Scriptura 116 (2017:1), pp. 1-20 http://scriptura.journals.ac.za
ttp://dx.doi.org/10.7833/116-1-1339

CURRENT TRENDS AND PATTERNS IN AFRICAN BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA: MYTH OR FACT?*

Elelwani B Farisani
University of South Africa

Abstract

Madipoane Masenya and Hulisani Ramantswana (2012:598-637) have argued that 18 years into the democratic dispensation, South African Old Testament scholarship is still trapped in Eurocentric methods of interpreting the biblical text, deliberately avoiding any meaningful dialogue with the African context. Accordingly, this article examines the role of African Biblical Hermeneutics in the current South African context. In the first section we will engage with Christo Lombaard's assertion that African Biblical Hermeneutics has not succeeded in its endeavour because it does not use exegesis in its methodological approach. We will also dialogue with another Western Biblical scholar, Gerrie Snyman, who uses the concept of whiteness to engage with his Western Afrikaner context. We will then move on to discuss the three poles of African Biblical Hermeneutics, before focusing on two trends and patterns in African Biblical Hermeneutics, namely, Black biblical hermeneutics and African Feminist hermeneutics. In this last section, we want to examine several challenges facing African Biblical Hermeneutics in the post-Apartheid context. We will start off by locating ourselves in the post-Apartheid context. We will then move on to spell out what the role of African Biblical Hermeneutics could be in the post-Apartheid context.

Key Words: African Biblical Hermeneutics; African Context; Appropriation; African Feminist; Hermeneutics; Black Theology

Introduction

The choice of topic for this article was informed by two things: The first is an article by Madipoane Masenya and Hulisani Ramantswana (2012), in which they show that 18 years into the democratic dispensation, South African Old Testament scholarship is still trapped in Eurocentric methods of interpreting the biblical text, deliberately avoiding any meaningful dialogue with the African context; the second factor was the apparent dismissive attitude by some amongst Western Biblical Hermeneutics (WBH) of African Biblical Hermeneutics (ABH) as a wishful thinking or a myth.

The focus of this article therefore is to examine the role of some **c**urrent trends and patterns in ABH in post-Apartheid South Africa.

This will be done in the following four stages. First, we engage with Christo Lombaard's assertion about what he calls ABH's 'false Pieties'. Second, we discuss Gerrie Snyman's hermeneutics on whiteness. The article shows that Snyman takes his own context

* This article arises from the author's inaugural address in 2013, which was reviewed in January 2015 and reworked, however, due to unforeseen circumstances, there was a delay in the resubmission for publication.

seriously in reading the biblical text. Third, the article demonstrates that the interpretation of the biblical text in Africa has three key elements or poles, namely the pole of the biblical text, the pole of the African context, and the pole of appropriation. It is here where two current trends in ABH, namely Black theology and African Feminist theology, will be used to show how appropriation takes place.

And, finally, the article spells out the role of ABH in the current South African context.

Christo Lombaard: African Biblical Hermeneutics' false Pieties?[1]

In his article "The relevance of Old Testament science in/for Africa: two false pieties and focussed scholarship", *OTE* 19/1 (2006), Christo Lombaard (2006:144) argues that "the calls for Old Testament scholarship to be (more) relevant to the African continent have fallen into a number of traps, or 'false pieties'". He goes on to mention two of these 'false pieties' as "the preference for hermeneutics to exegesis", and "the conviction that the discipline must, and can, be inherently African/contextual/relevant" (2006:144). Accordingly, Lombaard is concerned that exegesis has not been taken seriously by what he calls hermeneutical-theological studies. He argues that "…this *chic-ness* of hermeneutical-theological studies is a false piety in our own consciousness" (2006:147). He explains further that it is "…a piety, if one wants – that hermeneutics outranks exegesis, means that we continue to underachieve exegetically on the international scene. For this there is no need; the strength of the South African Old Testament guild is exegesis" (2006:147). Several questions may be in order here. First, is exegesis the only strength of Old Testament? How about the need to bring the results of exegesis in dialogue with the context of the reader? Second, is the international scene the only benchmark in the interpretation of the biblical text? What is the role of the national scene? Shouldn't both the national and international scenes play complementary roles in our interpretation of the Bible?

Second, he argues that Africanisation is "about incorporating African and other religions into the Bible. This is a different issue – a new scripture for all/ many religions – to ours here" (2006:147). Lombaard should be aware that calls for Africanisation and contextualisation are not about mere incorporation of "Africa and other religions" in the Bible, as he claims. Africanisation is of the firm view that "Africa offers worldviews (ontologies) and knowledge systems (epistemologies) that are due to have a significant and transformative impact on theory and practice, particularly. … Africanisation … has an agenda that far exceeds mere importation into and adjustment to Africa. Africanisation should also aim to export African ontologies and epistemologies to the world, reaching far beyond the coastlines of this continent" (CTF, 2016:3). Accordingly, Africanisation and contextualisation of the Old Testament cannot be additions and addendums, but they need to be part of the reading and interpretation process.

To this end, Lombaard lists three problems he has with Africanisation/contextualisation/ relevance hermeneutics, namely blind spots, seeking affirmation and an impossible enterprise.

[1] Although other works of Lombaard have been consulted, the discussion in this section is based mainly on his article "The relevance of Old Testament science in/for Africa: two false pieties and focussed scholarship", *OTE* 19/1 2006:144-155 for two main reasons. First, in this article, Lombaard clearly and openly articulates his views on the relevance of Old Testament science in/for Africa and then goes on to highlight some weaknesses of ABH. Second, his critique of ABH has not been fully appreciated and engaged with within ABH circles.

Blind Spots

Lombaard argues that Africanisation/contextualisation/relevance hermeneutics does not accord the Biblical text its 'authentic' place as a book of faith:

> In an earlier study on the ways in which the Bible had been employed both in support of and in opposition to apartheid (Lombaard 2001a:69-87), I was led to the conclusion that, however lofty a cause it is that one seeks to hold up, whenever the Bible is called in support, it is misinterpreted. Purposefully formulated bluntly, I submitted 'that the Bible cannot legitimately be used for modern-day political pronouncements. The use of the Bible to discuss politics subverts its intentions in two ways: the contextual messages of the ancient texts are largely discarded, and the biblical texts habitually serve but to legitimate. Neither of these features accords the Bible its authentic place as a book of faith. The use of the Bible for political assertions should therefore not be regarded as warranted practice (Lombaard 2001a:85; 2006:147).

Let's make few observations from the above paragraphs. First, Lombaard seems to regard the use of the Bible either in support of or against apartheid as misinterpretation of the Bible. One wonders how one can equate both the misuse of the Bible to support an evil system which was declared a crime against humanity by the United Nations and a heresy by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) on the one hand and the use of the Bible as a site of struggle against apartheid on the other hand, on the same equal footing? Were the same methodological approaches employed by both camps? Second, he seems to discourage the use of the Bible in politics. However, he does not seem to define what he means by politics. Furthermore, the same biblical text that he does not want to taint through involvement in politics is already a product of its own political, social, religious context. Third, he seems to believe that the Bible has "its authentic place", but he does not indicate where this place is located.

