Biblical Spiritualities of the "City to Come":
Narratives of Meaning, Complexity, and Resistance

by

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I hereby declare that **Biblical Spiritualities of the "City to Come": Narratives of Meaning, Complexity, and Resistance** 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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(C C du Toit)

SUMMARY

"How does one develop an appropriate urban Christian Spirituality?" is the question this study asks. First, I develop a rigorous, yet open, theoretical framework with which to describe Christian Spirituality's complexity: a description focused primarily on constraining the markers of Biblical Spirituality and City Spirituality. Within the limits placed on the complex system of Christian Spirituality, I begin exploring various, mostly minor, tropes of urban biblical spiritualities in the "Old" and "New" Testament. From these analyses, I evince the implications of these biblical spirituality tropes for the current city theater, and also construe a set of questions evaluating the appropriateness of mitigating urban communities. The study culminates in an imagined ideal mitigating urban community named an *ekklesiastes*: a wisdom teaching technology of urban meaning, complexity, and resistance.

KEYTERMS

Biblical Spirituality; City Spirituality; Christian Spirituality; Complexity; Urban

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

Christian Spirituality has fascinated me since I studied Christian Reformed Theology at Stellenbosch University. The ways in which new situations challenge Christian thought and life, infusing the old rusted metaphors of Christianity with new vitality, inspires me. To understand this dynamic process of renewal, I introduce two fundamental concepts that shaped my understanding of Christian Spirituality: "rich" identity and symbol.

"Rich" identity is a property of complex systems. Complexity is especially helpful when describing Christian Spirituality. Christian Spirituality, as a system of human thought, facilitates non-linear connections, which might produce emerging properties. Cilliers (2010: 61–62) explains how complex systems use "rich" identity to cope with unique features in its environment:

> The more diversity there is involved in the construction of the identity, the richer it will be. A 'rich' identity does not imply that such an identity is open, general, or vague. This is exactly the nature of a lean identity. A rich identity is also richly constrained… Excess diversity in the system allows the system to cope with novel features in the environment without losing its identity—as long as one remembers that identity is now a dynamic concept which is subject to change.

Christian Spirituality, as it confronts novel situations, perpetually searches for new articulations of Christian tradition. Christian tradition is the "rich" identity from which Christians draw resources for Christian Spirituality: an ongoing process, symbolising Christianity's meaning in a particular time and space.

Discourses pertaining symbolics are complicated and diverse, so to hint at what I mean by symbol, here is Jung's (1920: 12) definition:

> The symbol is not a sign that disguises something generally known. Its meaning resides in the fact that it is an attempt to elucidate, by a more or

less apt analogy, something that is still entirely unknown or still in the process of formation. If we reduce this by analysis to something that is generally known, we destroy the true value of the symbol; the attributed hermeneutic significance to it is consistent with its value and meaning.

Christian Spirituality, as a complex system, draws on the "rich" identity of the Christian tradition and symbolises possibilities in a new space and time. Through this process, Christian Spirituality revitalises the old rusted metaphors of the Christian tradition.

My interest in the dynamic process of Christian Spirituality led me to devote my M.Div. dissertation to Celtic Spirituality (du Toit, 2007). The dissertation sensitised me to new ways of viewing metaphors, rituals, symbols, and spirituality. What this study of Celtic Spirituality taught me might be summarised in a single Allchin (1997: 1) quote:

> A Welsh poet of our time, Waldo Williams, replies to the question 'What is Life?' with the words 'Finding a large room between narrow walls.'

When moving to the Gauteng Province in 2008, Christians' struggle to develop an appropriate Christian Spirituality in cities struck me. The struggle to establish an appropriate Christian Spirituality in cities was especially baffling, since the city of Geneva gave birth to the flavour of Christianity I ascribe to: the Calvinistic tradition (Naphy, 2004: 35–37). In 2011, the question regarding an appropriate Christian Spirituality in cities took on a new measure of urgency for me.

During 2011, a group of Christians between the ages of 20 and 30 started a small Christian community in the Sandton-area. They did this with the help of the Dutch Reformed Church: the Christian denomination to which I belong. I played a strategic role in facilitating this community's formation. The Sandton-area is one of the wealthiest and cosmopolitan areas in South Africa — with Alexandria, one of the poorest informal settlements in the country, skirting its skyscrapers. This small group's struggle with the question of Christian Spirituality in the city was my initial inspiration for this study.

While completing this study, I relocated in two ways that developed my idea on an appropriate Christian Spirituality in cities. First, I took leave of my congregation in Pretoria to write academically. In 2013, I produced academic papers for two annual conferences of South African theological organisations. One for the Spirituality Association of South Africa (SPIRASA), held in Pretoria, and another for the South African Missiology Society (SAMS) held in Stellenbosch. In 2014, I wandered into less theological territory delivering papers at two international conferences: One at the Spiritual and Religious Capital session of the International Sociology Association (ISA) in Yokohama, Japan and another at the European Union Project Religion and Legal Territory (EUREL) in Lublin, Poland. These conferences afforded me contact with a variety of thinkers active in divergent fields.

My second migration was from Pretoria to New York City. This shift of research locale, from Pretoria to Manhattan, broadened my horizons. New York City is one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world and a first port of entry into the United States for many. Here I met a variety of captivating people — academic and less academic, old friends and new ones — who further formed my contemplation on an appropriate Christian Spirituality in cities. As a researcher, the New York Public Library, New York University, and Columbia University, granted me access to their libraries. All this exposure happened in the shadow of regularly walking along Wall Street: a metonym for the world of power that flows through this tiny pocket of our planet.

I have already mentioned some of my ideas surrounding Christian Spirituality in this section. Embarking on this study, I consider a working description of Christian Spirituality. I prefer a working description rather than a working definition because of my conviction that Christian Spirituality is a complex system[1] that cannot be defined but can be constrained as Cilliers (2010: 58–59) explains:

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[1] As Loubser (2014: 1) points out " [t]here is no unified theory of complexity that is embedded in a single epistemology, and this leads to the variety of ways in which researchers draw on complexity." I choose here, for what he describes, as *general complexity* (Loubser, 2014: 1–3).

Complex behavior is possible only when the behavior of the system is constrained. On the other hand, a fully constrained system has no capacity for complex behavior, either. This claim is not quite the same as saying that complexity exists somewhere on the edge between order and chaos. A wide range of structured systems displays complex behavior. Complexity is not a function of plenitude, but of interchange and relationships.

One can only describe the interchanges and relationships within the complex system of Christian Spirituality in a hermeneutical and interdisciplinary way. Because of the hermeneutical and interdisciplinary nature of the study of Christian Spirituality, one has to "…settle on a working definition, in order to share somewhat more clearly a frame of reference during academic deliberations" (Lombaard, 2011a: 214). I merely want to tweak the mention of "working definition" to "working description" due to Christian Spirituality's complexity.

This study will focus on a sub-discipline of Christian Spirituality, namely Biblical Spirituality, which I explore once I have come to a working description of Christian Spirituality. A third working description I investigate is that of City Spirituality. The working descriptions of Biblical Spirituality and City Spirituality are to form the constraints of my study within the broader field of Christian Spirituality. Such constraints maintain Christian Spirituality as a complex system with a memory (Biblical Spirituality) and emerging properties (City Spirituality). Sheldrake (2003: 20) claims that this tension lies at the heart of Christian spirituality:

The heart of Christian spirituality may indeed be expressed in terms of this tension—a dialectic of the mystical-contemplative and transformative practice (the prophetic).

1.2. A WORKING DESCRIPTION OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

This section attempts to delineate Christian Spirituality's knowledge field into a working description. I start with the question: "What is spirituality?" leading into a survey of the surprising contemporary return of spirituality. Finally, I consider the

origin of the word spirituality and what it can teach us. From the information gathered I draw four markers of Christian Spirituality, which outline the limits of my study.

1.2.1. WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

You only have to walk through your local bookshop and search for the spirituality section to discover spirituality as a term used for all sorts of things. Books in these sections range from the self-help to the quick fix, some New Age, some written by the Dalai Lama, some by a monk, others referencing a motorcycle. Some scepticism in academic circles about spirituality is to be expected considering that this label "…has become an umbrella term which covers a myriad of activities, ranging from the deeply creative to the distinctively bizarre" (Kourie, 2009: 151). Caution among academics is precisely why spirituality must be constrained to a working description from this study's onset. So, let us consider a selection of attempts to define spirituality.

Possibly the most influential current Spirituality scholar is Waaijman. His book *Spirituality: Forms, Foundations, Methods* has given the field of Spirituality a broad academic framework. Waaijman (2002: 1) gives the following definition of Spirituality:

> Spirituality as we define it touches the core of human existence: our relation to the Absolute… In our daily life, as a rule, spirituality is latently present as a quiet force in the background, an inspiration and an orientation.

I respect Waaijman's *magnum opus* and make use of some of his structures in my study. However, I find a nuance in Waaijman's definition of Spirituality awkward. The way Waaijman describes Spirituality is ontological, with a big Other, Being or Absolute as relational object.

The next subsection explores the surprising du jour return of spirituality, but this return is de-ontological, with no big Other, a fragile Being, and a non-absolute. There is no place for capital letters or full stops in the contemporary return to

spirituality, only small letters, and ellipses. Caputo (2006: 5) articulates this move beyond Being as a theology of the event:

> An event refers neither to an actual being or entity nor to being itself, but to an impulse or aspiration simmering within both the names of entities and the name of being, something that groans to be born, something that cannot be constricted to either the ontic or ontological order at all… An event is not an ontico-ontological episode on the plane of being but a disturbance within the heart of being, within the names for being, that makes being restless.

Žižek (2009: 101), true to his style, gives a blinding overview of Marxism, Christianity, Wagner and concludes, in Hegelian fashion, the same as Caputo's positive insight, but states it negatively:

> What, then, is the proper atheist stance? Not a continuous desperate struggle against theism, of course—but not a simple indifference to belief either. That is to say: what if, in a kind of negation of negation, true atheism were to return to belief (faith?), asserting it without reference to God—only atheists can truly believe; the only true belief is belief without any support in the authority of some presupposed figure of the 'big Other.'

McGrath (1994: 112–113), in a short introduction to postmodernism, provides a table of differences between modernity and postmodernity, and then comments that:

> …[T]he terms gathered together under the 'modernism' category have strong overtones of the ability of the thinking subject to analyze, order, control, and master. Those gathered under the 'postmodernism' category possess equally strong overtones of the inability of the thinking subject to master or control, with the result that things need to be left as they are, in all their glorious and playful diversity.

After this tour into the future subsection, I cannot help noticing the capital letter of the "Absolute" in Waaijman's definition of Spirituality. Seems that the

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contemporary return to spirituality is a humbler endeavour than Modernity's Neurosis of Producing Ontological Truth Claims, with big capital letters (Schreiber, 2012: 1–8).

Kourie's (2009: 158) description of (Christian) Spirituality is much more sensitive to its recent return:

> By way of summary, Christian spirituality impacts on the totality of everyday life; it is non-dualistic and holistic, effecting change at cognitive, volitional and affective levels of the person. Spirituality recognises the fullness and complexity of the human being. It has come a long way and speaks to us from the corridors of history: freed from deterministic categories, it allows a fresh approach both in terms of the lived experience itself and also the academic discipline.

My first marker, then, for a working description of Christian Spirituality, is to think in small letters, ellipses, and with a theology of the event always haunting me like a very holy ghost.[2] This broader and less ontological description of spirituality will guide my examination of the contemporary return of spirituality and theology.

1.2.2. THE CONTEMPORARY RETURN OF SPIRITUALITY

Perhaps the most surprising thing about postmodernity is the return of (or turn to) theology and spirituality. Davis (2009: 3), in his introduction to *The Monstrosity of Christ*, gives an account of the unexpected reappearance of theology in the humanities:

> If the theological was marginalized in the age of Western secular modernity, it has now returned with a vengeance. Theology is reconfiguring the very makeup of the humanities in general, with disciplines like philosophy, political science, literature, history, psychoanalysis, and critical theory, in particular, feeling the impact of this return.

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[2] The allusion is to the calling, captivating, and spectre-like qualities of the Holy Spirit.

What Davis means by "theology" here, is the return of Christian theology, specifically. Davis' chapter in *The Monstrosity of Christ* introduces a debate between Žižek and Milbank concerning, amongst other things, Christianity's meaning, Hegel, and contemporary times. This book is by no means an exception in Christian theology's reappearance as a source for the humanities. The past decade has witnessed a flood of books in the humanities dealing with Christian theology.[3] We have here one might say, a return of the spirit of Christianity to the humanities.

Theology and spirituality's return in the humanities has its roots in what Kourie (2009: 152) calls constructive postmodernism:

> As such, constructive postmodernism has immense significance for present-day spirituality, particularly in its emphasis on the inter-connectedness of all of life, human and non-human. Postmodernism represents a *gestalt* shift, or epistemological transformation, which, without denying the very real benefits of the scientific and technological advances of modernism, nevertheless is open to the mystical, the spiritual and the aesthetic.

Thus, spirituality is already part of the very structure of constructive postmodernism. No wonder the humanities notices this spirituality *gestalt* shift and turns it into a theological reflection.

As mentioned in the previous subsection, this return has a different flavour than the modernistic spirituality claiming strong ontological truths. Whereas spirituality

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[3] Five prominent works in the past decade include:
   1. *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core Of Christianity* – Žižek (2003): Žižek explores Christianity through Lacanian psychoanalysis.
   2. *Saint Paul: The Foundations of Universalism* – Badiou (2003): Badiou uses the writings of Paul to explore his influence on universalism.
   3. *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans* – Agamben (2005): Agamben marks the "messianic time" that Paul introduces in his letter to the Romans.
   4. *The Weakness of God* – Caputo (2006): Caputo explores deconstruction and Christian theology.
   5. *St. Paul Among the Philosophers* – ed. Caputo and Alcoff (2009): Paul's writings are at the centre of a debate between eminent philosophers, "Old" and "New" Testament scholars.

was previously part of, or propagated by, religious traditions alone, now spirituality can be with or without religion (Caputo, 2006: 273–277). Some who ascribe to spirituality might even rightly pass for atheists. Caputo (2006: 266) explains why atheism might even be an advantage:

> So by the mad para-logic of the impossible, rightly passing for an atheist is no obstacle, and might even be an advantage, while rightly passing for one of the inside crowd [of the kingdom of God] could spell trouble.

This does not mean we must disregard organised religion and its offerings as Kourie (2009: 153) notes:

> Nevertheless, although the established religious traditions do not exert a strong appeal for a large number of people, religion and spirituality can be partners, and not necessarily rivals; spirituality can be a source of renewal for religion and the latter can prevent spirituality from becoming rudderless and isolated.

The next subsection I dedicate to the search of such a rudder by exploring the study of Christian Spirituality. Before we move on, let me formulate my second marker for a working description of Christian Spirituality: Christian Spirituality must engage, in some way, with contemporary spirituality with or without religion, atheist or religious.

1.2.3. THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

The study of Christian Spirituality has a history traced back to the origins of the word spirituality itself as Kourie (2009: 155) explains:

> As is well known, the word 'spirituality' comes from the Latin *spiritualitas*, which is related to *spiritus* and *spiritualis* — used to translate *pneuma* and *pneumatikos* in Paul's writings. Paul, in turn relied on the Old Testament role of the spirit (*ruah*) of God.

The first thing to notice concerning Kourie's description is spirituality's Judeo-Christian embeddedness. The term's Judeo-Christian origin does not preclude the possibility of using it when study other forms of spirituality. Nor does it mean that one can only practise Christian Spirituality within the confines of organised religion (Kourie, 2009: 152). One, however, must take the term's Judeo-Christian origins seriously.

The second thing to notice from Kourie's description of the origin of the word spirituality is its deeply biblical beginning. The term spirituality stretches back through the writings of Paul right into the "Old" Testament. Christian Spirituality, then, must in some way be rooted in the Word of God, as put poignantly by Schneiders (2002: 134, italics added):

> …Christian spirituality is a self-transcending faith in which union with God in Jesus Christ through the Spirit expresses itself in service of the neighbor and participation in the realization of the reign of God in this world. *Christian spirituality, thus understood, is necessarily biblical and it is adequate only to the degree that it is rooted in and informed by the Word of God.*

Any spirituality that has a hope of being called Christian must be rooted in and informed by the Word of God (Schneiders, 2002: 135). My third marker for a working description of Christian Spirituality follows this insight: Christian Spirituality cannot but help to be rooted in and informed by the Word of God.

The third notable matter of Kourie's account of the origin of the term spirituality is its communal texture. Paul does not write his letters into a vacuum, but for a community of believers. Furthermore, Paul or the school of Paul, never writes alone, but in a community (Meeks, 1983: 7, 8). After carefully considering socio-historical and literary data from, what is traditionally called Paul's letters, Johnson (2010: 271) concludes:

> Paul's 'schools' was operative in the production of his letters even during his lifetime. Although Paul authorized each letter that bore his name, it is highly probable that many hands and minds contributed to their final

composition. The social setting for Pauline correspondence is as complex as for his ministry.

One part of this description requires further explanation: the word "authorised." Here, Johnson does not mean that Paul writes every letter bearing his name. Instead, the person of Paul inspires each letter and in that sense, he is the author or originator of each letter bearing his name.

Paul also writes by drawing on the community of "Old" Testament writers. Spirituality as a communal exercise might seem strange to some, but the tension between the private and public spheres has always been key to (Christian) Spirituality, as Sheldrake (2003: 19, 21–23) explains:

> For many people, the word 'spirituality' immediately implies interiority in the sense of a quest for personal spiritual experience away from everyday life. The sharp contrast between inner and outer life was prevalent in most books about Christian spirituality until the last part of the 20th century and has still not disappeared entirely… In fact, the most insidious sin was privacy or self-enclosure. The private is seen as the opposite of common or public. For Augustine, the Heavenly City was the community in which there would be the fullness of sharing. Within Augustine there is a tension that should not be resolved between a striking sense of the personal self and an equally striking sense of the fundamentally social nature of human existence… Like Augustine, the medieval quest for the soul, or inner self, did not imply a unique, particular, autonomous self. Rather, the *homo interior* was a shared human nature, made in the image of God.

Christian Spirituality takes shape in the tension between the private and public spheres of life. To overemphasise either might lead to a reduction of Christian Spirituality. Keeping the tension between private and public spirituality open, is my fourth marker for a working description of Christian Spirituality.

1.2.4. SUMMARY OF MARKERS FOR A WORKING DESCRIPTION OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

This section looked at what spirituality is, why it has made a contemporary return, and what studying it means. While describing spirituality four constraining markers binding my study to Christian Spirituality crystallised, namely:

1. Christian Spirituality thinks in small letters, ellipses, and with a theology of the event always haunting it like a very holy ghost.

2. Christian Spirituality, in some way, must engage with contemporary spirituality, with or without religion, atheist or religious.

3. Any spirituality that has a hope of being called Christian must be rooted in and informed by the Word of God.

4. Christian Spirituality takes shape in the tension between the private and public spheres of life. This tension must be kept open.

These markers will be my guide for this study of Christian Spirituality. I have described the first and second markers sufficiently for the purpose of this study. The third and fourth needs further elaboration: Why? First, this study falls into a subsection of Christian Spirituality, namely Biblical Spirituality. Second, this study focuses on City Spirituality, which engages precisely the tension between the private and public spheres.

1.3. A WORKING DESCRIPTION OF BIBLICAL SPIRITUALITY

This section delves deeper into the third marker I have set to constrain the complex system of Christian Spirituality: Any spirituality that has a hope of being called Christian must be rooted in and informed by the Word of God. At first, this statement might seem straightforward, but it is marred with quagmires.

To define "the Bible" is problematic due to its process of canonisation (Johnson, 2010: 595–613). McGrath's (1994: 160) description of "the Bible" is helpful: "The canon of Scripture may be regarded as emerging organically from a community of faith already committed to using and respecting it". McGrath's explanation

means that the Bible used in a local faith community is the Bible we are interested in when studying Biblical Spirituality. Still questions loom like: What does "rooted in and informed by," mean? Why the strong capitalised statement "the Word of God"? If one defines the Bible as "the Word of God," how should it be read? With these sorts of questions, we are now thoroughly in the area of Christian Spirituality called Biblical Spirituality.

1.3.1. ROOTED IN AND INFORMED BY…

We return once more to the bookshop (this time a Christian one) to search for books on spirituality (this time Christian Spirituality). If we find books on Christian Spirituality, something will swiftly becomes apparent: there is little of the Bible in current Christian Spirituality (Adam, 2004: 15). The lack of the Bible in Christian Spirituality is strange because the Bible (as a collection of narratives) is the fountainhead from which Christian Spirituality is continuously enriched and relativized. If Christian Spirituality does not revolve around the Bible as constitutive texts that enrich and relativize it, where does it turn for inspiration and how can it know its limit? Biblical Spirituality is an attempt to return to the main source of Christian Spirituality: the Bible (McGrath, 1994: 142). Returning to the Bible might assist in assessing spirituality in general (Adam, 2004: 19), but also more specifically, Christian Spirituality. Biblical Spirituality turns to the Bible as the primary source for Christian Spirituality but reads it in a particular way.

Since the Enlightenment, the study of the "Old" and "New" Testament has made significant advances (McGrath, 1994: 171–176). These advances allow an extremely close reading of the biblical text. By a close reading, I mean a reading informed and shaped by the academic tools at our disposal. Someone informed by, seemingly apathetic to, or opposed to the Christian tradition might equally do such a close reading. Unfortunately, the broader discipline of Christian Spirituality

has mostly ignored the riches provided by such close readings of the Bible.[4] Part of the problem is exegetical studies of the Bible seldom move beyond pure analysis of the biblical text as Lombaard (2011a: 222–223) observes:

> The fact that it has become the academic habit within many exegetical studies to call a halt after the analysis of a biblical text, and not to take a next step of indicating religious meaning or implications (subversive or nurturing as such may be), that is, not to consummate the union of partners Bible and faith, may be ascribed to a host of reasons. Be these reasons what they may, such exegesis stops short of the expectations of most religious people of what interaction with the biblical text ought to entail.

Biblical Spirituality attempts to bridge the gulf between the analysis of the biblical text and its meanings or implications for the believer's (or even atheist's) life. To bridge the gap between analysis and meaning or implication of the biblical text, Biblical Spirituality roots and informs Christian Spirituality from the rich identity of the spiritualities found in the Bible. Bridging this gap relies on the conviction that the Bible is the normative text for Christian Spirituality, or to put it differently, that the Bible is "the Word of God."

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[4] Lombaard (2011a: 223) suggests that the discipline of Christian Spirituality's biblical anaemia is mainly due to its under-developed methodologies:

> Whereas the well-refined historical methods of Bible scholarship may help us to gain some insight into the spiritualities that lived behind the textual veils, the relatively under-developed methodologies of Christian Spirituality however have some way to go yet in order to be of similar value to the discipline of Biblical Spirituality.

1.3.2. THE WORD OF GOD[5]

Seemingly, we have a return to the capital letters I vowed to disavow in the previous section. "The Word of God" capitalised is, however, a qualified use of capital letters. It reminds us that, within a particular faith community, the Bible has a particular power, but not a strong universal power. Not the power of ontological truth claims, but of a call (Caputo, 2006: 13), a symbol, or a sacrament, as Schneiders (2005: 5) puts it:

> …[T]he Bible, becomes Scripture when it functions sacramentally in a religious community, i.e., when it mediates the encounter between the believers, personally and as a community, and the Transcendent, however the latter is understood.

Again, I would merely change "Transcendent" to "transcendent." This change creates an opening for the religious and not-so-religious, the atheist and believer, and those who would rightly pass as atheist, to engage sacramentally with the biblical text.

No talk of call, symbol, and sacrament detracts from the fact that, for Christians, the Bible is the normative text for spirituality. I, however, want to keep the doors open so that all (Christian or not) are welcome to join in reading the Bible and living biblical spirituality. After all, the soft sacramental power of the Bible, as the Word of God, is somehow already embedded in the reading and interpretational act itself (Lombaard, 2011a: 221). It is this act of reading the Word of God, and the question of how to read, to which I turn next.

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[5] McGrath (1994: 166–167) points out that the "Word of God" is a complex and highly nuanced term that brings together various clusters of ideas. He distinguishes three broad senses of the phrase, namely:

1. The phrase refers to Jesus Christ as the Word made flesh;
2. The phrase refers to the message or proclamation of Jesus Christ;
3. The term might denote, in a general sense, the whole Bible.

This study uses the third sense of "the Word of God".

1.3.3. READING THE WORD OF GOD

If Biblical Spirituality already starts with the reading act, how shall one read? If reading the Bible might vacillates between a fundamentalist and liberal reading of the Word of God (Schneiders, 2005: 6), what will be one's hermeneutical key? Will one opt for a simplistic interpretation of the Bible and lose the richness of the text (Lombaard, 2012: 171–172)? Must one try to engage its complicatedness (Lombaard, 2012: 172–173) and risk getting drowned in the richness of approaches? I explore these questions in this subsection.

I make use of Schneiders' (2002: 133–142, 2005: 1–22) answer to this dilemma. Schneiders argues that Biblical Spirituality has two nuances. First, Biblical Spirituality holds that the Bible contains many spiritualities to which we are exposed, if we read the text closely (Schneiders, 2002: 134). Second, in the act of reading biblical spiritualities closely, the person or persons reading become biblical in character (Schneiders, 2005: 1–22; Lacocque, 2009: 29–41). I consider both contentions.

One can hardly deny Schneiders' argument for various spiritualities in the Bible. If one takes the eclectic and organic formation of the books constituting the Bible seriously (Childs, 1979: 27–106), one cannot deny that each biblical book contains multiple spiritualities. The question remains: how shall one discern which spiritualities and meanings are responsible readings of the text?

Here, I rely on the rich identity of interpretive tools that have been evaluated, found useful, and responsible, by the complex system of biblical study throughout the history of interpretation (Lombaard, 2012: 178). Employing these interpretive

tools, we can experience responsible contact[6] with the multiplicity of biblical spiritualities while remaining aware that time and space separates us.

Schneiders' second claim is that, in a close reading of biblical spiritualities, the reader(s) become(s) biblical in character. A close reading of the biblical text not only unveils biblical spiritualities, but also reveals the reader's spirituality and relativizes it. Exposure to the spiritualities of the biblical text protects the reader's spirituality from idolatry or irrelevance.[7] A close reading of the biblical text is not a passive act, but one where the reader(s) is/are simultaneously read by the biblical text.[8]

Schneiders' claims describe a reading of the biblical text that fits well into my four markers of Christian Spirituality as a complex system, with one exception. For some reason, Schneiders (2005: 10–12) collapses her reading of the biblical text

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[6] "Contact is not just togetherness or joining. It can only happen between separate beings, always requiring independence and always risking capture in the union. At the moment of union, one's fullest sense of his person is swept along into a new creation. I am no longer only me, but me and thee make we… Contact is the lifeblood of growth, the means for changing oneself and one's experience of the world. Change is an inescapable product of contact because appropriating the assimilable or rejecting the unassimilable novelty will inevitably lead to change" (Polster, 1973: 99–101).

[7] I adapt Mcfague's (1983: 1–29) model of religious metaphors, to spirituality. Idolatry happens when religious metaphors (read spiritualities) become dead and unchangeable formulas while irrelevance occurs due to the overuse of religious metaphors (read spiritualities).

[8] An interesting overlap between a reader's approach to the biblical text in Biblical Spirituality, and the 20th century's minimalistic art movement's description of art:
1. Framelessness: Asbury (2005: 173) explains that, in Gullar's view of minimalism, the frame is a "…mediator between fact and fiction, the fictions space, while also facilitating its communication with the external, real, space." By removing the frame as mediator, the art's observer becomes part of the artwork, and concurrently the artwork views the observer. In Biblical Spirituality, the Bible is read within a particular frame of interpretation, but as one reads closely, one finds the frame removed leaving the reader biblical in character (i.e. the biblical text simultaneously reads the reader closely).
2. Non-object: A minimalist artwork is a non-object. A non-object is not an anti-object (Asbury, 2005: 170) in the sense that it is not taken seriously, but as Reynolds (2004: 230) describes: "The object itself has not become less important. It has become less self-important." Biblical Spirituality has the biblical text as its non-object. The biblical text is crucial, but the aim of the close reading of the biblical text is a renewal of the reader's spirituality. The biblical text thus becomes less self-important.
3. Rearrangement: For minimalism, the "art" of the artwork resides in its constant rearrangement (Reynolds, 2004: 235). Minimalistic art's rearrangement is akin to how Schneiders (2005: 16) describes the symbolic human discourse: While reading, misreading, and rereading both the reader's and the biblical text's symbolic discourses are rearranged (Schneiders, 2005: 17, 18).

into a Christocentric hermeneutic. Schneiders' Christocentric reading is strange for three reasons: First, she undermines her argument for reading the Bible exegetically and responsibly. Second, by collapsing into a Christocentric hermeneutic she collapses the complexity of the interaction between the reader(s) and the biblical text. Third, such a Christocentric interpretation of the "Old" Testament would not sit well with "Old" Testament scholars (Brueggemann, 1997: 109). I want to resist Schneiders' hermeneutical collapse; keep the biblical text open for a close reading with or without Christ as the central figure. My preference is to remain open to the complexity of new and unexpected ways of reading the biblical text (Lombaard, 2012: 182).

