

THE OBJECT AND AIM OF MULTI-DISCIPLINARY LITURGICAL RESEARCH

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Abstract

Set against the backdrop of the current hiatus concerning an anthropological approach in the study of Liturgy within Protestant (Reformed) liturgical research, this article firstly argues for a very specific object (rituals) as well as aim (liturgia condenda) for liturgical research. Thereafter it is shown how such an object and aim call for a multi-disciplinary research design. The research design of Paul Post is then presented and applied to the authors' proposed research. The article argues that such an approach towards the study of Liturgy is not only attainable, but also important for theologically and anthropologically justifiable liturgical renewal.

Key Words: Anthropological Approach, Liturgy, Paul Post, Ritual

Introduction¹

Many people from a Western Protestant background, find 'ritual' is a rather foreign concept. Therefore an excerpt from an article by the Indian cultural anthropologist, Gheevargese Maharajah, is perhaps a good starting point. It is the description of the animal sacrifice ritual of the Renakirfa-tribe taken from his own qualitative research:

"The preparation of a person for this ritual consists of the drinking of holy alcoholic potions. These potions are usually prepared by the designated 'medicine'-man, and helps participants to achieve a semi- trance like state. The focal point of this ritual is a fire, around which all participants gather. When most have reached this consciously altered state, numerous animal sacrifices are conducted and afterwards consumed by the tribe. Passage into this ritual is based on age and gender. Only adult males are allowed to attend the open-air fire ceremony, while the women and children stay indoors. Women, who have been reported to cross this cultural border, have taken the wrath of both men and women of the tribe upon them. The ritual is usually performed on a weekly basis, preferably the sixth day, making sleeping till very late on the seventh day compulsory. Whilst conducting my research, I found this ritual to be a thought-provoking window into the heart of the Renakirfa culture, showing for example a very patriarchal society, exclusivity along racial lines (apparent from the way in which I struggled to gain access into this ritual in order to conduct my qualitative research) and abundant wealth (apparent from the presence of the huge amounts of meat and potion and the absence of the under privileged). The only aspect that I still find very puzzling, is the meaning of (so familiar in my own Indian culture) the discussion the men had about Eastern spices during the height of their trance. A discussion about a so-called 'Currie Cup'".

¹ This article was first read as a paper in February 2002 at Postgraduate Encounters in Systematic Theology and Ethics (PESTE) at Stellenbosch University. In the meantime the research proposed in this article, although not following the exact lines as set out here, was completed in 2004 as Wepener, CJ 2004. *Van vas tot fees. 'n Ritueel-liturgiese ondersoek na versoening in verskillende Suid-Afrikaanse kultuurkontekste*. DTh dissertation Stellenbosch University.

Some readers would have noticed that Renakirfa is Afrikaner spelt backwards, and that this description is obviously nothing more than a tongue in the cheek account of a South African 'braaivleis'. However, the idea here is to help us realise that ritual is not something foreign, it is not just something that 'other', or 'primitive', people do. Ritual is something close to home; it is something all of us take part in on a regular basis.²

Bearing this in mind this article firstly argues for a very specific point of view regarding the object and aim of liturgical research. Thereafter it will be shown how this view can influence the research design of a liturgical inquiry. As a whole it can be seen as a methodological starting point for a research project titled *Ritual road markings for reconciliation – A liturgical and anthropological inquiry of rituals of reconciliation in three South African cultural contexts*. This research is currently being conducted under the guidance of Prof Johan Cilliers (promoter) from the department of Practical Theology at Stellenbosch University, and Prof Paul Post (co-promoter) from the University of Tilburg, the Netherlands.³ Before this view on the object and aim of liturgical research is presented, just a brief look at the research question and hypothesis of this study.

The research question: "How can the inculturation of a liturgical repertoire of rituals of reconciliation assist with the process of reconciliation in South Africa, and specifically, with the reconciliation between the Dutch Reformed Church and Uniting Reformed Church?", is asked against the background of the current violent South African context; the historical background of the apartheid years and the still prevailing unbiblical and, as such, sinful schism within the Reformed family (i.e. the Dutch Reformed Church and the Uniting Reformed Church) in South Africa.

By stating the problem in this manner, a number of factors come into play which have to be incorporated within the scheme, most notably the need for an expansive analytical unit, and secondly the need for interpretation. As a whole, the research will focus on the domain of the Christian liturgy and will work towards some proposals for the inculturation of rituals of reconciliation in South Africa. Without using too functional a language concerning rituals, this research also works with the hypothesis that the inculturation of more appropriate rituals of reconciliation can make a considerable contribution towards peace and reconciliation within the South African context, and that such a liturgy can assist in the process of working towards church unity. In this hypothesis there is the conviction that there is room for the expansion of the liturgical repertoire of the DRC, and that better repertoires of rituals of reconciliation are especially suitable in this regard. This expansion can be attained through the inculturation of rituals of reconciliation, which can possibly assist with the formation of a new faith-ethic concerning guilt, violence, peace and reconciliation in a violent South Africa, and with the achievement of unity within the Reformed family.

