acts in a living way. God is referred to as the

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40 Bujo 1992,18
Supreme Being. Most tribes have different names to describe God. The Akan title, Borebore, given to God means excavator, hewer, carver, creator, originator, inventor, architect, and the people firmly believed that it was God alone who created the world. The Sotho-Tswana people understand God as the creator and the highest over the highest. The universe is described as having its architectural origin and form from God who is pictured as its Artist in Chief.

The African religion portrays the universe as a composite of divine, spirit, human, animate and inanimate elements hierarchically perceived, but directly related, and always interacting with each other. God is taken as the Supreme Being and sustainer of life. God does not only sustain human beings, but the rest of creation as well. According to the above statements God is the object of theology. God is above everything and humanity must only follow the orders for life. God also takes care of the created world together with all living things. Africans believe that vital forces or forces of life are from above. They are transported by God down to the people.

The Sotho-Tswana concept of God (Modimo) is that God is in the sky. For instance it is a taboo to point a finger at the sky or even to gaze into it to detect the signs of rain. The sky is known to be the resident place for (God) Modimo. It is very interesting that the Sotho-Tswana people refer to God as IT not in human terms. This raises a lot of theological confusion in Christian African theology where the Supreme Being is referred to in human terms like in the Christian Bible. For the Sotho-Tswana there was no being that they could begin to compare with It. Nor would it occur to them that IT was any other than that called It, in neighboring societies, by others. Nevertheless the issue of the African Supreme Being being referred as IT or HE remains inclusive because the High God in Africa is truly a personal God.

God as the object of theology does not receive more support from many African

41 Ibid., p.18-19
42 Magesa 1997, 39
43 Ibid., p.39
44 Setiloane 1976, 82
45 Amanze 2002, 33
theologians who are influenced by the concept of God as highest and provider of everything. Nevertheless, the Sotho-Tswana belief that God is IT therefore exposed God to be associated with the object world. The issue here is how God is experienced by people today in Southern Africa. Africans understand that God is present in people’s daily life. The relationship between God and humanity should be kept in good terms in all times. In case it is broken, a disaster may happen. It is believed that God’s wrath comes when humanity disobeys God’s rules and nature. Then the relationship between God and people may be affected. It is understood that:

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\text{God is in relationship, or even better,}
\]
\[
\text{in communion, with humanity and the}
\]
\[
\text{entire world.}^{46}
\]

This kind of relationship is indicated by Gabriel Setiloane an African Theologian, when talking about the thunderbolt that pierces the earth as God (Modimo) returning to God’s own, in the same way one would return home after a trip or as an animal returns to its lair.\(^{47}\)

Theologians in the region should recognise that the relation between God and humanity in the African religion is dealing with people’s experiences in their natural environment. Our theologies today should not only take theology as directed to God. African traditional religion also indicates some aspects where theology was directed to people and nature.

In his writings Magesa argues that:

\[
\text{the relationship between God and creation specifically,}
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\[
\text{humanity is one of the solicitude on the part of God.}
\]
\[
\text{To associate God with anything that is not good,}
\]
\[
\text{pure, just and honorable is ridiculous. The expression}
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\[
\text{“It is God’s will,” uttered when Africans experience}
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\(^{46}\) Magesa 1997,41

\(^{47}\) Setiloane 1976,82
difficulties from which they cannot escape, delineates this belief. People know that misfortunes can and do happen, but they believe that it is always with the knowledge or the permission of God.\textsuperscript{48}

This is a good communion relationship where God, people and humanity are in a peaceful atmosphere. God never makes a mistake. Therefore when evil attacks them, they do not run quickly to blame God as some Christians tend to do today. They first look around themselves; search for what went wrong in the created order rather than pointing fingers at God. They strongly believe that whenever something evil happens, it means that the created order has got a problem, not God. Nevertheless, God can withdraw vital forces from people if they disobey them. This explains that Africans are homo religious. African people embrace the physical and the metaphysical, the visible and the invisible, matter and spirit, sacred and profane.\textsuperscript{49}

Theologians should demonstrate that God's involvement with humanity and natural science is very important. Any theology should commence with how people experience God’s presence in natural science and on themselves. Africans believe that God takes care of humanity, natural environment and animals. That brings happiness, peace and harmony in God’s creation.

\textit{God’s care and concern for humanity are demonstrated particularly when humanity faces such limit experiences as drought, lack of food, illness, premature death and other calamities. Even though human beings and spirits may be the immediate causes of these disasters, God has the final say in what does or does not happen because God stands as Creator, Molder, Begetter, Bearer of the World, Potter, Fashioner,}

\textsuperscript{48} Magesa 1997,41
\textsuperscript{49} Amanze 2002,18
Builder and Originator of All. But God is also Helper in Trouble, Healer, Guardian along the Path, Ruler, Water Giver, Distributor of Goodness, Sustainer of All.50

The above description of God makes theology to be a science like other disciplines. The cosmology theology and human self-consciousness in God are the main issues in African traditional religion. Human beings develop a feeling of absolute dependence on God. Even when bad things happen to people, Africans never blame their creator. The feeling of immediate self-consciousness is reflected on the concept of God in African context. People depend on God. They cannot even point a finger to the sky where God resides, according to their belief. Therefore, God is not just like an object which depends on humanity like the whole objective world. Humanity is not at liberty to make everything according to its own will in the world. God does still sustain people, and people through their individual experiences, should respond to God by being faithful to Him.

People self-experience is not separated from the natural environment, as we have seen that African traditional religion does not separate humanity from the natural environmental science. The two belong to each other because they are all created. The concept of creation in an African context argues that God actively sustaining his creation and provides for it. Human beings should not destroy God’s creation. That would be a punishable sin. There is a tendency by human beings not to treat God, the environment and animals accordingly. Africans are convinced that a human being cannot offend God and can neither add anything to God, the Creator, nor take anything away from God, so that moral behaviour and its consequences concern only human beings. 51 Human beings are just a creature like other creatures. God does everything for the sake of human beings and creations. That is according to the African worldview of the natural view on the universe.

50 Magesa 1997, 44-45
51 Bujo 1992, 33
It is said that some people have sexual intercourse with some domestic animals. Such kind of behaviour is against nature and environment. It is actually against the will of God. Therefore African people believe that such kind of disrespect to God will consequently result in ceasing of vital forces. Therefore natural calamities such as droughts, epidemics, locust invasions, and floods are beyond individual human cause or control. They are generally attributed to God’s activity, or to a spiritual being. If God is thought to be responsible, it is often taken that he is punishing the people for their mischief or evil behaviour.

The African traditional theologies take vital forces very seriously, and these are believed to be transported by mediators from the Supreme Being to the people. Human consciousness depends on these vital forces. That is because there is no good life if vital forces are withheld. People take God as their absolute creator who should not be offended in any way. The immediate self-consciousness has been taken as the instrument used to touch God.52

It is important to theologies from the regions to take human self-consciousness very seriously when theologizing. Humanity is taken as the object of theology. Theology should critically reflect on the concept of human sense of dependency on God. From people’s testimonies during different church services, people experience God differently. In an interview with a member of the Faith Mission Church in Gaborone who did not want his name to be revealed about how he became a Christian, he narrated his story;

I have not been a member of any Church. I used to see people going to Church and I thought they were wasting their time because I did not believe in God. One day I was critically ill and was admitted to the hospital. I was close to death. I lost hope on recovering from the illness. That was when I encountered God in a dream or vision. I dreamt that I had gone to a worship service. I woke up during the dream. Later I requested to be prayed for. They brought a pastor to

52 Van Niekerk 1980,118
pray for me. In a shortwhile, the doctor told me that I was recovering. That is when I encountered God.  

The interesting issue in this story is the concept of encountering God. The issue is, do we encounter God like anything which we encounter in our daily lives? If God is encountered as people claim, then we are reducing God more to human encounter each time. God should not be taken as an entity that crop up here and there in the world. God is not like that. It is important for theologians and ministers to be careful not to reduce God to a concept. On this issue McGrath analyses Martin Buber as follows;

Buber's approach affirms that God cannot be reduced to a concept, or to some neat conceptual formulation. According to Buber, only an “It” can be treated in this way. For Buber, God is a being who escapes all attempts at objectification and transcends all description. Theology must learn to acknowledge and wrestle with the presence of God, realizing that this presence cannot be reduced to a neat package of contents.

Buber tries to avoid the idea that God is the object of theology. The reason being that knowledge about God does not only include just a collection of data about him but also a close personal relationship with God.

This argument can be summarised by Schleiermacher’s views of conceiving God as the origin of the human feeling of unconditional dependence, with human self-consciousness mediating between God and the world. Comprising the idea of taking God as the object we can use the ideology of taking God’s primary and secondary objectivity. God is an object, both within and to the divine self in a way that no other object can be. That means

53 An interview at Faith Mission Church Gaborone on the November 2006
54 Van Niekerk 1980,119
55 McGrath 2001,272
56 Van Niekerk 1980,124
God has no need of any creature. The second assumption according to Barth is that human beings know God as both You and He/She. This means there is no way that humanity can be in isolation and contradistinction. African traditional theologies understand that human beings cannot live without God. God is always present in the life circle of humanity and physical organic environment.

1.5 **Theology Directed to Theory and Praxis**

Theology as a theory and praxis has been debated for many years. Theory is also concerned with God. It is concerned with how we perceive God. Theory is an activity which is practised in theology. Theology is the critical reflection on how people live out their faith. Faith is concerned with the belief in the Supreme Being or God. This means that there is a theory of faith which theology should reflect on. Theology cannot avoid the theory of faith. Theology should not leave the praxis behind. It should reflect on life. In his comments on praxis, Gustavo Gutierrez argues that:

...theology as critical reflection on Christian praxis in the light of the Word does not replace the other functions of theology, such as wisdom and rational knowledge; rather it presupposes and needs them.

Liberation theologies commence their theology from praxis. Praxis is the physical situation experienced by human beings. Theology reflects on people’s situations, concerns, experiences, etc. Theology should speak to praxis. Christian faith sometimes neglects praxis and only concentrates on the theory of faith. The traditional theology was also the victim of such a situation. It classified God as the object of theology and this put God far from people’s praxis. The theory of faith was in the forefront.

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57 Van Niekerk 2006, 25 (TIC310-C/105)
58 Gutierrez 1973,13
People should not misinterpret the theory of faith. The word “theory” is used in many other disciplines without (careful) knowledge that it also refers to God. Theory is a word that comes from the Greek word “Theos” for God and “oros,” to perceive. Therefore, when we talk about theoretical methods for science, mathematics and economics, we are at the same time referring to God. This is very technical. This understanding is not common in today’s understanding. Theology also talks about God, therefore it is theory. Liberation theology has theory too. The nature of liberation theologies is to be open in the protest against the trampled human dignity, in the struggle against the exploitation of the vast majority of people, in liberating love and in the building of a new, just and fraternal society. That is the gift of the Kingdom of God. Its theory is based on the practical human being’s life experience, the physical organic environment and God’s intervention. The world is full of afflictions which humanity faces daily. Hence the urgent need for theology to intervene by all means to remedy the situation. Many scholars conclude that liberation theology is a theology of praxis.

Theology as critical reflection on historical praxis
is a liberation theology, a theology of the liberating,
transformation of the history of mankind and also
that part of mankind gathered into ecclesia
which openly confesses Christ?

If we come to the consensus whether theology is directed to theory or praxis, we should first look whether theory and praxis are separable. This is the main issue which we should tackle first. According to the above definitions of theory and praxis, the two cannot be separated. The main reason is that they both reflect on humanity, the world and science. However, they deal with these issues from different perspectives. Theologies of the world critically reflect on humanity, God and the world. Theology needs a theory in order to deal with issues which are theoretical. Theology is a science. It is also an academic.

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59 Van Niekerk 2006.59 TIC310-C105
60 Gutierrez 1973.15
61 Ibid., p.15
discipline and like any other academic discipline, it should have theory. It should also have theories to fulfill its task.

As a theoretical perspective of faith theology is pertinently concerned with such things as the church as a social structure, the sacraments, various creeds, spirituality and the church’s role in society.  

The Church should address people’s praxis and their faith. She must also direct the economic and political policies of the society. It is the core mission work of the Church to evangelize and provide diakonical service to the needy in the society. It will be difficult for the Church to do all these things due to dynamic change in the lives of people. Therefore, the Church must use theology as a tool to overcome these challenges. There is no doubt that theology is directed to both theory and praxis.

The cultural integration of theology is a necessity in Southern Africa. The study of theology will enable us to understand God as either the object or subject of theology. In African traditional religion the belief in the Supreme Being, Ancestors and Spirits is very common. It is good to experience the presence of the Supreme Being and the ancestral world in our daily lives, but it will be significant to critically study how their presence influences our social lives. The study of African traditional religion using all components of theology is a necessity. It will help people to fully understand African theology and engage it in dialogue with other sciences. There is a lot to be learned from the African traditional religion. The philosophical understanding of God by African Anthropology should be researched and used to address issues we encounter in the religion.

There are people who take for granted that studying or reading theology belongs to the academics only. For instance, Ruben Pius, a prophet of the Head Mountain Church in Botswana, argues that priests and pastors from the mainline churches do not regard them

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62 Van Niekerk 1980,128
as their colleagues because they do not have formal theological training. This is a dilemma African Christians find themselves in. Pius continues to stress his point by saying that,

...ministers from the mainline churches do not regard us because they claim that we did not study theology. God’s work does not only require theological qualifications but requires the gifts of interpreting the Bible, to heal and prophesy. Theological education cannot take you to heaven. I am a pastor, healer and a prophet. The mainline churches’ pastors used to pray for people but their people never got cured. I used to pray and heal people with herbs and 'sewacho' and people are healed both spiritually and physically. I don’t need to go to the seminary to learn that. God called me by vision to come and do so. They should know that we are their colleagues and equal in front of God.

This stream of thinking associates theology only with academics. In his writings De Gruchy claims that there is an advantage when using the phrase doing theology. His emphasis is that doing theology indicates that theology is not simply something one learns through reading textbooks or listening to lectures but through engaging in doing theology in a particular context and situation.

If we analyse Mr Pius’ arguments, one will say that he is engaged in doing theology. His arguments are based on what he does presently, which, of course, is right. Nevertheless, the good work he is doing needs to be backed with some theological studies. The idea is not to make him an academic, but for him to have knowledge which will help him to be able to deal better with clients who believe in modernity and education. The study of

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63 Pius in an interview in Gaborone, 20th February 2006
64 Pius in an interview in Gaborone, 20th February 2006
65 De Gruchy 1994,2

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theology is important to cultivate our natural knowledge on spiritual issues and how to deal with issues of beliefs in today’s context.

The studying of theology should not only be concentrated in seminary or university education. It can be done in a way that will be accommodative to those who do not have university entry requirements. Theological colleges and seminaries should develop theological training for lay people who do not want to be trained academically but only gain basic knowledge. There could be the opportunity for pastors and prophets from African Independent Churches to enhance their general knowledge of theology. Such studies in theology should be conducted in local languages in order to accommodate all. This will also strengthen the use of indigenous languages which seem to be marginalised by European languages in academic disciplines.

Studying theology helps to do theology with better insight, to gain greater knowledge and become faithful in the Christian faith. The study of theology still remains essential in the sense that it helps to develop theology to be relevant in the changing world. Nevertheless, there are situations where theology does not address people’s issues. Gutirrez quotes Bouillard’s words that the

...theology which is not up to date is a false theology.66

There are situations where theology studied at seminaries and universities answers questions which nobody has ever asked. This is where theology reflects on issues only from academic insights. For instance, there are theologians who concentrate much on how great theologians in Church history understood faith and doctrines and how they interpreted the Bible. Their interpretation of theology was based on their time, and it reflected how they experienced faith at that time.

We cannot take it for granted that the old methods of studying theology which were used during that time will be effectively applicable today. At the moment theology uses methods which are mostly western orientated. The problem which may arise in that

66 Gutierrez 1973,13
situation isthat theology may answer questions which were never asked by anybody. This simply means that theology does not address issues that affect people and their physical organic environment. Theology which is studied at universities and seminaries is liable to ignore the people’s concerns because the classroom reality is very different from the lives of people outside the classroom. This methodology of doing theology could have compromised many challenges affecting humanity from different environment. Despite the fact that what is studied at universities and colleges should be applied to the contemporary life, traditional theology approach was more to change the way people live out their faiths. The major challenge for an individual person living in Southern Africa today is how to integrate these topics into their own contemporary lives. In other words, we are saying it is important to study those doctrinal theologies from western world but we also have to develop our own theological reflections out of those doctrines which are meaningful to our lives today in the region. The methodologies which are developing in Southern Africa do not need necessarily to follow western and traditional standards or to be weighed according to their systems. The study and the doing of theology methodologies as proposed by many theologians in Southeran African should not be subject to the scrutiny of the western standards.

Another methodology which can be vital in Southeran Africa is that theology should be part of an individual’s daily doing of faith. One should do theology because theology is faith in action. Theology is not only the reflection and contemplation of expert theologians, but is part of the fabric of every person’s daily actions and doings of faith in society. It is very important for an individual to express his/her faith as the challenges of life confront them. People daily lives style plays a very good role in creating an enabling environment for this methodological approach. Individual daily experience informs us about the praxis of the community. That ultimately will help theology in critical reflection on issues happening to those people at their specific areas.

Theory and praxis are drawn so close to each other that many theologians struggle to separate them. John Mbiti tells a story about a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) African who

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67 Veldsman 1998, 50
graduated in Europe. The African graduate did all his theological studies in Europe and finally returned home. During his welcoming feast his older sister suddenly fell down. The doctor insisted that his sister be taken to hospital. A school boy advised him that the nearest hospital was very far. The chief of the village said to him: “You have been studying theology overseas for ten years. Now help your sister. She is troubled by the spirit of her great aunt.” The graduate slowly went to get a Bultmann book and read about spirit possessions in the New Testament. He got what he needed: “Bultmann has demythologized it, i.e. according to him such a thing does not exist in reality.” He insisted that his sister was not possessed. The people shouted: “help your sister, she is possessed.” He shouted back: “Bultmann has demythologized the demon possession! It does not exist.”

This story contains the clear distinction between studying of theology and the doing of theology. The African graduate was caught in a dilemma and couldn’t reconcile these two antagonistic worldviews this graduate did precisely what we call reading of theology. He wanted to understand her sister’s spiritual possession from a theoretical point of view. That would give him a clear picture of what was happening to her. The available material he could consult at that point was his small library where he could read about spirit possession. It was unfortunate that the book he read was written from European context with foreign language. Therefore, he was bound to address her sister’s situation from a European perspective. Reading of theology means taking the theory as it is in the book and applying it to the current situation. That is exactly what this graduate did by reading what Bultmann says about possession and then applying it to her sister, who was possessed. Theory seems to play a more important role than praxis in this story. Theologians should understand that theory helps them to identify appropriate methodologies and other tools to be used to critically analyse praxis. While it does not fully address the situation, it can help a person to understand how to handle the problem.

Theological students who are fresh from the classroom encounter difficulties in their congregations. It takes some time for these young theologians to adjust to the congregational life on issues of cultures, norms, values and traditions. In such situations it

68 Maluleke 2003,60
is likely that confrontations between the old and young generations may arise. In this situation theology seems to be answering questions which nobody has ever asked. The graduate was saying something which nobody at the scene understood. In our example, people were requesting nothing else except for the theologian to heal her sister. The graduate, according to the story, could not even pray for the patient.

There are similar stories today in our congregations which seminarians encounter in their first congregations. In an interview with Tjoephi Mbuende, a young female theologian who was just six months into her first congregation, she felt that her congregants needed to be taught basic knowledge of Christian faith. Her story goes as follows: “An old woman came to me in the morning. She requested me to go and speak to her son who was refusing to take a traditional healer’s advice. The traditional healer claimed that the son was bewitched. The old woman, who is very active in Church, an elder of the congregation, and also a member of the Women’s League, argued that the son was being impossible and she wanted to report his behaviour to the village headman.” The old woman requested the pastor to pray for her son, because she was of the view that he was possessed by demons as indicated by the traditional healer.

It was a challenging story for me. I didn’t know whom to start praying for first, whether the mother or the son. My wonder is that this woman has been in the congregation which had pastors all the time. What were those pastors doing all these decades? People cannot differentiate Christian faith from traditional beliefs.69

Mbiti’s and Mbuende’s stories are very similar. Therefore there is a very serious problem which needs to be addressed in our theological institutions. This challenges the education given to people by these institutions. It lessens the importance of studying theology. It is not good to encourage people to study theology and yet cannot use it to address certain

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69 Mbuende in an interview on April 2006
Around the year 1840, the first missionaries’ strategy was to educate Africans so that they could easily be Christianised. David Livingstone saw Christianity as being inextricably linked to education.\textsuperscript{70} Education was considered a handmaiden of Christian mission work. The establishment of schools in order to teach children how to read and write was a crucial necessity. This does not mean that people who are uneducated would not accept the Gospel message, but education would enable them to contextualise Christianity within their own situations. Another very important thing was to send locals for theological training so that they could become pastors.

The likes of David Livingstone encouraged learning to read because it would enable people to read the word of God in their own language.

\textit{We don’t need Europeans to do it. They are good but much can be done with far less expensive machinery. The whole of the tribes we visited could be placed under effective instructors. The native teachers are really most efficient agents in the dissemination of religious truth, if we have two in each of the interior tribes I don’t hesitate to affirm that as much...}\textsuperscript{71}

This statement, which was made around 1847, indicates that the main objective of the first missionaries in the region was not only to educate the indigenous people, but also to empower them to be able to contextualize Christian faith.

The impact of traditional theology in Southern Africa is still very dominant. This theology as it was discussed on this chapter has both positive and negative influence on the lives of the people in the region. Traditional theology is still relevant to be studied. However, there is a need for traditional theology to learn from emerging theologies in Southern

\textsuperscript{70}Blaikie 1910, 57
\textsuperscript{71}Schapera 1961, 10
Africa today. That shall make this theology to be relevant to people needs. Traditional theology which is prominently led by Universal Church and Mission Churches should start take new liberation theologies in the region as soul mates in contributing to a positive development of a relevant theology and a new meaningful church life Southern Africa.

The rightful approach in putting praxis and theory together into practice is to create an enabling environment for dialogue, interchange, exchange and cooperation of newly developing theologies and traditional theology in the region. These approaches shall make sure that there is no theology which is behaving like a big brother among others as it has being before. Communities in Southern Africa experiences a many challenges on daily life. These challenges immanate from the unstoppable dynamic world of today. They semaultinioulsy affect the whole humanity including their organic environment. Many of liberations theologies are the results of these afflictions people in Southern Africa are going through. Therefore, for the best harmonic and effective way of making theology relevant to people in the region is to commence our reflections on the current challenges and respond after having intensive dialogue with other theologies. The process of dialoguing, exchanging and interchanging should not be seen as a way of moving away from doctrinal faiths and beliefs but as a method of bringing praxis and theory together while addressing situational challenges. It should also be seen as tolerance and acceptance to each other as people created God/Supreme Being.

1.6 The Importance of Quality Theological Training in Southern Africa

During the Middle Ages theology became the queen of sciences and hence universal. The natural theology described a universal and direct knowledge of God which everybody has in the light of natural reason, that there is a God and that God is one. On the other hand, Christian theology is based on the revelation of God as attested in the Holy Scriptures. It presupposes this natural theology as a preliminary stage of the knowledge of revelation or as preparation for it. Therefore in the Middle Ages the great synthesis of Christian theology and natural theology, the sacra doctrina and the prima philosophia, came into the scene.  

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\[72\]Moltmann 1988, 11
Theology has been enjoying this splendid isolation position. Nevertheless, sciences started later to emancipate themselves from the limitations and the laws of this theological metaphysics. They started to be autonomous from metaphysical theology. Science started constructing the world of scientific and technological civilization. In his writings Moltmann claimed that

in the modern scientific university theology is no more ‘queen’ than the church in the modern world represents the crown of society. But if the world of the sciences is no longer compatible with a cosmos of knowledge the criterion of which is a metaphysical theology, then theology loses not only its pre-eminence but also its relevance.  

Moltmann’s statement is worthwhile, even in the twenty-first century. The relevance of the university theological education needs attention, especially in Southern Africa. Theology used to be the queen of sciences. Theology should return to its standard. But this depends on the quality of theological training in the region. Theological education should produce quality ministers who can make theology relevant to the people as well as raise theological education standard at universities, colleges and seminaries. The reading or studying of theology is also very important for the church and society. In Southern Africa, the study of theology seems to be neglected and less emphasized. Such a move is not relevant to the church. There are many reasons which cause the above irrelevance. It is getting very expensive to run a theological seminary or a college in Southern Africa. Some Churches are compelled to change their seminaries and colleges into centers for workshops and seminars. This will have negative impact on the future of theological training in the region.

The quality of theological training should be taken into consideration in the region. We have learned that theology recognised the importance of being an academic discipline.

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73Moltmann1988,11
during the 12th century. Theology should not lose such momentum. Today the quality of educational training is crucial. There is a need to control and keep the standard of all educational providers in the region. It is said there is proliferation of education providers. These are colleges and schools which provide poor quality education to the public. Many governments in Southern Africa realized the need to regulate the situation. They started to form training accrediting bodies in their countries. Botswana established a Botswana Tertiary Education Council which registers and regulates all tertiary education institutions in the country. In South Africa, South African Qualification Authority was established. It is important to have regulatory standards governing theological education in different countries.

It is necessary to have theological education of high standard in the region. There are theological seminaries in the region which still provide theological education of low standards. It is important to produce well trained ministers because consequently they will be able to address new challenges that the region currently faces. Such ministers will be in a better position to address these challenges from a well informed perspective. Those challenges include the HIV/AIDS scourge, the decline of morality in the society, tribalism, xenophobia etc. This does not mean that ministers who do not have formal theological training are not able to address these crises. It simply means that the magnitude of the challenges may require theologians who are equipped with tools which are relevant to the modern world.

All the theological training institutions should meet the requirements set by their countries’ qualification regulatory bodies. Emphasis should be put, especially, on churches’ theological institutions. For theology in the region to be relevant, its quality should be taken very seriously. Theology can make the Church’s role to be relevant in the society. But if today’s world does not recognize the existence of the Church and her prophetic voice, theology would not be taken seriously. Governments may be reluctant to sponsor people for theological education. Consequently, theological faculties may run short of students to teach.

Theological institutions should play a major role in combating contemporary ideologies and distortions of faith. They should act as resource institutions particularly on

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74 Fraser 1986, 64
economic and military complexes which are among today’s principalities and powers and of the calling to unmask these, to oppose them and people to see them in a true light and not worship their idols.

1.6.1. Making Theological Education Accessible

In order to maintain the status of theology as science and also as a discipline, which is highly regarded at universities and congregations, the study of theology should be encouraged. Young and old people should be motivated to venture into the field of theology. However, it may be very expensive for one to study theology in most institutions in Southern Africa today. Due to economic disparities in the region, it is difficult for most people to go to seminaries, colleges and universities in the region. Churches have been the main sponsors of theological training for many years. However, it is now difficult to train pastors due to the fact that Churches also face financial problems. Nonetheless, the fact is, the Church still needs well-trained theologians and pastors.

There is need to introduce theological training by extension in local theological seminaries and colleges. There are universities in the region which provide such kind of service, but it is quite expensive for most people to afford the service. For instance, the University of South Africa’s fees per one module is approximately R900.00. In his paper Nyambura Njoroge argues that it is no wonder that theological education by extension programmes emerged as an alternative to residential training which accommodates a smaller number of students. The Theological Education by Extension’s fees per course is approximately R850.00. In Botswana, to study theology at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, a student must pay P25000.00 per annum, including tuition, meals and accommodation. Just like any other discipline, theological training is very expensive today. Therefore, churches, in most instances, may not afford the above-mentioned prices. The situation in the African Independent Churches is even

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75 University of South Africa information brochure, 2004/2005
76 Njoroge 2004, 4
77 Theological Education by Extension information brochure, 2005/6
78 Lutheran Theological Seminary, Woodpecker brochure 2004/2005, LTS. Gaborone
worse because their congregations are very small. This, therefore, means congregations might not afford to sponsor their congregants for theological training.

This situation will consequently have negative effects on Christian faith in the region. The region needs Church ministers who are well-trained to deal with social problems, economic afflictions, political matters as well as spiritual issues. There is no doubt that the church’s role has been crucial and there are still more challenges coming in the world of today.

When the political and social crisis in Zimbabwe unfolded, churches in Southern Africa were reluctant to address the situation. The church kept silence until the situation got out of control. That could be the result of lack of competent theologians who could address economic and political issues at a critical level. To have well-informed and enlightened citizens will enhance their reasoning capacity and to reflect critically on any situation.

The worrisome situation today is the proliferation of untrained pastors in Southern Africa, which is common in African Independent Churches. Most pastors, bishops and prophets have limited knowledge in theology. While God’s gifts to these people are acknowledged, they need to have theological training, which is important for their ministry. Training will help them to properly use their spiritual gifts for the benefit of God’s people. As already alluded to, theological training is hampered by financial constraints within churches and congregations. Most churches do not have resources to sustain their ministry. They do not get financial help from anybody. It is difficult for them to access the cheapest theological training. Nevertheless, these churches have many followers. The call for the study of theology in the region is an urgent matter.

Universities, theological colleges and seminaries should make theological education affordable to the low income people, church groups etc.

1.7 Conclusion

Theologians in the region should reshape their theological ideology to deal with the core issue of traditional theology which portrays God as the object of theology, and the modern one which claims that humanity is the object of theology. Theology should be regarded as a special science which is concerned with God, the human being and the
physical organic cosmic universe. This science is special because it deals with the personal, wholesome experiences of human beings (human self-consciousness) with their physical organic environment in relationship with God.

Theologians in the region should do Liberation, Africanist, Black and Womanist/Feminist theologies which focus on God, the human being and the physical organic cosmic universe. A theology which only focuses on people’s experiences without also dealing with the natural environment is not complete. Theology should protect nature, i.e. animals, birds, the environment, etc against human aggression which is unjustifiable. A religious person is one who treats nature as a sacred creation of God. God is within our midst. Therefore, we cannot be religious people while we do not respect the rights of animals and birds and other living things.

The study of liberation theology should not only be concerned with people’s experiences, neglecting natural science. The post liberation theology should be regarded as a science. Therefore, every science should have a slice and bit of God, humanity/being human, society, nature, cosmos, universe, reality, being, history, truth, freedom, sense and sensibility. It is important for theology to engage other disciplines such that it can be in a position to guide them. Theology should not only concentrate on academic discipline because it may lose touch with the reality of human life.

Gutirreiz claims that a theology which is not up-to-date is a false theology. We could also say that a theology which is not directed to theory and praxis, the threesome of God, the human being and the physical-organic cosmic universe is incomplete. God should be reflected on in other sciences including economics, politics, mathematics, biology, development, and globalization. This kind of theology would then be relevant to Southern Africa. There is also a call to formulate important elements of African religion which could be considered as latent theological seeds. The African cultures should be structured such that they can be more easily integrated into the academic world of theology and other sciences. Due to the fact that Christianity is a universal religion, it must have a theology which would be valid for all cultures and races.

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79 Gutierrez 1973,11
80 Ibid., p.13
81 Bujo 1992,60
82 Ibid., p.60
are ongoing efforts to formulate theories that will be better applicable to the African situation. The study of theology helps to analyse different theories in religion and other fields of study. Those influences the interpretation of theology in a particular context. We have seen that the traditional theology influenced many theologians in Africa.

The study of theology helped to reflect critically on the issue of God as the object of theology and also human being as the object of theology. This method has indicated that the relation between God and humanity in African religion deals with people’s experiences in their natural environment. Theology should be directed to how people experience the presence of God in the natural science and among themselves. Therefore, the cosmology theology and human self-consciousness to God are main issues in African traditional religion. African people have absolute dependence on God. Africans understand that there is no life without God.

Theology as a science has a theory. In order to understand this theory, we should critically study it. Theology is also directed to praxis. Theory and praxis play a crucial role in the integrating of theology into the context of Southern Africa. In the next chapter the discussion will focus on theologies which are born out of praxis and how they can influence people’s faiths and way of living. The study of theology helps to develop contextual theories on new theologies in the region. Therefore, it is important to continue assessing the quality of theology education and keep it as an academic discipline.

There is no doubt that this will help other academic disciplines in addressing social issues surrounding humanity. The study of theology should not be limited only to God and humanity but it should also include the cosmic environment as it was discussed in this chapter.

The reflection on how theology is developed out of cosmic experience in the line with praxis and theory will be further discussed on the topic of theology directed to contextuality. The human being is part of the natural environment. We have seen how it is important to preserve the natural environment. Human beings should stop destroying God’s creation. In the following chapters we will see how theology can contribute to the
economic strategies in Southern Africa. The quality of theological training is one essential thing in most theological institutions in the region.
CHAPTER TWO

DOING THEOLOGY IN CONTEXT

The study of theology leads us to the concept of doing theology. This chapter will discuss the integration of theological theories into the common practical life of people. The vexed relationship between contextuality and universality will help how to do theology. The concept of doing theology is to make theology relevant to humanity and life in general. It is important for those who lead congregations and work with people to have good knowledge of theological theory.

Theology is concerned with the social, political and economic life of people. The doing of theology embarks on some new methodologies on how to address issues affecting people in this pluralistic society. The pluralistic society composes of the physical environment. Faith shall be discussed in line with people in relation to the physical environment. There are theologies which were very relevant during the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. Those theologies are now finding their new role in the new society in the region. This chapter shall analyse these theologies and find out how they can be used today. The thesis is calling for the restoration of these theologies in the line of gender, HIV/AIDS and theology diversity.

2.1 Theology Directed to Contextuality and Universality of Experience

The debate on whether theology is directed to contextuality and universality has been of interest to many theologians. It is important to discuss the direction theology is taking in the post-liberation era. The vexed relationship between the contextuality and universality is determined by the approaches used. The universality of the gospel is facing modern universal forces and this of course affects the concept of enculturation. We should also be careful that universality is not confused with uniformity. The matter is raised by Ott that since the Second Vatican Council many theologians have addressed the question of how the one Church, which by its very nature subsists in local churches, can achieve unity. What should be sought out is the genuine communion ecclesiarum.83

83 Ott 2007,65
The universality of the Christian faith started long back. According to Rahner and Bosch the shift from Jewish to Hellenestic Christianity was a revolutionary phase and first step towards the realization of the universality of the Christian faith. The Church in Southern Africa is obliged to come up with a universal approach of theology in order to do theology. Nevertheless on the issue of approaches, there is a suggestion that we can start from below, beginning with the development of contextual theology, or from above, starting with the concept of the universality of the gospel. The main issue here is concerned with the relevance of theology and its task. In the past theology was reserved for clergy. The Church and theology strongly supported the privileged position of the clergy as the first estate in the social set-up of the old order. That kind of attitude confined theology to the clergy’s theories and ideologies. In his writings Joseph Comblin observed that

... for a long time the right to get up and speak in the church was reserved to clergymen, and theology was designed not to be understood by the faithful. It was a coded language. Its very mysteriousness seemed to be a sign of the sacred, when in fact it was only a way of hoodwinking God.

One of the tasks of theology is to liberate people who are denied freedom, knowledge and access to God. Therefore theology should address people in their real context. This will make the Church to be its true self by using the word of God in familiar terms and languages. Christian languages and theological terms must be stripped of all the technical and scientific jargon surrounding it so that ordinary Christian people can rediscover the simple words and straightforward language of God. The study of theology at universities and colleges influenced people to hold the perception that the Bible belongs to the clergy and theological experts. This led to the belief that the clergy in the society are the only ones in possession of God’s wisdom and people should only follow their interpretations. Theology of such nature becomes irrelevant to the people’s context.

84 Ahonen 2000,18
85 Ott 2007,65
86 Comblin 1973,63
In this way the people were deprived of their most basic language, and words like love, liberty, truth, community and kingdom of God lost their meaning. Christian language thus was turned into a secret language having nothing to do with simple things of life and existence. It became a type of mystification, working hand in glove with a society that was depriving the poor of their means of expression.87

This leads to the conclusion that theology is not for clergies only. It is also concerned with the social, economic and political life of the people. There is no way theology can disassociate itself from the real afflictions people go through. Any erupting theology should meet the standards of theologising. One of the main tasks of theology is to liberate the church from false theologies. These are theologies which proclaim salvation as an individual journey instead of the wholesome approach. Theologies which do not deal with the current pains and suffering but only concentrate on the good life in paradise after the second coming of Jesus Christ, i.e. a theology of pie in the sky, are irrelevant and meaningless.

Theology itself, however, is not addressed directly to the people of God as such. The poor and lowly could never read it. Theology must go so far as to efface itself, giving way to the straightforward enunciation of God’s message. Theology lies on a preliminary sage and has a preparatory role. This is what the poor will really understand. Theology itself, however, will never be simple and straightforward enough to reach that point. It is a process of simplification, but itself is not the ultimate simplicity desired.88

The call for contextualization of theology has been an issue throughout Church history.

87 Comblin 1973, 64
88 Ibid., p. 65
Even today we still talk about it. The fact is that theology becomes meaningful when the word of God is referred to with some form of special action in the church and the world. The word of God should be preached and be connected to some special actions of the Church in the world. Many liberation theologians are tempted to associate liberation theology mostly with the poor, marginalized, and the oppressed. Those theologians include Gustavo Gutierrez and Joseph Comblin. Comblin argues that

all theology is a form of wealth, signifying involvement
in the world of the wealthy and solidarity with it. What
gives theology legitimacy, however is the process of getting
rid of this wealth in order to distribute it to the poor.89

In his writings, Gutierrez argues that material poverty is sub-human situation. It means to die of hunger, to be illiterate, to be exploited by others, not to know that you are being exploited, not to know that you are a person.90 The main concern for theology is also the universal life of a human being. Human beings experience different dilemmas in life universally.

Theological education in seminaries, colleges and universities should be contextualized. Students who are trained will ultimately work in the region, and it will be beneficial if they are equipped with contextualised pedagogical methods during training. For mission work to continue effectively, learners should be equipped with relevant tools which are helpful in their working environments. The study of theology should also concentrate on contextual theologies in the region. The fact is that contextualisation of theological education has been spoken of, or called for, for many years but rarely practiced,

it may be stated that contextualization should be the focal concern because through it alone will come reform and renewal. Contextualization of the gospel is a

89 Comblin 1973,65
90 Gutierrez 1973,289
Contextualisation of theology should be thought about, considered and reflected on in seminaries and colleges. This does not mean that we should not teach western theology as some African theologians assume. Our theological colleges should not only put emphasis on Western and Ancient theology as seems to be the case in many local theological institutions. Instead, they should be encouraged to give first priority to the different contextual theologies of the region. There are theological seminaries in the region which still use the European and American liturgies in their worship services. In Namibia, the United Lutheran Theological Seminary strictly follows the Lutheran Book of Worship for their daily prayers and evening service. In Botswana, the Woodpecker Lutheran Seminary still uses the same book. These seminaries have been using this book of worship from the United States of America for more than two decades. That can symbolise lack of contextualisation of theology at theological institutions. The need to contextualise the way of training is an urgent item which should be observed.

