# Mission as liberation in socio-economic and political contexts: towards contextual and liberating theology of mission in the context of migration and human dislocation

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## Abstract

The article argues that for mission to be contextual and liberating it has to take seriously the plight of those who for various socio-economic and political factors have been forced to migrate from their countries of birth. Furthermore it critically analyses those factors that have led to the uprooting and the dislocation of Africans who are further impoverished, if not enslaved in the new countries where they are domiciled, particularly in the South African context. The paper argues that it is time, just like at Melbourne (1980) with regard to the poor, for those people who are dislocated to be "put in the very centre of missiological reflection". In addition they also have to be put in the centre of theological reflection, and in particular theological education. Only if the plight of foreigners (migrants) who have been dislocated is placed at the centre of theological education can the churches through their main functionaries who benefit directly from theological education play a liberating and humanising role in welcoming and humanising the foreigners who have been dislocated. Clergy, theologians and laity have significant roles to play in view of uprooting and dispelling the myths, stereotypes and resentment that often fuel xenophobia, in view making Africa hospitable to Africans.

**Keywords:** Missiological reflection, migration, dislocation, marginalisation, socio-economic and political factors, contextual, liberating, Melbourne

## Introduction

In his reflections on mission, David Bosch eloquently argued for a position that views mission as liberation (Bosch 2008:432). Bosch first starts with a position that regards mission as contextualisation, tracing this to the 1970's in the circles of the Theological Fund. This was one of the paradigm shifts that Bosch identifies in his classical book, Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Missions (2008:421). Not unrelated to contextualisation, Bosch points out correctly that there are two major types of contextual theology, namely the indigenisation model and the socio-economic model (2008:421). It is particularly this socio-economic model that appeals to me and that lays a strong foundation for mission as liberation, especially in the context of poverty, displacement and migration. This paper argues that for mission to be contextual and liberating it has to take seriously the plight of those who for various socio-economic and

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political factors have been forced to migrate from their countries of birth. The Melbourne's call to put poverty at the centre of missiological reflection must still be listened to and be intensified for as long as there is poverty in the world and as long as those forced to migrate are subjected to untold pain and suffering. At the same time, just like at Melbourne the plight of those who suffer doubly, migrants, the dehumanised and dislocated must equally be put at the centre of theological reflection and theological education. Those who are being prepared to take over leadership roles in theological reflection and theological education must be socialised in ways that make them sensitive to the plight of the marginalised. They have an important role to play in terms of contributing to creating humane and liberating conditions for those who have been displaced.

## The poor at the centre of missiological reflection

What the Christian World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) said and did in Melbourne, Australia in 1980 is still relevant today, that is "putting the poor in the very centre of missiological reflection" (Bosch 2008:435). This in fact should be extended to all theological reflections and theological education. Thus the migrants and the dislocated must be "put at the very centre of theological reflection and theological education." According to Bosch the conference had made "an unalloyed affirmation that solidarity with these (the poor) is today a central and crucial priority for Christian mission" (2008). The poor were not only made the hermeneutical category at Melbourne, but also the interlocutors of theological reflection. This was an affirmation of the poor which Emiio Castro referred to as the "missiological principle par excellence" (in Bosch 2008:435). At Melbourne, under the theme "Your Kingdom come" the mission conference had insisted on the particular role of the poor in God's mission (Missio Dei) (World Council of Churches 2005; World Council of Churches 2012). Melbourne somehow facilitated a paradigm shift as it helped to move away from traditional condescending attitude of the (rich) church towards the poor; it was not so much a case of the poor needing the church, but of the church needing the poor. The poor were no longer objects of the mission of the church, but rather the poor became the agents and bearers in the Missio Dei (Bosch 2008:436). Equally, today the church needs the displaced. They have to be placed at the centre of theological reflection and theological education. They must not be passive objects or mere recipients of charity but active participants and interlocutors in theological reflection.