With this question and hypothesis in mind, I would now like to propose a view on the object and aim of the scientific study of liturgy, starting with a short overview of the current state of liturgical scientific research, focussing on The Netherlands and South Africa.

² See, Grimes, Ronald, L. 2000. *Deeply Into The Bone. Re-Inventing Rites of Passage*. Berkeley/ Los Angeles/ London: University of California Press, p. 26-27.

³ The project also forms part of the so called, "Liturgische bewegingen II: Personen en patronen. Het tweede Landelijk Liturgiewetenschappelijk Onderzoeksprogramma, 2001-2005", and is therefore embedded in a whole web of liturgical research conducted all over the world (South Africa, The Netherlands, Belgium, United States, Italy). This specific project falls under the sub heading "Ritualiteit en persoonlijk leven", see pages 184-185 of Post, P.G.J. 2001. "Liturgische bewegingen II: Personen en patronen. Het tweede Landelijk Liturgiewetenschappelijk Onderzoeksprogramma, 2001-2005". *Jaarboek voor liturgie-onderzoek* 17, 159-192.

Liturgy

Within Liturgy as a subject there are numerous research methods. In this regard Barnard⁴ distinguishes between a Practical Theological, a Systematic Theological, a Historical, and a Biblical-Theological method. When Barnard typifies all the different methods in detail, he replaces the sub-heading 'Practical Theological approach' with 'Anthropological approach'. Both these terms are applicable to this research, and are also used by Barnard in his own view of the subject, which is apparent from the title of his inaugural speech as professor of Liturgy at the University of Amsterdam, namely *Liturgy as science of Christian rituals and symbols*.⁵

Unlike Barnard, Post in 1995 distinguishes between eight different approaches within the domain of Liturgy Science, but asks that all of these approaches should be seen as open and complementary. These approaches include: Historical; Anthropological; Semiotic; Pastoral liturgical and Empirical liturgical approaches as well as an approach from the arts (expressive, music, space, bodily expression/dance); an approach from (Systematic) Theology (Theology of the Liturgy and Sacramental Theology) and other approaches taken from Women's Studies or Spirituality.⁶ In 1996 Post expanded this list and added a ninth approach, namely a Biblical-Theological approach.⁷

In South Africa today, it is possible to differentiate many different approaches to the subject matter of Liturgy. It is, however, extremely problematic to incorporate and/ or categorise all the developments in this field. The choice for the specific approach within Liturgy is inextricably linked to what the researcher considers to be the object and aim of the subject. Therefore the object and thereafter the aim of this liturgical inquiry will now be presented and explained.

Object

Liturgy, as a Practical Theological inquiry strives to develop the celebration/ *doksa* of the congregation which finds expression in worship and celebration so that the gospel can be effectively communicated.⁸ To achieve this ideal or goal, it is necessary to bring the object of the inquiry into focus, that is, the celebrating congregation as well as a determined Theology of celebration. To this end, an anthropological and theological approach is thus required. Accordingly there was also in the liturgy since the 1960's talk of a so-called 'antropologiese Wende', a focus shift away from the message to "de bonte religieuse werkljkheid welke in de liturgie wordt gecommuniceerd".⁹

⁴ See, Barnard, M 1998. "Liturgiewetenschap als discipline". In: Oskamp, P en N Schuman (reds.). *De weg van de liturgie. Tradities, achtergronden, praktijk*. Zoetermeer: Meinema, p. 94.

⁵ Barnard, M 2000. *Liturgiek als wetenschap van christelijke riten en symbolen*. Amsterdam: Vossiuspers.

⁶ See, Post, PGJ 1995. "Zeven notities over rituele verandering, traditie en (vergelijkende) liturgiewetenschap". *Jaarboek voor liturgie-onderzoek* 11, p. 19-20.

⁷ Post, PGJ et al 1996. "Liturgische bewegingen en feestcultuur. Een Landelijk Liturgiewetenschappelijk Onderzoeksprogramma". *Jaarboek voor liturgie-onderzoek* 12, p. 3.

⁸ See, Louw, DJ 1999. *Pastoraat as vertolking en ontmoeting. Teologiese ontwerp vir 'n basisteorie, antropologie, metode en terapie*. Nuwe Hersiene Uitgawe. Kaapstad: Lux Verbi, p. 130. This view goes back to that of Schleiermacher who can be seen as the founder of Practical Theology.

⁹ Barnard, M 1998, p. 94-95. For "antropologiese Wende", see also, Post, PGJ 1999. "Feast as a Key Concept in a Liturgical Studies Research Design". In: Post, PGJ et al (reds.). *Christian Feast and Festival: The Dynamics of Western Liturgy and Culture*. Leuven: Peeters.