We live in a globalised world. There is a need for a theology which is directed to universality. Theology is the instrument which brings the world together into common understanding on issues of religion, economics, politics etc. This means that there is no way the world can avoid globalisation. People are moving from one country to another and from one continent to the other. Theology should be able to create a conducive atmosphere for people to practise their faith freely and universally and for people to tolerate other faiths. Theology therefore, should be contextual in a universal world.

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91 TEF staff 1972,30
2.2 Doing Theology and Faith in Action

Faith is part of the daily human activities in life. It concerns mainly with belief or trust. Faith is also a theological issue. It needs a theological reflection and an action. People should be guided carefully because faith is one of the sensitive human experiences. Theology is concerned with the reflection on how people live out their faiths and how theology and faith cannot be separated.

Doing theology in context is the most common theological method used by modern theologians. Theology as a science cannot run away from the realities surrounding it in the modern world. It is clear that theology develops in a particular context, or a particular situation and a particular historical period. Theology was developed as a method of analysing things systematically. That can be simply traced from Tomas Summa to the Systematic Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg. This prompted the concept of doing theology.

At this point the three worldviews of theologies initiated by theologian’s today are highly engaged. Those are the contribution of theology on the daily experience of God, the experience of human beings and the experience of the organic environment. Theology is compelled to bring together theory and praxis which were separated at certain stages. Theory is sometimes referred to as scientific thinking and praxis as non-scientific experience.92

There are uncertainties whether doing theology in context has methods or not. Nevertheless the method used in most cases is determined by the praxis. Of course, this may put Christian theology in trouble. Theology must respond to the needs of the people. In his writings, De Gruchy argues that there is a need to recognise theology and its contextual character and therefore its limitations in the post-modern world where a variety of theological paradigms or models arise out of different contexts and use different methods may have equal validity.93 The need to recognize the limitations of theology in the modern society is crucial. The modern world is challenged by situations

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92Van Niekerk 1980,77
93De Gruchy1994,9
where sometimes theology is used to justify human errors. To have limitation of methods of contextualising theology will help in reconstructing a sound theology in the region.

Doing theology cannot be separated from the method of liberation theology. Therefore doing post liberation theology in Southern Africa is one of the most important items in the agenda today. The praxis has changed. Old challenges like colonialism and apartheid are gone. Life in Southern Africa has changed. Theology should then address issues in the new life of Southern Africa. It is important to know whether methods of liberation theology used in previous decades are still relevant today. It has been taken for granted that the starting point of liberation theology is the Bible. The idea has been well supported by the Lutheran theologians whose theology is based on Martin Luther’s *sola gracia, sola fide and sola scriptura*. In his writings Maimela argues that

...the starting point of liberation theologians is not the Bible or some once-and-for all given, existent pure kerygmatic “truths” which can be distilled and reproduced so as to apply them at the right moment. Rather the starting point in liberation theology is the concrete, historical praxis which claims to be Christian, that is, real life itself in which the germinal events of Christianity are believed to be incarnated (embodied).[94]

The life of a Christian cannot be separated from reading the Bible, preaching the word of God, and the fervent prayers that God’s will may be done. These are the core practices in Christian life. The post-liberation theology cannot deviate from praxis methods. If praxis calls liberation theologians to challenge the socio-political and economic issues, they are obliged to do so. In his view Maimela is convinced that

liberation theologians are persuaded that their commitment to the struggle and critical reflection on the historical

[94]Maimela 1983,90
situation of oppression and domination does not arise out of purely socio-political and economic factors but rather from hearing the gospel, whose message, they believe, is incompatible with unjust and destructive social structures. Rather the gospel calls all God’s people to a total fellowship with God and with one another, a fellowship whose best expression is found in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, an event that invites the oppressor and oppressed to form a sacred pact, and in the willingness to be exposed and converted to one another.  

The Gospel calls for total unity in human kind. The fellowship Maimela is talking about is the communion of God’s created people. The sharing of the Lord’s Supper is an emotional sign of the feeling of togetherness, forgiveness and acceptance of one another as equal in God’s eye. This is a situation where people are living together in the physical organic world doing God’s will.

The Post-Liberation theology should enforce Tutu’s “Rainbow Nation Theology”. The theology is calling men, women, children and everybody to a fellowship with God. It is a theology which wants to see the poor and rich, blacks and whites together celebrating the Lord’s Supper. The Post-Liberation theology is committed to liberate everybody who is marginalised because of colour, race, gender, disability and sexual orientation and to be freed from such oppression. In most African communities some cultural practices and traditions are oppressive and violate human rights. Those cultures and traditions should be revisited and consequently be modified, if necessary.

The Post-Liberation theology we propose in Southern Africa today does not only concern itself with humanity. It calls for the wholesome approach on the created universe in relation to God. It is a theology which harmonises the threesome i.e. God, the human self and the natural physical-organic environment. This theology should create an environment

95Maimela 1983,91
whereby two kingdoms, which Lutheran theologians talk about, are in harmony in this world. Post-liberation theology is obliged to preserve God’s creation order and living things. Doing theology in the post-liberation era in Southern Africa concerns with what Van Niekerk says is

> the real of theological-religion in which all sciences and disciplines about God and religions are engaged in, the reality of the humanities in which all sciences about human experience, doings, acts, deeds and processes are collectively engaged in and the realm of natural sciences in which all science solely focused on the physical-organic environment are collectively engaged with the smallest micro particle in micro processes to the biggest macro processes of the many universes.\(^\text{96}\)

Doing theology in simple terms means, taking care of animals, cleaning our houses and surroundings, working in the garden, nursing people at the hospital, lecturing science or economics in a school, teaching Sunday school, composing music which reflects people’s lives, providing counseling to people etc. This is a situation whereby people and the worlds are actively engaged in building God’s creation. The book of James in the Bible concentrates on the issue that human beings can be saved by good deeds. Some theologians from Lutheran background are very skeptical because of its strong emphasis on good deeds.

> What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food and one of you says to them, depart in peace, be warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body,

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\(^{96}\text{Van Niekerk 2006, 5-6 TIC310-C}\)
what does it profit? (James 2:14-16)

Doing theology calls for good works and devotion to God because good works are born out of faith. Good deeds are the result of our devotion to God. People should have faith in God. In this way we can now conclude that deeds represent human activities in the physical-organic environment. Therefore doing theology is a theanthropocosmic principle which includes God, humanity and the world in negotiation side by side. The physical organic environment should produce good wealth for the people and this wealth should be distributed to the needy equally. This means that the physical organic environment is taken seriously in the book of James.

2.3 Post-Liberation Contextual Theology
The different contributions to the theology of reconstruction have broadened the scope of confession theology. The introduction of the socio-political debate which can indeed be prophetic according to the standards set by the Kairos document should be the framework of the discourse, openness, democratic and pluralistic society. Post-Liberation theology is one of the subjects which need attention. One can ask whether there are substantial reasons for liberation theology today. Indeed, we still need to be liberated from post-colonial unfavourable conditions even though apartheid conditions have been removed. Some scholars understand post-colonial conditions as a process of describing the modern history of imperialism, beginning with the process of colonialism, through the struggles for political independence, the attainment of independence and to the contemporary neo-colonialist realities.  

Neo-colonialism is one of the main challenges in the post liberation theology. This concept delays progress in the development of Africa. Africa should be liberated from economic dependency on former colonisers. Africa has won political liberation, but she is still not economically liberated. Liberation means removing all barriers which hinder people to have fully abundant life and be free from all forms of injustice and discrimination.

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97 Ashcroft and Tiffin 1989, 2
Post-Liberation theology in Southern Africa is a theology which heals the afflictions caused by tribalism, ethnicity, racism and sexism. Tribalism and ethnicity have disastrously destroyed many African countries which became independent from their former colonial powers. In his comments on the issue of tribalism, racism and idolisation of ones tribe and language which some people are calling for in present Namibia, Bishop Kameeta says

\[\ldots\text{those who do that, put the historical-political reality of “One Namibia-One Nation” in the second place, or reject it ultimately. I am, in the first place, thinking of the people who are supposed to be sisters and brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ or comrades…that idol has many examples of countries which came out of colonial bondage, but were destroyed by it politically and economically and dumped into perpetual poverty and violence}\]^{98}

These are not surprising stories from our region. How do theologies in the region respond to this? What are we teaching at our theological institutions after the liberation struggle, if our people are still thinking in this way? These are not the only major issues post-liberation theology should deal with. There is neo-colonialism, economic injustice and other challenges that pose a serious challenge in people lives.

Neo-colonialism is an ideology which tries to justify the evils of colonialism and imperialism. It portrays itself as a Big Dad to the so-called third world countries. Africa has shown the world that she is very strong and determined by achieving political freedom. There is no doubt that the continent can again unite and face the challenges perpetuated by neocolonialism. After the political liberation struggle the continent is still facing a process of transformation. Of course, it should be noted that the process is not easier.

\(^{98}\text{Kameeta 2006,83}\)
The main issue is who plays the subject role in this process of transformation. Musa Dube sees the definition strongly emphasising the connection and continuity of the past and the real present between the coloniser and the colonised.\textsuperscript{99} This means those who are subjects are former colonisers and former colonised who are now known as first world and third world or developed or underdeveloped respectively. The main problem is the model of transformation. A model plays a significant role in transformation. It should be clear to people first about the model. For the colonisers, African transformation means that Africans should leave their way of living, reasoning, doing things, and follow their colonisers’ lifestyle. Africans are asking themselves whether they can return to the African way of life or not. Of course, that will be difficult in today’s situation. The modern infrastructure, modern education, civilised world and globilisation will make it difficult for Africans to live a fully traditional and cultural life. The colonisers have made sure that Africans are left with a limited choice of models of transformation. These are the negative consequences of colonialism. To make matters worse, the colonisers decided to classify the world into groups. They decided to put themselves at the top, calling themselves first world and second, and third class and underdeveloped class. Colonisers never wanted to be in equal partnership with the so-called second and third world countries.

The then colonial masters classified Africa as a continent that is historically notorious for wars, poverty, misery, hunger and sickness among other things that make life difficult. The current situation in Africa is not satisfactory. The continent is fighting a dual war. That is the political liberation and economic liberation. The so-called third world status has made African misery worse by introducing globalization phenomena to make sure that African countries remain in debts and in lower ranking according to their classes. The continued inter-tribal and ethnic conflicts around the continent make African countries vulnerable to manipulation by the developed countries. This is what makes African people thirsty for liberation.

\textsuperscript{99}Dube 2000,15
Liberation is the first priority for Africa. Ngwa Ambe understands that liberation begins from the desperate human need to get rid of whatever threatens or enslaves. It is mostly defined as the absence of any compulsion, restraint or impediment that keeps people bound to their own or others’ habits or interests. In biblical traditions the word liberation was used throughout the whole bible. The key message in the bible is to liberate humanity from both the physical and spiritual oppression.

Liberation is a response both to human need and to the biblical notion of redemption; indeed, liberation is the modern term for redemption. In other words, it involves not simply a desire to be free or to set someone free, but a conviction that it is of the essence of morality...

liberation must be discussed in context. For a genuine liberation to take place, decision-making power must be decentralized with power being exercised by the people.

Contextual theology in the post-liberation time addresses the connections and relationship between the first world and the third world. The main task for the future will be to remove barriers of putting countries into categories such as developed, underdeveloped or developing. This does not only apply to the countries, but it also has an impact on people as well. People are segregated according to colour, tribes and wealth classes. The consequences of colonialism and apartheid have torn apart not only African humanity identity but God’s salvation plan for the world. This phenomenon still holds the legacy of colonisation. Instead we should be speaking about building up one world regardless of our economic wealth and political power. The unity of Godhead according to the Trinitarian Christian science is God’s master-minded salvation plan. This issue shall be dealt with in detail in the next chapter.

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100 Ambe 2008,24
101 Ambe 2008,26
2.4 Social, Political and Economic Transformation

The Post-Liberation theology addresses aspects of economic imbalances and all forms of discrimination. It is the main task of post-modernity, post-colonialism, post feminism and other post theologies to transform the present situation in order to have one liberated world. According to Musa Dube, post-colonialism is not about dwelling on the crime of the past and their continuation, but about seeking transformation for liberation in the modern world.\textsuperscript{102} We are not forgetting the past, instead we learnt from it and we continue to learn from it. This will help us not to repeat the same mistakes. That goes together with Dube’s argument that

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the term post colonial subjects describes people whose perception of each other and of economic, political, and cultural relationships cannot be separated from the global impact and constructions of Western/modern imperialism, which still remain potent forms of neo-colonialism, military arrogance, and globalization.\textsuperscript{103}
\end{quote}

Therefore, post-colonial people are people who should be willing to forgive one another, totally reconciled from the bottom of their hearts, willing to share God’s earthly resources, willing to cooperate with one another regardless of class, colour, tribe, ready to fight and stand against any injustice perpetrated in humanity and the physical organic environment.

There are countries which still experience difficulties after political independence. Those difficulties include acceptance between the then oppressors and the oppressed. For instance in the Republic of Namibia, Bishop Zephania Kameeta says:

\begin{quote}
we thank God that colonialism has been terminated and
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{102} Dube2000,16
\textsuperscript{103} Dube 2000,16
ended in our country. But it is also regrettable that colonial attitudes and a slave mentality are prevalent in Namibia...It is still practice that in most business places, e.g. shops, banks, restaurants, and also in some government offices in the Afrikaans language blacks are addressed as “jy” and “jou”, while whites are addressed as “U”. We cannot credibly and honestly proclaim liberation and reconciliation in a free Namibia without seriously addressing these anti-human attitudes.  

That is also the case in countries which got independence earlier than Namibia and South Africa. In Botswana, which is believed to be non-racial, similar stories of racism are prevalent. In an interview with a young woman named Ms Ida Mogorosi working for a white couple as a domestic worker in Gaborone, she said that her employer uses racist language against her whenever she makes a mistake, and sometimes he just utters rude remarks. Her story goes as follows;

*My boss always makes racist comments against Botswana people. He always says that they are lazy; they sleep with everybody like animals.*

This kind of attitude is still happening in our region. We still have a long way to go in order to achieve the goal of liberating African people. Kameeta argues that if we do not address these issues very seriously,

*we will allow the legacy of colonialism and apartheid to continue unhindered in the liberated Namibia and to be inherited by generations yet unborn.*

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104 Kameeta 2006, 82  
105 Mogorosi in an interview on 26th March 2006, in Gaborone
Another factual truth is that this is not only done by white people in Africa, it is also done by blacks to other blacks. Those are colonial-injected and brainwashed blacks. The situation may cause more devastation to African humanity. Post-liberation theology should not only deal with the syndrome of black and white, but also with classes in black societies. Those classes create ill-treatment among black people. This is not how transformation from colonialism to modern independent Africa should happen and be practised.

Today in our region we experience a very unique situation in which people living with HIV/AIDS are stigmatised. This is a wrong attitude in African communities which should not be entertained. Where is the concept of Ubuntu? Africans are people who use a holistic approach to deal with issues. Africans take illness and calamity as breaking up of the wholeness of life and that illness is experienced as a disturbance in the society as a whole. If a person is sick, the whole family and community is sick too. It has been a surprising and shameful situation in Southern Africa that people living with HIV/AIDS are stigmatised. The issue here is, whether we are transforming from worse to better or vice versa.

The Post-Liberation theology is obliged to help the transformation process in Southern Africa to move accordingly without taking a one-sided method. A method is needed for bringing together the African world-view, what was good and evil during the colonial period and challenges of today into dialogue at an equal level. There is no way we can only blame colonialism, closing our eyes on the good things it brought for the continent. We should also see what we can improve from what colonialism left behind. Many black Africans still uphold that old African traditional life is an ideal and should be revisited. People in the country side are calling for a return to traditional life. In an interview with a headman of a rural village in Botswana, the headman argued that:

...the challenges we face today cannot end unless we

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106 Kameeta 2006,82
107 Ter Haar 1992,168
return to our own African traditional way of living. Ancestors are not happy with all these new changes.\textsuperscript{108}

It is clear that we cannot totally return to that life in today’s context. Theology should search for what was lost which was good or evil in African traditional norms and values of life. The next step will be to take out what is good and applicable to the modern life in the region today. There are sayings that the good traditional lifestyle which was practised during olden days was the best. The question shall be whether this can be applicable today? There are limited ways of avoiding the western life influence in Africa. It will be advisable for the African world-view, western life-style and current life-style in Africa which is mixed up to enter into intensive discussion and find out how they can be practised together for the benefit of society at large. The discussion will engage the society in socio-political and economic development. The society should be part of the transformation process of the life-style in Africa.

Theology from the region is calling for the Theanthropocosmic principle to be used in the transformation process. The transformation of the human life-style goes hand in hand with people’s social, political, economic and spiritual life. Post liberation theology is a theology of transformation. Its task is to transform society for the better. Therefore to do theology needs a community with different forms of involvement, different experiences and angles of insight, variously gifted, which invests time and energy in uncovering the terms of situations faced and searching the scriptures for light on them, which thus learns to live in the world under the discipline of the world attentive to the Spirit.\textsuperscript{109} That is community work. It is an exercise that needs everybody to participate. God’s people are the only possible theological community.

2.5 Doing Theology in a Pluralistic Society

It is important to stress the point that theologising implies more than reflection as it was mentioned in the last chapter. Theology describes the disciplined attempts of human beings to understand how the world has been and is being affected by God’s presence and

\textsuperscript{108} Interview with Letshoo (chief of Mogobane village South East Botswana) 15th January 2006

\textsuperscript{109} Schwantes 1986,59
activity within it. That means to make out what kind of God and what is God agenda.\textsuperscript{110} Theology in Southern Africa is challenged by a multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-ethnic society. This situation plays an influential role in the socio-economic and political context of the people living in a specific region. There is no doubt that the political history of apartheid and colonialism made quite an impact on the African culture. Southern Africa is blessed with people of different races with unique backgrounds. This indicates the wealth or riches in the region.

It will be important to put together riches in the region to have societies which observe and are proud of their cultures and traditions. It seems that many people do not recognise that having multi-cultural a society is wealthy. Instead we consider it as a stumbling-block for the progress of the society. Theology should convince a person that living in a multi-cultural, multiracial and multi-ethnic society is a blessing from God. Therefore such a society should recognise that God is on their side. The fruits of the Holy Spirit must be seen within our societies.

Many people appreciate the emergence of pluralistic society as liberation from the force of all sorts of traditional authority. However, the same people often complain about the decreasing trustworthiness of the foundations of life. Many of the certainties which people used to rely on naturally have lost credibility. This leads to a feeling of insecurity among many people. There are hearsays that in the past people felt much closer to God. The traditional African society seemed to be much nearer to the will of God as it is revealed in some African traditional creation stories than today. If the religious situation is analysed carefully, it will be realised that many people feel cut off from any access to God. They neither feel that God is keeping the promise made in the past, nor do they join in the hope that in the future God will do anything, which might improve their present misery. This state is disturbing.

The uncertainty of a pluralistic environment can therefore lead to a renewed effort and desire to look out for any truths which can give meaning, hope and certitude for a troubled life situation. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia has shared the observation that in urban squatter areas, young men who hardly ever attended church

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., p. 59
service in their rural home congregations are streaming to the church services in the cities.\footnote{Fekeipo, in an interview on 22\textsuperscript{nd} September 2006(Namibia)} It looks like the Church has been confused by the uncertainties of the pluralistic urban environment.

Africa is tormented by civil wars and coups. It will be difficult for African Renaissance to take place without dealing with the root causes of these wars. A healthy environment should be created to enable the renaissance to take place. Religious groups in Africa are expected to play a leading role in framing the way forward in order to meet the goals of the renaissance. Theology should instigate religious tolerance, harmony and inter-faith among African people. This can be done by promoting inter faith dialogue on political, social and economic issues affecting people of different faiths. Theology should promote theological debate on religious matters. There is need for public theological education on key themes on different religious faiths. The process will help people of different faiths to understand and accept each other.

Religion has a great contribution in civil wars, coups and other afflictions in Africa, e.g. the current situation in Sudan. Theology is obliged to contribute towards the building of inter-faith dialogue in Southern Africa. Inter-religious dialogue and solidarity is a profound ethical and theological challenge.\footnote{Nolan 1994,223} The challenge sends segments to educational systems in the region. The inter faith and religious tolerance should commence at our families, schools, working areas and communities. Therefore, school programmes at all levels and community gatherings should be accommodative to all faiths.

To be very precise on the issue on religious tolerance, the religious education which should be intergrated into education systems.Children should be taught different religions from kindergardens schools, primary schools and secondary schools. This shall assist in moulding children to respect each others religions and can live together despite their religious orientations. Religious leaders in communities should mobilised to facilitate inter-faith dialogues within their societies. There are also structures in different socities which could be used to educate people about religious tolerance. Those structures include
traditional leadership, community development committees and others. There are structures which play an influential role in communities and they can be the right people to be used in public education on religious tolerance. It is also important for countries constitutions to be religious inclusive during this modern society. That shall encourage people to be religious sensitive when addressing societal challenges.

There are concerns from elderly people in the society about the changing behaviour and attitudes of today’s people. Mogotsi, an old man living in Gobabis in Namibia, expressed his concerns about young people who do not respect traditional authorities by saying:

*Young people do not have respect for Chiefs as it was long time ago. They even do not fear God. They just don’t care. Pastors today are not respected by the public as it was before. This is because of many churches and religions which are foreign to our country. I think the state must stop them.*

The Church today seems not able to give convincing answers to people’s questions of faith and the people find themselves having to search for their own answers. In the search for such answers, some people are bound to make improper decisions. The Church today is living in a time characterised by the dynamic of time. Churches seem to have difficulties to formulate theological positions which could offer people better answers to their questions particularly in the years after independence and liberation in Southern Africa.

The situation in congregations seems like the faith of the people is not uniform at all but everyone seems to feel free to express his/her faith without looking much to authorities like pastors, church boards, synods, theological seminaries, etc. The Church seems to be affected by movements which can be discovered in many areas of the society that call for pluralism. Today people are suspicious of traditional authorities like parents, chiefs, and governments that they want to think and live as they please. They rush to conclusions that these authorities are just protecting their own personal satisfaction.

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113 Mogotsi in an interview on 20th September 2006 (Namibia)
People in leadership experience negative reaction from the public. A group of theological students at the Lutheran Seminary in Botswana shared their experiences from their internship. They said that they have observed that people do not give respect to pastors and priests as it was before. The pastoral profession has lost credibility in the congregations.\textsuperscript{114} It is common in the region that you hear pastors, teachers, political councilors and office bearers of all kinds complaining that people do not want to follow their advice.

People never expressed their feelings during the colonial era. They couldn’t say their opinions in public. Of course nobody had ever asked for their views. Today people are allowed to be themselves. Pluralism is seen in a wide variety of contexts. In our political life it is reflected on the recognition that we do not all think alike. Even in the liberation movements there are significant and irreducible differences in analysis of the situation and in visions of a new society.

\begin{quote}
This political pluralism is in turn expressed in the felt need for political tolerance and multi-party democracy as necessary components of a democratic social and political life. In our cultural life, the compelling arguments advanced by feminists and by theorists of race and identity, that politics is about respecting differences, not seeking to overcome it and reducing everything to the same, are further signs of radical pluralism. So too is the conflict of interpretations over significant events, texts, rituals and symbols that occupies much of our political, social and cultural debate.\textsuperscript{115}
\end{quote}

Pietersen argues that everyone chooses what he/she likes. It is important to respect each other’s differences and live together. According to him and other theologians, pluralism

\textsuperscript{114} Interview with Theological Students of Lutheran Theological Seminary Botswana January 2006.
\textsuperscript{115} Pietersen 1994,219
is a development that the Church and theology have to face and even to appreciate, because it gives room to questions that people themselves regard as relevant. The task of theology is to examine the way in which Christian thinking and action have developed and have been expressed by others both in our time and throughout the Christian history. The Christian thinking and actions keep developing as people encounter new challenges.

Religious pluralism should be included in the agenda for theologies in the region. There are many religions in Southern Africa. Prominent religions include Christianity, African traditional religion, Islam, Rastafariism, Hinduism and Judaism. It is important to make sure that there is religious tolerance, peace and stability in the region. There has been religious conflict especially between the Christianity and Islam in some countries in Africa which include Sudan, Ethiopia and Nigeria. Southern Africa has not experienced religious conflict yet. People from different religious backgrounds live together in respect for other faiths. We should create an environment where people are able to practise their faiths freely without any intimidation.

A religious pluralistic society builds a communion of people of different faiths. Theology in the region should engage people of different faiths in dialogue to face society’s challenges. It is the responsibility of the religious leaders and organisations to see to it that this is done. Such an environment can be created through educating people on the importance of working with other faiths. This can be done through interfaith dialogue forums, seminars and workshops. Inter-faith dialogue is an ideal approach which can help create a religious pluralistic society. It can promote religious peace, stability and tranquility. Religious conflicts drastically affect the religious, social, political and economic life of the society. The fight against religious conflicts should be a first priority for governments, religious leaders, religious organisations and the public. Everyone in the society should be committed to avoid religious confrontations.

2.6 Doing Theology with the People

Theology that is being taught at universities and seminaries should address some serious questions from people. People in our region pray and organise their lives according to

116 De Gruchy 1994,2
religious ideas. In most cases if they have to take a decision, they are guided by Christian norms and values. Newspapers and television broadcasts are full of religious words, and even people who do not go to church neither think nor talk without making reference to religion. Our lives are full of religion. We eat, walk, talk, sing, and celebrate according to our religion. Religion, therefore, is as diverse as the people. Frequently, religious ideas lead people to different opinions about certain issues. In Botswana the HIV/AIDS pandemic is sometimes associated with the wrath of God on people. In the Republic of Namibia, the Bible is used frequently to address the issue of homosexuality, abortion, racism et.c. The basic communities are more marvelously gifted, in that they possess the languages which are proper for theology, which many theologians and pastors often do not have.117

The secular theology has more influence on many theologians. Personal hardship often creates religious language. In situations of danger and depression, many people find themselves praying to God for help. The experience of suffering and hope receives its meaning from the Christian tradition. It is a common place that life is not paradise; that one can’t escape problems. But many people feel that where there is suffering there is no hope. The same applies to the basic notions of order. The claim of obedience to parents and the government, the superiority of men, the understanding of marriage and immortality is justified using the Bible, even by people who never respect the Bible much in their lives and might not have read it even once. Another important example is the understanding of justice and equality. It is one of the most powerful ideas of our century that human beings are created equal and oppression therefore must not be there. Even hard-core communists will agree.

We cannot ignore people’s faiths. Religious ideas are extremely powerful. They lead people to hold very strong views. If we analyse the debates in society, we will realise that there is hardly one which was not held along the lines of religious positions. One cannot do otherwise, but to call all those debates, ideas, and convictions theology in the strict sense of the word. Therefore anyone who seeks orientation in the Bible, in the history of Christianity or in the direct encounter with God is strictly speaking a theologian who is

117 Fraser 1986,63
engaged in an exercise which we could call people theology. There is temptation for theologians to leave their congregations behind.

Contrary to some other theological approaches this popular form of theology is definitely relevant, because this theology is produced by the people themselves in their quest to understand themselves and to act in the world in a meaningful way. Nobody is indifferent to this way of theology, and in dealing with those kinds of challenges of life nobody is a nominal Christian but almost everyone seeks God for guidance and understanding, as vague and clumsy this might ever be.

The exercise of people doing theology is a process which first should start with people themselves. The theology of life, which is applicable to the people of Southern Africa can be essential in dealing with practical life issues of people. The methodology commences with the faith of people, therefore humanity. That is the faith of people before hearing the word of God. This realm of people’s faith before hearing the Word of God is characterised by the ordinary, the natural, the order, the proven and the tested. This emphasis on before does not mean that people have never heard the word of God. It means that in the very moment of their lives they have not yet heard the word of God. Martin Luther uses the phrase for them in his Christmas Day afternoon sermon.\textsuperscript{118}

Therefore they must hear the word of God specifically for themselves. It is not that they did not know God’s word. They know about God’s word but they do not gain any comfort from it. We can now say that people’s faith before hearing the word of God is a faith characterised by disillusion and lack of confidence. For instance, squatters who are streaming to Church, people infected by HIV/AIDS who are told that the disease is a punishment from God, a mother who does not see the future for her baby and decides to kill her, robbers who take somebody’s life in order to steal their property and somebody who commits suicide know about God’s commandments. They hear how graceful God is. Nevertheless they still continue committing such evils.

\textsuperscript{118}\textsuperscript{Noll 1989,228}
The second one is after people have heard the word of God. The main issue here is what happens to people after hearing God’s word. The word of God brings about real change in human beings. The person starts to think differently. We believe that the Holy Spirit directsthe thoughts of that person. According to Martin Luther, God satisfies the “needs of the body” by all means.\textsuperscript{119} There is no division of body and soul. God is acting in this stage.

The third stage is the renewed reality of the Church. The Church exists in the physical organic environment, as discussed in the previous chapter. Another scenario is role of the Church after people receive faith and encounter God. This is a situation where theology takes action and directs both people’s faith and the Church. This methodology shall be elaborated in the next chapter on the reconstruction of theologies. People participate in theology. In the previous time, families practised theology from their homes. They prayed together with their children and devoted their lives to Christ. Therefore Christian faith became dominant in families and that made mission work easier.

\textit{The people of God, then, the whole people comprising children, women and men are called to live the faith, to perceive the substance of what they are living, to articulate it and develop a critical understanding of what it means. They are the theological communities.}\textsuperscript{120}

Theological communities were made up of devoted families from the community. The childhood education from the family is the most important thing because it determines the future of the family and the community.

The faith which is taught to children should be perfectly analysed before it reaches children. The people of God will live a devoted life which upholds Christian teachings at family level and in the community at large. Theology is all about God and the people. The doing of theology is the matter of spiritual devotion to God by people in response to what God has done to humanity. This devotional response is done by all groups of people

\begin{footnotes}
\item[119] Tarppert 1956, 430
\item[120] Fraser 1986, 63
\end{footnotes}
in the community. That includes men, women children, disabled, the poor and the rich. The doing of theology with people is where men and women are able to articulate clearly their faith and develop it according to their context. It is a process where theology and the communities are able to understand each other and face challenges jointly.

The theology which is taught at seminaries, universities and practised in churches can be relevant if it begins with the expressions of people. The development of theology should be based on the expressions of people faiths and the realities of people environment. Theology must continue with the approach of starting with the real world, with real people, real problems, real hope, real challenges and real celebration. The most important thing is that modern theologians should learn to listen to the people. Theologians and pastors who stick to themselves and their opinions and do not listen to others will never become relevant to the society. Those theologians who listen to people opinion will become competent partners of people’s theologies in their quest to seek God’s guidance in the ups and downs of their lives.

As we consider our task as theological educators, we are humbled before God and before God’s people. We now see more clearly that we must learn to listen to the stories of suffering people as they tell of their hope and work for justice in the midst of oppression. We need to learn their language, interpret their experiences and stories for ourselves and others in the light of the gospel, and make available to them the experience of the universal Church, the wisdom of the Christian tradition, and appropriate critical tools.\textsuperscript{121}

The best method of engaging people in theology is by listening to them. This method plays an important role in the process of doing theology in context. Veikko Munyika suggests an understanding of salvation which would be relevant to the people.

\textsuperscript{121} Amirthan & Pobee 1986,131
Those pastors and theologians who seem to distance themselves from involvement, render themselves and indeed their whole churches, irrelevant. Please do not do that. It is our task as pastors and theologians of the day to avail ourselves and therefore the Church, as agents and channels of salvation not only spiritual salvation but salvation which is worth calling life in its fullest. We shall be working out our salvation with fear and trembling if we address humanity’s everyday problems such as poverty, hunger, ignorance, disease, hatred, all forms of injustice, oppression, exploitation, unemployment, immortality and death.122

Nevertheless every scientific subject has a method. There is a certain set of procedures which one should follow. This is most obvious in the physical sciences, but it also applies to the social sciences and theology. The most important question is the starting point. Munyika’s statement indicates that the starting point is if people are engaged in theology. The starting point of theology should not be from theologians’ reasoning but from people debates. The starting point is a crucial thing and must be taken seriously. If we take the starting point seriously we will realise that no one can do theology just for him/herself. One always needs the input of other people. Theology is a team exercise which involves the lay people as well as the trained theologians. For instance, theologians should be encouraged to let the people choose topics for theological debates and discourse.

Theologians are not the judges of the people’s opinions. There was a tendency where theologians and pastors had the feeling that they could decide alone about what is right and wrong. Theology, therefore, seemed to be a very authoritarian thing where the experts talked almost alone and the debates of the people were controlled and censored. A theology that claims that it knows better what is good for the people than the people themselves easily becomes irrelevant. Theology can only be relevant if it is conducted in the spirit of partnership between nature, humanity and theologians.

122 Munyika 1998,4
It should be clear that theology is the exercise of people’s faith. The people’s faith cannot be neglected when analysing their experiences of life. Theology is produced when people continueto reflect on how they experience God in their lives. In other words, the people’s faith is the main source of theology.

*All theology also presupposes that the person doing theological reflection has had experiences in this life with God. Theology is also a community activity; it grows out of life together of people of faith. It grows as people share together their lives and the interpretation of events that surround them in the light of faith.*

The people’s theologies have to be analysed critically using theological methodologies. The task of trained theologians is to begin with the affirmative task. The lay people are not trained to express themselves in a comprehensive way. Their theology is oftenvery elementary. It even appears to be clumsy. It is, therefore, the task of trained theologians to tell stories of the people to the wider public. In our deliberations on affirmative theology we have to discuss how people and trained theologians should work together. The working together of trained theologians and lay people should take place in the spirit of partnership. Gerald West suggests that trained theologians should produce theology with the people, but they should not fall into temptations. They should neither produce theology for ordinary people, nor should they just accept the interpretations of ordinary readers.

In the situation where theologians produce theology for the people, they will be in danger of pursuing topics of their own private interests and so to miss those issues which are really relevant to people. Theology critically presents a more sincere warning. The issue is that if theology is produced for the people, it might be done in bad faith. Theologians may claim that they are doing theology and religion, but the fact is that they are trying to dominate people and make people depended on their theologies. In some congregations, a

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123 Ndhlovu 2006,157
124 West 1994,19
pastor is the one who knows everything concerning God. In such instances, pastors extend their power at the expense of the people. Nevertheless people today are very aware of attempts to dominate them. Many conflicts between pastors and congregations have their roots on pastors’ attempts to produceg theology for the congregations and the congregation’s resistance against such attempts. Therefore, pastors are answering question which were not asked by anybody. This means they are addressing issues which are not even people’s concerns.

People always feel that their theological ideas are irrelevant. This kind of feeling can be discouraging and demoralising. Theologians should make people feel that they are participating and contributing in the theological debates. It is advisable for well trained theologians to realise that people’s opinions are very often influenced by all sorts of ideas. It was one of the strange experiences that people did not always support ideas which propagated liberation, but very often pursued convictions which justified their own oppression. Theologians have to initiate a critical process to free people from opinions which are imposed upon them. Theologians cannot just make theology for the people taking their own opinions and state it as the truth. Of course, they should not repeat the position of the people without any further deliberation.

The doing of theology with the people means to initiate a process of clarification. It is a process of analysing controversial issues and making them clear. Christians, irrespective of their initial opinions, must deal with the situation in which the modern governments hold the same position as the old tribal authorities or whether there is a difference. They should deal with questions of governance, democracy, political parties, mixing of traditional practices with other faiths, issues of women and youth empowerment etc. These questions may be asked by people themselves originally but a trained theologian may be able to make a great contribution to the understanding of the people without imposing his/her own opinion. Theologians can initiate a process of clarification in which the theological ideas of the people become clear to the people themselves and to other listeners as well. The results of this process can be written down

125 Ibid., p.20
in a comprehensive form. Such a document will then truly represent the theology of the people.

The temptation of not engaging people in theological discussions is very common among trained theologians. It is important to remind theologians that even if they engage themselves more in theory, they must not forget that it is still their task to produce relevant theology for people. They know that theological and philosophical terms are unavoidable in a discussion, but they must not dominate the discourse. The foundation of the discussion must be the debates by people and not any philosophical or theological position of some experts. The most complex theological argumentation will be relevant if it helps to clarify the positions of the people.

The theologies of the people therefore also have to be the starting point of more theoretical contributions to theology in general. Trained theologians oppress people by excluding them from theological discourse. People should engage in public debate on matters affecting their lives. Public matters and faith issues can be addressed during church and community gatherings. Therefore theology in the post liberation era should liberate people from trained theologians who try to enslave them. That can happen if trained theologians conduct bible study, seminars, workshops, debate in public gathering places deliberating on issues that affect their lives. The issues include faith matters, political, economic and social problems. This will avoid a situation where only theologians give public answers on matters affecting people.

The Bible has brought two dilemmas in African history. Africans became suspicious of the Bible brought by white missionaries to them. There are people who used the Bible as a political weapon to take away black people to be enslaved by white people. The following statements were made:

when the white man came to our country he had the bible
and we had the land. The white man said to us ‘let us pray’.
After the prayer, the white man had the land and we had the Bible.\(^\text{126}\)

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\(^{126}\) Mofokeng 1987, 34
The way the Bible was introduced in the region was to create obedient and loyal hard working slaves out of the indigenous people. The blacks were to accept to continue being in slavery and suffering with the hope that when Jesus comes for the second time everything will be fine. In many countries where slave trade was practised, the Bible was used for such purpose. One may argue that missionaries were complicit because they were at the mercy of colonial powers who thought missionaries may enlighten the black people and make them resistant.

The presence of the Bible which most of us still accept as the normative document of the Christian faith on the colonial wagon presents us as present victims of colonialism and capitalist exploitation which it ushered in is a contradiction we cannot easily ignore.127

Therefore the Bible in Africa brought problems and blessings at the same time. It blessed many Christians and non-Christians because many people went to schools and infrastructure was put in place. The damage it caused to people was healed by the same Bible. The word of God in the Christian community is the most influential tool in doing theology. The Bible is frequently used by people to address problems they encounter in their daily lives. The Bible is regarded as a Holy Book written by human beings under the influence of the Holy Spirit. It is one of the major ancient sources quoted by many people. It generally reflects many conflicting viewpoints and technically deals with crucial human issues and comes out with possible solutions for universal problems. The Bible should be interpreted into people’s context carefully.

