


# Afrocentric leadership reflections on Sadducees, Pharisees, and Essenes in the Second Temple Era

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In honour of Prof. Mazamisa, chronology, at its correctness, is viewed as the cornerstone of understanding every successful elaboration of any historical origination and leadership in realities through the perspective of the reader, text and two horizons. Second Temple period groupings' identities are not immune to such perspective of historical order at foundational dimensions and towards the higher unfolding of origination and leadership narrations, aiming to place or show them correctly in their context. The three Afrocentric generations' lessons and perspectives of leadership surfaced within the Second Temple three groupings context as an art of affirmative indigenous knowledge wisdom in origination and leadership chronologies from anti-colonialism and apartheid different generations. As Second Temple groupings, only Essenes, Pharisees and Sadducees are zoomed in to understand their correct historical chronology of originations and leadership through the three Afrocentric generations' lessons and perspectives of leadership. This is aimed at surfacing an understanding of cause and reaction, advantages and disadvantages within similarities and differences, identities and actions from three Second Temple groupings context affirmed by the three Afrocentric different generations' lessons perspective of leadership.

**Contribution:** This article aims to showcase the comparative leadership lessons from the Second Temple era and early Christianity of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes through Afrocentric perspectives in line with Mazamisa's reader, text and two horizons. It is a lesson within theology, sociology, political sciences, and other fields of study to show the importance of comparative lessons drawn from the Second Temple groups and the Afrocentric leadership perspectives of different generations.

**Keywords:** Second Temple; Sadducees; Pharisees; Essenes; leadership; Afrocentric perspectives.

## Introduction

Bvumbi (2021:1–3) notes that the Second Temple period included multiple groups that fall beyond this scope. This article focuses on the Essenes, Pharisees and Sadducees' originations with bearings aligned to anti-colonialism, apartheid, and three Afrocentric different generations' lessons perspectives on leadership. It seeks to pursue chronologically and reflectively the importance of the three groupings' identities of rigidity, firm flexibility and extreme radicalism as important templates of the reader, text and two-horizons perspective of Mazamisa's balanced hermeneutical approach. This balanced hermeneutical approach is not born or emerging from an obvious receptive environment, but out of the reality of a life that has communal values against individualistic theology and philosophy. This merit of communal values and consciousness aligns correctly with the African proverbs like *munwe muthihi au tusi mathuthu* [one finger does not pick boiled seeds of mealies] in the Tshivenda language and *mphiri o tee gao lle* [divided people are not strong] in Sepedi language. Second Temple group origination context, African organisation origination context, Sadducean, Pharisees, and Essenes perspectives will be focused on as reflective of the first, second and third generations of the three Afrocentric generations' lessons perspective of leadership.

## Second Temple groups origination context

Bvumbi (2021) asserts that:

[S]cholars have also debated the issue regarding the emergence of various groups or sectarianism. For Weber and Talmon, the origins go back to the transition period from exile to a post-exilic situation, which provided the environment for forming groups. (pp. 36–50)

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Smith (1961:18) identifies Nehemiah 10 as associated with the groups' origins, while Weber (1952) points to the transition from the nation-state to the confessional community as the time of the occurrence of group formation. According to Blenkinsopp (1990), unrest and dissidence in the *golah*<sup>1</sup> community is also said to be another factor in group formation (Blenkinsopp 1990:19). Moreover, 'scholars regard the years leading up to the Maccabean revolt (167–160 BCE) to have been fertile ground for the fervent Jewish sectarianism' (Justiss 2016:3). Within the different perspectives of the groups' origination, the Maccabean revolt era provides the specific, fertile and visible actions of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes among other groupings of the time (Bvumbi 2021:39).

## African organisation origination context

Although colonialism descended on the African continent at different times and strategies, this can be defined as an era that disorganised African people from their own social, economic, political, religious, educational and cultural order through new colonial domination. Its epitome has been sealed by the Berlin Conference as the backbone of the partition of Africa: towards the colonial countries' formations to serve imperialism through white supremacy (Craven 2015).