“[I]n de protestantse theologie, en dan vooral in de gereformeerde variant daarvan, zal een zekere reserve ten aanzien van (ook: christelijke) riten en symbolen blijven bestaan.”¹⁰ With this Protestant reserve in mind, a short plea for the incorporation of an anthropological approach within Liturgy will be conducted. One possible aspect of such a reserve, is that of normativity within this theological field, when the Bible is not exclusively used as critical-normative criterion. In other words, not only the content of the Gospel that must be communicated is formulated, but those who participate in the celebration, are also incorporated in the inquiry.

The ‘antropologische Wende’ which also collapsed in the Liturgy exerted a large influence on the scientific study of the subject in South Africa and elsewhere.¹¹ The field of interest grew in Liturgy under the influence of the Liturgical Movement of the twentieth century.¹² Despite all the expansion in the field and the introduction of the anthropological approach, various approaches for the study of liturgy are constantly being included. All these approaches are important for Liturgy as a field and complement one another. Nevertheless, a vacuum exists, as regards the anthropological approach in South Africa. This lacuna needs to be filled.

One possible reason¹³ for this state of affairs in the Dutch Reformed Church, is that the spoken and written word is still afforded priority over the word as communicated through the other four senses of the body. As is said in Afrikaans, ‘die mite kry nog voorrang bo die rite’. The Reformatory saying *Praedicatio verbi Dei est verbum Dei* is still mainly and exclusively interpreted as the preaching being an auditory medium, and something like *See/Smell/ Feel/ Taste verbi Dei est (also) verbum Dei*, is largely downplayed. In line with this, Barnard points to the debate which is currently being held about the status of the liturgical-scientific discipline in the German-speaking areas which sets the Anthropological- and Systematic liturgical-scientific methods up against one another.

The choice between one of the two aforementioned methods is largely dependant on who is viewed as the subject matter within the liturgy, i.e. whether man or God is viewed as the object of study. In this regard Barnard quotes Messner who believes that a liturgical symbol-act cannot be objectified, because this symbolism can, according to him, only be theologically determined. Therefore the liturgy can only be thoroughly comprehended by

¹⁰ Barnard, M en P Post (reds.). 2001. *Ritueel bestek. Antropologische kernwoorden van de liturgie*. Zoetermeer: Meinema, p. 13, see also, Ploeger, AK 2001. “De plaats en gestalte van het protestantse ritueel in onze cultuur”. *Praktische Theologie* 28/4, 457-480.

¹¹ The influence of the Liturgical Movement arrived in South Africa in the 1950’s, via theologians such as, GM Pellissier, HDA du Toit, AC Barnard en BA Müller. They tried to bring the Reformed liturgy on track with the Reformed tradition. See in this regard, Burger, CW 2003. “Reformed Liturgy in the South African context”. In: Vischer, L (ed.). *Christian Worship in Reformed Churches Past and Present*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans.

¹² Post, PGJ *et al* 1996, p. 2.

¹³ Some other reasons for this particular state of affairs are amongst others: the fact that the field of Liturgy has until now received relatively little attention in the Protestant world in South Africa, and is seen as a (small) subsection of Practical Theology at the chair of Homiletics, often subordinate to the latter. Liturgical inquiries are furthermore, especially within the current economic climate, seen as a luxury. There are also particularly many theologians from other *loci* who conduct research or just write about liturgy, and then often with the heuristics of their own field (that try to consciously avoid the ‘scilla’ of ‘nature’ that may be inherent to a anthropological approach). Lastly, in spite of so much criticism, priority is still given to the rational-cognitive within Theology and Liturgy.

¹³ See, Barnard, M 2000, p. 13. From a Catholic perspective Post also poses an objection. According to him there is a “tendens om, ondanks de kansen om de onvervangbaar geachte theologische bron van de ritueel-liturgische praktijk ‘te openen’ met behulp van de bloeiende RS, nietemin te reflecteren op verre afstand van de feitelijke ritueel-liturgische praktijk en verkenningen en analyses daarvan”. Post, PGJ 2001b. “Personen en patronen. Literatuurbericht liturgiewetenschap”. *Praktische Theologie* 28/1 p. 99.

those who allow themselves to be transported by the Holy Spirit, and the human or social and cultural sciences are not suited thereto; 'theologie en antropologie mogen niet worden vermengd'.¹⁴

This view of Messner's was a reaction to Cornehl's theory. He considers the liturgy to be the communication of the experience of believing, and therefore as a primarily human act.¹⁵ Cornehl thus embraces a typically anthropological approach to the liturgy. Barnard takes it further by pointing out that Messner's argument is based on that of Luther, according to whom belief is born out of man's need or persuasion that alone he is not complete. It is out of this that man then turns to that outside of himself for salvation. That outward turn is faith. But Barnard is quick to add, in contrast to Messner, and in agreement with Luther that, "Niet alle vertrouwen is evangelisch; niet iedere beweging naar een buite is christelijk; niet alle geloof is christelijk geloof. Maar deze beweging en dit algemene geloof zijn wel de bedding voor het christelijk geloof".¹⁶