The Bible itself shows that particular people interact with God in a particular context and that God speaks specifically to specific people in specific life situations.128

127 Ibid., p.36
128 West 1994, 18
Therefore God’s word speaks to the people in their specific life situations. The Bible is free to be read like any book. People can read it as a novel, historical book about creation, as spiritual book etc. The fact remains that it is a very influential book on people, especially Christians. The majority of people living in Southern Africa are said to be Christian. They are mostly familiar with the Bible. Every reader approaches the Bible with certain preconceived ideas about its nature and contents. These should be studied thoroughly. Therefore, the Bible should be read very carefully and critically, not just like any other book. People meet different challenges within their context.

We should learn to read the Bible not only with the tools of scholarship but also through the eyes of the poor and the marginalized in order to understand God’s message and make our response as disciples of Jesus Christ. We need to be changed according to this understanding. But we sense that God’s compassion for the poor is a newly urgent priority for theological education.129

The tendency that the Bible is read and interpreted well by those who went to theological training should be discouraged. People should be encouraged to learn the Bible. Scholars should read the Bible from contextual points of view.

We suggest that this will require new relationships between theological studies and social realities, church traditions and people’s movements, spiritual disciplines and cultural roots, learning and suffering, pastors and congregations within the body of Christ, which was broken that all might have life.130

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129 Amirtham and Pobee 1986,131
130 Amirtham and Pobee 1986,131
It is happening that many people read the Bible out of its context. They claim that the Holy Spirit is directly interpreting the verses through them while preaching or conducting bible study. Biblical texts are quoted and read out of context. Their messages often do not have substance and mislead people. People in Southern Africa always conduct night vigils during the night before funeral. People from different Christian denominations preach, sing and comfort those who are grieving. In most cases, night vigil services end up in chaos. Preachers use different texts to criticise each other. Everybody wants to protect his/her preconceived ideas about biblical texts. Some Christian denominations in Botswana have started to cancel night vigils. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Botswana does not have night vigils any more.

Night vigil was a good practice within our society. People are now misusing it. They have turned it to be like freedom square. The so called fly by night pastors (baruti ba tsietso) use it to attack one another and employ derogatory words against other faiths. People go there under the influence of drugs and alcohol. The situation during night vigils is tantamount to blasphemy. Therefore night vigils do not anymore serve their purpose. They bring more grief to the bereaved family instead of comfort and sympathy. That is the reason why the Lutheran Church in Botswana and other denominations decided to stop night vigils for their members.¹³¹

Doing theology means reading the bible with people. The sermons which are preached during night vigils where biblical texts are used by lay people to comfort one another show us that people read the Bible. It shows people are eager to know the God’s word and want to express themselves. There is a need of intensive teaching about the Bible in our society and it should be the responsibility of church ministers to teach them.

¹³¹ Rasefako (a pastor in Lutheran Church in Botswana) in an interview on June 2006
There is also a tendency among young theologians who are fresh from theological training to use complicated terminologies when teaching the Bible to lay people or when preaching. In order to read the Bible with people, simple language should be used such that people can understand. The reading of Bible with people means listening to their daily encounters, problems and achievements. Pastors should help them to read texts from the Bible which reflects their daily activities. Congregants can themselves reflect on their situations and get answers. It helps people to face their challenges. Lay people read the Bible without understanding because there is nobody nearby to interpret for them. In the book of Acts, there is a story about the Ethiopian eunuch coming from Ethiopia to Jerusalem for worship. Phillip was driven by the Spirit to his chariot. The Ethiopian was reading the Bible.

\begin{quote}
So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading in the prophet Isaiah, and said, “Do you understand what you are reading?” And he said, “How can I understand unless someone guides me? And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. (Acts 8:26 -40)
\end{quote}

Reading and understanding the Bible is very important. The Bible needs to be understood. People should be taught God’s word. There is also paradoxes found in the Bible. Those paradoxes cannot be denied because they also contribute a lot to what we have discussed above. There are paradoxes of racist oppression and the exploitation of black people by white people. It is internationally recognised that the forebearers of the present white Christians used the Bible to justify white supremacy and the right of the white race to be masters over blacks. This was derived from the state theology during the apartheid government in South Africa. That state theology justified the status quo with its racism, capitalism, and totalitarianism theologically. It blessed injustice, canonised the will of powerful white people and reduced the poor to passivity, obedience and apathy. \(^{132}\) The paradoxes are taking different direction today. It is no longer blacks and whites today; instead it is black versus blacks and denomination versus denomination.

\(^{132}\) The Kairos Document 1985,6
Christians in Southern Africa today use the Bible to perpetuate superiority over other marginalised groups in black communities e.g. the poor. Christian denominations cannot work together because others consider themselves as superior to others. For example, the African Independent Churches are the victims. They are frequently blamed by the so-called main-line churches for mixing Christianity and African traditional religion and for practising witchcraft.

*The main-line churches marginalize us. They accuse us of practising witchcraft (boloi). They say our interpretation of the Bible is misguided because we do not have formal theological training. I wonder whether they read their own Bible carefully. They do not respect the Holy Spirit which is given to humanity. The Holy Spirit interprets the Bible for us. If they don’t believe that God’s Spirit can do those great things then they are blaspheming against God. Our pastors meditate and invoke God to give knowledge before preaching from a text.*

133 Pius (a pastor in African Independent Churches) in an interview on February 2006

The racism which the whites justified in the Bible is still happening but in a different form. It has taken the form of tribalism, sexism and ethnicity. The Bible still plays a prominent role in all these situations. The Bible is a problem and a solution at the same time. It is a problem because everyone who gets a chance to address the public uses it to perpetuate his/her own oppressive purposes and objectives. In most cases, people misinterpret biblical texts to support or promote their hidden agendas.134 The bible can also be used to come up with solutions to some challenges in Africa. It is a solution whenever it is interpreted critically and accordingly without hidden agendas.

The partnership of a Bible and a Gun is the worse interpretation of the Bible by the oppressors. Of course the method is still used today in different ways. It is not anymore

133 Pius (a pastor in African Independent Churches) in an interview on February 2006
134 Mofokeng 1987,37
the gun but money and wealth. In Southern Africa people’s pockets are searched peacefully by Bible. They are told to give everything they have to God because they will be rewarded more. Then they are left in poverty and frustration. Due to the proliferation of new churches associated with charismatic movements, Pentecostalism and African Independent Churches and secret churches (those who do their worship services during the night) in the region, this method of preaching has come to the fore. In most cases the theology preached to the people is of promising Mannas from heaven if people give what they have to God. The theology reflected in the Old Testament, whereby prophet Elijah met a widow and asked her to share her last meal with him. The widow suddenly agreed and the next day she had abundant food in her house.

People are told to bring their money or expensive properties to be prayed for such that they can be multiplied. In the end people lose everything. They are encouraged to tithe and pledge expensive cars in the name of the Bible and Jesus Christ. That is done by unscrupulous pastors and great prophets. The situation in the region is getting worse just like the era of colonialism and apartheid where the Bible and the gun were partners. People are promised healing, quick wealth, promotions, riches, jobs and marriages provided they can give everything they have to the church like the story of a widow with Elijah. The solution is that people should be taught how to interpret the Bible.

The Bible was used as a liberation tool during the dark ages of Africa. It is a book of hope for the down-trodden and it should be treated like that even in this era. In conclusion we can use Takatso Mofokeng’s words that,

>a careful reading of the experiences and witness of the early church confirms the corrections of the experiences of our people concerning the usefulness of the bible as a book with a message of survival, resistance and hope... only the reading of these stories of the downtrodden. God among the downtrodden of this world strengthens the tormented faith of the oppressed of our time, as well as enhancing
the quality of their commitment to the physical struggle for liberation.\textsuperscript{135}

The liberation here includes liberation from social afflictions, poverty, unemployment, tribalism, illness (HIV/AIDS), capitalism and globalization as well as discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation (homosexuality), culture and traditions. The Bible should be read by people as the book for a new life in the world.

2.7 The Relevance of African Theology and Black Theology Today

African Theology and Black Theology agree on the weak approaches of western theology used in Africa. However, African Theology seems to be very skeptical towards the dogma of Black Theology. Archbishop Tutu quotes John Mbiti’s arguments that, theology which was not born out of joy and celebration cannot be regarded as genuinely Christian. Black Theology emerges from pains of oppression.\textsuperscript{136} This statement brought a lot of concern to many African theologians and their Afro-American counterparts. African theology came because people in Africa accepted Christianity and its message. It has been clear that whenever the gospel is proclaimed, theological activities begin to take place. This is what happened in Africa after people received the Gospel.

\textit{African theology started to germinate when the gospel arrived through missionary preaching and the work of African converts, evangelists, pastors, teachers and lay preachers.}\textsuperscript{137}

The above comments by Mbiti that African theology is born out of rejoicing Christian faith in Africa are good but leave stitches attached. Where do we place those Africans who are not in the continent? It challenges how the Africans in the Diaspora relate to

\textsuperscript{135} Mofokeng 1987,41
\textsuperscript{136} Tutu 1997,39
\textsuperscript{137} Engelbrecht, Kretzschmar,Nel Theron and Veldsman 2000,45 CGM101-L/1
their counterparts in Africa religiously, socially, culturally and traditionally. There is no doubt that there are some differences in the way of living between these kinds of groups due to the social, political and economic life of their environment. The duo should deal with issues like, who are more African than others comparing the AfroAmericans and white people living in Africa. In order to address these two issues, pastors need to have better insight about these theologies.

2.7.1 African Theology

African Theology was not fully welcomed by some theologians in Africa. There were still those who had suspicions on it. Byang Kato, recognises the need for a Christian theology that addresses itself to the African situation. He was very suspicious of the legitimacy and genuineness of African theology. He took African theology as a threat to Christian theology and that it is heading for a syncretism and universalism. Such thoughts still exist in some people, especially Europeans. There are also black people who think that African theology is just a syncretism. Rev John Nong of the Apostolic Faith Mission Church in Botswana argues that African theology is not at all Christian.

There is a lot of confusion today about African theology especially in Christian denominations. The main problem that has been observed is that people do not understand the concepts, themes, sources and aims of African theology. Theologians from other Christian denominations also have a problem with African theology and African traditional religion. They confuse the two.

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138 Pato 1994, 154
139 Nong (pastor of a Pentecostal Church at Lobatse Botswana) in an interview on October 2006
It is quite difficult to have one definition of African theology. Many African scholars have come up with a lot of key ideas which are important when defining African theology which has been defined as a

study that seeks to reflect upon and express the
Christian faith in African thought-forms and idiom
as it is experienced in African Christian communities,
and always in dialogue with the rest of Christendom.140

Many African Theologians came out with their individual definition of the term African theology. However, after the 1966 Ibadan theological consultation, the All Africa Conference of Churches arranged for another consultation on which a tentative definition of African theology was agreed upon.

By African Theology we mean a theology which is based
on the Biblical faith and speaks to the African “soul”
(or is relevant to Africa). It is expressed in categories of
thought which arise out of the philosophy of the African people.141

This definition tries to incorporate Christian theology into an African way of thinking. There is no hesitation to relate the origin of African theology with Christianity because there is a sense in which the entire Christian tradition is the background for the present theological enterprise. The main reason is that

it has been argued, and rightly so, that church fathers
like Saint Augustine, Tertualian, and Cyprian were the
actual founders of African theology.142

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140 Maimela 1992, 95
141 Muzorewa 1985, 96
142 Ibid., p.94
African Theology is a theology which is contextually based in Africa. It is classified as a theology of liberation. It is a theology which tries to rehabilitate African culture and religion as an important element of the African struggle for liberation. The African religion and cultures have been affected by civilisation, foreign cultures etc. This is a big concern to many theologians in Africa. There is a need to revisit some of those practices and find out if we can learn from them in order to be better placed to face modern challenges. The main objective of African theology has been to develop a new Africa. It is said that

_African theology has tried to develop a new methodology which will enable African theology to define itself according to the struggles of the people in their resistance against the structures of domination. This has meant that African theology must equally address the problems of coups d’etat and military regimes, as well as problems of poverty, wars, refugees and starvation, problems that challenge most African communities._

Liberation is the key task in African theology. This liberation should include the fight against oppression which is caused by African religions, traditions and cultures. Therefore, the society should be liberated from African cultures and western dominant cultures simultaneously. We cannot deny the fact that there are some African practices which do not respect human rights at all. We are not saying they have to be abolished. Instead we are calling for their relevance to be reviewed in contemporary context.

### 2.7.2 Christology

African theology had a crucial role in addressing issues affecting the continent. Those include doctrinal issues, being a Christian in Africa, African traditional religion, Christian theology and inter-faith issues in Africa. Formulation of African Christology

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143 Maimela 1992,73
144 Maimela 1092,73
would have an influence in many Africans who were brainwashed to worship Jesus Christ as a white man even though white people have a bad history of colonisation in Africa. African theologians discovered that the main task of African theology is to grapple seriously with the question of Christology:

- Who is Jesus? How did he become the supreme human manifestation of the Divinity, the Messiah of Judaism and the Christos of Hellenistic Christianity?
- What does Messiah or Christos mean in the African context?\(^{145}\)

There is a need for an authentic African Christology which must be sought somewhere in the area of the African traditional medicine (bongaka) and in the possession of the individual persons by the divinity, as Setiloane suggested.\(^{146}\) African scholars are compelled to come up with a theology of Christology which is applicable to the dynamic cultural and traditional setup in Africa. Some scholars like Kofi Appiah-Kubi, a Ghanian sociologist, have observed that there is little literature on the subject of African Christology and more are still to be done on the subject.\(^{147}\) He managed to come up with Christological titles which may be relevant to African Christology. Appiah-Kubi main concern is that

...Jesus Christ seems to be a spiritual, intellectual or philosophical entity in the missionary Churches instead of being a dynamic personal reality in all life situations.
Thus, He seems to be absent in several crisis situations of the African life, birth, puberty, marriage, illness and death.\(^{148}\)

Therefore, African theology should include Christology in all stages of life which are observed prominently in African societies. This question was raised by people who triedto

\(^{145}\) Wessels 1990, 107
\(^{146}\) Setiloane 1976, 128-131
\(^{147}\) Appiah 1976, 55
\(^{148}\) Appiah1997,65
understand the Jesus Christ that many were talking about. It is interesting that some people answered that Jesus Christ is like Che Guevara.\textsuperscript{149} There is no doubt that Nelson Mandela can also be referred as a Jesus Christ. Christology is closely associated with revolutionary ideas. Guevara and Mandela is not Jesus Christ. Instead, Guevara represents for us the world in which we live, the language we understand and the reality which is in us and around. What we discover in Guevara is linked with the name of Jesus Christ. Therefore, they did not say Che Guevara is Jesus Christ but Che Guevara is like Christ.\textsuperscript{150} This view does not intend to temper with the Christian view on Christology. People want to understand the biblical Jesus Christ within their own context. As they read the Bible, they continue to reflect on what is happening in their own lives. By doing so they create the image of Jesus Christ and compare it with some traditional leaders, revolutionary leaders and key people in the society. The good deeds, characters and attitudes of these leaders in their society is compared with those of Jesus Christ. It is important for theologians not to conclude that people are blaspheming to compare human beings with Jesus Christ. Theologians must listen to the people and hear from them how they understand Jesus Christ.

2.7.3 The Relevance of Black Theology Today

There is a feeling in the region that African theology does not address the issues affecting the continent. For instance, Archbishop Tutu argues that

\textit{African Theology has failed to produce a sufficiently sharp cutting edge… very little has been offered that is pertinent to the theology of power in the face of the epidemic of coups and military rule, about development, about poverty and disease and other equally urgent present-day issues. I believe this is where the abrasive black theology may have a few lessons for}

\textsuperscript{149} Bonino 1976,2
\textsuperscript{150} Bonino 1976,3
African theology.\textsuperscript{151}

African theology should deal with issues relating to the faith of people and Christianity in Africa. Black theology goes deeply addressing the context in which people find themselves in. That includes society structures, political systems, injustices etc. Black theology is supposed to be the alternative. According to the above statement of Bishop Tutu, black theology can still play a crucial role in the society today. He argues that Africa is faced with military rules, coups, poverty, diseases, economic recession and power struggle. The relevance of black theology in such a situation is not questionable as it preangles itself. These are the areas where African theology did not attend fully. Therefore, black theology with its radical tools must advocate for a reform of societal structures using both the bottom down and top down approaches. Those tools include the bible, churches, black theologians, black theology materials and human rights organisations. These tools need to be put into practice, and when that happens, society can be transformed. The time has come for black theologians to amend their theological approaches to comply with the modern society of Africa. African theology is the theology of everyone who lives in Africa and is concerned about the social, economic and political illness in Africa. It means men, women, white, black, Indians or whoever resides in the continent who wants to see the continent flourishing with peace, tranquility and good life.

There is discourse about whether Black theology is a Christian theology or not. It has been an issue among theologians in the region. Of course, others take the discourse as irrelevant. Some may argue that it is the debate for theologians only and that lay people are not interested on that because their only interest is to see that their issues are addressed. However, the fact is that black theology is a Christian theology that advocates for justice in African societies.

Nevertheless Black theology originates in the very existence of a religion pertaining to Africa. The formation of organisations like African National Congress and Black Consciousness Movement was a sign for black people to wriggle out of the oppression by

\textsuperscript{151} Tutu 1975,32-33
the white people. Africans realised that white people were not willing to share resources with them in their continent. This caused a spirit of hatred among people in Southern Africa. Today, it is not black people against white people, but black against blacks and whites against whites. Immediately after independence of African states, social-political and economic injustices which were perpetuated by colonial governments were reinstated differently by new African governments. Corruption in African governments and power struggle in political parties became endemic. Therefore, black theology is obliged to counter these challenges without favour for any comrades.

Black Theology is still relevant to help in enriching and deepen the understanding of Jesus Christ and the Church for all theology. The word black captures a broken existence of black people and it also helps to summons them collectively to burst the chains of oppression and engage themselves creatively in the construction of the new society.\footnote{Molobi 2005,11} This approach shall help black theologians in search for other methodologies of making black theology relevant in Southern Africa.

\subsection*{2.7.4 Black and African Theologies Today in Southern Africa}

Black theology is very relevant in Southern Africa today. It is facing a challenge of liberating people from the newly created structures of corruption, crime, sexism, tribalism xenophobia, nepotism, etc. These are evils perpetuated against God’s people. People are voiceless because they are told not to come out publicly to expose such evils. There is still a need for a radical theology similar to Black theology. Such theology should come up with modalities to challenge modern structures which oppress God’s people. It should address economic crises which are consequences of corruption. It should address matters of spirituality, material conditions, knowledge and education. It would be wrong to conclude that Black theology is not relevant while these social ills are still prevalent.

The main concern could be the wording of Black. The colour black already is identically associated with black people in the society. The name should be changed such that it could be neutral. White colleagues take Black theology as a theology that address black
people’s interests. They believe it has nothing to do with them. In an interview, a western missionary working in Botswana expressed that he understands Black theology as a very good theology which addresses black people.

Black theology is very essential and it will continue playing vital role in our community. The wording ‘black’ is not exclusive as some people think. Black is like any other colour and it is beautiful. It does not say black people theology, but black theology. There is a difference between those phrases. There are themes in black theology which are relevant to Europe and other continents. Black and African theologies are theologies made from Africa and are good.\textsuperscript{153}

The above view raises a positive way forward in clearly explaining the role of Black theology today. Theologians should not waste time debating whether Black theology is a Christian theology or not. Black theology becomes a Christian theology when it addresses the pains and suffering of God’s people. The Christian theology associates Jesus Christ with suffering. A relevant Christian theology is the one which seeks to be the voice of the voiceless. Black theology is also a Christian theology. The best way is to distinguish Black theology from racism. Black theology is a relevant theology which radically addresses injustices which are done against God’s people, wherever they are, regardless of the colour of perpetrators or victims.

Black and African theologies are still useful. There is no doubt that these theologies contributed a lot during the struggle against apartheid and colonialism in Africa. The theologies empowered African people to deal with different challenges in their context. These theologies directed Africans to discover the relevance of Christianity in the African context. The existence of African and Black theologies helped people who had difficulties in understanding African traditions and cultures. They can be used to bring reconciliation among the black and white people in their different contexts.

\textsuperscript{153} Interview with Owen in Gaborone May 2006
importance of these theologies is to address challenges faced by Africans today. They will continue to be relevant as long as they serve the intended purpose. Theologians in Southern Africa must read these two theologies together as soul mates. It was helpful of Professor John Mbiti to bring out the issue such that the two theologies can know their theological stands. Mbiti states that the Black theology of James Cone cannot and will never become African theology because it emerges out of pains of oppression, while African theology grows out of joy; and the experience of the Christian faith cannot materialize today especially in Southern Africa. Mbiti’s statement sparked a passionate debate in Southern Africa, especially in South Africa. We should take the debate as the previous challenges in our doing theology in context and universally.

In his response to this debate, Tutu responded directly to Mbiti trying to play a moderating role between his fellow black Christians. Tutu argued that black Christians are united by blackness, by being bonded to Africa, expressed by cultural values like the corporateness of life and the history of oppression and finally by being members of the body of Christ. Tutu’s view applies to all people who have a history with the continent of Africa. It opens up a wide horizon of possible viewpoints and debates. The common aim is to restore the full humanity of African people. It is not surprising that it was Tutu who coined the slogan which most aptly describes the vision of the new dispensation; “South Africa, the Rainbow nation.” The major issue is how black dignity can be brought back to people in Africa and America. However, Black theology is obliged to come up with approaches relating to white Africans.

This issue should not be taken for granted as it is a theological issue which needs attention. The question is; who qualifies to be an African and who does not? This has been an issue running in the minds of many theologians who write on Black theology and African theology. Africans are people who reside in the continent. They are Africans by birth. That includes Whites, Blacks, Arabs, Indians and others. There is a tendency to

154 Tutu 1997,38-39
155 Tutu 1997,37
associate white people who originate in Africa with Europe. The idea should not be encouraged because it does not reflect the reality.

There are also Africans who were taken away from the continent as slaves to other continents. They are mostly referred to as Africans in Diaspora. Those people who have African blood, whom their descendents are traced back to African continent but do not live currently in the continent should be referred as Africans. They belong to the continent regardless of their skin colour. Tutu made it clear again that we are united through our baptism and through our membership in the body of Christ which makes us all His ambassadors and partakers in the ministry of reconciliation.\textsuperscript{156} Therefore, if our fellow brothers and sisters have sinned against us, we should be ready to forgive and reconcile. We should bring back brotherhood and sisterhood among Africans of different colours in the continent and those who are in the Diaspora.

African and Black theologies are Christian theologies. They have the same goal, but different approaches. In his writings on liberation and theology, Ndewiga Mugambi argued that:

\begin{quote}
\textit{liberation is the task of a contemporary African Christian theology. It is not just one of the issues, but rather, all issues are aimed at liberating Africans from all forces that hinder him from living fully as a human being. In the African context, and in the Bible, Salvation as a theological concept cannot be completed without Liberation as a social/political concept.}\textsuperscript{157}
\end{quote}

In conclusion of the debate, it is proposed that Black theology is a Christian theology and soul mates with African theology. They should work hand in hand to deal with contextual problems and universal problems that affect God’s people. It is important to teach both theologies at all levels and on equal basis without putting them to antagonise each other. The two should concentrate on what they can do best in the field of theology depending on their context. Black theology, which is said to have been born out of pain

\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., p.38
\textsuperscript{157} Tutu 1997,39
and suffering, complements African theology, which is born out of rejoicing in Christian faith. For an African to rejoice, the Christian faith must have dealt away with the afflictions they found themselves in.

2.8 The Challenges of Feminist Theologies Today

African women experience oppression from different dimensions in their lives. This has led to men being viewed as of higher value than women, thus perpetuating the subordination of women. Women’s issues in Africa today are discussed and debated at both grassroots and higher levels. African women have suffered socially, economically, politically and from traditions. The SADC Gender Summit, which advocates for 50% Parliamentary representation of women by 2010, is in the same line with the emancipation of women slavery in the continent. It is a very urgent matter. In his writings Segobye argues that,

an emerging culture can become a dominant culture overnight. What needs to be done in the emancipation of the continent is recognizing the genuine contribution that women have made to Africa’s development.159

It is important to identify feminist theologies existing within our communities today. However, the meaning of Feminist theology will help to guide the discussions on the subject. Feminist theology originated from Europe and America. It was spearheaded by white European and American women who were treated as second class citizens by their male counterparts. It is actually a global movement working towards the emancipation of women. This theology, which tries to respond to the historical awareness and experience that women worldwide are marginalised and oppressed as a sexual class in patriarchal societies, arose in the early seventies. This word was used to express the fact that liberation movements direct efforts towards achieving equality for women in a modern society, especially through the removal of obstacles including beliefs, values and

158 Phiri1997,45
159 Segobye 2006, 9
160 Maimela 1990,43
attitudes which hinder the process. It arises from the historical reality of sexism in human society.

Denis Ackermann says that Feminist theology started as a weakening of feminist consciousness as women started to take part actively in the religious sphere especially in America. They started to have a perception that the Bible is not a neutral book but a political weapon against women’s struggle for liberation and that the Bible is not just misunderstood or badly interpreted, but that it is patriarchal and androcentric. \(^{161}\) They perceived it to be on the side of male dominance. This perception does not only exist in America but also within many African women. In Africa, male dominance is known to be common. Religious matters are addressed by male and women only abide by what themen decide. The male dominance in the Bible is also frequent. The Bible seems not to address women’s issues. Therefore, women perceived that the Bible is not neutral instead it is patriarchal and androcentric.

Feminism in Africa looks forward to women’s goals as well as back to the status and roles that women leaders have played in the past. Women in Africa now have a say in the political, economic and social running of their countries especially after liberation. They voice their opinions about the failed elections, military coups, political upheavals, refugee movements, economic recessions, structural adjustment, and other crises that severely affected women and children during colonial times. Today Feminism in Africa is challenged by the rapid growth of abuse of women and children by men, single parenting, rape, and femicides.

### 2.8.1 Women Theologies

There are women theologies which came about in response to the women’s situation in Africa. These theologies are there to empower women to overcome challenges and bring about reconciliation between them and their male counterparts. Women play a crucial role in developing theologies which are relevant not only to women but to everybody in the society.

\(^{161}\) Ackermann 1974,14
Womanist theology is identified with Afro-American women who faced double struggle. This theology came out because black women in America felt that Feminist theology was not relevant to their situation. Instead, it was found vital to the white women in Europe and America. Therefore, they felt that Feminist theology could not address their demands fully. They argued that they were oppressed by both white women and their male counterparts.

African Women Theology originates from the context of African women. This is a situation where African women face huge challenges of culture and traditions. It is a feminist theology in Africa that addresses affecting issues African women. The main objective of this theology is not to promote ideas of western feminism in Africa, but rather to formulate a theology which can be relevant to women living in Africa regardless of their skin colour. This theology is classified as highly political and it is a response to African social and political developments. It is also composed to deal with an androcentric African society. There is no doubt that African society is a masculine society. It is a society where men exercise power over all the significant institutions of the society or what is termed as patriarchy. The basic meaning of the patriarchy is

…the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women to society in general. It implies that men hold power over all the important institutions of the society and that women are deprived of access to such power.\(^{162}\)

Therefore the role of women in African society is limited. Women in a patriarchal society are compelled to conform to traditional roles, which are assigned to them within the family. That includes bearing children, attending to the household, cultivating at the fields and staying at home. These activities classify women in the society to be second class citizens. It implicates also that girls and women in African society are limited in terms of education, profession and the type of job they can hold. They are made to

\(^{162}\) Djomhoue 2008,120
believe that their position in the society is normal and necessary to maintain family and societal order and stability. It is still a tendency that the African society still inculcates in women the notion that they are powerless and they do not have the right to hold power in such a way that many women do not like being considered as authoritative, because men do not like that kind of women. It is believed that an authoritative woman is the anti-model of women. It is unfortunate that this perception about women is still prominent in some societies and the boy children are learning it.

African women are very vulnerable both in times of peace and times of war; they are violated both at home and outside the household. For instance, at home she is subjected to multi-dimensional violence at the hands of her partner with consequences on her mental, sexual, reproductive, and physical health. It is fortunate today that there are many organisations in which women participate that are involved in the fight against suppression of this violence in many countries. African women are fighting an external war and an internal one. The external war includes the fight against their whites counterparts, political and economic suppression by their own husbands and the right to be classified as important members in the community. The internal fight includes the struggle to raise children, the domestic physical abuse by male family members and the right to have a say in family affairs.

African women do not enjoy the rights and freedoms which they deserve as human beings. The problem of attaining the full recognition and enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for women abound in almost every sector of the Church and society. There is no doubt that these problems stem from the fact that contemporary Africa is characterised by a confusion of norms, expectations imposed during the colonial periods, beliefs inherited from earlier periods and new ideas developed since independence.

The curious blend of modern and traditional law which is tightly woven into the African social fabric makes simultaneous claims on women in particular who feel

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163 Ibid., p. 123
the disadvantages of customary law that is unable to address new social needs and claims...Gender issues are still perceived as a women’s cause, rather than the cause of both men and women, and advocacy of gender issues has been perceived as a win/lose scenario. Women’s gains have been seen as men’s losses.164

Women and children are the wounded soldiers. They are the most victims of civil wars and conflicts in Africa. Women and children constitute majority of the persons who are affected by the hostilities of armed conflicts. According to the United Nations Security Council Resolution (SCR 1325/2000) eight per cent of refugees IDP’s are women and children who are particularly vulnerable to violence and ill-treatment.165 In these conflict countries women are often left with no choice but to give in to sexual advances by military soldiers so as to obtain free passage and sometimes to save their own lives. Therefore women’s organisations speak from experience when they call for peace and stability in Africa. They experience the pain and afflictions caused by wars and conflicts. The contributions of women through their associations play a tremendous role in conflict resolution in Africa.

_African women know that women and children have borne the brunt of the recent crises, as measured in high child mortality rates, lowered female literacy rates, the continuing confinement of women to agricultural work, and their exclusion from modern, technical, and scientific fields. Many African women (and some African men) are committed to correcting these disparities and forging new relationships between state and society, even though Western powers and global institutions still exercise tremendous_

164 Akale 2006,149
165 Djomhoue 2008,139
Another task of African Women theology is to look at the African structural society and to find out if it can adapt itself to the situation. The main focus here is to redefine the nature of theology in terms of African women’s experience and re-analysing the relationship between traditional theology and culture with reference to patriarchy as an unhealthy contact point between the two. For instance, in Cameroon during the 1990s there was a devaluation of the CFA Franc, consequently several countries experienced bankruptcy and many men who were the main financial providers for their families lost their jobs. Due to this situation women began to be involved in the fight for survival by increasing the activities that allowed them to meet their families’ needs. It was reported that many children were able to continue with their schooling and have access to healthcare and food. Women contributed a lot to boost their families and helped the men to survive. This scenario calls for the reconsideration of the African culture and tradition on issues of gender equality. Men and women should be considered as equal partners in the society.

There is therefore need to encourage practices that raise the human being men and women in the way that Jesus would like us to understand by modifying the practices that destroy a part or all of humanity or creation. As African culture has been developed by our communities, it should also be developed with the communities.

African women are excluded from the societal structures existing in Africa. They are marginalised not only by African men, but also by both white men and women. Therefore, African women feel that white feminist theology and American womanist theology do
not fully address their situations. They need a theology which can talk about them fully. Musa Dube argues that:

*women in the colonized spaces not only suffer the yoke of colonial oppression but also endure the burden of two patriarchal systems imposed on them. Women in colonizing countries, on the other hand, become indicators of imperial civilization, enjoying some privileges but certainly oppressed for their female gender.*\(^{170}\)

African women were denied a lot of opportunities in life by the patriarchal system which has been dominant in Africa for many years to this day. They were denied opportunities to go to school and to look for jobs away from their villages. They were also oppressed by the local cultures and traditions. After imperial civilization women have shown that they are as capable as men. However, due to the world which is not gender balanced they remained disadvantaged compared to their African male counterparts.

African women theologians acknowledge an integration of the mind and body, of philosophical thinking and experience, of academia and activism. Nevertheless, their theology is not dependent on the philosophical meta-language of traditional theologies, but on the language of storytelling; stories which testify to hope as to anger, to laughter and sorrow alike, to liberation and to oppression.\(^{171}\)

Some women theologians in Africa feel that the struggle for liberation is not yet over. Africa has acquired democratic political independence but still has to deal with the issue of justice and liberation. Women in Africa believe that nothing is done to remove barriers which cause afflictions on women in the religion. Dube calls for women to be in “*a luta continua,*” the struggle that always continues.\(^{172}\) Women should be determined to

\(^{170}\) Dube 2000,20  
^{171}\) Landman 1998,138  
^{172}\) Dube 2000,197
continue fighting against social, economic and political injustices which hinder them from making their lives better.

This makes the African Women theology very unique from other feminist theologies. African Women Theology has a lot to share and contribute in the building of a new African society in this post liberation era. The bottom line is that the oppressed groups do not want to be oppressed in this century anymore. For instance Dube indicates that

...blacks, women, homosexuals, Two-Third World masses, Jews, children, the poor, or just about every minority and oppressed group, demand justice and liberation.173

In the context of Southern Africa, the black women, the San community, HIV/AIDS victims, and prostitutes demand justice and liberation. Therefore oppression did not die with apartheid, colonial and imperial era. Dube is calling for a Two-Thirds World postcolonial feminist theology which will address women’s situation in Africa. These are women who are living under the shadow of past colonialism, protracted independence victories, current globalisation and the post feminist era.174 Theology should also help in transforming African patriarchal ideology to integrate it in the new modern society. The concept of “a luta continua” is still very important today. Many people after liberation and democratisation of almost all African countries sat back and relaxed. They did not work hard enough to improve the economy, and instead wanted the newly elected governments to provide them with everything.

African women theologians are calling for a diversity of theologies. Christinah Landman argues that theology which is based on experience leads to a diversity of theologies. She suggests that amongst African Women’s theologies there are those which serve different cultures; theologies which cater for sexual preferences (including homosexuality) and theologies for Church women as well as for men and women who prefer

173Ibid., p.197
174Dube 2000,198
uninstitutionalised forms of inner religion. A diversity of African Women theologies will enable men and women to tackle together challenges with solidarity. African Women’s theology is strongly distinctly heterosexual, supportive of motherhood, and focused on issues of bread, butter, culture, traditions and power. Therefore this diversity helps to fashion theology. Everybody should be involved in this process of fashioning theology.

Women in Africa have proven to be the backbone of development and the drivers of the economy. They should be given the chance to perform at their best level and show their male counterparts how Africa can be shaped and developed. In Ivory Coast, women of Attecoube supported their spouses, brothers and families despite the crisis their country was going through during the colonial period and the beginning of the war.

> We are going to pay tribute in the most solemn way to the women of Ivory Coast. Our country is suffering. Our motherland is torn. It is divided into two. We hope for the peace. We want peace. I know that the women will impose it on us in one way or the other. As behind every man is a woman. And, therefore, the destiny of Ivory Coast is in your hands. So see to it that we forgive each other and accept reconciliation. And that we keep the promises made for peace.

In her critique on the theme of the 8th All Africa Conference of Churches Assembly, “Come Let us Rebuild”, Catherine Akale argues that is it worth rebuilding what was there before, from a gender perspective. In other words, is it necessary to rebuild the complex set of gender differentiated spheres where men’s dominance was the order of the day? She asks if there is a need to rebuild a system whereby some avenues were not available to women by custom; a situation where regulation of women’s marital sexuality was aided and abetted by religious beliefs that gave men control over women’s sexuality even when the gendered effect of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has been made

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175 Landman 1998,138
176 Fraser 1986,61
177 Djomhoue 2008,142
widely known. She challenged African churches to be clear on the modality of the process of rebuilding. It may sound too radical a theological insight from a gender perspective. However it is not an issue to be debated because it is clear to everybody that the African churches have long condoned gender imbalance within their institutions. Akale poses the following issue;

_Do we need to rebuild a system where men create the conditions for prostitution as waged work is relatively higher paying than most types of women’s work? Do we need to rebuild a system where the crisis of militarism within the African continent is accompanied by indiscrimination violence and repression of women and children who principally are among the many internally displaced persons and refugees, leading to the further deterioration of nutritional levels, which strip women of their human dignity?_  

Her arguments are valid because the rebuilding may mean to continue the oppression of women and children. The rebuilding should mean to completely destroy the old buildings of oppression, social injustice, oppression of women by men and any form of injustice against humanity. Therefore, there should be a process of rebuilding from a new foundation. This is the calling of the new reconstruction of Church theology which takes gender issues very seriously. African women theologians do not accept the invitation from All Africa Conference of Churches to come and rebuild the Church. Instead they shall welcome the invitation if the terms entail building a new instead of building again the ruins of all that reinforces subordination through management practices which reaffirm sexual stereotyping of women and control women by duplicating a family atmosphere where the Church leader and his male colleagues, no matter the rank, are father-figures to be served by female colleagues.  

178 Akale 2006,141  
179 Ibid., p.142  
180 Akale 2006,144
The HIV and AIDS epidemic continues to advance worldwide. People are now experiencing more challenges in their societies. They are learning about the power relationships between women and men. It is these relationships, together with physiological differences, which can determine to large extent women’s and men’s risk to the virus and their ability to protect themselves more effectively and to account for their actions.

There is urgent need for different faiths in different societies, community organisations, individual celebrities and healers to look for approaches which will promote genderbased solutions on the crisis men and women are facing today. This exercise will involve approaches which will focus on how the different social expectations, roles, status and economic power of men and women are affected by the epidemic. It will involve analysis of gender stereotypes, redefinition of male and female and their relationships, roles and promotion of progressive cultural values. This can support mutually responsible behaviour and the exploration of ways to reduce inequalities between women and men. There is no doubt that it calls for a supportive environment which will enable women and men to understand preventive measures that can address the epidemic.

On the issue of empowering African women, Akale challenges African churches from a gender perspective that

there can be no true participation in the rebuilding our institutions and organization without equal participation of women and men in all spheres of the church’s life and levels of decision-making; and the goals of building up God’s people cannot be attained without the equal participation of women and men not only in designing processes, but also in shaping its goals.\(^\text{181}\)

There are still many boundaries in African churches which disable women to fully participate in decisionmaking at higher levels. Women’s participation in the worship life

\(^{181}\) Akale 2006,141
of some African churches is limited. They are confined to minor activities as compared to men, yet they are the majority in almost all churches in the continent. Of course there is an issue of quantitative and qualitative participation of women. It is important to focus on empowering women such that there will not be a rat race of quantities and qualitative. The reason is that factors that present obstacles not only to the number of women participants but also to their access to leadership and decision-making include tradition, cultural attitudes and religion. However, religion has a very important role in determining cultural attitudes towards women and religious interpretations can be used to inhabit women’s participation, especially in the building process. It is unfortunate that the Church still has barriers that hinder women’s participation. Therefore it may be difficult for her to influence some cultural attitudes towards women. Women themselves should continue to struggle for equal participation.

