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1918 · 2018

**XIII. INTERNATIONAL BONHOEFFER CONGRESS  
STELLENBOSCH, SOUTH AFRICA  
19 – 23 JANUARY 2020**

How the coming generation is to go on living?  
Bonhoeffer and the response to our present crisis and hope





## WELCOME!

A very warm word of welcome to the 13<sup>th</sup> International Bonhoeffer Congress in Stellenbosch!

We are grateful for the fact that so many people from across the globe have travelled to the Western Cape to participate in this conference hosted by the Faculty of Theology and the Beyers Naudé Center for Public Theology at Stellenbosch University, in partnership with the Department of Religion and Theology at the University of the Western Cape. We look forward to learn from each other through the presentations and discussions, and to enjoy our togetherness.

The theme of our conference is “How the coming generation is to go on living?” – a theme drawn from Bonhoeffer’s remarkable text “After Ten Years,” in which we read: “The ultimate responsible question is not how I extricate myself heroically from a situation but [how] a coming generation is to go on living? Only from such a historically responsible question will fruitful solutions arise.”

Bonhoeffer’s remark, we believe, shows a concern to take responsibility not only for our own personal and communal life in all its complexity and richness but

also for the kind of values and society that future generations will inherit from us. The pertinence of Bonhoeffer’s question is felt anew in our day as we experience threats on a global level to socio-political, economic and inter-religious stability and solidarity. Also within the South African context, there have been major sea changes since the first truly democratic elections were held in 1994.

And the reality of climate change and ecological devastation implies that the question of how future generations are going to go on living is linked to the fact that we live on a planet in jeopardy.

It is our hope that our conversations and communion at this conference will bring the life, theology and legacy of Dietrich Bonhoeffer into fruitful dialogue with these challenges.

On behalf of the conference organising committee, I wish you all an enriching conference!

Robert Vosloo (Director of the Bonhoeffer Unit and professor in Systematic Theology at Stellenbosch University)

# CONGRESS PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

## SUNDAY 19 JANUARY 2020

16:00 – 17:30	Registration, Faculty of Theology, 171 Dorp Street, Stellenbosch
17:15 – 17:30	Welcome: Nico Koopman
18:00 – 19:15	Church service: Archbishop Thabo Makgoba (preacher)

## MONDAY 20 JANUARY 2020

9:00 – 9:30	Welcome and opening
9:30 – 10:45	Plenary 1: Wolfgang Huber
10:45 – 11:15	Refreshments
11:15 – 12:30	Plenary 2: Nadia Marais
12:30 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 16:00	Seminar papers 1
16:00 – 16:30	Refreshments
16:30 – 18:00	Seminar papers 2
18:00 – 21:00	Evening function, Book launch, Libertas choir

## TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2020

8:30 – 9:00	Morning Devotion
9:15 – 10:30	Plenary 3: Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela
10:30 – 11:00	Refreshments
11:00 – 12:15	Plenary 4: Terry Lovat
12:15 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 16:00	Seminar papers 3
16:00 – 16:30	Refreshments
16:30 – 18:00	Seminar papers 4
	Evening free

## WEDNESDAY 22 JANUARY 2020

8:00	Busses depart for the University of the Western Cape, Cape Town Parking lot, Faculty of Theology
9:00 – 9:15	Welcoming by Dean of Arts, University of the Western Cape
9:15 – 10:30	Plenary 5: Reggie Williams
10:30 – 11:00	Refreshments
11:00 – 12:15	Plenary 6: Teddy Sakupapa
12:15 – 13:00	Lunch to go
13:00 – 14:00	Busses depart for Cape Town
14:00 – 18:00	Visit Cape Town (including St George's Cathedral, District Six Museum)
18:00 – 21:00	Congress Reception
21:00 – 23:00	Busses depart for Stellenbosch

## THURSDAY 23 JANUARY 2020

8:30 - 9:00	Morning Devotion
9:15 – 10:45	Seminar Papers 5
10:45 – 11:15	Refreshments
11:15 – 12:30	Plenary 7: Panel of younger scholars moderated by John de Gruchy <i>How the coming generation is to go on living?</i>
12:30 – 13:00	Conclusion of Congress

## MAIN SPEAKERS



**Thabo Makgoba** is the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town. Born in Makgoba's Kloof in Limpopo, he grew up in Alexandra in Johannesburg until his family was forcibly removed to Soweto. He earned degrees in science, applied psychology and educational psychology at Wits University, and studied for the ministry in Makhanda in the Eastern Cape. He served as a priest in Johannesburg and as a bishop in Komani and Makhanda before being elected, at the age of 47, as Archbishop of Cape Town. He has a PhD from the University of Cape Town for a thesis based on his ministry to miners suffering crushed spinal cords and is the recipient of a number of honorary degrees.

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**Wolfgang Huber** served as research assistant and as deputy director of the Protestant Institute for Interdisciplinary Research in Heidelberg (1968-1980), as professor of Social Ethics in Marburg (1980-84) and then professor of Systematic Theology (Ethics) in Heidelberg (1984-1994). In 1989 he was visiting professor at Emory University in Atlanta/Georgia. He is an Extraordinary Professor in Heidelberg, Berlin and Stellenbosch. He received several honorary doctorates and other awards. He was Bishop of the Evangelical Church in Berlin-Brandenburg (1994-2009) and Chairperson of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (2003-2009). He is the author of both popular and scholarly works, mostly in the field of theological ethics, and plays an active role in the church, in ecumenical affairs and in many spheres of public and political life. He is married to Kara Huber; they have three adult children and six grand-children.

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**Nadia Marais** teaches Systematic Theology at Stellenbosch University in South Africa. She completed her PhD in Systematic Theology in 2015, with the title "Imagining Human Flourishing? A Systematic Theological Exploration of Contemporary Soteriological Discourses". Her research interests include theological anthropology, ecological theology, and soteriology. She is an ordained minister of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa and a Mandela Rhodes Scholar.





**Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela** is Professor and Research Chair in Historical Trauma and Transformation at Stellenbosch University. Her interests focus mainly on two strands of research. The first is exploring ways in which the impact of the dehumanising experiences of oppression and violent abuse continues to play out in the next generation in the aftermath of historical trauma. For her second research area, she expands her earlier work on remorse and forgiveness and probes the role of empathy more deeply by engaging a perspective that makes transparent the interconnected relationship among empathy, *Ubuntu* and the embodied African phenomenon of *inimba*—a Xhosa word that loosely translated means “umbilical cord”—and integrating these with the relational and psychoanalytic concept of intersubjectivity. Her critically acclaimed book, *A Human Being Died that Night: A South African Story of Forgiveness* won the Christopher Award in the United States in 2003, and the Alan Paton Award in South Africa in 2004. Her other books include *Narrating our Healing: Perspectives on Healing Trauma*, as co-author, *Memory, Narrative and Forgiveness: Perspectives on the Unfinished Journeys of the Past*, as co-editor, *Breaking Intergenerational Cycles of Repetition: A Global Dialogue on Historical Trauma and Memory*, as editor. She was awarded the Degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, from Holy Cross College in Massachusetts (2002), and the honorary Doctor of Theology from the Friedrich-Schiller University, Jena, Germany (2017).

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**Terence Lovat** is Professor Emeritus at the University of Newcastle, Australia, Visiting Professor at the University of Glasgow, UK, and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Oxford, UK. He was formerly Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean at the University of Newcastle. His research interests span theology and education, with special attention to Islam, moral education and the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer; he is currently Editor-in Chief of *The Bonhoeffer Legacy*, the only journal in the world dedicated solely to Bonhoeffer’s theology, and convenor of the annual Australian Bonhoeffer Conference. His work on Islam has been far-reaching in terms of publications and accessing Muslim communities. He has been a guest of universities in several Islamic countries, including Turkey, Tunisia, Indonesia and Iran. In recent times, he has been pondering on the intersection between his twin interests in Islam and the theology of Bonhoeffer, employing the latter to try to establish a more productive analysis and understanding of Islam in all its manifestations, including that of the troublesome radical Jihadism, than is common in Western assumptions, perceptions and biases.



**Teddy Chalwe Sakupapa** teaches ecumenical studies and social ethics at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). He holds a PhD in Ecumenical Studies from UWC and a master's degree in Dogmatics from the Protestant Theological University, Netherlands. His research interests include discourse on God in African theology, decoloniality, ecumenical ecclesiology and the history of Christianity in Africa. He is currently working on a project on the "Doctrine of the Trinity in African Theology" in conversation with discourse on decoloniality.

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**Reggie Williams** received his PhD in Christian ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary in 2011. He earned a Master's degree in Theology from Fuller in 2006 and a Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies from Westmont College in 1995. He is a member of the board of directors for the Society for Christian Ethics, as well as the International Dietrich Bonhoeffer Society. He is also a member of the American Academy of Religion and Society for the Study of Black Religion. Williams' book, *Bonhoeffer's Black Jesus: Harlem Renaissance Theology and an Ethic of Resistance* (Baylor University Press, 2014) was selected as a Choice Outstanding Title in 2015 in the field of religion. The book is an analysis of exposure to Harlem Renaissance intellectuals, and worship at Harlem's Abyssinian Baptist on the German pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, during his year of post-doctoral study at Union Seminary in New York, 1930-1931. Williams' research interests include Christological ethics, theological anthropology, Christian social ethics, the Harlem Renaissance, race, politics and black church life. His current book project includes a religious critique of whiteness in the Harlem Renaissance. In addition, he is working on a book analysing the reception of Bonhoeffer by liberation activists in apartheid South Africa.

**GENERAL  
INFORMATION**

## Registration

The central Registration Desk is in the foyer of the Theology Building, with its main entrance on 171 Dorp Street. The desk will be open for registration on Sunday 19 January 2020 from 16:00-17:30, and on Monday 20 January from 08:00-09:00. During registration, you will receive your congress bag with a name tag and lanyard as well as a printed programme book. *There is thus no need to print out the programme yourself.* Please remember to wear your name tag and lanyard during the whole congress (evening events included).

## Information desk

An information desk will be open throughout the congress in the foyer of the Theology Building. The staff will be able to assist with directions and further information related to the congress.

## Copy service

In Plein Street there is a PostNet shop which will be able to assist you with making copies.

## Security

You are advised not to leave your congress bag and other valuables (such as laptop computers, tablets, phones, etc.) in the lecture venues when going for refreshment or lunch breaks.

## Accessibility for wheelchairs

Please enquire at the Information desk about the wheelchair route.

## Parking

There will be limited number of parking spaces available on the premises of the Theology building.

## Keep cool during lectures

Water fountains can be found at the main entrance of the building and in front of the Attie van Wijk Auditorium.

## Refreshments and lunch

Refreshments will be served in the passages on both the ground level and the first floor of the Theology Building. Delegates are responsible for their own lunches on Monday 20 January and Tuesday 21 January. On Wednesday 22 January a brown paper bag lunch will be provided.

The EnRoute Cafeteria in the Theology Building offers both Take Away and À La Carte

## Recommended restaurants within walking distance of the Faculty of Theology (alphabetically):

- **Basic Bistro**, 31 Church Street – À La Carte
- **Bootlegger Coffee Company**, 15 Ryneveld Street - À La Carte
- **De Stomme Jonge**, 3 Ryneveld Street – À La Carte



- **De Warenmarkt**, 20 Ryneveld Street - À La Carte
- **De Vrije Burger**, 61 Plein Street – Take Away
- **Greengate Eatery**, De Wet Square, Corner of Church and Bird Streets – Buffet and À La Carte
- **Java Bistro**, 25 Church Street – À La Carte
- **Kauai**, De Wet Centre, Bird Street – Take Away and À La Carte
- **Meraki**, 38 Ryneveld Street – À La Carte
- **Oude Werf Hotel**, 30 Church Street - À La Carte
- **Stellenbosch Kitchen**, Corner of Dorp and Andringa Streets - À La Carte
- **Steam**, 5 Ryneveld Street – À La Carte
- **Taste Bud Eatery**, 44 Ryneveld Street – Buffet and À La Carte
- **The Blue Crane and the Butterfly**, 146 Dorp Street - À La Carte

## Wi-fi access

Free Wifi will be available in the Theology building. The details for logging into Wi-Fi network are:  
**BONHOEFFER2020** and password: **BONHOEFFER@2020wifi**

## Smoking

*Please take note that all congress venues are no smoking zones.*

## Emergency numbers

Police (National):	10111
Stellenbosch Police:	021 809 5015
Ambulance:	10177

## Health and Medical Services

*Hospitals provide emergency and casualty wards, and out-patient treatment.*

### MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

ER24	084 124
Netcare911	082 911

### HOSPITALS

Mediclinic (Private)	021 886 9999/ 021 861 2000
Stellenbosch Hospital (Public)	021 887 0310

### DOCTORS:

Stelkor Medicross:	021 887 0305
Campus Health Service:	021 808 3496 / 3494

### PHARMACIES

Campus Pharmacy:	021 887 2725
Clicks Pharmacy:	021 887 2989 / 2939



## **PROGRAMME**

## CONGRESS PROGRAMME

### SUNDAY 19 JANUARY 2020 (STELLENBOSCH)

16:00 – 17:30	Registration Foyer, Faculty of Theology
17:15 – 17:30	Welcome: <b>Nico Koopman</b> , Vice-Rector: Social Impact, Transformation & Personnel, Stellenbosch University <i>Attie van Wijk Auditorium, Faculty of Theology</i>
17:30	Short walk to Stellenbosch United Church, 8 Van Riebeeck Road
18:00 – 19:15	Church service. Preacher: <b>Archbishop Thabo Makgoba</b> <i>Stellenbosch United Church</i>
19:15	Refreshments <i>Stellenbosch United Church</i>

### MONDAY 20 JANUARY 2020 (STELLENBOSCH)

\*All plenary sessions take place in the Attie van Wijk Auditorium of the Faculty of Theology

9:00 – 9:30	Welcome: Reggie Nel, Dean of Faculty of Theology, Stellenbosch University Opening
9:30 – 10:15	<b>Plenary 1: Wolfgang Huber</b> Chair: Robert Vosloo <i>What does it mean to tell the truth? Bonhoeffer in the digital era</i>
10:15 – 10:45	Discussion
10:45 – 11:15	Refreshments
11:15 – 12:00	<b>Plenary 2: Nadia Marais</b> Chair: Mary-Ann Plaatjies van Huffel <i>'O, poor Judas, what have you done!' On Inheriting History, Or A Theological Exploration of Friendship and Betrayal</i>
12:00 – 12:30	Discussion
12:30 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 16:00	<b>Seminar Papers I: History, the Past, and Responsibility</b>  <b>IA: Room 2003 (Hofmeyr Hall)</b> <b>Clifford Green</b> , <i>Bonhoeffer's Letter to Gandhi</i> <b>Nancy Lukens</b> , <i>Life worth Living, Death worth Dying? Living the Questions under a Criminal Regime: Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Adam von Trott</i>  <b>IB: Room 2002 (Murray Hall)</b> <b>Ralf Wüstenberg</b> , "Scarring over of past guilt" – Bonhoeffer's impact on a responsible engagement with the post-Apartheid past <b>Nico Koopman</b> , <i>Bonhoeffer in Harlem. Some signposts to the future</i>  <b>IC: Room 1003</b> <b>Kevin O'Farrell</b> , "Seek the Things that are Above": Bonhoeffer on Reading and Responding to God's Action in History <b>Dallas Gingles</b> , <i>Responsibility and Guilt in the Moral Life: A Deflationary Reading of Bonhoeffer's Ethics</i>  <b>ID: Room 1005C</b> <b>Christoph Barnbrock</b> , <i>Confession as "Breakthrough to Community": Impulses from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Theology for an Individualized and Polarized World</i> <b>Michelle Wolff</b> , <i>Collective Acts of Civil Disobedience: How Karl Bonhoeffer's medical ethics &amp; Dietrich Bonhoeffer's political theology mutually informed one another</i>



Faculty of Theology, Stellenbosch University

	<p><b>IE: Room 1006</b>  <b>Etienne de Villiers</b>, <i>An Ethics of Responsibility for our Time: The Challenge to Christian Ethics</i>  <b>Peter Hooton</b>, "I am for you, and you are for me God's claim": A Christological Meditation on Bonhoeffer's Ethic of Responsibility</p>
	<p><b>IF: Room 2004 (Board Room)</b>  <b>Henco van der Westhuizen</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer in South Africa?</i>  <b>Hassan Musa</b>, <i>The reception of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Africa: 'Is he still of any use to us today?'</i></p>
	<p><b>IG: Seminary Room</b>  <b>Luís Cumaru</b>, <i>An Analysis of Heritage and Decay Fragment of Bonhoeffer's Ethics</i>  <b>Helena Jedrzejczak</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer's Idea of Europe as an Answer for the Crisis of Values</i></p>
16:00 – 16:30	Refreshments
16:30 – 18:00	<p><b>Seminar Papers 2: Threats and Challenges: Polarization, Climate change, Migration, and Poverty</b></p> <p><b>2A: Room 2003 (Hofmeyr Hall)</b>  <b>Steve Haynes</b>, <i>After Three Years: Discerning Signs of the Time in the Age of Trump</i>  <b>Jason Lam</b>, <i>Reading Bonhoeffer Amid the Hong Kong Protests</i></p> <p><b>2B: Room 2002 (Murray Hall)</b>  <b>Ulrik Nissen</b>, <i>Responsivity and Responsibility in the Age of the Anthropocene. Bonhoefferian Reflections on Hope in the Light of our Climate Crisis</i>  <b>Di Rayson</b>, <i>The Joy of Grounded Wisdom: Bonhoeffer, Earthly Christianity, and the Anthropocene</i></p> <p><b>2C: Room 2004 (Board Room)</b>  <b>Rudolf von Sinner</b>, <i>Is God Brazilian? A country, a movie and Bonhoeffer's ethics</i>  <b>Wilhelm Sell</b>, <i>Dietrich Bonhoeffer before the German nationalism of the Third Reich: analysis and theological impulses from Creation and Fall to contemporaneity</i></p> <p><b>2D: Room 1003</b>  <b>Carlos Caldas</b>, <i>How is today's – and the coming – generation to go on living? Bonhoeffer and the responsibility for the Earth. Bonhoefferian inspirations for an eco-theology and an eco-ethics.</i>  <b>Gregor Etzelmüller</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer's theology of the body and the responsibility for the Earth</i></p> <p><b>2E: Room 1006</b>  <b>Daniel Frei</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer and Migration</i>  <b>Lori Brandt Hale</b>, <i>A Better Earthly Future: Bonhoeffer and the Quest for Interfaith Cooperation</i></p>

	<p><b>2F: Room 1005C</b>  <b>Aad van Tilburg</b>, <i>Responsibility with respect to power imbalances in value chains with Bonhoeffer's ethics as a reference</i>  <b>Michael Phiri</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer's soteriology and the challenge of poverty in Malawi</i></p>
	<p><b>2G: Seminary Room</b>  <b>Mark Braverman</b>, <i>Revisiting Bonhoeffer and the Jews: Beyond Penitence and Reconciliation</i>  <b>Marthie Momberg</b>, <i>Beyond the dark night of the soul: Bonhoeffer and Jews for Palestinian rights</i></p>
18:00 – 19:00	Evening function (outside front of building)
19:00 – 20:00	<p>Book launch (Room 2002 - Murray lecture hall) (moderated by Dion Forster)  <b>John de Gruchy</b> - <i>Bonhoeffer's Questions: A Life-Changing Conversation</i> (Lexington Books, 2019)  <b>Nico Koopman</b> and <b>Robert Vosloo</b>: <i>Reading Bonhoeffer in South Africa after the Transition to Democracy: Selected Essays</i> (Peter Lang Verlag, 2020)  <b>Andreas Pangritz</b>: <i>The Polyphony of Life: Bonhoeffer's Theology of Music</i> (edited by <b>John de Gruchy</b> and <b>John Morris</b>, translated by <b>Robert Steiner</b>) (Cascade Books, 2019)</p>
20:00 – 21:00	Libertas Choir Concert, Attie van Wijk Auditorium



**The Libertas Choir** was established in April 1989 under the auspices of the Women for South Africa movement. Since 1989, Johan de Villiers has been the conductor and together with his wife, Louwina, as the manager of the choir, the Libertas Choir has performed on world-renowned stages. Its mission throughout remains the fostering harmonious co-existence between the respective cultural communities in our country through choral music, as reflected in the choir's membership.

