

# Editorial

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This issue of the *Journal for the Study of Religion (JSR)* is an open issue, for which we have invited scholarly research on any of the topics covered in the standard parameters of research for publication in *JSR*. We have received quite a number, and a great variety of submissions. For those accepted for publication, we thought that we could loosely identify a number of broad themes under which we could group the articles. They are very open categories, but do indicate some general theme in terms of which the articles could be read, i.e. in addition to the foregrounded arguments and thematisations in each. They also provide some categorization, in terms of which we see current and future research developing. In this editorial, we provide some added ideas as to these thematisations, and as we see the research developing with regard to the further development of research related to each.

## Religion and Migration Studies

In their ‘Social Responsibility with Respect to Religion and Migration in South Africa’ **Federico Settler** and **Buhle Mpofo** start with a thematic review of the current trends in the field of religion and migration studies, as perceived from South Africa. He argues that the intra- as well as inter-continental migration of people produce as yet untapped resources for development and social transformation. On the one hand, people moving to new locations, may provide important knowledge and skills resources that could importantly contribute to

local and regional development, as they add to the human resource potential and cultural capital available for the improvement of the quality of life of people. Inter-continentially, the same is true. With regard to religion, an important added advantage is the sociocultural addition of religion orders, denominations, and religious and spiritual persuasions, to the cultural mosaics and patterns of life of local communities and societies. They all add to their sociocultural enrichment and the advancement of their life and wellbeing more generally speaking. From this perspective, the authors' view that the scholarly engagements with the phenomenon of migration, also serves as a barometer for social cohesion and social responsibility, is a welcome observation, not least in South Africa, where we have had communities suffer under different forms of xenophobic marginalisation, if not attack. Through an interdisciplinary review of the developments in the field, they then suggest that despite an increase in interests in human mobility, policy makers, researchers and civil society activists should engage migration flows and the diversity of the people who form part of these movements of people, within the South African context more constructively. They conclude that although there has been significant civic and academic interest in understanding xenophobia as a symptom of a fractured national and civil society, most scholars have ignored the role of religion in the harnessing and cultivation of socially responsible cultures, through their various forms of reception and hospitality to foreigners. In this regard, they hold that religion has emerged as a necessary social formation in giving material substance to the shaping of civil social responsibility in local communities. The religions' receptivity of and hospitality towards migrants stand as an important beacon of hope for many migrants who have left their home countries, often under duress and in fear of their lives and wellbeing.

**Shahid Vawda's** 'Migration and Muslim Identities: Malawians and Senegalese Muslims in Durban, South Africa' is about foreign African Muslims, particularly Malawian and Senegalese Muslim migrants in Durban, South Africa. Modern 21<sup>st</sup> century migration processes are a global phenomenon deeply embedded in the complex interaction of social, economic and political patterns and processes, often leading to concentrations and enclaves of people in large urban centers, such as Durban, along lines of religious, ethnic or national origins. Durban itself is also a major urban area in Southern Africa with a significant Muslim population and a centre of Islamic influence reaching out across the sub-continent, and also serves as a point of attraction for many African Muslim migrants. Religious identity is an important factor that is

imbricated in Malawian and Senegalese Muslims' attempts to search for new solutions to their problems of adaptation, integration and assimilation into a new place. A key issue that he addresses in his paper, is whether their identities, particularly religious, ethnic and national identities, rather than normative values, provide a set of resources to accommodate themselves and pursue their aims of being gainfully employed as entrepreneurs and workers in a different country. De Certeau's conceptual distinction between strategy and tactics is used as a framework to evaluate the way in which Malawian and Senegalese migrants use religion and associated values towards making a life for themselves In Durban.