However, there should be empowerment of women and men at the same time. If the Church and the society only concentrate on women’s empowerment that may lead to the lowering of the self-esteem of men in the society. Then, after some decades, there would be a struggle to empower men again. Men should be empowered such that they can be responsible citizens who respect humanity and life. The process of empowering women alone may not address the problem in general. According to Akale, there should be a joint vision of building something new as partners to promote gender equality of opportunity that will create much needed sustainable human and economic development first, in our church institutions, and then in our beloved but war ravaged continent of Africa.  

2.9 Conclusion

Theology should lead the world in facing the challenges of today. Doing theology is a contemporary exercise which is contextual. People are playing a major role in this exercise. Their contributions help theologians to do their critical reflections on issues affecting people. The doing of theology contributes a lot in guiding the post liberation theology methodologies in Southern Africa today.

182 Ibid., p.153
The universality of theology is one of the most important things which have been neglected in the region. The universality of the gospel creates an environment where people from different cultures understand the gospel in their own cultures and traditions. Liberation theologies help in the process of enculturation of theology in a pluralistic society and that unites people and promotes peace among people of different faiths. There are challenges in Southern Africa today which these theologies should help to address. Theologians must contextualise these theologies and apply them in people’s lives. The next chapter will analyse how the universality of theology can help in addressing some sectors of life in the society. This method put together theory and praxis into reality. A contextualised theology helps to deal with major issues in the society and help to come up with an amicable solution.

The relevance of liberation theologies today is based on the ability of theologians to apply their theories into people’s daily life experiences. African, Black, and African Women, Feminist theologies are all applicable to the Southern African situation. In connection with the old debate between contextuality and the universality of theology, it is very good if theology starts from contextuality because priorities must be the systematisation and legitimisation of Christian existence in a specific cultural context. The next chapter will also discuss in detail how these methods deal with practical societal issues and challenges. Therefore, in the next chapters there will be the reconstruction of contextual theology that can help to meet challenges in the region. The struggle of building the society in Southern Africa should continue.
CHAPTER THREE

CONSTRUCTING THEOLOGY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (DUALISM AND WHOLENESS)

The influence of Liberation, Black and Womanist/Feminist theologies was their notion of wholeness and the wholesomeness of human life, societal experience and created reality. The strong dualisms of the modern world such as Western and African, church and world, sacred and secular, whites and blacks, male and female were approached as oppressive schemes. They amounted to approaches in which both parts were viewed as hard lumps that could not coalesce while one of the two had been designated as totally superior in quality of experience, contribution to the society and knowledge. In the process of reconstructing relevant theology in the region these approaches will play a vital role.

The wholesome approach is not only Christian but also African. African traditional religion’s approach to issues of culture, religion, traditions and economics is holistic. This means that reconstruction of theology in the region cannot avoid the influence of the wholesome approach, which is an important methodology to address crisis in Africa. Theologians do not deny that there are other methodologies which can do the same work. However, the wholesome approach seems to be more realistic than dualism. The reason is that Africa is challenged by the influence of globalisation and civilisation. The chapter will discuss theological approaches which can be relevant to the contemporary world. The possibilities of using the wholesome and dualism approaches shall be looked at.

3.1 Theology of Reconstruction

The situation in Southern Africa changed totally between the years 1989 and 1994. It was the period when Namibia and South Africa attained their independence. Some countries in the region which became independent three decades back faced new challenges in their democratic systems, e.g. Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Many goals and objectives of the liberation struggle were achieved. Countries like Namibia and South Africa had democratically elected legitimate governments. Their societies were in total transition.
This raised a question of the particular contribution the Church and theology had to make in a situation where prophetic theology as in the *Kairos document* had made its point. This again will bring theology to task to take a stand point on issues relating to the crisis of the universe and its inhabitants. Those issues include HIV/AIDS, political instability, economic crisis and social illnesses. There is no doubt that theology keeps on meeting unique challenges in life.

The reconstruction of theology is a daily exercise within our churches and community at large. The word reconstruction means to restore to a previous condition or recreate. We can extend its meaning by saying that it is the building up of a mental image or physical representation of a situation from the available facts. As issues and scenarios keep on engulfing humanity and its existence, the theology will then start to build up approaches, methodologies and strategic plans to protect the universe and humankind. This process of building is understood as reconstructing of theology. This exercise does not cease at any stage, but continues with people’s lives. This is the reason why there is an argument that the reconstruction of theology is not an option but a necessity.

It is quite significant that the Seventh International Bonhoeffer Congress that was held in Cape Town in January 1996 was convened under the theme: “Are we still of any use?” There were surely many reasons for the selection of this theme, but one most likely was a certain feeling of uneasiness to find out the role of the Church and theology in particular under the new dispensation. Theologians like Desmond Tutu did not even seem to acknowledge that question of whether the usefulness of the Church should again become an issue. The Church in Southern Africa is slowly losing her credibility. As we know during the liberation struggle the Church was very prominent. The Church was a place where people who suffered as a result of the unjust system were given hope.

The Church led the liberation struggle. She was the mediator, negotiator and at the same time victim of the situation.

*The Church in Namibia was in the front-line of this decisive battle. She fought bravely and became a fearless voice*

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183 The Penguin English Dictionary (1985-86),682
184 Dladla 1996,77
of the oppressed...The World Council of Churches was regarded by the fallen regime and its puppets as the Kremlin in Geneva.\textsuperscript{185}

The Church practised her prophetic voice during the socio-political crisis. She took a stand to challenge those who corrupted humanity without fear of intimidation and harassment. She also spoke for those who were marginalised and disadvantaged. The Church not only empathised but also promoted the spirit of reconciliation and unity in humanity, and this task is still continuing. This role seemed to decay slowly immediately after the armed liberation struggle came to an end. Of course most of those who were in the frontline during the struggle have occupied high posts in independent governments. There is no more pain and suffering. For instance, after independence some prominent outspoken ministers of the Church were taken into government structures. For example, in Namibia, a Lutheran Church bishop, Dr Zephania Kameeta, was one of those who were elected to parliament. The same applied for many other pastors.\textsuperscript{186} Many religious leaders were taken to parliaments in some countries in the region after liberation. That affected the role of the Church in post liberation era. We can assume that the reason was that those pastors were caught sitting on two seats i.e. sitting in a parliament and Church boards. Nevertheless we do not totally deny the Church’s role after independence. We are saying it became very low and ineffective. Other people, like Russel Botman, seemed to be almost overwhelmed by the practical challenges when he said that:

\textit{The South Africa nation is still divided, internally torn between the interests of so many different sectors and ideologies. There are so many areas that require building, reconstruction and transformation. There are so many voices demanding to be recognized, demanding our usefulness. To whom ought we to be of use? I ask this}

\textsuperscript{185}Kameeta 2006,98
\textsuperscript{186}Ibid.,p.5
question as a black person who has discovered that the demands placed on black people in our post-apartheid society have become increasingly strenuous and varied.\textsuperscript{187}

Of course independence is achieved, but more should be done in Southern Africa, especially on the issues of community building, Christian stewardship and evangelism. It is also important to keep in mind those who seem to be neglected by the current democratic systems. That includes people with disabilities, orphans, the poor, children and women. It is the responsibility of the Church to make sure that there is an equal sharing of resources by the rich and the poor. After independence the gap between the poor and rich did not decrease in almost all African countries. This made the poor vulnerable to the social ills and economic recessions. The fact is that the Church in the post liberation era is encountering difficulties. Of course, the Church must listen to all groups in the society; for instance, those who are suffering, those who still live in poverty, the government that does not have enough funds to eradicate social problems, the employed and trade unions. Everybody wants his/her voice to be listened.

\textit{Government expects our usefulness, civil society requires our usefulness and employers demand our usefulness. Even within society the issue is not that clear. Each within society calls for a particular and, sometimes, exclusive usefulness to its own agenda. The useful question is a scary one in a world of so many voices.}\textsuperscript{188}

The usefulness of the Church is still a concern. The society expects a lot of things from the Church. Everybody expects the Church to take their concerns and address them according to the way they want. They expect the Church to address their stress, depression and disturbances. The interesting thing here is that if the Church addresses an issue and she sticks to the reality on the ground, there will be a problem. If the Church

\textsuperscript{187} Botman 1997,371  
\textsuperscript{188} Ibid.,p.371
speaks out prophetically against a certain issue and her voice does not favour the state, she ultimately becomes the enemy of the state. That would make the Church not useful from the government’s perspective. In other words, the Church today is useful whenever it addresses an individual’s situation and stands by their side. That is where the people will claim that the Church is alive.

In this situation, it is not acceptable for the Church to refrain from participating in law-making and influencing the political process.189 We are rejoicing on what the liberation theology did in Southern Africa since 1970s. Liberation theology was a living issue for Christians. African people suffered the painful experience of oppression by the European settlers. They were denied basic human rights and unjustly exploited economically. The liberation struggle is not yet over. The Church in the region with young theologians should continue with a post liberation theology. Nevertheless, the gratitude should be expressed to the likes of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Simon Maimela, Takatso Mofokeng, Allan Boesak, Zaphania Kameeta, Gabriel Setiloane, and others for their advocacy in leading theology during such crucial period.

The Church cannot be useful until it is clear about her mission strategies. Today, the Church seems to be confined to the preaching of the word of God every weekend. The Church does no longer go on to the streets and join demonstrations of people against injustices perpetuated by new governments. The Church seems not to be active. The question of ‘who is the Church?’ also features here. We are always pointing fingers at the Church but we do not know who the Church is. The Church refers to those who are called out of the world to follow Christ. It means the body of believers who confess Jesus Christ as their Lord God. This issue is important to be defined because it helps us to know the role of the Church in the modern world.

People who are committed to the Church are Christ’s followers. They work in all government sectors and non-governmental organisations. Some of them hold high executive positions in government and private companies. They are very influential in their working areas. It is surprising that there are the same people sitting in boards which make decisions which are contrary to Christian norms and values. The same people go to

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189 Villa-Vicencio 1992,4
church the next day. Therefore it is advisable to say whenever a person points a finger at the Church the other three fingers are pointing at him/her. 

The challenge of the Church during the apartheid era, according to the Kairos theologians, was to say a clear and ambiguous ‘No’ to injustice and discrimination. The Church after liberation is confronted with a difficult task of nation building. The theological tool, which equipped the Church so well to express ‘No’, is now proving to be less useful in the debate about the shape of the new society.

_Hitherto the task of liberation theologians has essentially been to say ‘No’ to all forms of oppression. The prophetic ‘No’ must, of course continue to be part of liberation theology. As the enduring struggle for democracy in some parts of the world begins to manifest itself in different degrees of success, however, so the prophetic task of the church must include a thoughtful and creative ‘Yes’ to options for political and social renewal._190

For this ‘Yes’ the Church was not very well prepared, neither practically, ecclesiologically, nor theologically. The Church which contributed to the liberation had to struggle to be in a position of making a contribution to the shaping of a new society. The Church is compelled to realise her pastoral ministry in all its fullness and to act as a personal and social standard.191 Therefore there is a great need for a re-construction of theology which can address the current situation where poverty, human rights violations and immorality are the main concerns. There is a need for a theology which will be able to tackle the problem of dualistic thinking in the region. The concept of black and white people, the poor and the rich and the disadvantaged and advantaged is still a growing concern in the society. It should be given urgent attention. The Church should engage in economic and social activities which are essential for the survival of the society to combat issues of poverty, nepotism etc.

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190 Villa-Vicencio 1992,1
191 Ibid.,p.,3
The Church has been reluctant to indulge in economic business. The problem for the Church is the risk of being identified with the structures of markets, injustice and exploitation. Among them, certain states dominated by a handful of people more concerned with their personal interests and their hold on power than promoting the happiness of the people. The Church must not act before making an exhaustive and critical analysis of the situation regarding the political, economic and social structure of the country.

Theology is a science that wants to keep humanity and the world under God’s rule. The Church on the earth has a task to analyse and reflect on the cosmic situation and physical organic environment. If the Church is facing such a task it is obliged to involve in decision making processes which affect humanity and the physical organic environment. The Church represents God on earth. There is a view that pastors should not involve themselves in politics because this puts their pastoral credibility in a difficult situation. In a lecture at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Botswana, Rev Rupert Hambira advised young theologians that,

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\text{it is advisable for people not to mix active politics with full-time ministry in the Church. If a person wants to be active in politics and partisim he/she should leave the full-time work in the Church and indulge in active politics.}^{192}\]

According to the above statement pastors are free to be active in politics. The problem is that they will be compelled to be affiliated to political parties. It is very difficult to be a pastor of a congregation on a full-time basis and also be a member of a certain political party. It is a task of theology to influence the Church to participate on political issues and claim her position.

The Church should be able to use her resources to influence the running of the civil society. Her major resources include human resources. As we discussed, the majority who go to Church hold influential decision making positions in their professional

\[192 \text{Hambira, Open lecture at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gaborone on, September,2006}\]
assignments. Therefore the Church should use them. How can the Church use them? The issue is both difficult and simple. Again it depends on the Church ministry. The Church is obliged to help her members to grow spiritually and be influenced by the word of God in the light of the contemporary life. In a discussion at the Lutheran Homiletics Workshop held in Botswana for Lutheran pastors from Namibia and Botswana, the Executive Secretary of the Lutheran Church in Botswana Rev Kandovazu, argued that

*pastors are not able to administer people who hold top and influential positions in governments and non-governmental organizations. That is the reason why the Church is not able to have influence on people. There are hearsays that pastors, priests, prophets and lay preachers do not prepare their sermons. They do not conduct home visits and pastoral care to their congregants. How can we expect the word of God to have an influence in society? Of course Church administration is blamed for failing to keep pastors who are theologically educated. These pastors leave full-time service in the Church for greener pastures. The Church needs them in order to preach to people of their calibre and bring change to the way they are thinking. 

The Church should still be involved in politics as it was before. Nevertheless it should be done in a constructive manner. The theology of reconstruction should first commence with the role and usefulness of the Church in politics, ecumenical bodies, interfaith issues, economical issues, ecological matters etc. Therefore it is important for the Church to have well trained pastors and theologians who are competent to address these issues in a thoughtful manner. The Church is obliged to look for ways of keeping these pastors such that they can come up with thoughtful and well constructed theologies.

We do not deny the financial situation of churches in the region. Nevertheless we know that such theologians can still be used one way or the other. Theologians who are not full

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193 Kandovazu, October, 2006
time employees of the Church are always not considered for Church boards or council and synods in some churches. These theologians are the ones who could help the Church to face the challenges of the modern world. The fact is that most of them are civil servants, others teach at universities and other institutions. They are supposedly major resources for churches. To describe the scenario, we can say that the Church is in danger of dying of thirst while swimming.

3.2 Christian Theology and the African Traditional Religion

African scholars of theology are struggling to interpret Christian theology in the framework of African traditional religion. There is no doubt that many Christians in Africa still go to Church and at the same time visit ancestors through traditional practitioners. Christian theology has long ignored the world-view of African people. For instance, Pato quotes Schreiter’s views on the issue that

\[\text{for too long, embracing Christ and his message meant rejection of African cultural values. Africans were taught their ancient ways were deficient or even evil and had to be set aside if they hoped to be Christians.}^{194}\]

This kind of mentality by Western missionaries has denied Christianity an opportunity to learn and benefit from the African traditional religion. Africans were religious people before the advent of Christianity. Their daily activities are dedicated to the Supreme Being. Their cultures and traditions pay loyalty to their God. The rejection of African cultures by Westerners and embracing Christ did not only make African traditional religion lose substance but also devastated the Christian message in Africa. The reason has been that Christ was not a new figure in the African traditional religion. As already discussed in Chapter Two, Christ is the Great Ancestor, King of Kings, Great Healer and the Saviour.\(^{195}\)

Christian theological methodology of liberation used during the time of the Reformation

\(^{194}\) Pato 1994,153
\(^{195}\) Appiah 1998,67
and Pietistic movements was probably relevant for that time but it may not be suitable in
the African context. It is time for Africans to stop following western methodologies of
doing theology, for instance dualism. Africans now must also come up with their way of
reflecting on other religions which are foreign to them. Africans also have to know what
is meant by the term ‘liberation’ from their own perspective.

The theology of liberation in Africa includes the liberation of
African cultures that are debilitating. African struggles against
socio-economic weight of western powers. African works to
rehabilitate the humanity of the African that has been eroded
by the ravages of white racism. Many African scholars believe
that Liberation theology should come from these concerns. 196

The above dualistic approach on issues of life is not an adequate method in African
traditions. The African traditional religion understands life as a wholesome or holistic
unity. Human beings are not separated by gender, wealth and colour within a single tribe.
If one person is attacked, it means the whole nation is attacked. The holistic approach had
been an ideal theology in African traditional religion. The soul and the body are not
separated as it is in the Hellenistic Greco-Roman world where Christianity originated.
This indicates that Christian theology should enter into an intensive dialogue with
African traditional religion in order to restore true humanity of Africans into their
contemporary lives. African people accepted Christianity as their religion but still kept
their original African traditional world-view. In an interview with an elderly person in
South Africa about how he views traditional religion and Christianity today, he said:

our church (Lutheran Church) is a church which respects our
Tswana traditions. We go to Sunday service but if you have
any problem which is traditional you are free to call a Ngaka
(Traditional Healer). The reason is that there are other things
which the church cannot attend to. For instance, a medical

196 Oduyoye 1998, 367
doctor gives you the medicines and pills but a pastor prays for you and gives the Holy Communion sacraments. There is no problem.  

The reality is that African Christians at the same time uphold African traditional religion. These people worship ancestors and go to worship Jesus Christ at the same time. The question is whether this practice is a sin or not according to the Word of God. In a sermon delivered during a worship service of a Pentecostal Church called Universal Church in Lobatse, Botswana, the preacher emphasised that those who consult traditional healers and contaminate their bodies with evil spirits will never be saved. The preacher spoke against those who do sacrifice to ancestors and insisted that Jesus Christ is the last sacrifice from God.

Families are torn apart by Christian denominational differences in many villages in Southern Africa. The issue still concerns the mixing of Christianity with African traditional practices. It is claimed that Christians from Pentecostal churches totally reject traditional practices in their ceremonies e.g. weddings, funerals as well as during pregnancy. They claim that such practices are evil and clash with God’s will. Therefore those who practice them are not born again Christians. This attitude is popular among young people. It arouses conflicts between elderly traditionalists and young Christians.

It is the task of theology to bring stability within the Christian society with regard to these issues. In an interview with the chief of a settlement called Mogobane, in South East Botswana, Chief Moilwa confirmed that there are many incidents that come to his attention mainly conflicts parents have with their children who do not want to follow traditional procedures during weddings and funeral ceremonies.

Today young people have problems with some traditional practices mostly in wedding celebrations. They don’t want to be treated traditionally during the marriage, they reject the use of beer

197 Dube, in an interview on June 2006 in Johannesburg.
198 A sermon at Universal Church in Lobatse, Botswana December, 2005
and other practices. This is a concern to our society today. It makes things difficult for us as chiefs because we have to protect culture and traditions and at the same time we must respect human rights. We request pastors who understand the Bible better than us to intervene in such cases.¹⁹⁹

From this interview, it can be assumed that the chief is calling for the study of theology. Theology seems not to have been relevant in his village. The dualism which is happening affects peace, harmony and stability within families. The interpretation of the Bible relating to the context of the people is a major issue. The chief calls for a better theological methodology to deal with the matter.

The reconstruction of theology should start from the doing of theology. It should start from what is happening in the daily lives of human beings in towns and small settlements. The reconstruction should use the Bible and the African traditional religion as its sources. It should use both the dualistic and wholesome or holistic approaches to deal with people’s concerns. It will be difficult to avoid contact between Christian and traditional practices. Africans respect their cultures and traditions very much. Theologians in Africa have written on the western theologies, African cultures and tradition at the beginning. Nevertheless, the eruption of African theology and black theology alerted theologians on the continent. Of course, there are still African theologians who reject African cultural norms and values. Theologians should not only bring Christianity and African traditional religion into dialogue in academic books as some African writers are doing, but it should be reflected in Bible studies, spiritual gatherings, youth meetings, sermons and any other Christian gatherings. There is need to look for theological methodologies that could bring the two together. That is the task of those who study theology in universities and theological colleges. Pastors and deacons who work in villages should put into practice what academics have found. Theologians in congregations and universities should have a dialogue and reach a common understanding. The next process should be to promote dialogue with the African

¹⁹⁹ Moilwa,(Chief of Mogobane) in an interview on March 2006
traditional religion. Then African traditional religion and Christianity should engage people on the outcome of the consultation. Christianity and African traditional religion are not parallel. They are soul mates. Christianity, Judaism and Islam are classified as monotheistic religions because they are said to believe in one God.

African traditional religion also believes in one God, the Supreme Being. It is also a monotheistic religion. It should be included in the groups of monotheistic religions. African traditional religion is very similar to these three religions. It is also important for theology to work on how African traditional theology can have dialogue and work together with these three religions in Southern Africa. There are Islamic communities in Southern African countries and this provides an opportunity for religious dialogue.

3.3 Theology in the Framework of Rainbowism

Rainbowism seems to be an ideal framework for theology in Southern Africa, which is mostly made up of different races which were at certain times antagonistic, especially during apartheid in South Africa. Theology should guide this new society on how different races can live together and promote nation building. A theology which is built upon the ideology of rainbowism is contemporary to modern Southern Africa. Southern Africa is one of the regions that need the reconstruction of theology in context. What other regions in Africa have experienced after getting their political independence has been a disaster to humanity. Those regions, especially West and East Africa, never had peace and stability since the time of independence. Southern Africa should be busy working on how to build non-racial, non-tribal, non-sexist, equal and just society.

* Nation-building theology has a special obligation to enable and empower the nation to realize the highest ideals which may be enshrined within a new society.*

The theology built upon the framework of Rainbowism is a theology which takes Blacks, Whites, Coloureds, and Indians as equal in making God’s holy tree. It is theology which

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200 Villa-Vicencio 1992,43
aims at nationbuilding in a society which has experienced more than two decades of instability, discrimination, racism and corruption. The Rainbow nation of God with equality, stability, peace and democratic governance is the major aim of the Rainbowism theology. It is a nation where different talents should come together to search for a solution for an African society. The Rainbow nation of God is an ideal which is found in the Book of Isaiah.

*The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den.* (Isaiah 11:6-9)

The theology here can be referred to as God’s kingdom. That is a kingdom where peace and tranquility reign. The Rainbow nation of God is where all races live side by side peacefully in one country, one continent, and one universe. The founder of this Rainbowism idea, Desmond Tutu always talks of Africans united by the breasts of our mother Africa. He holds that, Whites and Blacks are equal creatures in front of God and belong to the body of Christ through baptism. 201

According to the book of Isaiah people are the physical organic environment and humanity will be in harmony in God’s kingdom. This goes together with our proposal of reconstructing a theology that is contextual to the region. A theology which takes care of God’s creation, listens to people’s experiences and involves God in human activities is a relevant theology.

The Rainbow theology is a theology of communion of living things with God. That includes people of different races, animals of all kinds and natural organic environment. The idea of rainbow nation of God includes protecting society’s marginalised groups.
such as homosexuals, prostitutes, stigmatised victims of HIV/AIDS, and people with disabilities. This theology does not condone some of the attitudes of these people but protects their right to exist as human beings and helps them to go through their difficulties.

Africa is full of riches. Those riches have to be used to create such a Rainbow nation instead of fueling civil wars in Africa. There are well trained and educated people in Africa of different races. The issue is why Africa looks like the way it does today. Africa is torn apart by wars today. The situation is better described by Keith Richburg in his book “Out of Africa” quoted by Kameeta:

*Mother Africa is often held up as some kind of black Valhalla, where the descendants of slaves would be welcomed back and where black men and women can walk in dignity. Sorry, but I’ve been there, I’ve had AK-47 rammed up my nose, I’ve talked to machete-wielding Hutu militia men with the blood of their latest victims splattered across their T-shirts. I’ve seen a cholera epidemic in Zaire, a famine in Somalia, a civil war in Liberia. I’ve seen cities bombed to near rubble, and others reduced to rubble, because their leaders let them rot and decay while they spirited away billions of dollars—yes, billions—into overseas bank accounts.*

The Rainbow nation is a nation which accepts other people’s cultures, traditions and religions. It respects people’s beliefs. It is a nation in which people care for one another. It is a nation which is willing to reconcile with the past and forgive. The Rainbow nation uses the prayer of Saint Francis as a model of interfaith and Ubuntu communion; a prayer which reflects exactly what is meant by Ubuntu.

*Lord make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us show love; Where there is injury,*

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202 Kameeta 2006,99
pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.²⁰³

African traditional religion takes life seriously. It is a theology which is created on the framework of Ubuntu. It is a theology that is based in hope and future for African people. Africans here include also those who are foreign in the continent. Immediately after they enter the continent according to the Rainbow nation, they become part of Africa. They are first treated as visitors, later as they get accustomed to the daily traditions; they become part of the community.

3.4            Revitalising the Kairos Theology after Liberation

The Kairos Document embraces a theology of liberation even though it was not written by liberation theologians. It is a Christian, biblical and theological comment on the political crisis in South Africa of apartheid. The theology of Kairos Document raised hopes of people in a difficult time of pain and suffering. It is a prophetic theology. It is a theology that is both situational and prophetic. It spoke to the crisis which took place in Southern Africa.

It is an attempt by concerned Christians in South Africa to reflect on the situation of death in our country. It is a critique of the current theological models that determine the type of activities the Church engages in to try to resolve the problems of the country. It is an attempt to develop, out of this perplexing situation, an alternative biblical and theological model that

²⁰³ Lutheran Book of Worship 1994,48
will in turn lead to forms of activity that will make a real difference to the future of our country.\textsuperscript{204}

The Kairos was a call to end the political crisis in a peaceful and amicable way. It was a proposal for an alternative option to resolve the crisis happening to God’s creation. It was also a critical situation for academics, non-academics, rich and poor to shout with a united voice for an end to the crisis. God’s creation was disturbed. Something had to be done in this crisis.

The document called upon the Church to do something during the political crisis in South Africa. It was a difficult situation for the Church as she was compelled to take the side of the oppressed and the poor.

\textit{The document also attacked what is called the Theology of the State in terms of which the then government was oppressing people under the guise of keeping law and order. The document also attacked what it calls the Theology of Reconciliation, mainly practised by the so-called English speaking churches in which the oppressive system of government was not adequately opposed. It discussed the question of violence, pointing out that the apartheid state was the main source and perpetrator of violence against society, especially against Africans.\textsuperscript{205}}

Theology played a vital role in the burial of the legacy of apartheid in Southern Africa. This is still a question to many African theologians in the region today. New theologians in the region have different ways of analysing contemporary life. The challenges are different from those of the time of colonialism and imperialism.

\textsuperscript{204} African Christianity S/A Kairos page 1/26. in\url{http://www.bethel.edu/~eletrke/AfricanChristianity/SAKairos.html} \textsuperscript{205} Mbiti 1998,152
The Kairos is defined not just as the contextuality of theological liberation but also the means of understanding time as Kairos (fulfilled time).\textsuperscript{206} If we take the concept of time seriously then the Kairos theology will be relevant to us today. Revitalising Kairos theology calls the Southern African theologians to stop answering questions which nobody has ever asked. It means that theologians should now concentrate on issues affecting people on a daily basis. It is important to indicate that the study of theology may tempt many theologians to concentrate on issues which are not relevant to the society. This consequently affects students from theological institutions as they will struggle with challenges in the community. In an interview with Bishop Cosmos Moenga of the Lutheran Church in Botswana, he indicated that theology in Southern Africa is getting irrelevant because the focus now is just on high philosophy which has no relevance to the grass-roots. Theologians who are at institutions, universities and seminaries should also equip themselves with the life of the congregations such that their teachings can be contextual.\textsuperscript{207} Kairos theology is a theology of the people. It is a theology that speaks for all people including the oppressors and the rich. The Kairos theology is classified as a theology which was born out of a crisis. These crises are tantamount to the crisis of today.

The region is going through difficulties which include economic, social and political problems. Southern Africa is faced with poverty, HIV/AIDS pandemic, malaria, unemployment, women and child abuse, ecological problems and bad infrastructure. Immediately after the liberation of Southern Africa in 1994, the Church in some countries started to deviate from politics and the running of the state. She left politicians to run the society and make social and religious decisions for the public. The Church is not the only institution that diverted its attention. Some human rights and justice organisations which belonged to the liberation movements during the struggle also have started to sleep. The situation is getting out of control because politicians are running countries according to how it suits them. Zimbabwe is a practical example.

\textsuperscript{206} Witvliet 1987,27-28
\textsuperscript{207} An interview with Bishop CK Moenga on 30th August 2006
Fellow citizens and comrades are faced with economic and health afflictions. There are stories about corruption in governments. The corruption is led by politicians and top government officials. The Church is now starting to re-visit what she ignored after the liberation struggle hoping that her people will deliver services to the people. Theologians and the laity should continue following the Kairos theology in order to meet challenges affecting them. It is important for the laity to participate because anyone who proclaims Kairos helps to create it.208

3.4.1 The Open Letter (Lutheran Churches in Namibia)

The churches in Namibia developed a contextual theology of Liberation to respond to the crisis caused by the then apartheid government in Namibia, the then South West Africa. The two African Lutheran Churches in Namibia wrote what is known as the Open Letter that appeared in 1971.209 The churches in Namibia had been silent on the status quo in Namibia. The Open Letter finally broke the silence. The long waited voice of voiceless was officially heard for the first time. The Open Letter condemned the evils of apartheid. The two African Lutheran Churches began to identify themselves openly with SWAPO.

The divergent theological approaches led to a partition of the Christian Church in Namibia into at least two major opposing divisions; Those accepting the status quo versus those who identified with the liberation struggle...the South African military began to capitalize on this partition of the Churches.210

The Namibian churches used this method in reaction to a crisis. The Open Letter divided Christian communities in Namibia. The apartheid regime used the concept of divide and rule in order to achieve its objectives which were based on the ideology of apartheid. The White Lutheran Church and Dutch Reformed Church reacted against the Open Letter. Then the voice of the Christians in Namibia was weaken by that. Theology was compelled

208 Witlvliet 19987,28
209 Buys and Nambala 2003,331
210 Ibid.,p.331
to engage churches in Namibia to come to compromise theologically in addressing the crisis.

_The dominant misunderstanding leading to tension and differences of opinions within the churches was the new epistemology used by Contextual Theology i.e. how to determine the nature of the gospel and the task of the Church in Namibia...Some local church council, spiritual leaders or groups of believers who supported or accepted the status quo, emphasized traditional conservative and orthodox (doctrinal) theology._

The methodology used by the two Lutheran African Churches in Namibia is a lesson to many churches in Southern Africa. The stand of the two Churches to write down a prophetic letter addressing the painful situation of that time without fear and favour is an example of how to face the current challenges today. The methodology used here commences with the situation and then follows the theological reactions on the situation and lastly the action which is the Open Letter. We have to be clear that the Open Letter was not accepted by other denominations in Namibia. There were other churches who rejected the initiatives. The importance issues here is that despite the fact that churches in Namibia differed on the matter but a new dimension of doing theology was born in Namibia as a result of two churches taking a deliberate stand against what was happening in the society of that time. In other words, churches should not stand and wait for the big ecumenical bodies to react to a crisis but use their theological tools to advocate for what is the right thing to be done. In his writings Barney Pityana quoted the Notting Hill consultation statement during the then apartheid regime in South Africa that,

_The church is charged with the task of reconciliation. And if it is to take that ministry seriously, then it must attack racism significantly—at its origin, as well as the symptoms. Therefore, the_

211_ Buys and Nambala 2003,333_
church must be willing to be not only an institution of love but also an institution of action.  

Pityana argument is that there were denominations which did not necessarily supported arms struggle groups but were committed to solidarity and common action to eliminate racism and oppression. There were some theological arguments on whether to justify violence during that time but some organisations did not want to respond to that instead supported what was a wrong practice at that time which was racism.

Today many denominations do not always want to be seen taking a stand especially on national issues affecting people and the state. Instead, they argue that they will speak out their views through ecumenical churches bodies which they are affiliated too. In most cases their statements are very much compromising. Individual denominations should be pro-active. Through the Namibian open letter, the construction of theology can be done commencing from people, denomination and at national level. Somebody must start the debate and other must continue to dialogue on the issue. That is the applicable methodology of the construction of theology in the region.

The Kairos Document and the Open Letter are critical theological reflections on the praxis of that time. These documents were spearheaded by academic theologians and pastors. Out of the pain and suffering, people decided to speak out loudly on behalf of millions of black people in Southern Africa. The theology of Kairos was constructed out of political crises which condemned the justification of apartheid theology. In his writings during that period Kameeta warned that:

\[
\text{This blasphemous power... stands under the judgment of God, and when the church nourishes it, worships it and proclaims it, she places herself under this judgment... In Southern Africa the somber yet loving voice of the Bridegroom wants to tear}
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212 Pityana 1994, 92
away the Bride from the blasphemous power which has entangled her, and which she confuses with the Bridegroom.\textsuperscript{213}

In this situation, the Church cannot carry out her God-given commission, if she is not prepared to go through a painful change. This painful change includes repentance to her Lord, through whom alone her liberated message can be preached in word and deeds to the world in bondage.\textsuperscript{214} This was one of the voices which were raised in such critical situation. The voice was reflecting on the contextual life of the people and expressing the feelings of those suffering. It is important today as we work on the reconstruction of Theology in Southern Africa to learn how theologians were able to analyse their context and take a stand against evil without resentment even though there was intimidation and threats.

The revitalising the Kairos theology and Open Letter is a huge challenge to young theologians. The region needs a theology based on transformation for good. How can theology be able to sustain what liberation theology has created after the independence? The Kairos Document and the Open Letter are models which were efficient during their time and can still be utilised today. Nevertheless we need a New Kairos document and open letters for theologians to cope with the dilemmas of today.

\textbf{3.4.2 What is Kairos Today?}

The word Kairos is a Greek word and it means ‘of time’ or a fixed and definite period of time, season or moment.\textsuperscript{215} Kairos has a variety of meanings in African languages. In Sotho-Tswana languages, there are many words which refer to time. These include \textit{Nako(time)}, \textit{Motlha(existing period)}, \textit{Sebaka (period)}. Time is also associated with the situation (\textit{seemo}). The word ‘\textit{seemo}’ can also be used to describe the place or the existing situation. Therefore, the word can be translated as the existing situation. If we analyse all these descriptions we can therefore conclude that Kairos in the Sotho-Tswana language means a period existing at a certain time.

\textsuperscript{213}Kameeta 1975, 124
\textsuperscript{214}Ibid., p.124-127
\textsuperscript{215}Smith 1999,226
In Namibia, the Herero word “Oruveze” means Kairos or time. It can also mean a chance or opportunity. This is also related to time. Nevertheless, this word can be translated as place. Therefore, Kairos means time and place.

To have time for somebody is to have place for that person.
And to have a place for somebody is to accept and recognize the existence of that person. To have no time for your neighbour is to have no place for him/her. And to have no place for a neighbour or for somebody is to deny the existence of that person.\(^\text{216}\)

Mbiti states that in many African countries time is created. It is not just understood as an external reality ruled by clocks and watches, which human life has to consider and obey, but time produced.\(^\text{217}\) It emerges wherever life takes place or any situation where there are living things. For instance like having a good life which does not refer to time as an external reality but rather as to one which is being generated in the process of a party or wherever people do not have good time. It is believed that if a time is not generated this way it ceases to be time and it becomes ‘no time’.\(^\text{218}\) Mbiti introduced the concept of time as nowness or now period which is “Sasa” in Kiswahili language.\(^\text{219}\) Kiswahile is a language mostly spoken in Central Africa. The Sasa covers the experiences of immediate concern and events which are felt to be filled by the force of life. What matters here is the importance of life. Sasa is very much associated with time. If forces of life are palpable reality, Sasa is experienced as presence.

The African understanding of Kairos has a relevant meaning to people. It does not only mean time but the existence and the right and privileges of existence as human beings do. This interpretation takes us back to the African concept of existence. Human beings exist because of other human beings, environment and God.

\(^{216}\)Kameeta 2006,66
\(^{217}\)Mbiti 1989,19
\(^{218}\)Mbiti1989,16
\(^{219}\)Ibid.,p.21
The other human being has time for another human being. To have time is also to have a space or place. The place we have is only on the physical organic environment. If I do not like my brother it means I don’t want him to exist in any place. This sounds philosophical. The issue here is that during the apartheid era the colonisers did not have a place and time for black people. Black people were marginalised by the colonisers. They could not occupy a space or place.

For instance, when a white South African says “Eknet geen tyd vir n Kaffer nie” that means literally: ‘I do not recognize your existence’. Kairos is a place and a place is existence.220 The Kairos Document called for the South African apartheid government to recognise Black Africans as existing human beings during that time.

Kairos means time and existence that God gave to us in His created world. Human beings must use that time. This is reflected in the Christian chorus which says in Tswana language; “Modimo o re file Sebakanyana se, le motsotsonyana yo.” The literal translation of the chorus is that God has given us this time of existence. The meaning exactly reflects the Christian meaning that we exist because of God. Revitalising the Kairos theology means to take back our places and retaining our existence in our countries. We should occupy our places. This means the hour has come for Africans to rediscover themselves. The time has come to restore African humanity. It is time for the landless, marginalised, the poor, the unemployed and disadvantaged to feel that they are human beings existing in their countries as God’s creation. They must reclaim what they deserve as human beings in their countries. Africans have been robbed of their Kairos for many years by colonisers. In many townships, poverty, crime, unemployment, illness and other social afflictions are the rule of the day. In Namibia, Kameeta describes the situation as follows;

...the overwhelming majority of the people, in Katutura, the vulnerable, the powerless are earning not more than 200 Rands

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220Kameeta 2006,66
And the majority of these people who are so under paid are women, the domestic workers. They are supposed to raise a family, children, with an amount of sometimes 70 Rand a month.\textsuperscript{221} Similar situations exist in some other Southern African countries. Some of these are the consequences of poor political leadership, such as the political and economic instability in Zimbabwe. The situation there calls for a New Kairos Theology. People are no longer deprived of their moment of Kairos by the colonisers but now by their own people or comrades.

The New Kairos Theology has a wholesome and holistic approach. Therefore, there is no more black and white fighting each other. It is now the blacks against blacks, the rich versus rich, the poor versus the poor and the whites versus whites. It should emphasise the existence of humanity with the physical organic environment and with God. The gap between the poor and the rich, regardless of race, is one of the major issues that hinder people from enjoying their Kairos moment that God has given to them.

In a newly democratic Southern Africa we want governments which will exist for the people. We need a Church which will exist for the people. We need leaders who are there for people’s interest not for their own personal accumulation of wealth. The Church theology should not be orientated to the orthodox theology.