This turning outwards of man to outside of his/her own existence, in other words human (Christian) faith, is what Schleiermacher calls the 'Gefühl schlechthiniger Abhängigkeit'. And this feeling can be awakened by eternity, God or a finite stimulus with the result that the feeling is immediately and actively expressed as a symbol. The so-called expression or 'Darstellung' of the feeling.¹⁷

Finally, the view is comparable to that of Nijk's hypothesis regarding the creation of rituals, which is quoted by Lukken:

*According to his hypothesis, rites arose in the first instance from no other cause than the consciousness of a lacunae, a hiatus, an undefined realization of 'having-to-act-without-knowing-how'. This realization contained within itself the want of 'something' that would make the action worthwhile. A second moment must have followed this realization, because it is clear that one is not brought to action simply by the feeling of 'having-to-act-without-knowing-how'. The only thing one can initially do, is to do something, experimentally. That is the only way in which one can determine how to act meaningfully, by doing something to discover which act replaces the realization of 'having-to-act-without-knowing-how' with the realization of 'this is it'. Evidently individuals and peoples have been able to find such actions, into which they packed their deepest reality. And evidently the realization that 'this is it', or 'this is the ultimate' or 'this is ultimately Him' was so radical that they have repeated these actions with great devotion. Thus rites arose.*¹⁸

It is this 'this is it', or 'this is the ultimate', or 'this is ultimately Him,' this 'Darstellung', which can serve as the object of research for Liturgy within an anthropological approach. The forming of these symbols or rituals come to the fore in human culture, be it art or liturgy, so that Barnard can rightfully propose that Theology in this sense evokes the human- and religious sciences'.¹⁹ Thus Liturgy has at its disposal not only an objectifiable phe-

¹⁴ Barnard, M 2000, p. 13-14.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14-15, see also, Berkhof, H 1973. *Christelijk Geloof. Een inleiding tot de geloofsleer*. Nijkerk: Uitgeverij GF Callenbach, p. 2 & 12.

¹⁸ Lukken, G 1994. "No life without rituals". In: Van Tongeren, L en C Caspers (reds.). *Per Visibilia Ad Invisibilia. Antropological, Theological and Semiotic Studies on the Liturgy and the Sacraments*. Liturgia Condenda 2. Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House, p. 98, also, Lukken, G 1999. *Rituelen in overvloed. Een kritische bezinning op de plaats en de gestalte van het christelijke ritueel in onze cultuur*. Baarn: Gooi & Sticht, p. 49-50.

¹⁹ Vergelyk, Barnard, M 2000, p. 16.

nomenon which can be studied but also traditional subjects which also study rituals and/or cultural placement and reception which can, in this regard, be incorporated.

This objectifiable phenomenon which serves as the object of research for Liturgy is however a complex and many layered entity. Post describes this complexity of the liturgical scientific domain as follows:

De aandacht richt zich in het liturgiewetenschappelijk onderzoek zowel op beschrijving, typering en schets van de verschillende christelijke rituelen en de reconstructie van hun ontwikkelingsgeschiedenis alsook op een analyse van de (talige en niet-verbale) betekenissen en symbolen die er in opgesloten liggen en de verschillende functies die zij vervullen. Het onderzoek richt zich niet alleen op de rituelen als zodanig, maar op hun receptie en de beleving ervan door de gelovigen, alsook op de relatie met hun culturele context waarmee zij in een constante wisselwerking staan.²⁰

In addition hereto, Dingemans²¹ is in line with Schleiermacher when he points out that the praxis of the Practical Theological is traditionally viewed as 'Krichenleitung' which existed as a collection of 'Kunstregeln', a 'techne', a 'abgeleitete und angewandte Wissenschaft'. A science, or rather applied science which is deduced from philosophical- and historical theory. As such these rules of art were traditionally aimed at the priest's duties regarding sermons, catechises and pastoral work. For certain Protestant theologians the catechises and pastoral work were even viewed as derivatives of the sermon. Thus Practical Theology is applied where the truth is brought to the fore by other theological fields. The result of this was one way traffic: "de kerk en de theologie stelden vast wat de waarheid is en de ambtsdragers gaven dat door in – in die situatie aangepaste – 'pasmunt', waarbij de praktische theologie werd geacht hulpdiensten aan te reiken".²²

This view of the Practical Theology resulted in the Liturgy being regarded as an extremely practical subject, aimed at the practise of being a priest which only comes to fruition at the end of his training. So too in the Roman Catholic theological training, liturgy was considered to be a practical and normative study. Consequently the subject was also allocated to the most practical lecturer, "de econoom: hij die zorg droeg voor huisvesting, aardappelen, wijn en sigaren".²³

With the passage of time the concept of truth of science became less absolute and the scientists became aware that the truth is inextricably bound to time and place and that room should thus be made for interpretation. The impact of this for Practical Theology was that the context in which people find themselves, as well as the people to whom the truth is communicated, should also become the subject matter of scrutiny. As stated by Dingemans, The entire congregation positioned on the crossroad between the Christian tradition and the current cultural context.²⁴ For the Liturgy as *locus* within the Practical Theology, this shift has meant that the congregation, partaking in their rites, can now be studied in a traditional and a cultural context. In other words, Liturgy can investigate rituals as integrated cultural objects on a continuum of past-present and continuity/discontinuity (with the tradition).