### **Mining and Morality Related to *Gender and Ecology/ Environment***

**Lilian Cheelo Siwila's** 'Reconstructing the Distorted Image of Women as Reproductive Labour on the Copperbelt Mines in Zambia 1920-1954' engages the conceptualising of the presence of women in the Copperbelt mine compounds in Zambia during the years 1920 -1954. Like many other mining companies across Southern Africa, The British South African Company which owned the mining rights on the Copperbelt imposed certain restrictions on women who came to the copperbelt province. Initially mine owners did not favour the idea of allowing women to live in the mine compound for the fact that women were seen as a distraction to production. The outcome of this decision was that as time went by, most of the men left their jobs to return to their villages to be with their spouses. Those who were single took advantage of the neighbouring villages during weekends and stayed on with their girlfriends and sometimes only returned back for work later in the week. This affected production in the mines and made the mine bosses to propose rules on how to incorporate women in the mine compounds. The aim of this study was to demonstrate how patriarchy played an important role in excluding women from participating in the economic development that took place on the copperbelt during that period. The paper further highlights ways in which the colonial government displayed some ambiguities in the exclusion and inclusion of women in the economic development of the copperbelt mines. The article also shows how labour markets exploited women's rights to participate in the economic development in the copperbelt and how, when access was granted, women's productive and reproductive labour was used as part of the

patriarchal business model and economic drive. The article also argues that when it comes to women's bodies, throughout history, religion has played an important role in defiling women's bodies. It is this negative perception that can also be perceived in the mining company's policies in the copperbelt during the period under study. While women were seen as a threat to economic development, their presence in the copperbelt also played a significant role in the economic development of the copperbelt mining companies. Therefore, women's contribution as a formative influence on the foundation of modern African life in Zambia, needs to be acknowledged in all historical and current reflections on the development of the copperbelt mines.

**Maggie Ssebunya** and **Beatrice Okyere-Manu's** 'Moral Responsibility and Environmental Conservation in Karamoja Mining Area: Towards a Religious Engagement' addresses the impact and consequences of the mining industry in Karamoja region. They argue that it has resulted in a serious environmental hazard to all forms of life in the area. For some reasons, as pointed out, efforts by the Ugandan government to respond to the environmental crisis caused by the mines, seem inadequate. Investors in the mining sector and other stakeholders, particularly those who are directly affected, also seem to be not concerned about the dangers associated with the crisis. This situation raises a number of critical moral questions, for example: Who is responsible for the degradation of the area? Why are the efforts of the government not yielding any results? and, Why are the locals who are bearing the brunt of the environmental crisis not showing any concerns? The article seeks to answer these and some related questions. Through the lens of the ethical theory of stewardship, the article challenges faith communities, particularly the two major religious groups in the area, the Karamajong indigenous religion, and Christianity, about the need to respond not only to the quality of human life needs in the area, but also to the threats to the natural environment, on which the quality of life and people's existence depend. The article argues that responding to the environmental crisis should not be solely left to the government but rather, be part of the moral and social responsibility of every individual living in the area, including religious groups.

## **Intra-Institutional, and Extra-Institutional Challenges Faced by Religious Formations**

Student sexuality, in relation to church 'surveillance' is addressed by **Albert**

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**Billy Bangirana, Sarojini Nadar and Sarasvathie Reddy**, in their ‘Sexual Surveillance and Student Sexual Agency: Catholic Moral Teaching and HIV Prevention in a Higher Education Context’. They point out that documented studies on HIV infection and prevalence at most of the South African University Campuses reveal high levels of HIV infection and prevalence among students. They also highlight higher infection rates among female than male students. They postulate that these statistics may be attributed to sustained high risk behaviour[s] at university campuses. However, these largely quantitative studies lack a qualitative analysis of the factors associated with high-risk behaviour. Within HIV scholarship, there is a significant body of literature that makes linkages to religion, gender and sexuality. What appears to be missing is a focus on Higher Education, in particular on how university students might experience HIV prevention models. In discussions on HIV prevention, religion is always seen as providing a moral compass for sexual behaviour. Using surveillance theory and Foucault’s theory of ‘power’ or power as a ‘relation of forces’ in relation to sexuality, this article critiques the notion of a moral compass by interrogating the foundational teachings of the Catholic Church’s HIV prevention model. The article concludes by utilising Albert Bandura’s ‘self-reactive selfhood reasoning’ to argue for students’ sexual agency in moral recourse to risky behaviour, rather than the Church’s approach that is hegemonic and hierarchical.

