

Climate Apartheid: Challenging Religious Communities to Engage Climate Change and Its Intersecting Issues

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Abstract

Climate change, poverty and racism/xenophobia are interrelated and must be analysed from an intersectional perspective. The late SA Archbishop Desmond Tutu himself coined the term “climate apartheid”, highlighting the fact that “people who are wealthy and have access to enough resources can anticipate and adapt to climate change, while people who are poor and who live in poor countries have less ability to do so” (Mc Carthy 2021). In unpacking the ways in which the undue impacts of climate change rest more heavily on people of colour and women, further arguments are made for the global situation of eco-injustice to be framed within an understanding of systemic environmental apartheid and its intersectional effects. Much like during the period of South African apartheid, many religious communities are silent and complicit in eco injustice due to pietism, passivity, and fundamentalist theology(ies). The call is, therefore, made for religious communities to mobilise against this state of affairs using the lessons learnt in other struggles for justice.

Keywords: Ecojustice; Climate apartheid; Faith and climate change; Race and climate change

Introduction

Firstly, let me admit that when my cousin – who is today a consultant on climate change for governments and global NGO’s – was a keen environmental student activist in the mid 1990’s, I found it strange and slightly irrelevant for a girl of colour from the Cape Flats of Cape Town. Living in a South Africa that at the time that was just emerging from the horrors of apartheid, the focus I thought should be on the way that our people had been impoverished and dehumanised, rather than on what I considered at that time a marginal issue, namely the environment. Mandela and Tutu had declared us “the rainbow nation of God”, and to my mind there was no environment in that equation – the emphasis was on people, not on the environment. Today, of course, I better understand that that these issues are linked – in what Steve De Gruchy (2016:217) termed the Olive agenda in reference to the need for both the brown agenda of poverty and inequality and the green agenda of care for the environment to be linked.

Moreover, climate change and issues such as poverty, gender and racism/xenophobia are interrelated and must, therefore, be analysed from an intersectional perspective.¹

¹ The notion of “Intersectionality” was first coined by Kimberle Crenshaw (1991). It seeks to “denote the various ways in which race and gender interact” to shape multiple dimensions of experiences of oppression (Crenshaw 1991:1244).

Willams (2022) notes that “there is a stark divide between who has caused climate change and who is suffering its effects. People of colour across the Global South are those who will be most affected by the climate crisis, even though their carbon footprints are generally very low”. The late South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu coined the term “climate apartheid,” thus highlighting the fact that “people who are wealthy and have access to enough resources can anticipate and adapt to climate change, while people who are poor and who live in poor countries have less ability to do so” (McCarthy 2021). In unpacking the ways in which the undue impacts of climate change rest more heavily on people of colour and women, further arguments are made in this article for the global situation of eco-injustice to be framed within an understanding of systemic environmental apartheid and its intersectional effects. Much like during the period of South African apartheid, many religious communities remain silent and complicit in eco-injustice due to pietism, passivity, and fundamentalist theology(ies), which are much like the views I held in the 1990’s, which understood environmental issues as marginal to that of faith praxis. In unpacking these, this article firstly explores these underlying assumptions which many Christians share and then explores what this could mean for mobilising religious communities against this state of affairs using the lessons learnt during the apartheid struggle for justice.

Debunking underlying assumption #1: Green equals white?

As De Gruchy noted (2016:222), for many in the world and in my country of South Africa, environmental concerns are often seen as the “agenda of those who are not poor”, such as suburban elites who appear to have the luxury of saving the Rhino or indigenous plant species, while the poor struggle for survival. In the South African context, suburban elites – especially in a city such as Cape Town – are still overwhelmingly white, as for the most part class remains aligned with race (see World Bank 2018:xix).² This was what clearly lay beneath my confusion with regards to my cousin’s interest in the environment. De Gruchy (2016:229), however, makes the important point that beyond the suburban elites, “any reading of the environmental data will make it unquestionably clear that these are fundamental issues...”. He (2016:229) goes on to state the following:

...beyond the fads of suburban elites, we must acknowledge that the mature green agenda focuses on such things as climate change, access to water, reliance on fossil fuels, erosion of topsoil, dumping of toxic waste and deforestation.