## The marginalised and displaced at the centre of theological education

While the focus on the poor must be intensified, there is also the need to place at the centre of missiological reflection, those who are not only poor but are marginalised and dislocated from their countries of birth, who have been forced by circumstances beyond their powers to migrate and look for better lives elsewhere in other countries, especially those who came to seek better life in South Africa. In the context of South Africa these are the refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants who came to South Africa and reside in South Africa. Following the end of apartheid millions of migrants, mainly refugees from war-torn and politically unstable parts of Africa to the north-have poured over the borders into South Africa, the wealthiest country on the continent (Newman and De Lannoy 2014:175). Many of these are looking for better living conditions, and some for what Newman and De Lannoy refers to as "simply the right to live" (2014:175). They are the victims of political and ethnic persecutions in countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Somalia, Rwanda, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, where inter-ethnic enmity has been spurred by elites competing for natural resources like oil, diamonds and other minerals resources (Newman and De Lannoy 2014:175). This is a reality that South African theologians, churches and Christians in general cannot ignore. In most cases it is the poor who are vulnerable to forced migration in the Southern African context. They were poor in the countries of origin, and they are subjected to double layers of poverty and suffering in other countries especially in the South African context. The same applies to the displaced in the global context. Therefore as one theological eye is firmly on the poor in general, as we do theology or missiological reflection, another firm eye should be on the migrants who have been forced to relocate due to a variety of factors. These marginalised, dislocated and often dehumanised people of God must be placed at the centre of missiological reflection. They must be made the dominant hermeneutical category of our time, as the overwhelming majority of the displaced persons are also poor.

## The widespread poverty of the world affecting the displaced

The poor, of which the displaced are a part, must be put at the centre of missiological reflection. This should be the case for as long there is this widespread poverty in the world, and in particular in Africa. Despite the relative wealth and prosperity that are part of our contemporary world, there are billions of people in the world for whom poverty is not merely an academic notion but an existential reality (cf. Buffel 2010:105). According to Smith (2005:1) we live in a relatively affluent era in comparison with the

past. Though despite this relative affluence there is still widespread poverty which has far reaching implications for the poor. There are also implications for those who have been displaced. The majority of those who live in poverty live in the developing world, and in particular Africa. They are trapped in poverty. It does not matter how hard the poor work or what they do to escape from poverty, it remains a trap from which it is difficult to extricate themselves. This poverty is entrenched in the socio-economic and political structures of the world. Smith correctly sees poverty as a trap: "Poverty is a cruel trap. For many of the unfortunate people who are ensnared in this painful leg-hold, escape on their own can be but impossible" (Smith 2005:157).

It is for that reasons that poverty is seen as structural (Mveng 1994:157). It is much more than just lack of income. The very conditions of poverty make it very likely that poverty will even continue tomorrow (cf. Terreblanche 2002:263; Smith 2005:11). It is not an accident of history that billions of people are poor. Neither is it inherently their fault that they remain poor. In some quarters the poor are often wrongly blamed for their poverty and wrongly accused of laziness. Bosch (2008:434) also points out that "poverty was not the result of ignorance, lack of skills, or moral and cultural factors, but rather that it had to do with global structural relationships." The world seems to be designed that way and poverty is entrenched in the socio-economic and political structures of our societies. As Maimela once pointed out, even God had nothing to do with poverty or its perpetuation (1986:101,102). The erroneous notion that it is God's will that people are and remain poor must be rejected. Those who are displaced from many countries are mostly poor and displaced a result of factors related to socio-economic and political conditions created by human beings in their countries of birth. Unfortunately as they migrate to other countries, particularly in the South African context, they find socio-economic conditions that are also marked by poverty.

## The South African example of structural poverty

The South African situation is a living example of poverty that is structural and entrenched in socio-economic and political structures. I have reason to believe that even in other countries that were liberated from colonialism the lot of the poor remain the same as in South Africa. Years after liberation, the majority of the people are still living in poverty, which is worsening in many respects. For many South Africans especially blacks, the more things change the more they remain the same. In some cases things are getting worse, especially in terms of the inequality gap between the rich and the poor (Saayman 2008:19). According to Landau (2011:11), the anticipated sharing in the wealth of the country has not happened. Instead many residents are relatively poorer than they were during apartheid and South

Africa remains the tenth-most unequal country in the world (Landau 2011:11).according to Stephen Gelp many measures of inequality suggest that inequality has worsened during the past decade (Gelp 2008: 81). Makgetla (2011:12) states that recent data on the levels of inequality show that South Africa may have the worst inequitable distribution of in the world, as Brazil has improved its position significantly in terms of its Gini coefficient. Gini coefficient is the most commonly quoted statistic for measuring inequality. Boff and Pixley (1989) also state that poverty is structural and entrenched in systems of our societies:

> The poor are poor because they are exploited or rejected by a pervasive economic system. This is an exploitative and excluding system which means the poor suffer and are oppressed. It means the system keeps them under it or outside it.