Regarding repertoire, the choir performs standard a cappella music, as well as commissioned arrangements of traditional and contemporary South African songs. In addition, collaborations with professional symphony orchestras and soloists have resulted, at least bi-annually, in performances of oratoria like Handel's Messiah, Bach's Mass in B Minor, the Requiems of Mozart, Brahms and Verdi, Mendelssohn's Elijah and Karl Jenkins's Stabat Mater and The Peacemakers.



## TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2020 (STELLENBOSCH)

8:30 – 9:00	Morning Devotion (Di Rayson)
9:15 – 10:00	<b>Plenary 3: Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela</b> Chair: Sipho Mahokoto <i>Witnessing Trauma: A Call to Reparative Humanism</i>
10:00 – 10:30	Discussion
10:30 – 11:00	Refreshments
11:00 – 11:45	<b>Plenary 4: Terry Lovat</b> Chair: Xolile Simon <i>Bonhoeffer on Islam: An Exploration that can Recoil</i>
11:45 – 12:15	Discussion
12:15 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 16:00	<b>Seminar Papers 3: Age, Intergenerational trauma, the Body, and Race</b> <b>3A: Room 2003 (Hofmeyr Hall)</b> <b>Frits de Lange</b> , <i>Old man Bonhoeffer. Generativity, life span psychology and intergenerational ethics</i> <b>Anne-Katherina Neddens and Christian Neddens</b> , <i>Transgenerational Guilt - Transgenerational Resilience</i> <b>3B: Room 2002 (Murray Hall)</b> <b>Dion Forster</b> , <i>Bonhoeffer and Biko: Towards a politics of hope among young South Africans</i> <b>Malcolm Cash</b> , <i>Abandoning the Tribe of Whiteness: Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Nelson Mandela as Leadership Models to End and Heal the Legacy of Euro-Racist Structures against Black People</i> <b>3C: Room 2004 (Board Room)</b> <b>Matthew Jones</b> , <i>No Way out of No Way. Bonhoeffer's Queer Future: Trauma and Eschatology in Creation and Fall</i> <b>Ashwin Thyssen</b> , <i>Queering Bonhoeffer's Ecclesiology: Saints Living Together in Communion</i> <b>3D: Room 1003</b> <b>Jennifer McBride and Thomas Fabisiak</b> , <i>Bonhoeffer's Critique of Morality: A Theological Resource for Dismantling Mass Incarceration</i> <b>Kristopher Norris</b> , <i>Seeing Responsibility from Below: Bonhoeffer, Niebuhr, and Racism</i> <b>3E: Room 1006</b> <b>Edward Van t' Slot</b> , <i>The Young Berlin Youth-Pastor on Being Church (1932)</i> <b>Andrew Root</b> , <i>Bonhoeffer and the Younger Generation: Responding to the Age of Anger</i> <b>3F: Room 1005C</b> <b>Tori Lockler</b> , <i>(Over)Coming Intergenerational Trauma: Learning from Second and Third Generation Holocaust and Rwandan Survivors</i> <b>Matthew Puffer</b> , <i>Christ as Mediator for the Coming Generation: Toward a Theological Ethic of Intergenerational Responsibility</i> <b>3G: Seminary Room</b> <b>Pieter Grove</b> , <i>From Versailles to the Holocaust: Does Bonhoeffer have anything to say on Restitution?</i> <b>Derek Taylor</b> , <i>On Giving Up Control in the Coming Generation: An Attempt to De-Colonize Bonhoeffer</i>
16:00 – 16:30	Refreshments
16:30 – 18:00	Seminar Papers 4: The Spirit of Christ, Truth-telling, Politics and the Church
	<b>4A: Room 2003 (Hofmeyr Hall)</b> <b>Mark Bocker</b> , <i>Creating Anew Responsible Human Beings: The Work of the Holy Spirit in Bonhoeffer's Ethics</i> <b>Koert Verhagen</b> , <i>Making the Future Present: The Church's Temporality and the Witness of the Spirit</i>

	<p><b>B: Room 2002 (Murray Hall)</b>  <b>Eben Scheffler</b>, <i>Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Historical Jesus</i>  <b>Günter Thomas</b>, "... the one realm of the Christ-reality". A critical examination of a powerful theological insight</p>
	<p><b>4C: Room 1003</b>  <b>Karola Radler</b>, "Dezision" as a modern version of Docetism: Bonhoeffer's disclosure of the heretic structure of Carl Schmitt's theory of state  <b>Jens Zimmermann</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer, Politics, and the Natural Law Tradition</i></p>
	<p><b>4D: Room 2004 (Board Room)</b>  <b>Tim Hartman</b>, "A church for the future?" Bonhoeffer's late ecclesiology in conversation with African Christianity  <b>Jeremy Rios</b>, <i>Plasticity and Politics: The Logic of Martyrdom and the Politicization of the Church</i>, with special reference to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King Jr., and Oscar Romero</p>
	<p><b>4E: Room 1006</b>  <b>Keith Clements</b>, <i>What does it mean to tell the truth?</i> The Church and the allegations against Bishop George Bell as a case-study  <b>Christiane Simon</b>, <i>Christian freedom in a "world come of age"</i> – Bonhoeffer in conversation with Luther</p>
	<p><b>4F: Room 1005C</b>  <b>Matthias Grebe</b>, <i>Truth-telling, Deception, and the Atonement in the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer</i>  <b>Louis van der Riet</b>, <i>And you will know the past, and the past will set you free? Bonhoeffer's confessional truth-telling</i></p>
	<p><b>4G: Seminary Room</b>  <b>Martin Pavlik</b>, <i>The Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Finkenwalde and its Import on his Later Prison Theology</i>  <b>Chris Dodson</b>, <i>Rise in Newness of Life: Religionless Christianity and the Sacraments in Bonhoeffer's Baptismal Letter to Dietrich Bethge</i></p>
	<p><b>4H: Beyers Naudé Centre</b>  <b>Kevin Lenehan</b>, <i>Between Visibility and Hiddenness: Ecclesio-genesis as Solidarity and Identity in a Pluralist Society</i>  <b>Stephan von Twardowski</b>, <i>Truth and justice seeking community. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's early ecumenical ethics and its significance for our time</i></p>
	<p>Evening free</p>

## WEDNESDAY 22 JANUARY 2020 (UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE; CAPE TOWN \*)

8:00	Buses depart for the University of the Western Cape, Cape Town Parking lot, Faculty of Theology
9:00 – 9:15	Welcoming by Dean of Arts, University of the Western Cape
9:15 – 10:00	<b>Plenary 5: Reggie Williams</b> Chair: John Klaasen <i>Recalibrating the View from Below: Bonhoeffer, Hope, and Social Justice</i>
10:00 – 10:30	Discussion
10:30 – 11:00	Refreshments
11:00 – 11:45	<b>Plenary 6: Teddy Sakupapa</b> Chair: Demaine Solomons <i>Bonhoeffer and the Public Role of Religion in Contemporary Africa: Promises and Perils</i>
11:45 – 12:15	Discussion
12:15 – 13:00	Lunch to go
13:00 – 14:00	Buses depart for Cape Town
14:00 – 18:00	Visit Cape Town (including St George's Cathedral and District Six Museum) <i>See information and a map following the programme</i>
18:00 – 21:00	Congress Reception <i>Cape Town Homecoming Centre</i>
20:30 – 21:30	Buses depart for Stellenbosch



### \*The morning sessions will take place at the University of the Western Cape

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) is a public university located in Bellville in the Western Cape. The University of the Western Cape has a history of creative struggle against oppression, discrimination and disadvantage. Among academic institutions, it has been in the vanguard of South Africa's historic change, playing a distinctive academic role in helping to build an equitable and dynamic society. UWC's key concerns include access, equity and quality in higher education.

## THURSDAY 23 JANUARY 2020 (STELLENBOSCH)

8:30 - 9:00	Morning Devotion (Carlos Caldas)
9:15 – 10:45	<p><b>Seminar Papers 5: Ecclesiology, prison theology, music and hope</b></p> <p><b>5A: Room 2003 (Hofmeyr Hall)</b>  <b>Andreas Pangritz</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer's eschatological reflections on the late works of Bach and Beethoven</i>  <b>Joanna Tarassenko</b>, <i>Spiritual Resonance: Polyphony and Pneumatology in Dietrich Bonhoeffer</i></p> <p><b>5B: Room 2002 (Murray Hall)</b>  <b>Barry Harvey</b>, <i>"How Shall We Educate to Goodness?" Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Ecclesial-Based Theology of Resistance</i>  <b>Javier Garcia</b>, <i>A Hope for the Future: Learning from Bonhoeffer in our Troubled Times</i></p> <p><b>5C: Room 1003</b>  <b>Peter Frick</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer and the Hermeneutics of Hope: The Quest for Existence and Meaning</i>  <b>David Hall</b>, <i>'Make straight in the desert a highway...' Relating Present and Future in Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Walter Benjamin</i></p> <p><b>5D: Room 1005C</b>  <b>Gerard den Hertog</b>, <i>In facing the past, taking responsibility for the future</i>  <b>Alexander Schulze</b>, <i>"Die Tage in Zingst ... waren ungestört schön." – 85 Jahre nach den Anfängen des Predigerseminars auf dem Zingst / Bonhoeffer and Zingst – 85 years later (English or German)</i></p> <p><b>5E: Room 1006</b>  <b>Daniel Adams</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer's "Concrete" Spirituality: Learning to Live In-between Suffering and Hope, in Dialogue with Bonhoeffer's Prison Writings</i>  <b>Adrian Coates</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer on Amusing Ourselves to Death: Mature aesthetic existence as antidote to everyday aestheticism</i></p> <p><b>5F: Room 2004 (Board Room)</b>  <b>Ulrich Duchrow</b>, <i>What can we learn from Bonhoeffer concerning the churches facing the Palestinian question?</i>  <b>Robert Vosloo</b>, <i>Bonhoeffer, the Discourses on Status Confessionis in Apartheid South Africa, and Confessing the Faith Anew</i></p> <p><b>5G: Seminary Room</b>  <b>Joel Burnell</b>, <i>Myth, Mystery and Metaphor - Casting Visions of Life Together in the Present World</i>  <b>Katharina Oppel</b>, <i>Living with an undivided Heart - Simplicity as a Christian Way for the Future</i></p> <p><b>5H: Beyers Naudé Centre</b>  <b>Christopher King</b>, <i>The Will to Love: Bonhoeffer's Account of the Church between Atomism and Idealism</i>  <b>Kyle Trowbridge</b>, <i>Political Theology on Cursed Ground; or, Towards a Political Theology of Fear: A Conversation between Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Judith Shklar</i></p>
10:45 – 11:15	Refreshments
11:15 – 12:30	<p><b>Plenary 7: Panel moderated by John de Gruchy</b>  <i>How the coming generation is to go on living?</i></p>
12:30 – 13:00	Conclusion of congress



## **EXCURSION**



## MORE INFORMATION ON THE EXCURSION ON 22 JANUARY AND THE PLACES OF INTEREST:



### MAP OF CAPE TOWN EXCURSION

1. St George's Cathedral
2. Arch for Arch
3. Slave Lodge
4. The Company's garden
5. South African Jewish museum and Holocaust & Genocide Centre
6. The Old Granary (Slave gallows site, now The Desmond & Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation)
7. Homecoming Centre
8. District six museum

## 1. St George's Cathedral

Known as the “People’s Cathedral” for its role in the resistance against apartheid, St. George’s Cathedral is the oldest cathedral in Southern Africa and the mother church of the Anglican Diocese of Cape Town. The gothic church is a classic cruciform building, with a courtyard garden which includes a Labyrinth. The administrative offices of the Cathedral are housed in cloisters facing the courtyard. The original St George’s Church had been built in the style of St Pancras Church in London, featuring six stone pillars whose places are marked today by oak trees on the Cathedral steps. It opened at Christmas 1834, and was made a cathedral in 1847 in anticipation of the arrival of the first Anglican Bishop in Africa, Robert Gray. However, he didn’t like it. Both Bishop Gray and his successor William West Jones wished for a grander cathedral, but neither lived to see it built. The current building was designed by the famous architect Herbert Baker. The foundation stone was laid in 1901 by the future King George V and can be seen from the bottom of the Avenue leading into the Company’s Garden. Construction did not begin until 1906, however, starting at the eastern end, and the completion of the north transept in 1936 finally brought Herbert Baker’s design to life. In 1963 the Lady Chapel and south aisle were completed, and in 1978 the Bell Tower and the Link were built. The Cathedral remains a work-in-progress, however, as there was intended to be a Chapter House attached to the end of the Link.

## 2. Arch for Arch

Arch for Arch is an architectural structure that commemorates the work and life of one of South Africa’s most celebrated figures, Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Commissioned by Design Indaba and supported by Liberty, the #ArchForArch project celebrates its namesake Tutu (lovingly nicknamed “the Arch”). Its design is meant to be a physical representation of his strength and resilient humanity. The #ArchForArch also celebrates the South African Constitution. A one-to-one prototype of the Arch was unveiled at the finale of Design Indaba Conference 2017 by the architects commissioned to work on the project, Snøhetta co-founder Craig Dykers and Johannesburg-based architect Thomas Chapman of Local Studio. The structure consists of 14 individual arched beams of wood, together forming a dome. The wooden arches were bent by Croatian boat builder Dario Farcic in Johannesburg. A version of the Arch for Arch structure has been installed near St. George’s Cathedral in Cape Town and launched on 7 October 2017 to coincide with Tutu’s 86th birthday.

## 3. Slave Lodge

The Slave Lodge is one of the oldest buildings in Cape Town. The building has answered to many names in the last three centuries, namely; Slave Lodge, Government Offices Building, Old Supreme Court, and SA Cultural History Museum. All these names reflect the long and rich history of the building. In 1998 this museum was renamed the Slave Lodge. Under the umbrella theme, ‘From human wrongs to human rights’. Exhibitions on the lower level of this museum explore the long history of slavery in South Africa. Through our changing, temporary exhibitions we address issues around and we raise human rights awareness.

## 4. The Company’s garden

Company’s Garden is a large public park and botanical garden set in the heart of Cape Town, home to a rose garden, Japanese garden, fish pond and aviary. It was proclaimed a National Monument in 1962. You will notice the back of Parliament and Tuynhuys, the President’s official residence when in the mother city. A number of other important buildings can be found within the garden - the South African Museum, the Planetarium and the South African Art Gallery. Company’s Garden is the oldest garden in the country. It has

its origins in Jan van Riebeeck's vegetable garden, which he grew to feed the original colony as early as 1652, but a little closer to the coast. In a bid to plant in more fertile soil, on ground sheltered from the wind, he moved his garden with its northern boundary on Wale Street, and this is where it stands today.

## **5. Jewish museum and Holocaust & Genocide Centre**

Situated in the midst of arguably the most interesting and historic urban square miles in the country, and on a campus that includes SA's first, oldest and surely grandest synagogue, the South African Jewish Museum is nevertheless a marvel of modern architecture, and one whose contents mirror this fusion of the old world and the new. The museum looks back fondly at the origins of SA Jewry hailing from Eastern Europe and elsewhere (and featuring a recreation of shtetl life) and traces the cultural history of Jews, Jewish life and Judaism in general. As an added attraction, the museum is home to one of the world's finest collections of Netsuke (Japanese miniature art). At the Holocaust and Genocide centre the focus is on remembering the names and stories of those who lived and died in the darkest days of history. The centre also aims to reflect on "how these things happened and are still happening today, what visitors can do to stop hatred and build a world where this never happens again"

## **6. The Old Granary (Slave gallows site, now The Desmond & Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation)**

The site of the gallows where enslaved people were executed on the ground where the Universal Church and the Old Granary stands. The beautiful building on Buitenkant Street, known simply as the Granary, or the Old Customs House, is well over 200 years old and part of the Cape Town city's heritage.

Designed by the French-born South African architect and engineer, Louis Michel Thibault - who worked on a number of the city's more elaborate buildings - it was constructed between 1808 and 1813 by Jacobus Hendricks for use as a house and bakery. Over the years the house has fallen into disrepair, and has failed to find an organisation to raise the necessary funds to restore and repair its steady decay. Instead it has stood empty for 20 years. In late 2015 Desmond Tutu came to the rescue, offering to contribute R12 million towards the Granary's refurbishment. He also agreed to take on the lease of the building as a home for the Tutu Foundation Centre. The City, in turn, contributed a further R30m towards restoration, which began in late 2016.