In 1911, Isaiah Shembe (1865-1935) founded the Nazareth Baptist Church, popularly known as KwaShembe (Dube 1936: 29). The church became the first amongst the Zulus to be founded ‘with the quest to restore the Zulu to their glorious past’ (Masondo 2004: 69-79). Today it is the oldest and most respected church founded with the intention of bringing Christianity and the quest for Zulu nationalism and culture together in South Africa. In its early days the church was faced with much opposition from the missionaries who accused it of misleading people, polluting the gospel and sheep-stealing. Shembe had to continuously defend himself and his church against the external forces that sought to destroy him and his church. As a result the church has had to walk a fine line, between belligerence and servility throughout the colonial and apartheid periods. However its history has also been marked by forces from within, that have divided the church into seven splinter groups of factions that are at war with one another. The power-struggles and fights amongst family members have directly taken a toll on the once great church as their different groups each scramble for a piece of the legacy and prestige of the church and

its founder. The article by **R. Simangaliso Kumalo** and **Martin Mujinga**, ‘Now we know that the enemy is from within: Shembeites and the Struggle for Control of Isaiah Shembe’s Legacy and the Church’ examines the factors that lead to the conflicts that have divided the church into the seven groups that are at loggerheads with each other and threaten to destroy its legacy.

In his article, **Hassan J. Ndzovu** engages the complex problem of ‘Muslim-Christian Public Discourses and Perceptions on Religious Violence in Kenya’. He shows that the numerous killings targeted at non-Muslims by the jihadi groups in Kenya, have fuelled ethno-religious tensions and also manifested in hatred and anger against an entire community. Though anti-jihadi Muslims have rightly condemned the targeting of their non-Muslim compatriots by the jihadists, the Christian leaders have not been satisfied by their counterparts’ internal self-criticism. There are suspicions from Christians, even when anti-jihadi Muslims disassociate themselves from the heinous criminal actions of the jihadists. The article argues that both religious indoctrination and marginalization theories explain the attraction of sections of Kenyan Muslims to the jihadi groups. In addition, for Muslim leaders, it is also poverty, that constitute the complex cause for dissatisfaction, anti-Christian agitation and a predisposition toward jihadi ideas, among vulnerably exposed sections of the Muslim community. For Christian leaders, again, Muslims are not the only ones economically marginalized in the country. For many of them, it is not poverty, but religious indoctrination by charismatic Muslim leaders, that coerce vulnerable Muslims to join the jihadi groups. The argument in this article is that one should not take sides in this perception of why Muslims join jihadi groups – i.e. make a choice between religious indoctrination and marginalisation theory. Rather, one should consider all the facts. Fore-grounding the potency of both arguments for providing the impetus for jihadi agitation and violence, the argument is that one should not choose between these two factors. In addition, it is also argued, that this complex situation is aggravated, by the public rhetoric of religious clergy against Muslims. As such, all these dimensions of this complex problem, together, threaten mutual, peaceful co-existence in society. The challenge should rather be, to both Christian and Muslim communities, in conjunction with the government, to constructively engage the endemic poverty problem in the country.

**Julius Musevenzi’s** article is titled, ‘The African Independent Apostolic Church’s Doctrine under Threat, and the Emerging Power of Faith Based Organisations Interventions: An Analysis of Johanne Marange

Apostolic Church in Zimbabwe'. It researches the changing and declining influence of the Johanne Marange Apostolic Church's doctrine and belief system over the behaviour of its members. It is mainly due to the result of the impact of the broad-based growth of the impact of biomedical health systems and the increased knowledge about sexual reproductive health among the population, as well as human rights advocacy and interventions. Despite the dominance of the more than seventy year old church doctrine – since its founding in 1912 – its hegemony over its church members has been challenged over the last few decades. The church's beliefs and doctrine have succumbed to the demands of the changing world. It is finding it difficult to continue as organised church, while facing, what could be called a dual-doctrine system. The church beliefs and doctrine were once regarded as impenetrable, and highly fortified. Doctrinal challenges and conscientising awareness programmes of its excesses were unable to affect its hegemony. However, over the last number of years, this has been eroded, by the broad-based developments and interventions mentioned above. Despite these challenges, the church remains a spiritual home to many. Even so, as part of their adaptation, they have to live with a dual doctrine system, as is the reality, for many for members of the apostolic movements.