Following both Heyns (1997:388) and le Roux (1995:169; 185**),** Lombaard concludes by stating that "Being 'relevant' and 'contextual' is reduced to being politically correct" (2006:147) in African/Black Hermeneutics.

Seeking Affirmation

Lombaard's second problem with African Biblical hermeneutics is that instead of reading the Bible exegetically, they simply seek affirmation from the text. He argues:

> Another dynamic, particularly apparent among black academics reading the Bible 'in' and/or 'for' Africa, is that one senses some sort of deep-lying insecurity. It is as if when reading the Old Testament, or other literature from the Ancient Near East (cf. Anum 2000:457-473; Holter 2000:30-34; Yamauchi 2004:209), this is done with the purpose of seeking personal and cultural affirmation (cf. Ukpong 2000:11-28). These ancient texts are mined for possible references or allusions to Africa, or the languages for linguistic influences on modern African languages, and indications found are presented with a *voila!* kind of attitude (cf. Adamo 2003:10-11; 19-20,22-24) (2006:148).

It is interesting to note here that although Lombaard accuses African Biblical hermeneutics of being nothing more than an insecure exercise led by affirmation seeking black academics reading the Bible, he does not adequately explore the insecurity that is engulfing all 'black academics'. So according to Lombaard, black academics are so insecure that they need the Bible for affirmation. His assertion above assumes that it is only black academics who are involved in contextualising and Africanising the biblical text.

Lombaard concludes this affirmation discussion by declaring that:

> Contextualisation/Africanisation/relevance which seeks foremost to play the "I'm okay, you're okay" kind of game, applied to any kind of literature (religious or otherwise), cannot come to authentic understandings of the selves or the texts concerned, or the interrelation between these two (2006:149).

It would be interesting to see how according to Lombaard, African Biblical Hermeneutics plays the 'I'm okay, you're okay' kind of game. It would also be interesting to see him understanding that ABH has several branches with different methodological approaches to the biblical text and that a generalisation of these various approaches is not helpful to anyone, including himself as the point he tries to make gets blurred in the midst of this unhelpful generalisation.

An impossible Enterprise

According to Lombaard, Contextualisation, Africanisation has proven itself over the years to be an impossible enterprise. He argues:

> For decades now, the clarion call has been heard time and again: the Bible must be studied in a way that is peculiar to Africa. The terms 'Africanise' and 'contextualise' and 'be relevant' are often uttered with emotive force in the voice, and bear no questioning. They have become holy cows, which may not be nudged out of the way, even if they impede passage. However, during these decades, has such contextualisation been done even once in a way that could be regarded as, finally, something satisfactorily, uniquely African? Nobody who implores us to be contextual can really tell us how. Though generalities abound, examples do not (2006:149).

It is clear from the above generalisation that Lombaard is either not familiar with the most seminal work done by ABH scholars nationally and internationally or he is consistent in his dismissal of their efforts as not scholarship enough.

Lombaard concludes as follows:

> I therefore do not believe there is or can be such a thing as 'contextual' Old Testament science in the sense that the scholarship would then be distinctively African. Old Testament studies are in no way unique among the academic disciplines in this respect; it applies to all forms of intellectual activity (Lombaard, 2006:150).

Does Lombaard dismiss all work done by African Biblical scholars in their various methodological approaches as not Old Testament science enough?

So according to Lombaard, the second 'false piety' of contextualising the biblical text revolves around three issues namely: the insistence on applying the Bible too directly to our issues, the search for affirmation/identity, and the belief in what has turned out to be an impossible enterprise (Lombaard, 2006:151).

Lombaard then prescribes exegesis as the heart of South African Old Testament science. He states:

> Our subject is the Old Testament – its text, theology, languages, history, cultural background and related matters. Exegesis is our strength. By pursuing precisely that strength in a focused way, all the constituencies involved – university, church and society – are best served (Lombaard, 2006:152).

But surely exegesis cannot be the only methodological approach to the Old Testament texts? Lombaard's major fallacy is that he assumes that black academics do not approach the text exegetically at all.

Having presented Lombaard's views on the ABH's approach to the biblical text, we will

proceed as follows. First, we will engage with his assertion that ABH has not succeeded in its endeavour because it does not use exegesis in its interpretation of the biblical text. Second, we will use the works of another Western Biblical scholar, Gerrie Snyman, who engages both with his Western Afrikaner context and African Biblical Hermeneutics, to dialogue with Christo Lombard. Third, we will then move on to discuss two trends and patterns in ABH, focusing on how they appropriate the biblical text. And, finally, we will examine several changes facing ABH in the post-Apartheid context. We will start by locating ourselves in the post-Apartheid context. We will then quickly move on to spell out what the role of ABH could be in the post-Apartheid context.

A Dialogue with Christo Lombaard

Lombaard makes an important point about the significance of exegesis in how we interpret the biblical text. We will address this matter later in the concluding section. For now, we would like to make the following observations concerning his views discussed earlier, on ABH.

- First, it is important for us to note here that Lombaard represents the views of some within Western Biblical Hermeneutics, who see ABH as a failed project. LeMarquand (2000:74) argues that the missionaries of the West who entered Africa failed to understand its depth and richness. These missionaries were white men carrying a biblical message wrapped in European Enlightenment clothing. They were culturally blind and racially prejudiced: "Africa had been weighed in the Western balance and found wanting: only by becoming less African could one become more Christian" (LeMarquand 2000:74). Becoming less African translated to what Ukpong (2000:14-15) calls the de-emphasis of Africa's presence and its contribution to the biblical story. Knut Holter (2000:570), a white Norwegian biblical scholar, who champions the cause of ABH, in turn, refers to a process of deliberate de-Africanisation in Western biblical scholarship (Snyman, 2006:188).
- Second, African scholars have made a case for the centrality of the African context in their hermeneutics. To Africa, Christianity was the slave master's religion (Yorke 2000:129), not only bringing 'the gospel', but also a hermeneutic which McEntire (2000:256) describes as 'imported fundamentalism'. This fundamentalism argues a radical discontinuity between Christianity and African Traditional religion. The Bible is used to undermine indigenous religious systems (Mafu 2000:400). The missionaries looked up to God for rain and the indigenous religious system in Zimbabwe, for example, looked up to the Matopo hills for answers to droughts (Mafu 2000:407). Dibeela (2000:388) regards the Christianity brought to Botswana a "heavenward fundamentalism of the West which holds the church sedated and groggy such that it accepts the poor human condition as from God" (cf Snyman, 2006:190).
- Third, Lombard disregards several trends in ABH before accusing us of not reading the biblical text exegetically.
- Fourth, Exegesis itself involves getting a message out of the religious, political, cultural, etc. context of the text. The text itself may be oppressive and exclusive to women and other groups of people. Lombaard does not show us how exegesis will enable us to read oppressive texts. Furthermore, he gives an impression that exegesis itself is a neutral process which does not take into account both the ideology of the reader and of the text.

  I have elsewhere argued that there is no neutral text.