1.3.4. A WORKING DESCRIPTION OF BIBLICAL SPIRITUALITY

This section surveyed my third marker of the complex system of Christian Spirituality, namely: "Any spirituality that has a hope of being called Christian must be rooted in and informed by the Word of God." First, I found that Christian Spirituality is rooted in the rich identity of the multiplicity of spiritualities found in the Bible. Second, I looked at the claim that the Bible is the Word of God. I found that one should not understand the Word of God as a hard ontological truth claim, but rather as a weak truth of a call, symbol, and sacrament. Such a view of the Bible leaves the doors wide open for anyone, even those who would rightly pass as atheists, to engage with Biblical Spirituality. In the last instance, I surveyed the reading act itself. The rich palette of critical exegetical tools at our disposal can help us encounter a multiplicity of spiritualities in the biblical text. As we read the biblical text and the spiritualities embedded in them, these biblical spiritualities also read our spirituality. This complex interaction is too precious to collapse into a single hermeneutical key, but must remain open to the complexity of the close reading act itself.

Having given a working description of my third marker for Christian Spirituality, I attempt, in the next section, to elaborate on my fourth marker of Christian Spirituality.

1.4. A WORKING DESCRIPTION OF CITY SPIRITUALITY

This section describes my fourth marker for a working description of Christian Spirituality, namely: "Christian Spirituality takes shape in the tension between the private and public spheres of life. This tension must be kept open." My fourth marker of Christian Spirituality has its unique issues. Where shall one find a place rich enough in diversity, multiplicity, and complexity to depict this tension between the public and private spheres of life: Perhaps in cities?

First, I consider whether cities are the most appropriate places to describe the tension between the public and private spheres of life. If cities are the most appropriate places to study this tension, I will further explore how the complex system of the city functions. I will constrain my examination of the complex system of the city to the *space of* City Spirituality, *symbol in* City Spirituality, and the call of the "city to come".

1.4.1. WHY STUDY CITIES?

Cities have become such an integral part of contemporary life that one forgets the massive urban growth experienced over the past few decades (Bishop & Phillips, 2013: 222).[9] Sheldrake (2010: 159) reminds us that:

> The future of cities is one of the most critical spiritual as well as economic and social issues of our time… The growth rate of cities offers a critical challenge. The figures over the last fifty years or so are illuminating. In 1950, 29 percent of the world's population lived in urban environments. By 1990 this had risen to 50 percent and is likely to reach between 66 percent and 75 percent by 2025. At the dawn of the twenty-first century humanity for the first time faces an urbanized world.

To those who dwell in cities, and so-called "shadow cities" (cf. Bishop & Phillips, 2013: 226–227), it might seem easy to describe what a city is and how it works (DeLanda, 2006: 34). As a city dweller, one is initiated into and shaped by the

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[9] At first, Sociologists of Religion heralded mass urbanisation as the end of religion. They since revised this claim because "…many cities turn out to be vibrant centres of religious innovation…" (Burchardt & Becci, 2013: 1).

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ways of a city (Auret & du Toit, 2014).[10] The uninitiated, however, see the city as a chaotic system of seemingly unrelated events that are highly encoded, inaccessible, and complex.

Due to cities' complexity, one needs tools to better grasp cities' emergence, its interactions with its surroundings, and the complexity of these interactions. DeLanda (2006: 39) describes the complexity of a specific city's interactions, with other cities, and with larger states, eloquently:

> ... [N]o city could keep its identity without ongoing exchanges between its political, economic and religious organizations; and no nation-state would survive without constant interaction between its capital city and its other urban centers. In technical terminology this can be expressed by saying that territorializing processes are needed not only historically to produce the identity of assemblages at each spatial scale, but also to maintain it in the process of destabilizing processes of deterritorialization.

An explication of DeLanda's quote might be helpful. DeLanda describes cities as complex entities interacting on multiple levels with its surroundings, or to put it differently, cities function in an assemblage.

Small villages form the base of the assemblage, constituting its least complex unit. From small villages, we move to towns that are higher in complexity, because of the interactions with small villages surrounding them. Towns, in turn, distil the most appropriate novel political, economic, and religious notions from their surrounding small villages: Ideas then exported back from the towns to the surrounding small villages. The same interactions are valid from towns to cities and in turn, from cities to capital cities.[11] Cities distil all the best (and worst) ideas

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[10] City Spirituality, in this way, is similar to Biblical Spirituality: while the reader (the city dweller) reads the text (the city), the reader (the city dweller) concurrently read by the text (the city), and so relativizes and renews the city dweller's spirituality. These are initial steps towards a close reading of the city as text.

[11] Lefebvre (1996: 118–121) imagines that the to-and-throw movement of urban texture will at the end destroy the notion of "urban" by making everything urban. The advantage of the assemblage approach is its admittance that everything is already, to a less or greater degree, urban.

of a particular assemblage. When studying cities, then, one engages one of the most sophisticated units of a described assemblage (Sheldrake, 2010: 166).

By studying cities, one engages with a critical issue of our time while also examining one of the most complex units of dwelling open to human beings (Gelley, 1993: 240; Ward, 2000: 2).[12] Cities are high in appropriate novel political, economic, and religious ideas that shape city dwellers. Cities, because of their high density and complexity, are one of the best places to contemplate the tension between the private and public spheres of life in Christian Spirituality.

While exploring the tensions in the assemblage of a city, one must keep in mind that the city is one of the most complex systems possible within a given assemblage of dwelling. When one engages complex systems such as cities, one must again ensure that one constrains the working description of the complex system. I constrain my working description of the tensions within cities to three areas, each of which I briefly describe. First, I describe the *space* of City Spirituality as the social contract between the memory of dweller and dwelling. Next, I turn to *symbol* in City Spirituality as the emerging properties of the complex system. Last, I consider the call of the event astir in the name of cities, which always looms over cities, pulling them forward like a very holy ghost.

1.4.2. THE SPACE OF CITY SPIRITUALITY (MEMORY OF DWELLER AND DWELLING)

As we engage the complex system of the city, we must first acknowledge that cities have memory, which helps differentiate a particular city from the assemblage of which it is part (Cilliers, 2010: 59). Deprived of this memory, the influx of appropriate exceptional ideas distilled in its assemblage of small villages and towns would flood the city. The city's memory helps it discern and further distil

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[12] Sustainable cities were identified, at the Rio +20 summit in 2012, as one of the Sustainable Development Goals set to replace the United Nations' current Millennium Development Goals in 2015 (United Nations, 2012).

the most relevant novel ideas from its assemblage environment. In a specific way, a city has an identity distinct from its assemblage, due to this memory.

A city's recollection not only articulates an acquired knowledge evaluating new ideas from its assemblage, but also produces an anticipatory quality. The memory of a complex system learns and through this learning process helps create non-linear patterns within the complex system producing sophisticated anticipatory capabilities as Cilliers (2007: 58) explains in a more nuanced way:

> If one characterises memory as the past being carried over into the future, it follows that the future can only be anticipated in terms of the memory of the system. Anticipation is *not*, or at least, should not be, simply an extrapolation of the present. It is a complex, non-linear process which tries to find some trajectory, some way of 'vaulting' from that which has already been experienced to that which has to be coped with. The quality of the anticipation is a function of the quality of the memory. A more varied, richer, deeper and better integrated memory will open up more sophisticated anticipatory capabilities.

These anticipatory qualities help structure a city to anticipate possible changes in its environment. A city with rich memory, in other words, is more resilient during times of change. When thinking about memory in the complex system of the city, one has to describe where memory resides.

Crinson (2005: xii) helps us understand where the complex system of the city stores its memory:

> Urban memory can be anthropomorphism (the city having a memory) but more commonly it indicates the city as a physical landscape and collection of objects and practices that enable recollections of the past and that embody the past through traces of the city's sequential building and rebuilding… [U]rban memory [also] seem to indicate cities as places where lives have been lived and still felt as physically manifest, shaping what is

remembered beyond the discourses of architects, developers, preservationists, and planners.

Crinson here describes the city as the memories of dwellings (physical spaces) and the memory of dwellers (people). These two memories are intertwined and kept in place by a thick network of social contracts (Lefebvre, 1996: 133–136; Isin, 2000: 9–11; Ward, 2000: 4). The intertwined memories of dwellings and dwellers facilitates surprising and unforeseen synchronicities (Jung, 2010) and simultaneities (Kofman & Lebas, 1996: 19) for those who currently[13] dwell in the city.

One might translate these social contracts between dwellers and dwellings, as the space where the public and private spheres of life intertwine or as I call it, the *space* of City Spirituality. The *space* of City Spirituality is an attempt to give a term to the social contracts between dwellers and dwellings where the city's private and public spheres intertwine. Sheldrake (2010: 141) describes this woven reality with the help of Isidore of Seville:

> For Isidore, there was no absolute separation between 'the city of stones' (*urbs*) and 'cities of people' (*civitas*). Yet, what makes a city a city are the people not the walls. 'A city [*civitas*] is a number of men joined by a social bond. It takes its name from the citizens [*cives*] who dwell in it. As an *urbs* it is only a walled structure, but inhabitants, not building stones, are referred to as a city.'

Sheldrake (or Isidore) by siding with *civitas* as the "real" city does not engage the city in its full complexity. Both *urbs* and *civitas* are unimaginable without each other. Due to the interwoven nature of dwellers and dwellings, I choose to give both *urbs* and *civitas* equal credence in the space of City Spirituality. Both

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[13] *How Societies Remember* by Connerton (1989) is a helpful guide to the connection between human memory and how that memory is enacted in the present. Connerton (1989: 2) writes:
> Concerning memory as such, we may note that our experience of the present very largely depends upon our knowledge of the past. We experience our present world in a context which is usually causally connected with past events and objects, and hence with reference to events and objects which we are not experiencing when we are experiencing the present. And we will experience our present differently in accordance with the different pasts to which we are able to connect that present.

dwellers and dwellings contribute their memories to the space of City Spirituality (Lefebvre, 1996: 224).

Sheldrake (2010: 51) himself touches on the memory stored by dwellings in the complex system of the city with his description of cathedrals:

> Cathedrals are repositories for the memory and the aspirations of the community that are constantly renewed and changed across time. Indeed, the moment a building like a cathedral becomes fixed, rather than continually mobile and changing, it is a museum rather than a living symbol of human community living.

Cathedrals[14] concretise the memory of the complex system of the city, or as Sheldrake (2009: 144) puts it, cathedrals are the "memory palaces" of the city. Cathedrals are architectural monuments to the memory of the complex system of the city and serve as traces or reminders that the entire infrastructure of the city stores memory.

As we have seen while describing the city as assemblage, the memory of the dweller is deeply involved in shaping the *space* of City Spirituality. The dweller carries the most appropriate novel ideas through the assemblage of which the city is part. The dweller arrives in the city with a rich memory of highly relevant unique ideas enriching the complex system of the city. The *space* of City Spirituality is where the memories of dwellers and dwellings intertwine. Now that I have described the *space* of City Spirituality, we move to *symbol* in City Spirituality.

1.4.3. SYMBOL IN CITY SPIRITUALITY (EMERGING PROPERTIES)

It is possible to describe the properties of the *space* of City Spirituality, but in some way, the *space* of City Spirituality is always more than the sum of its parts. The emerging properties of the *space* of City Spirituality egress its tightly woven

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[14] Recent archaeological evidence suggests that cities may have had a religious origin (Schmidt, 2000; Mann, 2011).

network of social contracts between the memories of dwellings and dwellers. Heylighen et al. (2007: 120) gives a helpful description of emerging properties using several examples:

> In present terminology, we would say that a whole has *emergent* properties, i.e. properties that cannot be reduced to the properties of the parts. For example, kitchen salt (NaCl) is edible, forms crystals and has a salty taste. These properties are completely different from the properties of its chemical components, sodium (Na) which is a violently reactive, soft metal, and chlorine (Cl), which is a poisonous gas. Similarly, a musical piece has the properties of rhythm, melody and harmony, which are absent in the individual notes that constitute the piece. A car has the property of being able to drive. Its individual components, such as motor, steering wheel, tires or frame, lack this property. On the other hand, the car has a weight, which is merely the sum of the weights of its components. Thus, when checking the list of properties of the car you are considering to buy, you may note that 'maximum speed' is an emergent property, while 'weight' is not. In fact, on closer scrutiny practically all of the properties that matter to us in everyday-life, such as beauty, life, status, intelligence…, turn out to be emergent.

The emerging properties egressing the *space* of City Spirituality link closely with the general impression of a city or the catchphrases representing cities. These general impressions describe the city, not in its complexity, but in a mere impression. The complex *space* of City Spirituality informs this mere impression, but it might have little in common with the *space* of City Spirituality. You hear love and might think of Paris. When one sees a yellow taxicab or a red double-decker bus, one's mind immediately wanders to New York or London. These impressions allow one to perceive the *space* of City Spirituality as a tightly woven unit when in reality it is a network of social contracts and synchronicities that are much more complex and unpredictable. This single emergent impression of the *space* of City Spirituality I call the *symbol* in City Spirituality.

Symbol in City Spirituality projects the *space* of City Spirituality into its assemblage environment. Ward (2000: 4) picks up, shadowing Lefebvre (1996: 108–109), on this projection of *symbol* in City Spirituality using the metaphor of writing:

> The city produces and promotes itself through symbols and symbolic action—the building of this bridge, the election of this woman, the labour of this man, the schooling of this child. Urban culture issues from this symbolic production. As such, it is writing *par excellence*: the public inscription of several million upon its pavement and upon the lives of each other. The city itself is a writing within which all other writings are circumscribed.

While studying City Spirituality, one must remain aware of symbol as the emerging properties of the *space* of City Spirituality. The *space* of City Spirituality and *symbol* in City Spirituality are interdependent, but not directly equivalent. Put in a different way, the *space* of City Spirituality and *symbol* in City Spirituality are in a non-linear relationship.

We now understand better what makes cities unique in their assemblages. In addition, we have some complex language with which to engage the *space* of City Spirituality and *symbol* in City Spirituality. Next, I contemplate what cities have in common: the event astir in the name of cities, the call of the event of the "city to come".

1.4.4. THE CALL IN CITIES

The space of City Spirituality and symbol in City Spirituality are ways in which the complex system of the city helps distinguish itself from the assemblage of which it is part. There is, however, also a common link between cities from diverse assemblages that remains unaccounted for by the *space* of, or the *symbol* in, City Spirituality. The common link is the call of the event of the "city to come": the ideal city (Ward, 2003: 462–473). As Lefebvre (1996: 151) ingeniously question those constructing cities:

[W]ho is not a *utopian* today...? Would not the worst be that utopianism which does not utter its name, covers itself with positivism and on this basis imposes the harshest constraints and the most derisory absence of technicity. Utopia is to be considered experimentally by studying its application and consequence on the ground.

A perfect city never exists, but always insists that a particular city is not yet the flawless city. The ideal city always remains the "city to come". This "city to come" is the common link between cities. It drives City Spirituality to become more than its *space* and *symbol*. The "city to come" protects us from idolising a particular city: Writing with big capital letters and full stops about a certain city, or claiming a specific city as the best city. It is the event astir in the *space* and *symbol* of City Spirituality: the "future city" that never exists, but always insists. This insistence of the "city to come" looms over every city like a very holy ghost.

The *space* of City Spirituality, the *symbol* in City Spirituality and the insistence of the "city to come" are present all at once in all cities. Ward (2003: 466) articulates cities, trailing Lefebvre's (1996: 101) *oeuvre*, as human art forms keeping these realities in tension:

> For if cities are understood as the greatest of human artforms, then the building and designing of cities is shot through with transcendental aspirations. The founders and builders of cities imitate a divine office. We should not then be surprised to discover in our cities intimations of the heavenly city. And to my mind—this is what gives cities their buzz, their kudos, their charisma…

If the "city to come" provides something worth emulating in the *space* of City Spirituality and the *symbol* in City Spirituality, we must choose our "city to come" incredibly carefully (Lefebvre, 1996: 210–212; Kang, 2013: 180–184). Where will we find the language to think about the "city to come"?

Biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" can engage and enrich City Spirituality by providing a language and visions of the "city to come" (Ward, 2003: 462–473). These biblical spiritualities' visions of the "city to come" can, in turn, influence both the *space* of City Spirituality and *symbol* in City Spirituality. Focusing on the "city to come" while studying Biblical Spirituality, I engage the tension between the public and private spheres of spirituality, because the *space* of City Spirituality and *symbol* in City Spirituality are closely linked to the "city to come".

1.4.5. A WORKING DESCRIPTION OF CITY SPIRITUALITY

This section outlined a working description of City Spirituality. First, I showed that cities are the best place to reflect upon the tension in Christian Spirituality between the private and public spheres of life, because cities are the most complex units in a given assemblage of villages and towns. Cities distil the most appropriate novel ideas from its assemblage. Next, I moved to describe the *space* of City Spirituality as the social contracts between the memories of dwellers and dwellings. The social contracts between the memories of dwellers and dwellings create spaces for unforeseen synchronicities. Third, I ventured to describe *symbol* in City Spirituality. A city has emerging properties that are in non-linear relation to the *space* of City Spirituality. These emerging properties I called *symbol* in City Spirituality. Last, I contemplated the "city to come" as the marker that links cities. I argued that biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" could enrich both the *space* of City Spirituality and the *symbol* in City Spirituality. Studying Christian Spirituality in the city must have something to do with biblical spiritualities of the "city to come".

Working descriptions of both Biblical Spirituality and City Spirituality are now in place. These descriptions have constrained the scope of the two main markers of Christian Spirituality I wish to engage in this study. I have already hinted at the connection between Biblical Spirituality and City Spirituality, namely biblical spiritualities of the "city to come". Now the question arises: What will be the aim

of this study? What are my methodological markers when thinking about biblical spiritualities of the "city to come"?

1.5. AIM OF STUDY AND METHODOLOGY MARKERS

After constraining my working description of Christian Spirituality to four markers and further constraining the two main markers of Biblical Spirituality and City Spirituality to working descriptions, I return to my guiding question: How do I develop an appropriate Christian Spirituality in the city? While constraining the complex system of Christian Spirituality, I have developed a more nuanced way of asking this question. Finding suitable biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" will be the task of this study. When facing such a daunting challenge, one needs a reliable methodology.

While devising my working descriptions of Christian Spirituality, Biblical Spirituality, and City Spirituality, I have already shown part of my methodological hand. I have displayed my love for interdisciplinary work by using a variety of approaches with each working description. Interdisciplinary research is namely a methodological marker of Spirituality (Wolfteich, 2003: 831; Sheldrake, 2010: 12). Interdisciplinary methodology gives the study of spirituality a vagueness, which Lombaard (2011a: 215) compares with the exact methodological demands of biblical scholarship:

> However, by exactly which methods Christian spirituality is to be studied, remains usually only vaguely indicated in the discipline, at least when compared to the intense methodological exactitude demanded from and debated on by scholars of biblical literature.

Lombaard (2011a: 215) argues that vagueness is not a problem, but an opportunity, because "…such vagueness is not unnatural in a new discipline, trying to understand its own place within the university setting, while seeking acceptance from other, more established disciplines". This vagueness, Lombaard believes, oils the wheels of creativity when studying Spirituality. Therefore, my first methodological marker for this study is interdisciplinary research. It, however,

cannot be my only marker, because interdisciplinary research assumes one will appeal to additional methodologies.

Another methodological marker for the discipline of Spirituality is narrative. Following Ricœur, Sheldrake (2010: 29) describes a narrative approach in Christian Spirituality:

> Therefore, every moment is significant even if that significance is presently mysterious. Such a view seems close to Paul Ricoeur's understanding of 'narrative' which is not descriptive of the time-space world as it is, and therefore of 'history' in a positivist sense. Narrative redescribes the world rather that describes it. Narrative brings together and harmonizes the otherwise discordant and disparate elements of the experience of time and history.

Put differently: the narratives we believe about the *space* of City Spirituality, the *symbol* in City Spirituality, and the "city to come" matter immensely.

While reading the Bible within the co-textual space of the city, one is already redescribing the city. The narrative approach also allows one to read the non-history in texts, or to put it differently, the minor narratives that never made it into official history. Agamben (2005: 40), stunningly describes how the archive of official history forgets to remember:

> In every instant, the measure of forgetting and ruin, the ontological squandering that we bear within ourselves far exceeds the piety of our memories and consciences… The alternatives at this junction are therefore not to forget or remember, to be unaware or to become conscious, but rather, the determining factor is the capacity to remain faithful to that which having perpetually been forgotten, must remain unforgettable.

A narrative approach that remains faithful to the last clause of Agamben's plea is to be the second methodological marker for this study.

Even if one pools all the power of different academic disciplines adding to it the conviction that narrative can interpret and reinterpret human social reality, one still needs a way of linking these two methodologies. This link should be complex, preventing a collapse into easy answers, while well defined to steel against vagueness. My third methodological marker, therefore, will be social semiotics.

Ward (2000: 17–24) gives an overview of social semiotics' development, expounds its possible theological uses, and summarises the six characteristics that major proponents of social semiotics have in common:

1. There is no immediate knowledge of brute data or the given. All our knowledge is mediated by the cultural and linguistic codes within which we are situated. Our knowledge is partial or from a particular perspective.

2. From this axiom of the mediation of the given, it follows that in the various readings of cultural metaphors no simple move can be made from a description to an explanation. All explanations of an act or an object and all descriptions of an act or an object are interpretations. There is no stepping outside of (or stepping into) the hermeneutic circle.

3. What perhaps can be said is characteristic of those investigating cultural metaphors, is that the line between description and explanation, the object of the study and its meaning, is traced in water. There is no end to the process of interpretation and reinterpretation; and so no final judgement can be made as to the status of the descriptions.

4. The recognition of a cultural politics, that which operates in any culture to make belief believable, introduces a further characteristic of those concerned to evaluate cultural metaphors: the recognition that there is no ideology-free zone. Critical genealogies, examinations of cultural metaphors, and the construction of a new Christian dogmatics…are not politically innocent.

5. Human beings are *homo symbolicus*, *homo faciens*. Humans are self-interpreting animals. With changes in self-definition go changes in what humans are.

6. The work of those concerned with evaluating cultural metaphors…

espouses a weak or a hermeneutical ontology.

By reading what Ward calls "the signs of the times" with social semiotics, we might initiate links between the present city and counter narratives or non-histories excavated from biblical spiritualities of the "city to come". Biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" can give us language with which to articulate non-histories or counter narratives that are already part of any city.[15]

2. "OLD" TESTAMENT SPIRITUALITIES OF THE "CITY TO COME"

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter traces narratives of the "city to come" in the corpus of books called the "Old" Testament. As I will show in chapter three, the "New" Testament develops and integrates these "Old" Testament narratives in its iterations of the narratives of the "city to come". I choose the phrase "Old" Testament, rather than *Tanakh* or Hebrew Bible, not in an attempt to be insensitive. The term "Old" Testament was chosen to accentuate the continuity between the "Old" and "New" Testament narratives. These expressions remain anachronistic, as are most of our analyses. These are, for the moment, just terms to come to terms with the "city to come" astir in biblical narratives.

My selection of "Old" Testament narratives of the "city to come" is by no means comprehensive, nor do I pretend to give a full exegetical account of each hermeneutical move I make. My aim is to trace mostly minor narratives of the "city to come" in the "Old" Testament and to understand how these narratives can enrich and relativize the spirituality of urban readers. I do this within the constraints put on the complex system of Christian Spirituality in the previous chapter.

When an individual reads the "Old" Testament, it appears to be a single book, but in reality, it is a rich tapestry of spiritualities curated by multiple strands of tradition.

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[15] Using both narrative and social semiotics locates this study somewhere between the topologies of *arborescent* and *rhizomatic* described by Baker (2013).

This rich tapestry of spiritualities, when understood sacramentally by a local community, becomes the Word of God. In turn, the "Old" Testament spiritualities read an individual's spirituality, and assists said person to articulate and relativize her or his spirituality. This process of reading and being read by "Old" Testament spiritualities has a particular character due to the distinctive imaginative traditioning process that the "Old" Testament went through (Bandstra, 1999: 9, 30–33; Brueggemann, 2003: 8–13).

One can see traces of the rich tapestry of "Old" Testament spiritualities, for instance, in the Pentateuch clustered around strands of tradition, woven and rewoven together through time. Four strands of tradition have influentially, in 19th and 20th century Pentateuch scholarship, been called the Yahwistic (J), Elohistic (E), Deuteronomistic (D), and Priestly (P) traditions (Bandstra, 1999: 21–31; Mckeown, 2008: 7–8). The analyses of these layers have, however, grown much more complicated since the 1970s. In the process of curating "Old" Testament spiritualities, the strands of tradition each cultivate a unique semantic field or cluster of meaning.

With each close reading of a narrative in this chapter, I remain conscious of the particular strand or strands of tradition the narrative contains. I understand that the parsing of sources (except, maybe, for P) underlying these strands of traditions is now highly contested (Stern, 2008). My reason for calling these strands "traditions" rather than "sources" is to allow me the freedom to remain aware of the characteristics of the "traditions," without engaging the "sources" debate. When individuals read and are read by "Old" Testament spiritualities, they do so through the unified language provided by a distinct strand of tradition.

Each strand of tradition's semantic fields or clusters of meaning present their curated "Old" Testament spiritualities in a unified language, pivoting around God and God's people. These curating strands of tradition are then woven and rewoven, most likely by a scribal class (Sparks, 2005: 56; van der Toorn, 2009) and through this process becomes the books one finds in the "Old" Testament.

The sacramental space between an individual's spirituality and a particular "Old" Testament spirituality comes loaded with interpretations.

My access point to the "Old" Testament narratives of the "city to come" will mainly be through grouping together significant recent interpretations and attempting to find common ground between them. The imaginative traditioning process of the "Old" Testament takes place not only in time, but also in space. The assemblage of the city provides the space in which the imaginative process of traditioning of the "Old" Testament takes place.

In the previous chapter, I described the city as part of an assemblage of villages and towns. Given that my model for cities is an assemblage, it follows that the imaginative traditioning process of the "Old" Testament takes place within the space of the assemblage of the city. The different strands of tradition differ in time, place, scope, and focus, but every one of them weave their way through the space of the assemblage of the city. The spiritualities curated by the multiple strands of tradition are woven through the space of the assemblage of the city into the narratives of the "city to come" in the "Old" Testament.

As the space in which the imaginative process of traditioning takes place, the assemblage of the city constantly exerts its influence on "Old" Testament spiritualities and its curating strands of tradition. At times, the effect of the assemblage of the city figures in the background. At other times, it figures in the foreground. Be it in the background or the foreground, the assemblage of the city always looms in or over these spiritualities and their curating strands of tradition in some way. In narratives where the city figures in the foreground, we find an ideological reading of the city, in other words, the city in its idealised form as the "city to come".

An "Old" Testament spirituality's ideological interpretation of the city can be a negative one, criticising the powerful for their actions and policies (Brueggemann, 1994: 69), which hinder the "city to come" from being actualised. On the other

hand, the ideological reading of the city might be positive, reading the city as a place beckoning the "city to come". Whether positively or negatively read, the "city to come" in the "Old" Testament is never actualised within historic Ancient Israel.[16]

The quantity of spiritualities concerning the "city to come" in the "Old" Testament necessitates me to constrain these narratives to three tropes. I choose these tropes with the assumption that, within each narrative in the "Old" Testament that has the city in the foreground or background, there stirs a hope of the "city to come". In this chapter, I constrain myself to the following three tropes: cities of prehistory, cities of refuge, and the wisdom spirituality (of Ecclesiastes).

2.2. CITIES OF PREHISTORY

This division surveys two narratives of the "city to come" from a part of the "Old" Testament called the prehistory of Ancient Israel (with one addition narrative from the Ancestral Cycle). Brueggemann (2003: 31) explains why the collection of narratives found in Genesis 1–11 can be described as the prehistory of Ancient Israel:

> Each of these narratives reflects older ancient Near Eastern traditions, so that it is impossible to ask questions about the 'historicity.' Rather, these materials may better be understood as complex, artistic attempts to articulate the most elemental presuppositions of life and faith in Israel, attempts that understood the world in a Yahwistic way. The end result of the interpretive process is a text that provided an imaginative context for the emergence of Israel in the midst of older cultural claims, visions, and affirmations.

Notice that Brueggemann's description of Genesis 1–11, as the prehistory of Ancient Israel, does not mean this collection of narratives is a historical account

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[16] Archaeological projects in Israel have shown (Fritz, 1995; Bandstra, 1999: 242; Cahill, 2003: 13–80; Finkelstein, 2003: 81–102) a marked discrepancy between how the "Old" Testament sketches cities and reality. Within this discrepancy lies the hope of the writers for the "city to come".

of events or arranged chronologically. This collection of narratives functions as a network of myths arranged in a way that constitutes, legitimises, and identifies, Ancient Israel as a unique entity within its cultural milieu.

The prehistory of Ancient Israel has two accounts of cities I will explore. To begin with, I attempt a close reading of the first mention of a city in the "Old" Testament, found as part of the Cainite genealogy (Genesis 4:17–22). My second close reading labours within the narrative of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1–9). To the cities of prehistory trope, I add a third narrative that is not part of Genesis 1–11: The narrative of Sodom (Genesis 19). Mckeown (2008: 72, 106) picks up on the central theme that links these three narratives as a trope: a negative view of the city. Although the narrative of Sodom falls within the Abrahamic Cycle of the Ancestral Narratives (Brueggemann, 2003: 43), it seems out of place there. This is the only instance in the Ancestral Narratives where God destroys a city.

Having given the rationale behind adding the Sodom narrative to the cities of prehistory trope, I explore the three texts in turn. My intention is to search for similarities in the underlying "Old" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come" between these three narratives.

2.2.1. THE CAINITE GENEALOGY: GENESIS 4:17–22

I begin tracing the cities of prehistory trope with the Cainite genealogy found in Genesis 4:17–22. In the Cainite genealogy, we find the first mention of a city in the prehistory of Ancient Israel. We read in verse 17 that Cain and his wife produced Enoch, and then Cain builds a city called Enoch. The rest of the genealogy describes a cultural and technological explosion: Jabal, son of Adah (4:20) is the first tent-dwelling livestock farmer; Jubal, son of Adah (4:21) the first musician playing strings and pipes; Tubal-Cain, son of Zillah (4:22) the first metalsmith.