## **7. Homecoming Centre**

In 2002 the District Six Museum has expanded its work from its location in the Methodist Church building at 25A Buitenkant Street, into a neighbouring building. Number 15 Buitenkant Street – now the District Six Museum Homecoming Centre – is known to many Capetonians as Sacks Futeran textile and soft goods warehouse. In addition to fulfilling the role of being a 'homecoming centre' to returning families and a centre for education and memory work, the facility has contributed to the Museum's financial sustainability by providing space for rental. The Fugard Theatre is currently the tenant occupying the largest portion of space in the Homecoming Centre. Sacks Futeran has formed an important part of the history of District Six and the city. It is here that the many seamstresses and tailors from the District purchased their fabrics; it is here that families purchased the layettes for babies and wedding trousseau items. The building continues to play an important if very different role in the present, as it evolves into the locale for workshopping and discussing the many issues linked to return and restitution. The programs and exhibitions in the two buildings work together to provide visitors with an in-depth understanding of an important part of our country's history. Most of the Museum's programs use the Homecoming Centre as their base for workshops, launches and other activities, and it is also the centre of its administration. The venue is equipped to host film screenings and other forms of public dialogues.

## 8. District 6 Museum

District Six before its destruction under Apartheid, was a community representative of diversity on a number of levels – language, religion, economic class, geographical area of origin – and became a living example of how diversity could be a strengthening characteristic of a community and need not be feared. It was a vibrant community of freed slaves, merchants, artisans, labourers and immigrants, with close links to the city and the port. It represented the polar opposite of what the Apartheid government, inaugurated by the National Party coming into power in 1948, needed people to believe and internalise. District Six thus became one of the main urban targets for destruction in the city of Cape Town. On 11 February 1966 it was declared a white area under the Group Areas Act of 1950, and by 1982, the life of the community was over. More than 60 000 people were forcibly removed to barren outlying areas aptly known as the Cape Flats, and their houses in District Six were flattened by bulldozers. The 'Hands Off District Six' conference of 1988 led to the formation of the District Six Museum Foundation in 1989. The Foundation worked towards the establishment of the Museum which was launched on 10 December 1994 with its inaugural exhibition called Streets: Retracing District Six. As it grows and develops, the Museum remains committed to its founding objectives, shaped in a new and constantly changing context. While the historically dispossessed people of the District return to the area as a result of the land restitution process, the Museum commits itself to deepening its memory work by supporting and facilitating the reconstruction of the landscape and the community in both material and intangible ways.

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**LEGACY**  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT





## **ABSTRACTS**

**Adams, Daniel** *University of Cape Town*

## **BONHOEFFER'S "CONCRETE" SPIRITUALITY: LEARNING TO LIVE IN-BETWEEN SUFFERING AND HOPE, IN DIALOGUE WITH BONHOEFFER'S PRISON WRITINGS**

Imprisonment represented a dramatic transitional event in Dietrich Bonhoeffer's life, reshaping the direction and quality of his relationships, privilege, thought, and spiritual formation. Interpretations of Bonhoeffer's Letters and Papers from Prison (DBWE 8), both past and present, have primarily focused their attention on those letters usually referred to as the "theological letters," or on minor, although significant themes there within. Attention given to Bonhoeffer's prison experience or the prison context in which he wrote has for the most part been of secondary contextual importance, rather than the concrete foundation of his prison writings. It is my contention that a considerable gap remains in the study of Bonhoeffer's prison writings, namely a contextual analysis of his prison experience and ministry, and the ways in which the prison cell shaped his experience, spiritual formation, and writing. Starting from a contextual analysis of Bonhoeffer's experience, this paper seeks to fill a gap in Bonhoeffer research and contribute to our historical picture of Bonhoeffer the prisoner-theologian.

This paper seeks to take Dietrich Bonhoeffer's prison experience seriously as a spiritually and theologically formative journey through liminal displacement. Using the anthropological theory of liminality as a lens for analysis, it offers a close reading of Bonhoeffer's prison writings, examining the porous nature of the socio-cultural and metaphorical boundaries of the prison space as expressed in notes, letters, prayers, poetry, and theological letters. Bonhoeffer's dramatic transition into the prison space resulted in an "inbetween-ness" (Palmer et al. 2009) that suspended the prisoner "betwixt and between" (Turner 1967) light and dark, inside and outside, above and below, sacred and profane, dislocation and located-ness, suffering and hope, life and death. Seeking to preserve his experience of liminality Bonhoeffer sought to "come to terms with it, let it become fruitful, and not push it away" (DBWE 8:201, 2/29). Here the porous nature of liminality, suspended between the poles of a fruitless cynicism and an equally fruitless optimism, gave birth to a surprisingly creative hope for the future.

**Barnbrock, Christoph** *Lutherische Theologische Hochschule Oberursel, Germany*

## **CONFESSION AS "BREAKTHROUGH TO FELLOWSHIP" IMPULSES FROM DIETRICH BONHOEFFER'S THEOLOGY FOR AN INDIVIDUALIZED AND POLARIZED WORLD**

In "Life Together" Dietrich Bonhoeffer describes confession as an event of various breakthroughs. The first mentioned is the "breakthrough to fellowship" (DBW 5, 94). In our time, in which achievement and self-portrayal (for example in the social media) play an important role for many people, the thought that the admission of one's own guilt could represent an access to the community is rather alien, yes, it seems downright paradoxical. Many people are convinced that integration into a community takes place through the demonstration of efficiency and the presentation of the considerable aspects of one's own life. And so the polarization in many societies of our world is characterized by the fact that the (political or social) opponent is put in a (often overly) bad light and one's own actions - largely without self-criticism - are presented as (particularly) successful. At the same time, we experience that these tendencies do not contribute to the strengthening of community in a society and the globalized world, but (quite on the contrary) to isolation or at best to community building in comparatively manageable small groups.

Bonhoeffer's thoughts on confession could represent an important impulse for overcoming these problems, if it comes to the fore that genuine fellowship can only develop where people perceive and accept themselves with their dark sides. It is worthwhile to take a closer look at the more recent research on shame. This

may lead to understand the phenomenon of clarifying the question of guilt in confession as the overcoming of shame, in which the person shamed by guilt knows that he has been taken back into the community by his brother or sister in Christ.

Furthermore, Bonhoeffer's thoughts can be related to the reflections of Henning Luther and his concept of fragmentarity, which explicitly takes up Bonhoeffer's theology, and more recent reflections of historical achievement research.

**Brandt Hale, Lori** *Augsburg University, USA*

## **A BETTER EARTHLY FUTURE: BONHOEFFER AND THE QUEST FOR INTERFAITH COOPERATION**

This paper explores the ways Dietrich Bonhoeffer's theology helps to imagine, construct, and articulate a commitment to interfaith dialogue and action. In a world in which cities, communities, and institutions are increasingly diverse by many measures including religiously, in a world in which groups of people are banned from crossing borders based on their religious identity, and in a world in which religious conflicts still start wars, the work of engaging in interfaith dialogue and understanding, and developing interreligious competencies, is vitally important and ethically imperative. The Network of ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) Colleges and Universities, also known as NECU, "has endorsed interfaith work as a priority in Lutheran higher education" and will serve as critical conversation partner, with Bonhoeffer, in this paper.

While Dietrich Bonhoeffer was an ecumenist, he was not an interfaith activist. That said, his ecumenical sensibilities, theological commitments, and ethical insights – from his dissertation to his prison theology – can serve as resources for developing interfaith cooperation. Moreover, throughout his work, Bonhoeffer reminds us that we are *living*, in concrete reality, with real people in front of us, demanding us to respond. Bonhoeffer's understanding of the sociality of theology includes the claim that when I encounter an *Other*, that *Other* places an ethical demand on me; the person *is* in encounter with and response to an *Other*. This commitment to sociality is underscored by his concern with community and his understanding that the church is only the church *for* others. And his exploration of religionless or *this-worldly* Christianity is marked by his call to see the events of the world from the perspective of those who suffer, the view from below, and to work for a better earthly future.

The NECU commitment to interfaith work is grounded on Lutheran theological ideas and commitments, including freedom, *theologia crucis*, epistemological humility, and neighbor-love. Collectively, the theological ideas and commitments articulated by Dietrich Bonhoeffer and This paper will take full account of the shared Lutheran commitments of Bonhoeffer and the architects of the NECU documents, conferences, and programs to construct a renewed call for interfaith dialogue and cooperation. In thinking alongside Bonhoeffer, this call will be grounded in concern for future generations, for how a coming generation is going on living.

**Braverman, Mark** *Kairos USA and Stellenbosch University*

## **REVISITING BONHOEFFER AND THE JEWS: BEYOND PENITENCE AND RECONCILIATION**

The scholarship on Bonhoeffer and the Jews has focused primarily on two issues: (1) Bonhoeffer's apparent adherence to classic Christian anti-Jewish theology, and (2) to what extent Bonhoeffer's resistance to the Third Reich was driven by solidarity with the persecuted Jews. Scholars have struggled with the seeming con-

tradition between the picture of Bonhoeffer the supercessionist and Bonhoeffer the martyr for the Jews. By and large, the latter view has dominated both scholarly and popular views of the German pastor.

Here the figure of Eberhard Bethge looms large. “Nothing challenged him more” wrote John de Gruchy, “in retrieving Bonhoeffer’s legacy.” Bethge argued that the persecution of the Jews was key in the development of Bonhoeffer’s theology as well as in his resistance to National Socialism from 1933 onward. Bethge’s work in this area coincided with his involvement in what came to be known as “Post-Holocaust theology.” For Jews Post-Holocaust theology is concerned with theodicy, a quest for theological and social restitution, and safeguarding and legitimizing the State of Israel. For Christians, it is driven by the need to atone for millennia of anti-Jewish doctrine and practice and the urgent desire to reconcile with the Jewish people. Post-Holocaust theology is one expression of the strikingly philo-Judaic theology that emerged in the Protestant West, reversing millennia of Christian doctrine concerning the Jews. Through Bethge and other Christian and Jewish scholars, it has exerted a strong influence on Bonhoeffer scholarship.

I will argue that viewing Bonhoeffer through the lens of the postwar Christian penitential project distorts Bonhoeffer’s legacy. To focus on his relationship to Christian anti-Judaism and on the question of what he did or did not do for the Jews is to narrow and particularize not only his actions but his theology. In our study of Bonhoeffer, we must move beyond the preoccupation with Christian sins against the Jews, directing our attention rather to where Bonhoeffer himself points us – the exceptionalism and triumphalism that have plagued the church from its beginnings. Bonhoeffer acted, and died, for the sake of the true church – those who stand for justice, compassion and inclusivity – and, ultimately, for the Germany he wished to rebuild in a new world order.

A review of the literature will pick up from Haynes’ important work, with a focus on American and German writers. A discussion of Bethge will consider him in the context of postwar German guilt and self-examination.

**Brocker, Mark** *St. Andrew Lutheran Church, USA*

## **CREATING A NEW RESPONSIBLE HUMAN BEINGS: THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN BONHOEFFER’S ETHICS**

Last January in the Oregon Bonhoeffer Seminar, one participant observed: “Bonhoeffer hardly mentions the Holy Spirit in *Ethics*.” Indeed, in *Ethics* there are only nine page references to “Holy Spirit” in the index. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit is vital to Bonhoeffer’s *Ethics*.

Just how vital becomes clear in the first pages of the first manuscript “Christ, Reality, and Good.” Bonhoeffer insists that in doing Christian ethics we must give up two questions: “How can I be good?” and “How can I do something good?” Instead, we must ask: “What is the will of God?” (47) Thus, the will of God is the subject matter of a Christian ethic; and according to Bonhoeffer the “*subject matter of a Christian ethic is God’s reality revealed in Christ becoming real [Wirklichwerden] among God’s creatures.*” The subject matter of theology is the “truth of God’s reality revealed in Christ.” Then Bonhoeffer offers this striking assertion: “The place that in all other ethics is marked by the antithesis between ought and is, idea and realization, motive and work, is occupied in Christian ethics by the relation between reality and becoming real, between past and present, between history and event (faith) or, to replace the many concepts with the simple name of the thing itself, the relation between Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit” (49–50).

The implication is that ethics is the work of the Holy Spirit. We participate in that work by discerning and doing the will of God. In Bonhoeffer’s view the thrust of the work of the Holy Spirit in ethics is toward forming

anew responsible human beings with the commitment to fulfill their daily responsibilities and the courage to act to address the most pressing issues of the day.

In section one, I discuss how the roots of the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in *Ethics* go back to Bonhoeffer's doctoral dissertation *Sanctorum Communio*. There he identifies *Stellvertretung* (vicarious representative action) as the life principle of the *sanctorum communion*—that is, the principle of being and action by which the community of saints is established in reality through the *Stellvertretung* of Jesus Christ and actualized or built up by the Holy Spirit through the *Stellvertretung* of human beings. In section two, I focus on the role of Jesus Christ and the role of the Holy Spirit in *Ethics*. I address the role the Holy Spirit plays in discerning the will of God, in ethics as formation, and in everyday and extraordinary responsible action. We see how the Holy Spirit works through our responsible action (*Stellvertretung*) in the becoming real of God's revelational reality in Christ. In the final section I highlight Bonhoeffer's plea for civil courage utilizing insights from his section on "Civil Courage" in "After Ten Years." I affirm why followers of Jesus participating in the work of the Holy Spirit will never seek to "extricate themselves heroically" from fully embracing the ultimately responsible question: "How is the coming generation to go on living?"

**Burnell, Joel** *The Evangelical School of Theology, Poland*

## **MYTH, MYSTERY AND METAPHOR - CASTING VISIONS OF LIFE TOGETHER IN THE PRESENT WORLD**

As witnessed by the myriad of quotes that flood the internet, Bonhoeffer had a feel for crafting the nice turn of phrase, for the *bon mot*. More importantly, he was able to capture the spirit of his times, and to discern how Christ was calling his people to follow in a world peopled by perpetrators, victims and bystanders. What is more, he embodied this discernment in his own life, and in his call for responsible action in solidarity with all people, especially with those who suffer. He cast a vision that instils courage to keep one's feet solidly planted on this earth, instead of escaping into otherworldliness, a vision that welcomes the encounter with the other as an opportunity, not as a threat. A vision that recognizes our own complicity in the evils of our time, and invites others to join us in recovery, and hence to suffer and to act in solidarity with the victims of prejudice and persecution.

The rising threats of religious fundamentalism, neo-nationalism, populism and xenophobia are fueled by fear. These threats must be met head-on, not only by education, information, and argumentation, but even more importantly by casting a vision of how to live today with courage and hope. Bonhoeffer continues to offer hope today, not only by his theology and praxis but also by the vision he cast of responsible life in Christ, for life lived in solidarity with and for our neighbor's, for our society, for our church, and for the earth "our Mother". In this paper we will examine the myths, mysteries and metaphors Bonhoeffer called upon and employed in academic and popular writing, in speeches and sermons, in prose and in poetry. We will consider whether his visions remain powerful and evocative for our time, and how we can both recast his metaphors and craft our own for life in this present age.



**Caldas, Carlos** *Pontifical Catholic University, Brazil*

**HOW IS TODAY'S – AND THE COMING – GENERATION TO GO ON LIVING? BONHOEFFER AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EARTH. BONHOEFFERIAN INSPIRATIONS FOR AN ECO-THEOLOGY AND AN ECO-ETHICS.**

It is a very well known fact that our planet is facing the largest and most threatening crisis of its so long history. And this is only because of human action: emission of carbonic dioxide in the atmosphere, deforesting in an almost global measure and global warming are producing extinction of animal species in a velocity that would be simply unthinkable not so long ago. If the current model of production and consumerism is not changed somehow the planet will collapse. There is also the problem of garbage and the pollution of streams of waters, rivers and the oceans as well. Wealthy and affluent nations have an immense level of consumerism, while in poor countries almost always people do not have the simplest basic conditions of hygiene. The question is so huge and terrible that some dare to say that we right now could be living the end of the Anthropocene. Thinking about this problem raises a question, that is: what is, or what has been the action of the Christian church in such a depressing and scary scenario? By and large Evangelical churches, with a more conservative theology, are almost completely silent about that (there has been here and there an Evangelical conservative exception to this silence regarding the care of creation, like, e.g., Francis Schaeffer's *Pollution and the Death of Man*).

But these churches have a soteriological comprehension that thinks only in terms of "salvation of the soul", and a heaven in the hereafter, and an ethics concerned only about individual behavior. By its turn, ecumenical organizations, like, e.g., the World Council of Churches, with a more progressive tone in its theology, has some openness to include this theme in its theological and pastoral agenda. The question is very difficult, and the church must deal with it, if she wants to have a prophetic voice and to produce and to live a public theology. Therefore, the aim of this paper is try to answer to some questions, which are: what would be an appropriate action of the Christian church regarding the ecological problem? Could Bonhoeffer be a guide in dealing with such difficult issues? Could Bonhoeffer's understanding of creation and of Christian ethics help theologians to formulate an eco-theology and an eco-ethics that are relevant to our world? Could Bonhoeffer help us to be more responsible to the coming generations, as far as a care for creation is concerned?

**Cash, Malcolm** *Ohio State University*

**ABANDONING THE TRIBE OF WHITENESS: DIETRICH BONHOEFFER AND NELSON MANDELA AS LEADERSHIP MODELS TO END AND HEAL THE LEGACY OF EURO-RACIST STRUCTURES AGAINST BLACK PEOPLE**

My paper seeks to lay out how Bonhoeffer's and Mandela's visions, values, and leadership actions provide a theological and political model of disruption of systemic evil that has become a balm of community and conscious commitment to abandon the central evil of Modernity: The tribalism of white racism. Bonhoeffer's writing is transformational because his perspicacity enlarges our view of the role of the Christian world, and our deeper insight moves us toward the higher ground of Euro-centric Christian praxis. Bonhoeffer's more expansive consciousness (apprehended through the Christocentric mode of Knowing) displaces and revises the untruth of the oppressors of the his and our time and provides the place and space for the reclamation of freedom for those whose lives, lands, and languages has been violated, tortured, and denied the chance to "bloom as a hundred flowers" (Ngugi wa Thiong'o).

My paper will contrast and connect Bonhoeffer's theological leadership with that other grand 20<sup>th</sup> century purveyor of freedom, Nelson Mandela. Mandela's *leadership experience, liberation ethic, and quest for justice and*

*freedom* presents profound insights and transformational ways forward on what the great bard Toni Morrison calls “Unspeakable Things Spoken,” which in this context, is the telling of complex, multilayered truths about the tribal realities of Whiteness in South Africa – and the World. Mandela’s leadership proffers an essential model on how to abandon the wretched political, educational, legal, economic, social, and cultural dynamics of “Whiteness”, especially in relation to the African experience in the United States and South Africa.