That poverty will continue to exist even tomorrow is almost a foregone conclusion, as "the poor become poorer and the rich become richer". According to Mveng the socio-economic and political order is "based on the endless enrichment of some and impoverishment of others" (Mveng 1994:160). He calls this "a hellish cycle of poverty". At best efforts aimed at reforming such structures are only tempering with the periphery without necessarily transforming them. If change is left to the system or its agents, only cosmetic changes are made.

While there is no doubt that poverty is structural, it is also anthropological, political and very theological (cf. Mveng 1994:160). It therefore makes sense that at Melbourne poverty was put at the centre of missiological (theological) reflection. Therefore missiological and theological reflection that does not grapple with poverty and associated socio-economic and political realities is aloof from context and therefore useless and irrelevant. Our missiological-theological reflection must be geared towards making a contribution to the transformation of society. That transformation agenda must include the plight of those who have been displaced from their countries of birth, who are also subjected to conditions of poverty and also subjected to xenophobic attacks and other dehumanising treatment and conditions.

## The reality of migration, marginalisation and dislocation

Migration is a highly complex component of population dynamics (Kok et al 2003: xvii). Kok sees migration as a very dynamic social phenomenon (Kok et al 2003:1-3). Migration is an on-going process which surrounds and pervades almost all aspects of contemporary society (Kothari 2002:5). In the Southern African context migration is a reality that we cannot escape. In fact it has always been a fact of live in South Africa. It is estimated that over

27 million people, the majority from low income regions, are currently displaced around the world (Fiala 2011:1). These displacements are due to a number of factors. In other areas they are displaced as a result of economic crisis often exacerbated by social and political aspects. The majority of displaced people are forced to leave their homes and countries of origin with a little more than what they could carry (Fiala 2011:2). This represents a large economic shock to many households (Fiala 2011:2). They are displaced as a result of the following factors:

1. Climate change, and associated weather shocks
2. Armed and violent conflicts and civil wars such as the Great lakes region and Sudan and Somali.
3. Political instability and sometimes political unrests and political repression. An example of such is Zimbabwe, especially following the failure of the Zimbabwean elections, often referred to as the "human tsunami" (cf. Landau 2011:12; Misago 2011: 91).
4. Deteriorating economic conditions in countries of origin. Such economic conditions are often seen as the root causes of migration (Kok et al 2003:130).

Forced migration continues to be a serious, protracted, and in some cases an expanding problem across Africa, particularly South of the Sahara. It is also estimated that Africa remained the continent by far the most affected by internal displacement. Over 50% of the world's internally displaced people (IDPS) live in Africa. There are estimated to be around 3.23 million African refugees and asylum seekers on the continent[2]. It is estimated that there are 3-4 million migrants in South Africa.

## South Africa as a destination of choice

South Africa is the preferred destination in Africa for various categories of migrants and it faces a host of migration-related challenges, including inter alia:

- increased prevalence of irregular migration, including women and unaccompanied minors (Chisale 2014);
- inadequate migration management policies and border management processes;
- rising xenophobic sentiments that in some cases turn into actual violence against migrants,
- high prevalence of communicable diseases such as HIV and Aids and tuberculosis;
- continued brain drain due to the emigration of skilled nationals.

[2] http://www.forcedmigration. Org/research-resources/regions/Africa

The need for enhanced and harmonised migration management policies is therefore a critical priority for e Government of South Africa. (IOM South Africa 2012). South Africa has long been a destination for regional migration, with workers coming from Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and other countries to work on the mines (Economic Migration in South Africa 2012).