In a traditional approach, traditional leaders such as King Sekhukhune, King Makhado, King Cetshwayo (Laband 1986), King Ngungunyane (Bertelsen 2018), Nehanda in Zimbabwe (Charumbira 2020), and many in other parts of Africa, served as earlier reactions against colonialism and pavers towards the origin of organised formations of movements against imperialism.

As a formalised reaction to resistance, organisations of resistance such as Ethiopian Patriotic Union (Abbay 2010), the African National Congress of South Africa (Govender 2015), Frelimo of Mozambique (Sumich 2010), Swapo of Namibia (Melber 2007), Zapu and Zanu of Zimbabwe (Mangani 2024) and others within the African continent are some of the fitting examples of the resisters of the colonial and apartheid with the exilic and locals' dimensions. In the context of South Africa's unique anti-colonial and anti-apartheid struggle, three distinct categories of activists are often highlighted: those imprisoned, such as Nelson Mandela (Gabal & Akiwa 2020); those operating underground, or 'inzile', such as Cyril Ramaphosa (Matela 2023); and those in exile, including Oliver Tambo (Marx 2018), Thabo Mbeki (Mohamed-Noor 2016), and Jacob Zuma (Southall 2020). Together, these groups epitomize the multifaceted nature of the struggle against apartheid.

Therefore, 'when the Golah community returned to the land, they utilized the same strategy to avoid assimilation with those who had remained in Yehud' (Bvumbi 2021:39). The Golah exile return can be likened to the perspective wherein

the mentality of thinking and viewing those who were in exile during colonialism and apartheid as the key central figures of heroes and heroines against colonialism and apartheid.

Samora Machel (Hama Thay 2020), Sam Nujoma (Munkuli 2022), Oliver Tambo and others in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid in Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa fit as perfect examples of the exile returnees being held in high esteem against colonialism and apartheid. These exiles, such as the Golah community returnees, had the centre of the new leadership posture of national reconstruction and development post the exile era. In the process, there had been temptations to view those who were left inside the country as not equal heroes and heroines with the exile returnees of the struggle against colonialism and apartheid.

As in this article the focus falls on the Essenes, Pharisees and Sadducees as epitomes of drawing three Afrocentric different generations' lessons perspective of leadership within the Second Temple Judaism period, the aim is simply to highlight the dynamics of the origin of these groups by showing the Afrocentric lessons triggered within the historicity of these groupings. Bvumbi (2021:41) notes that 'a disclaimer is necessary here, as we know about these groups, particularly the Pharisees and Sadducees, located in the following sources: Josephus, the New Testament, and Rabbinic literature'. Therefore, 'the information about these two groups does not stem from their own literary sources but instead is drawn from secondary sources' (Bvumbi 2021:41). It is also to be noted that the unfolding of these groups will now change from the alphabetical chronology (Essenes, Pharisees and Sadducees) to the historical chronology below.

## Sadducean perspective

According to Bvumbi (2021:410), 'Beckwith (1982) shows that establishing the specifics of the origin of the Sadducees is difficult because they left no literary artifacts'.<sup>2</sup> This resonates with the many African historicities wherein Africans are narrated from the angle of those outsiders. They also lack historical written sources as victims of colonialism, imperialism and neoliberalism agendas. Because of this lack, 'Sadducees have been portrayed as whipping boys for Jewish and Christian writers' (Botha 1996; Bvumbi 2021:41). As Sadducees' stories have been told to suit the Christian and Jewish angles contrary to that of Sadducees, African storytelling too has been told from the negative perspectives to suit the narrative of the oppressor. This is likened to a similar atmosphere in which both Mazamisa and his grandparents, who encouraged him to study theology, were born and bred in colonial and apartheid South Africa (Mazamisa 1987:8). A South African atmosphere that censors freedom of speech and promotes selective systems favouring white people against the African majority.