Our study of the text of Ezra-Nehemiah takes seriously the fact that this text is not neutral, it is embedded within an ideological world of its author, which suppresses and oppresses the voice of the marginalised group, namely the *am haaretz*. Having argued for the identification and analysis of ideologies in biblical texts, this article proposes an ideologically aware reading of biblical texts. Linked to this is the third point, namely, if black biblical hermeneutics has to have an impact in post-Apartheid South Africa, it does not only have to relate the text as is to the black context, it must also de-ideologise that particular text in the first place. For an unideologised reading may be counterproductive, in that instead of supporting and advancing the cause of the black and marginalised, such a reading may further marginalise them by further enslaving them with the 'revealed word of God (Farisani, 2010a:516; cf Farisani, 2002:642; 2003:27ff).

- Fifth, perhaps with few exceptions, every Biblical text was written to address a specific need or concern in a particular community. The biblical text was contextual to its original readers/hearers. So ABH cannot simply accept this message through *exegesis* without letting the message dialogue with the African context.
- Sixth, Lombaard is quick to lecture ABH on how to read the Bible, but he has not yet located himself as a reader of the biblical text in the post-Apartheid dispensation over against the role that exegesis has played in nurturing the apartheid ideology in South Africa. In other words, he will need to locate himself (as Snyman does) historically and presently in the current dialogue between WBH and ABH.
- Seventh, Lombaard argues that African/Black biblical hermeneutics is a theology which looks for affirmation in the biblical text, which renders it impossible to achieve the desired goal. He needs to be more specific here: Which trends in ABH are about affirmation? Not all trends in ABH have the same starting point, methodological approach, common desired/expected outcome, etc.
- Eighth, by his dismissal of African/Black Biblical Hermeneutics, Lombaard makes it difficult for any meaningful conversation to take place between ABH and himself. ABH should refuse to be treated as a junior partner in any conversation with WBH and should unapologetically claim its rightful space in theological debates.
- Ninth, contrary to Lombaard's assertion that ABH is a holy cow which does not allow for any debate or critique, the most vibrant and life-changing debates to the lives of black people in (South) Africa have been waged by ABH. There have been fierce debates within different trends of ABH.
- And finally, Reading the biblical text contextually has saved the lives of many people during apartheid and continues to do so in the era of HIV/Aids. This was shown by Tshenuwani Farisani's writings (1987; 1990)**,** wherein he shows that reading the Bible contextually has kept him alive in three separate detentions without trial in the Apartheid era. So for Farisani and many others, reading the Bible in an apartheid context was not so much a matter of luxury or choice, it was an existential need--It was a matter of life and death. The biblical text assisted them in coping with prison life of isolation, torture, etc. Today, the context has shifted a bit, but certain challenges have not changed yet: Racism, poverty, corruption, HIV/Aids, patriarchy etc. and it is important for some within Western Biblical Hermeneutics (WBH) to realise that African Biblical Hermeneutics(ABH) cannot afford the luxury of avoiding the context in its biblical interpretation.

It is important to note that although Lombaard is very critical of the role of context in biblical interpretation, Gerrie Snyman takes the context seriously in his biblical interpretation. This will become clear in the next section.

Gerrie Snyman's Hermeneutics

Gerrie snyman's hermeneutics on whiteness takes his own context seriously. Snyman deals with the role of ABH in showing how Western readers are shaped by whiteness as a system of power. Unlike Lombaard, Snyman is fully aware of the role of context in Biblical hermeneutics. The following issues attest to this observation.

- First, Gerrie Snyman identifies himself as a reader first before moving on to read the biblical text within his western context, specifically the Reformed Church.
- Second, unlike Lombaard, Gerrie Snyman (2006:184), being fully aware that context plays a significant role in the reading process, locates himself as a reader of the biblical text on three levels:
- Being *male*. Snyman is fully aware that by being male, he is automatically "part of that gender that has enforced heteropatriarchy on society, creating second class membership for those who do not conform to heteronormative patriarchy, i.e. women (cf. Snyman 2002) and gay men (cf. Snyman 2005b)".
- Being *white*, Snyman is aware he carries the "blame for racism, sometimes even to the point of being regarded as racist just for being white" (cf. Snyman 2005a).
- Being part of the *Western* population in South Africa, "means sharing the responsibility of colonialisation in terms of the West's intellectual heritage".
- Third, Gerrie Snyman's hermeneutics takes both the biblical text and his own context seriously. He engages his community on how to read the biblical text in the present day context. This is an endeavour that all interested in theologising cannot afford to ignore, on the pretext of doing *exegesis*.
- Fourth, Snyman does not dismiss ABH as Lombaard does. Instead, he engages with it. He attends and presents papers at the regular ABH section of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) which meets annually in the USA. As a show of confidence in Snyman's hermeneutics, the ABH organiners to our annual SBL meeting in 2010 held in Atlanta, requested him to be a respondent to articles in a book, The Africana Bible. The Africana Bible was a project which brought together African biblical scholars in the USA, diaspora, Southern Africa to write articles which foster a dialogue between the biblical text and their respective context, on each book of the Hebrew Bible.
- Fifth, Snyman engages in crucial dialogue with ABH as evidenced by his interaction with such books as the *Africana Bible*, *The Bible in Africa* and the famous dialogue on who is an authentic African scholar between himself and Madipoane Masenya (Mugambi 2003), etc.
- And finally, Snyman as editor of the journal *Old Testament Essays* has made history by publishing articles in African Indigenous Languages (Farisani, 2010c:497-626).

The discussion on Lombaard and Snyman's hermeneutics sets the scene for a discussion on current trends in African Biblical Hermeneutics. However, due to both space and time constraints we will focus only on Black theology and African Feminist theologies' hermeneutical approaches to the biblical text. This discussion is important to show that there is not just one trend in ABH. Second, the discussion below will indeed confirm that ABH takes seriously the context when interpreting the Bible in South Africa. And, finally, the

discussion will show that it is inaccurate to assert that not all trends of ABH use exegesis in reading the biblical text.

The Three Poles of African Biblical Hermeneutics

Generally speaking, the interpretation of the biblical text in Africa has three key elements or poles: the pole of the biblical text, the pole of the African context, and the pole of appropriation. Jonathan Draper has referred to this as a 'tripolar' approach (Draper 2001, 2002; West 2010:21).

The Text

ABH does not only take the context seriously, it also focuses on the biblical text using different methodological approaches in getting the message out of the text. Both West and Draper have shown that African biblical scholarship, like Western biblical scholarship, insists on distantiation.

The Bible is a collection of ancient texts, each produced in particular socio-historical contexts, and the task of biblical scholarship is 'to hear' the distinctive, ancient voice of the text within its own socio-historical context. Before the text can be brought into dialogue with the context, it must be given its own voice. This is done by locating the text historically, using historical-critical tools, and then situating the historical text sociologically, within a particular social context, using sociological tools. While Mosala, as we have seen, insists on particular sociological tools (historical-materialist sociology) (Mosala 1993), most African biblical scholars are more eclectic, using a whole range of sociological tools (West, 2010:30; cf. Ukpong 1996).

It is important to note here that there are some African scholars, who have employed "literary tools instead of historical-critical and sociological tools, preferring to locate the text within its linguistic, literary, or canonical contexts" (West 2004:30; Nadar 2006). It is clear, then, that different methodological approaches, including exegesis, are employed by scholars within ABH and that in critiquing them, one would specifically need to engage with identified methodological approach as opposed to brushing aside all efforts by ABH.