Bonhoeffer’s experiences with Black America, and his theological canon is the source of an illuminating and unique understanding of the experiences of a wide array of the African American experience, especially vis-a-vis religion, nonviolence, and the subsequent Civil Rights Movement that emerged less than 20 years after he left the USA for good.

Mandela’s extraordinary life and writings on the Black/African experience, and spiritual affinity and friendships with various anti-colonial leaders (Tambo, Castro, Nkrumah) provide an indispensable model for genuine reconciliation and true integration between African and Europeans [and White America]. My presentation will primarily focus on Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s nonfiction, sermons, personal letters, and his experiences in Harlem at Abyssinian Black church. I will explore how Bonhoeffer’s subsequent prophetic Christian experience in Harlem and his writing offers a profound model of convergence with the essays, letters, and drama on the *Black Revolution* of the 1960’s and early 1970’s, especially regarding the church and race with Martin Luther King & Nonviolence, Malcolm X and Black Power, and Angela Davis and the Black Power phase of the Black revolution. For Mandela, I will concentrate on his speeches, nonfiction, letters during his imprisonment, and his dynamic visit to the United States, and Black America in the early 1990’s. Mandela’s visits to Harlem, the King Center (Atlanta), Boston, Detroit, and meeting with Rev. Jesse Jackson, Mayor Dinkins, and members of the Black Congressional Caucus.

## **Clements, Keith** *Conference of European Churches*

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO TELL THE TRUTH?” THE CHURCH AND THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST BISHOP GEORGE BELL AS A CASE-STUDY**

During his period under interrogation in Tegel Prison Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote his (unfinished) essay “What Does It Mean to Tell the Truth?” (DBWE 16:601–608) He argues that the precise nature of truth depends on the circumstances and conditions in which the discourse takes place, and especially on the status and relationships of those who are speaking and listening. “‘Telling the truth’ is therefore not a matter only of one’s intentions but also of accurate perceptions and of serious consideration of the real circumstances.” Truthful speaking is in accordance with the *reality* of the situation.

In 2015, an allegation of historical child sexual abuse, claimed to have been committed in the early 1950s, was brought against the late Bishop George Bell (d. 1958), the greatest English friend of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The Church of England leadership publicly accepted the allegation and paid a sum in compensation to the complainant. Intense public controversy followed. Eventually an independent review conducted by Lord Alex Carlile, a senior lawyer, was heavily critical of the Church’s procedure as deeply flawed and not following recognised procedures, even to setting aside the basic premise of English law, namely the presumption of innocence until guilt is established. On the basis of this report, Bell could not be regarded as guilty.

This paper will examine the Church’s treatment of the Bell case – a “rush to judgment” in the view of the Carlile Report – in the light of Bonhoeffer’s essay, and as an illustration of what happens when the *reality* of the circumstances is ignored in the desire to safeguard the image of an institution (in this case the Church). According to Bonhoeffer and his relational understanding of humanity, truthful speaking is dialogical; and the

basic condition which authorizes speech as truthful is that which recognises the reality of the other person and their circumstances. In this light, the most fundamental error in the Church's investigation was the failure to provide any means of representation of the deceased Bell (as Carlile notes, the right to be heard does not cease with the person's death). The result was a grave injustice, illustrative of dangers much wider than the Bell case itself. For the sake of public image-building and control, institutions and corporations are prone to short-circuit the search for truth, ignoring even the most basic due processes of ensuring justice. This danger is even greater in an age of digital communication and social media when the corporate discourse effectively becomes an endless monologue in the institution's own interests and under its own control. Bonhoeffer's words are of his time but prophetic: "As a result of the increasing profligacy of public discourse in newspapers and the radio, the nature and limits of different words are no longer clearly perceived ... Words no longer have any weight. There is too much talking."

**Coates, Adrian** *University of Cape Town*

### **BONHOEFFER ON AMUSING OURSELVES TO DEATH: MATURE AESTHETIC EXISTENCE AS ANTIDOTE TO EVERYDAY AESTHETICISM**

In 1985, Neil Postman famously and presciently bemoaned a world "amusing itself to death." Ironically and significantly, it is amidst the atrocities of Nazism and the struggle against Hitler that from his prison cell Bonhoeffer reflects on a faithful Christian response to sensory immediacy, calling for the church to found Kierkegaard's notion of aesthetic existence anew. This, he suggests, should neither entail an embrace of aesthetic existence as absolute, nor the rejection of aesthetic existence in favour of ethico-religious existence. Rather, it should be the polyphonous celebration of Christological this-worldly reality, an affirmation of the penultimate in light of the ultimate. While Bonhoeffer's musical metaphors help to articulate Bonhoeffer's argument, they are more than illustrative mechanisms. If on the one hand, the metaphors capture the centrality of aesthetic existence in being Christian, on the other, the metaphors themselves implicitly point toward the formative nature of aesthetic existence – Bonhoeffer's own musical experience shaping his theology.

**Cumaru, Luis** *Christian Community Church, Brazil*

### **AN ANALYSIS OF HERITAGE AND DECAY FRAGMENT OF BONHOEFFER'S ETHICS**

Dietrich Bonhoeffer was concerned about the coming generation in the difficult period of World War II, and before being arrested in 1943, he set about producing his *Ethics*, the work he considered to be the "culmination of his life work", according to one of his letters from Tegel Prison. Published posthumously by his friend and biographer Eberhard Bethge, one of the fragments of *Ethics*, whose theme is *Heritage and Decay*, addresses the unfolding of historical events in the West that culminated in secularism of the 1930s. All the values of Christian civilization were being called into question, including those who shaped their rich family education during the Weimar Republic. The "deconstruction of all reality" around him deeply affected his personal and professional life. But the breadth of his formation and worldview (*Weltanschauung*) saw in the midst of the social and political crisis of his time, the end of a period and the beginning of a new one, in which he was interested in participating.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote a new ethics for a new time. Some could say "for those with no religion (without religiosity)", according to the famous saying in the letters from prison. That's the reason why the impact of his ethic still remains for us today, who are facing a confrontation with universal breaking of traditional cultures and ethics.

The text of *Ethics* is, at least, an attempt to treat the great moral dilemmas imposed by war and the necessity to resist the criminal government. The nature of this work reflects not only the different initiations in the search of the “foundations”, but also the many directions of its own work in the resistance against the Nazi regime. Chapter three affirms that the rich spiritual heritage of the West, which has its origin in Christ has fallen in decadence. People should return to their origin, even though among an anti-church a promising godlessness. Such return is a call to be a suffering church that considers “the total and exclusive Christ claim” becoming this way a leadership worthy of credit against the tyrannical despoiler of humanity” who explores “the human nature weaknesses”.

In my analysis of this fragment of *Ethics*, I address the issue of the context in which it was written, and what was his perspective of a united West, based on the rich traditions of Christianity, which were forgotten and replaced by the ideology of German Christians theologians, based on German myths. In my perspective, *Ethics* continues to inspire Christian life, culture, human rights, politics, and the formation of the church of today and of the future, in the middle of the challenges of the 21st century.

**De Lange, Frits** *Protestant Theological University, The Netherlands*

## **OLD MAN BONHOEFFER. GENERATIVITY, LIFE SPAN PSYCHOLOGY AND INTERGENERATIONAL ETHICS**

To make a connection between Dietrich Bonhoeffer, executed at the age of thirty-nine, and gerontology seems far-fetched. But one doesn't need to be old in order to feel old. The probability of his own imminent death made Bonhoeffer in prison feel as if he had a whole life span behind him. Bonhoeffer is exceptional, not only because of his precocious adulthood (he completed his dissertation at the age of twenty one), but also because he felt old so young. At the same time as he made plans for a post-war marriage with a fiancée, half of his age, he prepared himself for an untimely death. The ambivalence is strikingly expressed in one of his prison letters: “Sometimes the age difference also disturbs me again, especially since I have the feeling that I am becoming significantly older here and sometimes think my life is more or less behind me and all I have left to do is to complete my *Ethics*. But you know, in such moments I am gripped with an incomparable longing to have a child and not to vanish without a trace—probably more of an Old Testament wish than a New Testament one.” (DBWE 8, 222, December 15, 1943)

In this paper, I want to interpret Bonhoeffer's concern for the “coming generation” as the expression of generativity in late adulthood. The concept of ‘generativity’ developed in lifespan psychology, and defined as the “desire to invest one's substance in forms of life and work that will outlive the self” (Kotre 1984), elucidates both Bonhoeffer's concern for the coming generation, as well as his longing for a child and his wish to finish his book. Erik H. Erikson (1971) introduced the concept as an important developmental task in later life. Generativity, defined by Erikson as “the concern in establishing and guiding the next generation” has been theoretically expanded later on by J. Kotre (1984) and supported by empirical research by Dan P. McAdams (1998, 2001). I shall argue that Bonhoeffer exemplified this generativity – normally expected in late adulthood – in an exemplary way throughout his shortened life.

Bonhoeffer's urge for taking responsibility for the next generation might challenge and enrich the concept of generativity as elaborated in life span psychology. In particular the way Bonhoeffer acknowledges the failures of his own generation (“We have lived too much in our thoughts”, *Thoughts on the Day of Baptism*) and expresses his trust in and hope for the new born generation (“You will only think about what you have to answer for in action”) imparts the psychological notion of generativity with ethical earnestness. Embodying generativity should not be understood as just a generic sign of psychological health but first of all – as Bonhoeffer describes in “The Structure of Responsible Life” - as a “vicarious representative action”, a moral and political virtue to be learned and practiced.

## **Den Hertog, Gerard** *Theological University of Apeldoorn*

### **IN FACING THE PAST, TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FUTURE**

In the last period of his life Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes two texts in which he more or less explicitly gives account of his way during the Third Reich. At first sight they are of a completely different kind. The first he writes in December 1942, a kind of memorandum after ten years Nazi-government, for his family and co-conspirators, all of whom risked their lives and – with the exception of Eberhard Bethge – did not survive. The second is a letter on the occasion of the baptism of a newborn child, who has the future ahead of him. The difference in genre could not be greater, but the texts clearly have the focus on the question how a coming generation is to go on living in common.

It is worthwhile to ascertain the similarities, which are in fact striking.

- In both texts Bonhoeffer is critical about the Confessing Church, because she showed to be more concerned about her own existence, as if she were an end in herself ('Baptismal Letter'), than about the brothers for whom Christ suffered, opening her mouth, taking action for them, suffering with them. The question is: are we still useful (for God)? ('After ten years')
- In 'After ten years' Bonhoeffer exerts that God waits for and responds to sincere prayer and responsible actions, in the 'Baptismal Letter' Bonhoeffer elaborates the concrete actual responsibility of the Church as concentration on prayer and doing justice.
- In both texts Bonhoeffer reflects on the strengths and weaknesses of the German – and European – intellectual tradition, examining what real quality is in it.
- Bible and Christian faith are present in both texts, and form their core message.

Taking these convergences into account, the differences are the more interesting, especially with respect to the shifts in time and context.

- In 'After ten years' Bonhoeffer brings up the Christian faith in a way, that excludes any 'religious' appeal: God encounters us in history and who demands the free faith-venture of responsible deed. We cannot waive our efforts for a better future, until God's reign dawns, but have to show civil courage.
- In the 'Baptismal Letter' each segment end with several Biblical references, many of which refer to the personal life of the believer.
- Since the 'Baptismal Letter' was written in the aftermath of the famous letters of April 1944, in which Bonhoeffer explores the 'non-religious interpretation' of the Bible, the difference is both remarkable and confusing.

Being the main focus of Bonhoeffer in both texts to face the past and to take responsibility for the future, I will try to figure out what both the convergences and the differences between these texts bring in for our understanding of the role and the significance of Bonhoeffer's critics of religion.

## **De Villiers, Etienne** *University of Pretoria*

### **AN ETHICS OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR TIME: THE CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIAN ETHICS**

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's call in his letter "After ten years" of 1942 to take responsibility for the future, has since then often been repeated by others in different contexts. Today this call mostly relates to the momentous global challenges we are faced with as a result of, among others, the nuclear threat, environmental devastation and risks involved with new technology, especially info- and biotechnology.

However, not all initiatives in taking responsibility for the future are unproblematic. Taking responsibility for securing the future by relying on a purely functionalist approach in solving global problems comes to mind. To merely introduce, as counter-measure, the condition that the approach followed should be an ethical one, does not suffice. It does matter which ethics is taken as point of departure. Global problems could hardly be solved on the basis of a set of ethical convictions subscribed to by only a particular religious or cultural group.

I argue in my paper that the ethical approach to be followed in taking responsibility for the future is the ethics of responsibility. In my opinion the ethics of responsibility should not be conceptualised as yet another *first-level* normative ethical approach vying to replace existing ones. Doing so would only lead to competition with existing normative ethical approaches and intensify the advanced ethical pluralisation of our time. The ethics of responsibility should rather be conceptualised as a *second-level* normative ethical approach - as we are in need of such an approach at this stage of modernisation. Such an approach, on the one hand, recognises the indispensable contribution to the exercise of moral responsibility within particular social contexts by existing normative ethical approaches. On the other hand, it provides guidance to existing normative ethical approaches on how they could enhance the exercise of moral responsibility in a contextually appropriate manner and on the adaptations they need to make to their own set-up.

In my paper I, first of all, substantiate my proposal by discussing the conditions for taking responsibility for the future in our time. Secondly, I provide a profile of the ethics of responsibility we need today. And lastly, the question is addressed: 'Could Christian ethics respond positively to the challenge to embrace the proposed ethics of responsibility?'

**Dodson, Chris** *Decatur Christian School*

## **RISE IN NEWNESS OF LIFE: RELIGIONLESS CHRISTIANITY AND THE SACRAMENTS IN BONHOEFFER'S BAPTISMAL LETTER TO DIETRICH BETHGE**

The church's cultic practices remain a glaring omission from Bonhoeffer's prison theology. Bonhoeffer's proposal for a book indicated his plans for a chapter to address the subject, but little to nothing from the letters themselves indicate what the content of that chapter might have been. In lieu of this silence, scholars themselves have said nothing, or else have taken the silence to mean there is no place for the cultic in religionlessness. This paper asserts, however, that the church's cultic, sacramental practices would have been an integral component to a full-bodied treatment of Bonhoeffer's developing theology. By analyzing the first public statements Bonhoeffer makes on religionlessness, the reflections offered for the baptism of his godson, this paper demonstrates that Bonhoeffer deeply connected religionless Christianity to the church's cultic and sacramental practices. By so doing, this paper concludes that Bonhoeffer's hope for the future of the church and the world lay in a return to submission to the formative action of God-made-known in ancient practices.

When his godson was baptized, Bonhoeffer's prison letter offered five related passages that suggest how Dietrich Bethge will bridge the gap from the pre-war world to the new world radically altered by the war's barbarity, technology, and revaluation of values. The world has changed, Bonhoeffer contends, and religionlessness is the way forward. This paper proceeds in turn through each of the five sections in the letter to demonstrate, first, how the reflection is connected to religionlessness and, second, how the religionless life is itself for Bonhoeffer a product of receiving the sacraments in faith. For example, Bonhoeffer's consideration of his family's formative legacy evokes, from religionlessness, ideas of community discernment and formation and one's responsibility for community and, from sacraments, that baptism marks one's inclusion into a community of responsibility. Likewise, Bonhoeffer's pressing for a rebirth of language by which the witness of the church may be reinvigorated after so long adopting a selfish, inward gaze should be explained both by



religionless' appeal to a community that exists for others and baptism's function to reverse the *cor curvem in se*. By so doing, this paper makes clear that the cultic dimension of Christian faith remains necessary to form Christians capable of faithfully navigating the world Bonhoeffer saw emerging, the world in which we continue to live. However the church navigates the new world, Bonhoeffer's theology asserts that the church cannot move beyond the cultic and sacramental practices that give it birth and sustain its life.

**Duchrow, Ulrich** *University of Heidelberg*

## **WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM BONHOEFFER CONCERNING THE CHURCHES FACING THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION**

The World Communion of Reformed Churches, in its General Council (WCRC) 2017, "affirms that with respect to the situation of injustice and suffering that exists in Palestine, and the cry of the Palestinian Christian community, that the integrity of Christian faith and praxis is at stake." This statement does not yet speak of a *status confessionis*, but the language used points in that direction. This means that according to the WCRC the issue of Palestine/Israel is related to recent ecumenical history, building on Bonhoeffer's rediscovery of this ecclesiological concept.

The recent history of this goes back to the struggle against South African apartheid, during the preparation of the 1977 Lutheran World Federation Assembly (LWF) in Dar-es-Salaam. In its statement on "Confessional Integrity", the LWF declared that apartheid constitutes a *status confessionis*. The World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) followed in 1982 with its decision at the General Council in Ottawa, declaring apartheid a heresy. Another issue in this tradition became the imperial capitalist system with its economic injustices and destructive consequences for creation. From 1989 to 2004 WARC struggled with this issue, resulting in the ACCRA Confession in 2004.

Now the question of the integrity of faith and the church is being raised with regard to the situation in Palestine/Israel. This poses very complex questions. Bonhoeffer developed the categories of *status confessionis* in his article "Die Kirche vor der Judenfrage" (The Church Facing the Jewish Question). Can Bonhoeffer's article apply to the present situation in Palestine/Israel, to churches in countries that unconditionally support the present policies of the Israeli government, to the global church bodies, to the ecumenical movement, to interreligious relations? What is the role of the Christian-Jewish dialog? What about the deepening splits among Jews, both within and outside the State of Israel?

Hermeneutically there is a struggle going on concerning the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible and the messianic writings of the Second Testament. Jewish and Christian Zionists on the one side and Jewish and Christian liberation theologians on the other come to opposite conclusions. The "New Perspective on Paul" opens new ways of understanding the issue of „the law.“ In connection with the Reformation quincentenary a lot has been done to overcome the anti-Judaistic tradition of Luther. How can the effort to correct for Christian anti-Judaism, and church action for justice for Palestine both be affirmed?

In my particular situation we ask: What is the specific situation in the German churches and society in view of the unique crimes committed against the Jews by Nazi-Germany? How have the Palestinians been made to pay the price for this crime against the Jews? What is the role of the different types of theology as outlined in the South African Kairos Document of 1985 (state theology, church theology, prophetic theology)? How does this relate to Bonhoeffer's categories of "true church, false church and erring church"? In this paper I will discuss, how a *processus confessionis* could be organized along the lines of Bonhoeffer's article "Zur Frage der Kirchengemeinschaft".