The Kairos Theology calls for a theology that accommodates all people or a wholesome approach. It is a theology based on universality. Human beings exist because other human beings recognise their existence. In South Africa people of different faiths got involved in the struggle against apartheid. That was a sign of religious pluralism in the region. This seems to have been neglected after the liberation struggle. The Kairos Document was challenged by Moulana Esack when he said that:

\textit{The Kairos theologians have not understood the universal nature of what they have produced and so they offer}

\textsuperscript{221}Kameeta2006,67
it only to Christians. Their inability to do so does not stem from a Christian humanity or a fear that adherents of other faiths may reject it. It comes from a deep-rooted Christian (Europe) arrogance that leads to ignorance of other faiths and indifference to the possible contribution of their adherents to the creation of a just society.\textsuperscript{222}

This means that there is a lot of things which unite Christians and Muslims than what divides them. They are able to unite against evil visited on human beings. This means that it is possible for people of different faiths in Southern Africa to speak in a united voice.\textsuperscript{223}

The New Kairos Theology will discourage the continued production of theology, even progressive liberation theology, which takes place outside the context of the inter-religious, inter-faith dialogue, and continues to perpetuate another form of exclusion and domination of a minority. The New Kairos Theology calls for pluralistic theological reflection on people’s lives, afflictions and experiences. This is a methodological approach relevant to the current challenges facing the region. The approach starts with the experiences of the people, followed by the voices of people by listening to their problem and then the theological reflections. The process continues with helping or engaging people in addressing their own problems guided by their faiths and religious convictions.

There is an African expression which says ‘I am because you are’. Actually, people exist because there is a place they occupy. In summary, we can say that revitalising the Kairos Theology is the call for a theological reflection on the threesome approach that is God, human being and the physical-organic cosmic universe. People should start enjoying their moment of existence. They must earn what can sustain them through-out the whole year. They should enjoy good infrastructure, clean water, good health facilities, quality education etc. The theology of a pie in the sky has no place in New Kairos Theology.

\textsuperscript{222} Nola 1994,\textsuperscript{223} Ibid., p.223
The new Kairos Theology approach should use the threesome approach when addressing issues whether are social, economic, and political or spiritual. This approach shall assist the churches to take bold stand difficult issues without fear and favour. The threesome approach protects the spiritual, physical and political needs of humanity. Such approach always helps people to address their own concerns and questions. The normal practice is that theology gives answers to the people but this approach shall help people to answer their own questions. The approach just only facilitate and guide people to choose the right things.

The Apartheid system was not only cruel, unjust and discriminatory but also deprived people’s humanity. The political compromise that led to a new dispensation in South Africa was focused on the debate of the reconciliation of human rights violations, but deliberately excluding other forms of oppression, such as land issues and globalisation. Many countries attempted to secure a peaceful transition from the dictatorial regimes or colonisers to democracy. Reconciliation seemed to be one of the main models in the region. The people living in Southern Africa have been torn apart by structures of apartheid and colonialism for a longtime. This kind of structure has dehumanised many people, and brought a dichotomy among the people.

The need for reconciliation is essential because of the process of healing the wounds of the past. People cannot live together in one place while they hate each other. The Church cannot be neutral in such a situation. It should heal people and promote peace and reconciliation amongst God’s people. Reconciliation is very essential in Southern Africa. The recent seizure of land from white farmers after twenty years of independence was a sign that white and blacks were never reconciled after colonialism. The region should not be made to experience the same scenario again.

Traditional theology clearly argues that God is the reconciler of humanity to Himself through His only Son Jesus Christ.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son,
that whoever believes in Him should not perish
but have everlasting life. For God did not send His
Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the
world through Him might be saved. (John 3:16-17)

Theologians should be the pioneers of reconciliation in the world. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission was an ideal model. It was one of the remarkable processes in Africa. For many thought that the advent of a black-led government would signal the onset of an orgy of revenge and retribution against whites for all the degradation and atrocities that black South Africans had suffered from colonial times to apartheid era. There is no doubt that the horrors of genocide that gripped Burundi, Sudan, Sri Lanka and others could have happened in South Africa during the democratic transition. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was a healing process to many South Africans of all races.

In his statement on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Archbishop Desmond Tutu said that,

*the harsh truths put before our people by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission drew the poisons from our politics. That is a lesson that other damaged countries can and must benefit from. The lesson of South Africa’s transition is that there is no going forward without truth and forgiveness. Russia’s transition to democracy began at almost the same time as ours... A crime can never be buried. Political crimes never fade.*

The truth helps the reconciliation process to be effective. People are able to talk about the pains and bitterness they experienced. By doing so, people can be healed emotionally. This healing leads victims to the process of forgiving the perpetrators. If the truth does not come out, the whole process of reconciliation and forgiveness is affected. People will not forget what was done to them during apartheid and colonialism.

*We have not forgotten what was done to ordinary black people in the name of apartheid. Indeed, by launching the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, we know far more about the full*
horrors of that era than we would have had we sought to prosecute people, or tried simply to move on. Literally, the truth has set us free to be at peace with ourselves. Remembrance and forgiveness have allowed our people to be consigned to the past.\textsuperscript{225}

God reconciled with people through Jesus Christ. Theology here portrays God as the initiator of reconciliation. Human beings are requested to respond to this free offer. They should accept the fact that they are sinners in front of God. Reconciliation goes together with acceptance of the truth and the willingness of total transformation of an individual. Therefore God is actively participating in reconciliation and human beings are also expected to participate. God and humanity can be taken as the object of theology of reconciliation.

We know that reconciliation is not something which can be done within a short period of time. It is one of the difficult things in life. It takes a while for people to reconcile with the past. The main idea of reconciliation can only be legitimate if it practically addresses the past injustice, particularly that which was committed in pursuing structural violence. Every reconciliation discourse which falls short of this yardstick has to be rejected as an attempt to cover and ultimately justify continuing oppression.\textsuperscript{226}

\textit{Reconciliation is not an easy option, nor does confrontation. After all, it did cost God the death of His Son to effect reconciliation; the cross of Jesus was to expose the sinfulness of sin when He took on the powers of evil and routed them comprehensively. No, just as there can be no cheap grace so there can be no cheap reconciliation, because we cannot cry \textquoteleft peace, peace\textquoteright where there is no peace.}\textsuperscript{227}

The theology of reconciliation should consist of reconciliation, truth and reconstruction. These are the key words which should take Southern African people through the

\textsuperscript{225}Tutu 2007,15
\textsuperscript{226}Maluleka 1999,228
\textsuperscript{227}Tutu 1985,38
reconciliation process. There were things which were lacking in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission when it was constructed. Those involved healing and counseling. A proper understanding of the meaning of reconciliation would help in the process of healing and thereafter reconstruction as a natural commitment of a nation to pay for the damages that had been caused.228

**3.4.3. Truth, Memory and Renewed Identity**

The whole exercise of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was conducted under the premise that the sharing of the stories of the apartheid era would be redemptive for the victims, as well as for the perpetrators, and for the healing of the nation as a whole.229 This was a very essential exercise in the region. The fruits of this exercise cannot be seen now but will become more pronounced at a later stage. The Research Institute on Christianity in South Africa at the University of Cape Town, described the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as an important national symbol that will show that the nation cares. It sees the commission to be initiating a national catharsis having a pastoral approach with regard to the perpetrators as well as the victims. The grand motive for this pastoral action process is the restoration of the people’s humanity.230

Nevertheless some Church leaders were more critical when seeing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a legal symbol rather than being a spiritual, theological and moral endeavour.231 There were a lot of comments that critiqued the motives of the commission. If we observe very carefully, the commission was generally welcomed in South Africa. In his comments about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Nelson Mandela was quoted saying:

> the work of the TRC, imperfect as it may be, has laid a foundation on which South Africa can work to forge a

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228Chikane 1995, 102  
229Ormar 1995, 25  
230Botman 1996, 156  
231Villa-Vicencio 1996, 156
common understanding of the past.\textsuperscript{232}

The exercise could have some weakness during its application. There was an argument that it did not help the victims because the culprits were left to go free. The victims did not get any compensation. However, the spirit of reconciliation was the driving factor in the whole process of TRC. Its input on the reconstruction of the new South African society could be detected. There was a spirit of acceptance between different races in the new South Africa even though it was difficult for other people to welcome the changes. The biblical concept of reconciliation portrays Jesus Christ as the reconciler between God and people. (2Corinthians 5:18-19) It was not simple for the Son of God to go through this exercise. He needed to be strengthened. He went out to Mount of Olives and prayed:

\begin{quote}
And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw,  
and He knelt down and prayed, saying “Father, if it is 
Your will, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless not My 
will, but Yours, be done.” Then an angel appeared to 
Him from heaven, strengthening Him. (Luke 22:43)
\end{quote}

The process of reconciliation cannot be expected to be simple for human beings. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission faced a lot of challenges. Those challenges could have jeopardized the credibility of the commission. It is clear from the biblical perspective that God cannot be left out when dealing with reconciliation. God’s intervention is essential. The reason is that human beings cannot effectively carry out the process on their own. Human beings need strong faith to be able to reconcile with one another. The process of reconciliation is not just a matter of verbal or written agreements. It is a process which goes together with human emotions, patience and a total change of mind. It goes together with the Christian concept of being born again. It means the total change that happens in a person. That change includes the way a person perceives things, the way a person does things, the way a person reasons things and the

\textsuperscript{232}Mandela 2004,331
way a person conducts his/her life. Therefore, there is need for human beings to seek help from God during this process.

Another challenge was the issue of a legal framework of the commission. This is where the commission has shown the world that it was competent in practising law and the gospel at the same time. The Minister of Justice, Dullah Omar, who was responsible for the legal framework of the Commission, emphasised the need for a process much wider than legal concerns, like amnesty. He said;

\[ \text{I could have gone to parliament and produced an amnesty} \]
\[ \text{but this would have been to ignore the victims of violence entirely.} \]
\[ \text{We recognized that we could not forgive perpetrators unless we attempted also to restore the honour and dignity of the victims and give effect to reparation. The question of amnesty must be located in a broader context and the wounds of the people must be recognised.}^{233} \]

The commission was to respond to questions exceeding its narrow legal mandate. The critical reflection on the commission is the issue of the truth as an important means of reconciliation. Another important question is the concept of justice that would be adequate to re-address the legacy of apartheid. The issue of the legal mandate of the commission and the concept of justice to address the legacy of apartheid are the most debatable issues during the process of reconciliation. The issue can be summarised by former president Thabo Mbeki’s sentiments about the commission as follows:

\[ \text{handling this relationship between reconciliation} \]
\[ \text{and transformation is not a mathematical thing, it’s an art.} \]
\[ \text{It’s going to define South African politics for the next fifteen years at least.}^{234} \]

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233Ormar 1995,25
234Mbeki 1999,58
There is another truth better than Mbeki’s view. In Namibia the reconciliation process was different. The South Africans adopted the truth as the means of reconciliation as we have already discussed. On the other hand, the Namibian policy of Reconciliation was based on the “Forgive and Forget policy”. That was declared during the independence celebration by the then president Sam Nujoma that the new society should not be tainted by the memories of the past.

The approach of Forgive and Forget can be vulnerable. The upheaval in Zimbabwe could be the result of this method of reconciliation. The concept of forgiving and forgetting is not efficient, especially for reconciliation. The Old Testament does not understand God’s Grace as punishment on the victims, but it insists that the fate of the victims must be addressed. For instance, if people lost their land, they would get it back after a period of 50 years. (Leviticus 25:9). During that time nobody put blame on those in power or even those who held slaves. The law of the Year of Grace ensures that all who are wounded and marginalised will be restituted with their legitimate rights. By doing so they are reincorporated into the community. (Exodus 23:3). That was a song of reconciliation.

The idea of the Year of God’s Grace attempts to extend certain elements of Christian reconciliation to the everyday life of the people. It tries to induce healing where reconciliation in the true sense has failed. It insists on action where frustrated disciples of Christ remain passive. It points to the victims where the powerful want to hide their fate from the eyes of the world. The Year of God’s Grace counts on the grace of God and expects the wounds of the past to heal even in situations where attempts of reconciliation in the Christian meaning of the word have been futile.

The proclamation of the Year of God’s Grace is an attempt to limit the consequences of the past guilt in order to open the door for a new beginning. The Year of God’s Grace essentially is an act of justice. It does not allow revenge or retribution, it does not even promise compensation, but the emphasis is focused on the restitution of the rights of the victims and their remittance as full members of the society. For various reasons these
victims had lost this place in their suffering. During the Year of God’s Grace, they were welcomed back to the community and restituted with their full rights.

The restitution is seen as the condition of the healing of the wounds of the victims of injustice. They just need to be assured that they are safe and no further injustice or acts of violence will be committed again. Then their wounds will be healed. This is not a process which can take place immediately. It is a slow process and far slower than it had been if real reconciliation had taken place. But over the years the wounds would nevertheless close and healing would take place. The process is well described by Dietrich Bonhoeffer as follows:

_This forgiveness can come only when the wound of guilt is healed, when violence has become justice, lawlessness has become order and war has become peace. If this is not achieved, it wring still rules unhindered and still inflicts new wounds, then of course, there can be no question of this kind of forgiveness and man’s first concern must be to resist injustice and to call the offenders to account for their guilt._

The Theology of Reconciliation should be based on the biblical and the African traditional worldview. Reconciliation in African traditional religion involves traditional treatment, sacrifices and rituals. The biblical reconciliation involves the truth, forgiveness and faith. The Truth and Reconciliation model and the Forgive and Forget model are common in Southern Africa. These methods were used in some countries in the region. While Namibia opted for the Forgive and Forget model, South Africa chose the route of Truth and Reconciliation. There is need to introduce the African understanding of reconciliation. This is one aspect which has been neglected. The African reconciliation includes a proper public ritual confession by the perpetrator to the victims. The ritual is performed to bind the perpetrator together with the victims. The ritual also plays a role in asking for forgiveness from the ancestral spirits on behalf of the perpetrators. It is believed that the ancestral spirit would tell whether the perpetrators are genuine or

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235 Bonhoeffer 1995,97
not. Theology should accommodate this process of reconciliation. It is only then that there can be a proper contemporary African reconciliation process.

The need for a renewed identity is vital. It is essential to have an African identity which should be passed from one generation to another. That will help Africans to understand their culture and traditions against the influence of the modern world. There is a tendency to forget local cultures and practices when coming to national issues like reconciliation and justice. Africans are losing their cultures, traditions, norms and values due to western civilisation. Therefore, it may be concluded that the continent has problems, and it needs healing. It should be renewed and the only people who can renew it are the Africans themselves.

3.5 Theology in Use

Theologians in Southern Africa are busy theologizing. The main concern is how to practise theology properly in the Southern African context. There is need to come up with some methodologies which can analyse the situation carefully and address it. People encounter different crises in their lives. These crises have caused many believers to be uncertain about their religions. Though theology addresses them, it is not enough. Theology is obliged to address the wholeness of the reality in today’s challenges. The wholesome approach could be an alternative model to answer societal grievances and challenges.

There is a need for a theology of a just and democratic world order. The main task of such theology will be to build upon Christian concrete utopianism, continue in contradiction to modernity, a belief in God as a necessary hypothesis, affirm belief in the triune God as a symbol of human sociality and resume belief in the Christian doctrine of original sin and a convergence between the democratic system and its vision.\textsuperscript{236} These tasks are the most crucial items that have to be tackled by theology. It is high time that theology reclaimed its place at the centre of political discourse.\textsuperscript{237} Politics rules the world today. Theological voices must be heard in political arenas. In his speech at the All Africa

\textsuperscript{236}De Gruchy 1995, 230
\textsuperscript{237}De Gruchy 1994, 11
Conference of Churches in Maputo, Rev Dr Andre Karamaga, the Secretary General of AACC, argued that the priority for churches in Africa and everybody who wants to contribute to the building of a new Africa with Hope and Dignity is to strive for peace in the continent.

*Without peace, there is no development. Without peace, there is no way to deal with our multiple challenges. Without peace, there is no hope and there is no future. Without peace, there is no life and there is no dignity.*

Africa needs peace in order to have a democratic society. The democratic way of governance is highly regarded as one of the best methods of governance in the modern world. Gaie says that leaders in a democratic situation should be advised to appear to be democratic when it suits them and they should change when it does not. In Southern Africa democracy is still growing. It is uncertain whether it is developing towards achieving good results or not. This is because countries which became independent during the 1980s are now experiencing leadership crisis and consequently economic constraints.

The Church’s role in democracy is an issue which needs to be addressed. During apartheid and colonialism in Southern Africa, the Church played a vital role of mediating between two antagonist camps. The Church provided places for those in despair and she was the voice of the voiceless. Immediately after independence of almost all Southern African States, the Church started to be a reluctant player in the political field. She left everything in the hands of the indigenous politicians. The Church started to be engulfed by the states powers. Some Church leaders were given positions in the governments. This weakened the Church’s prophetic voice. Okulu Henry observed that,

*... the church has been slow in giving the guidance which African nations needed in working out their national aspiration as independent states. Instead a church leader has found*
himself largely jumping on the bandwagon and accepting opinions mooted by politicians. Yet it is clearly the church’s duty to teach eternal truth and not repeat popular slogans.240

The Church should return to her role before the world gets out of control. The role of the Church is to provide guidance on spiritual issues, political matters, economic matters, morality and other societal structures. There is no way that democracy in the region can be successful without Church participation. Therefore the Church needs to reconstruct a theology which will specifically deal with democratic matters in the region. In a lecture at the United Lutheran Theological Seminary Paulinum, James de Vries said that:

one day God will ask the Church, where were you when the following things happened; legalization of abortion, gays and lesbians be deported and eliminated as SWAPO party wants and the HIV/AIDS pandemic increased. Where was the Church when all these happened?241

This question is still relevant today. The Church should stop relaxing because she has won the liberation struggle. The Church should concentrate on God’s mission. Those politicians who want the Church to follow their injustpolicies should be helped through teachings and counsellings regardless of whether they were comrades with the Church during the liberation struggle, or not.

3.5.1 Political Leadership

The Church provided countries in Southern Africa with leaders. Many of them were trained in mission schools and others were sponsored by churches for education during colonial reign in the region. These include Seretse Khama, Keneth Kaunda, Julius Nyerere and others. It is taken for granted that they were influenced by their denominational doctrines. The Church put more trust on some of these leaders. The

240Henry 1982,2
commitment of many African leaders during the liberation struggle was profound. Many sacrificed their lives for the liberation of their people. When such leaders got into power, expectations were high. Today some of those leaders have lost integrity due to their style of leadership which does not go with what they promised.

Africa, by the end of the 1980s, was renowned for Big Men, dictators who strutted the stage, tolerating neither opposition nor dissent, rigging elections, emasculating the courts, cowering the press, stifling the universities, demanding abject servility and making themselves exceedingly rich. Their faces appeared on currency; their photographs graced offices and shops. They named highways, football stadiums and hospitals after themselves. Their speeches and daily activities dominated radio and television news and government newspapers.242

They continued persecuting those who opposed them and packed the civil service with their own supporters and employed secret police to hunt down opponents, licensing them to detain, torture and murder at will, if necessary.243 People were compelled to follow and support the ruling parties. This resulted in the eruption of civil wars. Examples of these incidents were to be found in DRC and Zimbabwe.

We still have such kind of leaders today. It was assumed that after one or two decades of independence a new generation of leaders in the continent would have a different view of leadership style. Unfortunately that did not happen because some African leaders are reluctant to relinquish power. These are bad fruits harvested from the liberation struggle. Statistics show that out of hundred and fifty (150) heads of state who had trodden the Africa stage, only six voluntarily relinquished power. These included the likes of Leopold Senghor of Senegal, who was in office for 20 years. Elsewhere, Hastings Kamuzu Banda of Malawi appointed himself president for life in 1971, Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Cote

242 Meredith 1994,378
243 Ibid.,p.378
d’Ivoire stayed for 24 till the age of 84. In 1988 he said that in Cote d’Ivore there is only a number one, “that’s me and I don’t share my decisions.”

It can be observed that African leaders of the 1960s had the mentality of keeping power until their death. The picture in modern day Africa is such that President Robert Mugube of Zimbabwe has managed to centralise power on himself while the country is going through political and economic crisis. The question, therefore, becomes, is the region still going to have such kind of leaders? If so, how is democracy going to be enhanced?

Of course another important issue to be addressed is what makes African leaders reluctant to relinquish power. This is one of the main problems African people are facing today. Leaders want to keep power until death. The only way to take it away from them is by force. Possibly this has to do with the African understanding of leadership, especially chieftainship. Africans understand that chiefs are born to be leaders. Consequently they will die as leaders. It can, perhaps, be argued that this is engrained in the African concept of leadership. However, this must change because it causes problems for African people.

There is a developing tendency among Southern African presidents to want to retain control of their local political parties even though they are not presidents of their own countries. The former president of Namibia, Sam Nujoma, did not leave the leadership of his party SWAPO after he retired as the country’s president. In South Africa, Thabo Mbeki sought to remain the African National Congress president even as his term as the country’s president was coming to an end. This tendency may affect the nascent democratic system in Africa, and it should be discouraged by all means.

There is a need to direct leadership in Africa. Leadership forums should be conducted which can talk about all issues relating to the challenges Africa is facing in leadership. In October 2007 the 7th African Governance Forum was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso under the theme “Building a capable State in Africa”. The main objective of the forum was to gather African leaders, representatives of the private sector, civil society organisations and other stakeholders in Africa including leaders of African development

244 Ibid., p.379
partners to share views and experiences on the key challenges and opportunities in the promotion of good governance in Africa. These gatherings can enlighten African leaders on issues of governance. They can also empower politicians and other people on issues affecting their countries in relation to the international community. There is a popular statement that says; ‘knowledge is power’.

It must be mandatory for political leaders to have a certain level of educational background in order to qualify for political office. Training is another important tool that can be used to fight against poor leadership in the society.

The establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in 2003 by African countries was to improve governance and drive development in African countries as part of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development. This development is very positive as African countries decide to evaluate their own governance with foreign intervention. Therefore, this initiative mainly is for African solutions to African problems. The key areas for this review is that if a country acced to APRM they submit to a series of voluntary peer reviews which examine the country’s governance across four thematic areas: democracy and political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance and socio-economic development. The major challenge is that some African countries did not yet acced to the APRM due to different reasons. This is very concern because this programme objective are very good to drive the economy and visionary leadership. Countries who are not yet acceded to this programme should encouraged and be motivated by civil societies, and religious organisations. Theologians of different religions should lead the campaign of lobbying these countries to join the APRM. Theology should play a vital role in assisting civil societies with strategies to influence their state to acced. In order to have a good leadership in Africa we should first empower people with education such that they will elect and choose the right people. After elections of leaders in our countries, there should be monitoring, guidance and evaluation of their way of governance which is one of the APRM objectives. Therefore the APRM and other organisations in Africa who are fighting for good governance in the

245 Turianskyi 2014, 4
region should be supported by theologians who are busy re-constructing theology in the continent.

3.5.2 Leadership in Church

Leadership in Church is a recurring problem. In Southern Africa there is a Church leadership crisis. This often leads to the split of churches. The main causes include the fight for leadership positions, and greed for money. Churches face internal leadership squabbles. For example, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Botswana split from Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa’s Botswana Diocese as a result of a power struggle. It is unfortunate that theology is blind to see this crisis. Pastors are no longer servants of the Word, but are now bosses. They are served, instead of serving. Pastors are masters of everything in congregations including finance. They rule and own congregations. An elder once asked the difference between a bishop and a pastor. She narrated her story,

*I was just approaching the Church Head Office when I accidentally met the bishop of my church in a passage. I greeted him, ‘Hello pastor!’ The Bishop replied, ‘I am not a pastor, I am a bishop. Never ever call me pastor.’ The bishop’s response made me terrified. I thought the bishop was also a pastor. Therefore what is the different between the two positions in God’s eyes?*\(^{246}\)

According to the above story, the Church is no longer a place of spiritual services, but a centre of struggle for power and positions. Therefore, the pastoralship of the Church is discredited. Therefore, the Bishop’s position is no longer viewed as a shepherd of the word, but an earthly position. It has been observed that in certain instances, bishops have refused to relinquish power, choosing instead to form their own churches. There is no other way the Church can run away from its internal leadership problems. This mirrors

\(^{246}\)Mogorosi in an interview in Gaborone, 2006
the concern in Southern Africa where the political leadership does not want to hand over power.

The Church mission work is dying slowly. The reason may be that the Church has lost focus of its core mission work. The leadership of congregations does not cater for people’s needs. Njoroge argues that:

*today we need leadership that believes in inclusive communities and full participation by all members of the local congregation, beginning with children, the most vulnerable, the poor, people living with disabilities, youth, women, men and the elderly: “A church of all and for All”. We need bold and committed leadership that will listen to all voices, discern the will of God before making statements and decisions that will ferment disunity and schism.*\(^{247}\)

The Church does not need leaders who are there to protect their own personal interests. Leaders should lead by example and be able to reflect critically on issues affecting people. They should put God ahead of everything when dealing with matters brought to them. Leadership today is very challenging and demanding. Leaders should continue developing their skills in order to be up to date with changes.

*We need courageous leadership that value the submerged and excluded majority, the weak and vulnerable for here we have the whole people of God who are called and sent by Jesus to go, feed and tend the sheep and the lamb. We cannot continue to give a blind eye anda deaf ear to the ongoing leadership and ecumenical crises.*\(^{248}\)

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\(^{247}\) Njoroge 2004,12

\(^{248}\) Ibid.,p.12
The Church should exist for the people. Today congregations are turned into places of social gathering rather than spiritual gathering. The Church no longer caters for the poor, marginalised and disadvantaged. It is only concerned about the rich and powerful. Bishop Cosmos Moenga of the Lutheran Church in Botswana describes the situation in Botswana as worrying. He says that most Church leaders in Botswana have jumped onto the bandwagon of politics. They accept opinions mooted by politicians. He argues that church leaders are only happy to be invited by politicians to state functions or special gatherings. For these church leaders, it is a privilege to be at these functions and bless the occasion, or even pray at occasions where morality is absent. This is a sign that the Church needs spiritual revival.

There are widespread reports of corruption in some churches in the region. Church leaders enrich themselves with the theology of a pie in the sky. There are frequent allegations of abuse of office and misappropriation of church funds in many churches. A Pentecostal church in Botswana reported that its pastor had centralised everything on himself.

_He is the chairman of both the local and national boards of the church. While these boards have secretaries and treasurers, their role is nominal. The pastor has not only played the role of chair but has also taken the roles of secretary and treasurer. He sets the agenda, includes his cronies as members of the boards, and makes it appear as if these boards actually deliberate and take decisions on church affairs. He has not submitted any returns that show how the church is managed to the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs._

These are very common stories about churches in the region. If the Church is serious, she should avoid these kinds of stories. There are issues of fraud, favouritism, nepotism and

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249 Moenga 2005,44
250 Mmegi News Paper (Staff writer) 12th January 2007, page,4
lack of financial accountability in churches. The Church should seriously address issues of corruption and poor leadership. There is no way the Church can win the respect of the larger society while these negative occurrences still persist. The state will never listen to the Church’s prophetic voice if such corruption happens within the Church.

One day Jesus went to the temple to worship. He found people selling, gambling and battering in the Church.

Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of thieves.’ (Mathew 21:12-13)

This message is relevant to some churches today in Southern Africa. There is need for the Church to wage a campaign against corruption within congregations and other church institutions. The Church should focus on how to develop the country and help maintain peace and tranquility in the region. That is the gospel message to those church leaders who lead the church with evil motives. Church leaders should learn from Nyerere’s view on what the task of the Church should be.

The Church should accept that the development of the people means rebellion. At a given and decisive point in history human beings decide to act against those conditions which restrict their freedom as human beings. I am suggesting that, unless we participate actively in the rebellion against those social structures and economic organizations which condemn human beings to poverty, humiliation and degradation, then the Church will become irrelevant to people and the Christian religion will degenerate into a set of superstitions by the fearful.  

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251 Nyerere 1974, 22
This means that theology should come out with a relevant approach to address social illness. The Church becomes irrelevant if her teachings are not adequate to address the challenges of the contemporary life. The Church needs a theology which can change people’s minds and their approaches to life.

Unless the Church, its members and its organizations, express
God’s love for man by involvement and leadership in constructive
Protest against the present conditions of man, then it will
become identified with injustice and persecution. If this happens,
it will die and humanity deserves to die because it will then serve no
purpose comprehensible to modern man.252

Even though Nyerere made these observations a long time back, they are still relevant to the contemporary society of today. It is important for the Church to concentrate in the reconstruction of a theology that will be contextual. The construction of theology can only be effective if the Church takes very seriously the human consciousness. This takes us back to the concept of God, humanity and the physical organic environment. Nyerere calls on the Church to engage in development work. For him the physical environment is most important to praise God. God’s love is the most crucial thing. The task of the Church today is to reconstruct theology in the frame-work of God’s providence.

The issue of leadership is important for a country’s development. The leadership model of kingship can cause instability if not handled very well. In the African traditional religion, leadership is hereditary. It is passed from father to son. Kings and traditional leaders are born as leaders. This means that, people are born as leaders, but not trained. Perhaps this African system of leadership served its purpose in the past. The reality is that it is no longer adequate today. Today African traditional leaders and politicians are mixing the traditional way of leadership with the modern leadership style. This causes a great deal of confusion for the people.

252 Nyerere 1974,22
The traditional leadership which is transfared from one family member to another can no longer serve today’s society which demands that those in leadership should possess certain academic training. Leadership is a skill which should be developed all the time. In the secular society, leaders are appointed, while others are voted into power. Some people get into leadership through qualifications, skills and experience. The debate today is whether African traditional leadership can work in today’s society. The main problem is not only lack of training in African traditions, but the belief that people are born as leaders. In an interview with Chief Letshoo, he argued that:

*chieftainship is not like any position which you young people think it is. It is a position which is sacred in our cultural belief. It is a position whereby divine power is bestowed upon the unborn by ancestral spirits. Therefore a chief is born and not chosen. The chieftainship is within blood. Those who claim to be chiefs and kings while they are not from the royal family will never succeed in leading the tribe. They are not supported by the Supreme Being and ancestors.*

The big problem today is that the similar terminology is used in politics. Chiefs and kings have joined politics today. For instance, the president of Botswana is the Paramount Chief of Bangwato tribe. This causes problem in some societies. The emphasis in African traditional religion is that a king is a king because of his people. Kings and chiefs are highly respected by their subjects and people at large. It will be very difficult for a tribe to vote against their own chief or king in a political election. There are still people who believe that going against their chief’s wishes may make ancestors to turn against such a person.

In the modern world chiefs are also citizens and they are free to stand for elections. Many people are sometimes caught in a dilemma whether or not to vote for their chief even though he/she is not in their favoured political party. Of course, people are forced to vote for their chiefs and kings. The main problem is the people’s consciousness when such a

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253 Letshoo in an interview with on January 2006
situation confronts them. They cannot divulge that feeling to the public. In an interview with a member of the opposition party whose chief belongs to the ruling party and wants his name not to be revealed, he said that:

...whenever I go to the voting station I start to think whether I feel embarrassed. I do not want to vote against my chief. How can our chief lose elections? It is not good. My problem is that even if I differ with him in politics... it will be a shame for our tribe if our chief loses elections. Our ancestors will be annoyed. ²⁵⁴

The traditions also put people in a dilemma. Culture and traditions deprive people of their political rights. Theology must elaborate the concept of the continuum of genes or memes. Van Niekerk understands meme as a cultural unit of replication, passed between individuals and across generations. It covers the human, social and cultural spectrum from cultural and social codes and modes to songs and recipes. ²⁵⁵ Africans believe that they are bound together by the meme as a family, tribe and clan. Therefore, this means that a family of traditional leaders will continue producing traditional leaders, the same applies to other families. These genes are a natural building block. They build the family or the tribe. There are no doubts that the concept of meme in Africa creates a problem in modern society especially on the issue of leadership today. The norm is that leaders are born.

In Africa today, supporters of certain leaders do not see the wrong-doings of their leaders. This is very common in politics, community organisations and churches. The African understanding of leadership can still be useful today. In the past, if the chief was perceived not to be running things accordingly, a team from the village would be sent to discuss with the chief. Those charged with such a responsibility would be the chief’s uncles. Uncles, elders and headmen were advisors of the king. Therefore it was difficult for the king to be a dictator. Of course dictatorship was there, at least there were some

²⁵⁴ Interviewed with Ndobane on March 2006 in Serowe, Botswana
²⁵⁵ Van Niekerk 2006,10 (TIC310-C106)
limits which were used to control the chiefs. Leadership was understood to be a gift given by the Supreme Being to human beings. Chiefs and traditional doctors were understood to lead the community on behalf of the Supreme God.256

Leadership today could be taken as a gift from God. It should be associated with religion. There should be a connection between religion and leadership. This is what modern leadership can learn from African traditional religion. Politicians and leaders of community organisations should put people’s interests ahead of their own. It is also important for traditional leaders to go for leadership skills development courses which are provided by many public education institutions. That will improve their working conditions, develop the community and help them to face challenges of the modern society.

Today’s society is very dynamic. It needs a leader who is well informed and literate. In order to combat corruption in Southern Africa nobody should be above the law and justice. The judicial system should be independent. If law and justice are respected by politicians, community leaders, church leaders, and non governmental organisations, countries will have peace.

The Church and State should have leadership with vision. The majority of people go to church and many also belong to political parties. Therefore, church leaders and political leaders lead millions of people. These people belong to all sectors of the society. This is a huge task for those in leadership. It is a challenge that requires leaders that are equipped with vast skills to deal with people of different groups. It is advisable for the Church to emphasise the need to study theology. The Church should have well trained leaders in order to deal with issues concerning the society at large. These days, people in congregations are well-educated. Church leaders should know that today’s congregations differ from those of the past that agreed with whatever the pastor said. Today the congregations are bound to question issues. Moenga argues that little knowledge can be a problem.

256Nkomazana 2005,67,68
As the saying goes, little knowledge is dangerous.

In theology the little knowledge is even more dangerous because whatever little knowledge you have, when you give it people accept it as a divine statement.257

This should not only apply to Church leaders but also to everybody in society who is in leadership. A leader should direct the people they are leading. The Church believes that leaders should seek guidance from God such that they can lead people according to God’s will. Moenga argues that a visionary political leadership is needed in order to have solution to the economic crisis in Botswana.

True leaders give directions. That is the task of visionary leaders. President told us not to spend our hard earned money on luxury things. In my view this is a good advice from a visionary leader.258

We need visionary political leaders and visionary Church leaders in our region. It is the responsibility of the State and the Church to produce such kind of leaders. There is need for leaders who can groom young generations in order to take over after their retirement. There is no need for a leader who will not relinquish his/her duties when it is due.

The leadership style in Southern Africa should be viewed as the ultimately of creating way for people to contribute in making something extraordinary about their own lives. Leadership should be the process of knowing the questions of the time that are asked by people and be in a position to journey with them to find answers. Theology have the task to see to it that leadership issues in societies are well inspired by divine powers and servant hood. There is a calling for theology to contribute in developing good leaders in the region. Theology could that by participating and engaging on development of

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257 Moenga 2005, 44
258 Moenga 2007, 11
school curriculums, programmes, Christian education and religious education at early childhood education and educational material on leadership. That shall help Africa to have leaders who are coercive, visionary, affiliative, democratic and pacesetting and coaching.

3.5.3 The Silent Death of the Prophetic Voice

The core mission of the Church is to spread good news to the whole world and administer to the poor and the needy. The Church has a mandate to be the voice of the voiceless. Throughout the history of humankind, the Church has performed these roles successfully. During the apartheid in South Africa and Namibia the Church was the voice of those who suffered the pain and brutality of oppression. This role of the Church has been prominent in the whole of Africa. The Church has been one of the major institutions in Southern Africa which supported the liberation movement during the struggle. For instance, the South African Council of Churches had first hand information about the scores of South Africans who fled the country, either for fear for their safety and the security of their families and/or to contribute to the struggle from outside South Africa’s boarders.

The Church today is faced with a huge challenge as it looks like her prophetic voice is declining slowly. This became clearer immediately after the independence of all countries in Southern Africa, lately South Africa in 1994. The decline of the prophetic voice of the Church was due to lack of proper theology to address challenges of the post-liberation era. Today, the Church does not seem to know where and how to regain the prophetic role.

The Church has put herself between the horns of a buffalo. It is difficult for the Church to challenge the governments which she helped put into power. She is also suffering financially, mainly as a result of the drying up of donor funding. What is happening today that some within the Church put the blame on financial cut-back by donors, which has led to massive programme shrinkages, staff lay-offs and the flight of quality staff. Others

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259 Makue 1990,6
lament the inability of local churches, several hundred years into their lives, to take financial ownership and responsibility of themselves. Yet others blame the financial recession in the North and lack of financial commitment in the South and that this is the problem of theological bankruptcy.\textsuperscript{260} To make matters worse, the so-called main-line churches are gradually losing members to the new Pentecostal churches. This is the result of lack of relevant theology in the post-liberation era. The Church’s voice, which was adhered to during the liberation struggle, is not heard today. The question is, ‘why is the Church silent today? The Church has neither theological grammar nor liturgy to deal with the impact of social ills in communities. Of course, there is an excuse that the Church does not have enough resources to deal with the current challenges. The resources do not hinder the prophetic voice of the Church.

The Church and State have to find a common theological ground to face social ills facing Southern Africa. Today the institutions seem to be operating parallel. However attempts to bring together these institutions seems to be difficult. A theology of reconstruction was created to deal with this relationship but ended without success. That theology was known as theology of democracy, later becoming theology of public life, and today is known as public theology. This theology aims to find common ground between the State and the Church. It encourages the solidarity of the Church with the State. The major problem with this theology is that it does not adequately define key issues like the parameter of cooperation. Tinyeko Maluleke challenged this move by pointing out that it was not explained how church leadership-turned-state functionaries would be critical in the solidarity with the State and when. He warned that under the safe umbrella of the confusion spread by the notion of critical solidarity, a blurring of the roles and missions occurred. Suddenly the ecumenical church was to be found represented in all sorts of strange places, such as parliament, and political parties etc.\textsuperscript{261} This move drives the church away from her prophetic voice. The Church is runs the risk of being held hostage by the State. The Church must not make suicidal compromises in this solidarity and she should draw clear parameters.

\textsuperscript{260} Maluleke 1990,9
\textsuperscript{261} Maluleke 1990,13
The decline of the prophetic voice of the Church has been associated with the failure of the Church to be contextual or overtaken in terms of progressive thinking by the society in general and by government in particular.\textsuperscript{262} This view is held by those who got the opportunity to taste power in government. Those who were vocal against the apartheid regime were given positions by their ruling parties after liberation. They are silent today and enjoying the fruits of liberation struggle. The prophetic voice of the Church should be revived. The public theology should be expanded in order to meet challenges in Southern Africa.