2. Botha (1996:235–280) shows that scholars, such as Jeremias (1969:228–232), Mansoor (1971) and Vermes (1977:118–119), place a noteworthy emphasis on the varied character and complexity of the Sadducees. He considers the inquiry of Saldarini (1989:298–308) very useful, with appropriate 'care and restraint ... in characterizing them' (Botha 1996:235–280). He believes that Saldarini expressed caution about portrayals of the Sadducees. He says that Porton (1992) showed a good study within this perspective, although it is brief.

1. Post Babylon captivity, the Golah community returned to the land; they utilised the same strategy to avoid assimilation with those who had remained in Yehud. For scholarly work around Gola community (see Cataldo 2011; Glissman 2019; Guite 2018; Middlemas 2005).

Although Sadducees are narrated from the angle favouring the outsider, 'their personalities do show the aristocratic level within its religious, social, and political context' (Bvumbi 2021:41–42; Regev 2006). This is also part of a positioning that gives a glimpse of understanding their uniqueness within the context of greater society. This class dynamic had an effect on their ability, although they could not utilise it to counter the wrong narration done to them by their equal contenders beyond Jewish traditions.

On the other hand, the aristocratic element of the Sadducees reveals the layer of the first generation of African activists' leaders within the context of resisting colonialism. Many of them were products of missionary schooling, with the ethical standards of their missionary mentors. Like Sadducees without their own literary sources, the literary bias of African activist leaders of the first generation will also have the limitations that the Sadducees had. The aristocratic characteristics inherent from their missionary mentors have been the fundamental layer within these generations of African leaders, such as Julius Nyerere of Tanzania (Zalanga 2016), Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia (Morsy-Misriqiya 2023), Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana (Hausler 2017), Namdi Azwike of Nigeria (Nwagbara 2012), Eduardo Mondlane of Mozambique (Sansone 2014), Kamuzu Banda of Malawi (Drumhiller & Skvorc 2023), Rev. J.L. Dube of African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa (Mzondi 2021), and many others.

The primary sources for understanding the Sadducees include Josephus and the New Testament (Bvumbi 2021:41), while Eurocentric churches and missionary schools have been crucial for uncovering the first generation of African leaders. Although not classified within the era of the first African generation of leaders, Mazamisa's time of birth, 10 August 1942, classifies him among those who, many of them, are also products of the Eurocentric church and missionary schooling (Hombana 2024). Thabo Mbeki, Steve Biko (Mba 2017) and Chris Hani (Longford 2020) are among the second-generation African leaders who fall within Mazamisa's age mates. This shows that, unpopular as they are, Mazamisa's grandparents are among the first generation of African leaders. However, they were not in the limelight or activism of political consciousness like Mandela, Tambo, Govan Mbeki (Mbeki & Philip 1992), and others. No wonder seeing theology playing an important role in the liberation of the people through the context of Luke 10:25–37 became an inspiration they imparted to their grandson (Mazamisa 1987:8).

Both Mazamisa's grandparents and the first generation of African leaders have similarities with the Sadducees on the basis that they have a posture of being the first to formulate an organised identity in a difficult situation. They are pioneers of that which is not perfect or ultimate, but aimed to be the best weapon against the oppressor through the future generations beyond them. They are like the roots of a tree or the foundation of a house, providing essential support but not representing the full scope of the mission against the

oppressors of colonialism and apartheid. They are not visible as roots because their's is a hard mission deepening themselves for strength to support the emerging on the surface. As a foundation, they are to be worth in weight to carry the posture of the structure of the whole house.

As it is in the 'pre-Maccabean era, the Maccabean era, and the post-Maccabean era that the Sadducees situated their origins and manifestations within the Second Temple period' (Bvumbi 2021:43), so is the first generation of African leaders through the pre-colonialism era, colonialism era and post-colonialism era.