As Lombaard (2012: 91–92) explains, verse 22 ends with "…the enigmatic three-word concluding phrase וַאֲחוֹת תּוּבַל־קַיִן נַעֲמָה (thus, also daughter of Zillah). This brief sentence has usually been ascribed to the persistence of a strand of tradition, awkwardly holding on for dear life here, or to the Yahwist's need for narratological/structural balance (i.e., a second child for Zillah too). As it turns out, both possibilities may be correct (though not for the reasons they were proposed): continuing the pattern in 4:20–22 of a connection between name and profession, Naamah (= 'Giver-of-pleasure') may well, according to Vermeylen [(1991)], be the initiator of prostitution."

One finds in the Cainite genealogy an attempt at a cultural or technological aetiology (Von Rad, 1972: 110; Lombaard, 2012: 93–94), but not a purely neutral aetiology. The redactor's framing of this genealogy with Cain's fratricide and Seth's counter genealogy sends a strong negative message about the cultural or technological advances described (Kunin, 1995: 183; Brett, 2000: 39–40; Mckeown, 2008: 43). Levine (2011: 209) even quips: "Genesis 4:16–26 presents an ideological assessment of the components of civilization in capsule form." Given the negative framing of the Cainite genealogy, no wonder the majority of Jewish and Christian interpreters throughout history have read it as denouncing technological and cultural advancement (Paul, 1996).[17]

The redactor's framing of the Cainite genealogy creates a social matrix (Lombaard, 2012: 48), which introduces the way cities are seen by the narratives to follow in the prehistory of Ancient Israel. Carr (1996: 239–241) has made a convincing argument for linking the Cainite genealogy with the Tower of Babel narrative in the prehistory of Ancient Israel. Notice, for example, how the Cainite

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[17] As Enslin (1967: 88–90) points out, one could easily see parallels between the Cainite genealogy and the myth of the two titans, Prometheus and Epimetheus. Here is Stiegler's (2009a: 16) synopsis of the titan myth: "Zeus, having asked Prometheus to bring into the day the beings that are not immortals, hands him all the qualities, the *dunameis*, to distribute to the living. Epimetheus, who is in charge with this distribution, forgets to save a quality for man, for which Prometheus tries to compensate by stealing fire, that is, technics." It would be interesting to read the Cainite genealogy together with Stiegler's (1998) Technics and Time: The Fault of Epimetheus, in which Stiegler contemplates the relationship between technics and humankind.

genealogy's aetiological accounts each relate to the building of the assemblage of the city. Linking Cain to the building of a city, functions as an introductory warning to the reader from the redactor: where there are cities, be sure there is criminality or corruption.

Where does this description leave the spirituality of the "city to come" that the Cainite genealogy curated? The text functions as introduction to the remaining curated spiritualities of the "city to come". Introductions are important as markers of the social matrix one is about to enter. A few markers concerning the Cainite genealogy's spirituality are:

1. By introducing the curated spiritualities of the prehistory of Ancient Israel with the Cainite genealogy, the redactors have created a negative social matrix for the narratives of the "city to come" that follow. The reader is primed to expect some criminality or corruption whenever the narrative concerns a city. The curated "Old" Testament spirituality is one of suspicion of the assemblage of the city and the activity it harbours.

2. The aetiology introducing the assemblage of the city to the prehistory of Ancient Israel, primes the reader to expect an explanation concerning human culture or technology. We will also see this aetiological priming entertained by the Tower of Babel and Sodom narratives. Thus, the following curated "Old" Testament spiritualities, will attempt to explain anachronistically, through myth, the current assemblage of the city (Kunin, 1995: 19–48). As we shall see, myth-making is a critical part of creating and explaining the assemblage of the city. Myth-making similarly relates closely to what Lacan called the primary signifier, the Father, or the big Other (Reinhard, 2010a: 39).

This subsection contemplated the Cainite genealogy as an introduction to the spiritualities of the "city to come" in the prehistory of Ancient Israel. In the following two subsections, I further nuance my reading of the cities of prehistory trope within the social matrix of suspicion provided by the Cainite genealogy's retrospective aetiology.

2.2.2. TOWER OF BABEL: GENESIS 11:1-9

I continue tracing the cities of prehistory trope with the Tower of Babel narrative found in Genesis 11:1–9. The Tower of Babel narrative expands the curated aetiology of suspicion introduced by the Cainite genealogy. In this subsection, I explore recent interpretations of the Tower of Babel narrative, which falls into two broad groups. Next, I synthesise ideas, from what I term the "unified arrogance" and "multiplicity" groups, to create a richer and more nuanced reading of the spirituality curated by the Tower of Babel narrative. Last, I redescribe the Cainite genealogy's aetiology of suspicion by including the curated expansions injected by the Tower of Babel narrative.

Recent interpreters of the Tower of Babel narrative fall broadly into two factions. The first group of interpretations hinges on the unified arrogance of the people building the city and God who disperses them as punishment (Lacocque, 2009). These "unified arrogance" interpreters claim that, within the broader network of myths of the prehistory of Ancient Israel, the Tower of Babel serves as the ultimate failure of God's attempt to save universal humankind. After the final failure, God collapses the attempt to save universal humankind into a covenantal relationship with Abraham (Awabdy, 2010: 3–29). Reading the Tower of Babel narrative with a focus on unified arrogance also makes it useful as a modern critique of Empire.

Those who read the narrative as a critique of unified arrogance and Empire contend that Babel and Babylon are closely connected (Brett, 2000: 46; Runions, 2011: 143–169). Babylon, as the place signifying unified arrogance and Empire, wants to replace God as sovereign. God responds to this attack of the unified arrogance of Empire by creating untranslatable multiplicity in the form of language bringing down the unified arrogant system of Empire. This sketch of the Tower of Babel as a critique of unified arrogance and Empire has found its way into popular culture. A few examples of popular cultural adaptations are: multiplicity and the impossibility of translation (Calefato, 2004: 175–185; Lefcowitz, 2007: 452;

Babana-Hampton, 2009: 482–492), a metaphor for the 2008 financial collapse as a punishment for arrogance (Jacobs, 2009: 17–30), and an artistic critique of Empire (Tritt, 2003: 46–51; Morra, 2007: 198–216; Runions, 2011: 143–169).

A second group of interpreters claim that the narrative itself does not support inferring the Tower of Babel as a punishment for unified arrogance and Empire. These interpreters focus on the way God creates linguistic (and by proxy cultural) multiplicity as a blessing. This group of "multiplicity" interpreters use a medley of approaches to arrive at the conclusion that the Tower of Babel narrative's message is one of God blessing humanity with linguistic and cultural multiplicity.

Hiebert (2007: 29–58), for instance, focuses on the narrative's aetiological role as an explanation for linguistic and cultural multiplicity. The Tower of Babel narrative seeks to explain the multiplicity of language and culture while insisting on evaluating the human drive towards identity and solidarity negatively. God wants linguistic and cultural multiplicity because it enriches human life. Moyaert (2013: 215–234) sees linguistic and cultural diversification in the Tower of Babel narrative as a solution to the misunderstandings and miscommunication in Genesis 1–10. Diversification of language and culture functions as a tool for individualisation that gives rise to otherness and transcendence. Through language and culture as a function of individualisation, the potential of communication and understanding starts to be realised, most prominently in God's covenant with Abraham.

Can these readings of the Tower of Babel narrative be synthesised? Is there some place where these interpretations overlap crystallising a more nuanced reading of the curated spirituality of the "city to come"? There is some potential for synthesis between reading the Tower of Babel as a narrative concerning unified arrogance and as a narrative focused on multiplicity. The unified arrogance and multiplicity views of the Tower of Babel narrative namely overlap in their outline of the divine "Us".

The divine "Us'" intervention in the narrative provides the contours of the overlaps between the unified arrogance and multiplicity interpreters of the Tower of Babel. Both views on the Tower of Babel agree that the attempt at uniformity by the city and tower builders is the problem of the narrative. The unified arrogance view holds that the builders' uniformity (that some interpreters call Empire) is contingent with the aim of the city and tower: to reach heaven and be like God (α). [18]

The multiplicity interpreters insist that the Babel narrative tries to explain the lack of otherness in human society ($\sim\beta$). Although the multiplicity interpreters contend no contingency or a weak contingency between the building and the purpose of the city and tower, they see the builders' drive towards uniformity as the implicit negative to the explicit positive of explaining linguistic and cultural multiplicity. What both views agree upon, is that uniformity, whether in correlation with the aim of the builders or not, is disrupted by the divine "Us'" intervention, resulting in multiplicity.

Both unified arrogance and multiplicity views of the Tower of Babel narrative agree that the emergence of a multiplicity of language and culture, brought about by the divine "Us", is in reaction to the human drive towards uniformity. Here, we find the previous paragraph's argument reversed. The aim of the Tower of Babel narrative according to the multiplicity interpreters is to explain why we have a multiplicity of language and culture (β). Conversely, we find the unified arrogance interpreters perceiving this multiplicity as God's punishment because of human arrogance ($\sim\alpha$). These two interpretations of the Tower of Babel narrative are in tension concerning uniformity and multiplicity (α, $\sim\beta$; $\sim\alpha$, β), with the divine "Us'" intervention providing the contours of the tension.

Both interpretations collapse the tension between uniformity and multiplicity by reading the divine "Us'" intervention as functional. A more nuanced reading of the Tower of Babel narrative will insist that the divine "Us" is not only a functional

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[18] I add these Greek letters for the reader's convenience, making it easier to follow the argument, which might become heady.

agent. How might one integrate the divine "Us'" intervention in the Tower of Babel narrative without collapsing the divine "Us" into a mere functional agent?

With Derrida's (1985) reading of the Tower of Babel narrative, entitled *Des Tours de Babel*, we find traces of a possible interpretation that envisions the divine "Us'" intervention as non-functional. Derrida provides a non-functional perspective on the divine "Us'" intervention by reading the Tower of Babel narrative as a double negative ($\sim\alpha$; $\sim\beta$). He agrees with the multiplicity interpreters that the Tower of Babel narrative is mainly an aetiological account of the multiplicity of language, which brings about the need for translation. However, he is less optimistic that translation will lead to better communication. Derrida believes that multiplicity of language brings with it the impossibility of translation and hence more miscommunication ($\sim\beta$).

After asserting that language multiplicity leads to the impossibility of translation, Derrida moves to agree with the unified arrogance interpreters. He agrees with the unified arrogance interpreters that the divine "Us" comes to destroy Empire and punishes humankind with language multiplicity and its infinite untranslatability ($\sim\alpha$). Derrida is so emphatic about his wish to see Empire dispersed that he goes even further.

In the final paragraph of Des Tour de Babel, he claims that creating language multiplicity leaves the divine "Us", or the primary signifier of Empire itself, open to the impossibility of translation. As Derrida (1985: 227) puts it:

> God weeps over his name. His text is the most sacred, the most poetic, the most originary, since he creates a name and gives it to himself, but he is left no less destitute in his force and even in his wealth; he pleads for a translator…

The line from Yanni's piyyut (Lieber, 2005: 180) rings true not only for the builders of the city and tower, but ironically also for the divine "Us" whose intervention produces language multiplicity in the Tower of Babel narrative:

They schemed to build a city / but became homeless in every city // they plotted to establish a name for themselves / but by them no name was established.

Derrida's double negative interpretation (∼α, ∼β) of the Tower of Babel, nuances the unified arrogance and multiplicity explanations of the narrative (α, ∼β; ∼α, β) by insisting that Empire's destruction, the multiplicity of language, and even the divine "Us" falls under the curse of infinite untranslatability. What is then the double positive (α, β) of Derrida's double negative reading of the Tower of Babel narrative?

The answer lies in a reversal of Derrida's analysis. If both uniformity and multiplicity fall under the rubric of untranslatability, then one can imagine a city where multiplicity defines its very uniformity. In other words, the narrative of the "city to come" is the direct opposite to Derrida's interpretation of the Tower of Babel narrative.

The narrative of the "city to come" found in the Tower of Babel narrative is the insistence that, the unique lived matrix of language and culture (or meaning) of every individual trumps Empire's arrogant uniformity. Furthermore, what unifies the "city to come" in the Tower of Babel narrative is its very insistence on multiplicity of meaning, kept in place by God, the divine "Us", who signifies this unified multiplicity (Reinhard, 2010b: 44).

The builders of the "city to come" need not build a tower of arrogant uniformity to reach heaven or wait for the big Other to come down and force multiplicity. Instead, the builders find that the "city to come's" unity is its insistent protection of the multiplicity of individual meanings. In the "city to come", God does not have to come down, but the divine "Us" is shown in the city's insistent protection of each unique meaning, as its unity.

Where do these readings of the curated spirituality of the "city to come" in the Tower of Babel narrative leave the aetiological spirituality of suspicion that the Cainite genealogy introduced? How does this reading of the Tower of Babel narrative further calibrate the cities of prehistory trope I am tracing? With this non-functional reading of the divine "Us'" intervention in the Tower of Babel narrative, I further nuance my reading of the cities of prehistory trope in the following ways:

1. The Cainite genealogy curated an "Old" Testament spirituality of suspicion concerning the assemblage of the city and the activity it harbours. The Tower of Babel narrative reveals some of the markers of suspicion against the assemblage of the city that the city of prehistory trope curates, namely: uniformity and multiplicity. The "Old" Testament spirituality curated by the Tower of Babel narrative is suspicious of uniformity at the cost of multiplicity. In the "city to come" there can be no Empire that destroys multiplicity for the sake of arrogant uniformity. The mark of "city to come" is rather the divine "Us"; the big Other's unity marked by an insistence on a multiplicity of unique existential meanings. This curated spirituality wants us to be suspicious about the future of any city that does not create space for a multiplicity of uniquely lived meanings.

2. The Tower of Babel narrative further elaborates the aetiological spirituality explaining culture and technology introduced by the Cainite genealogy. While engaging in the act of myth-making for the "city to come", we should remain aware that the Tower of Babel narrative insists that the multiplicity of distinct meanings is what unifies the city. In the "city to come" language, culture, and technology expresses the unifying multiplicity of particular meanings. If the technological and cultural explosion found in the Cainite genealogy is subjected to Empire's uniformity, we will quickly see an intervention of confusion from the divine "Us". This divine "Us" models the insistence that the multiplicity of unique meanings expressed in culture and technology unifies the city.

This subsection elaborated on the cities of prehistory trope's introduction found in the Cainite genealogy by injecting insights from the Tower of Babel narrative. In the next subsection, I continue to elaborate the curated spiritualities of the "city to come" in the cities of prehistory trope. I do this with a close reading of the narrative I added to the cities of prehistory trope, namely that of Sodom.

2.2.3. SODOM: GENESIS 19:1-28

The Sodom narrative is the final "Old" Testament spirituality in the cities of prehistory trope. To understand how the Sodom narrative expands the cities of prehistory trope, I first attend to three clusters of explication. Next, I move to integrate these clusters of interpretation around a central theme. Finally, I show how the curated "Old" Testament spirituality of the Sodom narrative expands the cities of prehistory trope I am tracing.

Doyle (2004) groups recent interpretations of the Sodom narrative into three clusters. The first cluster focuses on "male-male genital expression", the second gathers round "hospitality", and the third congregates around "honour". One might access each interpretation of the Sodom narrative through their description of the root ידע (to "know"). I consider each interpretative cluster in turn.

The first interpretive cluster of the Sodom narrative is "male-male genital expression". Exegetes in this cluster interpret the root ידע , in verse 5, as a sexual expression of pleasure. The men of Sodom want to have sex, for pleasure, with the strangers in their city (Speiser, 1964: 142; Sarna, 1989: 135). This interpretation appears convincing, especially considering that the Sodom narrative is extremely sexually laden (Nel, 2005: 370–372). The focus on the sexual is intensified further by the redactor's insertion of this account into the Abrahamic cycle of the ancestral narratives, burdened with the problem of Abraham's progeny (Wheaton, 2006: 151).

The "male-male genital expression" cluster of interpretation is so pervasive, that the Sodom narrative has become synonymous with perceived sexual deviance through the word sodomy. However, if one takes this cluster of interpretation seriously, then one should look beyond the selective and limiting "male-male genital expression". One should rather interpret the Sodom narrative as an anthology of the total breakdown of sexual boundaries (Aldrich, 2004: 1719–1737; Noort, 2004: 4; Toensing, 2005: 61–74; Low, 2010: 37–54) and by proxy of sexual difference itself. The men of Sodom wanting to "know" the strangers in their city, Lot offering his daughters who have not "known" a man to the men of Sodom in the strangers' place. Finally, Lot's daughters who enter into this sexual deviance themselves by "knowing" Lot without Lot's knowledge.

If the first cluster of exegetes translated the root יָדַע purely in sexual terms, then the second cluster underplays or avoids this sexual interpretation. Interpreters in this cluster highlight how the יָדַע, in verse 5, facilitates the interplay between Lot's hospitality and the hostility of the men of Sodom.[19] Interpreting the Sodom narrative as an account of hospitality has Christian roots going as far back as John Chrysostom and Augustine of Hippo. Chrysostom and Augustine portray Lot as an exemplar of hospitality to strangers, in the face of considerable hostility from the men of Sodom. There is, however, a division among recent exegetes of the hospitality cluster regarding the subject of Lot as exemplar of hospitality.

Some interpreters namely believe that Lot's actions towards the strangers are in line with Ancient Near Eastern hospitality norms (Noort, 2004: 14), or even goes beyond the expected hospitality (Morschauser, 2003: 461). Other interpreters claim that the narrative's structure is set up in such a way as to compare the Abrahamic episode of hospitality in Genesis 18 with Lot's episode in Genesis 19. Comparing the two episodes, Abraham trumps Lot on almost every aspect of hospitality (Doyle, 2004).

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[19] Both the "male-male genital expression" and the "hospitality" clusters are also found in early commentaries on the Sodom narrative in the Koran (Leemhuis, 2004: 173).

The third cluster of interpreters tries to integrate the "male-male genital expression" and "hospitality" views by using "honour" as a third concept. Employing honour as the central notion, these interpreters paint Lot as a semi-outsider who, by including and protecting the strangers, shares his honour with them (Bechtel, 1993: 108–128). ידע in verse 5 then refers to "know" in its ambiguity.

When the men of Sodom ask to "know" the strangers, their intent is not sex for the sake of pleasure, but sex to shame the strangers. By shaming the strangers, who might be spies, the men of Sodom want to assert their power over them. Lot then counter-shames the men of Sodom by offering valuable assets in the strangers' place: his daughters, who have not "known" a man and are valuable assets, because of their ability to produce offspring. The counter-shame enrages the men of Sodom and they try to attack Lot.

Although the "honour" cluster of interpretation integrates the "male-male genital expression" and "hospitality" views, it fails to move beyond a functional approach to the Sodom narrative. Every move the characters make, stand in calculated-functional relation to the effect it has on honour and shame. It might be true that honour and shame is an important cultural marker in the Ancient Near East, but can one assume that the characters in the Sodom narrative calculate each step in honour and shame terms?

To claim such a calculated-functional relation to honour and shame for each action in the narrative retrospectively seems like a now debunked idea in anthropology and historical research. Namely, that an anthropologist or historian can explain phenomena in another culture objectively by using a single concept and without confluence or influence from the anthropologist or historian's culture (Jones, 1980: 207–212; Vandermeersch, 2004: 149–171). If this petition against the "honour" cluster holds, then where will I find an alternative that integrates the

clusters of interpretation of the Sodom narrative in a more honest and less "objective" way?

When looking for a more honest and less "objective" way of integrating the Sodom narrative's clusters of exegesis, one might turn to the political theology of the neighbour as espoused by those who combine Lacan and Rosenzweig. The advantages of integrating the Sodom narrative's clusters of interpretation through a Lacan-Rosenzweig political theology of the neighbour are threefold. First, in a political theology of the neighbour, the neighbour participates in the economy of sexuation. Additionally, one can expound a political theology of the neighbour in terms of hospitality. Finally, a political theology of the neighbour includes allusions to honour and shame. I use concepts from Reinhard's (2010a; 2010b) two recent articles on a Lacan-Rosenzweig political theology of the neighbour and expound them in relation with the Sodom narrative.

In the Sodom narrative, the strangers, the messengers from God, are male (Lyons, 2002: 215), which one might group in the constructed Lacan-Rosenzweig set of Master, male, and God. Although these strangers are male, they are at the same time the stranger, the other, or the neighbour in need of hospitality, which one might group with the Lacan-Rosenzweig set Analyst, female, neighbour. The strangers themselves are then the start of the symbolic breakdown of sexual boundaries and difference between male and female in the narrative. These strangers disrupt the very fabric of difference between God (Master, male) and neighbour (Analyst, female) and confuse the men of Sodom.

The disruption in the field of sexuation by the strangers confuses hospitality. For Lacan, the neighbour represents, according to Hendrickson (2012: 478), "…that remainder of self left out of the symbolic, lodged in the real, which enjoys the excessive dimension of *jouissance*." The neighbour as female is the one who desires the excessively impossible of, and in, the other. At first it appears easy to

understand who constitutes the neighbour-set, but as the story progresses it becomes less clear who the neighbour is (Baker, 2009: 210).

Is Lot saving the strangers (neighbours) or are the strangers saving Lot (the neighbour)? Is Lot the neighbour, desiring the impossible of the strangers by negotiating that another city, Zoar, not be destroyed? Alternatively, are the strangers the neighbours, whom Lot protects from the men of Sodom, who desires to treat them as female? Does Lot do the excessively absurd and offer his daughters in the strangers' place? The disruption of sexuation in the narrative not only gives rise to a confusion of hospitality but also undermines the unwritten system of justice: honour and shame.

The strangers' disruption of sexuation undermines the honour and shame system in the Sodom narrative. Indeed, the destruction of the city of Sodom and its men destroys the very space on which the justice system of honour and shame is dependent. Again, the strangers carry the embryos of this destruction. Lot chooses the strangers as neighbours, removing them from what Žižek (2006) would call "justice", or the balance of honour and shame. They function as beings outside the cultural norms of the honour and shame system. By attempting to save Lot and his family, the strangers in turn undermine the fibre of the justice system of honour and shame. If the honour and shame norm held true, those saved should have been those with the most honour in the city of Sodom, not the semi-outsider, Lot, who shares his honour with strangers.

What then of the men of Sodom's insistence to ידע the strangers in verse 5? The men of Sodom cannot bear the disruption of the symbolic order of sexuation. They yearn to "know" the strangers: are they gods or neighbours; are they male or female; do they bring honour or shame? Lot's offering of his daughters is beside the point: why would the men of Sodom want to "know" the familiar? The disruption brought by the strangers is what the men of Sodom desire to "know", but the strangers are fundamentally "unknowable", due to the disruption they bring.

The curated spirituality of the Sodom narrative congregates around the stranger in the "city to come". In the "city to come", the stranger is welcomed as a disrupter of the field of sexuation. The stranger in the "city to come" is simultaneously messenger of God and neighbour, male and female, the Analyst and the Master. In the "city to come", there remains a fluidity concerning who has the status of neighbour: is it the city dweller or the stranger. Who is the neighbour desiring the impossible? The "city to come" welcomes the stranger as someone who disenthralls the city of its embedded justice structures, by acting as an exception to the justice system.[20] In short, the stranger dismantles and harasses (Žižek, 2012a: 51) the city's love of its societal psychosis regarding sexuation, hospitality, and justice.

If the strangers in the Sodom narrative disrupt the field of sexuation, confuse hospitality, and undermine the justice system of honour and shame, what does this mean for the narrative of the "city to come"? How does this Lacan-Rosenzweig reading of the Sodom narrative further nuance the spirituality of aetiological suspicion, which the Cainite genealogy introduced in the cities of prehistory trope? I propose this interpretation of the Sodom narrative enriches the cities of prehistory trope in the following ways:

1. The Sodom narrative enriches the Cainite genealogy's curated "Old" Testament spirituality of suspicion of the assemblage of the city and the activity it harbours, by adding the element of the stranger. The strangers in the Sodom narrative dismantle and harass the city's societal psychosis regarding sexuation, hospitality, and justice. The "Old" Testament spirituality curated by the Sodom narrative is suspicious of any city that does not actively welcome the stranger as the unknowable disrupter of societal psychosis. By actively welcoming the stranger or loving them as

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[20] Agamben (1995: 114–119) moves towards this insight in his article *We Refugees* where he describes all humans as strangers or refugees, in terms of the nation-state. If we are all refugees as Agamben claims, then we might rethink our structurally ready-made identities and re-evaluate the immigrant stranger. Auret and du Toit (2014) attempts this in a recent paper entitled The Site of *Recapitalising the Spiritual Capital of the City: Welcoming the Stranger with Intention and Architectural Edifice.*

neighbour (God), the "city to come" undermines its societal psychosis. The relationship between the city and the stranger can be constrained to the following maxim: either the city loves the stranger as itself, or the city will love its societal psychosis as itself.

2. Aetiologically the Sodom narrative explains the relationship of the stranger to the assemblage of the city. The narrative of Sodom reminds us that the stranger comes to reveal the city's ready-made ideas of culture and technology. As an exception to the city's ready-made ideas, the stranger dismantles and harasses the dominant aetiological myth of its culture and technology, which the assemblage of the city mindlessly reiterates. Put differently, the stranger saves the assemblage of the city from the hermeneutical feedback loop of cultural and technological myths that captivates and keeps it captive.

As we have seen in this subsection, the stranger breaks the societal psychosis and hermeneutical feedback loop of myth, which captivates the city and keeps the city captive. The stranger does this by disrupting sexuation, confusing hospitality, and undermining the dominant justice system. In the narrative of the "city to come", the stranger is actively welcomed and loved as the one who breaks the captivation and captivity of the city's social psychosis, and its technological and cultural hermeneutical feedback loop of myth.

This is the final narrative in the cities of prehistory trope. I now move to summarise what the curated "Old" Testament spiritualities have taught me concerning the "city to come" in the cities of prehistory trope.

2.2.4. MARKERS IN THE CITIES OF PREHISTORY

In this section, I traced curated "Old" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come" in the prehistory of Israel. Tracing the cities of prehistory trope, I found some markers of the narrative of the "city to come". I started by exploring the introduction to the cities of prehistory trope, namely the Cainite genealogy. I found

that the Cainite genealogy introduced the cities of prehistory trope by creating a social matrix of suspicion. Through this social matrix of suspicion, I undertook my close reading of both the Tower of Babel and Sodom narratives.

My close reading of the Tower of Babel narrative focused on the tension between uniformity and multiplicity. Into this tension enters the divine "Us" modelling the insistence that the unifying factor in the "city to come" is its protection of the multiple configurations of language and culture, which comes into being through each person's unique lived meaning. The curated "Old" Testament spirituality in the Tower of Babel narrative is deeply suspicious of any city that does not protect this uniquely lived meaning of an individual. In the process of myth-making, the narrative of the "city to come" must heed the call of the divine "Us" to find uniformity through its insistence on multiplicity.

Reading the story of Sodom closely, I found that the strangers are the key to unlocking the aetiology of suspicion in the narrative. By reading the stranger through a Lacan-Rosenzweig political theology of the neighbour, I found that the stranger should be actively welcomed in the "city to come" as God-neighbour, male-female, Master-Analyst. The stranger disrupts sexuation, confuse hospitality, and undermine the dominant metaphor of justice. In short, the stranger harasses and dismantles the social psychosis, which the city reiterates through a hermeneutical feedback loop of myth. To be saved from its captivation with and captivity in its social psychosis the "city to come" actively welcomes and loves the stranger. The maxim of suspicion in the Sodom narrative is: either the city loves the stranger as itself, or the city will love its social psychosis as itself.

The curated "Old" Testament spiritualities in the cities of prehistory trope produce a mosaic of the "city to come". The constitution of the "city to come" insists that the city's unifying feature is the uniqueness of each individual's configuration of culture and language. Each individual's arrangement of culture and language and the meaning it produces emulates the divine "Us". However, the "city to come" remains painfully aware that it can never sustain the suspicion needed to remain

open to each individual's uniquely lived meaning. This is due to the city's tendency to get caught up in its myth-making feedback loop leading to social psychosis. To break this feedback loop of myth-making leading to social psychosis, the "city to come" actively welcomes and loves the stranger. The stranger is the one who disrupts sexuation, confuses hospitality, and undermines the dominant metaphor of justice. By welcoming the stranger, the "city to come" disenthralls itself from its self-created myth, inviting suspicion back into its fold to activate the uniquely lived meanings kept in place by the divine "Us".

Having traced the markers of the cities of prehistory trope, I now move to the second trope of "Old" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come" I have identified, namely the cities of refuge trope.

2.3. CITIES OF REFUGE

This division delves into the biblical legal texts that relate the cities of refuge trope excavating their contribution to the narrative of the "city to come". The cities of refuge trope has a different timbre and tonality from the cities of prehistory trope. For the cities of prehistory trope, I traced three curated "Old" Testament spiritualities, divergent in focus, but convergent in their suspicion of the assemblage the city. In the cities of refuge trope, I will trace a single "Old" Testament spirituality, curated by the broad P and D strands of tradition (Barmash, 2005: 81), convergent in their focus on the exceptional status of asylum cities. Owing to the cities of refuge trope's different timbre and tonality, I adapt my close reading method of these texts to understand what they mean in relation to the "city to come".

The material representing the "Old" Testament spirituality of the cities of refuge are the biblical laws found in Numbers 35:9–34, Deuteronomy 4:41–42, 19:1–13, and Joshua 20:1–8. These biblical legal texts should be read as literature, rather than coherent law codices, as Knight (2011: 11) highlights:

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Biblical law is, in a word, literature—a composition seemingly comprising Israelite laws, presented in the text as divine ordinances, woven together into a literary whole (actually, into several literary sections), and embedded in a larger narrative context, the story of the people's journey from Egypt to Canaan.