## **Religion/ Spirituality and Ethnicity/ Race**

**Johnathan Jodamus** addresses the fact that the role and place of South African Black Theology has been questioned, as to its relevance, since the advent of democracy in 1994, in post-apartheid South Africa. Recognising that South African Black Theology was essentially 'protest theology' against an unjust White government, its utility in a post-apartheid context with a Black government in place, has been questioned. Predominant within this questioning is the political usefulness of Black Theology. What has remained largely unexamined in the literature is a focus on the prefix "Black" in "black theology." It is this that forms the focus of this article. Scrutiny of the prefix "black" requires a scrutiny of the complexity of racial identity in South Africa. Notwithstanding the ways in which scholars reach for the "inclusive Biko notion of Black" as a means to almost "get on" with the political task of black theology, as opposed to debating identity, in this article the author argues that critical race and identity theory are central to discussions on resurrecting Black Theologies. So, rather than focusing on the notion of 'theology', the focus is

on how identity is racially constructed. He offers suggestions as to how we may begin to think more critically regarding this category with regard to a subject such as black theology. His approach is to bring his experiences of being ‘Coloured’ in South Africa, into dialogue with critical identity theorists and argue that we need to ‘make the circle bigger’, to include diverse perspectives on identity; and, that while Spivak’s notion of ‘strategic essentialism’ (i.e. stressing uniformity in blackness) was important in Apartheid South Africa, in post-apartheid South Africa, our ideas of race need to be far more nuanced, if we are to achieve the political ends of Black Theology.

**Garth Mason’s** ‘A Gift of Grapes: What Biography Reveals of the Uniquely Religiously-based Friendship between P.Q. Vundla and Nico Ferreira’, examines the forgotten historical narrative of the unique friendship between P.Q. Vundla and Nico Ferreira in the social history of South Africa. The two men stood at diametrical opposed positions on the South African political stage – P.Q. Vundla, an ANC activist and Nico Ferreira, an Afrikaner working for the Department of Native Affairs. Their friendship was forged through their membership of the Moral Re-armament Movement, a Christian inspired international peace initiative in the mid-twentieth century. The article focuses on the beginnings of their friendship during the time of the Sophiatown forced removals in 1955. The study comprises of a close reading of the biographies of their lives penned down by the two men’s wives Nchibadi Betty Kathleen Mashaba (Kathleen Vundla) – *P.Q.: The Story of Philip Vundla of South Africa* (1973) and Nico Ferreira’s biography – *In Case Anyone Asks* (2006) written by Loël Ferreira. Kathleen Vundla and Loël Ferreira’s biographies provide important information about P.Q. Vundla’s and Nico Ferreira’s spirituality in the context of their community work and friendship. Both biographies offer privileged information about the inner life of the two men that assists in understanding their motivations behind their political work. *First*, they are read as mediated renderings of their respective husbands’ lives and therefore the data offered is filtered through memory and interpretation. *Second*, the biographies have a unique status as privileged windows into two forgotten life histories. The friendship between P.Q. Vundla and Nico Ferreira is an untold story of religiously inspired racial conciliation, within a politically contested space. A nuanced analysis is required to provide an adequate explanation for the friendship between the two men. This article makes such an attempt by establishing an ethical lens via Levinas’s religio-ethical writings on alterity and transcendence through which their friendship is viewed.