Harper (2016:109) notes that “increasingly common and increasingly intense climate events disrupt the ability of poor people to survive” – the green agenda is, therefore, a brown agenda, as it is often the poorest who are most affected. Nevertheless, according to Jerneck (2018:3), “knowledge on how and to what extent climate change interacts with social and spatial inequality is seriously underrepresented in in both policy and

² Despite the demise of apartheid, South Africa remains one of the most unequal nations in the world. The World Bank Report of 2018 notes that black South Africans continue to “bear the brunt of this inequality” (cf. Swartz 2016:xx). Poverty and inequality are, therefore, racially skewed. The legacy of apartheid also means that due to the Group Areas Act, people of colour were moved to the margins of cities such as Cape Town (into what are commonly referred to as townships), and the suburbs became largely the domain of white South Africans. Although this picture has shifted somewhat since 1994, spatial inequality persists.

research”. On a global scale “an Oxfam study shows that the world’s wealthiest 1% emit twice as much Carbon Dioxide as the poorest 50%”. It is also interesting to note that “a recent analysis by the thinktank GermanWatch found that the 10 countries most threatened by climate change are in the Global South, countries that have been harmed by colonialism” (McCarthy 2012). Centuries of colonialism based on white supremacy have given this inequality an overarching racial dimension, leading to what Archbishop Desmond Tutu called a “climate apartheid” (Mc Carthy 2021; cf. Abimbola et al. 2021:6–8). The role of colonialism and on-going neo-colonial thinking is argued to be at the root of this. Abimbola et al. (2021:7) note that “the colonial era laid the foundation and created a structural opportunity for racist hierarchies to be normalised and institutionalised. Contemporary political, economic, scientific and cultural conditions around the world are shaped by the colonial era, which are characterised by the violent expansion of European economies”. They go on to state that “there is a perverse paradox in that resources were expropriated from colonised countries... which would later contribute to a rise in GHG emissions, and trigger climate change impacts that would critically affect formerly colonized countries and territories” (Abimbola et al. 2021:8). Bhambra and Newell (2022:1) note that the IPVV 2022 in its 6th report on “impacts, adaptation and vulnerability’ references colonialism, not only as a driver of the climate crisis, but as something that continues to exacerbate the vulnerabilities of communities to it”.

Perhaps one of the most extreme cases of environmental racism and climate apartheid is toxic waste dumping on the African continent, which has existed for decades. An article from the Mail and Guardian in 2020 noted the following:

In the same way that global warming hits those most vulnerable and least responsible for the crisis the hardest, hazardous waste shipped from wealthier countries and dumped illegally on the African continent is damaging the health of some of the poorest people on earth (Andersen 2020).

This illustrates the way in which climate change intersects with global health inequalities – both of which are racialised. This is not confined to global inequality, but also to local racialised inequalities. Canadian professor of climate justice, Naomi Klein (2023), notes the ways in which the effects of climate change are unequal and argues that any response to climate change must be intersectional and address the root of a completely unjust system. She highlights the ways in which, during floods caused by hurricane Katrina, while the rich were able to hire cars or hotels to escape, “those who didn’t were overwhelmingly black and poor – were stranded on their rooftops holding signs that said “help”. In recent years, the floods in Kwa-Zulu Natal in 2022 disproportionately affected the poor living in informal settlements as, unlike their wealthier counterparts, they were unable to recover from the economic shocks incurred by the floods – living in informal housing with no insurance and little economic buffers meant that the little they had was figuratively and literally swept away.

These racial disparities stem from global inequality, and of course in a country like South Africa, they are also rooted in the story of racial inequality. People who are wealthy and have access to enough resources can anticipate and adapt to climate change, while people who are poor and people who live in poor countries or areas have less

ability to do so. Sadly, this vulnerability has a black face and, more often than not, a female one. The challenge of Climate apartheid is, therefore, intersectional.