Three phrases from Knight's definition of biblical law as literature require further explication. To begin with, Knight claims that the written legal texts traditionally called the Covenant Code, Deuteronomic Code, Holiness Code, and Priestly Code are not legal codices in the modern constitutional sense of the word. The legal codices we inherit from Ancient Israel are, rather, literary works, which seemingly contain some Ancient Israelite laws, but not necessarily only Ancient Israelite laws, nor all of them. Biblical law represents a selection of Ancient Israelite laws, which a particular social class of Ancient Israel favoured. It is possible to make some assumptions about the cultural stratum of Ancient Israel who procured, produced, and encoded biblical law.

The particular social class, who procured, produced, and encoded biblical law must have had access to a rich collection of oral and written laws. Some could have been Ancient Israelite laws; others borrowed from different legal traditions in the Ancient Near East. This distinct cultural stratum of Ancient Israel must also have been able to read, write, and reason to decide which Ancient Israelite or other Ancient Near Eastern laws should be included in or excluded from biblical law.[21] From my description of the city as an assemblage, it follows that the richest collection of oral and written laws, as well as the expertise for reading, writing, and reasoning about this collection of laws, congregates in the largest city within an assemblage (Knight, 2011: 126–128).

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[21] Including and excluding Ancient Near Eastern laws would have included adapting legal codices subtly subverting the originals by inserting Ancient Israelite religious or political propaganda (Lombaard, 2011c).

Knight's second contention is that biblical law presents itself as divine ordinances. The specific cultural stratum of Ancient Israel, who procured, produced, and encoded biblical law, justified it by invoking the power of a divine guarantor. Immediately our power relation instruments should pick up seismic activity. Knight (2011: 26) concludes that the cultural stratum of Ancient Israel who procured, produced, and encoded biblical law do so exclusively with a self-serving bias. Although a self-serving bias is obviously present during the procurement, production, and encoding of biblical law, overstating such a self-serving bias is also dangerous. An overstated self-serving bias does not take the possibility of benevolence seriously, nor does it account for resistance from other power players in Ancient Israel.

Indeed, the cultural stratum of Ancient Israel, who procured, produced, and encoded biblical law do so from a place of power and privilege. However, it seems hard to imagine that they did so solely in self-interest. I, therefore, exercise a hermeneutics of suspicion about Knight's extreme implementation of a hermeneutics of suspicion.

Indeed, if the particular cultural stratum of Ancient Israel who procured, produced, and encoded biblical law was bent on exclusive self-interest in the form of a totalitarian regime, biblical law would be much more extensive, as Žižek (2008: 135) remarks:

> One of the strategies of totalitarian regimes is to have legal regulations (criminal laws) so severe that, if taken literally, *everyone* is guilty of something.

Biblical law does not conform to the profile of Žižek's description of a totalitarian legal system. It reads more like an attempt by a particular cultural stratum of Ancient Israel to centralise a legal system that distributes power throughout the entire assemblage of the city: from the smallest rural clans to the power of the largest city (Barmash, 2005: 36). My third and final remark concerning Knight's

definition of biblical law as literature will disclose why biblical law reads in this non-totalitarian way.

Knight's third comment concerning biblical law regards its embedment within a larger narrative context: the Israelites' journey from Egypt to Canaan. This journey has a loaded history of topological interpretation that continues today. To the throng of topological voices I add my claim that this symbolises the people's legal journey from law to justice.

The tension between law and justice was already articulated by the prophets of Ancient Israel (Knight, 2011: 56) even as biblical law was being procured, produced, and encoded (Budd, 1984: xvii; Knierim & Coats, 2005: 9). Within this tension, the prophet's vocation was to announce the call to justice astir in the letter of the law. Theologians like Caputo (2006: 27, 140) described justice as the undeconstructible and uncontainable event that beckons the social-historical construct of the law to revise, reform, rewrite, and amend. When the call of the undeconstructible and uncontainable event of justice is not heeded by those who have the power to revise, reform, rewrite, and amend law, law quickly degenerates into universal state violence driven by mysterious interpretations of the law from those in power (Žižek, 2010: 127).

The relationship between law and justice in Ancient Israel can thus be recast as a relationship between those who procured, produced, and encoded biblical law and the prophets: with both the lawmakers and the prophets claiming a divine guarantor. Returning to Knight's second claim, one can understand why his extreme hermeneutics of suspicion is suspicious. Knight (2011: 34–35) fails to give equal weight to those who procure, produce, and encode biblical law and those who called for justice: the prophets. The prophets serve as resisting and revising agents for those who procure, produce, and encode biblical law.

As I read the "Old" Testament spirituality of cities of refuge, I attune my ear to the call for justice in the "city to come" that is astir in the letter of this biblical law. I

listen to two symbolic iterations (du Toit, 2014: 246) of the "Old" Testament spirituality of cities of refuge and the call for justice of the "city to come" astir in it. The first iteration reading of the cities of refuge trope will be of the biblical texts themselves. My second iteration reading considers three interpretations and reframings of these biblical legal texts for the current city theatre.

2.3.1. BIBLICAL ITERATIONS OF THE CITIES OF REFUGE TROPE

I begin tracing the cities of refuge trope by discussing the biblical iteration of this single "Old" Testament spirituality, curated by the broader D and P strands of tradition, and the call for justice in the "city to come" astir in the letter of this biblical law. The cities of refuge trope focuses on how the exceptional status of asylum cities acts as a fragmented reminder to other cities in Ancient Israel of the justice in the "city to come". This fragmented reminder, of the justice in the "city to come" found in the cities of refuge trope's idea of asylum, is deeply embedded in the narrative of Ancient Israel itself (Brueggemann, 2003: 59–60), as Burnside (2010: 224) puts it: "Israel is not simply a nation of former slaves but also a nation of asylum seekers."

The legal issue, in the biblical iteration of the cities of refuge trope, is manslaughter (van Seters, 1999: 195). In Ancient Israel, whenever someone was accidentally slain, the slain's clan was obligated to retaliate by executing the slayer. This execution was carried out by a particular member of the slain's clan, called the "blood avenger" (Levine, 2011: 217). It seems mitigation in the case of manslaughter is necessary, lest manslaughter turns into an all-out war between clans.

Into this aperture of mitigation steps the biblical law concerned with the cities of refuge, creating a space that suspends judgement, leaving time for justice to be done (Levine, 2000: 553; Brueggemann, 2001: 198; Rofé, 2002: 121). Reading the three texts referring to the cities of refuge as the curation of a single "Old" Testament spirituality, one finds that the letters of this biblical law contains three

tensions where justice resides. The first tension concerns the power relations between centralised criminal law, and the decentralised judicial sites of the cities of refuge. A second tension deals with the ludicrous logic of guilt articulated in this single "Old" Testament spirituality. The final tension is how the biblical iteration of the cities of refuge imagines the relation between the sacred and secular.

The first tension, where the restlessness of justice dwells, is in the biblical law of the cities of refuge's attempt to counterbalance centralised power by devolving judicial duties to decentralised sites (Nelson, 2002: 239; Barmash, 2005: 82, 91). By devolving judicial duties, the central administration or monarchy limits their influence on the cities of refuge sites (Barmash, 2005: 23; Stackert, 2006: 23–49). Decentralised judicial sites, such as the cities of refuge, are important because the centralised authority that designates these sites could otherwise be tempted to commit unchallenged totalitarian injustice in the name of justice (Fritz, 1995: 165–175; Nelson, 2002: 239).

One must, however, remember that these attempts to counterbalance centralised power by devolving judicial duties to the decentralised sites of cities of refuge is a step taken by the centralised power itself. This strange circular counterbalance causes an unsteady reliance of the centralised administration and the cities of refuge on each other: an uneasy reliance wherein the restlessness of justice can dwell.

A small detail of biblical law as literature is important to understand the uneasy reliance of the centralised administration and the cities of refuge on each other. Biblical law seldom deals with, what today might be called, criminal law: crimes committed against the common good as defined by a centralised state. Rather, biblical law mostly deals with what today would be called torts: crimes committed between individuals or clans requiring mitigated (Knight, 2011: 34).

The distinction between criminal law and torts is important in the case of the cities of refuge, because those who procure, produce, and encode biblical law avoids

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constructing totalitarian criminal law by enacting decentralised spaces of refuge. The manslaughter perpetrator faces the judgement of those who administer the cities of refuge. In other words, the slayer is not a criminal under persecution for disrupting the common good as defined by a centralised state. The slayer commits a tort against the slain's clan, which has to be mitigated by the administrators of the decentralised cities of refuge. The status of the slayer changes from criminal to tort committer when entering the decentralised sites of the cities of refuge.

A second tension from which the cities of refuge trope ooze justice is the enactment of a ludicrous logic of guilt that counteracting the law's fixation with judgement. As a prerequisite for entering the cities of refuge, the slayer has to admit to the manslaughter tort (Phillips, 2002: 58; Barmash, 2005: 86). In other words, to activate the possibility of justice, the slayer has to subvert the law's fascination with judgement by admitting guilt. This way of reasoning does not conform to any Western legal tradition's idea of judgement. Both the French and Anglo-American legal traditions, for instance, maintain the "innocent until proven guilty" principle (Tadros & Tierney, 2004: 402–404; Laudan, 2008: 333–335). This principle of innocence until proven guilty was further enshrined into the current dominant global legal tradition when it was included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 11 (United Nations General Assembly, 1948).[22]

Secretly, however, the principle of innocent until proven guilty has been subverted by the advent of global terrorism, international on/offline security surveillance, and the possibility of being held without a trial. These three phenomena create a special space where those who are a threat to global market capitalism and democracy are assumed guilty until proven innocent (Tadros, 2006: 193–213). Rather than engaging in the neatly mirroring concepts of innocence and guilt, the

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[22] Human Rights may be tracable to the archives of "Old" Testament spiritualities, as Lombaard (2011c) claims. Yet, these spiritualities' idea concerning Human Rights might not directly correspond with that of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Some articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights might be easier to trace to the archives of "Old" Testament spiritualities while other articles might be more distant from a Human Rights ideal portrayed in the "Old" Testament.

cities of refuge's principle seem to be: "You have pleaded guilty to the tort, give time for justice, let us prove your innocence, and if you are innocent we will provide asylum."

A last tension where justice stirs in this biblical law is its description of the cities of refuge as a liminal space between the secular and the sacred. The way in which the broader P (Numbers 35:9–34) and broader D (Deuteronomy 4:41–42, 19:1–13) strands of tradition sketch the tension between the secular and the sacred differs. The broader P strand of tradition maintains that the land of Ancient Israel is holy, and spilling blood (either by mishap or on purpose) must be avoided because it defiles this holiness (Brueggemann, 2003: 75). The broader D strand of tradition, per contra, claims no holy space except the temple in Jerusalem (van Seters, 1999: 198). I read both these strands of tradition together as different glimpses of the liminality present in the single "Old" Testament spirituality of the cities of refuge.

The holy God generating the sacredness field of the land dwells in the perceived centre of the Ancient Israelite community, the temple in Jerusalem (Budd, 1984: xvii–xxi; Knierim & Coats, 2005: 7). The temple in Jerusalem, where the holy God generating the sacredness field of the land dwells (Clines, 1998: 574), is the exclusive domain of the Aaronide priestly class (Knierim & Coats, 2005: 7, 20). The Aaronide priestly class cannot dwell in the cities of refuge for two reasons: First, they cannot live anywhere but in Jerusalem, where they perform temple service to the holy God generating the sacredness field of the land. Second, the Aaronide priests cannot have anything to do with the defilement that spilt blood brings to the land of Ancient Israel. Who then are fit to administer the cities of refuge?

The broader P and D strands of tradition define the Levites' responsibility differently. The broader P strand of tradition sketches the Levites as the perfect class to administer the cities of refuge. For the broader P strand of tradition, the Levites are intermediaries of the sacred: they protect the sacred from defilement.

The Levites are then, according to the broader P strand of tradition, not in sacred service in the same way as the Aaronide priestly class is (van Houten, 1991: 130; Levine, 2000: 566, 568).

The Levites are sketched as ideal candidates to officiate in the cities of refuge, where alternatives to the Jerusalem altar are inconceivable as a guarantee of sacred space (Milgrom, 1990: 291; Levine, 2000: 548; Barmash, 2005: 85). The Levites, as a class set apart to protect the sacred, has just enough sacred agency to consecrate the cities of refuge, and in so doing create a safe time-space for the accidental slayer to receive justice. The accidental slayer is kept safe within the semi-sacred spaces of the cities of refuge by the Levites' agency to protect the sacred and the fear that the land might be defiled further with innocent blood (Milgrom, 1990: xl–xli; Levine, 2000: 555; Knierim & Coats, 2005: 26).

The markers of the justice astir in the "city to come" for the biblical iteration of the cities of refuge trope therefore are:

1. The single "Old" Testament spirituality of the cities of refuge relates the justice astir in the "city to come" through an uneasy reliance of centralised and decentralised judicial sites on each other. Decentralised judicial sites, like the cities of refuge, ensure that a centralised power does not control the legal system with their interpretation of the common good or criminal law. The cities of refuge, as decentralised judicial sites, ensures that centralised criminal law does not commit unchallenged totalitarian injustice in the name of justice. In the "city to come", the balance between centralised and decentralised judicial spaces is the lighthouse keeping justice away from the rocky shores of injustice in the name of the law.

2. The "city to come" houses a ludicrous logic of guilt, taken from the cities of refuge trope. All those who dwell in the "city to come" gain access to it by admitting their guilt. In the "city to come", all are guilty of manslaughter — a theme I elaborate on in the following iteration of the cities of refuge trope. This admittance of guilt does not cripple the guilty, but gives them

courage to aspire towards a "city to come" where the law's fixation on judgement breaks down. In the "city to come", the law's fixation of judgement breaks down, because everyone's guilt means everyone's equality — everyone is responsible for each other's guilt.

3. The protectors of the cities of refuge as semi-sacred spaces are the Levites. This class of people has just enough sacred agency to protect those guilty of manslaughter, but not enough to do temple service in Jerusalem. There is also no valid altar in the cities of refuge; the only valid altar diverted to the temple in Jerusalem, where the holy God that generates the sacredness field of the land dwells. The Levites function, then, as semi-sacred living altars in the cities of refuge. No clear-cut line between the human and the altar or between the sacred and the secular exist in "city to come". All who administer in the "city to come" are called to be semi-sacred liminal living altars who do not mitigate the sacred, as the Aaronide priestly class does in Jerusalem, but rather protect the sacred through their administrative acts.

The upcoming subsection review reframings of the city of refuge trope's biblical iteration in the current city theatre. These recent expressions make use of the city of refuge's biblical iteration, but creatively resituate them within a space and time foreign to biblical law.

2.3.2. RECENT ITERATIONS OF THE CITIES OF REFUGE TROPE

This subsection considers three recent rereadings of the cities of refuge trope's biblical iteration. Christian Spirituality has a long tradition of cathedrals, parish churches, monasteries, and other holy spaces as asylum sites (Pohl, 2006: 81–101). Other areas of study, such as urban planning (Darling, 2013: 1785–1801) and geographical studies (Young, 2011: 534–563), have begun to perceive the assemblage of the city itself as such a space of refuge. Drawing on both the biblical iteration and other ancient cultural iterations of cities of refuge, this trope

has been inspirational for divergent areas in the theatre of the assemblage of the city.

These diverse areas include architecture, social critical theory, and writer's guilds. As second iteration rereadings of the biblical law of the cities of refuge, they function as creative approximations of the biblical iteration. In this subsection, I inspect three such creative approximations of the cities of refuge trope's biblical iteration. I join each of these approximations to a specific marker of the justice astir in the "city to come" identified in the preceding subsection.

First, I reinvestigate the uneasy reliance of centralised and decentralised judicial sites on each other, with the help of Derrida's address to the International Parliament of Writers (IPW) during its 1996 meeting in Strasbourg. Thereafter, I reconsider the ludicrous logic of guilt expounded in the cities of refuge's biblical iteration, using ideas from Žižek's books entitled *Violence* (2008) and *Living in the End Times* (2010). Finally, I resurvey the semi-sacred liminality of living altars that protect the sacred through administrative acts, by looking at one of Le Corbusier's first large building projects: *Cité de Refuge*.

At the 1996 meeting of the IPW in Strasbourg, Derrida spoke on the need for an international network of cities of refuge. Derrida's speech was later published as the essay *On Cosmopolitism* (Derrida, 2004: 1–23). Since the inception of the IPW, in July 1993, it advocated for a network of cities of refuge, to protect writers under threat of persecution in their own countries. Derrida recognised the hidden potential of the network of cities of refuge. He envisioned an "International Agency for Cities of Refuge" to which certain cities would belong.

The "International Agency for Cities of Refuge" would not only offer protection and refuge for writers being persecuted in their own countries, but should take the bold step of circumventing the nation-state's logic of law and hospitality. These cities, representing a new logic of law and hospitality, could activate the spirit of justice astir in the name of the city itself, or as Derrida (2004: 8) puts it:

If the name and the identity of something in the city still has a meaning, could it, when dealing with the related questions of hospitality and refuge, elevate itself above nation-states or at least free itself from them (*s'affranchir*), in order to become, to coin a phrase in a new and novel way, a *free city* (*une ville franche*)? Under the exemption itself (*en général*), the statutes of immunity or exemption occasionally had attached to them, as in the case of the right of asylum, certain places (diplomatic or religious) to which one could retreat in order to escape from the threat of injustice.

The rest of Derrida's speech given at the IPW describes how the nation-state has become too powerful. Following Arendt, he shows how police became the perpetrators of injustice in the name of justice.[23] In the final part of the address, Derrida archives a history concerning cities of refuge. He mentions that cities of refuge has entered into the Western, European, and para-European traditions through the biblical iteration of the single "Old" Testament spirituality of cities of refuge I described in the last subsection.

Derrida's intuitive second iteration reading of the cities of refuge trope hints at the potential of the "city to come" to circumvent the locked-in symbolic order of the nation-state's political dominance. The biblical iteration of the cities of refuge is, however, more nuanced and disruptive than Derrida's rereading. The justice of the "city to come" astir in the cities of refuge trope asks not only of cities to organise themselves into international networks of asylum, but entices nation-states to urge cities to assemble such international networks. An uneasy reliance between the centralised nation-state and the decentralised international network of cities of refuge imagines a new political space. A political space where the nation-state's centralised legal system and its police force, do not perpetrate injustice in the name of justice.

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[23] One might add Lefebvre's (1996: 214) warning that "[i]f our cities simply become refuges for the retired, for tourists and intellectuals occupied with abstractions, that would be a disaster."

In an essay entitled On Forgiveness, usually bundled with On Cosmopolitism, Derrida (2004: 23–60) explores the impossible madness of forgiveness. By virtue of our systemic embeddedness in past crimes against humanity, which echo down the hallways of history, into contemporary time and space, we are all guilty of crimes against humanity.[24] We are indeed all perpetrators of manslaughter by being part of the inescapable intertwined historical-systemic human injustices. We are all guilty as symbolic sin, so to speak.

For this reason, the justice that oozes from the "city to come", as outlined in the biblical iteration of the cities of refuge trope, expects more of cities than solely organising themselves into international decentralised judicial spaces, with an uneasy reliance on the centralised nation-state. The single "Old" Testament spirituality insists that the law's fixation on judgement should be broken down by the ludicrous logic of guilt that reigns in the cities of refuge. To illuminate how this ludicrous logic of guilt functions, and how cities of refuge might break down the law's fixation on judgement, I make use of cues from Žižek's books entitled *Violence* (2008) and *Living in the End Times* (2010).

In the "city to come", the ludicrous logic of guilt that breaks down the law's fixation on judgement is not only an admittance of personal guilt, but also a public display illuminating humanity's universal status as perpetrators of manslaughter. Žižek provides an inventive answer on how to conceive of such public displays of guilt, which breaks down the law's fixation on judgement. His answer encourages the international network of cities of refuge to act in a counterintuitive way that seems, at first, to be to the disadvantage of the city. To understand Žižek's counterintuitive answer requires some background.

In 2003, after France did not support an invasion of Iraq by the United States, the Chairman of the Committee on House Administration, Bob Ney, renamed "French

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[24] An honorary mention of N.P. van Wyk Louw's poem *Ballade van die Bose* (translated into English as "Ballad of the Evil One" by Crewe, 1970: 60–62) which describes how humanity interlace with the problem of evil, is in order.

Fries" to "Freedom Fries" in three Congressional cafeterias ("US Congress Opts for 'Freedom Fries,'" 2003). Similarly, in 2006, Iranian bakeries renamed "Danish pastries" to "Roses of the Prophet Mohammed" after a Danish newspaper's cartoon caricature of the prophet Mohammed, caused an uproar ("Iranians rename Danish pastries," 2006). Žižek (2008: 111) comments on these events:

> Would it not be nice to live in a world where the US congress would change the name of French fries to Mohammed fries, and the Iranian authorities transform Danish pastries into roses of freedom.

The collective guilt in the "city to come", presses cities to symbolise publicly, with violent acts of inclusion, our collective perpetration of manslaughter, through our involvement in historical-systemic injustices. To improvise on Žižek's suggestion: In the "city to come", we should admit our manslaughter guilt, privately and publicly. Imagine if the New York City Council would insist on dedicating a space for a Mosque within the memorial site of the 9/11 attacks[25] or the Taliban insist on building an Evangelical church at the site of Osama Bin Laden's capture. Far from being insensitive, these acts would allow an awareness of the complexities of our historical-systemic manslaughter guilt and would disrupt the law's fixation on judgement. Notice that the "city to come" can make a powerful public confession of humanity's common manslaughter guilt by means of the parallax view of an architectural edifice.

The three aspects of an architectural edifice as described by Žižek (2010: 244–245), helps us understand the contours of its effect. His three aspects of the architectural edifice are: the objective, the subjective, and the parallax virtual. The objective is the building that exists in the world, the subjective is the point of view from which the observer sees the building, and the parallax virtual, is the gap

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[25] Building a Mosque, an Islamic cultural centre, and a space for interfaith dialogue close to "Ground Zero" has been proposed and seems, now, to be making headway (Cavaliere, 2014).

between the objective and the subjective, inscribed into the real building's temporal existence itself.[26] Žižek (2010: 244) explains:

> …[T]he parallax gap is the inscription of our changing temporal experience when we approach and enter the building. It is a little bit like a cubist painting, presenting the same object from different perspectives, condensing into the same spatial surface a temporal extension. Through the parallax gap in the object itself, 'time becomes space' (which is Clause Lévi-Strauss's definition of myth).

What I suggest we do, is read the parallax virtual between the objective and the subjective, temporally inscribed into the architectural edifice itself. If we stretch the timespan Žižek proposes, we see how a specific building, its occupants, and its administrators can serve as a compounded memory of the "city to come". The parallax virtual inscribed into the real architectural object itself, has the same ring as my third marker of the biblical iteration of the cities of refuge trope, namely compounded liminality. More specifically, the compounded liminality of the semi-sacred living altars who protect the sacred through administrative acts. The parallax virtual inscribed into the architectural object itself and the semi-sacred liminal living altars that protect the sacred through administrative acts, overlap in one of Le Corbusier's first large building projects, *Cité de Refuge*.

Le Corbusier's (1981: 11) vision for the city was more extensive than just architectural and urban design. He envisioned a city that, by design and build, would be an appropriate dwelling for a new humanity to discover its full potential. Le Corbusier was known for his relentless pursuit of a city that would be a refuge for all humanity. He saw each building project as a potential tipping point which would initiate the "city to come" (Taylor, 1987: ix). The Cité de Refuge, commissioned by the Salvation Army, designed and realised in Paris between

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[26] Giedion (2008: 434–437) used cubism to explain the parallax spatial dynamics of how a building is designed. Žižek's invention here is not so much using the temporal (Lévi-Strauss) or the spatial (Giedion) dimensions in the cubist mode, but rather the way he combines them in a single time-space reading.

June 1929 and December 1933, was Le Corbusier's chance to test his "city to come" on a larger scale than his previous projects.

The "Grant Scheme" pictured by Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, resonated with Le Corbusier's vision for the "city to come" (Le Corbusier, 1981: 11; Taylor, 1987: 2). *Cité de Refuge* was, in the words of Curtis (1986: 102), a "crisp new *machine á habiter* [machine for living] combating the decayed buildings around it: Le Corbusier characterised it as 'usine du bien' – 'a factory of goodness.'"[27] As a factory of goodness, as opposed to a factory of goods, Cité de Refuge was designed as an edifice to edify a "city to come" where the disenfranchised urban poor could fully participate in the city's wellbeing.

Here, one should gladly accept a later critiqued by some Foucaultian interpreters (Tafuri, 1987: 206), who by exploited the double meaning of asylum and some architecture flaws to claim that *Cité de Refuge* was a heterotopia. Foucault (1986: 24) himself saw spaces of heterotopia as enacted utopian projects:

> There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places—places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society—which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias.

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[27] Although Le Corbusier popularised the expression *machine á habiter* (a machine for living) he was not the first to use it. In 1914 an Italian named Antonio Sant'Elia, who was part of a group of architects who called themselves The Futurists, wrote in the *Manifesto of Futurist Architecture* (Al, 2013):

> We must invent and rebuild the Futurist city like an immense and tumultuous shipyard, agile, mobile and dynamic in every detail; and the Futurist house must be like a gigantic machine.

The aim of the Salvation Army's "Grand Scheme" and the *Cité de Refuge* was to imagine just such a utopian city where the disenfranchised urban poor could fully participate in the well being of the "city to come". *Cité de Refuge* was one such a heterotopia project acting as a societal mirror (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986: 24), yet it is a somewhat strange heterotopia. Whereas the heterotopias described by Foucault (1979: 195–228) was mostly directed inwards with the purpose of observing, branding, and altering the individual[28], *Cité de Refuge* was mostly a heterotopian mirror directed outwards.

The *Cité de Refuge* enhanced the fabric of the rundown industrial neighbourhood of which it became part (Taylor, 1987: 26), thus already allowing the disenfranchised poor to contribute to the well-being of the city. Rather than focusing inwardly and removing unwanted elements from civil society, the *Cité de Refuge* focussed outwards through its architectural contribution to the surrounding urban area. It also created a refuge for the disenfranchised poor, in which they could reach their potential, initiating their full participation in the "city to come".

The *Cité de Refuge* stands as a fragmented reminder that those excluded from the city are worth more than cheap charitable acts or mere inclusion. When those excluded from the city are afforded a space of refuge in it, by the semi-sacred living altars who through administrative acts protects sacred space, the "city to come" starts to be imagined as a place wherein everyone fully participate. The concrete creative memory of the *Cité de Refuge* responds to the call of the "city to come", reminding us that administrative power means more than charity. As a monument to the archival future, it creates an imaginative space where those deemed worthless can fully participate in the assemblage of the city. The *Cité de Refuge*, read through the parallax virtual, becomes a public monument to the semi-sacred living altars protecting such sacred spaces through administrative acts.

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[28] An extreme example being Foucault's analysis of Jeremy Bentham's (1791) prison design called the *Panopticon*.

This subsection evinced three recent iterations of the cities of refuge trope in the current city theatre. As second iteration readings of the cities of refuge trope, each appraisal is a playful approximation of the biblical iteration of this single "Old" Testament spirituality, which partly disentangles it from its original space and time, and attempts to elucidate its implications for the current city theatre:

1. Conjoining Derrida's reading of the cities of refuge trope with the biblical iteration's insight that justice stirs where there is an uneasy reliance between centralised and decentralised judicial sites, I found that these two readings augment each other's scope. When imagining an international network of cities of refuge circumventing the nation-state's logic of hospitality and law, Derrida pushes the biblical iteration of this single "Old" Testament spirituality past the borders of biblical law into the realm of the borderless-global. The biblical iteration of the cities of refuge, in turn, prompts us to perform an even more subversive move than Derrida could have imagined, by demanding of nation-states that they actively encourages cities to erect international networks of decentralised power. In this uneasy reliance between the decentralised international network of cities of refuge and centralised nation-states stirs the hope that, in the "city to come", injustice will not be perpetrated in the name of justice, by criminal law and the police force of the nation-state.

2. In the biblical depiction of cities of refuge, a ludicrous logic of guilt reigns undermining the law's fixation on judgement. Outlining our collective guilt by virtue of our systemic embeddedness in past crimes against humanity, I showed that all of humanity is guilty of manslaughter, to which all of us must admit, before entering the "city to come". Everyone is guilty means everyone is equal and equally responsible for each other's guilt. Our collective manslaughter guilt guides us towards violent acts of inclusion through public displays of solidarity with those who threaten us the most. Such public displays in the "city to come" act as a reminder of the ludicrous logic of guilt, which breaks down the law's fixation on judgement.

3. Building on Žižek's "cubist" reading of space-time as the parallax virtual, I

extended his reading's contours from the immediacy of the viewer's experience of the architectural edifice to the architectural complex as monument of memory. I chose to investigate one of Le Corbusier's first large building projects: Cité de Refuge. As a project commissioned by the Salvation Army, it has inscribed into the building itself Booth's "Grand Scheme", which imagined a future space where the disenfranchised poor would fully participate in the assemblage of the city. Cité de Refuge stands as a fragmented heterotopic reminder of the semi-sacred living altars that through administrative acts protect the imaginative sacred space, where those who do not fully participate in the city can find their edifying contribution in the "city to come".