African Biblical scholars have never denied that their ideologies influence how they read the biblical text, "…the ideo-theological orientation of the biblical interpreter influences what it is in the text that is the focal point of historical-critical, sociological, and/or literary analysis. Inculturation hermeneutics concentrates on the religio-cultural dimensions of the biblical text, liberation hermeneutics on the socioeconomic dimensions, feminist hermeneutics on the gender dimensions, and postcolonial on the imperial dimensions" (West, 2010:30).

What is important though, in African biblical hermeneutics, is that the biblical text is allowed to speak in its own voice in the African context, addressing various challenges pertinent to the African context.

The Context

It will be shown later in our discussion of both Black theology and African Feminist theology, that *contra* Lombaard's assertion, ABH in general takes seriously the African context in its interpretation of the biblical text. African biblical interpretation is overt about the context from which and for which the biblical text is interpreted. As West accurately puts it, "African biblical scholarship tries to be as thorough in its analysis of the details of

African contexts as it has been about the details of the biblical text (Draper 2002), using a whole array of historical and sociological tools" (West, 2010:30).

However, here too the "ideo-theological orientation of the biblical interpreter influences what it is in the context that is the focal point of analysis. Inculturation hermeneutics concentrates on the religio-cultural dimensions of the context, liberation hermeneutics on the socioeconomic dimensions, feminist hermeneutics on the gender dimensions, and post-colonial on the colonial and neo-colonial dimensions" (West, 2010:30).

It follows therefore that Lombaard will need to be aware of the different emphasis of each of the trends in ABH, in order for him to enter into a meaningful conversation and critique of ABH without belittling it as he does in the article in question.

Appropriation

Gerald West reminds us that appropriation "offers an important starting point in understanding the different emphases in African biblical hermeneutics" (West, 2010:22).

Appropriation connects both text and context. Through appropriation, the reader facilitates a conversation or a dialogue between the text and the context. The reader is aware that the text was not originally written for South Africans, but was written for Jews, Greeks, etc. The message from the text must first be retrieved. The reader must also be aware of the challenges within his/her particular context. The reader or scholar comes with his/her baggage to the conversation process, namely his/her ideologies, values, beliefs, cultural/ theological formations etc.

It is important to note here that "interpreting the biblical text is never, in African biblical hermeneutics, an end in itself. Biblical interpretation is always about changing the African context" (West 2010:22).

West further explains the process of appropriation:

> Because the act of appropriation involves a dynamic, back and forth movement and engagement (Boff 1987:136), both the Bible and the context contribute to and constitute the ideo-theological orientation of any particular interpreter. But other aspects of the interpreter's experience and life interests also impart their imprint on one's ideo-theological orientation. This is why the interpreter's ideo-theological orientation is often not foregrounded in the interpretive act it seems to the interpreter to be a self-evident product of the biblical text, the context, and the interpreter's reality (West, 2010:23; see also West 2013).

Below we see how appropriation has taken place in two different trends of ABH, namely Black and African Feminist theologies.

Black Theology's Hermeneutics

Black Theology: A Brief Historical Overview

The discussion below is an abbreviated version of the earlier discussion on Black theology (Farisani 2010a). Its relevance here lies in the fact that it clearly demonstrates that contrary to Lombard's assertion, black theology does take seriously the importance of using exegesis in its interpretation of biblical text.

Motlhabi traces the origin of Black theology to approximately a century after the emergence of the first African Initiated Churches. For Motlhabi, this theology was aimed "largely at filling this gap and searching aggressively for theological answers to the problem of white domination and oppression. In this way it rejected white theology and its

interpretation of the Gospel, life and reality. It challenged the church's complacency with the status quo and its justifications of its complacency" (Motlhabi, 2008:2).

Motlhabi informs us that even though Black theology focused on racism at first, its focus was broadened to include issues such as class and gender discrimination "as cardinal sins of the same magnitude as racism" (Motlhabi, 2008:2). This view is also shared by others, as seen in various essays presented at two conferences in 1983.[2]

Maimela was concerned about the division between Black and African theology and he wanted to find a middle ground between two camps of African theologians: an 'enculturation' approach versus a liberation approach. According to Maimela (1994) the debate between the two camps was "largely based on misunderstandings, [which] raged for many years" – and strongly maintained that the "struggle for liberation is all-embracing" (1994). As he pleaded with both approaches at a conference:

> In a very important sense, the theme for our conference tries to bring together the two African approaches to theology, by linking African cultural and religious expressions to African struggles for total liberation from all forms of human oppression … reinforces the hope that African theologians should be able to find one another and work together because total liberation is a first priority for all Africans, regardless of whether they live in so-called independent Africa or Apartheid South Africa. There is therefore no excuse for us to continue living in our splendid theological isolation from one another: thus allowing our detractors to mislead us into believing that socio-political and economic liberation is more important than cultural liberation (Maimela 1994:4)

Sources of Black Theology

According to Goba black theology has the following four sources: the Bible, African tradition, black experience and critical theory (Goba, 1988:53-55; See also Hopkins, 1989:124). Mosala also uses four sources for his historical materialist Black Theology of Liberation. First, he refers to African Traditional Religions which teach black theology the significance of operating communally in the struggle. Second, he states black culture as the second source. In this regard he avers that "black theology ... will have to rediscover black working class and poor peasant culture in order to find for itself a materialist hermeneutical starting point" (Mosala, 1986a:185; Mosala, 1985:109; Mosala), 1986:30). The third source, according to Mosala, is the African Independent Churches (Mosala, 1986a):7; Hopkins, 1989:131.). The fourth and final source is the Bible.

Although many black theologians cited four sources in their quest for a black theology in South Africa, they used different ways of interpreting them. The focus of this article is on how the fourth source, namely the Bible, was used in a quest for a black theology and further on how an ideologically aware reading of biblical texts could strengthen our black theological discourse in South Africa today.

Mosala's Ideologically aware Black Biblical Hermeneutics

Mosala critiques both the historical-critical method, the social scientific method and black theology's uncritical exegetical starting point, which expresses itself in the notion that the Bible is the revealed "Word of God" (Mosala, 1989:6). Accordingly, Mosala argues that the notion of the Bible as "the revealed Word of God" leads to a false notion of the Bible as

---

[2] Mosala, IJ and Tlhagale, B. *The Unquestionable Right to be Free*. Johannesburg: Skotaville.

non-ideological, which may cause political paralysis in the oppressed people who read it (Mosala, 1989:19, 20).

Being fully aware of the role that exegesis plays in Biblical interpretation, he then proposes a new exegetical starting point. He states that "The social, cultural, political, and economic world of the black working class and peasantry constitutes the only valid hermeneutical starting point for a black theology of liberation" (Mosala, IJ 1986a:119-129; cf. also Mosala, 1989:21.). His hermeneutics is based on *struggle* as the key concept: "I argue that the category of struggle provides the lens for reading the text in a liberating fashion as well as the codes for unlocking the possibilities and limitation of the biblical texts" (Mosala, 1989:8). Mosala therefore sees the category of "the black struggle, from pre-colonial times to the present, as representing an important hermeneutical factor" (Mosala, 1989:123). He states the following: "I propose that, in this appropriation of black history and culture for purposes of appropriating biblical texts, the category of struggle will serve as a critical grid" (Mosala, 1989:12).