Jerneck (2018) notes that “climate impacts influence men and women differently, and women tend to suffer more negatively in terms of their assets and wellbeing. According to the WHO, women are harder hit by droughts, flood, heavy rains, heatwaves and water scarcity – all increasingly attributed to climate change – and suffer higher risks than men in health and life expectancy”. Several studies note that that these uneven impacts on women are rooted in gendered divisions of land, labour and decision making. In sub-Saharan Africa, it is mainly women who engage in small-scale subsistence farming and on whom irregular rainfall patterns or drought caused by climate change has the greatest impact in terms of crops.

Climate change also highlights racial and class inequalities in interesting and sometimes unexpected ways. One of the starkest ways this has been illustrated in the past few years is with the drought that Cape Town experienced between 2015 and 2018, which saw dam levels dropping to concerning levels. Capetonians were urged to implement strict water saving measures, such as re-using water from bathing or laundry for the bathroom and being restricted to only 50 litres of water per person (Mahr 2018). Black south African twitter was incensed, however, when the then Premier of Cape Town, Helen Zille (a public proponent of colour blindness and neo liberalism) posted a picture of her perfectly manicured suburban feet in a plastic wash basin urging citizens to save water. They pointed out that bathing in a wash basin and not having private access to running water or sanitation continued to be the reality of the poor – drought or no drought. In this case, climate change also illuminates existing inequalities.

Currently, there are global calls for a just energy transition, which promotes a move away from fossil fuels to renewable energy. South Africa is a coal-based country, and our economy is tied to this. In fact, Secunda is the world’s biggest single-site emitter of greenhouse gases due to SASOL’s operations and resident coal-fired power stations (Sguazzin 2020). The question in terms of a just energy transition is how our government will manage the loss of jobs of the most vulnerable in the economy – as argued here, who are usually black due to persistent racial inequalities – as these power stations shut down. Many Global North countries are currently keen on providing aid for this transition to government in order to offset their own carbon debt, but there is a need to hold government accountable on this (more especially with regards to their mitigating the impact on the most vulnerable) and therefore the role of civil society is key.³

Debunking Underlying assumption #2: green is not spiritual

My environmental consultant cousin, a good Methodist, asked me why churches in South Africa are not taking more decisive action. Part of my answer to her was that Christianity has often fallen prey to modernist notions of dualism, which relegate the reconciliation of humanity with their fellows and with nature as lesser than reconciliation with God. It was this same dichotomy that led to quietism and passivity with regards to the injustice of grand apartheid (Nash 1984:38). In its extreme, part of a dualistic spirituality is that it is often fatalistic regarding issues of social change. Particularly fundamentalist

³ It is important to note that government corruption in the current post-apartheid era adds to the burden of the poorest in society through its perpetuation of structural inequalities.

Christians, who subscribe to a pre-millennialist eschatology, would believe that it is part of the course of Christian history for the state of the world (which would include the environment) to become progressively worse while we await the second coming when “all tears shall be wiped away”. This was the same soteriological and eschatological ethic utilised by many evangelicals especially during the apartheid era.

The response of anti-apartheid theologians at the time was to declare apartheid a heresy and sin (see De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio 1983). In this way, they cut straight to the soteriological issue with regards to apartheid. Archbishop Tutu, as theologian and church leader, would not have been unaware that using the term apartheid with regards to the climate, would recall a soteriological dimension of anti-apartheid theology. In a recent article authored by South African theologian Cobus van Wyngaard (2019:132), where he analyses the ways in which the theological struggle against apartheid was waged, he explores how different apartheid era theologians “drew from different theological loci in attempting to name apartheid a theological problem”. Albert Nolan, for example, chose to focus on soteriology/sin as a theological loci through which to “read the times”. Van Wyngaard notes the following:

Why is apartheid a theological problem? For Nolan it is because apartheid causes excessive suffering. It is a sin because an offense against people is the root of the suffering. But in Nolan’s social analysis, capitalism is really the root cause of the suffering. Also those who cause this suffering and support the system are guilty due to the way this suffering is justified.