2.3.3. MARKERS IN THE CITIES OF REFUGE

This section depicted the single curated "Old" Testament spirituality of the "city to come", present in the cities of refuge trope. I started with some remarks constraining my reading of biblical law. One should read biblical law as literature selectively procured, produced, and encoded by a particular stratum of Ancient Israel that had access to a rich collection of oral and written laws from Early Israelite and other Ancient Near Eastern sources. The ability to read, write, and reason gave this stratum of Ancient Israel power. We should be careful, however, to overstate their power, keeping the power relations open to the possibility of benevolence and other power agents. One such group of alternative power actors are the prophets, who like those who procured, produced, and encoded biblical law, claimed a divine guarantor. The prophets harried and harassed the specific cultural stratum that procured, produced, and encoded biblical law, reminding them that what stirs in the letter of each law, is the call for justice.

This call for justice I attempted to trace following the unique contours of this single "Old" Testament spirituality curated by different strands of tradition. My close reading found that the first/biblical iteration and the second/recent iteration reading of the cities of refuge trope thickened and focussed one another's

meaning. The fields of thickened and focussed meaning gravitated towards three markers.

First, the cities of refuge trope describe the "city to come" as part of an international network of decentralised judicial zones with an uneasy reliance on the centralised nation-state, where the nation-state actively encourages the "city to come" to create such international-decentralised city networks. Second, one can only enter the "city to come" if one admits to one's collective manslaughter guilt which undercuts the law's fixation on judgement. Everyone is guilty means everyone is equal and makes everyone responsible for each other's guilt.

The "city to come", described in the cities of refuge trope, enjoins us to do more than merely admit our personal guilt. It invites us to confess our guilt collectively, through violent public acts of inclusion, which shows solidarity with those that threaten us the most. I illustrated such violent public acts of inclusion by imagining spaces that include even the perceived perpetrating enemy's symbols into the monuments that mark their aggression. By building such violent public confessions of our collective manslaughter guilt, we can undermine the structure of the violence committed.

Finally, I surveyed Le Corbusier's *Cité de Refuge* commissioned by the Salvation Army, and how into its fabric is inscribed Booth's "Grand Scheme". This monument of heterotopia holds up a mirror to the present assemblage of the city, revealing the weakness of its imagination when helping the disenfranchised poor to participate fully in the "city to come". This edifice, by renewing the rundown industrial neighbourhood where it was built, showed that the poor can edify the "city to come" beyond a dependence on charity.

Having investigated the markers of the cities of refuge trope, I now advance to the final trope of "Old" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come" I have identified, namely, the "Old" Testament wisdom spirituality (of Ecclesiastes).

2.4. THE WISDOM SPIRITUALITY (OF ECCLESIASTES)

The prior sections of this chapter described foundational myths and legal implications recounted by the "Old" Testament spiritualities of the cities of prehistory and cities of refuge tropes. One of my markers for Christian Spirituality in the first chapter was to keep the tension between the private and public spheres of spirituality open. The public sphere never participates in the private sphere directly, and *visa versa*: there is always mitigation.

To keep the mitigating space between the private and public spheres of spirituality as uncluttered as possible, one needs an "open mitigation" or proscenium arch. A *proscenium* was, in ancient Rome, the area surrounding the stage opening of a theatre. The arch covering this open area was called a *proscenium arch*. This term is useful because it implies a space seemingly empty, yet in fact it merely remains open as a space of mitigation. I use proscenium arch to refer to a mitigation space in which the private sphere comes as close as possible to participating directly in the public sphere. Where does one find such *proscenium arches* for the "city to come"? The "Old" Testament spiritualities of wisdom, in general, and the "Old" Testament spirituality of Ecclesiastes, specifically, will frame my discussion addressing this question.

First, I explore how wisdom spiritualities batch together and the inner tensions in the gravitational field of this batching. Next, I explain how wisdom spiritualities are *proscenium arches*. Finally, I investigate the wisdom spirituality of Qohelet, the purported writer of Ecclesiastes (Weeks, 2012: 1–2), and muse about its appropriateness as a *proscenium arch* for the "city to come".

Ecclesiastes normally batches with "Old" Testament wisdom writings. "Old" Testament wisdom writings soaked in the larger lake of wisdom that rippled between the interconnected scribal classes of the Ancient Near East (Seow, 1997: 60–65; Sparks, 2005: 82; Hunter, 2006: 22; Knight & Levine, 2011: 429). Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes are the books in the "Old" Testament that draw

on and flow back into this Ancient Near Eastern pool of wisdom (Crenshaw, 1981: 5; Carr, 2011: 403–454).

Three matters are worth mentioning before continuing. First, batching these three books together as "Old" Testament wisdom writings does not imply that they all reached their final form at the same stage. In addition, one cannot claim that these books are the only "Old" Testament texts that contain wisdom writing (Köstenberger & Patterson, 2011: 291). As the scribal class wove and rewove the multiple curating strands of tradition, wisdom writing leaked into the fissures of every strain (Sparks, 2005: 56–57). Finally, the "Old" Testament books batched as wisdom writings do not espouse the same approach to wisdom; something I will discuss in further detail presently. What binds these "Old" Testament books together is how they zero in on the question of wisdom while simultaneously avoid engaging extensively with histories of tribes or kings, rituals or the prophets (Hunter, 2006: vii–viii).

Within the batch of "Old" Testament wisdom writings, one could distinguish different wisdom methods towards which each book or sometimes sections of a book gravitate. Spark (2005: 57) conceives a gravitational field of wisdom comprising different nodes. The book of Proverbs sets up a primary gravity node called *standard wisdom* while Job and Ecclesiastes stretch *standard wisdom* into approaches called *speculative wisdom*. *Standard wisdom* believed that the dictates of the world were stable — stability guaranteed by YHWH. By proxy, living a wise life could produce a set of predictable results summarised as the blessed life (Brueggemann, 1997: 333–358; Knight & Levine, 2011: 429). The *speculative wisdom* of Ecclesiastes and Job set out to challenge this stable and predictable worldview.

Ecclesiastes' particular mode of *speculative wisdom* reviews *standard wisdom* by claiming that the world is not stable and predictable but rather contingent. *Standard wisdom*, Ecclesiastes insists, should take the limits of a single human life seriously: life's confusing unpredictability, the death that remains life's final

horizon, and the death of potentialities every choice brings (Paffenroth, 2004: 85; Shuster, 2008: 219–244; Newsom, 2012: 130; Weeks, 2012: 76, 120). This stretching of *standard wisdom* further than its assumptions of stability towards the contingent view of the world held by Ecclesiastes, I suspect, has a parallel in complexity theory.

I believe one can reimagine the nodes of *standard wisdom* and *speculative wisdom* in terms of complicatedness and complexity. *Standard wisdom* constitutes the realm of complicatedness and *speculative wisdom* the realm of complexity. Cilliers (1998: viii, ix) explains the difference between complicatedness and complexity:

> If a system—despite the fact that it may consist of a huge number of components—can be given a complete description in terms of its individual constituents, such a system is merely *complicated*. Things like jumbo jets or computers are complicated. In a *complex* system, on the other hand, the interaction among constituents of the system, and the interaction between the system and its environment, are of such a nature that the system as a whole cannot be fully understood simply by analysing its components. Moreover, these relationships are not fixed, but shift and change, often as a result of self-organisation. This can result in novel features, usually referred to in terms of *emergent properties*. The brain, natural language and social systems are complex.

To reimagine *standard* and *speculative wisdom* as *complicated* and *complex wisdom* has advantages. First, it gives us richer, more rigorous imagery and language with which to describe the gravitational field found between the nodes of *standard* and *speculative wisdom*. *Complicated wisdom* conveys the sense that wisdom is similar to computers, aircrafts, and automobiles: transferable, linear, and predictable in the sense that a wise life will lead to blessing. *Complex wisdom's* critique of *complicated wisdom* becomes clearer in its insistence that wisdom is akin to social systems and language: contingent, non-linear, and possessing emerging properties.

Relating *standard* and *speculative wisdom* as *complicated* and *complex wisdom* also allows us to be honest about their shared features. The shared characteristic of both *complicated* and *complex wisdom* is their networked structure by which they create a network of meanings mirroring real meaning potentialities confronting individuals in their daily life-world. Once one notices that wisdom writings are networks of meanings that mirror real meaning potentialities in individuals' quotidian life-world, rather than a program removed from such realities, it becomes clear that both *complicated* and *complex wisdom* are *proscenium arch* teaching tools.

Both *complicated* and *complex* wisdom invites the student into a network of meanings mirroring an individual's circadian life-world as a training ground to be sensitised, in private, to possible meanings to be found in a particular public moment (Frankl, 2006: 98; Weeks, 2012: 85–96, 159–160). To achieve this, wisdom literature creates a matrix of possible meanings within which students experiment with discerning their own possible meanings in a particular public moment (Waaijman, 2002: 161–171; Ingram, 2006: 44–55).

Now that we understand how wisdom spiritualities batch together and function, we can trace them as *proscenium arches* between the public and private spheres of spirituality.

2.4.1. FEATURES OF "OLD" TESTAMENT WISDOM SPIRITUALITIES

Two features of the network of meanings that "Old" Testament wisdom spiritualities create make them appropriate proscenium arches in the "city to come". First, a community teaches "Old" Testament wisdom spiritualities, but the community's eventual horizon is to train individuals to discern their possible meanings in a particular public moment. Second, "Old" Testament wisdom spiritualities rely on the agency of individuals to search for, recognise, and live their

possible meanings in a particular public moment. In this subsection, I unravel these two characteristics of "Old" Testament wisdom spiritualities.[29]

The first feature, which makes "Old" Testament wisdom spiritualities appropriate as proscenium arches for the "city to come", is how they envision community. Wisdom spiritualities imagine communities as spaces, which sensitises individuals to possible meanings in a particular public moment (Waaijman, 2002: 49–51, 167–168). The appropriateness of this mode of community is best understood when seen against the limitations of prevalent modes of spirituality that profess to be proscenium arches, such as public theology or liberation theology (Sheldrake, 2003: 19–37; Heyer, 2006: 1–12; Van Eck, 2010: 1–10).[30]

Prevalent modes of spirituality in the guise of proscenium arches believe that theology should advocate for the inclusion of the marginalised into the present political and economic systems. Not only do these modes of spirituality include "the marginalised" into identity politics by segregating them from "the non-marginalised," but these theologies believe that the present political or economic systems can be tweaked to be inclusive (Moltmann, 1999: 220; Bedford-Strohm, 2008: 144–162). To advocate for the inclusion of the "the marginalised" is effective until these "marginal" elements are included, but it remains questionable how much such inclusion reforms the nucleus of the present political and economic systems.

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[29] Waaijman (2002: 117–122) uses a phase model to extrapolate how schools of spirituality develop. This is useful if studying a specific school of spirituality's temporal development, but it is not this subsection's aim. My aim is rather to find biblical spiritualities that are most appropriate for the "city to come".

[30] Lombaard (2011b) critiques liberation theology from another angle. A biblical critique of Empire relies on a selective reading of the "Old" Testament. He cites global political shifts away from America's hegemony of power and the "Old" Testament's diverse perspectives on Empire, to unmask liberation theology's simplistic reading of the "Old" Testament.

Loubser (2014: 4) from the complexity angle, comes to a similar conclusion including various other reductive theologies:

> By describing different theologies as different models, it is possible to identify models of theology that are reductive. Here one may identify certain feministic, liberation, African and biblical theologies that reduce theology to a simple underlying principle or critic. Some of these theologies offer a reductionist description of theology because they offer a description that is shaped by only one aspect of the system.

Calling on the language of "tolerance", the current political and economic systems can afford to incorporate any number of marginalised groups without effecting a fundamental reordering at the nucleus of these systems (Sheldrake, 2010: 140–143; Žižek, 2012a: 25). Indeed, "inclusion" is often in the interest of these political and economic systems. "Inclusion" potentially leads to new ways of violating, exploiting, and activating the desire of marginalised groups without being hassled or harassed by their intrusive otherness (Žižek, 2012a: 5, 6).[31] Caputo (2009: 6, 7) sums up the present economic and political systems' irresponsiveness to "marginalised" identity politics:

> Each segment of identity politics creates a new market of specialty magazines, books, bars, websites, DVDs, radio stations, a lecture circuit for its most marketable propagandizers, and so on. By creating an endless series of proliferating differences, of new specialty markets, cultural identity fits hand in glove with the ever-proliferating system of global capital… An investment capitalist is as happy to make a buck on an automobile that pollutes the environment as on one that conserves fuel, and will shift from one to the other as the market demands… The market has no interest in the truth value of what it sells, and those who practice identity politics are simply defending their own will to power, their own right to be different, not that anything they claim is true.

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[31] The documentary *Liebte der Osten anders? — Sex im geteilten Deutschland* (Meier, 2006) pools the fascinating insights of researchers who studied the differences in sexual behaviour between East and West Germans before the fall of the Berlin wall. Before the fall of the Berlin wall, East Germans reported having more frequent and satisfying sex than West Germans. After the fall of the Berlin wall, however, the influx of capitalistic goods (including pornography), co-opted the libidinal economy of the people, and the newly unified Eastern Germany soon reported their sex behaviour conforming to earlier Western lines.

Another interesting film is *Goodbye Lenin!* (Becker, 2003), which tracks Alexander Kerner's attempts to fool his mother — a faithful GDR official who had a heart attack just before the fall of the Berlin wall — that she is still living in the Old East Germany. His bedridden mother's room becomes a small outpost of the old GDR functioning as a heterotopia against the influx of western goods, and the labour consumption in the service sector. Near the end of the film Kerner remarks: "Somehow my scheme had taken on a life of its own. The GDR I created for her increasingly became the one I might have wished for."

Caputo's logic poetically comes together in an event t-shirt I recently saw worn by a tourist in Central Park. It promoted a mud-wrestling event organised for women's rights. Such a coincidence (with the full force of its double-meaning) expounds the "marginalised" identity politics that often comes in more nuanced forms.

Wisdom spiritualities imagine the "city to come" not as a "tolerant" space, but as a space where humans learns to discern their possible meanings in a particular public moment.[32] Wisdom spiritualities disrupt the language of marginalisation, inclusion, and tolerance, with an invitation to individuals to be sensitised to their possible meanings in a particular public moment.[33] Starting with the possible meanings of individuals, wisdom spiritualities do not tolerate "tolerance" that usurps the intrusive otherness of an individual's potential meanings.

A further assumption of prevalent modes of spirituality pretending to be *proscenium arches* is that religious groups speak on behalf of the individuals that constitute them. By aggregating the "support" of individuals, religious groups claim to be power players that assert at least some impact on the current political or economic systems. It is worth quoting Badiou (2003: 6) here, on the weakness of such an approach:

> What, in effect, does the contemporary situation consist of? The progressive reduction of the question of truth (and hence, of thought) to a linguistic form, judgement—a point on which Anglophone ideology and analytical tradition both concur (the analytic/hermeneutic doublet is the straightjacket of contemporary academic philosophy)—ends up in a

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[32] As Chesterton (2007: 134) quips: when the lion and the lamb lay next to one another the lion does not become lamb-like nor the lamb lion-like. Wisdom entails the lion laying next to the lamb in its full ferociousness.

[33] Kang (2013: 25–31) is also uncomfortable with *identity politics* if it leads to an *essentialisation* of identities, which might turn into a battle for inclusion. Kang rightly assumes that such an *essentialisation* of identity might be extremely marketable, and for this reason she uses the term *Trans-identity* to describe a cosmopolitan dialogue between different identities. What Kang does not understand is once any identity translates itself for the public sphere, a measure of *essentialisation* is inescapable. Wisdom communities circumvent this problem by proposing its *essentialising* feature as the one that *de-essentialises* it, thereby discoursing beyond *essentialisation*.

cultural and historical relativism that today constitutes at once a topic of public opinion, a 'political' motivation, and a framework for research in the human sciences. The extreme forms of this relativism, already at work, claim to relegate mathematics itself to 'Occidental' setup, to which any number of obscurantist or symbolically trivial apparatuses can be rendered equivalent, provided one is able to name the subset of humanity that supports this apparatus, and, better still, that one has reason for believing this subset to be made up of victims. All access to the universal, which neither tolerates assignation to the particular, nor maintains any direct relation with the status—whether it be that of dominator or victim—of the *sites* from which its propositions emerges, collapses when confronted with this intersection between culturalist ideology and the 'victimist' [*victimaire*] conception of man.

To escape the circular ineffective identity politics of attempting to including the marginalised weak, religious groups should rather embrace being marginalised, but not victimised, themselves (Guardiola-Rivera, 2013: 43).[34] Whereas prevalent modes of spirituality are intimidated by being marginalised without aggregation, wisdom spiritualities see their marginal status, here described by Ward (2000: 28), as an advantage:

> The Church, albeit in a different way, is as marginal as so many of the poor it portrayed, and all indications are that cities are turning into something else: radical eclectic places where each pursues his or her own consumer interest under the ever-watchful eye of surveillance cameras ready to pinpoint when radical difference flares up into riot.

Wisdom spiritualities have no grandiose power ambitions, nor do they claim that individuals should live only for, or agree with, the wisdom community. For wisdom spiritualities, the problem is not that we are individualistic, but we are not

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[34] Recently, Alexis (2014: 9) has argued that governments are enticing religions to deliver social services as part of its neoliberal agenda. If this is the case, wisdom communities should insist even more on its marginal status, less it becomes a victim of government outsourcing.

individualistic enough; we are too caught up in the symbolic order of identity politics, market value, and power exchanges to effect change (Badiou, 2003: 9–11; Stiegler, 2009a: 48). Wisdom spiritualities encourage individuals to find their unique configuration of meanings that go further than the readymade identities found in consumer interest, political affiliations, or monolithically organised religion. That does not mean that wisdom spiritualities are against community, but rather that a wisdom community does not advocate for inclusion of the marginalised through aggregation, but lives this inclusion in a more radical way by facilitating individuals' sensitisation to their possible meanings in a particular public moment.

Now that I have recounted wisdom spiritualities' view of community, I turn to the second feature of wisdom spiritualities that make them highly appropriate as *proscenium arches* in the "city to come": Wisdom communities rely on the agency of individuals. Individuals' agency to search for their possible meanings in a distinct public moment is not only taught by wisdom spiritualities, but the assemblage of the city relies on individuals' agency for its survival as a complex system.

Three features of complex systems, such as the assemblage of the city, might elucidate why wisdom spiritualities can act as *proscenium arches*, by encouraging individual agency in the "city to come". First, complex systems' description of meaning conforms to the contours described by Cilliers (2010: 57):

> …*[W]ithout difference there can be no meaning*… it would follow that if we want a rich understanding of the world and of each other (i.e., a lot of meaning), if we want resilient and dynamic organizations, then we need an abundance of differences.

The assemblage of the city is not only compatible with individuals' search for their possible meaning in a particular public moment: its meaning and diversity are inextricably linked.

Second, Heylighen et al. (2007: 127) explain how local effects in a complex system acts in a non-linear relation to the whole. What this means, is that small actions can have a large effect and large actions could have only minimal effects. Third, Cilliers (1998: 4, 5) recounts that, in a complex system, each element is localised and remains unaware of its greater effect. This means that individuals cannot know how their actions influence the assemblage of the city on a larger scale. When taken together, these three markers of complex systems, such as the assemblage of the city, brings one to the following reasonable conclusion. Rather focus on sensitising individuals to their possible meanings in a specific public moment that might have a larger effect, than attempting large-scale change that might have little effect. Wisdom spiritualities enrich the meaning coefficient of the assemblage of city by sensitising individuals to their potential meanings in a particular public moment.

In this subsection, I studied two features that make wisdom spiritualities appropriate for the "city to come":

1. Wisdom spiritualities sidestep the identity politics of prevalent spiritualities claiming to be *proscenium arches* by imagining wisdom communities' eventual horizon as sensitising individuals to their possible meanings in a particular public moment, while denying the possibility of aggregating the support of the individuals that constitute them. The identity politics of marginalisation, tolerance, and inclusion is easily coaxed into new exploitative forms of desire by the current political and economic system, effecting minimal change at the heart of these systems. Instead of entertaining identity politics by identifying and advocating for those they perceive as marginal, wisdom communities embrace their own marginal status, thereby breaking the circular ineffectiveness of identity politics.

2. Wisdom spiritualities mirror the markers for abundant meaning production in the assemblage of the city by relying on the agency of individuals to search for their possible meanings in a particular public moment. The description of meaning in complex systems, such as the assemblage of

the city, is: more difference equals more meaning. If one focuses on individual's agency, as wisdom spiritualities do, one can affect large-scale difference, and conjointly more meaning, through minimal input into the assemblage of the city. This holds true because of the non-linear nature of complex systems such as the assemblage of the city: small actions can have large effects, and visa versa. Individuals, however, will never grasp how their lived meaning in a particular public moment transforms the rest of the assemblage of the city. In the "city to come", then, individuals are encouraged to use their agency to effect small localised change, thereby enacting the potential of an explosive chain of non-linear meaning(s) that ripple through the complex system of the assemblage of the city.

Now that I have established wisdom spiritualities as appropriate *proscenium arches* for the "city to come", the question arises: How does one effect the paradigmatic shift needed from prevalent modes of spirituality to "Old" Testament wisdom spiritualities? Can one initiate such a shift without pretending to unplug from the present political and economic systems? I believe one can, and that the wisdom spirituality of Ecclesiastes holds the key.

2.4.2. THE WISDOM SPIRITUALITY OF ECCLESIASTES

The wisdom spirituality of Ecclesiastes does not aim at unplugging us from the present political and economic systems, but aims at grinding our passive participation in these systems to a halt. This standstill facilitates a shock at how desperate the current political and economic situation is, and how we enjoy the symptoms of these systems. To bring us to a halt, Ecclesiastes builds a web of meanings mirroring our life-world, constructed around several keywords/phrases, which I first contemplate. After contemplating these keywords/phrases, I describe the effects of this matrix of keywords/phrases as a personal apocalypse launching each individual into a struggle to identify their potential meanings within a particular public moment.

The spirituality of Ecclesiastes has as background the bustling of the Persian version of assemblage of the city (Seow, 1997: 21–36; Fox, 2004: xiv; Landy, 2004: 233–234; Limburg, 2006: 8). While the assemblage of the city bustles in the background, we find Qohelet in the foreground pausing to contemplate the contingency of a single human life. Qohelet does this by networking several keywords/phrases (Ingram, 2006: 55), namely: עשׂה/עמל, רת ון, הבל, קהלת, טוב, and תהת השׁמשׁ. These keywords/phrases represent a network of meanings mirroring an individual's circadian existence.[35] I peek into the networked structure of these keywords/phrases and muse about their implications for the individual in the "city to come".

I first turn to קהלת. Already in the name of the purported writer of Ecclesiastes ambiguities surface (Ingram, 2006: 75–82). Why call the writer "the gatherer" or "the witness"? What does "the gatherer" gather or about what does "the witness" witness: Wisdom or profit? Does מלך when used with קהלת mean "king" or "advisor"? In an ironic twist "the gatherer" or "the witness", because of the writer's obscurity and seemingly negative stance, acts as a proverbial black hole aggregating the meanings ascribed to it through the ages (Koosed, 2004: 252).

What allows Ecclesiastes to aggregate meanings is Qohelet's chosen position – that of the *imbecile* that stands between the idiot and the moron described by Žižek (2012a: 2):

> …[T]he idiot is simply alone, outside the big Other, the moron is within it (dwelling in language in a stupid way), while the imbecile is in between the two — aware of the need for the big Other, but not relying on it, distrusting it…

The posture of the imbecile makes Ecclesiastes appropriate for the "city to come" and explains why so many interpreters each have their unique interpretation of

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[35] Paffenroth (2004: 85–100) and Coogan (2014: 482) are spot-on when comparing Ecclesiastes with Pascal's *Pensées* (1962).

Ecclesiastes. Qohelet neither pretends to dwell stupidly within the human social construct (language) nor imagines being outside it. When Ecclesiastes is interpreted, one finds the same structure I recounted in my subsection on Biblical Spirituality: Qohelet (the imbecile) is interpreted; Qohelet interprets the interpreter (the idiot); which brings the interpreter's own search for meaning to light (while inviting them to join Qohelet as imbecile). The keyword Qohelet implements to assert the position of the *imbecile* is הבל.

הבל is notoriously difficult to translate. Proposed translations include "vanity", "vapour", "wind", "breath", and "contingency", but no English word seems to correspond fully to הבל's semantic field of meaning (Fox, 2004: 31; Shuster, 2008: 232). The untranslatable something between "contingency and nothingness" in הבל is further emphasised by relating it in the tautology הבל הבל ים. This tautology leaves the reader to wonder if the space between contingency and nothingness gives way to more contingency and nothingness (Ingram, 2006; Roper & Groenewald, 2013).

Given that הבל is the keyword/phrase Qohelet implements, is it not ironic that the translation of this untranslatable something between contingency and nothingness should determine how one interprets Ecclesiastes (Ingram, 2006: 91–92)? To further nuanced Qohelet's ironic gesture in הבל, I use a Hegelian and a Lacanian concept: (i) "negation of negation" as the language of the imbecile and; (ii) the human desire for the nondescript "it". I read both these concepts with Žižek's guidance.

First, the tautology הבל הבל ים, approximates Žižek's explanation of Hegel's "negation of negation". From the outset of *Less than Nothing*, Žižek (2012a: 38) equates the figure of the *imbecile* (in our case Qohelet) with the notion of "negation of negation". Later he develops how *imbeciles* include themselves in the "negation of negation" (Žižek, 2012a: 299):

…[I]n direct negation, the subject observes a change in the object (its disintegration, its passage into its opposite), while in the negation of negation, the subject includes itself in the process, taking into account how the process it is observing affects its own position.

With the tautology הבל הבל ים as "negation of negation", Qohelet wants to stop, shock, and sensitise the reader by claiming that social facts, which seem real and impossible to change is, as Žižek's title suggests, less than Nothing (Weeks, 2012: 52). Furthermore, the tautology הבל תבל ים, as "negation of negation", excludes the possibility that individuals can think about human social constructs without including themselves in it.

Rammstein's song *Amerika* (2004) illustrates how individuals might include themselves in the human social construct. *Amerika* may seem to join what has been called "America-bashing", but the song's critique of empire is much more subversive. At the end of *Amerika's* music video, Rammstein is shown on set, not as players at a distance, but just as part of the big Other as the listeners. *Amerika's* music video communicates a reality starkly different from the one we experience in our immediacy as individual choice. What we shallowly perceived as individual choice is rather a function of how the system props up our individualism (Žižek, 2012a: 977, b: 30). Far from being individualistic, we should identify ourselves as Rammstein does: people who recognise we are all *Amerika*, who desperately want to escape and be individualist, only to find that, in the end, this is exactly the American ideal. We are all ironically enjoying the symptoms of the system.

Here the spirituality of Ecclesiastes overlaps with Rammstein's Amerika. One can only affect change in the present political and economic system once one experiences one's own participation in these systems. Only then does one start to see how each individual partakes in a pre-ontological multiplicity constituting the more than Something but less than Nothing of the big Other, here described by Žižek (2012a: 495):

What precedes Nothing is less than nothing, the pre-ontological multiplicity whose names range from Democritus's *den* to Lacan's *objet a*. The space of this pre-ontological multiplicity is not between Nothing and Something (more than nothing but less than something); *den* is, on the contrary, *more than Something but less than Nothing*. The relationship between these three basic ontological terms—Nothing, Something, *den*—thus takes the form of a paradoxical circle, like Escher's famous drawing of the interconnected waterfalls forming a circular *perpetuum mobile*: Something is more than Nothing, *den* is more than Something (the *objet a* is in excess with regard to the consistency of Something, the surplus-element which sticks out), and Nothing is more than *den* (which is 'less than nothing').

If the tautology הבל הבל ים denotes the less than Nothing but more than Something, present in the pre-ontological social texture of human reality, then הבל designates how easily human beings are caught up in chasing the constructs emanating from the social texture of human reality. If הבל, is translated into Žižekinese, it would be a human's desire for the nondescript "it". The nondescript "it" is mitigated by our mass-marketed, seemingly unitary social constructs that vaguely describe that we should be "successful", "rich", "happy", "skinny", "holy", "democratic", etc. These seemingly unitary social constructs project themselves as realities against which we should gauge our human worth, but these social constructs always promise more than they can deliver. Once one runs into their limits and tries to push beyond these unitary social concepts, one is greeted, to use the title of another of Žižek's books, by the *Desert of the Real*, or in Qoheletian, הבל (Hegel, 2006: 175–176; Weeks, 2012: 55; Žižek, 2012a: 417–454).

To clarify the concept of desire for the nondescript "it", an illustrating given by Žižek (2000: 22–23):

So, when, some years ago, the advertising slogan for Coke was 'Coke is *it*!', we should note its thorough ambiguity: 'that's it' precisely in so far as

that's *never* actually *it*, precisely in so far as every satisfaction opens up a gap of 'I want *more*!'…This process is brought to its conclusion in the case of caffeine free-diet Coke—why? We drink Coke—or any drink—for two reasons: for its thirst-quenching or nutritional value, and for its taste. In the case of caffeine-free diet Coke, nutritional value is suspended and the caffeine, as the key ingredient of its taste, is also taken away—all that remains is pure semblance, an artificial promise of a substance that never materializes. Is it not true that in this sense, in the case of caffeine-free diet Coke, we almost literally 'drink nothing in the guise of something'?

With the keyword/phrase of הבל and הבל הבל ים, Qohelet aims to loosen the ground beneath individuals' feet: not in an attempt to create quicksand, but rather for cultivating individuals' search for their possible meanings in a specific public moment. This cultivation is a violent act, but one that allows individuals to identify the symptoms they enjoy in the system while tugging away at the system's malleable boundaries (Fiennes & Žižek, 2013).