As a liturgical inquiry done within the Reformed tradition, this investigation does not want to study the forming of rituals in a one-sided manner. Instead the aim is to expand the

²⁰ Post, PGJ *et al* 1996, p. 4.

²¹ See, Dingemans, GDJ 1996. *Manieren Van Doen. Inleiding tot die studie van de praktische theologie.* Kampen: Uitgeverij Kok, p. 15-16.

²² See, Dingemans, GDJ 1996, p. 18-19.

²³ Barnard, M en P Post (reds.). 2001, p. 11.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20-21.

object of the inquiry. The first part of the object of the Liturgy can be described as the anthropological leg within a liturgical research objective, namely how people express their experience of God or of 'the Other', in their *doksa*, and specifically here the liturgy. The other leg of the research objective is the theology of the liturgy, in other words the study of how in and through *doksa*/liturgy/rituals God is present in the celebrating congregation.

Within Liturgy there cannot be an either/or choice with regards to Anthropology- and Theology of Liturgy, both need to be encompassed in the research model. The theological leg will be grounded in a Biblical-Theological study of the liturgy and will be focused on reconciliation.

An inherent danger in such a bipolar model which uses both Cultural Anthropology (here specifically Ritual Studies) and Theology as sources of knowledge is that one of the two sources will tend to dominate. To use only the Cultural Sciences as a point of departure may result in the inquiry being pigeonholed into the field of natural theology. However a purely theological approach which negates the role the celebrating community in their specific culture within the model, may uphold an outdated worldview. Thus there exists a need for a model which achieves a balance between these two extremities.

It is with this quest for balance in mind, that the term 'inculturation' as a critical, reciprocal and guiding concept is introduced in the model.²⁵ According to the concept inculturation, anthropology and theology can be critically reciprocally illuminated. Inculturation thus becomes the convergence point for God and man within a research design that focuses on the Liturgy. In this way, both God's movement towards man in the liturgy and man's outward movement towards God, are incorporated.

Now that the object and position of the Liturgy as viewed by this inquiry has been argued, it is also necessary to describe the aim of the subject. The aim will be approached from a dual level, namely from Dingemans and Schreiter's description of the purpose of Practical Theology on the one hand, and Post's description of the objective and aim of liturgical science on the other.

Aim

According to Schreiter a new area of study in the field of Practical Theology has, in recent years, come to the fore. This new field has as its point of departure the life of the congregation, it then moves into faith and then back to life (practice to theory to practice). The first step is therefore to describe the situation of the congregation. Thereafter the description is correlated with the belief and convictions of the congregation, and to then move to the life of the congregation for refocused praxis.²⁶ Thus we find here a spiralling between theory and practice with a focus on the improvement of the praxis. "For both Groome and Browning, the final move in doing practical theology is action, a renewed practice of the faith".²⁷

Dingemans' view on the purpose of Practical Theology is linked to that of Schreiter. For Dingemans, Practical Theology is not positioned in contrast to theoretical theology, but rather points towards a theological reflection on the practice.²⁸ Room has also been made since the sixties for the factual situation within a congregation, through office bearers and the Gospel, which has been transported through the congregation into society. Didactic

²⁵ See, Wepener, CJ and BA Müller 2001. "'Liturgiese kitsch?' Liturgiewetenskaplike verkenning van 'n Gereformeerde ritueel". *NGTT*, 42/ 3 & 4, p. 488-489.

²⁶ See, Schreiter, RJ 1998. "Theology in the Congregation: Discovering and Doing". In: Ammerman, NT *et al* (eds.). *Studying Congregations. A New Handbook*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, p. 25.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

²⁸ See, Dingemans, GDJ 1996, p. 13.

terminology has been applied here to describe the process, to wit the starting situation (as factually encountered) and the desired situation (as envisaged).²⁹ This mutual relationship between theory and practice within Practical Theology, is labelled the research object by Practical Theology and is termed the 'inseparable reciprocal relationship' by Dreyer. She says that it is this relationship which not only tests the situation but also makes recommendations for the situation in which believers find themselves.³⁰

In order to accommodate this shift in mindset away from an exclusive focus on texts and towards the study of active persons as objects of research, it was necessary to introduce the methods of the Social Sciences. Traditionally only the methods of the Human Sciences³¹ were used in theological faculties, and still today, there is a measure of suspicion attached to the use of other methods within Theology. Be that as it may, today there is global consensus for the view that Practical Theology is an interdisciplinary science, which applies the methods of the Social Sciences and the Human Sciences. The steps, which led to this development taking place, according to Dingemans, will now be explained.