**Etzelmüller, Gregor** *Osnabrück University*

## **BONHOEFFER'S THEOLOGY OF THE BODY AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EARTH**

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's most important contribution to a future environmental ethics is his theology of the body. In his theology, Bonhoeffer strongly emphasized the corporeality (*Leiblichkeit*) of Christ and, as a consequence, the corporeality of human beings. This emphasis distinguishes him from most Protestant theologians. His discovery of the right to physical integrity (cf. DBW 6, 179) as well as his argument for a right to bodily joys (cf. DBW 6, 180) were theologically innovative and groundbreaking for both church and society.

Bonhoeffer's theological appreciation of the body can be interpreted as a helpful orientation and contribution to the current ecological debate, because besides current debates over possible rights of creation and duties of human beings, it is imperative to develop a new attitude towards nature. This attitude has, in turn, its origins in the handling with the nature that we are, that is, our body. According to Bonhoeffer the incarnation makes it clear that the body (and thus nature) is not to be despised but valued and appreciated as „ein Gegenstand der Liebe Gottes“ (DBW 6, 81). In accordance with this love of God human beings are liberated to enjoy their bodies and nature – and thus to counteract the destructive exploitation of nature.

In their 'Dialectic of Enlightenment' Max Horkheimer und Theodor W. Adorno raised awareness for the dialectics of „domination of nature and the end of subjectivity“. Following René Descartes, modernity has conceived of the human body as extended nature (*res extensae*), from which human beings could distance and detach themselves by thinking. One's own body and nature as a whole has been mechanized. In late modernity the objectification of nature has been extended to the human mind (*Geist*). In order to counteract such an objectification of nature, a new perception of the body as embodied subjectivity is needed.

In Bonhoeffer's theology, starting points for such a perception can be found – not incidentally since his turn 'to the bible' in 1932/33. Already in *Sanctorum Communio* Bonhoeffer was looking for a post-idealistic concept of person and self. But only since his perception of biblical anthropology Bonhoeffer develops a viable alternative to the idealistic conception of the human being. In *Creation and Fall* Bonhoeffer discovers a concordance between creation theology and evolutionary theory. However, his awareness of the evolutionary continuity does not lead Bonhoeffer to a reductionist understanding of what it means to be a human being: Instead, he argues that the body, which connects us with earth, is always already more than can be described with the help of science: „Leib ist die Existenzform von Geist, wie Geist die Existenzform von Leib ist.“ (DBW 3, 73) The human mind (*Geist*) is always already embodied.

The lecture wants to reconstruct Bonhoeffer's theology of the body and to make it fruitful for a future ethics of creation.

**Forster, Dion** *Stellenbosch University*

## **BONHOEFFER AND BIKO: TOWARDS A POLITICS OF HOPE AMONG YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS**

The 'born free' generation of South Africa is losing hope in the future. They were born after the end of political apartheid in 1994. However, for the majority of young, black, South Africans their current daily reality does not differ all that much from the experiences of racial enmity, poverty, and spatial separation that their parents and grandparents experienced growing up under apartheid rule. Dealing with the consequences of colonialism and apartheid, while transforming society from benefiting a privileged few to meeting the needs

of the many, has proven a slow and complex task. The social economist Sampie Terrblanche indicates that on average, white South Africans have never been as prosperous as they have become in the years since the end of apartheid. While the Achille Mbembe, an African Philosopher and Political Scientist, notes that young black South Africans are expressing their political, social and economic discontent by turning to a politics of identity (pitting the races against one another), a politics of generation (distrusting older generations of activists and liberation leaders as 'sellouts'), and a politics of impatience (seeking rapid and significant transformation by revolution rather than evolution).

This paper will seek to engage the very real concerns of 'born free' South Africans through an engagement with the person and work of the political activist and Southern African philosopher, Steve Bantu Biko and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's political theology and ethics. It will facilitate a conversation that seeks to explicate theological resources to foster realistic hope in the midst of an increasingly hopeless situation. In particular we shall engage Bonhoeffer's *Ethics*, and *Letters and papers from prison* (with particular reference to *After ten years*), and Biko's, *I write what I like* (with particular reference to *Black consciousness and the question for true humanity*, and, *Our strategy for liberation*). The first of the 'born free' South Africans are around the age that both the young Biko and the young Bonhoeffer were when they began to engage socially and politically. It is hoped that some important insights may emerge for a political theology of hope from the reflections in these conversations.

**Frei, Daniel** *University of Basel*

## **BONHOEFFER AND MIGRATION**

Migration is one of the main topics of discussion in Europe which affects also migrants living here and their children. What does it mean to stand in solidarity with migrants in our times of crisis and hope? Many migrants are members of migrant churches and they are taking strength from their Christian faith. We must ask about the future of migrants coming to and living in Europe and we want to bring these questions in dialogue with Bonhoeffer's experience as a migrant, living among migrants and his theological reflections. Is Bonhoeffer's life and theology still helpful in exploring these and related questions?

We are especially interested to find out how the coming generation is engaging with the question of migration. Thus, we want to bring Bonhoeffer's understanding and interpretation of migration in dialogue with members of migrant churches.

Members of Migrant Churches bring with them a belief systems which has been sharpened by their experiences of a difficult migration process. They are marked by the experience of losing, leaving back, and risking their lives. They find a home of faith in their migrant churches which give space and means to overcome the traumas. The next generation is also influenced by these experiences of crisis and hope and they have to face hostility towards migrants. How do they find their way as a third generation?

What is Bonhoeffer's contribution on the process of migration? Bonhoeffer has spent important parts of his life as a migrant, trespassing the cultural and racial borders of his time. He has been influenced by these important encounters especially with in the Afro-American churches in Harlem USA. What experiences has he lived, how did they change him and how did he reflect them theologically.

How do Bonhoeffer's experiences and reflections help us in our actual global situation of migration?

- There are some additional questions that can be explored in my paper: Could the differences in thinking theologically and politically between Bonhoeffer and Barth have a background of migration? There is a difference in travelling and knowing new contexts between them.

- How could we enable Swiss People to see and accept the reality of migration? What can we learn from migrants?
- How is a genuine encounter possible with other people?

**Frick, Peter** *University of Waterloo, Canada*

## **BONHOEFFER AND THE HERMENEUTIC OF HOPE: THE QUEST FOR EXISTENCE AND MEANING**

The question addressed in this essay is how we (theologians, educators, parents, pastors) can speak about hope and a future for our world without sounding cheap, naive and merely optimistic? Drawing on Bonhoeffer, Ernst Bloch and Jürgen Moltmann, I will examine, in three steps, the dynamic and movement from hope as a Christian virtue to hope as an existential, social and political catalyst for the present and the future.

For Bonhoeffer, firstly, hope is grounded in faith. But a hope such grounded is not simply the psychological side of a theological doctrine. The ground of hope, though in faith, is grounded in God himself. In short, if we have “this great hope in God... then everything is won. Do we no longer have it? Then everything is lost” (DBWE 15, 475), for in the resurrection of Christ “imperishable hope now opened” (DBWE 3, 146), hope for the future and hope for the here and now.

Secondly, the young Bonhoeffer daringly rewrote the Cartesian dictum *cogito ergo sum* into *sum cogito ergo* (DBWE 1, 71) and thereby, with Heidegger, assigns priority of being over thinking. An epistemological premise became now an ontological foundation. The ontological structure of our being includes the quest for a meaningful existence. That is to say, meaning and correspondingly hope, are part of the innermost core of our human make-up. Without hope it is impossible to live a meaningful life, or in existential terminology, an authentic Dasein.

Thirdly, hope grounded in both God and our ontological structures must, however, be tangible hope. Bonhoeffer’s teaching on the ultimate and penultimate things in his *Ethics* are of highest importance here. Our faith and hope compel us to prepare the way for “the coming of grace” (cf. DBWE 6, 160-6). Concrete signs of hope, “the conditions that are part of being human” (DBWE 6, 160) are those signs that address hunger, homelessness, social injustice, poverty etc. Even though, the fulfilment of hope is not automatic, as Ernst Bloch reminds us, but must be learned. As long as hope is mindful of “the other” and its own fragile and fragmentary context, it is possible to learn the fine art of an existential hermeneutic of hope.

**Garcia, Javier** *George Fox University, USA*

## **A HOPE FOR THE FUTURE: LEARNING FROM BONHOEFFER IN OUR TROUBLED TIMES**

In recent times a combination of seemingly insoluble global crises have all but extinguished the possibility of hope in a better future. Wherever we look, we are confronted with an overwhelming apocalyptic malaise, a growing sense that despair is all we have left in this our troubled world.

It is precisely here where Dietrich Bonhoeffer is an invaluable resource for recovering hope in the darkest of times. In his essay “After Ten Years,” penned during Christmas 1942 shortly before his imprisonment, Bonhoeffer offers the following remarkable comment on optimism: “In its essence optimism is not a way of looking at the present situation but a power of life, a power of hope when others resign... a power that never abandons the future.” The purpose of this paper is to extrapolate the theological reasons behind Bonhoeffer’s courageous hope in order to help retrieve this virtue today.

Using relevant portions of Bonhoeffer's corpus but with special reference to *Sanctorum Communio*, *Ethics*, and *Letters and Papers from Prison*, I will explore three aspects of Bonhoeffer's theology in this direction. The first is his understanding of history and revelation, which preserves the integrity of human responsibility and God's providential action in time while placing these in their greater eschatological context. Secondly, Bonhoeffer's radical this-worldliness places the emphasis not on the world to come, but on the world here and now. In a final section, I will turn to the implications of the revelation of Jesus Christ for the church and the world. This will entail wrestling with the reconciliation of God and world in Jesus Christ, grasping the particular role of the church among the mandates, and exploring what the "church for others" may look like as a church for the future. I will end this paper with a brief reflection on the importance of gratitude and forgiveness, which are the resounding notes of hope throughout the prison letters. By recovering these facets of Bonhoeffer's theology, we may change our perspective on our present trials and rejoice in what God has yet in store for us.

**Gingles, Dallas** *Southern Methodist University, USA*

## **RESPONSIBILITY AND GUILT IN THE MORAL LIFE: A DEFLATIONARY READING OF BONHOEFFER'S ETHICS**

Dietrich Bonhoeffer famously wrote that, "because Jesus Christ took on the guilt of the world, everyone who acts responsibly becomes guilty." Like much of what Bonhoeffer wrote, especially in his unfinished *Ethics*, this remark is what Rowan Williams has called "tantalizing." It is as cryptic as it is provocative. Rather than focusing on this statement in isolation, or attempting to give an account of Bonhoeffer's understanding of guilt across his corpus (as others have already done), in my paper, I draw on this section of the *Ethics* manuscripts, along with Bonhoeffer's reflections on the way the moral order might be reconstructed after the war in "After Ten Years," to show how Bonhoeffer's interpretation of the relationship between guilt and responsibility undergirds his understanding of the moral life as a whole. For Bonhoeffer, ethics is ordered to action. On this point at least, he has much in common with the broad Aristotelian tradition that conceives of ethics as a discipline of practical reason. Moral reason, in this tradition, terminates not in proofs but in action. For Bonhoeffer, in the normal course of the moral life, this kind of reason often escapes our notice: we don't even realize we're doing it. We realize our need for rigorous ethical deliberation in situations of moral ambiguity, especially situations of grave moral ambiguity. In situations of grave moral ambiguity, moral reason still terminates in action, but because the moral ambiguity is so grave, the agent cannot be confident that the normal work of moral reasoning has in fact justified the chosen course of action. In these situations, guilt might not necessarily obtain, but the feeling of guilt is inevitable—to borrow a distinction from Reinhold Niebuhr. If good ethical deliberation is about determining a course of action and then acting, fixating on the possibility of incurring guilt undermines the work of moral reason, and renders the agent reluctant—or even unwilling—to act.

Bonhoeffer's account of responsibility solves this problem by changing the object of the agent's deliberation from the morality of the act itself to the conditions for the possibility of a community of moral deliberation that might judge the act and agent after the fact. This shift of focus in the work of moral deliberation can exacerbate rather than resolve the ambiguity of the situation, but it concentrates the work of moral reason on its proper end—action—rather than on the abstract 'proof' of the agent's possible guilt or innocence. This sort of double ambiguity reinforces the feeling of moral guilt that accompanies action in situations of grave moral ambiguity, but it does not mean, pace Bonhoeffer's rather inflated rhetoric, that guilt will necessarily obtain. Such a strong relationship between responsibility and guilt would risk requiring the agent to willingly do wrong to achieve good—effectively rendering Bonhoeffer's moral system nothing more than crude utilitarianism (a criticism some have leveled against him). The account I offer recovers Bonhoeffer's responsibility from Bonhoeffer's own rhetoric and from his critics.

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**Grebe, Matthias** *University of Bonn, Germany*

## **TRUTH-TELLING, DECEPTION, AND THE ATONEMENT IN THE THEOLOGY OF DIETRICH BONHOEFFER**

Is lying ever morally permissible? What about lying in order to save an innocent life? Are there situations in which lying is not only morally permissible, but morally necessary to be obedient to God? Immanuel Kant famously argued that lying is never, under any circumstance, morally permissible, because it represents an act that is less than rational. In July 1939, Dietrich Bonhoeffer left New York almost as soon as he had arrived there, only to return to the burgeoning chaos of his native Germany. “I have come to the conclusion that I made a mistake in coming to America,” he wrote. “I shall have no right to take part in the restoration of Christian life in Germany after the war unless I share the trials of this time with my people.” Back in Germany, the self-declared pacifist joined up with a small resistance movement, and very soon was taken part in conversation about assassinating Hitler. Was lying morally permissible here to save lives? Can this be seen as part of Bonhoeffer’s concept of *Stellvertretung*: bearing sin on behalf of somebody else?

This paper considers how we might make sense of this ethically, whether all moral judgments are therefore relative. Bonhoeffer argued that God’s standard of truth-telling entails more than merely ‘not lying’: to be true in the deepest way means being obedient to God’s call, not merely conforming to rules (as this would merely represent blind legalism). Instead, Bonhoeffer advocated a ‘free responsibility,’ asking, “Who stands fast? Bonhoeffer’s life, work, and theology call for a closer evaluation of what is meant by ‘telling the truth,’ stressing that an understanding of the relationship between two parties – parent and child, teacher and pupil, government and subject – is crucial in making this evaluation: “From the moment in our lives at which we learn to speak we are taught that what we say must be true. What does this mean? What is meant by ‘telling the truth’?”

In light of Bonhoeffer’s wider ethics on truth-telling, this paper will investigate once more the patristic ransom-exchange atonement model, *Stellvertretung* and sin-bearing, and the moral implications it might have for the act of lying.

**Green, Clifford** *Union Theological Seminary, USA*

## **BONHOEFFER’S LETTER TO GANDHI**

This session presents for the first time the recently-found text of Bonhoeffer’s October 17, 1934 letter to Gandhi. More than a request to learn about Gandhi’s nonviolent resistance to British colonialism, it is a window into his thinking about the crisis of Western civilization and his disappointment with Western Christianity. It builds on Bonhoeffer’s new evaluation of the Sermon on the Mount dating from the formative 1930-31 experience at Union Seminary and Abyssinian Baptist Church, and his beliefs about intentional Christian community and peace. It also reflects his revisionist understanding of discipleship as articulated in his “Christ and Peace” lecture of 1932 and in the book *Discipleship*. In this context it contains a very provocative comment about Karl Barth. The presentation will highlight the main points of the letter and their connections to Bonhoeffer’s related writings.



## **Grove, Pieter Stellenbosch University**

### **FROM VERSAILLES TO THE HOLOCAUST: DOES BONHOEFFER HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ON RESTITUTION?**

Bonhoeffer reached his maturity after WWI and he died before the conclusion of WW2. During that time, he was challenged by the various positions of the Germans and French on the issue of war debt. With the rise of Nazism, a different issue reared its head - that of persecution of the Jews that culminated in the Shoah. Bonhoeffer was one of the first and most consistent commentators on the position of Jewish citizens and he took up the cause of Christians of Jewish descent actively.

What was Bonhoeffer's mature position on the relation between the European nations impacted on by that disastrous Great War and particularly on the responsibilities between the Germans and the French?

Did Bonhoeffer have a sense of the extent of atrocities against the Jewish and Roma communities and did this awareness influence his theological perspective and emphases?

My contention is that the theology and ethics of Bonhoeffer present an important source for reflection on the question of restitution. Bonhoeffer was a theologian of action and commitment. His theology informed a far-reaching practice that would end in his execution.

The originality of Bonhoeffer lies partly in the location he adopted from which to theologise. Being part of the underground, participating in a parallel seminary, a broad ecumenist, exposed to the holistic theology of the African American Christians, having direct family links with Jewish citizens – this location gave him a different and unique perspective on both theological and ethical issues. I propose that a close reading of Bonhoeffer's output will yield rich resources to think about restitution.

German society had to deal with this issue continuously (see Christian Pross: *Paying for the Past*, 2002) and to a large extent, the enormity of the cost of war and of genocide cannot ever be undone. What is the way forward?

The question of restitution and the way forward is critical in South Africa today. Our society carries the wounds of colonialism and of 40 years of Apartheid. Perhaps like the war generation of German society, many people just want to move on. But the disfigurements of Apartheid stare us in the face daily at all levels of society. By adopting Bonhoeffer's perspective from the underside, while yet remaining loyal to the liberating traditions of his people, we might find resources that can inform us on our own way forward.

## **Hall, David Centre College, USA**

### **'MAKE STRAIGHT IN THE DESERT A HIGHWAY ...' RELATING PRESENT AND FUTURE IN DIETRICH BONHOEFFER AND WALTER BENJAMIN**

This paper compares Walter Benjamin's published and fragmentary writings on political theology and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's ideas about "ultimate and penultimate things." This comparison makes sense historically as both Benjamin and Bonhoeffer were responding to the same crises facing Germany at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But, it is conceptually enlightening as well; both thinkers offer accounts of the relation between the present and the future that resonate and use theological concepts to do so. Finally, both offer profound visions of hope that may be instructive for our own situation.