The category of struggle becomes an important hermeneutical factor not only in one's reading of one's history and culture but also in one's understanding of the history, nature, ideology, and agenda of the biblical texts (Mosala, 1989:9).

Consequently, a biblical hermeneutics of liberation, using the same tool of struggle as was used to interrogate the readers' history, culture, and ideology, must now address the question of the material conditions that constitute the sites of the struggles that produced the biblical texts (Mosala, 1989:9).

Mosala's analysis should not be interpreted as a total rejection of the biblical text as he sees the role of exegesis in his interpretation of the Bible. Key to Mosala's approach is the use of the socio-historical materialist method of interpretation to identify the ideology of the text. He explains this as follows: "I used a materialist method to delineate the struggles inherent in black history and culture; I will use a similar method to connect us with the struggles behind and in the text of the Bible" (Mosala, 1989:103).

Clearly Mosala believes that in order to unearth the ideology of the text, the exegete must identify the social, cultural, class, gender and racial issues that are at work in the biblical text (Mosala, 1989:34-5).

According to Mosala there is a reciprocal dialogue between black history and the Bible:

> Thus black culture and history as hermeneutical factors in black theology in South Africa ask questions of the biblical text that seek to establish ties with struggles for liberation in the biblical communities. Similarly, the liberating aspects of the biblical discourses interrogate black culture and history in the light of the values and goals of struggling classes in biblical communities (Mosala, 1989:152).

He therefore sees the task of black theology's hermeneutics as:

> …to go behind the dominant discourses to the discourse of oppressed communities in order to link up with kindred struggles. The task now facing a black theology of liberation is to enable black people to use the Bible to get the land back and to get the land back without losing the Bible. In order for this to happen, black theology must employ the progressive aspects of black history and culture to liberate the Bible so that the Bible may liberate black people. That is the hermeneutical dialectic (Mosala, 1989:153).

Contrary to Lombaard's assertion that ABH does not use exegesis in its interpretation of biblical text, Mosala clearly demonstrates the use of exegesis as a starting point for his historical materialist black theology of liberation. Moreover, Mosala's work is important, in

that it helps us to see how appropriation takes place in Black biblical hermeneutics, taking the African context seriously in its interpretation of the biblical text. In the next section, we discuss feminist hermeneutics.

African Feminist Hermeneutics

African Feminist hermeneutics also takes the African context of women oppression seriously in its interpretation of the biblical text. As part of this enterprise Southern African women scholars employ several approaches such as 'womanist' (Nadar 2003), 'bosadi' (Masenya 2001, 2005), a postcolonial Imbokodo (Nzimande 2008, 2010) and "African women's hermeneutics" (Haddad 2000), to mention just a few.

It is important to state briefly here that both men and society have played a major role in the oppression of women. It would also be incorrect to deny that men are the major oppressors of women. Right from infancy, men are taught the values and attitudes that make them chauvinistic. They are taught to shun emotions and gentleness because these emotions are 'womanish'. Thus men have been socially conditioned to be hard-hearted and oppressive (Ayanga, 1999:94; Oduyoye, 1995:45,61; Nasimiyu-Wasike, 1992103). Members of any society internalize the social values around them to such an extent that they view the societal norms as natural. Certain men believe that oppressive traits are part-and-parcel of their being human (Ayanga, 1999:94; Oduyoye, 1995:34, 54; Nasimiyu-Wasike, 1992103).

Culture and religion do also play a role in women's oppression (Maina, 1999:137; Oduyoye, 1992:10ff; Ammah, 1992:83-4). In other words, religion can be used as a tool either to enhance or limit women's participation in the leadership roles. Religious beliefs circumscribe leadership to men thereby legitimising male domination over females in political leadership roles (Maina, 1999:136; Oduyoye, 1995:15). Amongst others, Islam and Christianity could be cited as religions whose doctrinal imperatives legitimise male domination over women by circumscribing leadership to men (Qurán, 4:34, 2:28; Bible, Eph. 5:22-23, Tim. 2:11-12, 1 Cor. 14:34-35, Col. 3:18) (Maina, 1999:137; Oduyoye, 1995:9,101; Kanyoro and Oduyoye, 1992:2ff; Edet, 1992:34; Ammah, 1992:83-4; Fanusie, 1992:140ff).

As West states correctly, African feminist hermeneutics has been in dialogue with both the religion-cultural emphasis of inculturation hermeneutics (Mbuwayesango 1997) and the racial-economic-political emphasis of liberation hermeneutics (Mncube 1984; Mosala 1984; Plaatjie 2001), though the former is predominant. African feminist hermeneutics adopts the attitude of suspicion towards the biblical text of African liberation hermeneutics (West, 2010:26).

Although African feminist hermeneutics, like Black biblical hermeneutics, follows a structured and systematic analysis of both the African context and the biblical text, its distinctive feature is that its primary focus is "on gender and the systemic nature of patriarchy" (Okure 1993; Dube 2001; West, 2010:26).

As West argues:

> A methodological innovation in some African feminist hermeneutics has been its use of literary exegetical modes of analysis of the biblical text. While the predominant exegetical modes of analysis of both African inculturation and liberation hermeneutics have been socio-historical, with only a few voices advocating and using literary modes of exegesis (West, 2010:26; cf also Boesak 1984; West 1995).

Maluleke (2001:237) argues correctly that "African Women's theologies represent the most creative dimension of African theology during our times. There is no doubt that, in the past twenty years, no dimension of Christian theology in Africa has grown in enthusiasm, creativity, and quality like women's theology".

Women theologians have also challenged and renewed methodology, orientation, and the content of the curriculum in theological education across the world (Werner 2009:9). In Africa, they have reflected on the major challenges for African women theologians in theological education and have identified four major challenges that have faced, and still face, African women theologians who are members of the Circle: (1) redefining the identity of African women theologians; (2) promoting more women to study Theology and be on permanent staff; (3) including African women's theology in the theological curriculum; and (4) collaborating with male theologians (Phiri, 2008:1; see also WOCATI 2008:4; Werner 2009:10; Farisani, 2010:298). These are *very* serious issues in which all of us should be actively involved to ensure that our curricula not only takes note of them but places them at the centre of our curriculum design and practice.

It is important to note that due to time constraints, we have not focused on other methodological approaches such as: inculturation hermeneutics, post-colonial hermeneutics, Shift of gravity theologies, Translation theologies, Reconstruction theologies, Reading with theologies, African Independent Church theologies etc. All of these theologies take the African context seriously.

In conclusion, we would like to state that there are three poles in African biblical hermeneutics' interpretation of the biblical text, namely *text, context, and the reader's appropriation*. These three poles play an important role in their own right in ensuring that the whole process functions well.