Tutu himself at the time referred to apartheid in terms such as “heretical, evil and wicked” (Kokobili 2019:126). And he repeatedly called on Christians to avoid a false dichotomy of secular and sacred rooted in dualism (Hulley 1992:33). As noted, his use of the term “climate apartheid” would, therefore, have similar theological roots. Indeed, as already noted above, racial capitalism lies at the root of climate apartheid. In his article for the *Mail and Guardian*, published in 2014, he frames racial capitalism as the heart of the suffering of those experiencing climate apartheid.

Furthermore, he refers to the system that results in the impending disaster as a result of “injustice”, and still later in the same article as “immoral” – a term which is of course linked to soteriology in that it implies moral transgression (i.e., sinful action) (Tutu 2014). Other Christian communities have also advanced a similar theological logic in their statements regarding this. The term “environmental racism” was interestingly enough first coined by the United Church of Christ, who produced a *Toxic Waste and Race* report back in the 1980s (See National Report UCC 1987).

Conradie (2013:113), notes that “the Christian message of salvation may well be relevant with respect to an activist attempt to “save” the planet”. Repentance in the Christian tradition implies a turning away from sin, language which all Christians understand. It also implies a “turning away” from current praxis (also of the racialised and neo-colonial global economic system) around the climate. It is interesting to note that this call to “conversion” is also made by Tutu (2014) in the following way:

We can no longer tinker about the edges. We can no longer continue feeding our addiction to fossil fuels as if there were no tomorrow. For there will be no

tomorrow. As a matter of urgency, we must begin a global transition to a new safe energy economy. This requires fundamentally rethinking our economic systems, to put them on a sustainable and more equitable footing.

Another challenge posed by a repentance soteriology that names climate apartheid a sin is to further ask the question regarding climate debt. “Climate-debt theory posits that the costs of adapting to climate change and mitigating it are the responsibility of the countries that created the crisis, the industrialized world. Said differently, “the polluter pays.” Article 3(1) of the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) addresses this responsibility by obligating the Global North to take the lead on efforts to combat climate change” (Moe-Lobeda 2016:29).

The World Council of Churches’ (WCC) call for justice is also one of calling for repentance and restorative justice in the context of climate change, for which they quote Is. 1:16–17 in this respect: “cease to do evil and learn to do right; pursue justice and champion the oppressed. Give the orphan his rights, plead the widows case”. The WCC note that “the victims of climate change are the new face of the poor, widow and stranger” (WCC Statement on Climate Justice 2016). Much like during the Jubilee 2000 and Drop the Debt protests and pressure put on governments by Christians at that time (see Bowers Du Toit & Forster 2013), social movement building to pressure for climate debt repayments in terms of just energy transitions need to be ongoing. Faith communities will also need to hold governments in the Global south accountable as to how these monies will reach the most vulnerable such as women.

As implied in this discussion, establishing theological loci for the conversation is key when addressing faith communities in terms of issues of injustice. Of course, there have been generations of scholarly work in this respect, and the soteriological perspective I present here is nothing new. In the current global rise in fundamentalist discourse more especially, however, I think this loci is an important one to revisit in presenting the notion of climate apartheid as a green issue, but also as more than a green issue. The soteriological or “sin” positioning of the discourse also allows for an intersectional approach in terms of the proclamation of shalom (meaning wholeness, justice, peace, equality and freedom) and notions of restorative justice in terms of humans and nature (see Clifford 2010:174). It is structural sin (immoral/unjust actions against nature and fellow humans – as expressed via racist patriarchy and lack of environmental stewardship) which has resulted in injustice and oppression in the form of climate apartheid. As we witness some Christians around the world “walk back” and become more polarised with regards to their commitments to justice as central to an understanding of the message of the Christian gospel – this includes issues of race, class and gender and of course that of environmental care – it is important to re-emphasise such a theological loci.