To outline הבל and הבל תבל ים, Qohelet rallies ideas connected linearly by those who consider themselves successful or blessed: רת ון (profit/left-over/excess), עשׂה/עמל (work/toil), טוב (good), and תהת השׁמשׁ (human social reality). These notions are linearly related, without contention, for those who "succeed" in accruing wealth or blessing, so there is no need to stop and think about them (Helsel, 2006: 208; Bartholomew & O'Dowd, 2011: 176; Kraus, Piff & Keltner, 2011; Weeks, 2012: 44). As the *imbecile*, Qohelet goes about questioning the arbitrary linear connection between these ideas.

By collapsing the linear relation between profit/left-over/excess, work/toil, good, and human social reality, Qohelet hopes to grind the city dweller to a halt. The city dweller that comes to a standstill is confronted with the pre-ontological less than Nothing, but more than Something, which feeds the human desire for the nondescript "it", but seldom delivers (Sharp, 2009: 196). By undermining the

common-sense linear connection between profit/left-over/excess, work/toil, good, and human social reality, Qohelet is cultivating the ground beneath both the moron and the idiot's feet for a personal apocalypse.

Ecclesiastes' matrix of meanings, which mirrors human social reality, attempts to grind a person to halt and induce a personal apocalypse (Landy, 2004: 233–234).[36] The mode of personal apocalypse is appropriate when unplugging from the present political and economic systems is a desperate impossibility. The apocalyptic mode is far from destructive or empty, it is rather a constructive re-search through history that tries to reactivate frustrated alternative histories, or as Žižek (2012a: 322–323) eloquently describes it, a break with the tautology of the current system:

> How can such a tautology open up the space for the New? The only solution in this paradox is that the New we are dealing with is not primarily the future New, but *the New of the past itself,* or the thwarted, blocked or betrayed possibilities ('alternate realities') which have disappeared in the actualization of the past: the actualization (*Verwirklichung*)—that is, the acceptance of actuality—brought about by Reconciliation involves the '*deactivation* of the existent and the reactivation and reenactment (in every sense) of the thwarted futures of the past. Actuality thus expresses precisely the presence of the virtual: it opens history to the 'no longer' of a blocked possibility and the persistence of an unachievable 'not yet'.'

To reactivate and re-enact the thwarted futures of the past, individuals have to step into a sceptical relationship with human social reality, while including themselves in it (Hegel, 2006: 190–191). Qohelet not only takes a sceptical stance, as Weeks (2012) believes, but also invites the individual to wrestle with, accept, and push back against the apparent scepticism in Ecclesiastes (Sharp,

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[36] This is a broader use of the word apocalypse as apposed to its precise technical use in the study of apocalyptic literature (cf. Carey, 2005: 4–10).

2009: 198).[37] This invites an individual beyond the discourse of the idiot who pretend to be outside human social reality and the discourse of the moron who dwells stupidly in human social reality. The only way to assume the stance of the imbecile is to wrestle with your own enjoyment of the symptoms of the current political and economic system (Ostriker, 2005: 8).

From the posture of the *imbecile,* individuals can critically wrestle with the way they enjoy the symptoms of the current political and economic systems. Critically wrestling with the enjoyment of the symptoms of these systems also moves beyond the naive and resigned idea that one's unconscious can unplug from the present political and economic systems[38]. The unconscious "somewhere inside" is rather the self-postulating gesture configured from the enjoyment of the symptoms of the current political and economic systems which we repress, or as Žižek (2012a: 274) explains:

> …[W]hat is truly 'unconscious' in man is not the immediate opposite of consciousness, the obscure and confused vortex of 'irrational' drives, but the very founding gesture of consciousness, the act of decision in which I 'choose myself,' by which I combine this multitude of drives into the unity of my Self. The 'unconscious' is not the passive stuff of inert drives to be used by the creative 'synthetic' activity of the conscious Ego; the 'unconscious' in its most radical dimension is rather the highest Deed of my self-positing, or (to resort to later 'existentialist' terms) the choice of my

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[37] Frankl (1991) recommended a logic of meaning formed by interacting with the meaninglessness of reality through the technique of paradoxical intention. Frankl's extreme examples, use in his later practice, concerns subjects contemplating suicide. Frankl's reply to suicidal subjects would be: "do it". Frankl calls the subject's bluff, and the subject constructs various meanings from their apparent meaninglessness.

[38] This view stands in stark contrast to a passing comment by Waaijman (2002: 496) that "…[i]n times of radical change God's will is no longer visible in the external order". Indeed, Ecclesiastes (which Waaijman quotes sparsely in his work), postulates a more complexly and intertwined view of the individual than Waaijman's naive assumption that one can "…ask for signs of God's presence". Earlier when Waaijman (cf. 2002: 491, 563–572) distinguishes different ways of discernment, he does describe the inner-outer dynamic of discernment in more nuanced terms. Yet, his underlying assumption, build a certain reading of Heidegger, does not afford him the luxury of seeing discernment as both the "outer forms" inside the individual, and the individual in the "outer forms".

fundamental 'project' which, in order to remain operative, must be 'repressed,' kept out of the light of day.

When this "unconscious" self-postulating gesture of the unity of the Self is thwarted, individuals enter a personal apocalypse, and they are freed to identify the symptoms of the current political and economic systems they enjoy. The wisdom spirituality of Ecclesiastes does not guide readers out of the personal apocalypse it produces, but it leaves each person to look for their own unique way out of its grip by imagining potential meanings in a particular public moment.[39] This personal apocalypse into which the individual tumbles is the opposite of Waaijman's (2002: 87) description of mercy that allows each person the freedom to enter a crisis if it leads to happiness. No, the wisdom community, as seen by Ecclesiastes, demands the literal self-sacrifice of each individual, by thwarting their founding gesture, with the risk of no happy conclusion. The personal apocalypse, which the spirituality of Ecclesiastes induces, opens up the possibility of a new form of urban community discussed in the following chapter.

What then are the markers that make the "Old" Testament wisdom spirituality of Ecclesiastes especially apt for the "city to come"?

1. Qohelet, the purported writer of Ecclesiastes, takes the position of the *imbecile* who is honest about the need for the big Other (language or human social reality), but does not trust the big Other. Implementing the keyword/phrase of הבל and its tautology הבל הבל ים, Qohelet exposes human social reality as a pre-ontological less than Nothing, but more than Something, into which each individual is included. This keyword/phrase also shows how we are easily duped into chasing the nondescript "it" of being "rich", "skinny", "successful", etc., which always promises more than

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[39] In this sense, the wisdom community of Ecclesiastes creates a systemic framework for the descriptions of individuation Stiegler (2009b: 101) discusses:

> The work to come, for we philosophers-to-come, lies in describing what will transpire globally in terms of individuation, whether this will be the individuation of geometry, the individuation of art, the individuation of physics, the individuation of the living, the individuation of nations, technological individuation, or psychical individuation in the Freudian sense.

it delivers. The nondescript "it" is, however, also the only way in which we can gauge our progress as humans. In the "city to come", an individual's search for their possible meaning in a particular public moment is always aware of the big Other, but distrusts it.

2. To edge the reader closer to understanding הבל and its tautology הבל הבלים, Qohelet questions the linear relation between keywords/phrases familiar to the dweller in the Persian Empire's version of the assemblage of the city. Driving a stake into the linear relation between דת ון (profit/left-over/excess), עשׂה/עמל (work/toil), טוב (good), and תהת השׁמשׁ (human social reality), Qohelet cultivates the ground beneath the city dweller's feet for a personal apocalypse. In the "city to come", wisdom communities are called to question the linear relationship between keywords/phrases that seem so obvious to the city dweller. By exposing the non-linear relationship between these keywords/phrases, each individual's self-postulating gesture is exposed, propelling them into a personal apocalypse; a personal apocalypse that opens up the possibility of a new form of urban community.

2.4.4. MARKERS OF THE WISDOM SPIRITUALITY (OF ECCLESIASTES)

In this section, I looked into why "Old" Testament wisdom spiritualities in general and the wisdom spirituality of Ecclesiastes specifically are appropriate for mitigating the tension between private and public spirituality in the "city to come". I related how "Old" Testament wisdom spiritualities batch together. Within the batch of wisdom spirituality, we find approaches varying from *standard* to *speculative* wisdom that one might reimagine as *complicated* and *complex* wisdom.

Reimagined in this way, "Old" Testament wisdom spiritualities are teaching tools mirroring human social reality and sensitising individuals to their possible meanings in a particular public moment. These wisdom communities are

appropriate for the "city to come" because of the close to uncluttered way they mitigate between the public and private spheres of spirituality. This almost uncluttered mitigating space I named *proscenium arches.* I mentioned two characteristics of how wisdom communities act as *proscenium arches.*

The first aspect of "Old" Testament wisdom communities I charted was an insistence that in the "city to come" communities' eventual horizon is the sensitisation of individuals to their possible meanings in a particular public moment. "Old" Testament wisdom communities not only sidestep the problems of tolerant inclusion but also hoodwinks the aggregation of power and identity politics that prevalent spiritualities claiming to be *proscenium arches* face. The second characteristic of "Old" Testament wisdom communities is their focus on the individual's agency as a way of tugging at the malleable borders of the current political and economic system. Individuals can only start to tug away at the malleable borders of the current political and economic system once they are sensitised to how they themselves enjoy the symptoms of these systems.

Turning to the spirituality of Ecclesiastes, I observed how Qohelet takes the postured of the *imbecile* who dwells within the human social construct, but distrusts it. By taking the position of the *imbecile*, Ecclesiastes gathers or witnesses to the search for meaning of all those who interpret it. Ecclesiastes constructs a network of meanings using several keywords/phrases to facilitate this gathering. Qohelet's main acting keyword/phrase that short-circuits the accepted meaning network is הבל and הבל הבל ים that I approximated to two notions explained by Žižek. First, I reviewed "less than Nothing" as the pre-ontological state of multiplicity that undermines the seemingly solid foundations of the present political and economic system. Second, I explained the human desire for the nondescript "it" inherent in concepts helping us to gauge our progress as humans, but when pushed into their limits leave us in the desert of the real.

To activate the effects of הבל and הבל תבל ים, Qohelet rallies seemingly linearly related keywords/phrases from the Persian empire's version of the assemblage of the city, namely: דת ון (profit/left over/excess), עשׂה/עמל (work/toil), טוב, (good), and תהת השׁמשׁ (human social reality). By disentangling the linearity between these ideas Qohelet thwarts individuals' Self postulated unity, tumbling them into a personal apocalypse, which opens the possibility of a new type of urban community.

This chapter focussed on tracing tropes in the "Old" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come". In the following chapter, I survey a selection of tropes from the "New" Testament that concerns itself with urban spirituality.

3. "NEW" TESTAMENT SPIRITUALITIES OF THE "CITY TO COME"

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter tracks "New" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come", within the limits of the complex system of Christian Spirituality described in the first chapter. As mentioned in the second chapter, I use the designation "New" Testament for the corpus of texts written in the wake of Jesus of Nazareth's life to show continuity with the "Old" Testament. The "New" Testament writers drew on the spiritualities curated by the "Old" Testament corpus in an attempt to come to terms with, what they perceived as a (r)evolution in covenantal time-space. A perceived (r)evolution brought about by the life, death, and claimed resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

Interpreting "New" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come" can scarcely be done without first fixating on the milieu in which its writers integrated and expanded the memory provided by the curated spiritualities of the "Old" Testament. The "New" Testament writers' interpretation of the memory provided by the "Old" Testament does not burst forth *ex nihilo*, but finds its making in the

riptide between the Jewish and Greco-Roman[40] symbolic universes. There are diverse approaches to studying the undertow between the Jewish and Greco-Roman symbolic universes, including focussing on (du Toit, 2009: 142–143):

1. An *idée fixe* strictly belonging to the first or second CE, Jewish or Greco-Roman context;

2. An innovation driven by the creative energy unleashed by the Christian movement;

3. The "Old" Testament heritage of the Christian message.

Du Toit (2009: 142), in his presidential address at the 63rd Annual Meeting of the *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*, implored researchers to add a fourth method, namely: Interculturality. While searching for "New" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come", I will draw mainly on the unique intercultural contribution of the creative energy of Christianity. Christianity's creative energy grafted the Jewish symbolic universe into Greco-Roman concepts: an implanting under the banner of the covenantal (r)evolution ensuing the life, death, and purported resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. To understand Christianity's grafting practice one needs a firm command of both the scion (the Jewish stem) and the stock (Greco-Roman root) (Sanders, 2009: 75, 76).[41]

Written in the wake of Jesus' life, death, and ostensible resurrection, its authors certainly did not believe they were writing a "New" Testament or initiating a new religion. Their only scripture was the "Old" Testament, mostly quoted or alluded to in its Greek translation, the LXX (that included "apocrypha") (Hengel, 2002: xi; Martin, 2012: 16). While reading the "New" Testament, one has to keep in mind that the canonisation of the LXX had not yet been finalised by the 1st century CE.

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[40] Martin (2012: 35) points out that some Classists might object to the term Greco-Roman. Although, with selected concepts like slavery and patronage (Briggs, 2000: 111–112; Oakes, 2009: 27), there is a disparity between Roman and Greek culture, Greco-Roman is a helpful contraction to describe the eastern Mediterranean horticulture during the writing of the "New" Testament.

[41] The advantage of the grafting metaphor becomes apparent when considering the Jewish symbolic universe (scion) — seemingly less important and more fragile — uses the Greco-Roman symbolic universe (stock) to propagate its genes.

Various locales each had its configuration of the LXX (Hengel, 2002: 109–112): much like the "New" Testament, in all its denominational variants today (Martin, 2012: 29–31).[42] The garden bed, from which the "New" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come" grew, furthermore, came infused with multiple strands of "Old" Testament spirituality.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the "Old" Testament's symbolic universe is not a monocultural farm, but rather a constrained horticultural herb garden. From this constrained horticultural herb garden, both Jewish and Christian interpreters flavoured and still flavour, their stew (Brueggemann, 1997: 731–732; Johnson, 2010: 39; Lombaard, 2012: 217; Martin, 2012: 65). It is from the "Old" Testament's horticultural herb garden that the "New" Testament authors' writings germinated, but with a flavour distinct from their other Jewish peers. To appreciate this uniqueness, I give a swift synopsis of the different Jewish reactions to the Greco-Roman cultural incursion.

It is safe to say that the language and cultural markers of the Greco-Roman profoundly influenced how Judaism developed in the first and second centuries BCE and CE. The Jewish acclimatisation to the Greco-Roman cultural infusion, loosely fit three topologies (Cohen, 2006: 32–37; Martin, 2012: 55–66): adaptation, revolt, and apocalyptic thinking. The first topology, adaptation, came in different flavours and strengths. On the one end of the spectrum, one finds the "apostates" (or rebels) that endeavoured to eliminate every distinction between being Jewish and being Hellenized. On the other, there were those trying to negotiate constructively their changing Jewish identity in the light of the dominant Greco-Roman culture (Johnson, 2010: 42).

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[42] Indeed, one could argue, as Loader (2002: 741, 751) has, that a "present" form of the "Old" (or the "New") Testament can be described, but hardly a "final" form. Similarly, Venter (2002: 471) observes that "[c]anonization is a social process within a historical context where groups express their beliefs by the material they produce and by the selection they make of available material". A canon is always-not-yet fully canonised.

Active resistance or revolt was a second Jewish acclimation approach. Considering that certain "Old" Testament spiritualities had imperialistic ambitions (Horsley, 1997: 12; Lombaard, 2011b; Martin, 2012: 65), a Jewish discomfort with being ruled by a foreign Empire, be it Greco-Syrian or Roman, is to be expected. An active acting out of this discomfort meant military action, typically as guerrilla warfare against the Greco-Syrian or Roman presence in Jerusalem.

Before, during, and after Jesus' life there were several Jewish revolts attempting to drive the Greco-Syrians and later the Romans out of Jerusalem. The most important of these rebellions were:

1. The Maccabean rebellion (Cohen, 2006: 22–23), which took Jerusalem from the Greco-Syrians and rededicated the temple in 164 BCE. In 63 BCE, the Roman General Pompey retook Jerusalem.

2. The Jewish War (as Josephus called it) of 66–74 CE (Cohen, 2006: 23–24), inspired by a conglomerate of Messiah's prophesying the destruction of the Romans, Jerusalem, or both. The Jews expelled the Romans from Jerusalem, but when the Romans retook the city in 70 CE, they destroyed the temple: an event that would profoundly alter Judeo-Christian religious consciousness.

3. After the Bar Kokhba revolt from 132–135 CE (Schäfer, 2003: vii–xx; Cohen, 2006: 24–26; Eshel, 2006), the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and rebuild it as *Aelia Capitolina*. Hadrian (the emperor at the time) enacted a series of edicts, designed to undermine Jewish nationalistic ambitions. These edicts remained in place until Hadrian's death in 138 CE.

With Jerusalem's destruction and its reconstruction as *Aelia Capitolina* we enter the open secret: the space of the city and symbol in the city as main disseminator of Greco-Roman culture (Meeks, 1983: 11–13; Horsley, 1997: 5; Harland, 2002: 386–387; Longenecker, 2009: 55–56; Johnson, 2010: 21; Martin, 2012: 38–42). Jesus of Nazareth's ministry started out as a local apocalyptic critique of the assemblage of the Greco-Roman city (most likely aimed at the city of Tiberius).

The Apostle Paul, however, saw the potential of the life, death, and professed resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth as an empire-wide urban movement (Meeks, 1983: 8).

The third topology of Jewish adaptation, the apocalyptic, is the bookish brother of revolt. For many "New" Testament commentators, Jewish apocalyptic literature's influence on the Christian imagination is key (Horsley, 2000: 93–96; Carey, 2005: 38–49).[43] One can hardly pick up a respectable introduction to the "New" Testament without finding a section about Jewish apocalyptic literature's influence on early Christian writings (Johnson, 2010: 45–48; Martin, 2012: 55–66). Commentators routinely cite Daniel 7:1–12:13 as a text portraying the apocalyptic sentiment taken up by both the Qumran and Christian communities.

The apocalyptic Qumran community removed themselves from Jewish society attempting to retain their wisdom-teaching and purity, while watching out for future signs of God's intervention, which would initiate the kingdom of God (Horsley, 1997: 116; Nitzan, 2010: 97). The Jesus-movement took another approach. Different filaments of Christianity uniquely developed Jewish apocalyptic thought (Meeks, 1983: 5, 9–10; Bird, 2002: 229–234). To survey all the apocalyptic adaptations of the Jesus-movement during the 1st and 2nd century CE is beyond this study's scope. What I want to develop in this chapter is a Pauline spirituality which appropriates, and instruments his writings to urban Christian communities.[44]

It is telling that the apostle Paul addressed his first epistle, indeed the first written record we find in the "New" Testament, to an ἐκκλησία in the city of Thessalonica. Although by no means normative, Paul's description of Christianity became pervasive for Jesus-movement urbanites in the eastern part of the Roman Empire

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[43] One property of apocalyptic literature, namely, *ex eventu* prophecy (Carey, 2005: 9), can be reimagined as a codified version of, what Žižek (2012a: 322) calls, excavating the thwarted futures of the past.

[44] I neglect here to put the designation "of Tarsus" behind Paul's (or Saul's) name since there is little scholarly consensus surrounding the "pre-Christian" Paul (Hengel, 1992: 29–41).

(Kyratatas, 2002: 544–545; Still, 2009: 97). If one seeks to structure a "New" Testament of the "city to come", Paul's authentic letters to urban communities provide a rich trove.

Scholars have reached a fair consensus on which letters bearing the apostle Paul's name are authentic. They are Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, First Thessalonians, and Philemon (Horsley, 1997: 148; Fredriksen, 2009: 62; Martin, 2012: 202). The sequence found in the "New" Testament, is not the order in which Paul wrote these letters, but reflect their length. Paul's authentic letters, except for Romans, target communities he founded or influenced: they focus on a specific situation either in the epistles' target communities or a concern of Paul's. Paul is akin to the scribes described in the "Old" Testament. As I explained in the first chapter, Paul writes in and for communities. A "New" Testament spirituality of the "city to come" structured from Paul, forms in tension with the spiritualities surrounding, relativizing, and challenging his spirituality (Fiorenza, 2000: 42–57).

Last (2011) claims that Paul's primary concern was that of ἐκκλησία building and maintenance, rather than the proselytization of Jews and Gentiles: an assumption I take to task in the following section, because I believe community is a secondary effect of Paul's view of time. That being said, Paul's ἐκκλησία is where many — religious, not-so-religious, and those who could rightly pass as atheist — have found a mimetic community sending inspirational ripples of thought throughout time and space.

The first chapter of Badiou's (2003: 4–15) recent commentary on Paul's spirituality is titled, for example, *Paul: Our Contemporary*. Badiou's designation of Paul as our contemporary did not escape the scrutiny in the form of praise (Martin, 2009a: 94) and scorn (Fredriksen, 2009: 61) in a recent debate with "New" Testament scholars. Badiou is far from the sole commentator on the contemporary texture of Paul's thought. Indeed, Paul seems to be mimetic, much like Ecclesiastes, as Guardiola-Rivera (2013: 40) comments on Paul's reception in Latin America:

[Paul's thought] makes itself at home wherever and whenever it finds itself, but in doing so it reinvents the very meaning of 'home' (which is why, seen from the standpoint of those comfortable in the present situation it would always seem 'un-homely' (*unheimlich*, violent and uncanny). It is the exemplar's ability (Paul's writings, in this case, as the operative basis for memory and action related to popular religiosity in Latin America) to be both antique and yet modern, 'its infinite—but never anarchic—plurality that categorizes it' as the embodiment of exemplarity itself.

Burton (2008: 163) gives an overview of why a Pauline urban spirituality still resonates today with the religious, the not-so-religious, and those who might rightly pass as atheist:

[O]ur own time and that of ancient Rome in some sense coincide. For thinkers such as Taubes (2004 [1993]), Badiou (2003 [1997]), Agamben (2005 [2000]) and Milbank (2008) this is a social and political coincidence, based partly on historical continuity (the Roman Empire and the birth of Christianity as conditioning subsequent western history) and partly on analogy (the conditions of empire in Paul's time mirroring those of modern global capitalism).

Part of the reason that philosophers, especially those of a Marxist flavour (Boer, 2007: 53–77), cannot get rid or enough of Paul is his eccentric and eclectic vision of community for the "city to come". Born from the Israelite imagination, amalgamating elements of the Greco-Roman and Jewish symbolic universes (Horsley, 2000: 93–96), and driven by a creative energy unleashed by the virtual Jesus-event,[45] a Pauline spirituality for urban communities seem odd and/or exciting to many insiders and outsiders, ancient and contemporary.

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[45] Badiou (2003: 22) insists that one should distinguish between the site of an event — the factual historical event — and the post-eventual truth that proceeds from the site of an event. For him, the event proper is the post-eventual truth inconceivable within the framework of the possible: an event subtracted from the count.

A fanciful account by Martin (2012: 10–11) — drawing on "New" Testament, Early Christian, Greek, and Roman sources — extrapolates how an ancient person might have viewed urban communities in the Pauline orbit:[46]

> Imagine that you are a seamstress who works in a cloth shop in the city of Corinth, in Greece, in the year 56. Euthychus, a guy who lives next door to you and works in a leather shop nearby, has just joined a new club, and he tells you about it. First, they don't meet in the daytime, but either early, before light, or after dark. There are only enough of them to fill a decent-size dining room, but they call themselves the 'town meeting.' You're not quite sure what they do at these meetings. They don't appear to worship any god or goddess that you can see. They use the term 'god' sometimes, but this god doesn't have a name, and to you that would be bizarre. Remember, you are pretending you're a Greek living in 56 in Corinth. To you, these people look as if they don't believe in gods at all; they look like atheist… At these town meetings they eat meals—which is not unusual since most clubs in your society eats meals—but they call these meals the 'boss's dinner,' or sometimes 'the thank-you.' Some people say they eat human flesh at these dinners, but you doubt that because for some reason they seem to be vegetarians… Once your in the club, they call you 'comrade,' and you have sex with anyone and everyone, because it doesn't matter if you're a man or a woman; in fact, they figure you're neither—or both.

One might chalk up Martin's description to the grafting metaphor used earlier in this section: Christianity instilling the genes of the Jewish symbolic universe into the roots of the Greco-Roman. What better place to implant massive economic, political, social, and religious change, than at the heart of the Greco-Roman ideological machine: the assemblage of the city. A Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", inspired by the virtual Jesus-event, splices the Greco-Roman and Jewish symbolic universes at the heart of the ideological machine of the city. In

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[46] Bear in mind that Martin teaches at Yale and thus the context of this description is American.

splicing these symbolic universes, a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", inoculates the Greco-Roman urban landscape, and future urbanities, against its diseases and founding gestures.

A Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", does not purport tightly tracking Paul's own thought. Instead, it shadows the influential, almost mimetic, trajectories Paul clears. As a complex system, with various influences and possible outcomes, one cannot track a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" linearly, but must select restraining tropes. My trope tracing, for a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", stalks three keywords, and how these wedge into the established discourse framed by the Roman Empire. First, I turn to the question of time in Paul's authentic letters, by focussing on the term καιρός, often translated as "the appointed time." Next, I rally the question of intermediate community, specifically the term ἐκκλησία frequently interpreted as "church." The big Other, Absolute, or Being surfaces, finally, as I pencil the outlines of κουριος, habitually rendered as "Lord."

With these three tropes I set out constructing a triple helix "New" Testament spirituality of the "city to come" based on Paul, by reading an unlikely duo together: Agamben and Badiou. Agamben's and Badiou's readings of Paul are, in Kaufman's (2008: 36) words:

> …probably the two most diametrically opposed approaches to the politico-theological, both articulated through readings of Paul's epistles: on the one hand, Badiou's claim that Paul represents a model of revolutionary universalism, and on the other, Agamben's use of Paul's epistles to outline a theory of messianic time.

Yet, they share a pre-occupation with the complexity of number and counting. Kaufman (2008: 51) leverages this shared feature to claim a latent messianic element in Badiou:[47]

> Insofar as the messianic can be represented by an adjacent day or number, which is not the last (that would be the apocalyptic) but the penultimate, not the seventh day as the day of rest but the sixth (the difference between the Christian and the Jewish Sabbath), and insofar as this space of difference in the count could be said to mark the messianic, then it seems that such a space of subtraction from the count is the latent messianic element in Badiou's work.

It is exactly this messianic space of subtraction from the count shared by Agamben and Badiou, around which I construct a Pauline "New" Testament spirituality of the "city to come".

3.2. HELIX: A PARAOUSIA-KAIROS HACK

Why commence with καιρός rather than ἐκκλησία like Last (2011) and Badiou (2003)? Here, I follow Agamben (2005: 2), who in the first chapter of his reflection on the apostle Paul's letter to the Romans states:

> The restoration of Paul to his messianic context therefore suggest, above all, that we attempt to understand the meaning and internal form of the time he defines as *ho nyn kairos*, the 'time of the now.'

Two remarks:

1. By focussing on the internal form of Paul's *the time of the now*, Agamben takes Badiou's Platonic idea, of the Pauline community as an Event outside the co-ordinates of the possible, to task (Agamben, 2005: 51–52; Badiou, 2005: 175).

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[47] Baker (2013: 312–335) notes Kaufman's article preferences Agamben's Paul. Rather than the count, Baker prefers the tension between law and grace as key to critically reading both Agamben and Badiou. This, of course, slants him slightly towards Badiou's Paul.

2. Agamben's statement of intent harbours the contention that without considering Paul's concept of time, one cannot understand what the messianic wisdom community of ἐκκλησία entails (Sanders, 2009: 87).

Agamben's assumptions bring me to the central premise of this section: a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" hacks the meaning of καιρός, and thus redraws time.

Some linguists (Sipiora, 2002: 3) and philosophers (Agamben, 2005: 18; Boer, 2013: 116) interpret καιρός as Paul's most revolutionary category. To understand why time is such an important category, one must first grasp every time-code as a linguistic-cultural inscription. What one perceives as time passing, is merely the effects of the second law of thermodynamics: entropy (Evers, 2003: 893–896).

Time, then, is the linguistic-cultural inscription of order veering towards chaos: things fall apart. Although time does not exist, it persists and insists in humanity's encoding of its, and our, passing (Boroditsky, 2011: 339). The connection between time (καιρός) and space (ἐκκλησία) is the subject of the next short section. For now, the following amuse-bouche sentence: How one encodes time is crucial, because it relates to how one encodes space (Minkowski, 1952; Kofman & Lebas, 1996: 16–17), which in turn produces the possibility of cultural negentropy (Smuts, 1926: 251).

Hacking the linguistic-cultural time-code, with a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", is not a dispassionate enterprise. It is an act of spirituality, in the sense described in the first chapter — without a big Other, evoking a fragile absolute, with the virtual Jesus-event always haunting us like a very holy ghost.[48] Here the convergence of Agamben and Badiou, pointed out by Kaufman (2008: 40), becomes so important:

> [W]here Badiou and Agamben converge… is in a pre-occupation with the complexity of number and counting, with two terms that may be mistaken

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[48] Paul had no physical contact with Jesus of Nazareth, and notably, seldom recounts historical events surrounding Jesus' life (Žižek, 2003: 9).

for one, and with the importance of registering this dialectic as a relation between two rather than a pure one.

A Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", targets untying καιρός in the light of the Jesus-event: registering καιρός' dialectic as a relation between two rather than a pure one.

A Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" draws on the memory (tradition) of the complex system of "Old" Testament spiritualities to suss out the meaning of the virtual Jesus-event. Truly, Paul has no clue what he is hacking; unlike us who has the blessing/curse of retroactively tracing his time-hack.[49] What we all — religious, not-so-religious, atheist, Jew or Gentile — share with Paul is the cipher of the Jesus-event and its dialectical (dis)ruption of time-space. Žižek (2012a: 232–233) chillingly portrays how the crucifixion event unbinds the unitary:

> As Christ died on the Cross, the earth shook and darkness descended, signs that the heavenly order itself—the big Other—was disturbed: not only did something horrible happen in the world, but the very coordinates of the world itself were shaken. It was as if the *sinthome*, the knot tying the world together, had been unraveled, and the audacity of the Christians was to take this as a good omen, or, as Mao would put it much later: 'there is great disorder under heaven, the situation is excellent.'