In “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” and “Theologico-Political Fragment,” Benjamin advances a kind of political messianism that aims to articulate a vision of justice outside of or beyond earthly regimes of law. Two ideas that emerge in these writings are those of *Jetztzeit*, or “now-time,” and “weak messianic power” that place human endeavor within the establishment of a future reign of justice. *Jetztzeit* marks out a particular orientation toward history whereby particular moments of the past impinge on the present, unleashing a “revolutionary potential” for a more just regime. By weak messianic power, Benjamin posits the possibility that human beings might “prepare the way” for the future coming of the messiah (whatever this term may mean from Benjamin’s Marxist-materialist perspective). Benjamin argues that human beings cannot establish the messianic reign; our time is the time before the true reign of justice. The messiah comes in his own time. However, our time is not simply a time of waiting; rather, in properly orienting ourselves to the past (*Jetztzeit*), the present is offered a set of political possibilities (weak messianic power) that prepares the way for the future messianic reign.

Similarly, in “Ultimate and Penultimate Things,” Bonhoeffer argues that our past and present (the “penultimate things”) are only properly understood, once the word of God “bursts” into consciousness, from the perspective of the future coming of Christ and the final establishment of righteousness on earth (“ultimate things”). Thus, while our lives are oriented toward the ultimate, those lives are lived in the penultimate. It is beyond the capacity of human beings to directly bring about the ultimate, the way of “radicalism,” nor may we simply wait on our laurels for Christ to do the work, the path of “compromise.” Christ comes in his own time, however, Christ calls us to lives of responsible action with and for others with the aim of relating the penultimate to the ultimate, thereby preparing the way for Christ’s ultimate reconciliation of the fallen world to God.

While Benjamin and Bonhoeffer argue from vastly different perspectives – esoteric Jewish messianism and Marxist political thought for Benjamin, Lutheran Reformation thought for Bonhoeffer – there are interesting points of convergence between the two. Both offer visions of hope in dark times for future generations. The paper concludes with reflections on how Benjamin’s and Bonhoeffer’s ideas might empower responses to crises we currently face, in particular the rise of ethnic nationalism and the politics of racial-ethnic division.

**Hartman, Tim** *Columbia Theological Seminary, USA*

## **“A CHURCH FOR THE FUTURE?”: BONHOEFFER’S LATE ECCLESIOLOGY IN CONVERSATION WITH AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY**

Of the many titles used to describe Dietrich Bonhoeffer: theologian, writer, professor, activist, conspirator, and martyr, rarely is prophet used. Yet in the summer of 1944 from Tegel prison, that is what he became. As Bonhoeffer had been writing to Eberhard Bethge about a “world-come-of-age” and a “religionless Christianity,” he sketched an ‘Outline for a Book’ which would have 3 parts: 1. A Stocktaking of Christianity, 2. The Real Meaning of Christian Faith, 3. Conclusions (Letters and Papers from Prison, 380). Bonhoeffer’s zeal for this project is demonstrated in that he diverted his attentions from his *Ethics* and letter-writing to work on the manuscript and then, instead of sending off the manuscript for safe-keeping, kept it with him as one of his few possessions when he was transferred to the Gestapo prison. While we only have the Outline, Bonhoeffer left a number of interpretive clues through his life and writings which point towards his ideas for a new ecclesiology. His ecclesial insights have been lauded in the increasingly secularized societies of Europe and North America. But what about in twenty-first century Africa where the Christian faith is growing exponentially? Drawing on *Ethics* and *Letters and Papers from Prison*, this paper explores Bonhoeffer’s late ecclesiology by tracing his Christological move from ‘man for others’ to ‘Church for others’ in a ‘world come of age.’ As the church turns towards resistance (and turns away from its alliance with the state), a new ecclesial self-understanding emerges.

A dozen years after Bonhoeffer's death, African peoples began gaining independence from European colonial rule. As colonial officials and missionaries returned home, many thought that the Christian faith might shrivel up on the continent. In a surprise that few saw coming, Christianity has grown exponentially in sub-Saharan Africa during the last sixty years. The insights of African theologians, such as Tinyuko Maluleke, Desmond Tutu, Vuyani Vellem, Kwame Bediako, Mercy Oduyoye, and others, have demonstrated the need for African Christian thought to turn away from the dominating influence of European Christianity and towards authentic, indigenous, African understandings of the Christian faith. Their reasoning is inherently post-colonial and offers surprising connections with Bonhoeffer's post-modern moves toward a less institutional and more others-centered church. Further, the dramatic increase in Charismatic Pentecostal expression of the Christian faith in Africa (as artfully described by Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu) points towards the attention paid to the spirit world in a way that might push Bonhoeffer further than he was comfortable. The paper concludes with a discussion of what Bonhoeffer might learn from African theologians and contemporary African Christianity with an eye towards how Bonhoeffer's late ecclesiology might also strengthen the growth of churches in Africa.

**Harvey, Barry** *Baylor University, USA*

### **"HOW SHALL WE EDUCATE TO GOODNESS?" DIETRICH BONHOEFFER'S ECCLESIAL-BASED THEOLOGY OF RESISTANCE**

In November 2011, as a group of Bonhoeffer scholars gathered in New York to celebrate the completion of the English translation of the *DBW*, the two-month run of Occupy Wall Street was drawing to a close. Though it claimed the media spotlight, the carnival-like protest effected virtually no social change. In spite of that lack of success, many point to movements such as OWS as the focus for a theology of resistance, its primary aim to provide "alternative ways and solutions" to the global regime of neoliberal capitalism.

Daniel Berrigan expresses the real challenge for a theology of resistance when he asks: "how shall we educate men to goodness, to a sense of one another, to a love of the truth? And more urgently, how shall we do this in a bad time?" Recent popular protests have little to offer to counteract the moral, spiritual, and intellectual formation of persons that takes place through a "cultural liturgy" of neoliberal capitalism. Contrary to what Max Weber asserts, a post-Enlightenment world is not disenchanted. It is instead a re-enchanted realm, or more accurately, mis-enchanted, with money as its animating spirit, "economics" its theology, philosophy, and cosmology, fetishized commodities and technologies its sacramentals, and management theory and business journalism its moral and liturgical codes (E. McCarragher).

A compelling basis for such a theology exists in *Creation and Fall*, *Discipleship*, and some of the shorter pieces from the Finkenwalde period. What Bonhoeffer says in these texts should not be dismissed as concessions to contingent circumstances, but as the framework for the profound this-worldliness he describes the day after the failed assassination attempt. In this approach to a theology of resistance, the church cultivates a space in which women and men can imagine what it is to be human and to be good "in a bad time."

Bonhoeffer provides the foundation for such a space in the notions of *Lebensraum*, living space, and *der Spielraum des Freiheit*, the leisure space of freedom. Josef Pieper, from whom Bonhoeffer borrows several concepts, describes leisure space as "a whole 'preserve' of true, unconfined humanity: a space of freedom, of true learning, of attunement to the world-as-a-whole," a principal goal of which is "to keep the human being from becoming a complete functionary, or 'worker'." Through music, play, art, education, and above all, the forming of friendships, writes Bonhoeffer, women and men enter into the "*necessitas*" of freedom, nurturing a form of resistance that does not fail "in a time of danger," but provides the theological basis for seeking the welfare of the earth.

**Haynes, Steve** *Rhodes College, USA*

### **AFTER THREE YEARS: DISCERNING SIGNS OF THE TIME IN THE AGE OF TRUMP**

In *The Battle for Bonhoeffer: Debating Discipleship in the Age of Trump* (2018) I traced Bonhoeffer's American reception since 9/11 and how the "populist Bonhoeffer" fashioned by Eric Metaxas and others contributed to support for Donald Trump by American Christians. The book revealed that during the first two decades of the twenty-first century Bonhoeffer's perceived relevance for American life has increased in moments of crisis. In particular, when American leaders or would-be leaders are compared with Hitler and their programs connected to National Socialist tyranny, Bonhoeffer's name becomes a rallying cry for resistance.

This trend has certainly held true during the first three years of the Trump era. On the right, Bonhoeffer continues to be invoked on the conservative side of issues such as religious freedom, home-schooling, opposing the "gay agenda," and support for Israel. In fact, conservatives continue to use the phrase "Bonhoeffer moment" in rallying Christians against threats from the left, and many of these warnings continue to be punctuated by the faux Bonhoeffer quote made famous by Eric Metaxas: "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."

Meanwhile, since 2016 there has been growing interest in Bonhoeffer on the American left. Recent invocations of the German pastor-theologian include an attempt to convince Mormons to support the legalization of medical marijuana in Utah and an award-winning paper at Eastern Mennonite University titled "Is This a Bonhoeffer Moment?: Asking the Right Questions in Trump's America." But it is among members of the anti-Trump resistance that Bonhoeffer's legacy is today most loudly advanced. These resisters rely on Bonhoeffer to interpret signs of the time amid a series of troubling events and trends—including the "Unite the Right" march in Charlottesville in August 2017, the immigration crisis of 2018, the president's ongoing attacks on Special Counsel Robert Mueller, and his government's position on climate change.

Oddly, the anti-Trump left has been just as likely as the right to quote the faux Bonhoeffer statement on "silence," which is cited as a call for ordinary citizens to speak out against everything from racist marches to hateful social media posts. But increasingly references to Bonhoeffer's writings come from the essay "After Ten Years." To note that the anti-Trump resistance finds inspiration in "After Ten Years" is not to claim that Christian opponents of Trump view themselves as living under a new Hitler. But it is no doubt significant that three years into the Trump era, opponents of the American president increasingly find guidance and inspiration Bonhoeffer's resistance writings.

**Hooton, Peter Charles** *Sturt University, Australia*

### **"I AM FOR YOU, AND YOU ARE FOR ME GOD'S CLAIM": A CHRISTOLOGICAL MEDITATION ON THE ETHIC OF RESPONSIBILITY**

This paper explores Dietrich Bonhoeffer's sense of what it means for the human being truly to exist in the world. It is theological in orientation, but rests nonetheless on certain historical, social, and political assumptions. It assumes the existence of a highly fragmented global civilisation which depends for its continuance on the unbridled exploitation of finite resources; which finds cooperation difficult; and which seems quite unable either to constrain the violence or to alleviate the inequities that have come increasingly to define it.

Bonhoeffer's sense of the truly human has four closely related components: his ideas of personhood, freedom, "being for others," and responsibility. Each of these is considered in this paper, but the focus is on the fourth—on what Bonhoeffer refers to in the *Ethics* as "the structure of responsible life."

The responsible life is a life lived in response to the Word of God addressed to us in Jesus Christ. It is Jesus Christ who “encounters us in every step we take, in every person we meet.” The fact that the human encounter with God is always particular, concrete, and historical demands of us a similarly concrete response. As responsible human beings, we are both bound and free: bound to other human beings and to God; and free for them. We are bound by the requirement to act both responsibly and contextually; and irreducibly free to choose the actions for which we will be held accountable. We are defined by the ethical situation of encounter, but are finally, and solely, responsible—before God—for our actions.

**Jedrzejczak, Helena** *Educational Research Institute, Poland*

## **BONHOEFFER’S IDEA OF EUROPE AS AN ANSWER FOR THE CRISIS OF VALUES**

In the chapter of *Ethics* “Heritage and Decay” Bonhoeffer wrote that the unity of the West is not only an idea but a historical reality, for which the only origin is Christ. He points out that this heritage isn’t unique for any of European states, but Germany renounced it which resulted in their decay. A visible sign of it is appearance of nihilism and, in consequence, the sinister ideologies, based on dehumanization of chosen groups of people. It means renunciation of the basic values of Christianity – mercy and inalienable dignity of a human. Bonhoeffer wrote mostly about Nazism but it’s also characteristic of Communism.

Bonhoeffer uses categories which are useful also for today’s discourse – the lack of trust, replacement of truth with propaganda, necessity of choice between things which are ethically correct and those which are necessary in politics. Those considerations cannot be interpreted in isolation from his concept of guilt and redemption; one of the key issues in this theme is the necessity of spiritual reconstruction of the West.

This Bonhoeffer’s concept of European heritage founded the way of thinking about the Europe for Polish Christian anti-communistic opposition. I’ll present the thought of one of them, an intellectual important for history of Poland and Europe – first non-communistic Prime Minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki. I’ll take into consideration his idea of Europe as a philosophical and ethical reality which influences the political one.

His concept of Europe was creative development of Bonhoeffer’s theology. It was reflected in an unusual event which 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary we celebrate in 2019 – “The Holy Mass of Reconciliation” in Kreisau. Bonhoeffer pointed that spiritual reconstruction of Europe must be founded on confession, forgiveness and reconciliation. The culmination of those processes in Polish-German case was this Mass and unusual Sign of Peace between Mazowiecki and Helmut Kohl. Kreisau is a symbolic place – before the War it was the property of Grafts von Moltke, during the War – the place of *Kreisauer Kreis* meetings, and after the War – a village in Poland in which *Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste* and the ‘Club of Catholic Intelligentsia’ (Mazowiecki’s circle) made a centre for meetings for European reconciliation.

I will present Bonhoeffer’s idea of Europe in Mazowiecki’s writings and show how it was shaped by the experience of two totalitarian regimes and – simultaneously – Christian heritage of Europe. I will point in which way it was an answer for the challenges of the Polish independence and consolidation of Germany as well as mutual reconciliation. Nowadays, in the year of 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of WW II and 30 years after the fall of communist rule and in the time of crisis of European values, the question about the idea of Europe, understood as a philosophical, axiological and political project, becomes the key to understand contemporary reality.

**Jones, Matthew** *University of Aberdeen, Scotland*

## **NO WAY OUT OF NO WAY. BONHOEFFER'S QUEER FUTURE: TRAUMA AND ESCHATOLOGY IN CREATION AND FALL**

Any attempt to articulate how the coming generation must go on living, must responsibly account for the horrors of the past. However, Christian eschatology has traditionally, and I argue problematically, interpreted trauma from within a narrative of progress towards resolution. To this end, this paper asks how Christians might begin to imagine a future that is hopeful, yet at the same time, nuanced enough to speak to survivors of unspeakable acts of trauma? This paper claims that Dietrich Bonhoeffer offers an alternative approach in *Creation and Fall*. Specially, I argue that throughout *Creation and Fall* Bonhoeffer disrupts the normative Christian narrative of progress by articulating an apophatic queer eschatology. Placing *Creation and Fall* alongside queer theory reveals that perhaps that the Christian life should *not* be lived in light of some future triumph over, or resolution of, the present.

**King, Christopher** *Christian Brothers University, USA*

## **THE WILL TO LOVE: BONHOEFFER'S ACCOUNT OF THE CHURCH BETWEEN ATOMISM AND IDEALISM**

This paper argues for the centrality of the role of the will in Bonhoeffer's account of the church. In addition to situating the church as a midpoint between Barth's vertical conception and Troeltsch's horizontal conception of the church, as Michael Mawson has recently pointed out, Bonhoeffer also positions his account of the church community as the midpoint between philosophical accounts of sociality: atomism and idealism. These alternatives fail to account for the concrete unity of persons, according to Bonhoeffer, because they lack an adequate concept of the will. The church is the structure which preserves both individuality and unity at the same time. It is the personal encounter with wills which accounts for individuality, and it is the reorienting of the will in love which makes possible true community. I conclude by highlighting the central role of prayer in the church, as a central manifestation of the church's will to adopt the divine will. For Bonhoeffer, intercessory prayer is a being Christ for others made possible by the restoration of the will's power to love.

**Koopman, Nico** *Stellenbosch University*

## **BONHOEFFER IN HARLEM. SOME SIGNPOSTS TO THE FUTURE**

Bonhoeffer's theology assisted South Africans in the quest to overcome apartheid. Various insights from Bonhoeffer's theology can assist us today to materialise the vision of a South Africa where all experience a life of dignity. Specifically, his time spent in Harlem, and the priorities that he had developed there, might at least render fresh reminders of insights that might be neglected by South Africans. Some of these insights for a society whose current and coming generations still learn to live constructively with diversity, still struggle to make historic alienations history, still are faced with growing levels of socio-economic and other forms of inequality, are the development of an ethic of interpathy, an ethic of hybridity, and thirdly an ethic of special identification with the most vulnerable and wronged in society.

**Lam, Jason,** *Melbourne School of Theology, Australia*

## **READING BONHOEFFER AMID THE HONG KONG PROTESTS**

As the title suggests, this essay reflects on how the people of Hong Kong have read the life and thought of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and found inspiration for their own struggle against autocracy, specifically following



the recent pro-democracy demonstrations. The purpose here is not to offer a first-hand interpretation of Bonhoeffer's works, but rather to present a historical exercise in sorting through contextual readings of Bonhoeffer. Interestingly, we find that the particular contextual reading conditioned by Hong Kong's recent socio-political turbulence is different from the existing scholarship and may offer occasion to rethink and develop some of Bonhoeffer's important concepts.

Many people in Hong Kong were interested in Bonhoeffer's life and thought before the protests have begun since June 2019. This is understandable considering the wider societal impact of the Umbrella Movement, which took place some five years ago. People have sought inspiration from Bonhoeffer and his resistance to National Socialism. This is no great surprise: Bonhoeffer was also warmly received by resistance fighters in South Africa, several South American countries, and even South Korea. The case of Hong Kong however is different in that only 10-12% of the total population there are Christians. Christianity has never been a prominent religion shaping the region's ethical landscape. Apart from being inspired by his participation in the resistance movement and consequent martyrdom as a pastor and theologian, some people outside the church in Hong Kong are attracted by Bonhoeffer's concept of "non-religious Christianity" and related ideas. Nonetheless, it is interesting that Hong Kong's churches have also played a significant role in the unfolding of recent events connected to the city's pro-democracy movement. This situation contrasts with the German experience during Bonhoeffer's time.

In view of the above, this essay will first of all offer a review of the church's participation in the movement during the period of protests that have taken place in Hong Kong and articulate the relevance of Bonhoeffer's thought. Secondly, amid the quasi-civil war scenario in Hong Kong we will reflect on several important concepts concerning how Bonhoeffer transformed from a pacifist into an active participant of the anti-Nazi movement. They include accepting guilt, free responsibility and so on. Next, some important figures involved in the Hong Kong democracy movement who are also interested in Bonhoeffer will be examined. They are not traditional church-goers and thus provide us a good opportunity for examining why Bonhoeffer's thought can truly gain "this-worldly" acceptance. It is just this line of questioning, however, that may bring about another set of questions inherent in his thought: What is the church then? Is Christian "religion" still necessary in a "world come of age"? These questions make Bonhoeffer's thought appealing but also provide a great challenge to traditional Christian theology.