Climate apartheid as prophetic call

Tutu’s challenge, here, was not directly to faith communities but to the UN, governments and civil society at large; nevertheless, the challenge remains one which requires a united response by faith communities as civil society role players. In his seminal Mail & Guardian article, Tutu (2014) indeed also references the notion of hope; “I am not without hope. When we, humans, walk together I pursuit of a righteous cause, we

become an irresistible force. There are many ways that all of us can fight climate change”. In this section, forms of hopeful praxis are highlighted in terms of addressing climate apartheid both locally and globally – which also take their cues from the struggle against apartheid for activating faith communities in terms addressing the intersectional climate crisis.

Theological Conscientisation

It was the prophetic theology of our prophet-activists – like Tutu – during apartheid that provided a theological moral reasoning against apartheid. The role of conscientising those of faith with regards to theological moral reasoning was also a strategy utilised by the Christian faith communities during apartheid. This was both through confessions (such as the Confession of Belhar (1986), Kairos Document (1985) and EWISA⁴(1986) and statements by global bodies such as the World Council of Churches and World Alliance of Reformed Churches as well as through preaching and other public gatherings often held in church buildings etc). Globally, these kinds of statements have been produced by ecumenical bodies such as the WCC and others with regards to climate change.

In addition, there were groups established internally within denominations which mobilised against injustice. The work of Green Anglicans – led by Rev. Rachel Mash, a South African priest – is one such example. While it started in South Africa, it has spread to Malawi, Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Kenya, DRC and Portugal. Take note of the fact that these are countries largely on the receiving end of climate apartheid as African nations positioned in the global South. Their mission is largely targeted towards conscientisations, namely to “resource and inspire Anglicans in the spirituality of Caring for Creation; inspire and encourage individuals to live sustainable lives; inspire and equip Churches and Dioceses to practical actions as Earthkeepers and challenge and network individuals, Churches and Dioceses to prophetic acts of advocacy” (Green Anglicans 2023).

This conscientisation at grassroots encourages Dioceses, local congregations and congregants to see creation care and advocacy as part of their Christian calling, and it has been interesting to note the prominence given to Green Anglicans by the Archbishop of Canterbury, more especially in recent years via the Lambeth conference and the Anglican Consultation of Churches. In fact, Rev. Mash will represent the Anglican church at the United Nations Commission on the status of women later this month and not only argue that women and girls are disproportionately affected, but that the church is a vital voice as faith communities “are often the first to respond in times of crisis as they are at the centre of the community and are trusted by local communities” (<https://www.anglicannews.org/news/2022/02/anglicans-set-to-highlight-climate-justice-at-un-commission-on-status-of-women.aspx>).

Boycotting and divestment

One of the key strategies utilised by the anti-apartheid movement, and also by the climate change movement, is that of boycotting and divestment. It is interesting that perhaps the last global protests where Christians have engaged as a united front with regards to

⁴ Evangelical Witness in South Africa.

addressing global powers were the Jubilee/Drop the Debt protests in the 1990's and early 2000's (Bowers Du Toit & Forster 2014). Where is the mass protest against injustice with regards to climate change today? Archbishop Tutu was clear in his call to end climate apartheid that divestment should and could be one of the strategies brought to bear on those creating the crisis. He notes that "Just as we argued in the 1980s that those who conducted business with apartheid South Africa were aiding and abetting an immoral system, we can say that nobody should profit from the rising temperatures, seas and human suffering caused by the burning of fossil fuels." (Tutu 2014).

He therefore proposed global boycotts of:

...events, sports teams and media programming sponsored by fossil fuel companies; demand that their advertisements carry health warnings; organise car-free days and other platforms to build broader societal awareness; and ask our religious communities to speak out on the issue from their various pulpits. We can encourage energy companies to spend more of their resources on the development of sustainable energy products, and we can reward those companies that demonstrably do so by using their products to the exclusion of others (Tutu 2014).