\textit{The problem we have is of a church whose feet are cold and whose voice is incoherent in the face of a powerful network of new forces at the helm of which is a government using its novel authority of legitimacy to relativise the legitimacy of all rival institutions perceived as threats.}\textsuperscript{263}

3.5.4. \textbf{Theology of A luta Continua}

The concept of \textit{a luta continua} that was used during liberation struggle in Africa is still very important today. Many people have tended to sit back and relax after liberation and democratisation arrived in African countries. They started to be less productive; instead they wanted the newly elected governments to provide them with everything. Africans were well known as people with a spirit of self reliance. Of course, during the liberation armed struggle black people were promised many things by their leaders. These included free education, land, financial aid, and economic empowerment etc. Nevertheless all these things did not happen after the first decade of political independence and self-governance. Naturally, the people became impatient.

They started to demand service delivery by protests on the streets. In some countries it resulted in coups and civil wars. Around the year 2000, ex-combatants marched from Northern Namibia to Windhoek to protest against poor service delivery by the SWAPO.

\textsuperscript{262} Ibid., p.12
\textsuperscript{263} Ibid., p.13
government. In South Africa, there is a lot of protests against the government for poor service delivery. In Botswana the civil society has been protesting about poor wages and an increase in the cost of living.

The mistake that was made during the struggle was that people were promised ‘a pie in the sky’ life after liberation. Of course, it was the way of motivating those who were in the forefront, but after liberation the people could have been advised to take the responsibility in developing their countries. In some countries like Botswana the generation of 1960s contributed a lot towards nation building. Africans are hard working and have a culture of sharing. This was demonstrated by the fighting solidarity which happened during the liberation struggle. This African solidarity seems to have lost its meaning to the modern Africa. That is reflected in the daily corruption, tribalism, smuggling of mineral resources attained through bloodshed and discrimination happening among Africans. One can argue that these crises are caused by poor governance of the inexperienced leadership. This caused fellow comrades to be impatient.

The Church should make sure that the struggle continues until humankind and God’s creation are liberated from evil forces of this world. Justice and dignity for the poor remain the yardstick for any system and the Church has to act according to God’s will and the example set by Jesus on how to bring about justice and dignity for God’s creation and within the human society. (Matthew 25:45) In the process of constructing theology we should bear in mind that

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\ldots \text{dignity and justice are all embracing and inclusive concepts covering the fullness and completeness of life, hope and compassion, sharing of resources, mutual support, respect, equality and protection of human freedoms.}^{264}\]

Africa should fight for peace. Peace plays an important role in the process of re-building the nation. Peace is the entry point through which we can promote the fullness of life promised to us by the Gospel.

\[^{264}\]Kameeta 2007,15
There is no peace where people are hungry. There is no peace where people cannot access medical treatment. There is no peace where people cannot access education. There is no peace where people do not have the freedom to speak and to choose their leaders without any manipulation.  

There are a lot of challenges in Southern Africa. These challenges should be addressed by the Church and the people. God wants people to live a good life. God sent Jesus Christ to restore human community and brotherhood which had been destroyed by sin. God had intended that people should fellowship together without destroying their distinctiveness and cultural otherness. The Church should continue to be the voice of the voiceless.

The struggle of addressing people’s concern must not stop because that would negatively affect humanity. Desmond Tutu says that he will continue talking for the people just like during the time of apartheid.

I said that in 1982 and would say the same thing today in relation to the work and witness of the Church of Jesus Christ. Apartheid may have disappeared as we prophesied, but there remain many challenges that divide God’s people in this nation and the world.  

The Church and theologians should take note of Tutu’s words of and continue to speak for those who are marginalised, oppressed, the poor, disadvantaged and disabled. It is the responsibility of the Church to lead non-governmental organisations, civil society and communities to fight against political, social and economic injustice.

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265 Karamaga 2008, 2
266 Tutu 1990, 5
3.6 Conclusion

The reconstruction of theology in Southern Africa needs the participation of everybody. That include pastors, congregations, church leaders, the community and politicians. It is a process that encompasses God, humanity and the environment. Theology needs other social sciences in order to deal with issues using wholesome approach. The wholesome approach is the best approach as opposed to dualism because it involves all people in the society. The process is not selective like dualism but inclusive. Therefore, in order for the wholesome approach to be relevant in the region, theology should engage in dialogue with other social sciences, such as sociology, social psychology, political science and economics. These sciences will provide necessary tools and resources to analyse the context within which the Church is called to proclaim the Gospel. This does not mean that dualistic approach is irrelevant. It has a role to play in society. Nevertheless it is not as effective as the wholesome approach.

The struggle to continue developing a theology that can address the people’s daily needs should not stop. Those include the economic development, justice and the cultural change in the Church mission work. As Desmond Tutu, points out people still go to bed hungry while others wallow in the riches created through greed and status; people remain in shackles of poverty and joblessness; many are frustrated at the lack of fulfillment of the promises of housing, education and health care. The poor still weep quietly while the rich and powerful proclaim their entitlement to wealth. What still stands before God’s Church is the challenge to proclaim and live out in daring actions of faith a life changing gospel for all of God’s people. Therefore, in resisting that challenge and ignoring its demands we bring shame to the name of God and God’s Church. God will still remain a liberating God for the poor and the oppressed. The task for the Church is not complete until all God’s people know liberation and freedom from oppression as a practical experience in

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De Gruchy 1994,11
their lives.\textsuperscript{268} The next chapter shall discuss those practical issues which human beings experience in a group or as individuals and see how theology can directly deal with them.

\textbf{CHAPTER FOUR}

\section{3. \textsc{Theology Directed To The Individual And The Group}}

Doing Theology in context is a methodology which needs team work. This method is very useful in today’s context. The method creates an environment where theologians and the laity can meet and discuss issues affecting them. Theologians have the capability to critically analyse the experiences, challenges and faiths of the people. Previously in traditional African setting, individualism was discouraged. People were bonded together as a community by culture, traditions and religion. Faith brings people of different cultures and traditions together. Faith is described as a response, responsibility, obedience, surrender, or life based on trust in God’s Word and divine strength.\textsuperscript{269} This description can define both individual and group understanding of religion and theology. Theology as the critical reflection on how a group of people or individuals live out their faith is also concerned with their social, political, religious and economic lives. The research will find out how the political, socio-economic and religious issues affect humanity in today’s contexts. A careful observance on whether theology tackles them from group or individual approach will be made.

\subsection{4.1 Relevance of Theology in the Society}

The Church has had a close relationship with the State for centuries. This relationship was initiated by the Church in order to pursue its own agenda. Since the time of Constantine, the Church has enjoyed this relationship and mission work was spread all over the world. The union of the Church and the State created by Charlemagne around the year 742 and 814 made the Church a close ally of the State. Even though this position brought to the Church many advantages and opportunities to exercise influence, the

\textsuperscript{268}Tutu1990,5
\textsuperscript{269}Van Niekerk 1980,38
major problem for the Church was that she was bound and compelled to adapt to the objectives of the State. Theology started to face some difficulties because the State’s objectives were not necessarily in line with the core aim for the existence of the Church. Therefore, theology found itself not addressing the issues of the community. The alliances between the Church and the State started to break down throughout the centuries and this compelled the Church to look for ways of partnership with other stakeholders. This divorce did not only affect Europe, South and North America only but also affected the life of all the churches in the world.

Ahonen has observed that in this alliance, the churches have been influenced by power politics and have adopted an erroneous notion of Imperial Christianity in which everywhere aspires to majority status and position of power through numerical growth.

In many countries the church has become so identified with the prevailing culture and political system that its own unique message cannot be distinguished from the rest of society; rather, the church is a continuation of the rest of society.

The Church is part of the society. It exists because of the society. Theology is relevant when it addresses the issues of the society in a holistic way. Of course, relevance is used frequently especially in contextual theologies. Relevance does not mean changing the message of the gospel in order to suit a particular situation. It means making the gospel message speak to the people directly. Theology should not seek to comply with the situation; instead, it should address it seriously. Therefore a:

relevant theology must be a theology that is presenting Christ in a meaningful way to the people in our situation and it must prove its relevance.
What is very important in theology is how Christ is presented to people. A theology that does not deal with issues from the people’s perspective can be taken as irrelevant. The relevance of theology is how it deals with people’s afflictions. Theology becomes relevant if it makes changes in people’s lives. It should address challenges the community encounters on daily basis. Theology should tackle those challenges at individual level and at community level.

Africans should re-discover what they lost during the colonial period. Perhaps if they were to revisit their traditional norms and values they could deal with current social, economic, and political problems. Those values include the concept of Ubutu or botho, raising up of children, veneration of ancestors, toteism, rain making, traditional medicinal knowledge, healing, medication, preservation of sacred trees, age regiments in the tribe (mephato), tribal leadership, division of labour within the groups in the tribe and knowledge on wild animals and vegetation. Africa is rich. It is rich with natural wisdom possessed by Africans. The continent still possesses raw material. Africans still practice their cultures and traditions, unlike in other continents. However one may ask whether Africa knows that she is wealthy. If she is aware of that, what is she doing to address the many problems that confront Africans? The only thing which is needed is for the continent to start to process her raw materials into finished goods and start to compete with the rest of the global village. Many people have hope that NEPAD and the African Union will work hard towards achieving economic stability and diversification, revival of social values and political reforms. Dr Segobye has observed that:

...we are still a donor continent. We donate ideas, raw materials, labour, manpower, food, everything. We are still donor countries. 274

This was a comment on the issue of trade barriers and movement of goods in Africa, which is a major hindrance to trade and development of the continent. Europe went as far

273 Becken 1973, 4
274 Segobye 2006, 9
as copying the Pan African ideals on trade. Today Europe is unified. Europeans can travel freely across the borders of the European Union. On the other hand, the African Union is still debating bilateral and economic policies for the continent. The African countries must put their differences aside and allow economic trade to function smoothly.

It is time for Africans in the region to attend to economic issues seriously as a group. Continued dependency on the West is a disease which needs to be healed. This dependency has put many countries in the region under a slavery of debts. It is reported that Sub-Saharan Africa owes about R135 billion to wealthy countries in the north. This is equal to 83% of everything it produces. The region should first deal with this dependency on the Western world. If such kind of practice continues, Africa’s economic development will remain just a dream. African debts will remain a hindrance to her economic development. The Jubilee 2000 campaign for cancellation of African debts was a positive initiative undertaken by Africans and other campaigners. That movement exposed the developed countries that refused the total cancellation of Africa’s debts. Pope John Paul II even asked how many more infants had to die in Africa because resources are being swallowed up in debt repayments.

The attempt by the united African countries to call for cancellation of debts showed that African countries can speak with one voice against injustice perpetrated on their people. There is no doubt that Africa’s external debt is a huge burden for the continent. People on the continent are suffering because of the debt. The claim by the developed countries that they are helping African countries to eradicate poverty is just a fabrication. Professor George Ayittey once observed that:

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\text{Africa’s economic performance has lagged persistently behind that of other Third World regions, despite receiving more than $300 billion in foreign aid since 1960. Crumbling infrastructure, senseless.}
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275 The Mail and Guardian, 4th November 1998, (Africa’s Debt Cow is Milked Dry). Johannesburg
276 Pope John Paul II, 2004,128
civil wars, political instability, high taxes, rampant inflation, runaway government expenditures, unstable currencies and high-level corruption have all conspired to stunt Africa’s economic growth and render the continent unattractive to foreign investors.277

The foreign investors are afraid of investing in the continent because of the above-mentioned crises. Many people are convinced that these problems are fueled by the western powers. There cannot be economic development in Africa without addressing problems like Africa’s debts. The core issues must be tackled first in order to clear the way forward. Those issues include the western infiltration of African governments, neo-colonialism and economic injustice committed against the developing countries. There is no point in investing a lot of money on infrastructure while it is known that subsequently it will be destroyed by civil wars, violence and political instability. The best description of Africa’s situation could be that:

Africa is left adrift at a time of economic crisis, perpetuating its sense of marginalization, frustration and anger over its seeming abandonment. The picture that emerged at the end of the 1980’s was one of increasing African peripheralization. The explanation for this phenomenon varied, but it included the end of the Cold War, the industrialized countries’ disillusionment with the economic and political performance of the African states, and the growing preoccupation of the developed countries with their own economic problems.278

There is no doubt that developed countries are also experiencing economic problems. This puts Africa at an even more disadvantaged position. The developed countries always

277 Ayittey 2004,127
278 Harbeson and Rothchild 2004,128
give themselves first priority on economic matters. Africans come second. When a crisis hits somewhere in the western world, African countries are bound to suffer as well, sometimes even more seriously than the affected countries. This is because in most cases the western countries would rather use Africa’s resources to solve their economic problems. Therefore, it is clear that Africa is actually dumping site of the world. The West will continue to force-feed Africa economic policies that are only meant to perpetuate the interests of the West. Africa’s weak position compels her to accept these policies, which puts her at a more disadvantaged position. Those policies include the current globalization programmes.

It is time for Africans to stop depending on the Western countries in the name of foreign aid. There is a proverb from West Africa that says; the mouth makes debts, but the arms pay. What should be done is to silence begging for foreign aid. The developed countries should not lend to Africa, but return Africa’s wealth to its rightful owners. It is a historical fact that developed countries have exploited Africa and other Third World countries to attain their current level of development. So it can be argued that Africa has no reason to repay her debt to the developed countries.

4.2 Economic Development

Southern Africa falls under the Third World countries. Many countries in the continent are developing. The word ‘development’ can be understood differently depending on the context it is defined. Some developed countries are using it to frustrate efforts for African Renaissance. Africans should be wary of those western countries that come to them with promises of “development aid”. Development has no worse enemy than war. Human security, good governance; equitable development and respect for human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. If war is the worst enemy of development, healthy and balanced development is the best form of conflict prevention.

Development is used by other nations for a wrong purpose. When they say ‘development’ they mean that they are in a mission for their own enrichment. This does not only mean infrastructural change, technology and wealth. It also means a change of human
perspectives about the world. Therefore, the human mind should be developed as well. Tangible developments cannot be useful if the human mind is not equipped to utilise them. In an interview with Rev William Sechele of the Lutheran Church of Botswana, he argued that,

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\textit{in order to develop a country you must first start with the people. For instance, how can you bring a computer to a traditional healer’s room without first teaching him how to use it? Illiteracy should be eradicated. Beautiful infrastructure can be built but people will vandalise it because they do not understand how to use it for the right purpose.}\]^{279}

The West’s concept of development is to open Africa’s market to the global village at the expense of the poor people who have no capital to partake in the capitalist system. These modern global economic policies create a kind of competition in which developing countries are at disadvantaged position. It is unfortunate that this has been done in the name of development.

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\textit{Development has meant the infusion of mostly foreign capital in order to increase the rate of exploitation of forests, soils, and agricultural potential in order to generate increased income including foreign exchange.}\]^{280}

This is a very wrong understanding of development, and it must be stopped immediately. Africans must stand up and stick to their own principles. However, it is unfortunate that all these are happening in African and Latin America continents only. The current economic situation in Africa should be handled as an urgent matter. Unfortunately, there is more talk than action. It is common for many international gatherings to pass resolutions on good governance, poverty eradication, and debt

\[279\text{ An interview with Rev William Sechele in 20th June 2007} \]
\[280\text{ Hall 2000, 51} \]
cancellation. The same resolutions are repeated daily by politicians in all countries in
the continent. One may say that it is a dream for Africa to be self-reliant. This dream
seems to be a nightmare because nothing is put on the ground to work towards realisation
of the dream. The English proverb that says action speaks louder than words should be
tried in this situation.

The economic situation in Africa keeps deteriorating despite the advocacy for economic
development and justice. Africa is then divided into two parts before the eyes of non-
Africans, as Jean-Samuel Toya claimed. Those parts are the useful part of Africa and
useless part. 281 The useful Africa is classified as the one that produces oil, gold, diamond
and forest resources. The useless Africa is the one which is plagued by poverty, misery,
sickness, hunger, and all other negative forces. This means that countries that are
considered useful by non Africans are those which are manipulated and turned into
satellites. 282 These countries are spoon-fed by the developed countries in return of raw
materials. While these countries are said to be independent and self governing, this is not
the reality on the ground. Their economies are still indirectly controlled by the non-
African countries. They dance to the tune of the Western countries.

Ngwa Ambe sees such a scenario as a devastating experience for African countries.

In some countries the mineral reserves have been mud
gagged and sold decades in advance thanks to the rising
debts. How can one imagine that a single loan span over
a period of thirty years and even more such that children
that are yet to be born will grow to inherit debts incurred
by their forefathers? Moreover, Africa has become fertile
ground for the IMF and World Bank and the so called
structural adjustment programmes proposed and implemented
by these financial institutions. These programmes have reduced
most countries to be worse than street beggars. 283

281 Toya 2004,35
282 Ambe 2008,27
283 Ibid.,p.27-28
Development is a war which should be tackled. It is the responsibility of every citizen to participate in this war. It should not only be fought by the ruling party in a specific country. It is a war which needs everybody on the African continent. It is a war which needs people’s contributions; even those who are in prisons and correctional services. This is a war that needs teamwork. Countries which belong to the useless Africa are those which resist foreign influence. Such countries are plagued by civil wars, corruption, and diseases. In most cases, these wars are fueled by non-African countries with the aim of ultimately gaining control over them. This scenario explains why for a lot of African countries, development will continue to rely on the so-called developed countries.

The Church should be equipped with intellectual tools to engage in advocacy and fully participate on economic matters. There is need for a continuous socio-theological analysis of economic processes that are challenges to most African countries. There is a need for the diversification of the economy in the region. In a paper at a Workshop on Intellectual Property Right and Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Dr Alinah Segobye said that;

...in Southern Africa, development agendas have focused on the reduction of poverty particularly for rural populations and the provision of stable governance institutions. In the search for avenues for increasing participation in development, some countries saw a niche in the emerging area of cultural heritage tourism as an avenue for enhancing community participation and diversification of production.284

The cultural heritage sites are economically beneficial and can improve the country’s economic potential. It is the responsibility of everybody to make sure that these sites are taken care of. Preserving culture does not only help to retain identity, but brings economic wealth as well.

This by and large included the production of crafts, engagement of culture in its various media such as music, art and the marketing of archaeological and historic resources. In some countries such as

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284 Segobye 2003,12
as Zimbabwe, there is potential gain from this avenue. We realized with the marketing of sites such as Great Zimbabwe, Victoria Falls and Nyanga district.\textsuperscript{285}

Today those potential avenues are not used properly. Some potential economic places do not serve at their best capacity due to the economic crisis as a result of political instability. It should now be Africa’s priority to unite and determine what should be done with the resources. Africans should not wait for Europeans to tell them how to govern their institutions. African states should be able make decisions on affairs of their governments. They should clearly indicate what they want and what they don’t want. If that happens, the western countries would no longer be able to impose their ideologies on African governments.

The role of theology is important because the concern here revolves around the cultural and heritage sites which are believed to play an important role in people’s faiths. There are Christian denominations which are not interested in African cultures and traditions. These places have been not given attention by Christian communities because they believe the message around them is unChristian and is misleading people. In her paper, Segobye made it clear that these places are God’s resting places. She continues to say that this is an area that still remains grey; the area of marketing cultural practices and places which in many cultures were and still remain sacred or of religious significance.\textsuperscript{286}

It is the task of theology to analyse issues which are economically beneficial to people but contradict people’s faith. It is important to involve the community in all aspects of economic development regardless of their faiths. The cultural and religious sites can enhance economies in the region. Manyanga argues that

\begin{quote}
...with some flexibility, the activities and involvement of the traditional groups can be put to good for
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{285} Ibid., p.12
\textsuperscript{286} Segobye 2003,16
The economic development also depends on skills training. In most countries in the region there is a major problem of unskilled manpower. The majority of the unskilled people belong to the black community. For instance; countries like Botswana, Lesotho, and Malawi have difficulties in this issue. There is lack of scientific expertise in some developing countries. These countries are compelled to import expertise for different skills from abroad. The region lacks expertise in the field of science, medicine, engineering and geology. There is also lack of skills in vocational fields of studies. These include art, building, hand craft etc. It is very difficult for a country to develop while those skills are lacking. Development always takes a long time. It is not that these countries in Southern Africa did not train their people in the above mentioned fields of studies.

Countries are spending money training people in the field of medicine, science and engineering. The problem is how to keep these professionals in service to the public after they complete their studies. In most cases those who study in Europe decide to work there. Those who come back to Africa after completing their studies decide to work for private organisations and companies instead of the public service. The argument is that governments like Botswana do not pay competitive salaries to the locals.

The problem of local training institutions in some countries in Southern Africa is the standard of education. This is a very difficult situation because the resources and infrastructures of training is not sufficient in institutions in countries like Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho Swaziland and Malawi. The main challenge is to improve the standard of training in local universities, vocational training centres, brigades, and technical colleges. That would enhance development in the region. The region needs skilled manpower. Of course what most of the governments have to deal with is to find ways of reducing migration of skilled manpower from Africa to Europe. This is not the task of the government alone. It is also the responsibility of the church and religious organisations to

\[287\text{ Manyanga1999,190}\]
teach people the importance of serving God and putting God as the first priority instead of themselves. This is a religious issue, even though it concerns money and labour.

Africans do not need experts from Europe to come and develop their countries. Instead they should try to keep local expertise from moving to Europe and America. There is a need to revive the spirit of patriotism in Africa. The sons and daughters of Africa should give their own mother continent first priority. That was the spirit during the liberation struggle. Unfortunately, this spirit is dying slowly. In an interview with Daniel Kgosiemang, a politician in Botswana, he argued that;

\begin{quote}
I cannot understand why our children do that to our government. The government sponsors them to study and they are refusing to pay back by serving their own mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers. That is terrible. Our children are out of order. They do not know where we come from as Africans. We need to put strong measures against such students.\textsuperscript{288}
\end{quote}

Economic development is a national issue. Everybody should be involved. It is the responsibility of non-governmental organisations, religious organisations and the community at large. All these organisations should participate as a group in developing their countries. Lack of team work and cooperation cannot lead the region anywhere on the development issue. Development is an economic, social, political and religious issue. All the stakeholders should be consulted about new economic policies and their implementation. In one speech, the former President of Namibia Sam Nujoma gives hope for the struggling region on the economic front by stating that;

\begin{quote}
…if we can establish an open, working democracy out of the ashes of war, we can also traverse the
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{288} Kgosiemang (political councilor) in an interview in April 2006 in Gaborone, Botswana
4.2.1 Eradication of Poverty

Poverty is one of the most used words in the world. The word has different meanings depending on who is defining it. Poverty is associated with economic and social conditions. It can be argued that one is poor if he/she lacks basic needs which could be material, economic, spiritual, intellectual, cultural, social, legal, and political. It is a human construct that creates and sustains a state of deprivation. That means Poverty is also associated with the inability to create wealth or denial to share the created wealth. Poverty can also be defined as a capability or the failure of basic capabilities to reach certain acceptable levels.

In order to talk about poverty from a well informed position, there should be a clear explanation of the word wealth. Wealth and poverty are words that go side by side though they explain opposite realities. Wealth can be defined as being the possession of a certain level of material, spiritual and as well as cultural commodities.

It is generally understood that wealth is the possession of great amount of property, money, riches etc. It is associated with material. In religious terms wealth may mean both material and spiritual possessions.

It is clear that during the last decades of the twentieth century there was a shocking and steady decline in the living conditions and livelihood of the peoples of Africa. It was also indicated that there was a gradual decline in volumes and returns on trading primary commodities which have been Africa’s economic mainstay since independence. The situation is compounded by neo-liberal economic policies, the scourge of HIV/AIDS and other diseases, violence and conflicts that have made life in Africa more precarious than ever.

In Romans 8:22, Paul talks about creation continuing to groan in bondage, waiting for its liberation. The root causes of massive threats to life, such as poverty, are above all the product of an unjust economic system defended and protected by political and military might. Today’s economic systems are a matter of life or death.

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289 Sam Nujoma, president of Namibia, speaking in Windhoek at a ceremony marking the country’s seventh anniversary of independence, 21 March 1997 (ANC Daily News Briefings, Namnet online service)
290 Munene 2005,2
291 McCullum and Otieno 2005,38
In the Accra Confession at the All Africa Council of Churches’ 8th Assembly, the statistics about poverty were alarming. We live in a scandalous world that denies God’s call to life for all.

The annual income of the richest 1% is equal to that of the poorest 57%, and 24,000 people die each day from poverty and malnutrition. The debt of the poor countries continues to increase despite paying back their original borrowing many times over. Resources-driven wars claim the lives of millions, while millions more die of preventable diseases. The HIV/AIDS global pandemic afflicts life in all parts of the world, affecting the poorest where generic drugs are not available. The majority of those in poverty are women and children and the number of people living in absolute poverty on less than one US Dollar per day continues to increase.292

The United Nation’s Millennium Development Goals put the eradication of poverty and hunger as the first goal. Poverty is one of the main factors in Africa which hinder economic growth and development. African countries are struggling to combat this phenomenon while developed countries benefit from this crisis in the form of debts. The shackles of colonialism have taken the form of debt, which grinds many countries of the South to livelihoods of abject poverty.293 There is no doubt that poverty is still a burning issue both on the continent and belatedly, in the North, especially among the eight wealthy industrialised nations that make up the G8.

George Kinoti states that;

...one out of every three Africans does not get enough to eat. A study covering the period 1988-1990 showed that some 168 million Africans were victims of chronic hunger. This was an increase of 40 million people in just one decade.

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292 The Accra Confession of 2004 Ghana
293 Ndungane 2002, 6
Tens of millions of African children suffer from malnutrition, which means retarded physical and mental development, disease, disability and death.²⁹⁴

He argues that two-thirds of the poorest forty (40) nations in the world are in Africa.²⁹⁵ There is no doubt that there is a direct relationship between poverty and health, as Kinoti observed. Therefore a disease means pain, inability to work and death.²⁹⁶ This situation has been very crucial in Africa. There are many poor people, beggars, handicapped people, homeless people, street children, refugees, thieves and prostitutes than anyone cares to count.²⁹⁷ Theology should come up with strategies to fight the war against poverty as it remains a major problem. It is one of the phenomena which challenge the African concept of Botho and togetherness.

Botswana has been considered very stable, especially in macroeconomics. The major problem the country is facing includes poverty compared to countries of similar economic stature. This is because of a narrow economic base, less opportunity for gainful employment, a poor endowment of agro resources, a small and a sparsely distributed population of 1.7 million in 2001. The result of population size and distribution is a small and fragmented internal market. These attributes translate into limited capacity for sustainable employment creation and poverty reduction. The Botswana Millennium Development Goals Status report of 2004 says that,

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\text{in 1993, an estimated 47\% of the population lived below poverty datum line of approximately P100 per person per month in 1997 prices, down 12 percentage points from 59\% in 1985. A 2001 report estimate, suggests that the rate of poverty reduction that was obtained between 1985 and 1993 of the national headcount.}
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²⁹⁴ Kinoti 1994,15-17
²⁹⁵ Ibid.,p.16
²⁹⁶ Ibid.,p.17
²⁹⁷ Donovan 2000,44
poverty ratio would have fallen to 36.7% in 2002. Over half of the rural population was classified “poor” in 1994 compared to 46 percent in urban villages and 27 percent in towns and cities. In 1993 50% of female-headed households were poor compared to 46% for male-headed households, respectively down from 60% and 58% in 1985.298

Countries in Southern Africa are facing similar problem of poverty. The eradication or reduction of poverty is an urgent item. There are many issues which need to be addressed in order to accomplish the mission of poverty elimination. These include unemployment, unskilled labour, laziness, and unfair allocation of resources. There is lack of sufficient economic policies that can help countries to deal with their economic problems. The problem is that everyone talks about the eradication of poverty. It is easy to talk about eradicating poverty but the main problem is how to achieve that. A lot of methods have been tried but nothing has happened in some countries in the region. If observed carefully, it will be realised that the problem has been lack of consultation with all stakeholders. This hinders development in Southern Africa. Development is an exercise which needs the input of everybody.

The first president of the Republic of Botswana, Sir Seretse Khama, once said that;

...but in modern conditions when everyone does not have equal resources on which to base his efforts to improve his lot, we must be aware of assuming that everyone who is poor is poor because he is lazy. A lean cow cannot climb out of the mud, but a good cattleman does not leave it to perish, above all we have to guard against the greatest threat of all to our future welfare; a society divided between extremes of wealth and poverty.299


Laziness is a disease that also needs to be dealt with. If people are poor, but not lazy that is better. In most cases poverty is caused by laziness and lack of creativity. The former President of Zambia Dr Keneth Kaunda once observed that;

*if by next year all the five million Zambians choose to be lazy as they are now, I would willingly step down as president because I don’t want to lead people with lazy bones.*

Africans are hard working people. It seems that laziness is a problem to our economy, especially with today’s generation. After the liberation struggle and independence of many countries, laziness increased. That consequently affected the economy. It is not only the economy that is affected but also the social life of the community. This led to an increase in unemployment, crime and illness. All these are caused by laziness and idleness. The problem is that idleness leads to relaxation, sooner or later bringing about ideological and material corruption. Corruption of course is accompanied by lack of discipline, anarchy, chaos and defeat.

On the other hand, laziness is caused by poor governance. People become lazy if they are not involved in the system of governance. People tend to lose trust in the leadership if there is unequal share of resources. They cannot continue labouring hard and yet remain poor. People should be motivated to participate in development activities and share natural resources. Therefore laziness can be a disease of the mind. The mindset of the people can be changed. Another issue is that people become lazy because of the structures and policies which are established by governments and the international organisations. There are economic policies that may discourage people from labouring hard. For instance, people work hard to dig minerals from underground and then the buyer is the one who determines the price.

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300 Kaunda 2004,233
It is also important to highlight at this juncture that spoon feeding of people also encourages laziness. In 1980s the Botswana government started a farming aid programme. The programme used to hire tractors for cultivation of fields, providing seeds for planting, pesticides for the crops and removal of weeds in fields. Everything was free. People started cultivating their fields and then stayed at home without taking care of crops. In an interview with Chief Letshoo on the subject, he was furious that this spoon-feeding programme encourages laziness.

_The government must stop this kind of programme because it is just wasting resources and money. There are other programmes that may benefit people. Batswana don’t want to work. They want to be provided with everything free. That is not how things should be. During our time, people worked hard. We never depended on the government. However, young people are the worst ones. They spend most of their time in bars and streets. They should be disciplined._

The issue of poor economic performance is dynamic. It is not possible to hold only one sector of the economy responsible. The performance of the economy is team work by all forces of life. These forces of life include governance, society, market, resources, politics and the people. Laziness alone cannot be blamed for causing people to contribute to the decline of the economic sector. There are other issues which need to be dealt with. The oppression of humanity contributes a lot in the decline of the economy. People should be liberated mentally, psychologically and physically. It is a fact that when people are subjected to any form of oppression they adopt the attitude of a slave or a rebel. For instance, the rise in the cost of living, low wages and poor working conditions can compromise people’s living standards. This leads to the inevitable discussion on the demarcations of groups, i.e. the slave and the master.

_The slave works for the master not because the one is_

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301 Letshoo in an interview on the 20th September 2007 in Mogobane
willing to serve, but because the one is compelled to do so. As such, the slave may work slowly and this could be mistaken for laziness; also, for fear of not being caught in deliberate slow-down, the slave appears stupid by understanding only the immediate clear orders. Still worse, depressed due to lack of respect emanating from a lack of respect by others, the slave could develop a reputation for being dirty. 302

Therefore people should not be blamed for the poor performance of the economy. Instead, an inquiry should be made in order to understand the whole situation. It cannot be claimed that all countries in the region are doing badly economically. According to the World Bank Institute report on data resource of governance, Botswana is placed at the top followed by Mauritius, Cape Verde Namibia and South Africa.303 Good governance has contributed a lot in many economies in the region. According to the World Bank Institute Director of Global Governance, Daniel Kaufmann, many countries in Africa are not doing well in terms of governance and in terms of controlling corruption.

But there are shining stars, which have been doing well and increasingly over the past decade.
And it shows in the case of Ghana,
Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Senegal and others.304

It is advisable that other countries in the region learn from those countries which have achieved a lot during the last decades. That could be a good lesson to some greedy and corrupt leaders who want to centralise power on them. Good governance is a solution to the economic crisis and political instability. Corrupt leadership scares investors from the country. Investors are the ones who can invest in big projects and employ many locals. That could help in the reduction of poverty levels in many countries in the region.

302 Ambe 2008,25-26
303 The Voice Newspaper, October 2006, page 4
304 The Voice Newspaper, October page, 4
It is time to help people to be filled with the spirit of self-reliance. This is a spirit which motivates people to be creative. People should not only think that the state will provide employment and free food for the destitute. People should always think of how they can create self-employment in their areas. The people should be well equipped with manual skills to be able to utilise the resources around them. For the state to equip the poor with education and skills will be the best solution to many issues which are the consequences of poverty. To empower the poor and the marginalised people is to combat both petty crime as well as organised crime at the same time.

It has been argued that lack of income for the unemployed people in the Republic of Namibia makes the situation worse just like in many countries in Southern Africa. Churches are proposing a basic income grant. They are arguing that the cost of a Basic Income Grant in Namibia would work out to 2.2 to 3.8 percent of Namibia’s Gross National Product and would therefore remain within tolerable dimensions. The argument put as follows;

*This means the grant can be paid out to all Namibians.*
*The consequences for the economy would be positive,*
*with poverty no longer needing to be financed and*
*the poor would be able to make use of their economic*
*(buying) power again. If each person were to receive*
*N$100 per month then a family of five would receive*
*N$500 for their day to day lives, which would*
*be a solid foundation from which to seek further*
*income opportunities.*

The poverty eradication exercise is not the task of States alone. It is the task of religious organisations, non-governmental organisations, the society as well as the rich and the poor. The consequences of poverty affect everyone one way or the other. Everybody needs come together and join the war against poverty. There is no doubt that poverty is a disease which can be prevented. The prevention lies with individuals, organisations and

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305 Sandner 2002,5
governments. The problem is that in most cases, instead of these groups coming together to combat social ills in the society, they choose to attack each other. This will never lead to anywhere. We spend more time in such debates without coming out with strategies of solving the problem. It is again the task of theology to engage community organisations into dialogue on issues affecting the society e.g. poverty.

Theology should critically analyse the different approaches of these groups and come up with appropriate methods of dealing with the matter. Theology guides the State, civil society, religious organisations and other organisations. A relevant theology should not only be relevant to the religious organisations, but also to the governments and those who control the wealth of countries. Therefore we should have a theology which deals with economic issues. There is need for a theology which will tackle poverty and economic development from different perspectives. People should be encouraged to work hard wherever they are. Laziness should be discouraged from pulpits through bible studies, as well as revival gatherings, in schools and working areas. It is a disease which needs to be prevented. An African hymn from Malawi, goes as follows:

Lazybones, let’s go to the farm.
Sorry, I’ve got a headache
Lazybones, let’s go pounding grain
Sorry, my leg isn’t right
Lazy bones, let’s go fetch firewood
Sorry, my hands are hurting
Lazy bones, come and have some food
Hold on, let me wash my hands!

The traditional churches addressed poverty from diaconical service approach. The Church only concentrated on service to the poor. She provided food, clothes and medicine them. The Church did not go deeper in finding out how she can address the issue of poverty. Bishop Zephania Kameeta quotes Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador who once said:
...when I give bread to the poor, they call me a saint, but when I ask, why are they poor, they call me a communist.\textsuperscript{306}

The Church did not want to go deeper and ask those questions because she did not want to be associated with communists. The assassination of Oscar Romero could be linked to such questions as above. The Church’s prophetic voice should address economic policies which affect the poor and create poverty within societies. The Church cannot afford to be silent on such issues. It is time for churches in the region to revisit their contribution in the fight against poverty. Those churches which concentrated on the diaconal service approach only, should now consider other ways of dealing with poverty. Those churches include Main-line churches and Pentecostal churches. The Church needs strategic planning to create development projects in the community. Dealing with poverty is a difficult task that needs clear strategies to enable the development work to achieve its goal in a set period of time.

The Church should make proper consultation with other stakeholders on the matters surrounding poverty. The Church cannot just be an island and try to deal with these issues alone. The observation made by Bishop Kameeta on what should be the role of the Church in Namibia is relevant.

\textit{Namibia needs a Church that is the conscience of the Government, political leaders and the business sector, and that fights for the empowerment of the weak... a Church which will, in a positive and constructive way in critical solidarity, cooperate with the Government and private business in the process of nation building.\textsuperscript{307}}

The Church was given a huge task of caring for the earth. It is the responsibility of the Church to ensure that governments and organisations working hand in hand in this task of

\textsuperscript{306}Kameeta 2004,5
\textsuperscript{307}Kameeta 2002,5
subduing the earth. There is no way the Church can leave the politicians and business people to rule the earth alone. Nation-building is a process which needs the Church to play a significant role.

*It needs a Church which will endeavour always to read the signs of the times correctly, and face the demands and challenges of the new millennium and tell those in political or business power, in praise or admonition, without apologizing to anybody. So says the Lord to Namibia.*  

The eradication of poverty in the region should be taken seriously. In Namibia churches and nongovernmental organisations initiated a programme known as Basic Income Grant for Namibia as an attempt to eradicate poverty. All nongovernmental organisations in Namibia committed themselves to working together with all stakeholders to make the Basic Income Grant a reality. This was based on the understanding that:

...*every Namibian should receive a Basic Income Grant until she or he becomes eligible for a government pension at 60 years. The level of the Basic Income Grant should be not less than N$100.00 per person per month. The Basic Income Grant should be an unconditional grant to every Namibian. The costs for the Basic Income Grant should be recovered through a combination of progressively designed tax reforms.*

The idea here is to make sure that people who are disadvantaged should be given at least N$ 100.00 each every month. One can ask whether this practice will again encourage dependency. In his response on the issue, Bishop Kameeta said that a Basic Income Grant

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308 *Ibid., p. 5*

309 *Haarman C and Haarman D 2005, 3*
will still need to change the system whereby a huge amount is charged on a basic necessity like water. It was anticipated that a Basic Income Grant would prevent dependency that is created by abject poverty, and give meaningful financial security to the majority of people, enabling many for the first time in their lives to partake in the economy.\textsuperscript{310} Therefore, Basic Income Grant was envisaged as part of the fight against poverty, and reduces dependency created by the various and deadly faces of poverty.

It is important that everybody is involved in initiatives to eradicate poverty. This goes together with Kobia’s sentiments that for Africans, the goal should be to eradicate poverty because this goal is noble; it is the right course to chart and pursue and it is possible.\textsuperscript{311} The main challenge facing the region is how to organise the economy to attain sustainable and inclusive development. This is a pressing issue, and it can be realised if the private sector, governments and non profit organisations join hands in combating poverty.