**Lenehan, Kevin** *University of Divinity, Australia*

## **BETWEEN VISIBILITY AND HIDDENNESS: ECCLESIOGENESIS AS SOLIDARITY AND IDENTITY IN A PLURALIST SOCIETY**

In his recent book *Protestants* (2017), historian Alec Ryrie argues that while Dietrich Bonhoeffer may have been 'the bravest theologian of his generation', the impact of his prison writings and his opaque vision of a 'religionless Christianity' in a world come of age was disastrous for mainstream Protestantism in the United States in the second half of the twentieth century. By taking up Bonhoeffer's aphoristic and paradoxical reflections on the character of authentic discipleship in the crisis of war-torn Europe and applying them programmatically to the church's response to the civil liberties and social justice movements of American society in the 1960s-70s, the leadership of the Protestant establishment sought to align themselves with these public and diverse movements as an expression of the 'un-churchiness' of authentic Christianity. What church leadership did not take in to account, according to Ryrie, was the tide of secularist thinking that has relentlessly been rising within Western culture, to which the USA is no exception, and which has been emptying churches, loosening religious affiliation, and reshaping the worldview of many Christians. Thus, in Ryrie's assessment, 'the Protestant establishment was busily using the principle of religionless Christianity to saw off the branch on

which it sat.' This strategy collapsed around the time of the 1980 US election campaign with the shift of white evangelical and conservative Protestants toward the right-wing voting block and the rise of a vocal religious Right.

Ryrie's analysis of the trajectory of liberal Protestantism and its social engagement in American public and political culture needs to be evaluated and complemented by more nuanced social scientific study of the complex and multi-dimensional features of this engagement. So too, the author's reference to Bonhoeffer's prison writings in relation to their original context and to their application in Protestant theology and practice needs to be assessed in the light of a fuller contextual reading of Bonhoeffer's theological and pastoral writings. Yet, Ryrie's argument goes to the heart of the question about the 'usefulness' of Bonhoeffer's thought and witness for the future of Christian discipleship and engagement in an increasingly post-Christian and multi-religious world. Can Bonhoeffer's legacy assist Christians to negotiate the delicate balance between *solidarity* with people of other faiths or no religion affiliation and *identity* as disciples of Christ within faith communities?

This paper will address this question by drawing on the resources of Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology. By reframing the theology of the church against the major trends of his time, Bonhoeffer tries to build a vision of a Christian *Gemeinde* that exists in and through its relations with others, both its collaborators and its persecutors. I will explore what Bonhoeffer meant by key theological themes, such as the 'worldliness' of the church, the hermeneutics of 'nonreligion' and the 'world come of age', the relational character of 'responsibility', and the central role of personal and communal 'discernment' in Christian engagement in public life. I will argue that, properly understood, Bonhoeffer's theology of the church offers ways for churches to avoid the 'fruitless criticism' and 'equally fruitless opportunism' in relation to the societies in which they exercise their mission.

**Lockler, Tori** *University of South Florida, USA*

### **(OVER)COMING INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA: LEARNING FROM SECOND AND THIRD GENERATION HOLOCAUST AND RWANDAN SURVIVORS**

One of the posters promoting the South African Truth and Reconciliation commission states, "The Truth Hurts, But Silence Kills; Let's speak out to each other. By telling the truth, by telling our stories of the past, so that we can walk the road to reconciliation together".

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, similar to the Gacaca courts in Rwanda, were meant to offer restorative justice allowing for reconciliation. Assessments of the TRC vary. On the one hand, some argue that it was effective in the goal of gaining the truth. Others, however, wonder about whose truth the TRC revealed? Were the victims cured by telling about their victimization and hearing the perpetrator admit to their crimes? Or, was talking about the event, or hearing a perpetrator talk about it, re-opening wounds thereby re-traumatizing the victim.

But both positions are too simple, ignoring the ongoing, processive nature of both trauma and recovery. My research with the ongoing trauma of survivors of the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide as well as second and third generation survivors shows that trauma carries over into future generations who continue to experience transgenerational/intergenerational trauma.

In this paper I will apply the results of Holocaust survivor and Rwandan survivor research as well as contemporary insights into psychological processing and resilience to complexifying evaluations of the TRC's success. On this basis, I will argue that the TRC was a both a positive dialogic step in history *and* that victimization will continue for coming generations. Ranging from financial restraints due to forced poverty that does not repair

itself in one generation to the emotional fragmentation of a survivor of torture and the way they raise and manage their children, the repercussions are endemic.

Examining both the success and limitations of the South African Truth Commission provides background for suggestions to further heal a fractured community. Rather than perceiving healing as a once-for-all occurrence, which with did or did not occur in response to truth telling, it is necessary to recognize that true healing of an individual and a community happens gradually requiring multiple levels and varied methods. The government should have programs in place to help victims become financially stable, especially as it moves into the future generations. There need to be other governmental resources available to victims. Now that the first layer is complete, the truth commission has closed, it is time to recognize the need for combining an indigenous method of conflict management with a variety of approaches to therapy including: art, talk, narrative, and music.

**Lukens, Nancy** *University of New Hampshire, USA*

### **LIFE WORTH LIVING, DEATH WORTH DYING? LIVING THE QUESTIONS UNDER A CRIMINAL REGIME: DIETRICH BONHOEFFER AND ADAM VON TROTT**

“If we are going to live with the probability of an early death, then it should at least have made sense to die, to have lived.” - Adam von Trott, 1935

“Not outward circumstances, but we ourselves will make our death what it can be, a death freely accepted.” - Dietrich Bonhoeffer, 1942

This paper explores the striking parallels between Bonhoeffer's life contexts and evolving *modus vivendi* in resisting Hitler, and the path of his lesser-known contemporary, Adam von Trott (1909-1944). Trott, one of the youngest in the circles of active civilian resisters, was not yet 35 when he was arrested in July 1944; he was hanged that August.

I will discuss how both began from a culture of privilege as well-educated upper middle-class white male intellectuals; both spent time in Britain and the U.S, spoke English and maintained connections abroad that served their underground purposes during the war.

From their early adulthood both Bonhoeffer and Trott crossed physical and metaphorical borders erected by the Nazi state and its coordinated web designed to deceive, dehumanize and destroy. Each pursued his vocation with roadblocks from 1933 on Bonhoeffer as theologian, pastor and ecumenical visionary in the Church Struggle, later as counterintelligence officer *cum* conspirator with close ties to those judging the right time and place for action. After his arrest, even and especially from prison, it was his love of all the “powers of good” that protect one from despair that allowed him the freedom to be known only by God and allowed to die in vicarious responsible action for others.

Trott's exposure to the ecumenical world and international peace movements of the late 1920s were essential to his formation as a person; his interest was chiefly political, and only in the end genuinely religious. As attorney-in-training in the mid-1930s he knew that by refusing to join the Party, he would never be a judge. It was an 18-month study visit in China that transformed his outlook on political action in wartime Berlin, where his role in the Foreign Office provides cover for the conspiratorial work that cost his life. He learned in China that in terms of the will to save lives and remove the tyrant from power, effortless, effective action (Wei Wu Wei), is all about grace or dao.

The paper will highlight what Bonhoeffer and Trott respectively offer to the present historical moment with its resurgence of anti-democratic rhetoric and action, and culture and institutions that exhibit the characteristics of earlier fascisms. In particular I will draw on Bonhoeffer's "After Ten Years", passages from the *Ethics*, prison poems and letters, and on selected passages from Trott's extensive correspondence and essays.

**McBride, Jennifer and Fabisiak, Thomas** *McCormick Theological Seminary, USA*

## **BONHOEFFER'S CRITIQUE OF MORALITY: A THEOLOGICAL RESOURCE FOR DISMANTLING MASS INCARCERATION**

The United States faces a crisis of mass incarceration, in terms of both the alarming numbers of Americans who are involved in the justice system and the disproportionate impact of imprisonment, militarized policing, and surveillance on vulnerable populations, especially communities of color. Recent bipartisan calls for prison reform, along with new policies aimed at decarceration, appear to suggest that we are at a turning point. And yet, few of these changes have substantially addressed the foundations of this crisis; indeed, there are good reasons to believe that the problem will remain entrenched and persistent. Mass incarceration continues to be supported by discourses that render it seemingly natural, acceptable, or inevitable. It is underwritten by a moral order, that is to say, by the moralization of social life, and especially by the moralized and racialized construction of criminality.

This moral order has taken shape through dominant forms of American Christianity; therefore, American theologians have a special responsibility to dismantle and transform it. We propose to turn to the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and specifically to his critical writings on morality, to that end. We undertake a close reading of *Creation and Fall* – which is the narrative framework for understanding key themes that are further developed in *Ethics* – focusing on the forbidden nature of the knowledge of good and evil; the affirmation of human creatureliness; the *imago dei* as freedom for others that respects the other as limit; judging others as breaking creaturely limits and attempting to be "like God"; and the sinful desire to be *sicut deus* as a fundamentally religious and moral impulse. From this close reading we highlight three interlacing features of morality that Bonhoeffer critiques: moral abstraction, the tendency to reduce moral judgments to ideological principles abstracted from concrete social situations; moral self-righteousness, the claim to know with certainty what is good and evil and to judge with certainty the moral status of others; and moral division, the tendency to separate the world into good and evil people and then distance ourselves from real human beings most affected by societal harm. Together, these three define a form of privileged Christian moralism, "bourgeois morality" as Bonhoeffer calls it, that we argue shares essential features with the moral landscape of mass incarceration in the United States.

Against this moral order we counterpose Bonhoeffer's call for an ethics grounded in conformation to Jesus Christ, the "real human being" who leads humanity back to its intended creatureliness by embodying freedom for others. Conformation to the incarnate God centrally includes, as Bonhoeffer makes clear in *Discipleship*, obeying Jesus's concrete commands in the Gospel narratives – commands to visit the prisoner; love strangers and enemies; judge not; do restorative justice. These commands are not, for Bonhoeffer, theoretical ideas or moral principles that Christians may integrate into an already existing knowledge system about good and evil. Rather they are practices – conforming to Christ's public presence – whose truth can only be known when worked out in the messiness of concrete situations of social concern.

**Momberg, Marthie** *Stellenbosch University*

## **BEYOND THE DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL: BONHOEFFER AND JEWS FOR PALESTINIAN RIGHTS**

National Socialism's triumphalism and self-glorification at the cost of whomever were perceived as lesser human beings lay bare Christians' and their churches' affinity with superiority and state power. Even Dietrich Bonhoeffer struggled to let go of deep-seated notions of a well ordered, hierarchical, patriarchal world. In the years 1943-1945 Bonhoeffer's existential devastation catapulted him first into despair, then into longing for the "good old days," and finally to the realisation that reaching back to past comforts no longer satisfies. Rather, a shattered reality can open up space for a new, infinitely more meaningful way of life. During this period, Bonhoeffer eventually succumbed to a "critical assimilation and finally a 'conversion,' a re-orientation". By the time of his final writings from prison, he was asking what it means to be truthful, to be a Christian, and, eventually, what it means to be religious.

On 9 April, 1948, three years after Bonhoeffer was hanged, Jewish militia killed an estimated 125-150 villagers in Deir Yassin, a Palestinian village near Jerusalem "in a barrage of machine-gun fire" They raped, severed body parts to take jewellery, and slaughtered a pregnant woman, cutting her open with a butcher's knife and shooting a girl who tried to rescue the unborn baby. The Deir Yassin massacre was part of a master plan of ethnic cleansing. By the time that most of Palestine was declared as Israel in May 1948 some 530 Arab villages had been destroyed and 750 000 of the then 900 000 Palestinians became refugees. Over seventy years later, the notion that Palestinians are irrational, backward, brutal terrorists who endanger an embattled, benign, and democratic Israel still dominates mainstream perceptions. Most Christians and their churches still reject the Palestinian civil society call for non-violent resistance. People from countries with histories of crimes against humanity such as South Africa, Rwanda and Germany turn a blind eye to the ongoing dispossession and murder of Palestinians on the basis of race, class and religion. In this regard, Bonhoeffer's questions about the nature of Christianity and about what is passed on from one generation to the next remain relevant.

This paper will draw on Bonhoeffer's reorientation in prison and his search for what it means to be a Christian, as well as the insights of South African and Israeli Jews who campaign for the rights of Palestinians. These Jews, several of whom underwent life-changing transformations, are a minority in their opposition to Israel's ethno-politics. They are vilified as traitors, and outlawed and/or imprisoned for their insistence that Zionist Israel's systemic inhumanity against Palestinians must be exposed and stopped. Like Bonhoeffer, they emphasise honesty, self-reflection, responsibility, empathy and a grassroots perspective. Cognisant of the danger of projecting their views onto Bonhoeffer's notions of a "nonreligious" Christianity and a theology of suffering, I will share what could be described as their "religionless" humanism and/or feminism and ask what, in light of Bonhoeffer's legacy, it means when Christians ignore the urgent calls of Jews who believe that "never again" means "never again" for everybody and not only for Jews.

**Musa, Hassan** *Stellenbosch University*

## **THE RECEPTION OF DIETRICH BONHOEFFER IN AFRICA: 'IS HE STILL OF ANY USE TO US TODAY?'**

This essay engages with the critical reception and in many ways responses to the life and ministry of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. It tries to reflect on the various leading Bonhoeffer scholars in South Africa like John De Gruchy, Russel Botman, Dirk Smit and Robert Vosloo especially on how they have discerned Bonhoeffer in the global South. Scholars of Latin America have given Bonhoeffer a warm reception in terms of his liberation ministry and messages. The Southern African context also reflects on his vision and mission for the enactment of the

Kingdom of God's truth and justice. From such paradigms we shall further explore other important ways of seeing who Dietrich Bonhoeffer has been in his German context and into other contexts in which he played a vital role for the growth of the church of Jesus Christ in the world. This article would closely read Bonhoeffer's ethics of responsible action as case in point to providing the cutting edge of theology and ethics in Africa that would continue to revolutionize and reconstruct the African contexts into being the true space of being human in the presence of God. The significance of Bonhoeffer would also be discussed in terms of the challenges of being with the other; from my Nigerian context, this struggle with otherness has more to do with the religious other than any otherwise. It would be argued that Bonhoeffer's ethics of responsibility includes the notion of otherness as central to the time in which we live. Thus it will continue the struggle in our attempt to ask and hopefully answer the question about Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Africa; 'is he still of any use to us today?'

**Neddens, Anne-Katharina and Christian** *Klinik Hohemark and Lutherische Theologische Hochschule Oberursel, Germany*

### **TRANSGENERATIONAL GUILT - TRANSGENERATIONAL RESILIENCE: CONCEPTS FOR 'ACCEPTANCE OF GUILT' AND 'RENEWAL' BY DIETRICH BONHOEFFER AND HANS JOACHIM IWAND FROM A THEOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC PERSPECTIVE**

In our joint contribution we approach from a theological and psychotherapeutic perspective the topics of 'acceptance of guilt' and 'renewal' with D. Bonhoeffer and H. J. Iwand.

One of the serious challenges of trauma therapy is the perpetrator introjection (Sándor Ferenczi). Those who have experienced the abysses of psychological and physical violence, with which perpetrators seize their victims, often tend to remain under the superiority of this experience, to feel guilty or even to become perpetrators of others themselves. On the other hand, the perpetrators also have distorting introjections. Many perpetrators not only stylise themselves, but also perceive themselves as victims (self-victimisation).

In terms of individual psychology as well as social history, this complex relationship between perpetrator and victim places a serious burden on the lives of the victims, perpetrators and their children. How can experiences of guilt and abuse, which cannot be made "good" in a biographical and historical sense, be processed in such a way that subsequent generations can live together without always wanting to repress, atone for or take revenge for guilt? What helps both victims and perpetrators, what leads them to themselves, lets mutual recognition grow and new beginnings become possible?

Against this background we see promising and quite divergent theological approaches in Bonhoeffer and Iwand to acceptance of guilt and renewal in the interest of future generations. Starting from the basic structures of their respective images of God and man, we want to show how both try to open up the social future against the concrete background of violence, humiliation and annihilation by uncovering the ways into guilt, by tying in with healing resilience factors and by daring attempts to work on and "transform" historical guilt in such a way that it becomes a sign on the way into life from a stumbling block.

Bonhoeffer, for whom "the world can become new through penance alone",<sup>3</sup> and Iwand, who focuses on the relationship level between perpetrators and victims in the subject of "atonement",<sup>4</sup> developed a sensorium for the complex problem of the introjective perpetrator-victim relation at an early stage. Both searched for ways of active atonement, which does not lead to an ideology of "reparation" in the sense of an economic balancing of accounts, but as a free and risky self-giving out of repentance which can be understood by the victims and - in a likewise free act - perhaps can be accepted (Paul Ricoeur). In the form of ecclesiastical-theo-



logical confessions they try to uncover guilt, to name it concretely and to process it symbolically in steps of conversion. Thus they point the way to a community-constitutive and solidary understanding of guilt and atonement, which does not make legal prosecution and economic equalization superfluous, but leads beyond them.

**Nissen, Ulrik** *Aarhus University, Denmark*

## **RESPONSIVITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE AGE OF THE ANTHROPOCENE. BONHOEFFERIAN REFLECTIONS ON HOPE IN THE LIGHT OF OUR CLIMATE CRISIS**

Over the last 20 years the ‘anthropocene’ has become an increasingly established, geochronological term for the awareness of our current age’s humanogenic impact on the Earth. From around a decade earlier, beginning with its ‘Earth Summit’ in 1992, a similar awareness and subsequent call for a collaborative, political responsibility for the climate has also been issued in numerous reports under the United Nations. Even though these climate challenges and their causes have attained higher urgency about half a century after Bonhoeffer, several studies have shown the significance of his theology for our response to these issues (e.g. Rasmussen, Scott, and Brocker). This paper will go a step beyond these studies and raise the question, if we in Bonhoeffer can find an understanding of a biological, social and spiritual responsivity of the human being and if so, what this implies for our responsibility with respect to the current climate crisis? In the light of primarily Bonhoeffer’s Creation and Fall and relatively recent contributions to theological anthropology (e.g. Kelsey and Schwartz), the paper will as a first step argue for a deep Christological anthropology, which emphasizes the bio-socio-pneumatological relationality and responsivity of the human being. The paper will show how this responsive understanding of the human being has roots in Bonhoeffer’s Lutheran heritage. Second, the paper will connect this to Bonhoeffer’s understanding of responsibility as the response of life as a whole to the life of Jesus Christ, primarily in the light of his Ethics. The paper will argue that this responsibility includes both the biological, social, and spiritual reality. In this part of the paper it will further be argued that the climate crisis calls for a broadening of Bonhoeffer’s mandates to include a responsibility for the non-human world. In the last part of the paper, Bonhoeffer’s wholeness of responsibility will be used to argue that the current climate crisis calls for a moral response which is nourished by a hope that in Christ the future is not absent from the present. When Bonhoeffer reflects on the relation between the ultimate and the penultimate, he argues for a position between the two extremes of the radical solution and the compromise. Where the radical is at risk of losing sight of the love for the world here and now, the compromise risks losing sight of the unity of life in the Christ reality. The paper will conclude with a reflection on the tense Christ reality and how this sustains an understanding of a saturated human reality which gives hope for the future in the midst of a time with climate crisis.