Challenges facing African Biblical Hermeneutics Today

In this article we set out to examine the role of ABH in the current context. In the first section we engaged with Christo Lombaard's assertion that ABH has not succeeded in its endeavour because it does not use exegesis. We also dialogued with another Western Biblical scholar, Gerrie Snyman, who engages both with his Western Afrikaner context and African Biblical Hermeneutics. We then moved on to discuss several trends and patterns in ABH. In this last section, we want to examine several challenges facing ABH in the post-Apartheid context. We will start off by locating ourselves in the post-Apartheid context. We will then quickly move on to spell out what the role of ABH could be in the post-Apartheid context.

Where are we in South Africa Today?

We live in a new dispensation under a democratic government led by former freedom fighters who associated with the ideals espoused by several trends and patters of ABH. Before April 1994, it was clear who the enemy was: Apartheid. Today the enemy is evasive and difficult to pin down. However, ABH faces an equally challenging context.

Theologically, Masenya and Ramantswana (2012:598-637) argue that 18 years into the democratic dispensation, South African Old Testament scholars are still increasingly employing methods employed by Western Biblical Hermeneutics without taking into consideration the African context in their reading of biblical texts.

On the socio-economic front, we are still confronted by amongst others, the following challenges:

- The economic scale has not shifted much since 1994.
- Racism is still alive, breathing and kicking.
- Ethnicity is still rampant in communities and is also tearing churches apart.
- Land redistribution has moved at a snail's pace.
- The gap between the rich and the poor has widened to alarming proportions.
- Homophobia and xenophobia are still rearing their ugly heads.
- The moral fibre of our society, including that of our churches is fast decaying.
- Tenants of patriarchy are still fully entrenched in our families, churches, communities.
- Black people must still work three times more than their white counterparts in order to prove that they are capable of doing their job.
- HIV and AIDS still pose the greatest single threat to our communities.

But there are other emerging challenges as well:

- Crime is not only soaring, but increasingly violent.
- There is a pervasive air of public corruption.
- Efforts to make the public service more efficient have failed.
- Democratic institutions are battered.
- Inability to relate civilly to people of different cultures, viewpoints, religion etc.
- Broken families, communities and individuals.
- The abuse of children, women and the aged has reached terrifying levels.
- The global financial crisis (Masoga and Mathye, 2010:73).

What then, is the Role of African Biblical Hermeneutics in a Post-Apartheid Context?

- First, the South African society is still economically, racially, ethnically and religiously divided and it will take many more years before the divide is fully closed. Theologically, the divide will widen, if some in Western Biblical Hermeneutics continue to dismiss ABH as nothing but unscientific, affirmation theology, a failed project. etc.

  Both WBH and ABH need to engage on crucial conversation first, on how to theologise better taking into consideration the old and new challenges facing our context. This conversation will have to be based on respect for each other's positions.

  My primary concern about some in Western Biblical Hermeneutics is not only that they do not want to engage with the African context, but also that they rubbish the efforts of ABH. As long as this attitude persists, there will be no meaningful conversation between the two sides.
- Second, ABH must continue to insist that the following three aspects are important in any meaningful hermeneutics in our context: text, context, and the reader's appropriation.

  ABH must always remember that it is a branch of theology in its own right and that it does not need an affirmation or accreditation by Western Biblical Hermeneutics in order for it to be able to meaningfully interpret the biblical text. Rather than wasting time trying to justify its existence, ABH, should continue to focus on several issues

affecting African souls in the post-Apartheid South Africa, e.g. Racism, Poverty, Sexism, Patriarchy, Tribalism, HIV/AIDS etc.

- Third, Christo Lombaard is probably correct in asserting that exegesis should play an important role in our hermeneutics. Biblical scholars should be able to read Biblical languages and interpret different variants in order to avoid the trap of doing *eisegesis* as opposed to *exegesis*. ABH believes, however, that exegesis is just but one component of Hermeneutics, alongside the context and appropriation.
- Fourth, ABH should ask how semesterisation and downsizing the structures of our undergraduate degrees has affected "the current training and development of students of biblical theology and interpretation. We need to ask if there is no need to go back to some of the classical approaches coupled with current theories of social critical analysis?" (Masoga, 2013:1; cf also Farisani, 2010b:296).
- Fifth, there is a need for ABH to produce organic intellectuals who are not detached from their communities. Furthermore, these scholars should not see their role only as producing articles in SAPSE accredited journals, but they should believe in and be committed to engaging with the context in which they live and write. Ignoring the context by hiding behind exegesis will not only render our efforts irrelevant but it will also signal our insensitivity to the needs and cries of our own communities.
- Sixth, as Masoga and Mathye state, there is a need to do *theology for power*. They argue that as we theologise in the post-Apartheid context, we need to point out how power influences theology. They highlight some central questions in this endeavour: "How much of our theologizing is endorsed? Who listens to us? Who dialogues with us? Are institutions of learning having the credibility of communities of faith-practice? Have margins of doing theology shifted? What shifts them? Why are they shifting? How should we do theology now? What should it be called? How should we minister now? Is there a theological discourse that can speak to all South Africans?" (Masoga & Mathye, 2010:76).
- The seventh challenge is that theological education needs regular contact with the "existing realities of church life, involvement and close touch with the challenges of mission, ministry and life witness of churches today, but it also needs critical distance and a certain degree of autonomy from the daily pressures of church work and from the direct governing processes and power interests of church institutions" (Werner 2009:6; Duncan & Hofmeyr 2002:656; Mohler 1996:280; Farisani, 2010b:298).
- Eighth, there is a need for theology to reflect on its *missional* task both as a gift and calling. The following question will remain with us for centuries: "*how is theology to give relevant expression and faithful embodiment to the Gospel?* One wishes to submit that theology's *essence is missional – for the calling and action of God forms the identity of doing theology*. It becomes important for theology to remain within the *kurios* mandate while reading the signs of times (the *kairos*)" (Masoga and Mathye, 2010:78).
- Ninth, theologians have for some time now been talking about Africanising and contextualising the curriculum. Introducing a curriculum in which teaching and learning happen through an African language will go a long way to Africanise or contextualise the theology curriculum. The degree offered by the University of Limpopo "is South Africa's first and only dual medium degree in which an African language, Northern Sotho, is used as a medium of instruction and assessment with English" in their BA CEMS (Keepile, 2010:1; Farisani, 2010b:298).

Furthermore, as part of the Africanisation and contextualisation efforts, our curricula should be the products of academics who are representative of the demography of our country.

- And finally, in theologising, in the post-Apartheid context, ABH will no doubt have to deal with the following three crises: *a crisis of values, a crisis of purpose in doing theology and a crisis of confidence in the theologians and by the community of faith-practice* (Masoga and Mathye, 2010:79).