Like Schreiter, Dingemans distinguished between three steps, to wit an analysis of the Practical-Theological situation, a search for the normative aspects and finally the development as a strategy for change.³² Each step has a different scientific method which is applicable thereto, to wit the Social Sciences (step 1), Theology (step 2) and Agogical Sciences (step 3).³³ It is in this manner that this research is also approached. The situations are described and analysed with the assistance of Ritual Studies, Cultural Anthropology, Religious Sciences and Ethnography. Consequently, the normative visual points are been brought into play with the help of Dogmatics, Biblical Sciences, Liturgical History and Ritual Studies in the chapters about Reconciliation, Rituals, Inculturation and History. In so doing Theology, (Christian) tradition as well as Grimes' 'qualities of ritual', could be used as normative components, which Dingemans calls the quest for the 'theological vision that is present'.³⁴ Finally, it is with an eye on change strategy/ *liturgia condenda*,³⁵ with an intra-disciplinary methodology of interfeerention and intuition as an Agogical Science, that all the components are dealt with.³⁶

Dingemans' point of departure of Practical Theology, together with Barnard's argument concerning faith which finds expression through ritual, and the purpose of Practical Theology (Schreiter and Dingemans), have definite consequences for what the object of the research of Liturgy can be. In this Reformed liturgical inquiry, a conscious choice has been made in favour of an anthropological approach within Liturgy, namely a study of rituals. Thus, such a choice is in line with the first step within a Practical theological model, namely the description of the situation, and here particularly, people's participation in their rituals. In addition to this, an anthropological approach taken from Ritual Studies, has an influence on the normative component, namely that there exists the notion that there are 'superior' and 'inferior' rituals. Ritual Studies, together with Theology, thus strives to an-

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

³⁰ See, Dreyer, Y 1999. "n Besinning oor Meta- en Basisteoretiese Aannames in die Praktiese Teologie". *Praktiese Teologie in Suid-Afrika* 14/ 1, p. 48.

³¹ To wit Philosophical-, Historical-, Linguistic- and Hermeneutical methods, see, Dingemans, GDJ 1996, p. 60.

³² These three steps can be approached in three different ways within Practical Theology, namely a so-called "Handelingswetenskaplike" approach, a Hermeneutical approach or a Liberation Theological approach.

³³ Dingemans, GDJ 1996, p. 62. Agogic has got to do with change, with methods and techniques to accompany people towards change.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

³⁵ Liturgy in process/ formation.

³⁶ This method will be dealt with in detail under 3.

swer the central question, namely “How can one acquire a better inculturated repertoire of reconciliation rituals within the South African cultural context?” It is with this purpose in mind, that this inquiry now calls upon a very specific research design, as a heuristic partner for this study.

The Matrix³⁷

This matrix of Post is here presented in an abbreviated form by using keywords.

Book – In the past the study of liturgy consisted of no more than the study of books, especially liturgical books and rubrics. This practical and normative subject was taught by a practically minded person in the seminary, as has already been mentioned earlier the so-called ‘pater eonoom’. The students were obliged to merely study the book and practice the contents.

Depth – In the context of the so-called Liturgical Movement (LM) of the twentieth century, scholars started going back to the sources, looking for the roots of the liturgy. This development, aided by using the historical-philological method, helped with the emancipation of the subject. Through this research a whole array of liturgical traditions were discovered which necessitated the help of further methods (e.g. Palaeography, Archaeology, and Musicology).

Integral – Once again under the influence of the LM as well as the ‘antropologische Wende’ the realisation of the so-called ‘liturgy beyond text’ grew. This realisation was serious about the bodily sensory reality as influenced by liturgy. It paved the way for more new alliances, e.g. Symbol-philosophy, Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology and Ethnology and attributed importance to the context of the liturgy.

Primary- and secondary sources – The next important realisation was that these integral liturgical sources are not from the same nature and/or order. There are primary and secondary sources. The former being the expression of the experience of God through word, act, celebration and life, and the latter being the discussions about God.

Designation and appropriation – The liturgical source’s multi-faceted nature complicates yet also nuances this matrix. Appropriation refers to the way in which society itself appropriates the liturgy through a process of giving meaning to what is being experienced (bottom-up), and designation refers to how the same liturgy is being discussed by third parties (top-down) e.g. academics and church authorities.

Context: Cultural and anthropological – This perspective can be linked to keyword 2 about depth, but here it refers explicitly to multiple contexts. Both the basic human-bodily aspects concerning ritual, as well as the complex cultural context, must be taken seriously. Thus every liturgical study becomes a cultural and an anthropological study as well as a ritual study.