Generally, the influx of refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants has increased dramatically since 1994, (http://www.polity.org.za/artcle/economic-migration-in-south-africa. accessed 14/06/2012). Although migration is not a recent phenomenon the current scale is unprecedented and increasing (Kothari 2002:5). The number of people entering South Africa from other countries is increasing. As to exactly how many people have entered South Africa in recent years is not known (Posel 2003:5). Only estimates are provided. The dominant view, which is popularised in the media is that people are entering the country illegally, that is, without requisite documentation (Posel 2003:5). And that they intend settling permanently in South Africa and that this has adverse economic implications for South Africa (Possel 2003:5). It is not uncommon for some South Africans to see all migrants as illegal, which is not true. Even if they were illegal they do not deserve to be denied African hospitality. They do not deserve to be subjected to dehumanising treatment and xenophobic attacks.

## Migrants and chronic poverty

Migration and poverty often go together, with possibilities that one's poverty may be worsened. The majority of those who are forced to migrate from their countries of origin are poor. A lot of migration is that of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced, they are often amongst the poor with the possibilities of becoming chronically poor (Kothati 2002:4). Migration sustains chronic poverty and even makes it worse (cf. Kothari 2002). Migration is understood as a cause and a consequence of chronic poverty for those who move as well as those who stay behind. Migration has a role in chronic poverty, in many cases (Kothari 2002:4). Chronic poverty refers to intergenerational transfer of poverty (Kothari 2002). Chronic poverty is not limited to economic deprivation and is sustained over many years, often being transferred from one generation to the next (Kothari 2002:4). Those amongst the chronically poor are the least likely to benefit from current national and international development efforts (Hulme cited in Kothari 2002).

Migration should not be seen only primarily as an economic survival strategy for those immediately involved. For some, migration is a livelihood strategy. For others, though I suspect very few migration can be a strategy to move out of chronic poverty (cf. Kothari 2002:4). Research by the Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty (2009) also support the position that migration is a livelihood strategy,

pointing out the following: "migration is also a common livelihood strategy of the poor, and represents an important route for many poor people". Though, the report cautions that migration is not without risks and costs (2009:3). In support of this, Kothari says: "Individuals and groups may remain chronically poor by adopting migration as a livelihood strategy or, alternatively may benefit from migration and move out of poverty "(Kothari 2002:4). At the same time there are those whose social, cultural, economic and political exclusion makes them unable to move (potential migrants) and those who choose not to move (committed non-migrants) and who subsequently stay put albeit in an environment characterised by out-migration (Kothari 2002:4). Migration is understood as a cause and a consequence of chronic poverty for those who move as well as those who stay behind. Migration has a role in chronic poverty (Kothari 2002:4). Migration plays a significant , if not central role in livelihood strategies of the poor and 'movements generally take place in response to the circumstances, actual as well as the potential and perceived, with which people are faced both in their home communities and in areas away from home' (Parnwell cited by Kothari 2002:8).The increase in the scale of migration presents a paradox; for many, migration does not necessarily make migrants better off, indeed some become further impoverished by moving from one place to another (Kothari 2002:15). This can be due to migration pressure which is the result of an excess supply of people willing to migrate relative to the demands for people in potential destinations (Kothari 2002:15). Thus while migration can be understood as a strategy out of poverty, there is no guarantee that the strategy will be successful (Kothari 2002:15). The expectation that by moving they will find appropriate employment and enjoy a better standard of living does not always materialise and subsequently, those who are poor and migrate can end up in a category of the chronically poor (Kothari 2002:15). This is supported by research done by the DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE ON MIGRATION which points this in one of its reports: "migration is not without risks and costs" (2009:3). In the South African context migrants are seen as threats by many South African and therefore they become target of xenophobic attacks.

New migrants may be unable to find adequate employment or housing and may also suffer from the loss of family support networks through their movement away from one environment to another. They become increasingly vulnerable economically, as well as politically, culturally, socially and in this way, migration may result in substituting one set vulnerabilities and difficulties with another (Kothari 2002:15).