By tapping into this untying of the unitary, a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" hacks the linguistic-cultural inscription of καιρός disrupting both the unitary time-codes of the Jewish apocalyptic and Greco-Roman with a cryptic key. Its cryptic key is not a third unknown time-space in the full sense of the word (which would count as a fourth), but rather a messianic time brought about by the virtual Jesus-event (Agamben, 2005: 62–64, 69). A Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", constructs its urban time inoculation in such a way that neither the Greco-Roman nor the Jewish time-codes can decipher, merely include, or locate it in their own time source-code. Where a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" focuses its

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[49] As Žižek (2014) rightly points out: "What characterizes a really great thinker is that they misrecognize the basic dimension of their own breakthrough".

hack, shatters both the Jewish and Greco-Roman cultural-linguistic time-codes' expectations of παρουσία.

In different ways, the Jewish apocalyptic and the Greco-Roman expectation of καιρός and παρουσία were synchronistic. The Jewish apocalyptic expectation collapsed καιρός and παρουσία into the synchronistic occurrence of the resurrection of the dead, the coming of the deliverer (Messiah, Michael, Son of Man), and the kingdom of God.

While counter-movements, like Jewish Apocalypticism, tend to project the coincidence of καιρός and παρουσία into a future hope, empires thrive on compressing καιρός and παρουσία into the hegemony of "now" (Stiegler, 2009a: 48; Ward, 2009: 179). Stiegler (in Venn et al., 2007: 338) puts this compression of καιρός and παρουσία into the "now" in terms of capitalism, remarking that "[capitalism] destroys time; it destroys desire and thus time. Equally, it destroys space and the environment". In a similar way, the Roman Empire's time-code collapsed καιρός and παρουσία into the arrival of the Emperor's, or his representative, in the Greco-Roman city (Oakes, 2005: 316; Luke, 2008: 238). The Empire's symbolics pervading the city's public space constantly reminder denizens of the Emperor or his representative's παρουσία (Horsley, 2000: 76; Carter, 2002: 464–465). The Emperor insured the city's denizens comprehended he brought the realised καιρός of "peace and security" (Elliott, 2000: 24–25; Nasrallah, 2005: 499–500).

Central to a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" is interweaving an operative messianic "now" between Jesus' (the messiah's) resurrection and the παρουσία of the Kingdom of God (Martin, 2012: 256–257): an operative messianic "now" dialectically interrupting both the Greco-Roman and the Jewish synchronous expectation. The insertion of a messianic "now" relieves a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" of the title Apocalypticism: a logic of the end or teleology (Martin, 2009a: 96). A question Agamben (2005: 60–63) illuminates why a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" is not strictly apocalyptic or philosophical. If Paul

is an apocalypticist why does he not call himself a prophet? If he is not an apocalypticist why does he not appropriate the label philosopher?

Agamben (2005:60–63) claims Paul creates a new category, apostle, because he has a clear mission. His mission is not to preach hard teleological παρουσία. Paul avoids clearly stating how or when παρουσία will take place. His descriptions of παρουσία remains fuzzy, for example when discussing the resurrected body in 1 Corinthians 15:35–49. Everything outside καιρός (operative messianic time) blurs for Paul: all he wants to know is how to live the καιρός the Jesus-event inaugurated, before the παρουσία, which always remains around the corner.

Paul is an apostle, a hacker on a mission, to spread the split in καιρός brought about by the Jesus-event. Paul undeniably uses apocalyptic language, but he uses it in a strange circular way — or rather in a helix. Paul pencils a call of the "city to come" where there always remains something to be done, before all is said and done (Martin, 2009a: 98). Yet, the "city to come" is always already initiated by the Jesus-event from which Paul draws his καιρός foundation.

To summarise: The Roman Empire's καιρός/παρουσία is compressed and instantaneous while the Jewish apocalyptic version of καιρός/παρουσία is projected into some synchronic future event. Paul's hacking genius is how he corrupts the Roman Empire's καιρός/παρουσία: decompressing and desynchronising time. Similarly, Paul disentangles the Jewish apocalyptic time-code creating a new cultural-linguistic time-concept called operative messianic καιρός — a virus corrupting any time-data insisting on the impossibility of καιρός without full παρουσία.

The insertion of what Agamben calls messianic time, for which Paul uses the Greek word καιρός, stirred a(n) (r)evolution in the linguistic-cultural texture of time plundering both the Jewish and Greco-Rome time-codes. Paul's hacked linguistic-cultural time inserts and exerts an operative messianic time within

chronological time: a time always subtracted from the count. Agamben (2005: 67–68) describes this intrusion:

> [M]essianic time is *the time that time takes to come to an end*, or, more precisely, the time we take to bring to an end, to achieve our presentation of time. This is not the line of chronological time (which was representable but unthinkable), nor the instance of its end (which was just as unthinkable); nor is it a segment cut from chronological time; rather, it is operational time, pressing within chronological time, working and transforming it from within; it is the time we need to make time end *the time that is left us [il tempo che ci resta]*.

Messianic time is the time we take to live into a hoped future time. The time of the "city to come", which is always lived into, but never lived in: a disentangling of the unitary into the dialectical.

Agamben (2005:75), furthermore, observes how καιρός recapitulates in a biological sense: repeating while developing and growing: (r)evolutionary. Not only does Paul's καιρός recapitulate "Old" Testament and Greco-Roman time-codes, but καιρός also redevelops within Paul's letters themselves. Καιρός' meaning changes as an ἐκκλησία lives into καιρός and finds παρουσία deferred, which then necessitates a freshly imagined καιρός, etc. From Paul's first epistle onwards (1 Thessalonians where καιρός and παρουσία are closely joined) the gap between καιρός and παρουσία stretches steadily, as one gets closer to his final epistle, Romans.

This helix motion of Paul's καιρός, the time it takes to live into the παρουσία always around the corner, is not outside χρόνος. It is rather a thickened knot of χρόνος spinning in a helix, or in Agamben's (2005: 62, 69) words:

> What interests the apostle is not the last day, it is not the instant in which time ends, but the time that contracts itself and begins to end (*ho kairos synestalmenos estin*; 1 Cor. 7:29), or if you prefer, the time that remains between time and its end… [*Kairos* is] a contracted and abridge *chronos*... [It] is nothing more than seized *chronos.*

The time of "now" is always just for now; up for future revision and reinterpretation, which is why Žižek (Sarahana, 2013), when speaking at the Occupy Wall Street protest, warned:

> There is a danger. Don't fall in love with yourselves. We have a nice time here. But remember, carnivals come cheap. What matter is the day after, when we will have to return to normal lives... But there is a long road ahead. There are truly difficult questions that confront us. We know what we do not want. But what do we want? What social organization can replace capitalism? What type of new leaders do we want?

Even Žižek (2012b:82), who locates in the Occupy Wall Street movement a temporary **proscenium arch** wisdom community, a very holy ghost, is aware of how easily καιρός can empty into παρουσία or flatten back into χρόνος.

The καιρός of Paul's spirituality of the "city to come", then, only exists as part of χρόνος when παρουσία is endlessly near, but never here. Rather than teleology, this constitutes a non-non-teleology: neither teleology nor non-teleology proper, but a double negated teleology. Not an "arrow of time" or full circular time, but rather a helix of thickened χρόνος: a messianic time always subtracted from the count.

This section discussed how Paul is in the first instance not a community builder, as Last and Badiou claim, but a time-hacker. Paul's time hack disentangles, desynchronises, and disjoins παρουσία from the thickened χρόνος of καιρός. Both Jewish apocalyptic and Greco-Roman time codes collapsed καιρός and παρουσία into either a deferred or a realised synchronistic moment. A Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", however, shows these linguistic-cultural time-inscriptions are too unitary in the light of the Jesus-event. Καιρός should be dialectical: two and not one, inspired by a double negated third.

Here, then, is the time-code indicator of a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come". The "city to come" is suspicious of anyone or anything that collapses παρουσία and καιρός into each other — be it a realised or hoped future simultaneity. Καιρός, in the "city to come" is always messianic, deferred, (r)evolutionay, something to

live and lean into, recapitulating the memory of tradition in helix form. Inserting this helix time-index into unitary linear or circular time-codes dialectically disrupts notions of current or future wholeness. One always lives into the παρουσία of the "city to come" through the καιρός of the time that remains, until we live into it: an ever possible subtracted reality.

Now that we have explored the messianic time described by a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", I consider if and why this new time-code nictitates at a new form of community.

3.2$^{1/2}$. INTERMISSION: DOUBLE HELIX

If time hacking, rather than community building, is the genesis of a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", is ἐκκλησία of secondary significance? This would be a preposterous claim. The genesis of a "New" Testament spirituality of the "city to come" constructed from Paul is the theo-poetic-politics of καιρός-hacking, but as the previous section alludes to, one cannot conceive time without immediately nictitating at space. This holds true even for the semantic field of καιρός itself.

Boer (2013: 122, 126), after indexing different meanings of καιρός in ancient Greek literature, concludes that one:

> … [should extend the] sense of kairós, [to] one that goes well beyond time. Even more, both temporal and spatial meanings of the term find their basis in the sense of measure, proportion or fitness. As time, kairós is then a distinct measure or the appropriateness of time — the exact, critical and opportune time. As place, it becomes measured space, as well as the way space is proportioned, preferably 'correctly' when one refers to the body where everything is in its right place… A kairological social order has everything in its proper place — aristocratic elites, exploited peasants, driven slaves, women, and so on.

If Boer's archiving of καιρός holds, it follows that καιρός as time immediately nictitates at a space or social order; a space or social order already included in its semantic cluster or field. The reason the space or social order of a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" does not correspond to the proportion of Boer's above example — aristocratic elites, exploited peasants, etc. — is not because it constitutes an *akairos*, as Boer (2013: 122–126) suggests, but is rather due to Paul's hacking of καιρός as described in the previous section.

Once one grounds the genesis of a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" in a time-hack, the double helix structure of καιρός and ἐκκλησία starts to (r)evolve together and become inseparable. In other words, once initiated by the virtual Jesus-event, the double helix of καιρός and ἐκκλησία nictitate at each other: always deferring, recapitulating, and subtracting from the unitary. In the following section, I reflect on the second strand of a Pauline double helix spirituality of the "city to come", namely, ἐκκλησία.

3.3. DOUBLE HELIX: EKKLESIA

After considering the καιρός constructed from a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" and how it winks at ἐκκλησία, in this section I focus on how ἐκκλησία nictitates back at καιρός rotating in a double helix. I do so in two motions. The first observes how καιρός and ἐκκλησία share the same double negated logic: disrupting parts of the Jewish and Greco-Roman symbolic worlds. The second ponders how ἐκκλησία and καιρός, in double helix bond, recapitulates — in a biological sense — drawing on "Old" Testament spiritualities and a constructed Pauline spirituality, learning from and adapting to emerging situations within local communities.

First, we sink our teeth into how ἐκκλησία in a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" shares the same double negated subtraction as καιρός. Jewish and Greco-Roman symbolic universes claimed different meanings of ἐκκλησία in the 1st and 2nd century CE. A Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", however, equips this

term with new potency, cutting and disrupting both senses to create a new subtraction from the count (Badiou in Caputo & Alcoff, 2009: 161–163): a virtual set of people neither (but still) Jewish nor Greco-Roman or (later) even Barbarian (Jewett, 2000: 62–65). How did the Greco-Roman and Jewish symbolic universes encode ἐκκλησία in the 1ˢᵗ and 2ⁿᵈ century CE?

How ἐκκλησία was encoded both in the Greco-Roman and Jewish symbolic universes during the 1ˢᵗ and 2ⁿᵈ century CE remains hotly debated (du Toit, 2009: 132, 142). Trebilco (2011: 448), after indexing translations of ἐκκλησία and συναγωγή in the LXX, Philo, and Josephus concludes:

> Clearly, ἐκκλησία is a general word which does not refer to a particular type of assembly and so is not a technical term; the type or form of 'assembly' must be defined by the addition of further words, or by the context. Common usage includes speaking of Israel as 'the assembly of the Lord' or speaking of 'all the assembly of Israel'. It does not have a particular eschatological reference. As I have noted, συναγωγή is found 221 times in the LXX to speak of a 'gathering', 'congregation' or 'assembly', as a translation of עֵדָה and קָהָל. It is used especially for 'the congregation of Israel' (see, for example, Lev 8.3; Deut 5.22; 2 Chron 5.6), and in phrases like the 'whole congregation of the sons of Israel' (see Exod 12.3, 6, 47; 16.1–2, 6; 17.1; Lev 19.2; Num 1.2; 8.9). It is very closely associated with the covenant people in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers and in the Prophets.

Two aspects of Trebilco's indexing are worth highlighting. First, ἐκκλησία clearly is a term designating, in the Jewish symbolic world of the 1ˢᵗ and 2ⁿᵈ century CE, nothing more than a general meeting, unless the text or context explicitly states otherwise. ἐκκλησία also did not have apocalyptic undertones in the LXX, Philo, or Josephus, yet in the Pauline corpus it is framed apocalyptically (du Toit, 2009: 141). The question is why Paul calls the urban communities ἐκκλησία and not συναγωγή? Is it, like Trebilco (2011: 453–458) and du Toit (2009: 142) suggest,

because a group of Hellenistic Christians wanted to distinguish themselves from Jewish Christians? Before risking a premature answer, I turn to the Greco-Roman use of the word.

To miss ἐκκλησία's Greco-Roman political hues would be a mistake when discussing Paul's choice for this term to denote the καιρός communities of the virtual Jesus-event. One should remember that the ancients did not distinguish between the political, religious, economic, and cultural spheres as moderns do (Horsley, 2000: 75; Ward, 2005: 29; MacDonald, 2010: 31). ἐκκλησία denotes a "governing assembly" of a Greco-Roman city (Horsley, 2000: 74; Milbank, 2008: 148; Martin, 2012: 40). Once again, one should keep in mind that ἐκκλησία was synonymous or at least closely tied with καιρός, as Boer's description in the previous section made clear. Belonging to an ἐκκλησία of a Greco-Roman city thus meant belonging to the καιρός of the Empire: a social order guaranteed by the ideology disseminated by the Emperor's παρουσία. The ἐκκλησία, as "governing assembly", settled the fate of the Greco-Roman city controlling both space and time.

Returning to why a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" uses the designation ἐκκλησία instead of συναγωγή:[50] Could there be another reason to choose ἐκκλησία other than its familiarity to Hellenistic ears? An appropriation of ἐκκλησία by Hellenistic Christians to distinguish themselves from Jewish Christians is a possibility. Yet, adopting the term ἐκκλησία remains a loaded choice, even if the term signified continuity with the covenantal community of Israel (Dunn, 2007: 61). Members of the urban communities Paul wrote to — especially those with no or minimal Jewish background — would have understood ἐκκλησία's nuances, at least partly, in the light the privileged of partaking in its καιρός-order (Horsley, 2000: 91).

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[50] Du Toit (2009: 133) notes "…ἐκκλησία is not the only prominent early Christian self-designation in Paul; Ἅγιοι is also quite conspicuous."

ἐκκλησία has three fascinating features meriting further exploration when contemplating a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come":

i.   It includes its founding trauma,

ii.   It does not aggregate mathematically, and

iii.   It does not canvass for inclusion into the dominant order.

First, Paul's ἐκκλησία incorporates the trauma of its founding gesture into its celebration, as Milbank (2008: 141) points out:

> According to Paul, to be a citizen of **ecclesia** is constantly to repeat this founding trauma. Normally, in any human society, founding traumas must be at least partially covered over, because of a collective memory of inaugural guilt or inaugural shame.

The inaugural trauma Milbank refers to here is the virtual Jesus-event that transformed time by inserting the thickened χρόνος of καιρός into the expected synchronic καιρός and παρουσία. In stark contrast, the Greco-Roman city's ἐκκλησία disavows its founding violence — the constant threat of military violence guaranteeing the claimed "safety and security" of the Empire.

Second, ἐκκλησία does not aggregate mathematically, but embodies each pneumatic body as some-body (Martin in Caputo & Alcoff, 2009: 163): individuals trained by the ἐκκλησία to identify their καιρός meaning in a particular public moment. To paraphrase Milbank's (2008: 142–148, 158) argument: those who were part of a Greco-Roman city's ἐκκλησία (male citizens) counted, were accounted for and counted-in.

The Greco-Roman city is a production of Plato's and Aristotle's aggregated mathematics of the city's soul. In contrast to Plato's and Aristotle's mathematical soul of the city, Paul's ἐκκλησία does not aggregate mathematically, but lives into a subtraction from the count, freeing individuals to live into the city not yet accounted for, rather than the accountable city. Paul's ἐκκλησία embodies pneumatic-resurrected bodies: every-body and any-body that has some-body in

the *space* of the city must be embodied in ἐκκλησία. Unlike the mathematical model of the soul of the city, there are no no-bodies in the resurrected-pneumatic καιρός body of ἐκκλησία: only potential for the traumatic inclusion of each subtracted disruptive identity.

A Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" also claims continuity between the spiritualities of the "Old" Testament and those who stand under the sign of the virtual Jesus-event (Dunn, 2007: 61). The ἐκκλησία might be seen as a(n) (r)evolutionary continuation of the *proscenium arch* wisdom community of Ecclesiastes. It is a political, economic, religious, and cultural body fit for a new people in a new creation: one that does not aggregate mathematically, but embodies pneumatic-resurrected bodies being trained in the ἐκκλησία to identify their καιρός meaning in a particular public moment.

A newly constituted intermediate community would too easily create a new identity competing on the Roman Empire's marketplace of already included identities. Paul's vision of ἐκκλησία, allows individuals to keep their unique "cultural" meaning configuration, as long as this meaning remains continually cut by the disruptive trauma of the virtual Jesus-event: a potential perpetual personal apocalypse (Martin, 2009a: 101).

Third, notice how Paul's ἐκκλησία does not attempt to include itself into the existing Greco-Roman ἐκκλησία or canvasses for a broader definition of the Greco-Roman ἐκκλησία (Horsley, 2009: 91). No, it merely lives the new desynchronised καιρός truth. Thus, a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" calls the ἐκκλησία to live a double existence: one reality mirroring the καιρός of the always differed and another the recapitulating time before παρουσία — a time attracted to the potential of the deferred subtracted. In a sense, the life-world of those bound to the virtual Jesus-event has changed little (Martin, 2009b: 118), yet the potential of παρουσία is ever at hand. In this sense, ἐκκλησία passes the

Jungian test of a genuine symbol (du Toit, 2014: 247): living the inkling of an unfinished always future truth.

One should notice further that like καιρός, ἐκκλησία slowly recapitulates within its own embryonic tradition. The scope of ἐκκλησία's diversity grows as the synchronistic realisation of καιρός and παρουσία stretches apart and Paul learns from each local flavour of ἐκκλησία: each with its own intrigues and challenges. At first, with 1 Thessalonians, little mention is made of Jew and Greek. However, as καιρός and παρουσία stretches and Paul learns from different local situations, ἐκκλησία's scope grows ever wider: even including Barbarians by the time the letter to the Romans is written (Jewett, 2000:62–65).

This section illustrated how ἐκκλησία and καιρός nictitate at each other in double helix. ἐκκλησία is not a specifically religious term, in 1st and 2nd century CE Jewish literature unless used with a descriptive term or within an explicit context. In the Greco-Roman symbolic universe, however, ἐκκλησία's main meaning was the "governing assembly" of the city. Whether intentional or not, Paul's use of ἐκκλησία for the urban καιρός-communities of the Jesus-event, puts them at odds with the mathematical καιρός-order the Emperor-ideology holds in place.

Everyone who counts politically, religiously, economically, and culturally are aggregate into the order of the Greco-Roman ἐκκλησία guaranteed by the παρουσία of the Emperor-ideology. The ἐκκλησία of a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come", however, yearns for the unaccountable city. It, rather, asks to embody every-body as somebody subtracted from the count, into the newly constituted pneumatic-resurrected body of the ἐκκλησία: a body with no no-bodies.

A Pauline ἐκκλησία of the "city to come" does not harass the Greco-Roman city's ἐκκλησία for a broadened definition of itself. It, rather, encourages the ἐκκλησία of the Jesus-event to live the messianic καιρός of the ever-deferred παρουσία in the

present: a dialectical existence, where reality does not harmonise with the Greco-Roman ἐκκλησία's unitary representation.

Here, then, is my second marker of a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come". The "city to come" does not aggregate mathematically; accounting only for those who count, are counted-in, or accounted for by the assemblage of the city. Instead, the "city to come" embodies every-body who has some-body into the resurrected-pneumatic καιρός body of ἐκκλησία: Jew, Greek, those considered Barbarian, and even those not yet imagined part of the city (migrants and strangers). There are no no-bodies in, or on their way to, the "city to come".

The following section considers how the last strand of a Pauline triple helix spirituality of the "city to come", namely κύριος, connect with the double helix of καιρός and ἐκκλησία.

3.3.$^{1/2}$. INTERMISSION: TRIPLE HELIX

Having described the double helix of καιρός-ἐκκλησία, its joined deferment and recapitulation structure, I turn to κύριος as the final string of a Pauline triple helix spirituality of the "city to come". In the "Old" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come" a fragile absolute or big Other always lurks (un)articulated. Be it the spectre of the divine's condemnation of Cain haunting the Cainite genealogy, or the "Us" left untranslatable in the plundering of a single language at Babel. The Sodom narrative shattered the categories of sexuation God-neighbour, slave-master, and man-woman, while the cities of refuge featured a divine guarantor of biblical law, lurking in the background. Finally, while the wisdom spirituality of Ecclesiastes disavowed a full divine involvement in life, it also left the possibility open that one could, or maybe should, push back against such a claim.

What often lurks when describing the divine, is the compact ethical, the ideological, the founding "ground" guaranteeing the arbitrariness of the linguistic-cultural inscribed "figures" of ethical "truth." Put in more social-scientific "New"

Testament research terminology: whoever brokers with God, or the gods, on the people's behalf is a nodal thickening where the ethical strings come together. While describing the previous strings of a Pauline triple helix spirituality of the "city to come" we found the Emperor, κύριος, functioned as divine broker-guarantor of καιρός and ἐκκλησία for the Greco-Roman city.

Three works remains seminal to understanding the Roman Imperial Cult. The first, often cited by "New" Testament scholars, is Price's (1984) *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor*. Price (1984: 248) explains:

> The imperial cult, like the cults of the traditional gods, created a relationship of power between subject and ruler… That is, the cult was a major part of the web of power that formed the fabric of society. The imperial cult stabilized the religious order of the world. The system of ritual was carefully structured; the symbolism evoked a picture of the relationship between the emperor and the gods. The ritual was also structuring; it imposed a definition of the world. The imperial cult, along with politics and diplomacy, constructed the reality of the Roman empire.

Price's clean claims were curtailed, however, by a second key work on the Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor, Burrell's (2004) *Neokoroi: Greek Cities and Roman Emperors.* Burrell (2004: 1–3) introduces her oeuvre by taking aim at Imperial Cult as anachronism. While various cities did build temples to honour the Emperor as god and guarantor of the Roman Empire's cultural-linguistic inscription of space and time, there was no Greek word explicitly denoting an imperial cult. One should rather imagine several Greek vassal cities, *Neokoroi*, independently, or sometimes collectively building temples and statues honouring the Roman Emperor.

The final work on the Roman Imperial Cult of pertinence for the present study, is Miller's (2010) article *The Imperial Cult in the Pauline Cities of Asia Minor and Greece.* Miller indexing present-day archaeological proof for active imperial worship in Paul's cities of ministry during his lifetime. The tripartite conclusion Miller (2010: 331–333) arrives at:

1. The evidence for active imperial worship in Paul's cities of ministry during this lifetime is scanter than claimed by "New" Testament scholars.
2. Roman imperial ideology and Romanization is not precluded by excluding imperial worship.
3. In those cities where an Imperial Cult did exist, it was marginal.

Although archaeological evidence seems scant for claiming the Emperor as religious icon in the milieu of Paul's urban ministry in Asia Minor, not even Miller can deny the imperial ideology's perforation, which sets up the Emperor as guarantor of a certain cultural-linguistic inscription of space and time.

The Emperor guarantees the Roman Empire's cultural-linguistic inscription of space and time in the assemblage of the city. As a guarantor of time and space, the Emperor becomes correspondingly the patron of a particular ethical order. It is interesting that Boer (2013: 122) extends his idea of καιρός further than mere time-space to include the ethical. Sipiora (2002: 115–117), furthermore, calls καιρός not only the strategic rhetorical concept of the "New" Testament, but also an ethical notion. In other words, whomever gifts time in the Greco-Roman city, also gifts social space and the ethical. Whoever fiddles with the cultural-linguistic inscription of καιρός, will find a whole symphony of social strings vibrating.

In the Greco-Roman city, the Emperor knows what time it is, and through his constant reminder of his παρουσία, he guarantees that everyone else knows it as well. To combine two imagines from Benjamin (2000: 71) and Pratchett (1994:1): The Emperor is the ugly dwarf hidden inside the shiny automaton, who always wins his chess match, because the rest of the Empire is playing dice. A Pauline triple helix spirituality of the "city to come", then, looks like this: καιρός-ἐκκλησία-κύριος.

3.4. TRIPLE HELIX: KURIOS

So far I have described Pauline καιρός as "messianic time" conjoined with ἐκκλησία in a double helix. It always defers while recapitulating from the "Old" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come", and even develops themes from within its own short-lived tradition. Now, we turn to κύριος, which forms, with καιρός and ἐκκλησία, the spinning triple helix in a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come". In this section, I first survey κύριος' significance for both Jewish and Greco-Roman symbolic universes during the 1st and 2nd century CE. Next, I note how Paul amalgamates and subverts these expectations. Finally, I consider the implications of the κύριος string for a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come".

In the LXX, "…one can find κύριος, 'Lord', besides θεός, 'God', as the most frequent used designations for God. As rule of thumb, θεός can be found where the MT has אֱלֹהִים, and κύριος obviously serves as a translation of the actual name of God, the tetragrammaton" (Rösel, 2007: 414). While both θεός and κύριος translate names of God, they are not on equal footing.

The rest of Rösel's (2007) article gives a fascinating account of early Septuagint manuscripts, and how the exception to the above rule often translates into protecting the unsayable name of God. When God is perceived as acting unjustly, then the tetragrammaton is translated with θεός, not κύριος. Sounds like a silent attempt to censure the unsayable name of God from acting unjustly, i.e. protecting the divine-ethical *sinthome*.

Turning, now, to how the Greco-Roman symbolic universe viewed κύριος. In "New" Testament studies, there is fair consensus that, especially in the east of the Roman Empire, the Roman Emperor dominated the semantic field of κύριος. Already, while sketching the double helix of καιρός and ἐκκλησία, one felt the undertow of the Emperor as κύριος, who through imperial ideology guaranteed a social order claiming to bring "peace and security" (Carter, 2002: 462). Two issues remain, concerning the ugly dwarf controlling the automaton of the Roman

Empire, lest one becomes too anachronistic and sketch too dark a picture of the Roman Emperor.

First, the Roman Emperor's κύριος claim was not seen as scandalous. Although the Emperor may (or may not) have been worshipped as a god in Rome (Botha, 2004: 14–45), generally he claimed the label κύριος by infusing it with a local flavour, as Finney (2005: 21) attests:

> Cults of the emperor were not an independent element of religious life; sometimes the emperor was placed under the protection of the Olympian pantheon or linked with the traditional gods, and sometimes cult was offered directly to him.

Second, the Roman Emperor's rule was propagated, and thus viewed by many, as a healthy step towards including and enfranchising those outside the Empire's patronage system, as Martin (2012: 50) observes:

> Certainly in his [Augustus'] propaganda and, one could argue, at least to some extent in reality, he did set himself up, as had Caesar, as the 'patron of all the people,' the 'patron of the patronless.' The radical change effected by Augustus, who is following Caesar's aborted lead, was a change from an oligarchy of wealthy families exercised through an infighting and competitive Senate to the rule of one man and his household. Augustus became the paterfamilias of the entire new Roman Empire.

Now we have a fair idea of the linguistic-cultural inscription of κύριος in both the Jewish and Greco-Roman symbolic universes, and can turn to Paul's use of the term. In Paul's authentic letters, the term κύριος is tightly bound to Jesus of Nazareth (Gathercole, 2011: 174). One does not have to read far in any of Paul's authentic letters to find Jesus described as κύριος. For Paul, Jesus is Messiah or Christ and κύριος, but never θεός, something that will become important later (Turner, 2010: 140). Leaving the question of κύριος' meaning in Paul's authentic letters open for now, a discursive remark about his use of θεός. In Paul's authentic

letters θεός can be translated with the God whose covenantal relationship with Israel gave rise to the "Old" Testament spiritualities of the "city to come" (du Toit, 2009: 138).

What is included in Paul's semantic field of κύριος remains debated: a debate that conveniently runs along the vault lines of emphasising a more Jewish or Hellenistic Paul. First, we follow the argument for a more Jewish reading of Paul's κύριος. Exegetes with this conviction argue that the semantic field of κύριος in Paul and the LXX are the same: a translation of the unsayable tetragrammaton (Wright, 2000: 169). Κύριος then implies Jesus of Nazareth is, for Paul, also God. Such a claim by Paul about Jesus would be an affront to the Emperor, but this would be a secondary effect of a primary Jewish theological statement (Wright, 2000: 182).