Present, past, continuity and discontinuity: future: ‘liturgia condenda’ – A last dimension of this research-matrix is time, the dynamic of present, past and future. Both the liturgical sources, as well as the context, are always situated in time and space. First of all there is the reciprocal movement between past and present, and what is important here is the normative steering that comes from the tradition. However, the situation is further

³⁷ This is just a summary of the matrix of a liturgical research design that was developed by Post, see Post, PGJ 1999a. “Interferentie en intuïtie: over de eigen aard van het liturgiewetenschappelijk onderzoeksontwerp”. Presented at NOSTER-symposium, September 1999, Utrecht, also, Post, PG 1999b. “Feast as a Key Concept in a Liturgical Studies Research Design”. In Post, PGJ *et al* (eds.). *The Dynamics of Western Liturgy and Culture*. Liturgia Condenda 12. Leuven: Peeters. This matrix will here only be conveyed cryptically, in order to establish a link between the object and aim, and the actual research being conducted.

complicated by the fact that the six above mentioned sources are not only relevant in themselves, but also need to be studied within the perspective of past, present and future. However, in both past and present the inculturated *loci* are important, thus in the past the anthropological and cultural contexts, the primary and secondary *loci*, as well as appropriation and designation is important. But there is even more depth, because except for the present and the past, there is always also the perspective for the *liturgia condenda*.

All the different parts of the matrix will be held together within the research via the steering concept interference³⁸ and the researchers' own so-called tamed intuition. It is with this matrix, and this specific view of the object and aim of liturgical research in mind, that there will now be turned to the research which is currently being conducted, endeavouring to illustrate how it all fits together.

The Contextual Analysis

Firstly, a contextual analysis by means of participatory observation is currently being conducted within a specific geographical context in and around Cape Town. The idea is to document all the rituals within a specific context. This documentation process will cover a fixed period of two years, and will include all rituals of reconciliation, as well as the main liturgies of the different congregations, using a broad definition of liturgy. All information gathered will be gathered with the focus of the chapters on ritual theory and reconciliation. By means of 'thick descriptions' the rituals are described.³⁹ In addition, by means of semi- and unstructured interviews, focus group discussions and other means of participatory observation, an endeavour to ascertain how the participants appropriate the rituals in which they participate will be made. All the data collected in the fieldwork will serve as a primary liturgical source, which will later interfere with secondary sources about the same liturgy.

The data obtained through the interviews and focus groups will also serve as a source for the chapter on culture. This will be an attempt to not only describe the local cultures of the three contexts, but also to establish whether it is possible to speak of a 'culture of reconciliation', and if so what it means in the different contexts. The three contexts aim to be representative, if not of South African society as a whole, then at least of the Dutch Reformed family. It is thus that three congregations have been included, namely an Afrikaans DRC, a Xhosa URC and an Afrikaans URC, thereby encompassing Afrikaner, Xhosa and Coloured cultures within one research context. In order to assimilate proper participatory observation in a scientifically justifiable manner, the researcher becomes a member of each one of these congregations for a period of at least six months. It is through this method of ethnography that the object of the research, namely rituals as enacted and appropriated by participants, is made possible.

Rituals

In this chapter it will thus be argued for rituals as the object, and the *liturgia condenda* as the aim of this research. Such an object and aim however requires a multidisciplinary approach which uses, amongst other sources, Ritual Studies and Cultural Anthropology. The whole nascent field of Ritual Studies will be described and thereafter related to Liturgy.

³⁸ Interference is a term rooted in Physics, and used to describe the movement and vibration of waves (sound and light) and the influence of these movements on one another. This influence can be obstructive, but it can also enhance and enrich. See, Post, PGJ 1999a, p. 11 & 12.

³⁹ For "thick description" see chapter 1 of, Geertz, C 1973. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Then the theories of Ronald Grimes (one of the most prominent contemporary exponents of Ritual Studies) and Gerard Lukken (a famous Dutch liturgist) on rituals will be presented. Building on their work, the researcher's own theory on ritual is formulated which will serve as part of a framework for the interpretation of the documented rituals.

Here the interfeerention between the contextual analysis and the theory of ritual is apparant, seeing that the theory of ritual will be used in the analysis of the rituals. By being a theological inquiry the critical-normative question comes into play here because cultural anthropological 'ritual qualities' cannot serve as the only criteria for the inculturation of Christian rituals in the liturgy. The so-called question about the identity of a Christian ritual. This critical-normative question is answered in two ways, firstly by means of a theological chapter on a Biblical-theological view of reconciliation, brought into play *via* interfeerention and inculturation.

Since time and place influence rituals, these aspects will also have to be attended to. The time-aspect will be brought into play by means of a chapter on history of liturgy in order to try and show the (dis) continuity between enacted rituals and historically reconstructed rituals. (Dis) continuity within the liturgical tradition is closely linked to appropriation, and is as such an important factor to consider when working with the *liturgia condenda*.

Reconciliation

This chapter will begin with an exegetical section in order to formulate a Biblical perspective on reconciliation. The focus will fall on a selection of reconciliation rituals in the Bible. Besides reconciliation, a Biblical-theological view on church unity will also be formulated which will also serve as a critical-normative guide within the whole process.

This chapter will then interlock with the chapter about rituals to, along with the 'qualities of ritual', serve as a criteria indicating which Christian rituals of reconciliation can be regarded as 'better' or 'more adequate' than others. It will also, *via* the concept inculturation, touch on contexts and cultures. This Biblical view on reconciliation will shed critical light on the 'culture of reconciliation' or absence thereof, within the three different contexts. It will also contend with the historical chapter, by critically looking at the Dutch Reformed liturgical tradition *via* the reconstruction of one ritual of reconciliation.