Over the years since the dawn of democracy, millions of people migrated to South Africa from countries as far apart as Zimbabwe and Somalia, seeking better life (Hartley 2114: 235). According to Hartley they lived in uncomfortable existence on the margins, frequently without proper

documentation and often doing menial work for low wages (Hartley 2014:235). While in good faith people migrate with dreams of better life, in some cases those dreams are shattered, become nightmares or those dreams are deferred. This dream of a better life is shattered or differed as our "African neighbours" (foreigners) become victims of our anti-immigrant (anti-foreigner) sentiments and associated xenophobic and violent attacks (anti-outsider violence[3]). In May 2008 during the xenophobic attacks directed at foreigners of African descent, 62 people died, including 21 South Africans (Monson and Arian 2011:26; cf. Hassim, Kupe and Worby 2008:1). In addition, 100 000 people were displaced and left homeless (cf. Hartley 2014: 235). This xenophobic violence started in Alexandra Township and spread to other parts of the province of Gauteng and later other parts of the country, especially in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Kwazulu Natal (cf. Hassim et al 2008:1; Landau 2011:1; Nieftagodien 2011: 109). Most of the victims were from beyond the borders of South Africa (Landau 2011:1). By the time the violence subsided in early June hundred had suffered grievous injuries, and tens of thousands had been displaced from their homes , taking shelter in community halls, tents in make-shift refuge camps and police stations or fleeing in terror across the borders in anticipation of an uncertain future (Hassim et al 2008:2; cf. Hartley 2014: 236). Alex Eliseev states that as others were feeing, they had no idea of where they were going (Eliseev 2008:27). The investigation of the South African Human Rights commission (SAHRC) found that the 2008 violence was a climax of creeping xenophobia that was decades old (Hartley 2014:236). The commission pointed out that the targeting of foreigners and their heightened vulnerability to street crime in general is a symptom of underlying general marginalisation and inequality (Hartley 2014:238). According to Harley the violence directed at foreigners occurred in a context of systemic discrimination against non-nationals (Hartley 2014:238).

> According to Fauvelle and Segatti (2011:57) there are studies that reveal that there is a widespread xenophobic sentiment among South Africans in general. Key explanatory factors that lead to this anti-foreigner violence are inequality and poverty (Fauvelle and Segatti 2011:59).

The migrants (foreigners) are often blamed for everything that goes wrong. They are blamed for inter alia, the following:

- Taking our wives and girlfriends
- Taking or "stealing" local jobs (Landau 2011:33; cf. Eliseev 2008:36).
- They are blamed for the slow improvement in the standard of living of blacks since apartheid ended in 1994. According to

[3] A phrase used by Landau, in the introduction to a book he edited in 2011.

Misago (2011:91) the failures of government to deal with endemic poverty, joblessness, lack of shelter and basic services has led to scapegoating of migrants by frustrated citizens.

- They are harassed and attacked by some South Africans. Police often do not intervene. When they do intervene, it is usually too late.
- The accused for being the source of HIV/AIDS,
- The primary cause of crime. Foreigners are often erroneously equated with crime (Landau 2011: 10).
- A threat to South African jobs and cultural values (Landau 2011: 6).

According to Landau the presence of those who are from beyond the borders of South Africa (foreigners) "came to be seen as an existential threat to South Africa's collective transformation and renaissance" (Landau 2011:1).

When these happen we suffer from convenient amnesia as we conveniently forget that many South Africans were once in exile at some stage, and they enjoyed the hospitality of other African countries during the struggle for liberation.

As the violence that started on the 11th May and ended in June, the response from the leadership ranged from silence, to denialism, to dismissal of attacks as non-xenophobic but criminal activities (cf. Eliseev 2008:31). When the finally authorities spoke, they blamed criminals and a third force and came up with some political conspiracies (Nieftagodien 2008:66). They failed to grapple with the real underlying causes. The silence from churches was even more disturbing, as well as the conspicuous absence of church leaders from scenes of violence.