## Pharisean perspective

Bvumbi (2021:46) states that:

[S]cholars regard the years leading up to the Maccabean revolt (167–160 BCE) to have been fertile ground for the fervent Jewish sectarianism (Justiss 2016:3); and the earliest mention of the Pharisees appearing during the time of Jonathan Maccabee, 152–142 BCE (*Ant.* 13:171; Kampen 1988), this implies that sectarianism existed before the consciousness of the written context. Based on the literary sources, the Pharisees emerged during the Hasmonian period. (152–163 BCE; *War* 15:1; Justiss 2016)

In the African context, the wave of the Pharisees formation carries more diverse experiences of the realities, which are not uniform, but reactions prompted by different conditions and consciousness of continuing levelling the liberating ground for the African identity. This is the second-generation phase in which Mazamisa, Thabo Mbeki, Steve Biko, Chris Hani, and others with diverse missions and potential fall within. As within the first generation against colonialism and imperialism, there were silent ideologies and traditions that had automatic realities of diversity towards the continued unfolding of the African leadership identities, the second generation had the task to shape the African leadership identity towards an extension and entrenching of matters which were not entrenched in the first generation.

While the Sadducees can be likened to the first-generation posture of African leaders in the post-colonial context, the Pharisees represent an emerging identity, the second generation, developing from the foundations laid by the Sadducees, as a response to colonialism and apartheid. Therefore, the first generation of African leaders, across different realities of time span, can be viewed as the ground on which the second generation of leaders, with a broader scope that focuses on colonialism and apartheid, has emerged. This is the generation that cannot divorce itself from the realities of the first generation, as it had been the youth generation of the first-generation time.

This is the generation of leaders who were groomed by the first generation of the post-colonial era. As OR Tambo groomed Thabo Mbeki and others politically, Mazamisa's grandparents encouraged him on the path of liberation theology. The second generation was both privileged by time



and age to see that colonialism was not the end of the injustices towards the African context: socially, economically, politically, religiously, educationally, culturally and otherwise. These are leaders who took the baton from the first generation with a new reality, different from that of the first generation. The language of colonialism alone as the common enemy was not enough to sustain the African new identity in the path of growth and development.

This is the generation that began to question the stereotype of Eurocentric superiority by asserting the consciousness of acceptance of the African identity as an equal partner with any other racial identity in world affairs. Thabo Mbeki, among many, represents this generation which he cemented through his speech known as 'I am an African'. This is a speech that had both inward and outward conscientisation as part of defining and accepting that both Africans and other races are created in the image of God.

This generation went on to recognise that the continental identity of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) must be refined to the African Union (AU) to boost the effective levels which were not there before (Murithi 2007; Nwebo 2018). This has been a reality way forward for strengthening African unity as strength against external dominance and an internal mechanism of advancing critical approaches towards sustainable developments, which are part of the critical bedrock towards building Africa at peace with herself, her people and the world. This continental approach stirs African leaders to move away from the individualistic approaches towards the continental consciousness, which recognises that Africa's development is intertwined from all its regions. This balanced approach, which goes beyond a one-sided view, resonates with Mazamisa's consciousness of navigating through a dialectical approach, reconciling the conflict through recognising the centre through common interests.

The emergence of the New Partnership of African Development (NEPAD) is one of the symbolic consciousnesses of that extension from the second generation, forging the internal ways of dealing with the issues relevant for Africa to stand on its own identity different from that of the colonial and apartheid era (Tawfik 2008). Like the Pharisees recognising the oral traditions of their forefathers, the second generation was beginning to recognise the indigenous knowledge system as part of the reservoir from which Africa must draw strength. In line with Mazamisa's perspective, which advocates not merely offering money to beggars on the street but rather addressing the deeper systemic causes of such realities, this approach calls for the courage to ask difficult questions and to implement innovative, contextually grounded solutions that confront the enduring challenges of the past.