## **Religion in the Media, Literature, and Colonial Architecture**

Given the eruption of religion and media studies in the last two decades and following the predictions of leading scholars that the study of religion and media would come to represent a pivotal moment in the study of religion, the current dearth of studies about religion and media, from the Southern African region in general and South Africa in particular, suggest that this area of inquiry is in need of serious critical attention. In her, 'A Historical and Critical Overview of Religion and Public Broadcasting in South Africa' **Lee-Shae Salma Scharnick-Udemans** investigates the role of religion in the history and development of the South African mediascape by analysing the role of religion in the banning and introduction of television under apartheid and the place of religion in the formulation of new media policy in the democratic era. This article argues that throughout the history of broadcasting in South Africa, religion has been mobilised in strategies and resources for nation building, and that there exists an unexpected continuity based on regulatory measures between the apartheid and post-apartheid contexts.

Although the eminent Spanish novelist and anticlericalist Vicente Blasco Ibáñez (1867-1928) received little scholarly attention outside his homeland for several decades, he gained significantly greater international notice in the latter half of the twentieth century. His novel of 1903, *La Catedral*, published in both the United Kingdom and the United States of America six years later as *The Shadow of the Cathedral*, is a scathing indictment of the conservative Roman Catholic religious establishment in Spain. Blasco Ibáñez faulted its intolerant monopoly on national spiritual life for much of the country's cultural, political, and economic backwardness. Relying heavily on the subsequently discredited nineteenth-century belief that Andalusian Spain had been a model of religious toleration under Islamic hegemony for many generations following the Moorish invasion in the eight century and that this had fostered a golden era of cultural flourishing, he argued for the dismantling of Catholic privilege in favour of secularism, toleration, and pluralistic religious freedom to spur the country out of its stagnancy. In his, 'Holy Toledo: Muslim-Christian Relations and Catholic Nationalism in Vicente Blasco Ibáñez's *The Shadow of the Cathedral*', **Frederick Hale** explores both the construction and recent dismantling of the myth of religious harmony in Moorish Spain, and how that perception of the Middle Ages is used rhetorically in *The Shadow of the Cathedral*.

As is well-known, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Dutch Reformed Church became a major agent for the promotion and spread of Dutch settlement into the southern African interior. After 1841 it began to set out its villages according to a standard plan, known as the *kerkplaats*, which made use of a central *nachtmaal plein*, surrounded by residential stands. Key plots were allocated for the village church, a residence for the pastor and a Drostdy for the Resident Magistrate. The remaining stands were then auctioned off to parishioners to fund the construction of the church, and for over a century these settlements remained at the heart of Dutch, later Afrikaner, cultural, political and social life. The design of the first *kerkplaats* was probably owed to Willem Hertzog, Deputy Surveyor General of the Cape, who was also prominent in the Craft of Freemasonry, and there are strong indications that his plan was based upon an idealized reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon, also used by Freemasons in their planning of Masonic lodges. It appears likely, therefore, that throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Masonic movement exerted a powerful influence in the affairs of the Dutch Reformed Church which was only broken off for political reasons in 1962. **Franco Frescura's** 'Symbolic Dimensions of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Dutch Colonial Settlement at the Cape of Good Hope' examines the historical origins of Dutch colonial settlement in southern Africa during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It posits, that its roots lie in Masonic ideals commonly circulating in colonial society of that time.

## **Globalisation and Religion**

The article by **Bekithemba Dube, Milton Molebatsi Nkoane, and Dipane Hlalele**, is titled, 'The Ambivalence of Freedom of Religion, and the Unearthing of the Unlearnt Lessons of Religious Freedom from the Jonestown Incident: A Decoloniality Approach'. It interrogates and problematises the concept of freedom of religion in South Africa. The South African constitution provides for the right to freedom of religion; unfortunately, its implementation has evoked various forms of abuse, commercialised religion at the expense of the poor, marginalised and exploited, and the violation of human rights. The article argues that freedom of religion is misinterpreted, misunderstood and consequently religion is becoming a contested terrain, where it discourses and practices in society become associated with the violation of human rights. To problematise and critique 'freedom of religion', they draw lessons from the Jonestown incident. In doing so, they uncover the dangers of the freedom of

religions, when not conceptualised within the lens of human rights and decoloniality. The paper argues that freedom of religion in South Africa needs to be redefined and reconceptualised, so that it entails and inspires, beliefs and practices that promote social justice, emancipation, freedom, and human rights.

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