## What happens when one dream is deferred? What happens when two dreams are deferred?

While in good faith people migrate with dreams of better life, in some cases those dreams are shattered, become nightmares or those dreams are deferred. In the South African context, the migrants encounter the poor South Africans whose dreams of a better life have also been either shattered or deferred. In the concluding words of the poem by Langston Hughes, a dream deferred explodes as it did in 2008 when xenophobic attacks by South Africans led to the killing of black foreigners, with attacks that started in Alexandra and spread to other parts of the country. There are chances that the dream deferred will explode again and again, at the expense of human life. We have on one hand the dream of migrants and on the other the dream of South Africans who have been promised a dream of "better life for all". What happens when more than one dream is deferred? Explosion? Double explosion?

As pointed out when South Africa elected a democratic government and President Nelson Mandela became the first President of a democratic, non-racial country hopes of the poor and the oppressed was that there would be a better life, not only for the few, the whites, the rich and the powerful, the politicians and tenderpreneurs[4] but "better life for all". There was hope of a better life for all as correctly promised by the African National Congress (cf. Jeffery 2010: xxv). Since 1994 the ANC government has repeatedly emphasised its "pro-poor" policy focus and its determination to bring about a "better life for all" (Jeffery 2010:317). Unfortunately promises of "better life for all" have not yet materialised. The South African dream had failed to materialise, the dream had been deferred, as Mbeki himself had previously stated in some of his speeches. Mbeki had said in 1998:"we are faced with the danger of a mounting rage to which we must respond seriously". He said that he was haunted by the nightmare of a seething majority that would boil over into rebellion because its liberation had been deferred rather than redeemed. Mbeki had asked the question in one of his speeches in 1998 in Parliament, paraphrasing a poem by Langston Hughes: "What happens to a dream deferred? It explodes" This had captured the imagination of many but particularly the prolific journalist and author Mark Gevisser who wrote a biography of Thabo Mbeki with the title: The Dream deferred: Thabo Mbeki (2007)

## The poem:

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore-
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over-
Like syrup sweet?
Maybe it just sags
Like a heavy load
Or it explodes?

(Gevisser 2003: xxxi; cf. Zegeye and Maxted )

[4] Tenderpreneur is a word that is used to refer to those well connected comrades who use their political connectivity and brown envelopes to secure state tenders and enrich themselves.

According to Gevisser (2007:xxxi) Hughes' concern was the plight of fellow black Americans whose dreams of emancipation had sagged, rotted and festered into city ghettoes like Harlem. Thabo Mbeki appropriated the poem to refer to the crisis of expectation of black South Africans awaiting liberation and who often found themselves with less than they had before, and were on the brink of a dangerous explosion. That was very prophetic, and unintentionally so, that Mbeki spoke about a dream deferred and exploding when one looks at recent spates of service delivery protests in the last few years and the last few months and weeks. According to Moeletsi Mbeki South Africa has one of the largest occurrences of social protest against incompetence and corruption at various levels of the political sector and this proves the fallacy that there can be no social and political upheavals in a democracy (Moeletsi Mbeki 2011:13). One also has to look at xenophobic attacks that got out of hand in 2008, and have been followed by sporadic ones since then. If one dream deferred explodes, what then happens to the dream of migrants who also rightly had a dream of better life in South Africa. This leads to double explosion.

The dream of a better life for all remains an illusion for millions of poor South Africans especially in townships and villages inhabited by blacks. The dreams of the poor and oppressed have become, in the words of Allan Boesak, "the blanket of the rich; where justice for the poor is a line in a slogan but not the song of our hearts" (Boesak 2009). As their dreams lie shattered the poor face the following challenges: starvation, nutrition related illnesses, infant mortality, premature death, drastically reduced life expectancy, chronically reduced standards of living and devastating impact of HIV and Aids pandemic and many other challenges. It is important to note that the reality and existence of a South African dream is contested by many. It is contested amongst others by Moeletsi Mbeki brother of former President Thabo Mbeki who said: "I don't think that there is a South African dream. I think there are different South African dreams; different dreams for different groups, classes and ethnic groups" (Hunt and Lascaris 1998:13). However the majority of the blacks who are poor are united in their dream of a better life for all which is consistent with promises made at every election since the dawn of the new South Africa. It is that dream which has been deferred Therefore the theological reflections happen in townships and rural villages should be the critical theological reflection in the light of a dream deferred. Equally the plight of the often dehumanised migrants must be at the centre of theological reflection and in particular our missiological reflection.