Other interpreters focus on the Greco-Roman effects of Paul claiming Jesus of Nazareth as κύριος. For these interpreters, Paul's genius is mainly political (Oakes, 2005: 305–307). Horsley (2000: 93), for example, says about Paul's use of κύριος:

> Paul's redeployment of key terms from Roman imperial ideology, however, meant that he 'reinscribed' imperial images and relations within his arguments aimed at reinforcing the discipline of an anti-imperial movement. In offering his assembly an alternative to Caesar, Paul in effect presented Jesus Christ as the true emperor, the true Lord and Savior who was in the process of subjugating all things to himself!

What makes Paul's use of κύριος so contentious is the text's sparse data on what he meant by it. The most balanced overview of κύριος' use in Paul's authentic letters, comes from Hurtado (2003: 117):

> There are thus three main types of Pauline contexts in which Jesus is characteristically referred to as *Kyrios*: (1) In hortatory statements and passages Jesus is the Lord/Master whose teaching and example are authoritative for believers. (2) In reference to eschatological expectations, Jesus is designated the Lord who will come again as agent of God. (3) In formulae and passages reflecting actions of the worship setting, *Kyrios*

designates the unequal status given to Jesus by God and is the characteristic title given to Jesus in the worship practices of early Christian circles.

Paul claims Jesus as κύριος, the broker with God and patron of a new ἐκκλησία. This is why "[t]here is no clear designation of God as *Kyrios* in Paul's own language" (Stendahl, 1980: 246), because for Paul, Jesus is Christ or Messiah, the initiator of the kingdom of God, but not God-self.[51] Jesus brokers on the ἐκκλησία's behalf, but this new Israel does not belong to the broker but to the one being brokered with: the God of the "Old" Testament.

Jesus as κύριος remains, for the the urban Greco-Roman reader, scandalous, regardless of whether Paul's intent was Jewish or Greco-Roman. Remember, cities were the main disseminator of the Greco-Roman cultural set. Furthermore, the Emperor was the nodal thickening tying linguistic-cultural time-space to the ethical (Oakes, 2005: 311). The Emperor, as κύριος, is the *sinthome* of the Greco-Roman assemblage of the city. He virtually inscribes time-space with his statues, the threat of his armies, or his physical triumph (Horsley, 2000: 76; Harrison, 2002: 7; Finney, 2005: 28). The Emperor is the "ground" or big Other from which the "figure" of the quotidian linguistic-cultural-ethical springs. The Roman Emperor gifts the assemblage of the Greco-Roman city.

Here one comes to the question at the heart of the term κύριος: who gifts time and space in the assemblage of the Greco-Roman city? A Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" has the audacity to claim that the Emperor did not broker the gift of the assemblage of the city's καιρός conditions. No, Paul claims a criminal Jew from a far-flung unimportant eastern province brokered the καιρός conditions for the gift of the assemblage of the city. Augustus was not the patron for the

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[51] This helps resolve a thorny issue, which needs further study: if κύριος and θεός are closely related in the Jewish and Greco-Roman symbolic universes why does Paul split these terms? Why keep strictly to the set θεός-ἐκκλησία and Jesus-κύριος? Why is Jesus not θεός and does ἐκκλησία not belong with κύριος?

patronless, but someone who himself was patronless. Claiming a patronless criminal as the patron of the patronless, i.e. the one who gifts the Greco-Roman city, rather than the godlike Emperor, is indeed a decree that violates the decrees of the Empire (Elliott, 2000: 25).

If one includes Agamben's study on *homo sacer* into the description, the point becomes even more poignant. Agamben (1998: 53, 61) voices *homo sacer* as follows:

> At the two extreme limits of the [legal] order, the sovereign and *homo sacer* present two symmetrical figures that have the same structure and are correlative: the sovereign is the one with respect to whom all men are potentially *homines sacri*, and *homo sacer* is the one with respect to whom all men act as sovereigns… in each case we find ourselves confronted with a bare life that has been separated from its context and that, so to speak surviving its death, is for this very reason incompatible with the human world.

Jesus and the Emperor are both figures excluded from the legal order: they are bare humans symmetrically opposed. The Emperor, the sovereign, for whom all men are potentially *homines sacri*, can benevolently set himself up as the patron for the patronless — bare life tying the *sinthome* of the city. Jesus, as *homo sacer* is the complete opposite. If Jesus is claimed to be *homo sacer* as well as sovereign where does this leave the legal order and indeed sovereignty itself?

Jesus, as both κύριος and *homo sacer*, corrupts the field of sovereignty, unmasking the Roman Emperor's claimed unitary "peace and security", ἐκκλησία governance, and καιρός/παρουσία as nothing but neat aggregated nonsense. If Jesus is sovereign, a patron of those subtracted from the Empire's ethical aggregation, then those partaking in his political body through his time-transmutation are all holes in the order of the Emperor's social time-space.

Jesus, *homo sacer*, is κύριος of a new ἐκκλησία, living a new καιρός, potentially gifting the Greco-Roman assemblage of the city evermore to those always subtracted from its count. A Pauline spirituality of the "city to come" wants to turn everything upside down, make all hell break loose, or in Caputo's (2006: 278) poetic words:

> The kingdom of God is a community without community, a city without walls, a nation without borders, unconditional hospitality without sovereign power, where the decision procedure for admission is based on a holy undecidability between insider and outsider. For all the world, it looks like all hell has broken out, the holy hell that we have been insisting all along is the stuff of sacred anarchy.

This section began by surveying the Jewish and Greco-Roman understanding of κύριος: the final string of the triple helix of a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come". For the Jewish symbolic universe, especially in the LXX, both κύριος and θεός may refer to God. θεός is mostly used to translate the unspeakable tetragrammaton when God is perceived as acting unjustly. Κύριος, thus, is closely related to the holiness of God.

The Greco-Roman understanding of κύριος, on the other hand, relates closely to how the Roman Emperor and his cult pervades the religious, economic, political, and cultural galaxy of the Empire. As κύριος, the Emperor insures the καιρός conditions gifting the assemblage of the Greco-Roman city remain in place. Although sometimes sketched as malicious by "New" Testament scholars, the Emperor propagated himself as the patron of the patronless, something that, as far as it became a reality, is admirable.

After surveying the Greco-Roman and Jewish semantic clusters of κύριος, we turned to describe the fault line running through "New" Testament scholarship. One group of interpreters leaned towards a Jewish interpretation of κύριος while others preferred a Greco-Roman understanding. Considering that κύριος and Jesus, in Paul's letters, are closely associated, this debate has theological

significance. A Jewish understanding of κύριος would equate Jesus with God, and thus the Greco-Roman effects of the title would be secondary. However, if one gives a Greco-Roman interpretation of κύριος priority then Paul is deliberately making a shrewd political point.

I, however, am far more interested in the effects of Paul attributing κύριος to Jesus than what his intention is. I examined Paul's Jesus as κύριος brokering the καιρός conditions of the "city to come", by being sketched as patron to the patronless. Paul sets Jesus up to become direct competition for the other Emperor in the city, the Roman one. Yet, this is not a competition of equals.

They are two symmetrical opposed figures of bare life: left out of the legal order and human existence per se. The Emperor, sovereign, for whom all men are potentially *homines sacri*, originates the Roman urban social order, and Jesus as *homo sacer* represents one the one always outside of this self-same order. The implication is scandalous. If Jesus as κύριος brokering the καιρός conditions of the "city to come", and he is patron to all, even those who are *homo sacer*, then even the Emperor falls under the rubric of *homo sacer.*

Here is then the marker of the final strand of Paul's triple helix spirituality of the "city to come". The "city to come" belongs to those left outside the legal and human order: bare life. This *homo sacer*, however, creates the very co-ordinates of space and time in the city. Jesus, the patron *homo sacer*, reveals the strange secret that we are all *homo sacer*. We are all subtracted from the social order, outside the law, bare beings, and monstrosities in the eyes of the law.

As Žižek might have phrased it: each individual subject constitutes a hole in the social order, a subtraction from the count. If every individual constitutes a gap in the social order, there is no social order proper. What constitute the social order are the subjects, who are the holes in it: an untying of the *sinthome*, the knot that constitutes social reality, indeed. This open order allows for καιρός, ἐκκλησία, and κύριος to (r)evolve in triple helix form, where παρουσία is always near, but never

here, and where time dialectically recapitulates into the always potential inclusion of the subtraction from the count.

3.5. A PAULINE TRIPLE HELIX SPIRITUALITY OF THE "CITY TO COME"

This chapter constructed a Pauline triple helix spirituality of the "city to come", by focussing on three tropes associated with καιρός, ἐκκλησία and κύριος. Here then are the coordinates of a Pauline (r)evolving triple helix spirituality of the "city to come" where all the elements nictitate at each other:

1. Paul, as time-hacker, disrupts both Empire and resistance movements' claim that καιρός and παρουσία is ever simultaneous, either in a collapsed hegemonic "now," or in a hoped future. Paul hacks these time-codes — always a human linguistic-cultural inscription of entropy — by disentangling καιρός from παρουσία. By reinscribing καιρός into χρόνος as a thickened operative time — where παρουσία is always near, but never here — it becomes the time left for us, to live into the time we hoped for. Καιρός is not only an insistent time subtracted from the count, but also recapitulation of previous traditions. In this way, καιρός (r)evolves in helix form towards παρουσία, until we live into the time we hoped for, the time left for us. In the "city to come", no one can claim the "now" as a co-incidence of παρουσία and καιρός, neither hope for such a future co-incidence. The only time the "city to come" has, is the thickened operative χρόνος of καιρός to live into παρουσία: a subtraction from the unitary into a dialectic.

2. The semantic cluster of καιρός, also-already includes a social-code. Hacking the linguistic-cultural time-code, hence, nictitates at a new kind of social space. καιρός and ἐκκλησία, thus form a double helix bond: constantly (r)evolving, learning, winking at each other, and insisting that παρουσία is not here, but always just around the corner. The ἐκκλησία of the "city to come" never aggregates mathematically: only accounting for those who count, are counted-in, or accounted for by the assemblage of the city. It also avoids neatly keeping the political, religious, cultural, and economic spheres apart. Instead, the "city to come" embodies pneumatic-

resurrected bodies, which is every-body who has some-body especially those unaccountable in the city, into the καιρός body of ἐκκλησία. As καιρός and παρουσία stretches it slowly includes Jew, Greek, Barbarian, and who knows what or who else next. There are no no-bodies in the "city to come", and every-body gets to keep their Jewish, Greek, Barbarian, or whatever identity as long as the virtual Jesus-event continuously cuts it.

3. Returning to the semantic cluster of καιρός, we noted that it not only includes a social order, but also, by proxy an ethical order. What one often finds in the divine, or whomever brokers with the divine, is the concentrated ethical. This statement was subsequently supported by the LXX's use of θεός, instead of κύριος, to translate the tetragrammaton when God is perceived to deal unjustly. Giving Jesus the title κύριος competed with the claim that the Roman Emperor gave the gift of the assemblage of the city. Jesus becomes both patron for the patronless, and broker of the conditions of the "city to come". Even more subversive, Jesus and the Roman Emperor are symmetrical figures of bare life: left out of the social order. The Emperor, as sovereign, to whom all are potentially *homines sacri*, keeps the legal-social order in place. If Jesus as *homo sacer* is also sovereign, κύριος, then all are *homo sacer*, even the Emperor. In the "city to come", then, the social order belongs to those left outside of it: every subject is a hole in the social order, is subtracted from the count, decimates any arrogant unitary. The "city to come" belongs to every subject, because each subject constitutes a hole in the social order, a dialectical potential waiting to dissolve the unitary. Such a sparse "social order" allows for καιρός-ἐκκλησία-κύριος to (r)evolve in a triple helix.

In this chapter, I constructed a Pauline triple helix spirituality of the "city to come". The final chapter will return to the first, kicking its order into reverse to answer the initial question of this work: What does it mean to live Christian Spirituality in the city?

4. CONCLUSION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The start of this study asked: What does it mean to live Christian Spirituality in the city? As my constrained description of the complex system of Christian Spirituality crystallised, it became apparent that one could hardly answer such a question, without considering biblical spiritualities of the "city to come". Such spiritualities should be accessible to the religious, the not-so-religious, and those who might rightly pass as atheist. This might seem like an almost impossible task.

Indeed, some might argue that reading biblical texts exclude all sorts of people. Must one envision a city where only those belonging to Christianity are welcome? No, no, a double negated no in a triple helix! This study attempted to show that it is still worthwhile reading the mimetic texts of the Bible to discover constructive spiritualities for everyone in the "city to come". In this final chapter, I look at two ways that such a reading might still be valuable.

In a sense, this chapter reverses the order of the first. Initially, I will reflect on how the preliminary description of the theoretical markers shifted and concentrated during this study. Next, I ponder how this study can illuminate and explicate issues in the broader city-sphere. These include:

1. Stalemates in virtual legal territory;
2. The resurgent interest in spiritual architecture and;
3. How urban social movements need to search for constructive spiritualities of the "city to come" if they have any hope of real revolution.

Third, I consider what this archaeology of biblical spiritualities means for urban wisdom communities, such as churches. I finally reflect on my spirituality's interplay with the biblical spiritualities of the "city to come".

4.2. POINT DE CAPITON & SINTHOME

The first chapter described a theoretical triad i.e.: Interdisciplinary research, reading minor narratives, and social semiotics. This section reviews the outcome

of each vector. I also consider how one might reduce these theoretical vectors from three to its primitive number of two. For this I enlist Žižek's expounding of *point de capiton* and *sinthome*.

This study drew on multiple disciplines to trace my constrained tropes of the biblical spiritualities of the "city to come". I drew mainly on the constellations of Biblical Studies and Philosophy: relying heavily on the likes of Žižek, Derrida, Badiou, and Agamben. Where the livewires of Biblical Studies and Philosophy cross there exists the perpetual possibility of short-circuits: not being philosophical nor biblical enough. Sometimes, the biblical narratives and philosophers seem to enlarge each other's scope; at times, their proximity might seem awkward or at odds. In any complex system, like Christian Spirituality, a certain amount of awkwardness is appropriate. Such awkwardness merely shows that the system is still complex: was not reduced to complicatedness.

My next theoretical approach was reading minor narratives. The histories not included in the "official" past illuminate when reading minor narratives. As one reads this study, my strategic avoidance of some obvious choices for constructing a biblical spirituality of the "city to come" becomes apparent. The tension between the city and the rural in both the Minor and Major Prophets is blatantly obvious. Why avoid the myths about Jerusalem in the "Old" and "New" Testament? Revelations also seems an obvious choice if one follows the cliché of the Bible "starting" in a garden and "ending" in a city? Yes, all of these are possibilities but they are, I felt, orthodox texts used in the "official" history of an urban Christian Spirituality.

My first theoretical marker of interdisciplinary study admittedly influenced my choices. I preferred "Old" and "New" Testament texts recently read by philosophers. Why choose in this way?

My choices connect with the third theoretical marker: social semiotics. I wager that biblical spirituality is at work when philosophers read biblical texts and this

spirituality is mimetic. In no way do I claim the philosophers assisting my reading of the biblical texts are religious. What I am saying is that if philosophers, who do not swear allegiance to any divine party, find in these texts a very holy ghost, do they not still hold public value?

Is arguing that the philosophers' social semiotic interpretation of these biblical texts constitute a biblical spirituality a fair claim? While defining the notion of biblical spirituality in the first chapter, I wagered that all those who read biblical texts are engaging in biblical spirituality through the mere reading act itself. When one reads the accounts of my philosophical co-readers it quickly becomes apparent that they hold the texts in high esteem. Although the texts thoroughly shaped them, they never fully buy into the text's surrounding Christian dogmatic diatribe. They engage the text sacramentally, as defined in the first chapter. For them, however, the texts never become the word of God, but a key to unlocking the cryptic human texture of the social.

Now that I have reviewed my initial methodological markers, let me attempt reducing three to its primal number of two. To do this I employ Zizek's understanding of two Lacanian concepts: *point de capiton* and *sinthome*. Žižek (1989: 99) explains his understanding of *point de capiton*:

> This then is the fundamental paradox of the *point de capiton*: the 'rigid designator', which totalizes an ideology by bringing to a halt the metronymic sliding of it signified, is not a point of some supreme density of Meaning, a kind of Guarantee which, by being itself except that from the differential interplay of elements, would serve as a stable and fixed point of reference. On the contrary, it is the element which represents the agency of the signifier in the field of the signified. In itself is it nothing but a 'pure difference': its role is purely structural, its nature is purely performative — its signification coincides with its own act of enunciation; in short, it is a 'signifier with out the signified'. The crucial step in the analysis of an ideological edifice is thus to detect, behind the dazzling splendor of the

element which holds it together ('God', 'Country', 'Party', 'Class'…) this self-referential, tautological, performative operation.

For Žižek, a *point de capiton* is not a metaphoric quilting point through which one can access Meaning, but a site revealing an ideology's arbitrariness. It is, however, not enough to show how the discursive ideology-elements tie into an arbitrary *point de capiton*. Analysis is not enough, because even once we have analysed ideology, we are still fascinated with the enjoyment and meaning it gifts us. How shall one then proceed to negate ideology, when we are doing it, but not aware that we are doing it?

The answer for Žižek lies in the enjoyment-in-meaning, the *sinthome*, of the ideological systems: its gifts, so to speak. The only way to reveal ideology, according to Žižek (1991: 129), "…is to *isolate* the *sinthome* from the context by virtue of which it exerts its power of fascination in order to expose the *sinthome's* utter stupidity. In other words, we must carry out the operation of changing the precious gift into a gift of shit…"

Both *point de capiton* and *sinthome* featured sometimes implicitly or explicitly in this study. These concepts encapsulate all three of my original theoretical makers. Without interdisciplinary research *point de capiton* and *sinthome* can hardly be identified. Furthermore, constructive engagement with these concepts is only possible through excavating thwarted futures of the past: in this study's case the biblical spiritualities of the "city to come". Finally, to keep the strands of analysis together, one needs the rigorous system of social semiotics.

These theoretical markers of my constrained description of biblical spiritualities of the "city to come", have the timbre of Stiegler's *pharmaka*. Barker (2012: 24) summarises Stiegler's *pharmaka* and its link to the *polis*:

> …for Stiegler, the *polis* is both city, in the largest sense (i.e. as itself grammato-centric), and the metaphoric 'associated milieu' of individuation, and it is absolutely subject to the vicissitudes of *pharmaka*.

The **polis** is the source and the result of **both** enchantment and disenchantment. Since intelligence, maturity, and 'citizenship', are all techno-grammatological constructs and functions of taking care 'of **pharmaka** through the careful use of **pharmaka** against the perverse effects of **pharmaka**', intelligent, social - political - life requires 'taking care of the social' within the organological conditions forming psychic and collective intelligence, and thus individuation.

My theoretical triad reduced to its primal number of two I transfer to show how my constrained biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" elucidates and moves to imagine possibilities in the current city theatre.

4.3. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CURRENT CITY THEATER

In this section, we turn to the private and public spheres of spirituality in the "city to come", and how the tension between them illuminates the contemporary city theatre. I draw on three papers I produced while writing this dissertation. First, I analyse urban social movements/revolutions as public spiritualities. Second, I consider how biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" can assist in redeveloping spiritual architecture. Finally, I deliberate the current tension between the virtual legal territories of nation-states and religions and how they can be relativized by the city as third vector.

The first paper was originally read at the Spirituality Association of South Africa, and is was published in *Verbum et Ecclesia* (du Toit, 2015: 1–5). First, the article moved to show how protests are, like religious communities and social movements, mitigating communities. It focussed on two protest events from 2010 to 2013, Tahrir Square and Occupy Walls Street, as temporary mitigating communities attempting to construct meaning through non-linear symbolic interactions, i.e. spirituality, for its adherers, just as social movements and religious communities do.

The problem, however, is that these temporary intermediate communities did not have a constructive message, hence their effects were temporary. Any social movement that has a hope of sustaining the long process of true revolution needs a constructive public spirituality carried by an intermediate (wisdom) community (cf. Lawson, 2005, 2012, 2014). As it stands these movements merely dissipated under the idols of global market capitalism: time and technology. I will briefly survey how thoughts from this study assisted me to analyse one such temporary intermediate community and its idol: Tahrir Square and time.

To understand the idol-ology of time at Tahrir Square, I applied Paul's triple helix spirituality of the "city to come". The people on Tahrir Square had no decisive spirituality of the "city to come" to fall back on, so they fell under the sign of the dominant spirituality of global market capitalism. As we saw in the previous chapter, Empire thrives on collapsing $\varkappa\alpha\iota\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ and $\pi\alpha\rho o \upsilon \sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$, so the cry in Tahrir Square for immediate change fits hand in glove with the empire of global market capitalism. Falling under the sign of global market capitalism meant that the movement did not produce a group that could do the hard work of recapitulating and deferring $\pi\alpha\rho o \upsilon \sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$. In the words of a Pauline spirituality of the "city to come": Tahrir was a carnival of $\varkappa\alpha\iota\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ outside of $\chi\rho\acute{o}\nu o\varsigma$ producing no $\dot{\epsilon}\varkappa\varkappa\lambda\eta\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$ to (r)evolve and recapitulate tradition for a real revolution.

Constructive spiritualities were part of the next research project that sprung from this study. While attending the International Sociology Associations' Conference in 2014, something became apparent as I drifted from one Research Committee to another. Sociologists seemed to have a common frustration. They have mountains of data to support the reform needed in human social reality, but feel impotent to change anything: Why? In my joint, yet to be published paper, for the Spiritual Capitalism session of the Sociology of Religion Research Group, we proposed the following analysis (Auret & du Toit, 2014).

The constrained set religion, sociology, and spirituality conform to Žižek's (2012a: 292–304) description of Hegel's dialectic: statement, its negation, and its negation

of negation. Hegel (2006: 109) called the negation of negation "speculative" or "spiritual" reasoning. Speculative, here, should not be equated with uncritical thinking but rather a mode of thinking that appears once one has moved through the statement and its negation. Sociology remains stuck in the analytical negation of religion (Varga, 2007: 145–160) and thus can also only describe spirituality. Spirituality, however, might be a space where both religious and sociological resources are used to speculate reality-altering alternatives.

My co-author and I focussed on spiritual architecture: a field long barren, but one to which academic cultivators are slowly returning (Van West, 2014). Using cues, and especially the maxim, from this study's analysis of the Sodom narrative, we speculatively tackled the question of the migrant stranger. Sociologists know that the problem of migration will probably increase as climate change intensifies (Brown & McLeman, 2013). Who will facilitate this migration?

Nation-states, in recent years, have become increasingly hostile towards the migrant stranger, but cities are more tolerant, because they are heavily reliant on migrant labour for their subsistence. Our paper proposed and designed an architectural edifice welcoming the spiritual capital gift of the migrant stranger. While designing, our maxim remained: if the city does not love the migrant stranger as itself, it will soon love its social psychosis as itself.

The architectural edifice we proposed structurally welcomes the migrant stranger, showing the thankfulness of the established denizens towards them, but also allowing them to participate promptly in the city. The migrant stranger can immediately contribute to the city by illuminating, with their uninitiated eyes, in a dialogue with established denizens, facilitated by the building, sites of urban spiritual bankruptcy. Armed with this speculative reasoning, we challenged the UN (2012) sustainable development report of Rio +20, entitled *The Future We Want*. Although this document commits a section to cities, it does not connect sustainable development with the migrant stranger's contribution to and arrival in

the city. Migrant strangers might not be part of the future we want, but they are part of the future we need.

The final article tooled from structures developed in this work was delivered at the European Union Project Religion and Legal Territory (EUREL) as this study was ending. It concerned the floating legal territories of cities, nation-states, and religions. I postulated that scalar models do not function as an accurate description of political spheres today. A model developed by Isin (2007) skirts the contours of the current political sphere closer. His model distinguishes between virtual and real territories. Nation-states are virtual territories because their formation partakes in the hermeneutical loop of law and identity.

Cities, however, are according to Isin, both virtual and real legal territories: they share the nation-states' hermeneutical loop of law-identity, but the effects of this loop are also thicker. They are nodal thickenings within the legal order. There is, however, a third legal territory in need of description: religions. I argue that religions follow the same virtual legal texture as nation-states: identity feeding into law begetting identity etc. An uneasy coexistence marks nation-states and religions because their legal textures match so closely.

Cities might function as third vectors between the warring parties of nation-states and religions: sharing their virtual texture, but also thickening into real territories or urban form. At this point, I introduced a category from this study, namely complexity's insistence that meaning is related to a system's multiplicity. Cities could or should function as the *proscenium arches* mentioned in the wisdom spiritualities of the "city to come".

Cities as *proscenium arches* can mirror a network of meanings so that individuals can find their meaning in a specific moment. In this way, cities as real legal territories might foster difference and by proxy meaning, harassing nation-states' and religions' narrow hermeneutical loop of identity and law. I end by giving

specific European examples for France (who banned all religious symbols and garb in public schools) and Switzerland (who banned minaret all future building).

This section reviewed three ways in which structures revealed by biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" assists what Hegel called "speculative" or "spiritual" thinking in the broader city theatre. From the implications of my constrained biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" for the broader city theatre we move, in the next section, to urban wisdom communities.

4.4. QUESTIONING MITIGATING URBAN COMMUNITIES

In this section, I wonder what my constrained biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" have to convey for intermediate urban communities such as churches. It would undermine the whole argument of this study to assume that the constructed biblical spiritualities of the "city to come", arrives bearing the safety and security of answers with Big Capital Letters. The constrained biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" can evaluate, however, the meaning levels and spirituality of urban intermediate communities.

From the various traced tropes, I evince a string of questions to gauge the degree in which intermediate communities partake in the constrained biblical spiritualities of the "city to come". I question the meaning levels and spirituality of a specific intermediate urban community: the broad category of sport. Sport has been touted as a religion or spirituality of sorts, providing meaning to its adherers (cf. Prebish, 1993). Sport is set up as a straw puppet for grounding my questions. As we saw in the previous section, any claimed intermediate community, temporary or permanent, can be evaluated in this way.

One can follow the contours of Paul's constructed triple helix spirituality of the "city to come" and add the "Old" Testament spiritualities under its headings. First, one might ask about time. How does sport inscribe time? Does its legal code inscribe time for the event astir in law, namely justice, to be done? Do we find its

καιρός as part of χρόνος, but not collapsing into παρουσία? In what ways does it live into the time hoped for, or recapitulate tradition?

Next, we turn to Paul's second helix of the "city to come": ἐκκλησία. How does sport imagine community? Does it construct a web of meanings mirroring the public sphere, which assists individuals to live their specific meaning in a particular public moment? Do sport communities view the stranger as a disruptor of its social psychosis? How does the mitigating community of sport publically partake in our collective manslaughter guilt?

Finally, Paul's third helix of the "city to come", κύριος, is voiced. How does sport sketch the relationship between the sovereign and *homo sacer*? Is sovereign also *homo sacer*? Is the divine "Us" also left untranslatable, in need of a translator?

The answer to every question need not be negative and might differ in each context. Yet, these questions show that both the form and content of mitigating communities are equally important. To use a metaphor, I hope will make the late South African philosopher Versfeld — who wrote a guide to Augustine's *City of God* (Versfeld, 1950) and loved food almost as much as philosophy (Versfeld, 2004) — proud: meaning is like jelly, not water. Popular wisdom holds that meaning is like water: it can be poured into any container or flow from one container to another. Meaning, as seen from the above questions, is rather like jelly: the container always leaves its shape imprinted on the subject.

This section proposed a string of questions evinced from the constrained biblical spiritualities of the "city to come". I set up, as a straw puppet, sport as mitigating urban community, so the reader could have a community in mind while contemplating the questions. These questions can measure any mitigating urban community against the constrained biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" read in this study. The next and final section attempts to give a name to this study's constrained biblical spiritualities of the "city to come".

4.5. EK-KLESIASTES OF THE "CITY TO COME"

A study inspired by a small Sandton-community has ballooned into encompassing more areas of the urban than I expected. What has become increasingly apparent, is the importance of communities mitigating between private and public spirituality. One, however, can seldom prescribe what mitigating communities in cities should do, because the urban is a complex system.

I learned that biblical spiritualities of the "city to come" have broader use than just questioning urban mitigating communities. Excavating thwarted spiritualities of the past can be useful to relativize the political, legal, and architectural stances viewed as normal. In the few final words of the study, I want to give a name to the constrained biblical spirituality of the "city to come", always aware that names are but houses for events. My temporary term for the mitigating community in the "city to come" is an *ek-klesiastes*. A few thoughts on this name housing the event of the "city to come".

Although *ek-klesiastes* sounds like Ecclesiastes its spelling differs. Here I draw inspiration from Derrida's (1982: 1–27) descriptions of *différance*, a description producing distinction, deferment, loosening the events in words. The word *ek-klesiastes* inscribes the truth of Ecclesiastes' personal apocalypse, but also of Paul's ἐκκλησία. *Ek-klesiastes* mirror the double existence that comes with being a mitigating urban community of the "city to come": living a future truth already, not yet experienced by the broader texture of human social reality.

The hyphen in *ek-klesiastes* is a remnant of the messianic time recapitulating tradition, a reflective breath, a pause, a contemplation, before completion: a sigh for the justice in the letter of the law to be done. The hyphen mirrors G-d's untranslatability: a space left open for the breath of the Spirit to come. *Ek-klesiastes* is a strange, yet familiar word breaking the categories of strange and

familiar, shattering the expectation of who can be a neighbour and who cannot. *Ek-klesiastes* is a broken or compounded word, like *homo sacer* it remains outside the order of words that have a being, yet claims humanity share this broken texture, partaking in collective manslaughter guilt.

All indications are that the urban is already the future-now, maybe not the one all people want, but the one we have, and cannot do without. What we perceive as being human is tightly bound to its fate. May the event of an *ek-klesiastes* mirroring the divine "Us" be let loose in each imagination, unleashing a "city to come" (a refuge for all) that never exist, but always insist, pulling us forward like a very holy ghost.

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