This is moving beyond the blame game by recognising that the best way to deal with the problem is to identify ways in which one should be solution-oriented rather than a problem glorifier. As part of building a culture of responsibility and creating a bridge against the wrongs of the past, the African

Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)<sup>3</sup> as a wing within NEPAD under AU was established in 2003. This act, beyond colonial divides of African nation states, serves to be an iron sharpening another iron, with intentions of African countries being not antagonistic to each other, but serving to strengthen each other from both areas of their weaknesses and advantages.

This mechanism of building bridges for African nations through the leaders within the second-generation African leadership shows the importance of what Mazamisa calls dialectical reconciliation. This combination of exegesis and hermeneutics is characterised by the progression of a hermeneutical circle or the completion of the spiral movement (Hombana 2024). It is this completion of the spiral movement that stirs African leadership in the second generation to build bridges with the understanding of avoiding continuous conflicts that always make the ordinary citizens pay the highest price through their blood.

Raila Odinga (Maina 2024), who had been a staunch political opponent of President Arab Moi (Winder 1994), President Mwai Kibaki (Mwiandi 2015), President Uhuru Kenyatta (Omulo 2023) and President William Ruto (Agola 2023), in Kenya, falls within this second-generation African leadership which understands the power of dialectical reconciliation. In all the contestations he had with the above fellow Kenyan leaders, he understood that the greater mission is always above personal interest through building bridges. As Pharisees realise that written law is not complete without oral law, African leadership is incomplete without building bridges through tools like the APRM, for the benefit of the greater good of the African continent.

This phase of looking inward with an objective vision availed the APRM as part of benchmarking and time framing the approaches towards the realities of what Africa needs for it to become the continent at its best functionality for its billion population. This second generation moved away from the unilateral blame view towards a direction of putting measures of accountability, inclusivity and partnership through regional blocs such as Ecowas (Yabi 2010), EAC (Binda 2017), SADC (Mapuva 2014), being way of seeing leadership as task for service to the people and not chieftaincy.

In this generation, constitutional democracy has become the guiding pillar, which contradicts the old leadership guards who are still holding power and brokering like-minded individuals through militaristic and autocratic authorities such as Museveni (Lubogo 2014) and Kagame (Uwizeyimana 2020). This constitutional democracy is slowly but surely becoming a political leadership identity contradicting and differing with those who stick to political leadership office for long. Yoweri Museveni of Uganda is among those old guards symbolising the militaristic and autocratic leadership which is not embracing limitation towards the term of office.

3. For perspectives around APRM, see Hope (2005) and Kanbur (2004).

According to Mazamisa (1987), the dialectical reconciliation:

[I]s the incessant pendular motion from the whole to its parts and from the parts to the whole which, if consistently executed, can prevent one-sidedness and cure us from becoming fixated upon one particular view of the way. (pp. 156–157)

This second-generation approach shows to be a learned leadership style from the first generation that continues the vision of leaders such as Nelson Rholihlahla Mandela in the creation of a rainbow nation in the post-apartheid era in South Africa.

The Pharisees' twofold law approach, through the oral law supplementing the written law, shows this dialectical reconciliation approach within the domain of the Second Temple era and continuation of influencing the Christian tenets of faith, which uphold the logos and the Rhema as important posture within their religious identity. This dialectic approach of written and oral law, and its balanced perspective, is not surprising, as, over two centuries, the proto-Pharisaic ideology acted to counter the Hellenistic influence in Palestine (Smith 1956). It means that the Pharisees, as a second grouping after the Sadducees, had a dualistic approach which resisted the Hellenistic imperial onslaught (Bvumbi 2021:47). It utilised the era in a manner that was like a creative amoeba style of leadership, wherein the ability to take the good and resist the bad from the opponent was at play.

This creative amoeba style of leadership is what Mazamisa, through his dialectical reconciliation, saw as the key to the New Testament theology and all spheres of leadership identity, starting from African leadership. It avoids the extreme polarisation possibilities found within African biblical hermeneutics and the Western biblical hermeneutics, structuralists, and materialists, or the black and white antagonisms (Hombana 2024). It goes for a bridge-building pattern that recognises that all are created in the image of God.