## The centre of theological reflection in theological education

As we make the plight of the dehumanised migrants at the centre of theological reflections we have to develop a missiology (and theology) that is humanising as proposed by Prof. Willem Saayman (2007), in his book: Being Missionary, Being human. He says: "the concept of humanisation is very important in the understanding of Christian mission". By that he means that Jesus of Nazareth, the new human being, incarnated in his joy and grief, victory and pain, empathy and anger, what it means for all of us to be authentically human in relating to self, others, the created universe and God-self. Jesus invites us to participate in his liberating, healing and evangelising mission, thus being missionary while being human (Saayman 2007:5).

Therefore in the context of the marginalised and dehumanised migrants our participation in the Missio Dei must be humanising as we become faithful to the Missio Dei. As we become obedient to the Missio Dei we must extend African Ubuntu and associated hospitality to migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, especially African migrants from our neighbouring countries. Where could the best place to start be, if not with theological education, that is, with the main functionaries of the church and pastors and future theologians. At the moment it is unfortunate that unlike in the past, when there are social unrests, including incidents of xenophobia and associated unrests, the church is disturbingly silent and conspicuous by its absent. In the past pastors and theologians had organic links with community organisations and as a result they journeyed with communities in the midst of their struggles. It is no longer the case. This is probably because the leadership of the church is lost and they do not know where to start, what to say and what ministry to extend to those people whose dreams have been shattered or deferred. Ministers, theologians and laity have significant roles to play in view of uprooting and dispelling the myths, stereotypes and resentment that often fuel xenophobia, and making Africa fail to be hospitable to Africans.

Any theological education must include processes of inculcating "fundamental values of community, inclusion and participation in Ubuntu" (cf. Albertyn 2008:176). In line with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Supreme court of Appeal recognises the dignity of all people including citizens and foreign nationals. In 2004, the court said:

> "Human dignity has no nationality. It is inherent in all people-citizens and non-citizens alike-simply because they are human. And while that person happens to be in this country-for whatever reason-it must be respected, and is protected by the Bill of Rights" (Albertyn 2008: 176).

The challenge for theological disciplines is to design modules and curricula that are transformed and that include and inculcate the values that are entrenched in the constitution such as respect of human dignity and human rights of all people. This in the same spirit of some modules such as Missiology, which aims at, in the words of Nel: "teaching to change the world" (Nel 2009:139). This echoes the efforts of successive heads of Missiology such as Saayman, Kritzinger and Bosch who argued for transformation (Nel 2009: 139). This is transformation, not only of Missiology but all theological disciplines, in such a way that both poverty and the plight of migrants are placed at the centre of theological reflections and theological education.

## Conclusion

As much as poverty must be placed at the centre of theological reflection, the plight of the migrants and those who are dislocated and displaced must be at the centre of theological reflection and theological education. They suffered as a result of poverty and they are subjected even to worse conditions in their new country. South Africa is a Classical example of a destination where migrants are in many cases discriminated against. They were even subjected to horrible xenophobic attacks on a massive scale in 2008. These attacks continue sporadically from time to time. No theological reflection can afford to ignore the plight of people who dreamed of better life, and their dreams are not only deferred but shattered. As they come to South Africa they find other people who are frustrated angered by poverty and its associated socio-economic ills and their dreams are also not only deferred but shattered. As a result of the anger and frustration from many South Africans the country's capacity to extend African hospitality is paralysed. This is a challenge to theologians, pastors and in general to the church. The church and institutions that offer theological education can start by ensuring that the plight of not only the poor but the displaced is placed right at the centre of its theological reflection and that it functionaries and other leaders are sufficiently empowered to provide effective ministry in the context of untold suffering to which migrants are subjected. The theological education that should be developed is the one in which candidates are sensitised to important values such as upholding human rights, human dignity and the importance of what Kitzinger refers to as "affirmation of all other people as image-bearers of God" (2010:232). The churches and institutions offering theological education must consistently search for creative models of "contextual, liberating theological education" that equips pastors, theologians and the laity to contribute to inclusive processes of nation-building, restoration of the social fabric and dismantling of socio-economic and political structures that perpetuates poverty and inequality.

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