Unfortunately, it appears poverty will remain a major problem for people in Africa. This will continue until the current world economic order imposed by global capitalism and any other economic system, including absolute planned economies, which defy God’s covenant are discouraged and abolished. These policies exclude the poor, the vulnerable and the whole of creation from celebrating the fullness of life. It is important for the international community to see to it that corruption, greed and economic injustice be stopped. They are the perpetuators of poverty. The society should be involved in the sharing of natural resources. Poverty is evil. A theology that claims that God is only for the rich and that poverty is a fault of the poor has no biblical basis. Such a theology should be discouraged in the society.

The God of the Jews, Yhaweh, was concerned about poverty and the situation of the weak and the marginalized (Exodus 3:7; 4:31; Deuteronomy 26:7). It is clear in these texts that those whose natural rights were taken away survived miserably. They had no

\textsuperscript{310}Kameeta 2005,5  
\textsuperscript{311}Kobia 2003,8
right to salary and to credit. The misery was at once economic, social and physical. Of course the Torah has a considerable number of laws to protect them. (Exodus 20:22-23,12). Oppression is an affront on God the creator. God’s prophets defended the poor and marginalised. They attacked the oppressors and the rich.(Amos 2:6-8; Esther 11:4-5). These prophets spoke on behalf of God against all forms of injustice and denounced the abuse of the poor, the needy and aliens. They spoke from their own experience without necessarily having a formal order from God. These prophets predicted tragedies that occurred in and against Israel due to the absence of justice, mercy and compassion. Israel was faithful to God when they looked after the poor among themselves. It seems that Amos was particularly virulent against the exploiters, oppressors and those who abused justice to the detriment of the poor considered as a social category. During that time the rich and influential people had enormous responsibility towards the poor.(Deuteronomy 15:7-11). However Amos attacked those powerful and rich people who wanted to exploit the poor and the weak.

Poverty is also reflected in the New Testament. References is made to landlords, farm loans, farmers, manual workers, slaves, good or bad stewards, creditors and debtors, unjust and just judges, widows that groan for justice etc. Jesus’s first teaching is an address about the poor to whom He promises salvation. It clearly shows the state of poverty is undeniably a combination of both the socio-economic and spiritual evolutions in Israel. In the entire programme Jesus spoke about the poor as the blessed and justification of the Good News of the Kingdom of God. The blessing of the poor does not lie on their material conditions or spiritual effectiveness but in the way the Kingdom of God is conceived. It is a Kingdom well adapted for the oppressed. The source of the salvation for the poor is not in the poor but with God. They are blessed because God wants to put an end to poverty for a new world of justice and communion starting right now.(Revelation 21:1).

Jesus starts his ministry at a time of social, economic and political crises. A small minority that included the Pharisees with their religious ideology and some elites connected to the Romans monopolised the resources. Impoverished and expectant crowds (handicapped, sick, prisoners, widows and alike) followed Jesus by thousands to be fed. It is surprising that among the excluded were the tax collectors who were economically
better off, but socially and spiritually regarded as people of second category due to the suspicion that they earned their wealth in complicity with the administration of the occupants.

Today in Southern Africa poverty remains a huge challenge. It is even use by political parties to gain political support during elections with the promise that they eradicate poverty and create employment for people.

4.2.2 Crime Prevention

There is no doubt that crime impedes the economic growth of a country. Criminal activities are the consequence of lack of moral guidance to the people, especially young people. Crime, which is the result of migration to urban cities and unemployment, is a critical problem in developing towns and cities. A gangster in South Africa was quoted saying;

\[ I \text{ was born in a cruel world, I'm living in a cruel world, and I'll die in a cruel world.}^{312} \]

In an interview with another gangster Jama on the same issue in Botswana, he said that;

\[ I \text{ lost my parents. My relatives do not want to stay with me. They always punish me. Life is not good at home. That's why I came to look for survival in town. I can't get a job here, except to eat from wastebins and steal. That's the easiest job available in town. I qualify for it. Garden work pays less to what I'm earning in this field.}^{313} \]

It is the responsibility of religious organisations to educate and influence the civil governance on how to combat crime at all levels. In order for religious groups’ voice to

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312 Killer, 2002 (a gangster working in a car hijacking syndicate in Johannesburg South Africa), quoted in Guns, Gangs, and Culture of Violence, by Carolyn Dempster, BCC, 10th April 2002

313 Jama in an interview in Gaborone on the 8th May 2006.
be heard by the civil society they should speak in one voice. It is the task of theology to guide religious groups to come up with strategic plans for inter-faith crime prevention.

The crime rate in the region chases away potential investors. Crime is not only an economic issue, but also a social problem. Lack of unemployment, poverty and political instability are the major items contributing to crime. Crime is also a religious issue. The region is forced to resort to any means to combat crime. Religious communities should come together and join hands with governments to deal with the matter. However, the most important thing is to address conditions that lead to unemployment and poverty. The reduction of poverty and unemployment are the most important issues that should be considered first.

Crime should not only be treated as a sin by religious people. It should be taken as a challenge to the religious teaching within a country. The Christian theology teaches that crime is evil and belongs to the social evils that destabilise the universe. That is a concern. The issue is how the Church can combat this social problem. Is it enough to condemn it from the pulpits without taking into consideration the causes of this sin? Crime is a theological issue and should be tackled in a holistic approach.

As already mentioned, it involves the social, economic and spiritual life of an individual. A proverb from the Democratic Republic of Congo that says;

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\text{a stolen object does not fill one’s heart with joy.}^{314}
\]

Corruption is very common in developing countries. Economic corruption has hindered development in many countries and people bear the consequences. There is nobody who will invest money in a country which is known to tolerate corruption. Louis Fourie, a South African economist, has observed that;

\[
\text{let’s be honest ...you won’t put your own money}
\]
\[
\text{in a company scoring an ‘average’ in corruption.}
\]
\[
The same applies to investment in a country...
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^{314}[www.afriprov.org/resources/dailyproverbs.htm](http://www.afriprov.org/resources/dailyproverbs.htm)
any corruption is too much.\textsuperscript{315}

Corruption is a criminal offence against God and humanity. Corruption goes side by side with politics and power. Politicians tend to use their power for their own personal gain and satisfaction. It is obligatory for the Church to rebuke, counsel, and discourage its members who are found practising corruption. Such prophetic voice is found in Mathew 14:3-8 by John the Baptist. Corruption is a social illness and therefore needs to be prevented by divine intervention. The Church should deal with issues of corruption within society and even within the Church. Leaders in Africa have a tendency to misuse their powers. This is very common among politicians. Some heads of states behave irresponsibly in modern Africa. They are compared to

\begin{quote}
a big Man who looks like this: His face is on the money. His photograph hangs in every office in his realm... He names streets, football stadiums, hospitals and universities after himself. He insists on being called doctor or.. ‘the big elephant’ or ... ‘the wise old man’ or ‘the national miracles.’ His every pronouncement is reported on the front page. He sleeps with the wives and daughters of powerful men in his government... He scapegoats minorities to show up support. He rigs elections. He emasculates the courts. He cows the press. He stifles academia. He goes to Church... He blesses his home region with highways, schools, hospitals, housing projects, irrigation schemes and a Presidential mansion... His enemies are detained or exiled, humiliated or bankrupted, tortured or killed. He uses the resources of the state to feed a cult of personality that defines him as incorruptible, all-knowing... and kind to children. His cult equates his personal well-being with the well-being of the state.\textsuperscript{316}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{315} Fourie 2004,82  
\textsuperscript{316} Donovan 2000,169
It is getting common in some Southern African states, that whenever leaders are in power they are left unchallenged when committing corruption and after losing power they are taken behind bars by their successors. This kind of practice causes a lot of concern to many people and results in political instability. For example in Zambia, former President Kenneth Kaunda faced a lot of charges on corruption instigated by President Frederick Chiluba. Chiluba also faced the same corruption charges pushed by President Levy Mwanawasa, his successor. The Church was silent when the issue of forgiveness was brought into discussion. The Church should not avoid to condemn corruption and structures which lead to corruption. Therefore as the Church continues speaking about corruption, she must also promote counseling and pastoral care to the perpetrators so that the same thing is not repeated.

It will be difficult to solve the economic problems while power is still on corrupt political leaders. If all Africans can say ‘no’ to all corrupt leaders in the society, Africa will be a better place to live. The former United Nation Secretary General, Kofi Annan once said that

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hunger, \text{ war, Aids,… Epidemics that destroy Africa will not disappear while the power is in the hands of corrupted official governments. They (are) the main obstacle to get the whole continent out of the tunnel.}^{317}
\]

Corruption should be dealt with. It is rooted in our apartheid past, but it is also a problem of the present. Many of those who are new in the government are as corrupt as those before them. It affects all areas of the society. It can not be denied that corruption also happens within religious organisations. This is a theological issue which needs to be addressed. It is a theological issue because the teachings of most faiths are against corruption in all its forms. Corruption is considered evil by religious group. For example,

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317 Kofi Annah, United Nation Secretary General (www.respondanet.com/english/previous quotes week.htm)
in Christianity and Judaism there is a commandment that says; *do not steal.* (Exodus 20:15). Religious organisations should first combat corruption and then help the civil society in the war against it and other social afflictions that affect communities.

### 4.2.3 Land Issue

The land acquisition, land distribution, land misappropriation by the rich and the powerful in African countries is one of the major challenges. The poor are in most cases the landless and victims of political fights for the land by the rich. The scarcity of land in Africa has been one of the factors that caused conflicts. For instance, it is still believed that the genocide in Rwanda was caused by lack of land after independence. Even today the government is still at war with powerful groups who misappropriate the land to the detriment of the population. Some countries are said to be considering a possibility for a shift from the customary system of inheritance of land. The land issue in Zimbabwe was used to retain power at the expense of the poor. In Namibia the minority white people are selling land at exorbitant prices to prohibit the government from purchasing it for the landless black communities.

In his introductory comments on Black Theology, Mannas Buthelezi said that today even the best friends are quarrelling over which part of the South African soil should be allowed to be his/her permanent home.\(^{318}\) The current experiences on land issue in Southern Africa reflect precisely what Buthelezi recognised a while ago. Africans who claim that the land belongs to them might end up fighting over it. In Botswana, the Basarwa (the San) also known as the KhoiSan faced the same issue. They found themselves quarrelling with their own government over a large area of land known as the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) in the Kalahari Desert. The problem was that the government of Botswana wanted the Basarwa to vacate the game reserve and relocate to New Xade a place choosen to them by the government.\(^{319}\)

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\(^{318}\) Buthelezi 1972,18

\(^{319}\) News in Brief 2006,17 in Mission Online United Evangelical Mission Newsletter.No 37
The former colonial governments are still blamed for having taken land from the indigenous people. Musa Dube categorises the land issue in Africa into three stages. Those stages include the land being occupied by black Africans, the white men came in and took it and finally the black Africans were given the Bible to replace the land. She argues that the issues of Western geographical possession and expansion and non-Western dispossession are inseparably tied to the biblical text. The Bible has been used by colonisers to justify their imperialistic ideologies in Africa. African states are now struggling to resettle the landless Africans because the vast majority of the land is taken by settlers of European descent and a few rich, black people. This kind of scenario should be discouraged. The European theology justified the injustice perpetrated against black people. The land issue is a biblical matter that theology should address. Theology should address the allocation of natural resources by those in leadership.

It is known that white people are accused of bringing the Bible to Africans in exchange for land. This practice is part of the history in the Southern African region. The Biblical theology shows us that the land issue as reflected in the Bible has played a crucial role in the history of the Israelites. Nevertheless, we should not take the issue of land ownership for granted because we recently saw this history repeating itself in Zimbabwe. Therefore, we need not only fairly distribute land to the landless but to transform minds of the people who are still hindered by this history. These people include all races, rich and poor.

In the Bible, the land issue is reflected throughout biblical history. The Israelites were promised land by their God. The land which was promised was very good, fertile and rich. It may be because of the suffering of the Israelites in Egypt that they found favour with God. According to the Bible, the Israelites received the Promised Land. What needs to be analysed is who owns the land. Somebody could ask if God was just to remove the Canaanites from their land in favour of the Israelites. Today the issue of land in Middle East is the central issue. Is there a just way of taking some people’s land

320 Dube 2000, 16
321 Ibid., p. 16
without breaking any Biblical laws? This goes back to the issue of who owns the land. It may be that the land belongs to God and God is the one who allocate it.

The Black Africans claim that the land which belongs to them was taken away by colonisers. This land was given to them by God. The white people came to grab that land. Who knows whether God is the one who sent white people to grab the land like he sent the Israelites? The land issue in many national anthems of African nations is associated with God. Some of these anthems are as follows:

Botswana National anthem,  
*blessed be this noble land. Gift to us from God’s strong hand. Heritage our Forefathers left us.*

Lesotho:  
*Lesotho our forefathers’ land in all lands it is the most beautiful. That is where we are born. That is where we grew up in... God keep Lesotho.*

Namibian anthem says,  
*Namibia land of the brave.*

Most of these anthems have nothing but two things in common, land and God. Therefore, we cannot talk about theology without talking about land. A Theology of land will empower people to claim their right to the land. Land is one of the major economic resources.

The issue of land does not only affect a single country in the region but is a concern to many countries as the human population increases. It has been easier to argue that the minority of white people are the ones who have vast land and the way they accumulated this land was unjust. Southern Africa is moving towards the situation whereby the focus will shift from white people to rich people in Africa, black or white.

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322 Ngongola, Gatsha and Selwe 2004, 137
Many people become landless while the rich people acquire more land for their private use. The land issue may not be handled in a similar way across the region. Currently in Zimbabwe the present leadership forcibly seizes land from descendants of European settlers. In some countries it may end up being blacks seizing land from each other by force. Governments should come up with long term programmes to avoid this situation from happening. The post-colonial era impacts on the land issue, hence the vital role that the Bible plays in this issue. Dube described this scenario in this way:

*biblical texts have authorized Christian believers to enter and take the lands of non-Christian believers, either under the ideology of converting them, as Mazrui and Mudimbe hold, or under the self-serving paradigm of claims of chosenness or superiority, as Canaan Banana and Dickson argue.*

This position puts Christian theology in a very difficult position. The Bible and God again are used to justify something that is unjust. The situation calls for a relevant hermeneutics theology on the land issue. The land issue has religious, political, race, and ethnic power struggle powers. The land issue is not something which can be taken for granted. It is a problem for societies in the region. What happened in Zimbabwe should be a lesson to many countries in the region. The process of reconciliation goes together with the land issue. If people are willing to reconcile, they should also be willing to share and live together side by side. Reconciliation has been a highly regarded issue, but it is land and poverty which are the consequences of apartheid and colonialism. A story was told concerning reconciliation and the land issue:

*It was during a theological discussion and a key note addresser happened to be a black American. The topic was reconciliation and confession. The discussion or debate was organized by white people to discuss reconciliation. The black American presented a*

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323 Dube 2000,17
A robber broke into a house and stole a television set. The robber ran away with the television. On the chase the robber was caught. Then the owner came. Imagine that you are the owner. Will you take back the television set and reconcile with the robber? All white theologians present said a big ‘Yes’. The speaker continued. It is the same with reconciliation. What was taken during the apartheid era from black people should be returned. Then we can talk about reconciliation. All whites silently left the discussion.

This story offers a valuable lesson about the land issue. Reconciliation did not go deep enough to tackle the main issues. The situation where land issue is used by politicians to retain power like in Zimbabwe could have been avoided. These political leaders know exactly that black people are not yet reconciled with white people because much of the land still belongs to the white people. Many blacks are landless in their own countries. The white people who own big tracts of land are not ready to share their land with the landless.

The land policy of a willing buyer and a willing seller does not seem to bear much fruit. This policy was adopted by the black governments in the region especially Namibia. The policy is not working because the land owners demand very high prices for the land. The policies of redistribution of land have been unsuccessful in countries such as Namibia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. The danger, as we already discussed, is if this issue is left unchallenged for a long time it is hard to make change. Consequently it has negative effects on the country. Of course some people benefit from the situation when things get out of control.

Reconciliation should be encouraged within different societies so that blacks and whites, rich and poor can live together and share with one another in harmony. Today black politicians who are in power possess a vast amount of land, while the poor are left with nothing. Some do not even have the money to build a house on the small piece of land.

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324 A case story told by Cosmos Moenga at the Lutheran Theological Seminary Botswana at a workshop of talks on reconciliation and unity of Lutheran Churches in Botswana in April 2005.
allocated to them. Consequently the state reclaims that piece of land after five years if the plot is not developed. In Botswana those who are not able to develop their plots decide to sell them rather than give them back to the government.

*I am unemployed, I have no money to buy food for my children, how can I build a house? It is better to sell the plot.*

The problem which may arise out of this situation is that the poor and working class people will revolt against those who took advantage of them and their poverty. They will stand by any political leader who will claim to seize land from the rich to restore it to the poor as it happened in Zimbabwe. It would no longer be the whites fighting against the blacks but rich blacks against poor blacks. This may result in violence and instability in the region. It is important for the Church, the State and other stakeholders to deal with the land issue before it gets out of control. A case in point is the decision of the government of Botswana to evict the San or Basarwa people from their ancestral land. The case attracted worldwide attention, especially from international human rights organisations, such as Survival International, which helped them to challenge the government at the Botswana High Court.

*After a hard-fought court battle-billed as the longest and most expensive in Botswana’s legal history, on the 13th December the San won their right to return to their ancestral home in the Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve.*

This is a very good example of democracy. Land dispute is settled in court and the court rule is obeyed. In future, no-one knows if such cases will be dealt with in the courts or on the battlefield. It is something that should always be kept in mind. It is important to

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monitor the long term land policies in different countries. Those policies should be done not only be the monopoly of governments, but there must be input from the civil society in the form of non-governmental organisations, and religious communities. The Church must seriously theologise on the issue of land. It was very surprising that the Botswana Council of Churches was highly supportive of the position taken by the government of Botswana during the court battle instead of pushing for an out of court settlement. Some people felt that the Church’s voice was biased.

_The churches in Botswana could have theologized first on the issue before taking a side. There was no theological era for the Basarwa to claim their ancestral land. There was nothing wrong for the government to request the Basarwa to vacate the reserve for economic reasons. The main problem was the eviction. The Botswana Council of Churches could have brought the two conflicting sides into dialogue._\(^{327}\)

The problem is that the case has caused a sour relationship between the concerned group of the San and the State. Even the country is affected because the government has used a lot of taxpayers’ money on the case. The San also spent a lot of money which could have been utilised for something else. To make matters worse, during the campaign Botswana diamonds were targetted for boycott, and this tarnished the image of Botswana diamonds in the world market, something which is detrimental for a country whose economy is largely diamond-led. Mr Roy Sesana, a Central Kalahari Game Reserve resident and spokesperson for the First People of the Kalahari expressed his joy by saying:

_today is the happiest day for us Bushmen. We have been crying for so long, but today we are crying with happiness. Finally, we have been set free. The evictions have been very, very painful for my people. I hope that now_

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\(^{327}\) Mbuende in an interview on April 2006 in Gaborone.
It is now the task of the Church in Botswana to reconcile the two parties and bring them together to settle their differences. There is no need for more public funds to be wasted on court cases which could be resolved amicably. There was a similar case which involved Botswana and Namibia’s dispute over Sedudu Island that ended up at the International Court of Justice in the year 2000; it could have been dealt with locally. The Southern African region should form a platform where similar cases can be discussed to stop a waste of resources and public funds. It is also advisable for the international human rights organisations to promote negotiations between the quarrelling parties and play a mediating role. The land issues are still going to cause problems in the region because they are not handled carefully and efficiently.

4.3 Economic Globalisation

There are too many different views on whether globalisation is an advantage or a disadvantage to African countries. These debates are also very popular in the Church. African theologians should not only look at globalisation in a negative way but should also consider the advantages that globalisation bring to developing countries. Nevertheless there is no way developing countries can avoid the negative influence of globalisation. The Church is compelled to join the world in the globalisation discussion. The reason is that today the world is being pervasively shaped or distorted by economic global market forces. Globalisation is increasingly turning the world into one unitary market according to neo-liberal economic principles. These forces intensify what are already unjust relationships of power and access; feelings of fear, panic and powerlessness arise as a result.

It is imperative to mention that globalisation in reality has limited significance because it applies to one fifth of the world excluding five billion of the six billion human populations on earth. If that is the reality about globalisation’s impact in the world, monitoring of the perpetrators is indicated. The fact is that Africa remained a mere

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328 Kasonga and Mukuna 2006,74
subservient appendage to the global village by supplying a pool of cheap labour and cheap raw material. In return it provided markets for imports of unsophisticated products. It is clear that African continent is very rich. Other continents are using the disadvantaged Africa to solve their own economic problems. This is where the terminologies of globalisation and global village come into the picture. These terminologies have not benefited Africa contrary to what they were promised by developed countries. Instead they increased the gap between the rich and poor countries. The poor countries will struggle to survive in this race of globalisation. Africa will be left with only the option of selling raw material at cheaper prices and buying lower quality products at a high price. To make matters worse, globalisation is not doing enough to empower Africans with life skills and education. For instance, the era of globalisation found the index of adult literacy in sub-Saharan Africa amounting to an average of 50 percent and this has never changed. That means that the use of cheap labour in Africa will continue until the continent has a well-trained labour force. It is imperative to bear in mind that

university enrolment of high school leavers averages 2.5% compared to 77.3% in North America. To add to the stress, brains drain of skilled and university graduates out of Africa are estimated at 20,000 per year... For every African who logged into the Internet, there were 149 people logging, in the North. On a world scale, Africa's share of Internet users fell from 0.025 percent in 1997 to 0.022 percent in 1998.

Globalisation has got positive and negative effects in Southern Africa. The focus of post liberation theology is not to look at globalisation as a western phenomenon. Instead it should be taken as one of the major challenges facing the African continent. The role of the Church is to monitor such forces. In a paper presented at the Consultation Organized for Church Leaders on NEPAAD in Moshi, Tanzania Prof. Seithaya Chachage of the University of Dar es Salaam argued that history demonstrates that globalisation is not a

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329 Ibid., p.74
330 Ibid., p.74, 75
new phenomenon in this world. He argues that it is a process which can be traced to 144AD (or even earlier), starting with the landing and collecting of gold and ten African slaves in West Africa by Antonio Gonsalves and handing them to the Portuguese Prince, Henry the Navigator, who in turn gave the slaves to the Pope. Then the Pope in turn granted Henry a title to lands “discovered” east of Cape Blanco.\textsuperscript{331}

In other words, it is clear that globalisation is an European ideology. It started when Europe began to intervene in other countries’ internal affairs. What is happening now is just a continuation of history. This involvement in other countries’ internal politics for economic interests caused a great deal of misery in many countries, especially in developing countries.

The Atlantic Slave trade, which followed thereafter, and especially with the landing of Christopher Columbus in America, was rationalized by Europe in terms of a “holy” intended to introduce Africans, who were supposedly heathens, to Christianity.

Colonialism, which followed after the 1884 Berlin Conference, was also rationalized in terms of a Civilizing Mission intended to bring Christianity and trade. After independence, imperialism and neo-colonialism was rationalized in terms of “modernization” development and now globalization.\textsuperscript{332}

Africa today is spending a lot on repairing what legacy colonialism and imperialism have left. New terminologies are invented to continue neo-colonialistic ideologies e.g. globalisation, religious tolerance and free trade. It is unfortunate that some of those things are continuing in different forms.

This means that Africans are still waiting for another terminology which again will put Africa in a disadvantaged position. Those who are anti-globalisation hold the view that

\textsuperscript{331} Chachage 2003,3
\textsuperscript{332} Ibid.,p.3-4
globalisation is another strategic plan of the Western countries and Americans to solve their economic crisis. Africa again becomes just a ball in a soccer match kicked to any direction by players. It will be advisable to re-visit ideas of our fore-fathers before we indulge in globalisation. In the 1970s, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere foresaw this idea of having one world as an illusion. He said that,

*the world is one in technological terms. Men have looked down on the earth and seen its unity. In jet planes I can travel from Tanzania to New York in a matter of hours. Radio waves enable us to talk to each other either in love or abuse-without more than a few seconds elapsing between our speech and the hearing of it. Goods are made which include materials and skills from all over the world and are then put in sale thousands of miles from their place of manufacture. Yet at the same time as interdependence of man is increased through advance of technology, the divisions between men also increase at an ever increasing rate.*

Nyerere felt that the more other countries were progressing in technology the more this continued to divide the world. In other words, as the developed countries advanced in technology at high rate, the worse it got for the underdeveloped countries. It is just like increasing the gap between the poor and the rich. If this gap widens, society becomes even more divided. Consequently crime, poverty and disease become a major problem.

*So the world is not one. Its people are more divided now, and also more conscious of their divisions, than have ever been. They are divided between those who are satiated and those who are hungry. They are divided between those with power and those without power. They are divided between those who dominate and those who are dominated; between*

333 Nyerere 1974, 86
those who exploit and those who are exploited.\textsuperscript{334}

The above statement raises a lot of concern about the issue of globalisation especially for the so called Third World countries. Globalisation ideology is perpetuated by rich countries which are advanced in technology. A fact which is raised by Nyerere is simple: how can we be one while we are not equal? If the market price is controlled by G8 (countries) and other European countries, how can we be equal? According to Nyerere the enterprise between dwarfs and giants was considered to be an illusion. Therefore, injustice and peace in the long run are incompatible; stability in a changing world must mean order and change towards justice, not mechanical respect for the status quo.\textsuperscript{335}

There are many views on how globalisation can be tackled in society. Globalisation seems to be overwhelming and inevitable such that people feel they lack the time, expertise, or hope to respond to it. Their only reaction is to minister to those who suffer because of it. On the other hand, there are those who point to the new opportunities which economic globalisation promises. The main problem is the group which denounces economic globalisation with strong words or symbolic actions, for the sake of solidarity with those oppressed by it. These two groups usually are polarised in ways that cut off the possibility for constructive ethical dialogue or joint action.\textsuperscript{336}

The Lutheran World Federation released a statement that

\begin{quote}
... in the face of this situation the biblical witness is clear:

\textbf{God consistently opposes and calls for change in practices and structures that are unjust, especially in their effect on the poorest. When assumptions, dynamics and outcomes of economic globalization go against what God intends, this becomes a matter of faith. We must name, reflect on, and seek effective ways of responding to the challenges raised by economic}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{334} Nyerere 1974,7
\textsuperscript{335} Ibid.,p.84
\textsuperscript{336} Lutheran World Federation, a working paper 2001,5
4.3.1 Theological Engagement in Economic Globalization

There is no doubt that economic globalisation widens the gap between the poor and the rich. A realistic economic policy should aim at closing this gap. That will be a great achievement. Nevertheless, economic globalisation benefits some and harms others but people are told to be realistic in accepting its inevitability. The Post-Liberation Theology should correct such injustices and be the voice of the voiceless.

There are those who feel that globalisation is idolatry. Today markets and money rule the world. This is what globalisation is all about. People today have put their faith in wealth and money. The wondrous machine of free-running enterprise has fantastic capabilities and people defer to its powers, persuaded it will carry them forward to millennial powers. Today many intelligent people have come to worship these market principles, like a spiritual code that will resolve all the big questions as long as no one interferes with its authority.

There are also some views which seem to be critical of globalisation from biblical perspectives. The market is now becoming more like Yahweh of the Old Testament, the only true God, whose reign must now be universally accepted. This Yahweh allows for no rivals. He is an omnipotent with the capacity to define what is real, to convert creation into commodities that dramatically alter human beings and nature for the sake of higher profits.

The world is ruled by market forces. Demand and supply are key players. The poor and rich people buy from the same shops but have unequal monthly income. Others do not have any income at all. They are compelled to buy from the same shops as their masters and employers. The Old Testament does not differentiate wealth, power and idolatry from injustice towards the poor. In the book of Jeremiah 10:1-16 and Isaiah 44:9-20, idolatry is something that is created by human beings. It is a man-made thing which leads to corruption of life. Therefore, if post-liberation theology views idolatry as the major concern in economic globalisation; there is no way the Church can be silent. Money rules

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337 Lutheran World Federation a working paper 2006,4
the world. People’s consumption patterns are influenced by the society in which they live.

The study and doing of theology should be used here as methodology to liberate people from the bondage of globalisation. Theology can no longer ignore economic globalisation and its effects because it has become a reigning power and it is in competition with faith system in today’s world. People need to be engaged in this process. This requires an in-depth study of globalisation in order to gain knowledge about its philosophy. It is only then that Africa will be in a position to respond in one voice.

The complexities of economic globalization are such that if we are to respond adequately to it, we need the perspectives of those who experience its effects and respond to it quite differently. We need to talk together about this. Some voices should not be silenced due to their relative power, education, gender, social status, where they live, what they do for a living, or the unpopularity of their opinion.  

Tony Blair, the former British Prime Minister once said;

this is a moment to seize. The kaleidoscope has been shaken. The pieces are in flux. Soon they will settle again. Before they do, let us reorder this world around us...if globalization works only for the benefit of the few then it will fail and will deserve to fail.

The African Renaissance concept accepts that Africans are politically independent and are proud of this great achievement. The next challenge facing them is to be economically independent. This is not an easy task. It will take time, just as liberation struggle took long. The struggle needs men and women, rich and poor, disadvantaged and advantaged, joined together in building the nation. The struggle continues in different ways. This

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338 Lutheran World Federation, a working paper 2001,17
339 Blair speech, October 2001
struggle is about the liberation from the economic bondage which threatens the stability of the social, traditional and political structures within our communities. The economic bondage includes poor wages, poor working conditions, poor health facilities and poor education. These factors must be addressed and overcome.

4.4 The Relevance of Botho (Ubuntu)

Botho is a fundamental ontological and epistemological category in the African thought of Bantu-speaking people.\textsuperscript{340} It is the African way of living. It encompasses the wholesome life of a person. There is no doubt that the African concept of Ubuntu can be taken as the basis of African philosophy.\textsuperscript{341} A theology which advocates for the revival of the African concept of Ubuntu is very relevant. Such theology should not commence from who is African and who is not. The African concept of Botho has got no racial bias. In Sotho-Tswana one of the pillars of Botho is that ‘

\textit{motho ke motho ka batho ba bangwe}, which means that a person is a human being because of other human beings. Therefore a person exists because of others. We exist because of other people whom we are living with. Africans exist because of other nations and vice versa. The Botho concept is concerned about the humanity of a person not the tribe, colour and race. The concept is very important to be used in modern world. If looked at critically, the World Millennium Goals also emphasise the Botho concept of fullness of life. It is clear that a social structure is evolved not only to give effect to certain conceptions of human nature, but also to provide a framework for both the realisation of the potential, goals, and hopes of the individual members of the society and the continuous existence and survival of the society.\textsuperscript{342} A society exists because of human beings living together. On the other hand an individual behaviour is also influenced by the society he/she lives in.

Botho concept consists of what Van Niekerk calls sense making God-life and worldview. This is a concept which captures various ideas, pointers and assumptions while portraying the basic pattern and configuration of a person or a group of how God, humanity and the physical-organic universes fit together to make sense in all walks of

\textsuperscript{340} Ramose 2002,230
\textsuperscript{341} Ibid.,p.230
\textsuperscript{342} Gykye 2002,297
life. It also connects God’s creation, reconciliation, renewal and consummation as milestones of the meandering processes of the Commonwealth of God.343

There is a need to revisit some of the cultural values which were misunderstood or misinterpreted by the Western people. These must be reformulated and preserved for posterity. This will help to build a well informed and moral nation.

The cultures and traditions of people continue to transform everyday. Culture is not supposed to oppress people. Due to the dynamics of culture and traditions there is no permanent culture. The environment plays an important role in influencing and transforming culture. The cultural diversities signify the best of the God’s creation. In Southern Africa people of different cultures and traditions seem to be developing the spirit of accepting each other’s cultures, traditions and religions. The Botho concept concentrates more on the right of a human being to exist as a human being. This respect of one another should be practised by all human beings regardless of race, ethnicity and religion. Botho will be relevant today if human beings are allowed to exist freely in their environment. Human beings should be allowed to enjoy God’s creation as creatures. Nevertheless human beings should also allow other God’s creatures to exist. It is the responsibility of human beings to take care of other God’s creatures. In the Book of Genesis the concept of man to subdue and dominate on the earth talks mostly about man taking full responsibility. (Genesis 1:28)

In an interview with Rev Dickson Moyambo of the Lutheran Church, he stressed that people should take care of the universe and its inhabitants.

*It is the responsibility of human beings to protect wildlife from poachers, diseases and unnecessary loss of life. All these are God’s creatures which are given to human beings to live upon. We should embark on tourism. Animals also have the right to live and be used for the right purpose by human beings.*

343 Van Niekerk 2,2006
344 Moyambo, in an interview in Maun Botswana in August, 2007
A theology which is relevant will use the concept of Ubuntu in addressing human problems. We have seen the wholeness approach of Ubuntu in the society. This approach can be used by people regardless of their race, religions, cultures and traditions. It is a continuous process. Ramose indicates that

*Ubuntu is a specific entity which continues to conduct an inquiry into being, experience, knowledge and truth. It is an ongoing process impossible to stop unless motion itself is stopped.*

It is proper to say that Botho is relevant to the modern society if its concepts are applied properly. That includes respect for one another, respect for God’s creation, and communion of people of different religions, race, ethnicity, cultures and traditions. The transformation of cultures and traditions within society should be allowed. Botho is also a relevant theology because it allows for a pluralistic society. That means a society that is able to tolerate the dynamics of the modern world.

Communication in Africa is very important. It is closely associated with Ubuntu and it is a culture of communication that is essential in the life of a person. Communication can be done in different ways. These include democratic discussions, face to face talks and mediating communication. Communication can also be done in symbols. It can also be done by the way of punishment. We brought this issue here because the modern world has neglected the African way of communication. We are struggling with how to give information to youths and children about issues they are grappling with, including sexuality, drugs and alcohol, HIV/AIDS etc.

Africans used to address their societal issues at their public gatherings called by royal authorities long ago. In Sotho-Tswana tradition it is referred to as the Kgotla. It is a traditional parliament for Batswana where issues concerning the community are raised.

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345 Ramose 2002,231
and discussed democratically.\textsuperscript{346} This form of communication was very important because decisions were made collectively by the tribe. The team work was highly practised. This communication is still used today in Botswana. The main problem is that young people do not attend these gatherings anymore. Young people’s problems are addressed at these gatherings during their absence. These meetings or gatherings are now losing relevance. Only old people who are too feeble to do some village activities are the ones who attend these meetings.

\begin{quote}
People are no longer attending kgotla meetings. Even if you can advertise only a few turn up. I am very concerned about this problem. The young people do not turn up at all. But we are concerned about alcohol abuse in the villages, crime and lack of good behaviour. They must come and discuss their grievances. If they stay away, how can we help them?\textsuperscript{347}
\end{quote}

The above issue calls for revisiting some ways of communicating matters affecting our communities. It is the task of chiefs and their administration to find out why people do not come to meetings which are very important to the community. It must be established which form of communication is suitable for today’s young people. Is it the modern way of media, workshops, seminars and conferences or the traditional ways?

In a research about African cultural values Klem discovered that most Africans prefer face to face spoken communication to impersonal written communication.\textsuperscript{348} Among African people, relationships between people are more important than almost everything else. It is observed that people are held in higher esteem than programmes, projects, strategic plans and schedules.\textsuperscript{349} Africans are not book orientated people like the modern world is today. That could be the reason why people do not use information they get. Africans should find a way of communication in Africa which will be relevant to their

\begin{footnotes}
\item[346] Moenga 2005,42
\item[347] Interview with Moilwa (chief of Mogobane Village South East Botswana) in March 2006
\item[348] Klem 1982,8
\item[349] Donovan 2000,7
\end{footnotes}
context. However, the modern communication system is very costly for people in Southern Africa. The restrictive public policies, high taxation on computers and telecommunications facilities as well as high tariffs charged on telecommunication service are to be blamed.

In Africa, average connection cost is about US $20 higher than in rich states where per capita incomes are many times higher.

Other telecommunication indexes show that there is an average one fax machine for every 30 people in the North compared to an average one fax machine for 1,000 in Africa.\textsuperscript{350}

These statistics are very discouraging. Communication is an agent of change. Today knowledge is communicated through the information-communication channels such as internet, cellular phones etc. It is clear to everybody that human development depends on knowledge gained. A nation without knowledge is a lost nation. Today’s world is likely to be divided between knowledge-rich and knowledge-poor. Some people claim that if it is the case it, it will be a worse form of colonisation than the previous one since it will be a colonisation of the mind.\textsuperscript{351} However, communication can still have an opportunity to engage Africa with the global village. Africa needs fast and reliable communication facilities. The electronic communication is cost effective and time saving. Africa can benefit a lot from this development brought by globalization. It will be important for African countries to join hands and build a good communication infrastructure and make it accessible to the people.

4.5 Diseases and Medicinal Plants (Healing)

The issue of healing and medicinal plants is a disaster for many people living in the Southern Africa.

Here people are daily exposed to frightening wild beasts,

to poisonous snakes, to the unpredictable alternation

\textsuperscript{350} Kasonga and Mukuna 2006,75
\textsuperscript{351} Ibid.,p.75
of devastating droughts and floods, to sickness and poor crops, backed by a high infant mortality rate.\textsuperscript{352}

After liberation, the region has been experiencing attacks of terrible diseases. The integration of traditional and western medicines is a matter of urgency in African context.\textsuperscript{353} Africa is struggling in maintaining health standards in hospitals, clinics and other health facilities. Health is one of the urgent issues in African societies. The continent needs to bring together all the knowledge of healing that exitsts within various African societies and find out how it can be incorporated into the modern healing system.

\textit{We do indeed need a good theology of healing; but if that is all we have, we shall be in danger of being left in disillusionment and disappointment.}\textsuperscript{354}

The Christian theology should put its focus on both spiritual and physical healing. The reason for the emergence of the African Initiated Churches was not only to be liberated from the doctrines of Mainline Churches but also to be free to incorporate traditional healing within Christianity. Probably this was due to the dissatisfaction of Africans with the way of worship instigated by western churches. African churches are today popular of their miraculous healing. In most cases their

\textit{...treatment of illness or disease will always reflect African ideas expressed in diagnostic statements about illness.}\textsuperscript{355}

The challenges theologians are faced with are to re-visit the Christian theology of healing and find out how it can accommodate the African traditional religion in matters of healing. The African traditional healing understands illness in a holistic approach.

\textsuperscript{352}Schewer 1998,7
\textsuperscript{353}Ter Haar 1992,172
\textsuperscript{354}Hurding 1992,75
\textsuperscript{355}Dube 1988,166
Healers in these churches consider themselves endowed with supernatural powers which characterised Jesus’ healing ministry. People do not need to study in universities but they should possess God’s gift of healing. Nevertheless it is important to mention that it is God who heals through these gifted healers who are His messengers.

4.5.1 Disease is a Crisis of Life (HIV/AIDS)
We cannot avoid talking about diseases which are a challenge to the region today. HIV/AIDS is one of the most deadly diseases affecting the economic backbone of the Sub-Saharan region. In fact, the whole of Africa is in a crisis.