This also brings the time-aspect of the matrix into play, on the basis of (dis) continuity with the tradition regarding reconciliation. Also the interfeerention between primary- and secondary sources will become especially apparant in this chapter, where the actual ritual *praxis* in the past and the present will interfere with secondary sources on reconciliation.

Culture

Here the culture of the three contexts will be described according to the data collected from the qualitative research. Designation and appropriation will be especially important here, seeing that the culture of each community will be described by means of how the respondents appropriate their culture in the interviews and focus group discussions. This will, however, also happen by means of designation, whereby the researcher himself will describe the culture, and by also making use of the work of anthropologists, sociologists and cultural philosophers, as secondary sources.

Moreover, with this exploration by means of primary- (appropriation) and secondary (designation) sources, rituals themselves give an excellent window into a specific culture. Therefore deductions extracted from the analysed rituals will also be incorporated into this description of the culture of the three local cultures. Here one can clearly see the interplay

of the whole dynamic that exists between cult and culture. This will once again interfere with the chapter on reconciliation, exploring the relation between reconciliation in cult and culture and the interference between them. Rituals, however, also give us a very good window into the anthropological contexts of each one of the three communities. Here one can especially think of the importance of the physical body, very much part of most liturgical research after the so-called 'antropologisch Wende'. Once again the dynamic between cult(s) and culture(s) comes into play, seeing that the body (sensory aspects) is afforded priority in some cults/cultures to thought (cognitive-rational aspects) and *vice versa*. This will also affect the discussion on reconciliation, because some of the road markings as well as stumbling blocks on the road towards reconciliation are possibly inherent in the different experiences of the importance of the physical body.

The South African culture, specifically the Western Cape, will also be described by means of designation by making use of secondary sources, i.e. demographic data. This will be an attempt to do some justice to the fact that this contextual analysis is embedded in a multi-layered global culture. This section will, however, paint in board brushstrokes so as to avoid the danger of confining contexts and cultures.

After the cultures have been described by means of designation and appropriation, the concept inculturation must be explored. Firstly, the term will be distinguished from closely related terms such as enculturation, indigenisation, accommodation and interculturalisation. Thereafter, the critical-reciprocal meaning and function of this concept, as used in this research, will be explained. This concept serves as a critical-normative guiding concept within all the different sections of the research design.

Diachronic-Historical Reconstruction of a Ritual of Reconciliation

The chapter on the history of rituals of reconciliation in South Africa will focus on one ritual of reconciliation in both the URC and DRC during the apartheid and post-apartheid years. The idea is to try and reconstruct, from its historical debris, the ritual of reconciliation (penance and its alter developments) and the Lord's Supper as exemplary rituals of reconciliation. This chapter will make use of the so-called comparative method as a basis for interference in the development of an adequate ritual repertoire for the inculturation of rituals of reconciliation. In this chapter, like in other chapters, primary as well as secondary sources will be consulted, thereby not only looking at liturgy as a book, but also describing the whole sensory interplay. Thus as a historical reconstruction with special reference to the anthropology of the ritual, this diachronic historical description will cause interference with the synchronic description taken from the contextual analyses. Thereby letting past and present, the tradition and the actual liturgical praxis, cause interference with each other, showing the (dis) continuity with the past, to help with the formation of rituals of reconciliation in the future. It will also shed some light on the dynamic interplay between cult and culture within the history of the liturgy of the DRC and the URC. For example it will be shown how politics helped with the formation of both the ritual of the Lord's Supper in the DRC and URC, but also how both these rituals influenced (by either rubber-stamping or challenging) the politics of the day. What is important here is to try and pinpoint the places around which this ritual took shape, for example the time, place, symbolism and persons present. These areas can once again be important road markings for areas that are particularly important when developing a ritual of reconciliation.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ See, Wepener, CJ 2002. "Still because of the weakness of some? A descriptive exploration of the Lord's Supper in South Africa, 1948-2002". *Jaarboek voor liturgie-onderzoek* 18, 139-158, as well as the two

Conclusion

The matrix mentioned earlier will be applied throughout the research on each one of the five main parts individually and thereafter on all the main parts together. The theological concept inculturation will guide the whole process, in order to see which ritual road markings, lines of force, principles, or series of qualities can be distilled from the process. As a whole this process is in line with the initial question, namely: “*How can a better inculturated repertoire of rituals of reconciliation be attained?*” On this basis the research aims at making a contribution towards the so-called *liturgia condenda*, working towards the goal that the current liturgical formation in South Africa, and specifically within the Dutch Reformed Church, will take place in a theologically and anthropologically justifiable fashion. This will also assist with the creation of a better inculturated liturgy of reconciliation, which could in turn assist with the formation of a new faith-ethos concerning realities such as guilt and violence.

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