This bridge-building pattern acknowledges that both the African worldview and the Western worldview have important values to learn from each other without a superiority complex mentality or approach. This is what the beatific comradeship exegetical-hermeneutical study of Luke 10:25–37 anchors and conscientises about (Mazamisa 1987). It confronts the blame game and self-justifications through the spirit of compassion. It goes beyond the dimensions of entitlement, status, class and religiosity by showing the importance of dealing with the challenges in a pragmatic and compassionate manner.

## Essenean perspective

Nodet (1997) calls 'the Essenes the third school and associates them with the Sadducees and Pharisees' (Bvumbi 2021:49). This confirms Justiss's (2016:3) assertion that 'the years leading up to the Maccabean revolt (167–160 BCE) were fertile ground for fervent Jewish sectarianism'. On the other

hand, Josephus specifies the Essenes as 'a group that came into existence under Jonathan, ca. 150 BCE' (*Ant.* 13.171). This again shows that Essenes were indeed the last in the order of the Sadducees and Pharisees to originate (Bvumbi 2021:49).

The Essenes, as the third group that Josephus spoke about, are likened to what one calls the third generation from the post-colonial era in the leadership reflection of the African perspective. This is a generation that has features or characteristics that are totally different from those of the first and the second generation of African leadership, yet inheriting much from the two generations.

Schiffman (1992) views the Essenes as 'a breakaway group from the Sadducees; those who broke away were unwilling to accept the status quo established in the aftermath of the Maccabean revolt' (Bvumbi 2021:49). Wise, Abbeig and Cook (1996) view the Zadokite separation as 'coming twenty years before the arrival of the Teacher of Righteousness' (Bvumbi 2021:49). This broke away of the Essenes has its distinct from that of the Pharisees through its radical stand against the status quo. It also employs the posture of a total rejection of cooperation with Sadducees, even where common interests exist. Within the principle of not accepting the status quo, the third generation of African leaders does share this similarity with the Essenes. Theirs has denialism of accepting and continuing in the pace and postures of the first and the second generations. There is a sense of radicalism and a grassroots conscious sense of urgency through these crops of leaders who are totally unique from the traditions of the first and second generations.

As the Essenes are centrally known by their total breakaway from all total religious attachment with their physical detachment, there is an element of a shift of new leadership emerging within the African leadership. Such emerging African leadership is totally shifting from the features that are associated with the first and the second generations. This generation is rising with a totally different posture from the previous generations. Africa is beginning to detach itself from the political lineages and circles that have been embraced as traditions and norms of political leadership dynasties or comradeship.

With the long roots of Pan Africanism entrenched within the first and the second generation, their voice and actions have not undergone a total shift and posture like the arrival of a new generation of leaders who are taking the tempo to heights, which were mostly suppressed because of colonial stronghold and times. As Nkrumah and Thomas Sankara (Leshoele 2017), among others, can be viewed as the first and second generation of leaders who had fundamental firebrands of Pan Africanism, their atmospheres did not lead them to the realities beyond the established status quo. Patrice Lumumba (Isike & Abutudu 2012) and Steven Bantu Biko, as of the first and second generation, too, did not live to that unto that realisation of the marks of the atmosphere of the third generation propelling radicalism to be clothed within Pan Africanism. Julius Malema (Mazwi 2020) and