Why is HIV/AIDS a crisis in Africa?: 29.3 million Africans (75%) are HIV positive, while 42.2 million people are HIV positive globally. 58% of those infected with HIV are women, while 42% are men. In South Africa, over 5 million are infected. In 1998, for example, an estimated 200,000 people died in war, but more than 2 million died of AIDS in the same year. Traditional safety nets that were present in the family set-up are also unwavering as more young adults die of AIDS-related illness. Grandmothers are becoming the New Mothers of Africa, as they painfully watch their daughters and sons die.

HIV/AIDS is a theological issue. It is a challenge to people and the Church. The Church is sick of HIV/AIDS. Gerald West of University of Natal understands that, the blood of Jesus is HIV positive and that the role of the Church is to be in the forefront of initiatives to deal with the epidemic prophetically.

A tribute should be forwarded to churches in Southern Africa which have reacted to this

356 Nthamburi 1990,46
357 Okaalet 2006,132
358 West 2003,5
plea even though the reaction was late. Poverty and HIV/AIDS are linked. Studies suggest that among pregnant women in Southern Africa the HIV infection rate is 30 percent and is increasing annually.³⁵⁹ There are many social issues which cause this scenario in the region. It is often that school girls and unemployed ones hope to be given money for their school fees and for other things by rich men, who drive fancy cars. Young mothers prostitute themselves, simply to raise enough money to feed their families. This makes them vulnerable. It would be misleading to ignore poverty in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. A practical example was made by Bishop Kameeta when he made specific reference to the instructions found on the packaging of antiretroviral medicines:

“To be taken after a meal”. But if the person with AIDS has had nothing to eat, how can the medicine be effective?³⁶⁰

Infectious diseases in Africa are a major challenge. There are many situations which cause different kinds of diseases on the continent. Lack of clean water, bad sanitation, food hygiene, Malaria, Ebola, malnutrition and others are the main problems the region is facing. There is need for good health facilities and lay personnel. The Church is calling for an exchange and interchange between the modern healing, traditional and Christian healing in Southern Africa in order to improve the health situation in the region. Christians and theologians can no longer deny that people go to traditional healers and African independent prophets for healing instead of modern medical doctors. Ill health is a very serious problem which can affect the economy very badly. Illness causes a lot of affliction in the society.

Maganu argues that,

people always quote the Asian countries, especially India and China, as having found a balance between

³⁵⁹ Sandner 2004,4
³⁶⁰ Sandner 2004,4
the two forms of Medicine. The advantage of their systems (Ayuverda, Acupunture etc) is that they are to a large extent written and codified, and therefore they do have what can be called standard practice, and therefore also standardize their training and code of practice. African traditional medical systems lack this written base and that is why they are so difficult to standardize.\(^{361}\)

Our region should also learn from this development. Traditional medicine could be important both for healing and for economic reasons. It is high time traditional healing is accommodated in health system. It is said that some African governments have set up laboratories to study the active ingredients of traditional herbs. There is always a dilemma when a herb is found to have medicinal properties.

### 4.5.2 Theology of HIV/AIDS

One of the tools the Church should use to combat HIV/AIDS pandemic is theology. The lack of clear theological perspectives in many church leaders, preachers, families and individual believers may contribute to the pandemic. HIV/AIDS pandemic disturbsthe lives of human beings. AIDS is a world crisis. The Church should use a holistic approach to this crisis. In Southern Africa, the deadly virus has devastated families and orphans are left in miserable poverty. The question is: where is God in this time of HIV/AIDS? Musa Dube argues that *Jesus has AIDS* because the body of Christ, the Church is affected.\(^{362}\) Of course the question of theodicy seems to be a problem to people. Harold Kushner argues that,

> ...in the final analysis, the question of why bad things happen to good people translates into some very difficult questions, no longer asking why something happened but asking how we will respond, what we

\(^{361}\)Maganu 2004, 8

\(^{362}\)Dube 2003, 5
intend to do now that it has happened.363

The Christian theology will argue that God loves humanity. In difficult times, like of HIV/AIDS, God is still giving His love to humanity and creation. Even if the pandemic increases God will take sides with humanity. It will be advisable for the human race to come together as a group to ask the question ‘what do we intend to do now that it has happened?’ Team work is very important to deal with a crisis like this. We should not think only about ourselves, our organisations, or our private companies when dealing with HIV/AIDS or any other crisis for that matter. The HIV/AIDS crisis needs all of us together to fight the pandemic. It needs the affected, infected, the blacks, whites, the poor and the rich.

The pandemic was complicated by stigmatising people infected with the virus and claiming that they had sinned against God. The virus has been associated with sin. This shows that many Christians in the region still lack basic knowledge about Christian faith. It is time that Christians accept that we are all ruined sinners and that people lie helplessly in the hand of the wrathful God. People should not concentrate so much on what caused the disease or why God allowed it. Instead they should be thinking about how to respond to it i.e. to cry for Christ’s mercy.

The theological debate on HIV/AIDS may be difficult for those who are not trained theologians. Some people decide to remain silent to avoid conflictive issues, others promote a theology of glory mixing the gospel and the law. The issue is that the body of Christ is HIV positive. This is because many members of the body of Christ are HIV-positive and many are suffering from AIDS. The Church carefully teaches the law and the gospel to people bearing in mind the basis of the Pauline analogy of the Church as the body of Christ. The law is God’s command to refrain from harmful behaviours that threaten and destroy life. The law helps us recognise factors that contribute to the HIV pandemic and calls us to be prophetic and advocates. People should work together to change socio-economic structures and policies that contribute to poverty, illiteracy, violence, prostitution, drug abuse, and especially gender inequality that makes women

363 Kushner 1981,134
more vulnerable to HIV. People should refrain from preaching in judgement and accusation to those infected by the virus.

It should be remembered that through the gospel of Christ we have life. More also, through the grace and acceptance we know in and through Jesus Christ, all are unconditionally accepted, not condemned because of their behaviour. Through the gospel of Jesus Christ, we come to know what God is like, who we are and what we as Church are called to live out. This is the gospel of Christ that we should proclaim to the world during the crisis of HIV/AIDS. ³⁶⁴

The pandemic has caused people to relate human sexuality with sin. That is because HIV is mainly transmitted through sexual intercourse. It should be indicated that sexual activity is created by God and it brings joy to human relationships. This view must be respected. God has created it in order for life to be good. There are conditions which are given by God to make sure that this activity is done according to His will. The negative theological views of sexuality, combined with cultural taboos, are a recipe for disaster in the face of the HIV pandemic. This often makes response to HIV/AIDS to be difficult, limited and largely ineffectual. The Church should discuss and talk about issues of sexuality in its different gatherings. This will promote open discussion about the virus in families, churches and in the community at large. This should be the basis of the Church’s prevention strategy. There are other prevention strategies which the Church must not stand in the way but support.

### 4.5.3 HIV/AIDS is a New Kairos

Tinyiko Maluleke has classified HIV/AIDS as a New Kairos. Therefore AIDS is shaking the foundation and meaning of life, individuality, family, culture, community, religion, economy and Church. He calls the Church to use its strong voice against the crisis just like during the struggle against apartheid. ³⁶⁵

Maluleke feels that the stand which was taken by a group of theologians in 1980s could be repeated. This time it is not apartheid but HIV/AIDS which is a threat to the human race. The crisis has left many weeping. The worst part is that we are still going to weep

³⁶⁴ Lutheran World Federation 2009, 4
³⁶⁵ Maluleke 2003, 63
more. Is there a hope in this weeping? This again challenges the existence of the Church. It is a challenge to young theologians in the ministry to fight with all possible means against this New Kairos.

The issue of HIV/AIDS prevention is crucial. For instance, churches are still debating about their doctrines on issues like the use of condoms, safer sex, faithfulness and abstinence. It is unfortunate that while debates are ongoing in workshops and seminars hundreds are dying in hospitals and homes. Pastors are busy conducting funeral services. In his writings, Benezete Bujo argues that

"neither purely technical advice (use of condoms to prevent AIDS) nor moral admonitions (remain faithful) are sufficient to control the disease. The prevention and stopping of AIDS does not depend solely on the individual but on the quality of our institutions, changes in culture, economy and politics as well."

Bujo’s argument is realistic. It is important that the approach to this crisis should be a team work. This is what happened with the Kairos Document where a group of theologians came together to deal with apartheid. Theologians, pastors, and church leaders should bring a united voice and methodologies of dealing with the crisis.

"A crisis is a judgment that brings out the best in some people and the worst in others. A crisis is a moment of truth that shows us up for what we really are. There will be no place to hide and no way of pretending to be what we are not in fact. At this moment in South Africa the church is about to be shown up for what it really is and no cover-up will be possible."

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366 Bujo 1997,186-187
367 Maluleke 2003,63
The existence of the Church today is brought into a discussion. The Church should exist for all people. The late response of the Church to this crisis speaks a lot about the relevance of the Church’s theology and her prophetic voice. The New Kairos of HIV/AIDS should awaken the Church from her deep sleep. This goes together with what Kameeta understands about the Kairos today in Namibia, that it means time and existence that God gave to us. The Church today should exist for her people because God has given her time to exist. Lack of proper reaction to the crisis of HIV/AIDS indicates that the Church has got no time for her people who are destroyed by HIV/AIDS.

The Church has not created space or time for the affected and infected. The theology of HIV/AIDS is based on creating space and time for people living with HIV/AIDS. According to Kameeta, Kairos is a gift of God and people should be allowed to enjoy it. The stigmatization of people living with HIV/AIDS is denying them the Kairos which God has given to humanity. They are denied space at church buildings because they fear to be considered sinners. They are denied time to rejoice freely in worship services because they will be just conformed to their bedrooms. They are denied the right to existence in this world created by God.

Young people in Botswana are said to have been calling for the blessing of condoms in Church. The correct and safe use of condoms is a big factor in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. In an interview with Angela Gomases, a young person from Namibia, said that

...the Church has run away from the main issue to condom use. Condoms do not promote promiscuity as some Christians claim. Condoms do not invite people to use them. Why is the Church wasting time talking about man made things which are actually innocent? The main problem is the behavioural change of our people, not condoms.370

The calling for blessing of condoms at the level of the Church may be too much for the

368 Kameeta 2006,66
369 Kameeta 2006,67
370 Gomases in an interview on September 2006 (Walbisbay)
church. In his open lecture at the Lutheran Theology Seminary in Botswana, Professor Amanze of the University of Botswana responded to the debate about the use of condoms by arguing that it is not the task of the Church to proclaim the use of condoms. Instead the Church should leave that task for other collaborating organisations and concentrate on the behavioural change and pastoral care and counselling.\textsuperscript{371} This does not mean that the Church cannot have a say regarding the use of condoms, but it should not be the main objective and task of the Church. The Church’s first priority should be to proclaim the Gospel to the people, such that they can change their moral behaviour and live according to Christian norms and values. Therefore, the Church should preach abstinence and faithfulness in marriage.

\section*{4.5.4 Theology of Life}
The Theology of HIV/AIDS is a theology of life. Other theologians look at the issue from a different perspective. Post-liberation theology in Southern Africa should be concerned about protecting life. Moji Ruele, a lecturer at the University of Botswana, stresses the importance of the theology of life. 

\begin{quote}
\textit{A theology of life... is born out of the problematic life experience in which the people of Botswana and Southern Africa and indeed of the whole world find themselves... is a response by the people to the pain and suffering brought by all that endangers life, such as the HIV/AIDS, war and poverty.}\textsuperscript{372}
\end{quote}

The HIV/AIDS disease caused a crisis to different sectors of life. The New Kairos theology of HIV/AIDS is a relevant theology for the Church today. This theology should go beyond religion, culture, traditions and politics. It should use the theanthropocosmic approach in dealing with the crisis where God, humanity and natural environment are actively involved and participate in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The aim of HIV/AIDS

\textsuperscript{371} Amanze public lecture on HIV/AIDS in Botswana at LTS Woodpecker October 2006
\textsuperscript{372} Ruele 2003,78
theology is to create a good physical organic environment for those who are infected by the virus and those affected to live together rejoicing to God, the heavenly Father/Mother.

The theology of AIDS will seek to do more than merely inculturate; it will fearlessly and creatively engage in critique of culture... A theology of AIDS will seek to go beyond sheer cultural cliches so that the weapon of criticism i.e. African culture which was used to critique Western culture and Western Christendom-becomes also an object of criticism. If anything, the AIDS epidemic demonstrates the fallibility of all human cultures-African culture included.373

The Church is obliged to take care of people’s health. It is part of the diakonical mission work of the Church. She should continue promoting health as part of spirituality. Health is understood as the capacity of individuals, families and communities to work together to transform the conditions that promote in a sustainable way, their physical, emotional, economic, social, environment and spiritual well-being. The Church’s role in the community is to guide people on how to live according to norms and values of the community and Church doctrine in order to avoid diseases which are spread by acts of immorality. It is the Church that can promote total health which is the shalom or salvation that involves not only just physical wholeness but also social and spiritual wholeness embracing the totality of human life. Of course, another major challenge is lack of a sound theology of health which can guide the Church on matters of health.

I see the greatest challenge for the Church today in ministry lying in the field of health and wholeness and ministry of caring for its own and those to whom it has opportunity to minister. Nowhere in society is there: a foundation, a base, a philosophy and a theology

373 Benn 2002,11
so strong and so geared to develop around issues of health than in the Church.374

The Church should live out in practice what she preaches. It is not useful for the Church to keep uttering words without putting them into action. Therefore, the Church should be promoting a holistic approach in health care mending the spiritual, physical, mental and social aspects of health and balance. A sound theology of health should be formulated and be taught at all entities within the Church.

The Church, which is the body of Christ, is infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. The theology of the Church should give hope to those infected and comfort them instead of condemning them. It is clear that a theology that is largely otherworldly, dualistic and not holistic, offers old solutions from the past rather than offering new responses to the problems of today. The Church should offer hope beyond death. It is theologically irresponsible to think of Christianity only in otherworldly terms. There is a desperate need for hope in the present and future.

The issue here is whether or not justice and human rights which were promised during the liberation struggle have been realised. Criticism is concentrated on the amnesty question, but it should reach far beyond that. Amnesty is still a highly contested matter. In South Africa after the elections of 1994 the main task of the new democratic leadership was outlined in the preamble as follows as:

...to heal the divisions of the past and to establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.375

This targets several institutions with extensive powers, which are to ensure that these principles are implemented. Those include the Constitutional Court, the Human Rights

374 Okaalet 2006,135
Commission, the Gender Equality Commission, the Public Protector and others. Many constitutions in democratic countries in the Southern Africa have such beautiful verbiage. However this does not mean that everybody fulfills these principles. This is a main issue in the region of Southern Africa. For instance, the recent political crisis in Zimbabwe raises a lot of uncertainties about the issue of judicial system as guaranteed in the constitutions.

It is clear that the definition of human rights has been used by Western powerful countries for their own benefit. This was very common during the Cold War. The Northern states used human rights as a weapon against countries in the South. The Western governments impulsively perpetuated the right to liberty and political participation. Of course the socialist governments rejected these rights because they suspected that they cover up for the individual in bourgeois capitalist society and that they will be subordinated to the interest of the working class and the party governing.376

The socialist states, on the other hand, emphasised the social and economic rights. There was still no common universal understanding of human rights towards the 1960s, which was the decade of decolonisation. The Cold War and colonisation are buried with their legacy. Today human rights are still a burning issue. Some governments in the Southern Africa have violated human rights with impunity. The Zanu PF in Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe is accused of torture and maltreatment of political opponents in prisons, corruption, lack of transparency and harassment of journalists. The seizure of land by force from the white Zimbabweans is considered a human rights crisis.

In Botswana the political rights have been guaranteed since independence (1966) but there is still inadequate representation of the original San population in the country.377 At the moment the San community is challenging the Botswana government in court for removing them from their ancestral land and relocating them elsewhere.

376 Human Rights in the ministries of Berliner Missionswerk, review report 1995,8
377 Human Rights in the ministries of Berliner Missionswerk, review report 1995,26
4.6 Doing Mission Theology in Southern Africa

Mission work is one of the main areas in theology. It is the task of theology to look for a renewal, viability and transformation of mission work in Africa. The transformation should include all aspects of theology including theological education (studying of theology) and practical work in the communities (doing of theology). Mission work should respond to the contemporary issues of crises of faith, justice, culture, abuse of women and children, poverty, illiteracy etc. Doing theology is the core mission work of the Christian Church. The task of doing mission theology needs everybody to participate. Therefore, all Christian denominations and other religions should work hand in hand in order to promote spirituality.

In some countries in Africa today, pastors who have the responsibility of congregations and mission work are simultaneously active participants in politics. This situation has contributed to discrediting the prophetic role of the Church and is a serious drawback for the Church in its mandate to develop, promote and defend human rights, democracy, moral and Christian values. The Church today seems to have a problem with pastors who actively participate in politics. Those pastors who came out openly to actively participate in political parties seem to have difficulties too in issues of the prophetic voice of the Church. This is one item which needs to be addressed by Church at a higher level. The main task of the Church is to make sure that people are provided with spiritual guidance and also with physical needs. There is a need to come out with theological methodology which may guide young theologians to carry out their mission task in this challenging crisis in Southern Africa.

Missiology is a branch of Christian theology which deals with mission work of the Church in the world. It has played an influential role in the social, political and economic life in all continents. In biblical traditions, the universality of the Gospel created a multicultural change in the mission work of the Church. The mission work of Jesus Christ initially came directed to the Jews. Christ brought salvation only to them. Therefore, the Gospel was primarily meant for the Jews. Then there was a paradigm shift. A Canaanite woman corrected Jesus after Jesus claimed that he was sent only to the lost sheep of the

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379 Nakamhela 2000, 46
379 Ibid., p. 46
house of Israel. She said, *True Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters table.* (Matthew 15:24-28). Jesus Christ’s mission strategy shifted from particularism to universalism. The Gospel of Christ was compelled to integrate itself into different cultures and traditions. The universal Church manifested its faith in different parts of the world in different ways in each culture and tradition. It is important to mention that the conversion of Gentiles to Christianity triggered a profound crisis. This led to fundamental changes in Christians’ cultural identity, language, choice of authorities, forms of service and lifestyle.  

The African Independent Churches introduced what can be referred to as an Africanised mission strategy. This was made in comparison with the western church mission strategies that are believed to have negative impact on African cultural and traditional practices. The Western missionaries were influenced by their culture and their background to have a particular mental picture of what the Church ought to look for in Africa. This is considered unfortunate because it was not according to biblical understanding of missiology.

It may not be fully true that all first Western missionaries were radical in their approach to African cultures and traditions and anti-Africans involvement in politics. Some missionaries had different views of their mission strategies. David Livingstone is reported not to have been only interested in the spiritual needs of people but also in the integration of their spiritual, physical, political and social needs. It is documented that he complained that their uncivilised attitude destabilised economic, political and religious enterprises. What was important for Livingstone was to mix Christianity with politics and the apolitical Robert Moffat rejected the approach. Therefore, Christianity should address political issues without any fear. Africans are struggling with the same thing today.

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380 Ahonen, 2000, 17
381 Amanze 1998, 132
382 Nkomazana 2000, 99
383 Ibid., p. 99
There are people who feel that ministers should not be in active politics. Western and American mission societies’ ideas on how the church should look like in Africa include the following;

...they have their own ideas of the status and qualifications and salaries of a full-time minister. The academic training was done by the missionaries in various ways, and the theology they taught was based on the image they had of the church as it developed in their own culture in their home countries. They were trained in the methods on interpretation and philosophy of a foreign culture.384

This resulted in having well educated African clergies who perpetuated western ways of worship into their own fellow Africans ways of worship. Congregations in Africa had evangelists who were untrained and unpaid. Their position in the church was lower than those of educated clergies. Hayes described the situation as follows;

...the “mission” churches therefore tended to have two Theologies, a “clerical” theology and a “people” theology.385

Nevertheless, African theologians now have an opportunity to revisit their mission theology with their vast academic qualifications and experiences. Theology and mission are identical twins. Bosch argues repeatedly and persuasively that the Church’s approach to theology, especially after the fourth century, had lost sight of the fact that mission is the mother of theology.386 The western missionaries did not recognise the importance of learning African traditional religion. Theology cannot be separated from mission work. It reflects critically on how people live out their faith and respond to it. Theology itself is the main tool for missiology. The Church should take theology as the mother of mission.

384 Hayes 1998 162-163
385 Hayes 1998,163
386 Shenk 1996,83-84
work. It is imperative for the Church to devise good mission strategies which are contextual. A mission theology which is relevant to Africa is a necessity.

There is a need to revive diaconal ministry in Africa. The missionaries are not the only ones who brought diaconal work phenomena in Africa. Africans had practised diaconal work in their societies before. The concept of Botho (Ubuntu) exists in almost African countries. Diakonia in Africa should take the form of a prophetic voice of the Church. Deenabandhu Manchala insists that,

*Diakonia itself prophetic should be a ferment of change transforming this violent world into a world of peace and justice. Diakonia must stop treating the poor as recipients of its service, and join them in their moral struggle against poverty which is but a brutal form of violence. On the other hand, this kind of diakonia can only emerge out of a process of genuine repentance. Diakonal possibilities in dealing with violence include affirming human dignity and human rights, promoting mutuality and interdependence, redefining power as a shared, liberating sources.*

The doing of mission work in the city is an urgent thing to be dealt with in Africa. There is a hypothesis that this area of study has not been emphasised at theological colleges and seminaries. For instance, a study conducted among pastors in Nairobi found that only one percent of them had received any form of theological education and training which was specifically directed towards preparing them for the ministry in the city. It can be assumed that Nairobi is not much different from other African cities. In an interview with Rev Risto Lidgeblad of the Lutheran Church in Botswana, he argued that there is an urgent need for the Churches in Botswana to start targeting towns and cities because that is where the HIV/AIDS pandemic is most alarming.

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387 Manchala 2002,43
388 Smith 2008,249
We must start to shift our mission strategies to urban mission in order to combat the pandemic. People have migrated from villages to towns and cities to make a living. The major problem is if the Church have well trained pastors and deacons to do mission work in cities. I am convinced that our seminaries’ curriculums donot accommodate this field of study fully. Therefore African Churches should now do their best in making sure that urban mission is accommodated in their programmes.389

African cities and towns compose of people from different backgrounds. There are inhabitants who are first and second generation residents. The inhabitants also include part of new generation who no longer consciously trace their roots to the rural areas. They have even forgotten their cultures and traditions of the villages of their origin. They consider rural life as old fashioned and out of today’s context. There are those who have formed part of that tidal wave of humanity which, across the globe, has been moving from rural to urban areas unsure whether the ticket will ultimately prove to be one way or return. The composition of people in the city creates a lot of social problems. The gap between the poor and the rich is very visible in cities. There is a sharp rise in unemployment figures, often resulting in crime, drug and alcohol abuse as well as other social problems.

There is a tremendous population increase in African cities and towns. It is interesting to look at the numbers of a city called Ashaiman in Ghana. It is known to be the fastest growing urban area in Ghana.

In 1970 the population of Ashaiman was 22,549. In 1984, it was 50,918. It tripled in 2000 to 150,312. It is estimated that as of 2007, the population was about 210,400. Most

389 An interview with Rev Risto Lidgeblad on February 2008
people who migrated from other parts of the country find their way there, and a sizeable number of nationalities in West Africa are also found in Ashaiman.  

The Church in Africa should work on the ecumenical theology in order to strengthen her mission work. It is often said; united we stand, divided we fall. For the Church to have a strong and influential voice in Africa, she should come together and join ecumenical organisations. The main ecumenical body in the world is the World Council of Churches that was formed in 1948 by 147 churches in Amsterdam, Holland. In his explanation, Rev Dr Samuel Kobia, the former WCC Secretary General, underscored that the WCC is a concrete expression of the ecumenical movement. It was founded on the basis of human need that people of diverse cultures in this world affirm each other’s faith and their unique place in the household of God. The ecumenical body provides the space in which we celebrate diversity. This body plays an important role on advocacy and dialogue with other faiths of the world in order to promote peace in the whole world.

Today, WCC endeavours to deepen the fellowship of more than 340 churches in over 100 countries throughout the world. And with Eucharistic hospitality, the Council is reaching out in the spirit of dialogue with other faiths, so that we may become a true oikoumene whose foundation is koinonia.

The WCC contributed a lot in mission work in the whole of Africa. The council helped the continent throughout times of political, social and economical crisis. It is justifiable to suggest that the WCC is a partner with Africans as they journey together for hope. It is clear that the emergence and growth of the African initiatives in Christianity have led to new cultural and spiritual autonomy that proclaim human dignity as the basis for humanity’s common quest for the meaning of unity in diversity. In this global world, there is a need for cultural diversity to enhance the global village’s spirituality. Therefore

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390Smith 2008,225
391Kobia 2006,96
392Ibid.,p.96
the growth of new church-based social movements, especially in rural Africa, poses major challenges to the extension of ecumenical boundaries. Here, non-traditional ecclesial structures find home in the household of God. The world ecumenical movements should loosen their strict entry requirements so that rural churches from Africa are able to join them. In most cases African churches have complained that they are not able to meet membership requirements.

As the WCC provides an ecumenical space for encounter between peoples representing every aspect of the human experience, African rural churches should be provided with exemption to be members of the WCC. That will benefit the global church. People of different experiences will be able to interact and share their spiritual experiences with one another. There is no doubt that Africa has a rich history in spirituality and human existence. This history should be preserved and shared with other continents. The human experience in Africa is actually close to the biblical traditions. Kobi observes that this human experience

> ... alludes to the dignifying value of what it means to be human in the context of biblical narratives. Moreover Africa, as the shrine of human origins, bears the historical burden of ancestry that has a deep and most profound implication in the ecumenical motifs of unity within the household of God. Africa has a great deal to contribute to the cultural and social memory contained within this ecumenical motif. This contribution could be made more effectively within the context of encounter between churches and spiritual movements of Africa with the western and eastern forms of Christianity.³⁹³

³⁹³Kobi 2006,96-97

It is time for the African Church to stop splitting into new churches. This weakens the voice of the Church in Africa. Churches in Africa should preach unity and diversity and put it into practice. The problem can be avoided by having strong ecumenical bodies
within Africa like the All Africa Conference of Churches. These organisations can assist in conflict resolution within African churches because divisions among these churches are often caused by power struggles. Ecumenical institutions in Africa also should become more active. Africa’s rural churches should have access to these institutions, especially for theological training.

The major problem in Africa is that individual churches do their training. Within a country like Botswana, there are six theological seminaries and colleges for a national population of less than 1.8 million. In most cases these seminaries are collapsing financially because it is very expensive for an individual entity to run a theological institution. There is need to pool resources together and have a quality reliable theological ecumenical institution. Through initiatives of the WCC, ecumenical institutions were established in Africa. These include Limuru Conference Centre in Kenya, the Church and Society Center in Nigeria and the Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in Zambia and later the Contextual Theology in South Africa. Ecumenical institutions help in fostering interaction between churches and people both globally and locally. This interaction is defined and redefined by the common concerns for the spiritual and economic well-being of communities and peoples. It is doubtful that African churches take ecumenical mission work seriously. But they must do this in order to meet the challenges imposed by factors of globalisation.

4.7 African Renaissance

The African Renaissance should allow the continent, which was plundered for centuries, to take its rightful place in the world. It depends on the building of a strong economy as the world moves towards greater liberalisation and competition. African Renaissance calls for the radical economical, cultural and political liberalisation of African continent. This move will enable the continent to enjoy the sovereignty it deserves.

A Renaissance is a theological issue. It involves God, human beings and physical organic environment. It can be taken as God’s revelation to the world. It is not only the changing

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394 Ibid., p.97
395 NEPAD 2001,12
of infrastructure, having new political leaders and a booming economy but the changing of people’s attitudes towards life. It is a way people perceive their personal life, their neighbours, and their physical environment. It is a process which takes time. Africans should not only concentrate on the development of the physical organic environment and take for granted that human beings are just fine. African governments should equip people with education, skills, self-reliance spirit and hard work. The human mind should be developed. The Renaissance spirit is also reflected in the New Testament. The concept of being born again is one of the most important teachings of Jesus Christ. (John 3:3). Jesus meant that people should totally change. The total change means the way they perceive God and other things, the way they think, the way they worship and believe. People cannot do that without the help of the Spirit of God. Therefore, they should be born again by the Spirit and water.

The African Renaissance calls for a theology which is well-grounded in Africa. That is a theology which comes from African people’s experience. Those people include women and children, men, disabled and people infected by chronic diseases including HIV/AIDS. This theology rejects all forms of racism, discrimination, tribalism, sexism, and xenophobia. It should be a theology which addresses people’s concerns, issues and difficulties. It is a theology of reconstructing and rebuilding the future Africa.

The role of the Church in the Renaissance is very important. It seems that the Church has forgotten her main reason for existence. She is trying to do so many tasks, while forgetting the task for which she exists. The Church should know that she exists for God, humanity and the physical organic environment. Therefore, the main task of the Church is delivering the Good News to the people. The Gospel is the Word of God that makes people free. Jesus Christ is the liberator. This God’s Word also allows people to be restored to creation, to be the caretakers of God’s beautiful garden and treasure and saviour of the delights of this garden as well.

Theology should not be about providing an overall system, but instead it should deconstruct systems. Undoubtedly it is desirable for the Church’s catechism to seek
rhetorically a structured presentation of the faith. The Church should provide guidance to the politicians in this process of African Renaissance. The Church is well equipped with theological tools which should enhance her efforts in the struggle against the world’s afflictions.

The African Renaissance is another way of calling for revival of the Church and the State relationship. Most African countries attained independence from colonial powers through the help of the Church and other faith organisations. The Church played a vital role in liberation struggle. The role of the Church after liberation seems not to be central as before. The possible problem could be that the relationship between the Church and the new African governments was neglected. Of course, this created differences between the Church and State when addressing social issues. One may assume that lack of proper consultation between states and religious organisations may have negative consequences on the lives of the people.

The states in Africa are often equated with daunting challenges of the extreme poverty, a devastating HIV/AIDS epidemic, cruel and dehumanising dictatorships and failing leadership, ravaging civil wars, uncontrolled corruption and unrestrained economic exploitation. There are names like Darfur, Zimbabwe, DRC, Charles Taylor and many more in this situation. These are realities in Africa. There is no doubt that Africa has heroes and heroines in the fight against injustice and oppression. She has produced world-class politicians, theologians, intellectuals, artists, musicians and athletes that influence and shape the rest of the world. But the question is why the negative picture of Africa outweighs the positive one. Why is the African Renaissance not as effective as it had been hoped? The role of the Church in Africa today should be revisited. It is legitimate for both the states and the Church to go back to the round table for discussions about their relationship.

396 Mattes 2004, 181
397 Kameeta 2007, 14
398 Kameeta 2004, 14
The Church should see to it that she is the guardian of governments in Africa. The Church should engage other religious organisations, private sector, and nongovernmental organisations and the society at large on this task. The Church is expected to be the main facilitator on resolving and avoiding socio-political and economic crisis in Africa. The Church should use her prophetic voice not only to condemn the State but to give advice and support to governments. The Church should not be limited by the dominant forces of the world. She is obliged to stand for what is needed and biblically imperative, not for what seems possible in the worldly way. It is the task of the Church and other nongovernmental organisations to engage and direct the states on issues of governance.

African churches have financial problems. Perhaps this explains why they are unable to play a meaningful role in the African Renaissance.

Most of the limited resources of the Church are used for mission work. For instance, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) has challenged the Church to give more attention to ways that will permanently eradicate poverty in Africa. The issue is whether the Church is capable of playing a major role in this endeavour given her limited resources. However, that does not give the Church an excuse. The Church does not need only finance capabilities to participate in this exercise. There are lots of things she can do in order to assist the NEPAD strategic plans. The Church is very rich with resources. The major resources for the Church are congregants. The Church can use her congregants to influence social-economic policies in different countries. The Church can use her ecumenical movements to have a louder voice on issues affecting their people at international level. In his calling for the Church to be engaged in NEPAD, the General Secretary of All Africa Conference of Churches pleaded that

\[\ldots we thus, have a responsibility as the African Ecumenical movement to engage \textit{The New Partnership for Africa’s Development} intensely. We have to ensure that it achieves the goals of reversing the continent’s poverty. To do so will require that we examine the values and strategies. It employs to see if these will help us achieve the goals set\]
so that our accompaniment will be informed by the values and principles that we believe should guide proper stewardship of resources in the world.\textsuperscript{399}

4.8 Conclusion

Theology is directed to both individuals and groups. The challenges Africa is facing need participation of everybody in the community including governments, non governmental organisations, political formations and religious organisations. There is no way that the State alone can fight and defeat poverty and crime without help from other institutions in the society. Theology should direct how these institutions can work hand in hand to meet challenges faced by human beings.

The land issue cannot be left unchallenged in Southern Africa. It is important that all civil societies and other organisations are included in the formulation of land distribution policies. The world today is controlled by economic market forces and some ideologies like globalisation. It is the responsibility of the Church and other religions to be the voice of those who are disadvantaged by these forces. Africans should all support and uphold the concept of Botho. This is a concept that retains the African identity. It is through this concept that some social ills in Africa will be addressed. The Botho concept calls for the renewal of cultural practices to be integrated into modern societies.

HIV/AIDS is a crisis in the whole world. Africans should use everything possible to address the pandemic. African medicinal plants should be investigated and when possible used in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Church should use new mission strategies to deal with the creeping individualism that often results in a lot of injustice in different societies. An African Renaissance is the only exercise that can direct the hopes, visions and dreams for African people and their governments.

\textsuperscript{399}Dandala 2006,83
Theologies in Southern Africa should not only behave as academic discipline but also be applicable to the community at large. Theologies discussed in the preceding chapters can change the lives of many people. The study and the doing of theology are soulmates. They work hand in hand. The two methodologies should be treated equally. Pastors who did not have formal theological training should be enrolled in theological training. This is because the study of theology helps to apply theological methods into contemporary life. It helps to analyse technical scientific theological debates like God as the object of theology and human being. To engage in this kind of discussions, one should be well-trained in the field of theology but that does not mean that those who are not trained cannot do it. The African concept of God is very important in Southern Africa.

The principle of Theanthroposcosmic can be effectively applied by theologians who are keen to use different approaches on issues affecting the community. The people’s self-consciousness determines their faith and their experiences to God and the physical organic environment. Human beings should be taken as objects of theology. The influence of theology in the region will depend on the quality of theological education in local theological institutions and universities. It is important to have theological seminaries and colleges which teach both academic theology and practical theology. Their existence will help Southern Africa to have, not only academic pastors, but diligent and contextual ministers.

Theology loses its creditability if it is not contextual. A relevant theology addresses contemporary issues about God, human beings and the physical organic environment. In the society, there is a need for a universal theology. Globalisation influences the world of today. There is no way theology can escape that influence. The study and doing of theology in Southern Africa must put more emphasis on the diversities of theologies in the pluralistic society of Southern Africa. These theologies are concerned about human experiences and feelings.
The African and Black theologies, Feminist, Womanist and African Women theologies are liberation theologies. They are considered people’s theologies. They share the experiences of people within their context. These theologies sensitise people about their existence. These are relevant theologies which helped the continent during the liberation struggle. These theologies should be reformulated in order to address people living in the post-liberation era in Southern Africa. They are very essential to the theological methodologies used today. These theologies are used to restore the lost African humanity. This restoration reflects critically on what Africa has at the moment and how she can retain her identity in these global world. Black theologians in the region should start engaging new approaches of Black Theology to reflect on social economic illness affecting black people today. The relevance of black theology is determined by the effectiveness of its methodology. Black Theology should continued to stand on its own.

The methods of studying and doing theology in today’s contexts contribute to the construction of theology in Southern Africa. It is important to engage people in theology, listen to their concerns, to tell stories and read the Bible with them. This way of doing theology makes theology not to belong to the academic world but also tends to get people to participate in it. The theories of these theologies reflect the contextual life of the people. African, Black and Feminist theologies are applicable to the context of today. These theologies should not create divisions in the society. Instead they should create an environment which allows discussions between people of different sexes, races, genders, tribes and sexual orientations. Liberation theologies still have a crucial role to play in today’s life by transforming a modern society which must rise up against global afflictions. The process of transformation is spear headed by theological approaches and by engaging other disciplines and the society at large.

The concept of wholeness is essential in building a new society. The history of Southern Africa was dominated by racism, tribalism and xenophobia etc. The concept of dualism has been common in the region. The concept of wholeness was lost during colonial period. Reconstruction theology in the region should go back to the African concept of
wholeness. The concept of Rainbowism is an attempt to create a non-racial Southern Africa. Rainbowism theology uses wholesome approach. The New Kairos theology offers liberation from many of today’s afflictions which hinder people from enjoying the time God has created. The New Kairos theology gives hope for a new society that can be built on (Ubuntu).

The Namibian Open letter and Kairos Document are important examples of building a united nation. There is a need to have a theology which encourages discussion, dialogue, debate and negotiations. Re-construction of theologies in Southern Africa commences from families, societies, tribes, towns, countries and the region. Theology should address issues concerning democracy, leadership, cultural renewal and religious tolerance. The wholesome and holistic approaches have proven to be the best ways to do theology in Southern Africa. Southern Africa is facing new challenges, therefore the struggle continues. The theology of A Luta Continua will analyse cultural, traditional and modern theories which hinder people from having a good life. People in the region are looking forward to see their countries with less poverty, less economic crime, employment opportunities, democratic society and where justice and human rights are promoted.

Theology is directed to both individuals and groups. The Theanthrocosmic principle goes together with the approach which needs a group rather than individualism. Individualism is a practice which is discouraged in many traditional societies. It is mostly a practice of modern society. The post-liberation theology should liberate humanity from individualistic mentality. The revival of the African concept of ‘Ubuntu’ is a hope for dismantling the individualism in the society.

The challenges that the modern society faces can be managed properly if they are collectively dealt with by people who group themselves. Theology should help deal with social, economic and political issues as a group. Team work is the ideal African model of dealing with issues of corruption, crime, poverty, illness, healing etc. The Post-liberation theology should protect both individual rights and group rights in a society. The region
needs to revisit their diaconical ministry. Mission work should be done as a group by different denominations.

The key issue in diaconical mission is teamwork. Mission societies, churches, charity organisations should join forces to combat poverty, injustice, human rights abuse, crime, nepotism, racism and stigmatisation of those who suffer from HIV/AIDS. The post-liberation theology is directed to a group.

Theology should be taken very seriously because it has answers to people’s questions. Theology cannot make itself relevant unless theologians themselves do so. Theology is like the mother and father, son, daughter, sister and brother of other disciplines. A relevant theology is a theology which addresses a person from his/her home the workplace, relaxing place, resting place and at the graveyard. It addresses people’s ideas, visions, mentality, reasoning and their faith.
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Lectures


Dictionary