Conclusion

The focus of this article was the role of African Biblical Hermeneutics in the post-Apartheid context. The article has six main parts. In the first part it critically engaged with Lombaard's view that ABH has not succeeded in its interpretation of the text as it does not employ exegesis as its methodological approach. In the second part, the work of Gerrie Snyman, himself a Western Biblical scholar, who engages both with his Western Afrikaner context and African Biblical Hermeneutics, was used to illustrate the significance of contextual reading of the biblical text. The third section discussed the three poles of African Biblical hermeneutics, namely text, context and appropriation. The fourth and fifth sections examined two trends and patterns in African Biblical Hermeneutics, namely Black and African Feminist theologies. Here it became clear that various trends of ABH use different methodological approaches to the biblical trends. Furthermore, it became apparent that *contra* Lombaard, ABH is not a 'holy cow', as there are fierce debates within and amongst various trends. And finally, the article highlighted several challenges facing ABH in the post-Apartheid context and then went on to spell out what the role of ABH could be in the post-Apartheid context.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ammah, R 1992. *Paradise Lies at the Feet of Muslim Women* in Oduyoye, MA & Kanyoro, MRA (eds.), 87-100.

Ayanga, OH 1999. *Liberation of the African Woman* in Getui, MN & Obeng, AE (eds.), 90-106.

Edet, RN 1992. *Christianity and African Women's Rituals* in Oduyoye, MA & Kanyoro, MRA (eds.), 25-39.

Boesak, Allan 1984. *Black and Reformed: Apartheid, Liberation, and the Calvinist tradition*. Johannesburg: Skotaville.

Burden, JJ 1993. "Social Science and Recent Trends in Old Testament Research: Its Relevance for South African Old Testament Scholarship." *Old Testament Essays* 6, 205-232.

Dibeela, MP 2000. "A Setswana perspective on Genesis 1:1-10" in West & Dube (eds.). *The Bible in Africa. Transactions, Trajectories and Trends*, 384-99. Leiden: Brill.

Draper, JA 2001. "Old Scores and New Notes: Where and what is Contextual Exegesis in the New South Africa?" in *Towards an Agenda for Contextual Theology: Essays in Honour of Albert Nolan*, edited by MT Speckman & LT Kaufmann. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications

Draper, JA 2002. *Reading the Bible as Conversation: A Theory and Methodology for Contextual Interpretation of the Bible in Africa*. Grace and Truth 19, 2:1224.

Dube, MW (ed.) 2001. *Other Ways of Reading: African Women and the Bible*. Atlanta and Geneva: Society of Biblical Literature and WCC Publications.

Duncan, GA & Hofmeyr, JW 2002. "Leadership through Theological Education: Two Case Studies in South African History." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 23, 3:642-657.

Fanusie, L 1992. *Sexuality and Women in African Culture*, in Oduyoye, MA and Kanyoro, MRA (eds.), 135-154.

Farisani, E 2002. "The Ideologically Biased Use of Ezra-Nehemiah in a Quest for an African Theology of Reconstruction." *Old Testament Essays.* 15/3:628-646.

Farisani, E 2003. "The Use of Ezra-Nehemiah in a Quest for an African Theology of Reconstruction." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*. 116:27-50.

Farisani EB 2010a. "Black Biblical Hermeneutics and Ideologically aware Reading of Texts." *Scriptura* 105:507-518.

Farisani, EB 2010b. "The Impact of the New Policy Developments in Higher Education on Theological Education." *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, July 2010, Volume XXXVI, Supplement, 287-303.

Farisani, EB 2010c. "Kuhumbulele, Ḓivhazwakale na Mahumbulwa a Ṱhalutshedzelo: U Saukanya ho Dzhenelelaho ha 1 Dzikhosi 21:1-16 Bivhilini ya Tshivenḓa." *Old Testament Essay* 23/3:497-626.

Farisani, TS 1987. "Diary from a South African Prison." Minneapolis: Fortress Publishers Farisani, TS. In *Transit: Between the Image of God and the Image of Man*. Eerdmans Pub Co.

Getui, MN & Obeng, EA (eds.) 1999. *Theology of Reconstruction*. Nairobi: Acton.

Goba, B 1988. *Agenda for Black Theology in South Africa: Hermeneutics for Social Change.* Johannesburg: Skotaville.

Haddad, BG 2000. *African Women's Theologies of Survival: Intersecting Faith, Feminisms, and Development.* PhD, School of Theology, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Heyns, D 1997. "Considering Aspects of History, Knowledge and World-view: Is Old Testament History Relevant for South Africa?" *Old Testament Essays* 10/3:387-400.

Holter, K 2000. "Africa in the Old Testament" in West & Dube (eds.), *The Bible in Africa. Transactions, Trajectories and Trends*, 569-81. Leiden: Brill.

Hopkins, DN 1989. *Black Theology USA and South Africa: Politics, Culture, and Liberation.* Maryknoll:Orbis.

Kanyoro, MRA & Oduyoye, MA 1992. *Introduction*, in Oduyoye, MA and Kanyoro MR A (eds.) 1992:1-6.

Keepile, K 2010. "With many tongues." *Mail & Guardian* 19.

LeMarquand, G 2000. "New Testament Exegesis" in West & Dube (eds.), *The Bible in Africa. Transactions, Trajectories and Trends*, 72-102. Leiden: Brill.

Le Roux, JH 1997. "No Theology, no Relevance, no New South Africa." *Old Testament Essays* 8/2:167-190.

Le Roux, JH 1993. "A Story of Two Ways. Thirty Years of Old Testament Scholarship in South Africa." *Old Testament Essays* Suppl. Nr 2. Pretoria: Verba Vitae.

Lombaard, C 2001a. "The Bible in the Apartheid Debate." In Hofmeyr, JW, Lombaard, CJ S & Maritz, PJ (eds.) *1948 + 50 years. Theology, Apartheid and Church: Past, Present and Future.* Perspectives on the Church/Perspektiewe op die Kerk, Series 5: Vol. 1. Pretoria: IMER, Institute for Missiological and Ecumenical Research, University of Pretoria, 69-87.

Lombaard, C 2001b. "Four Recent Works on the Interpretation of the Old Testament in South Africa, with Evaluation and some Implications." *Scriptura* Vol 78:467-478.

Lombaard, C 2006. "The Relevance of Old Testament Science in/for Africa: Two False Pieties and focused Scholarship." *Old Testament Essays* 19/1:144-155.

Mafu, H 2000. "The Impact of the Bible on Traditional Rain-making Institutions in Western Zimbabwe." In West & Dube (eds.). *The Bible in Africa. Transactions, Trajectories and Trends*, 400-414. Leiden: Brill.

Maimela, SS 1994. *Religion and Culture: Blessings or Curses* in Maimela SS (ed.), *Culture, Religion and Liberation*, 1-17. Pretoria: African Challenges Series.

Maina, NK 1999. *Muslim Women and Politics in Kenya*, in Getui, MN & Obeng, AE (eds.), 136-150.

McEntire, M 2000. "Cain and Abel in Africa: An Ethiopian case Study in Competing Hermeneutics." In West & Dube (eds.). *The Bible in Africa. Transactions, Trajectories and Trends*, 248-59. Leiden: Brill.

Masenya, Madipoane (ngwana' Mphahlele) 2001. "Between unjust Suffering and the 'silent' God: Job and HIV/AIDS Sufferers in South Africa." *Missionalia* 29.

Masenya, Madipoane (ngwana' Mphahlele) 2001. "A Bosadi (Womanhood) Reading of Proverbs 31:1031" in *Other ways of Reading: African Women and the Bible*, edited by MW Dube. Atlanta and Geneva: Society of Biblical Literature and WCC Publications.