Jacob Zuma (who belongs to the second generation of leaders) are prime examples of the breakaways through their Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) (Satgar 2019) and Mkhonthe We Sizwe Party (MKP) (Makgamatha 2024). Breakaway political parties, which are propelled by extreme radicalism, are claiming the Pan Africanism identities and postures. Ibrahim Traore who took power through coup in Burkina Faso is also sensitising with his extreme radicalism against the former colonial master dominance (Faso 2022). Bassirou Diomaye Faye, the new President of Senegal, is also dismantling the colonial master domination treaties by totally practicalising the sovereignty of his country (Kohnert 2024). Bobi Wine in Uganda (Bareebe 2024) and Nelson Chamisa in Zimbabwe (Mwonzora & Hodzi 2021) are voices which are radical and staunch opponents of the long-standing personalities and organisations in government in their countries. Yoweri Museveni in Uganda and Emmerson Mnangagwa of Zanu PF in Zimbabwe (Marongedze & Gadzikwa 2023) are witnessing these breakaway voices demanding change, even from those who are known to have been liberators of their countries from colonialism and oppression.

Within the African leadership context, their radicalism has different approaches as some manage to win the power of governance while others break away and continue to be totally stand-alone, which remain victims of the ruling powers of the day. Many times, such breakaway voices with extreme radicalism do not find themselves at the centre rhythm of the majority government in the continent. However, their message seems to be pro-the masses, their extreme radicalism being the sting that turns to undo the possibilities of winning the centre because of the denial of inclusivity and balanced approach, recognising to resolve the injustices of the past through the 'building bridges' approach which Mazamisa's 'dialectica reconciliae' stands for (Hombana 2024).

## Reflection

Within the context of the reader, the text and two horizons in reflection to Prof. Welile Mazamisa's Contestation of identities: leadership reflection through Afrocentric lessons of perspectives in the chronological originations of the Sadducees, Pharisees and Essenes in the Second Temple era, reveals a leadership which has emerged within the oppressive system. Like biblical Moses emerging within the Egyptian oppressive system to the Hebrews, and Nelson Mandela within the oppressive apartheid system of South Africa, so is Mazamisa navigating his life humanly, theologically and scholarly within the oppressive system. As an outcome of a reliable lived experience from their entire life at the inhuman receiving end of apartheid theology (Hombana), his hermeneutics reveals the interpretation that serves as a bridge between theology and leadership, which is divided based on race.

In the context of the Sadducees' rigidity, Pharisees' firm flexibility, and Essenes' isolationistic radicalism in the Second Temple era, Mazamisa shows a firm flexibility that recognises the importance of upholding the good from all sides of the

two horizons. This is exemplified by his enduring, patient and purpose-driven character cemented through his early years as a trainee (Umtata) and ordained minister at Worcester-Zwelethamba in 1967, scholarship studies in the Netherlands in 1977, University of Cape Town academic life (1988–2009) and ministry. Unlike the Sadducees, whose first-generation outlook was one-dimensional, or the Essenes, whose third-generation stance drifted into isolationist radicalism, Mazamisa advocates a balanced approach. He shows that drawing on the strengths of both horizons offers a timeless hermeneutical method that should guide interpretation.

While Sadducees and Essenes have been trapped by rigidity and isolationistic radicalism at its extreme, Pharisees demonstrated a balanced approach of firm flexibility, recognising the strategies and tactics which are in par with the building bridges of both the oppressor and the oppressed, the employer and the employee, the rich and the poor, the white and the black. It looks at the progressive sides of issues rather than on the digression side of issues through continuous blame games.

## Conclusion

As the Second Temple groups' origination context, Sadducean, Pharisees and Essenes perspectives had rigidity, firm flexibility and isolationistic radicalism in their leadership contestation identities; so is the African organisation origination context, through first generation, second generation and third generation, the three Afrocentric different generation leadership contestations of identities. As the Pharisees' grouping perspective builds bridges through twofold law, written and oral law, so the second generation builds bridges through firm flexibility, through inclusive consensus in regional blocs and continental leadership through the AU. As the Pharisees and the second generation show firm flexibility through twofold law and inclusivity, Mazamisa shows it through the perspective of two horizons.

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## Competing interests

The author declares that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them



in writing this article. The author declares that their PhD supervisor is not part of this article.

## Author's contributions

A.E.B. is the sole author of this research article.

## Ethical considerations

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