He also noted called on civil society actors such as that "universities and municipalities, foundations, corporations, individuals and cultural institutions" (Tutu 2014) to cut their ties to the fossil fuel industry and argued that both divestment in fossil fuels and investment in renewable energy was the answer, and it is interesting that he once again emphasised the fact that this was a moral choice to act in the interests of justice

How, then, can global faith movements mobilise to address these global injustices? Although bodies such as the WCC have articulated the issues (for example divestment from fossil fuels is one of the calls of the WCC to its members), it is clear that there has not yet been a faith groundswell of the kind which engages the powers that be (<https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/statement-on-cop-24-and-just-transition-to-sustainable-economy>). Tutu's emphasis on "the power of our collective action" in order to "hold those who rake in the profits accountable for cleaning up their mess" is clearly a strategy which we need to pursue more rigorously as faith communities as with the Fourth-generation approach taken up by Jubilee 2000 many years ago (Tutu 2014).

Youth activism for climate change

Over the past few years, the face of climate change has been that of the youth – Greta Thunberg, for example, has emerged as a lodestar of the role played by young people in addressing such issues. In fact, the Arch noted in his seminal article is the fact that "The good news is that we don't have to start from scratch. Young people across the world have identified climate change as the biggest challenge of our time, and already begun to do something about it" (Tutu 2014).

The BCC reported in 2021 that a global survey illustrated that 60% of young people approached "said they felt very worried or extremely worried about climate change" and more than 45% said "feelings about climate change affected their daily lives" (Harrabin 2021). Despite (or perhaps because of) their climate anxiety, many young people are motivated to act – their future depends on it. Even in the absence of Thunberg at the last

COP, which she critiqued as “greenwashing”, it was reported that “young people from countries at high risk from climate change (namely those on the receiving end of climate apartheid) – “are calling it out from the inside”, because as one young climate activist from the global south noted, “for me the stakes are so high that I just can’t give up hope for change” (Rannard 2022). The latter of course highlights the disproportionate risks suffered by those in the Global South. It is not stated whether or not these young adults are religious, but in countries with high religious adherence it is clear that religion will play a role in motivating for social change. During apartheid, it was largely the youth who were mobilised in resistance and who were prepared to lay down their lives for the cause.

However, the mobilisation of youth of faith is more complex than it appears. The Barna 2019 study on what they term the “Connected Generation”, which surveyed global Christian young adults between the ages of 18–35, reveals some interesting findings. Findings indicate that on average Christian young adults were less likely than non-Christian young adults to prioritise climate change (Connected Generation 2019:113). Christian young adults, especially in the Global South, were more likely to cite issues such as corruption, poverty and racism as higher priorities for action, while those largely in the global north cited climate change at the top of their list (Connected Generation Barna Group 2019:115). This implies that for Christian youth there needs to be messaging from faith communities that recognises the intersectional nature (i.e., that climate change is interlinked with issues of race, gender and corruption). On our continent, these issues are not de-linked – as we have seen especially with regards to large multinationals on our continent – and the church needs to frame this intersectionality also theologically as connected to fighting for a better world.

Renewed ecclesologies: people power and grassroots mobilisation

While during apartheid many churches were formally involved in the struggle as denominations or as congregations led by powerful prophetic voices such as Frank Chikane, Desmond Tutu or Allen Boesak, there were also many individual lay Christians who supported the struggle in other ways by mobilising support at grassroots and resisting the oppression of Empire (Bowers Du Toit 2012). Many individuals, inspired by the Christian faith, hid activists, supported the struggle financially or engaged in community mobilisation and community development initiatives against the effects of racialised poverty by starting law and health clinics or NGOs unaffiliated to the political movement, but in support of the greater anti-apartheid cause. I believe this is a much-overlooked aspect of people power, largely because our ecclesologies are focused on global church bodies, denominations or congregations rather than on the ways in which individual believers engage with civil society (see Smit 1996). I have been fascinated, for example, by a female Christian environmental activist that I know who has joined Extinction Rebellion. This is a group who identify themselves as “an international apolitical network using non-violent direct action to persuade governments to act, and the time to act is now” (extinctionrebellion.org.za).