Masenya, Madipoane (ngwana' Mphahlele) 2006. "Killed by Aids and buried by Religion: African Female Bodies in Crisis" in *Let my People stay! Researching the Old Testament in Africa*, edited by K Holter. Nairobi: Acton.

Masenya (Ngwan'a Mphahlele), M & Ramantswana, H 2012. "Anything New under the Sun of South African Old Testament Scholarship? African Qoheleths' Review of *OTE* 1994-2010." *Old Testament Essays* 25/3:598-637.

Masoga, MA & Mathye, MM 2010. *Simon Maimela in the Chamber of African Theology: A Methodological Challenge!* SHE Supplement July 67-80.

Mbuwayesango, Dora Rudo 1997. "Childlessness and Women-to-Women Relationships in Genesis and in African Patriarchal Society: Sarah and Hagar from a Zimbabwean Woman's Perspective (Gen. 16:116; 21:821)". *Semeia* 78:2736.

Mncube, Bernard Sr 1984. *Biblical Problems and the Struggle of Women*. Paper read at Women's Struggle in South Africa: Feminist Theology Conference, at Hammanskraal.

Mofokeng, T 1988. "Black Christians, the Bible and Liberation." *Journal of Black Theology* 12 2:3442.

Mohler, RA 1996. "Thinking of the Future: Evangelical Theological Education in a New Age, in Hart." DG & Mohler, RA Jr (eds.), *Theological Education in the Evangelical Tradition*, 278-283. Grand Rapids: Baker.

Mosala, IJ 1989. *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Mosala, IJ 1993. "A Materialist Reading of Micah" in *The Bible and Liberation: Political and Social Hermeneutics*, edited by NK Gottwald & RA Horsley. Markyknoll, NY: Orbis.

Mosala, IJ 1985. "African Independent Churches: A Study in the Socio-Theological Protest", in Villa-Vicencio, C & de Gruchy, J. *Resistance and Hope: South African Essays in Honour of Beyers Naudé*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Mosala, IJ 1986a. *Ethics of the Economic Principles: Church and Secular Investments,* in Tlhagale, B & Mosala, IJ, (eds.) 119-129.

Mosala, IJ 1986b. "The Use of the Bible in Black Theology" in Mosala, IJ & Tlhagale, B. *The Unquestionable Right to be Free*. Johannesburg: Skotaville, 185.

Mosala, IJ 1986c. "Social Scientific Approaches to the Bible: One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* (June 1986).

Mosala, IJ 1986d. *Black Theology in South Africa and North America: Prospects for the Future; Building of Alliances*. Unpublished paper presented at the Black Theology Conference: Dialogue between USA and South Africa, Union Theological Seminary, New York (1-3 December 1986).

Mosala, IJ & Tlhagale, B 1986. *The Unquestionable Right to be Free*. Johannesburg: Skotaville.

Mosala, IJ & Tlhagale, B 1987. "The Meaning of Reconciliation: A Black Perspective." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 59:19-25.

Motlhabi, M 2008. *African Theology/ Black Theology in South Africa: Looking Back, Moving On.* Pretoria: UNISA.

Mugambi, J 2003. African and Africanist Scholarship. *BOTSA 13.* Electronic version: http://www.mhs.no/article_313.shtml.

Nadar, S 2001. "A South African Indian Womanist Reading of the Character of Ruth" in *Other ways of Reading: African Women and the Bible*, edited by MW Dube. Atlanta & Geneva: Society of Biblical Literature and WCC Publications.

Nadar, S 2006. "'Barak God and die! Women, HIV, and a Theology of Suffering" in *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*, edited by RS Sugirtharajah. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Nasimiyu-Wasike, A 1992. *Polygamy: A Feminist Critique*, in Oduyoye, MA & Kanyoro, MRA (eds.) 101-118.

Oduyoye, MA 1992. *Women and Ritual in Africa*, in Oduyoye, MA & Kanyoro, MRA (eds.) 9-24.

Oduyoye, MA 1995. *Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy.* Maryknoll: Orbis.

Oduyoye, MA & Kanyoro, MRA 1992. *The Will to Arise: Women, Tradition, and the Church in Africa*. Maryknoll: Orbis.

Okure, T 1993. "Feminist Interpretation in Africa." In *Searching the Scriptures: A Feminist Introduction*, edited by ES Fiorenza. New York: Crossroads.

Plaatjie, GK 2001. "Toward a Post-Apartheid Black Feminist Reading of the Bible: A Case of Luke 2:3638" in *Other Ways of Reading: African Women and the Bible*, edited by MW Dube. Atlanta and Geneva: Society of Biblical Literature & WCC Publications.

Phiri, 1 2008. *Major Challenges for African Women Theologians in Theological Education (1989-2008).* Paper presented at the IV International World Conference of Association of Theological Institutions, and Jubilee of the Ecumenical Theological Education of World Council of Churches Conference, Theological education: A radical reappraisal. 31 May-7 June. Neapolis, Thessaloniki.

Ukpong, JS 2000. "Developments in Biblical Interpretation in Africa: Historical and Hermeneutical Directions" in GO West & M Dube (eds.), *The Bible in Africa. Transactions, Trajectories and Trends*, 11-28. Leiden: Brill.

Ukpong, Justin S 1995. "Rereading the Bible with African Eyes." *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 91:314.

Ukpong, Justin S 1996. "The Parable of the Shrewd Manager (Lk 16:113): An Essay in the Inculturation of Biblical Hermeneutics." *Semeia* 73:189210.

Ukpong, Justin S 2000. "Developments in Biblical Interpretation in Africa: Historical and Hermeneutical Directions" in *The Bible in Africa: Transactions, Trajectories and Trends*, edited by GO West & M Dube. Leiden: EJ Brill.

Ukpong, Justin S 2000. "Popular Readings of the Bible in Africa and Implications for Academic Readings: Report on the Field Research carried out on Oral Interpretations of the Bible in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Nigeria under the Auspices of the Bible in Africa Project" in *The Bible in Africa: Transactions, Trajectories, and Trends*, edited by GO West & M Dube. Leiden: EJ Brill.

Snyman, G 2006. "The Rhetoric of Shame in Religious and Political Discourses: Constructing the Perpetrator in South African Academic Discourse." *OTE* 19/1 183-204

WOCATI 2008. *Theological Education: A Radical Reappraisal. A Conference of Strategic Importance for Ecumenical Theological Education for Christianity in the 21st Century* held in Neapolis, Thessalonica, and Volos (Greece), 31 May-7 June 2008, 1-7.

Werner, D 2009. "Challenges and Opportunities in Theological Education in the 21st Century: Pointers for a New International Debate on Theological Education." *World Study Report.*

West, GO 2010, "Biblical Hermeneutics in Africa" in DB Stinton (ed.), *AfricanTheology on the Way: Current Conversations*, 21-31, SPCK, London.

West, GO 2013. Exegesis Seeking Appropriation; Appropriation Seeking Exegesis: Re-reading 2 Samuel 13:1-22 in Search Of Redemptive Masculinities. *Verbum et Ecclesia* 34, 2:1-6.