It is very interesting to read her Facebook post, which features a photo of her participating in a protest, and the way in which she views it as a person of faith: “From where I was sitting I could see the oil execs and energy ministers making their way into the CTICC (which had been totally barricaded and ‘securitified’ against protesters). I

found myself praying fervently for an awakening among these people so willing to destroy the earth and harm fellow humans for their profits.” Despite the fact that she is participating in what is technically a civil society protest, it is clear that her faith is not divorced from her civil disobedience. She is a prime example of a person of faith for whom green is spiritual.

Elsewhere in Cape Town, I have observed Christians start and expand networks that promote both greening and the health of those on the margins. There remain few green spaces in townships, and food insecurity is high. Guerrilla gardening (which is often done on sidewalks and non-designated public spaces and in South Africa is often targeted not only as greening, but at food security) is identified as another form of climate protest and action. It is also intersectional, as according to a climate activist, “its direct action against nature depravation and depletion – highlighting the issues of bio phobic urbanisation while fighting it...its fighting for people, plants and the planet by taking action into your own hands... and is challenging the status quo of what we’ve been taught cities should look like and who can have the power and right to shape them” (Davies 2022). In Khayelitsha, Cape Town, a female Christian minister and FBO (Faith Based Organisation) worker were part of spearheading such a garden. Although they are confessing Christians, their involvement in the Ujamaa collective was as citizens seeking to act in their own way, inspired by the notion of decolonial black self-reliance against the might of the neo-liberal food economy that was literally leaving many black impoverished community members food insecure. In their work, one views also the intersection of the way in which neo-liberal capitalism has racialised health impacts and also the way in which something like guerrilla food gardens can address intersectional issues of sustainability and food security as well as pose questions regarding the current neo-capitalist system and the need for decolonial self-reliant approaches to resistance (Hogg 2017).

Conclusion

In many ways, the situation before us is discouraging in its complexity. It is clear that climate apartheid is an intersectional issue with its roots and fruits in the ways in which colonialism replicates itself in unequal power relations on both a local and global scale. Sadly, this has had disproportionate effects on black and female bodies; nevertheless, the myth persists that green issues and brown issues are separate. While global bodies such as the WCC are focusing their prophetic efforts in this regard, for the most part Christian faith communities have often – both in terms of their theological teaching and praxis – not engaged sufficiently.

In raising a soteriological perspective, here, questions could be asked whether raising this is not rather outdated in this context? I have argued, however, that in Archbishop Tutu’s challenge in identifying climate apartheid as a moral issue, there were definitely religio-political themes of sin and repentance that could be drawn upon to challenge the ongoing quietism and passivity of some sectors of Christianity – more especially those who have been influenced by modern dualism. Moreover, a soteriological challenge addresses climate change as both an individual sin (the call to change individual behaviours in terms of recycling and consumption, etc., and encouraging mobilisation at grassroots) and structural sin (confronting issues of climate injustice) just as anti-

apartheid theology did. The latter is perhaps a perspective that churches in the Global South, more especially, will need to emphasise with their youth.

John Lewis once noted that we need to stir up “good trouble” in the face of injustice (Library of Congress Blogs 2020). This is the challenge that faces us – just as it has with any situation of injustice and one which faith communities as civil society actors should take up and join in with broader movements. During apartheid, that included strategies mentioned here, such as conscientisation, boycotting and divestment, mobilisation of the youth and the power of grassroots mobilisation. It is clear that today those most affected by the impacts of climate apartheid, such as women and youth, are leading the charge in often unexpected and creative ways. As they said during apartheid – *aluta continua* – the struggle continues.

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