**Norris, Kristopher** *Wesley Theological Seminary, USA*

## **SEEING RESPONSIBILITY FROM BELOW: BONHOEFFER, NIEBUHR, AND RACISM**

This paper will analyze and compare the theologies of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Reinhold Niebuhr regarding race and racial injustice. It examines the ways both theologians responded to the racial crisis in America, and Bonhoeffer in Nazi Germany, in patterns consistent with their own particular account of responsibility. It argues that Bonhoeffer’s theology of the responsible life, expressed through vicarious representative action in accordance with reality, offers deeper ethical resources for how the current and coming generations might respond to the realities of racial oppression and white nationalism.

The paper will examine textual and biographical sources for each theologian's response to racial crisis. First, it will argue that while Niebuhr lamented racism and advised African Americans in strategies of resistance, his concept of responsibility led him to support a pragmatic and gradualist approach to racial equality based on the most realistic or responsible course of action. I will draw on criticisms from James Cone and Traci West to demonstrate how his commitment to Christian realism ultimately blinded him to black suffering and forced him into support of the social status quo. Second, the paper will address Bonhoeffer's experience in Harlem, and argue that his engagement with the black church helped develop an ethic of responsibility as an empathetic response to a particular social or political reality. Drawing on the work of Reggie Williams, Victoria Barnett, and again, James Cone, I will demonstrate the ways his ethic of responsibility, as vicarious representative action in accordance with reality "from below," emerged partly in response to this experience and animated his resistance to Nazism on behalf of the oppressed. Third, the paper will identify the ways Bonhoeffer's account of responsibility provides practical resources for present-day resistance to white nationalism and racial oppression due to its attention to concrete reality, openness to moral formation within a given situation, and emphasis on solidarity. While celebrating these contributions, it will conclude by drawing on criticisms of Bonhoeffer from feminist and womanist thinkers to press beyond Bonhoeffer and demonstrate the ways his shortcomings display the need for greater attention to the dangers of empathy and "vicarious representation" within morally complex and intersectional forms of oppression.

**O'Farrell, Kevin** *University of Aberdeen, Scotland*

### **"SEEK THE THINGS THAT ARE ABOVE": BONHOEFFER ON READING AND RESPONDING TO GOD'S ACTION IN HISTORY**

Karl Löwith and Louis Dupré have argued that with the emergence of modernity there also emerged a new science of history. With this shift, the common theological emphasis on history having a *telos*, meaning, and purpose persisted, but the doctrines of eschatology and providence became immanent to history, thus falling into the nexus of historical cause-and-effect. This resulted in a renewed emphasis on human activity as shaping history. While the shift was not wholly negative, this new philosophy of history nevertheless contributed to the emergence of the belief in an absolute history. By directly identifying a particular human movement, ideology, or revolution with historical progress, it thereby attempts to expunge opposing narratives, histories, and peoples that run counter to the dominant narrative. It assumes a singularizing hermeneutic that generates violence on the basis of how the purpose and meaning of historical events are *read*.

The paper attends to this dynamic of 'reading' history or 'discerning the signs of the times' through Bonhoeffer's emphasis on Christ's Word coming from above (cf. DBW 6:356/DBWE 6:353). It explores how Bonhoeffer's account of discerning God's activity and presence in history avoids the othering effects of an absolute history while affirming the necessity of concrete action for others in responsiveness to God's activity in history. The 'Word coming from above' centers on Christ's ascension, a muted theme in Bonhoeffer's work, but essential to a positive reading of history. In developing this argument, the paper engages Bonhoeffer's 1932 sermons on Colossians 3:1-4 (DBW 11:435-453/DBWE 11:450-467) where the ascension takes prominence in the reading of history. The first sermon works to undo an absolute history or ideology (such as a "Christian worldview") that obscures one's discernment of Christ's activity in the present (DBW 11:435-443/DBWE 11:450-457). The second sermon affirms how "seeking the things that are above" (Col. 3:2) does not betray the earth or lead to quietism, but rather empowers a more "tenacious and resolute" protest on earth (DBW 11:444-453/DBWE 11:458-465). The end result of this engagement is to gesture towards a hermeneutic for reading history through Bonhoeffer's idiom that empowers responsible action.

**Oppel, Katharina** Munich

## **LIVING WITH AN UNDIVIDED HEART – SIMPLICITY AS A CHRISTIAN WAY FOR THE FUTURE**

How is a coming generation in our churches going to live? In 1944, in his Baptism letter to his godson Dietrich Bethge, Bonhoeffer draws the picture of a future society and the (Protestant?) Church's concrete place within it. A church which was to go through many changes by the time "little Dietrich" would have grown up.

Bonhoeffer asks himself, if future humankind is moving towards "*an age of colossal organizations and collective institutions, or will the desire of innumerable people for small, manageable, personal relationships be satisfied? Does the one have to exclude the other? Isn't it conceivable that it is precisely the vast scale of world organizations that allow more room for life at the personal level?*" (DBW 8, 388)

Speaking about *colossal organisations* and *collective institutions* 76 years later, I cannot exclude the organisation of the German Catholic Church that I am working in Munich. Its growing management more and more imitates worldly enterprise structures, top down from the administration centre to the parishes. Maybe this is a late consequence of the Constantinian shift, but obviously we find it now in a dying, not in a growing institution. With Bonhoeffer's hope, I dare to ask: How will Christians of in the future realize new ways of discipleship in this Church, allowing more Christian life at the personal level within the public sphere?

In 1982 the Spanish-Indian theologian Raimondo Panikkar published his book *Blessed simplicity*, showing that the "architype of a monk" within each and every human being may contribute to a new spirituality: "*The effort to walk in simplicity (Prov. 10,9) and seek a new innocence helps us live in peace and grow as persons... today.*" Panikkar meets Bonhoeffer's ethical and at the same time biblical concept of the person in relation to the world: "*A person is simple who in the confusion, the distortion, and the inversion of all concepts keeps in sight only the single truth of God. This person has an undivided heart, and is not a double-psyche, a person of two souls (James 1[:8]). Because of knowing and having God, this person clings to the commandments, the judgment, and the mercy of God that proceed anew each day from the mouth of God. ...*" (DBW 6, 81)

Christians of the future will be either parts of a highly *organized* society if not church. Maybe their desire to live within *small, manageable entities* will be fulfilled under these conditions. Simply nourishing themselves and one another, in prayer, meditation and friendship. This will become a personal responsibility, learning with Bonhoeffer that "*no one can look at God and at the reality of the world with undivided gaze as long as God and the world are torn apart.*" (DBW 6, 82).

**Pangritz, Andreas** University of Bonn, Germany

## **BONHOEFFER'S ESCHATOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE LATE WORKS OF BACH AND BEETHOVEN (BONHOEFFERS ESCHATOLOGISCHE REFLEXIONEN ÜBER DIE SPÄTWERKE BACHS UND BEETHOVENS)**

*The paper will be presented in English, also with sound clips.*

In Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Briefen aus dem Gefängnis an Eberhard Bethge (Widerstand und Ergebung) finden sich theologische Reflexionen über Musik, die im allgemeinen nur wenig Beachtung finden. Sie scheinen auf den ersten Blick auch nur wenig verbunden mit der Fragestellung des Kongresses: „How is the coming generation to go on living?“ Es ist aber bezeichnend, dass es sich nicht zuletzt um Reflexionen über die Spätwerke Bachs und Beethovens handelt, die deutlich eschatologisch gefärbt sind, so dass das Unterthema „Bonhoeffer on eschatology“ berührt wird.

Der Vortrag wird sich auf diesen eschatologischen Aspekt von Bonhoeffers Reflexionen konzentrieren: Bachs (unvollendete) „Kunst der Fuge“ steht für das „Fragments unsres Lebens“ und – wegen des in der Tradition hinzugefügten Chorals – zugleich für die Möglichkeit seiner eschatologischen „Vollendung“ (23. 2. 1944; DBW 8, 336). Das „Arietta“-Thema aus Beethovens letzter Klaviersonate op. 111 steht für eine „nur mit dem inneren Ohr gehörte Musik“, die von Bonhoeffer wohl nicht zufällig gerade im Zusammenhang mit der „Auferstehung des Fleisches“ und der damit verbundenen Osterfreude thematisiert wird (27. 3. 1944; DBW 8, 368).

Bonhoeffers Anspielung auf Bachs „Kunst der Fuge“, in der die Hoffnung auf eine „menschlich nicht mehr zu leistende höhere Vollendung“ des „Fragments unsres Lebens“ ausgesprochen wird, kann mit Walter Benjamins Meditation aus dem Jahr 1940 über den „Engel der Geschichte“ verglichen werden, der im Angesicht der „Katastrophe, die unablässig Trümmer auf Trümmer häuft“, „verweilen, die Toten wecken und das Zerschlagene zusammenfügen“ möchte (Benjamin, Über den Begriff der Geschichte [1940], in: ders., Gesammelte Schriften, Bd. I, Frankfurt a. M. 1974, 697). Auch in diesem Text, den Benjamin im französischen Exil im Angesicht der drohenden Gefahr durch Nazi-Deutschland verfasst hat, ist das eschatologische Motiv unüberhörbar.

In Bonhoeffers Anspielung auf Beethovens letzte Klaviersonate, die sogar durch ein Notenbeispiel unterfüttert ist, ergeben sich überraschende Parallelen zu den Kommentaren der Romanfigur Wendell Kretzschmar, eines Organisten und Komponisten, in Thomas Manns Roman „Doktor Faustus“ zu demselben Klaviersatz Beethovens (vgl. Thomas Mann, Doktor Faustus, Das Leben des deutschen Tonsetzers Adrian Leverkühn, erzählt von einem Freunde, Stockholm 1947; ders., Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus. Roman eines Romans, Amsterdam 1949). Diese Kommentare gehen wiederum auf Gespräche zurück, die Mann im Winter 1943/44 im kalifornischen Exil mit Theodor W. Adorno über den Spätstil Beethovens geführt hat (vgl. Adorno, Spätstil Beethovens [1937], in: ders., Gesammelte Schriften, Bd. 17, Frankfurt a. M. 1982, 13–17). Bezeichnenderweise bezieht sich Adorno in seinen Reflexionen über Beethovens Spätstil wiederum auf Walter Benjamins Ausführungen in der Abhandlung „Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels“. Dort hatte Benjamin der Versenkung in die Allegorie zugetraut, dass ihre „Intention zuletzt im Anblick der Gebeine nicht treu verharret, sondern zur Auferstehung treulos überpringt“ (Benjamin, Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels [1925], in: ders., Gesammelte Schriften, Bd. I, 405f.). Auch hier ist das eschatologische Motiv unüberhörbar.

**Pavlík, Martin** *Charles University, Czech Republic*

## **THE THEOLOGY OF DIETRICH BONHOEFFER IN FINKENWALDE AND ITS IMPORT ON HIS LATER PRISON THEOLOGY**

The very fact that many scholars today are immensely interested, even to the point of being literally captivated by Bonhoeffer's prison theology, engenders two problematic side effects. In my opinion, the main thrust of the research revolves around the later period of Bonhoeffer's life, which is quite a questionable endeavor for many reasons (we are thrown back on the incomplete scope of his texts and thoughts which Bonhoeffer himself repeatedly cautioned about in his prison letters), and as a result his earlier work is often neglected. As stated by Peter Frick in his monograph *Understanding Bonhoeffer* (Tübingen 2017), the current scholarship tends to downplay the material stemming from the period in which Bonhoeffer stood at the forefront of the illegal seminar run by the Confessing Church at Finkenwalde (1935–1937). Frick believes that the closer examination of this period poses a big challenge to Bonhoeffer scholarship nowadays. He argues that the material written down by Bonhoeffer in this period, amounting to some 22% of the total text included in DBW/E, has so far received a very negligible attention. Moreover, it cannot be ruled out that the Finkenwalde period played a decisive or formative role in Bonhoeffer's later prison theology. Bonhoeffer himself referred to the years he spent in Finkenwalde as to the most fulfilling period of his life – apparently enjoying the opportunity he was presented with to teach theology there. The aim of my conference contribution is to provide a glimpse

into this extensive issue and sum up the preliminary results. A major breakthrough could shed new light on Bonhoeffer's theology and pave a way to the reconsideration of the standard positions which have traditionally been attributed to Bonhoeffer's theology.

I intend to open my contribution with a critical analysis of the primary sources coming from the Finkenwalde period. I will predominantly draw on DBW/E 14, which provides a picture of the theological seminary education in Finkenwalde during the five sessions from April 1935 to September 1937, however, I will take into consideration DBW/E 4, 5 and 15, too. Then, basing myself on the results of this analysis, I will present the main points of Bonhoeffer's theology and compare them with the ideas Bonhoeffer brought up in his prison theology. I would like to conclude my contribution addressing the reasons leading to the distortion of the image of Bonhoeffer's theology, which seem primarily to result from overlooking (or neglecting) the Finkenwalde period. The Finkenwalde period is a vivid demonstration of the fact that Bonhoeffer was not indifferent to the fate of the maturing generation and devoted all of his time to their spiritual and intellectual education, preparing the young seminarians to facing the new times.

**Phiri, Michael** *Stellenbosch University*

## **BONHOEFFER'S SOTERIOLOGY AND THE CHALLENGE OF POVERTY IN MALAWI**

The paper explores how Bonhoeffer's notion of salvation could be employed as a paradigm to address the challenge of poverty in Malawi. The soteriological perspective is preferred, among many other approaches, on two-fold ground: the hamartiological roots of poverty necessitate a soteriological solution and the theme of salvation is of paramount importance in Malawi. Addressing social challenges and dilemmas from the perspective of the doctrine of salvation could produce deep-rooted and lasting effects. Dietrich Bonhoeffer is chosen because of his unique treatment and application of the theme of salvation to the society of his times. He is thoroughly biblical and orthodox – in tandem with patristic and Reformation theology. Moreover, he continues to challenge each generation to take responsible action for the benefit of others and the next generation.

Part 1 of the paper outlines the state, causes and effects of poverty in Malawi. Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world despite being independent since 1964. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) indicates that more than 85% of Malawians are poor. There is chain effect in that the consequences of poverty lead to greater poverty which in turn lead to more intense consequences. Such consequences include, among others, diseases, brain drain and youth emigration to South Africa. Generally, poverty exists at both household and national levels as well as in both rural and urban areas. What could be the implications of the current state of poverty for the coming generation?

Part 2 explores the foundational nature of the theme of salvation in the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Also presented are selected cases of how his theology and approach to sociality were soteriologically influenced. The overall objective of this part is to display how prominent themes in Bonhoeffer like ecclesiology and Christology are built on soteriological foundations. In what way does soteriology function as a pivotal category in Bonhoeffer's theology? What's the nature, agency and means of salvation according to Bonhoeffer?

Part 3 explores how Bonhoeffer's notion of salvation could provide framework for addressing the dehumanizing challenge of poverty in Malawi. The answer to the question of how the next generation could go on living with respect to poverty lies in our embracing of Bonhoeffer's soteriology today. The hamartiological roots of poverty necessitate a soteriological panacea. Ways would be proposed regarding sustainability of the impact for the benefit of the next generation. With Bonhoeffer's soteriology, a bright future in Malawi could be a possibility: without poverty but with sustainable socio-economic development.



The conclusion proposes that addressing the roots of poverty from a soteriological perspective could in turn address other socio-economic challenges in Malawi. The paper attempts to contribute to the general topic of theology and development.

**Puffer, Matthew** *Valparaiso University, USA*

### **CHRIST AS MEDIATOR FOR THE COMING GENERATION: TOWARD A THEOLOGICAL ETHIC OF INTERGENERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Intergenerational responsibility became a central concern in environmental ethics discourse in the wake of the U.N. publication *Our Common Future* and its clarion call to restructure society for 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. In his Christology lectures, Discipleship, and Ethics, as well as in occasional essays, Bonhoeffer develops a theological ethic of responsibility based on the claim that Christ as Mediator is pro me and pro nobis. Rowan Williams (*Christ the Heart of Creation*, 2018) and Steven C. van den Heuvel (*Bonhoeffer's Christocentric Theology and Fundamental Debates in Environmental Ethics*, 2017) have expanded upon these aspects of Bonhoeffer's Christology in relation to creation and environmental ethics. In this essay, I further develop Bonhoeffer's account of Christ as Mediator to examine moral obligations related to future generations and intergenerational justice, with specific attention to the so-called 'non-identity problem' and 'repugnant conclusion'. I argue that Bonhoeffer's identification of Christ as mediator (Mittler) — Christ is at the 'center (Mitte) of human existence, history, and nature' (DBWE 12:324) — affords a theological response to philosophical quandaries about the grounding and specification of our responsibilities to future generations that are left unresolved by ethical theories dependent upon contractarian and reciprocity models.

At the centre and mediator of human existence, history, and nature, Jesus Christ 'stands not only between me and God, he also stands between me and the world, between me and other people and things. He is the mediator not only between God and human persons, but also between person and person, and between person and reality' (DBWE 4:94). By extending this argument about Christ's mediation of present relations to future persons unknown to us but already known to God in Christ, Christ's mediation resolves the 'non-identity problem' and avoids the 'repugnant conclusion'. Bonhoeffer's rejection of any unmediated relation (whether in an 'order of creation' or a *theologia naturalis*) insists simultaneously on the disintegrative epistemic effects of sin and on the binding responsibility of Christ's mediation: 'there is no knowledge of God's gifts without knowledge of the mediator; . . . There is no genuine tie to the given realities of the created world . . . without recognition of the break, which already separates us from the world' (96). It is through Christ the Mediator that we both rightly discern and enact our responsibilities to future generations.

**Radler, Karola** *Stellenbosch University*

### **"DEZISION" AS A MODERN VERSION OF DOCETISM: BONHOEFFER'S DISCLOSURE OF THE HERETIC STRUCTURE OF CARL SCHMITT'S THEORY OF STATE**

The argument I am offering in this paper is to read Bonhoeffer's early 1933 statement that the heresy of *Docetism* had reemerged 'in a different form' as criticism and rejection of Carl Schmitt's ecclesial, but secularized decisionist theory of state. Based on a particular linear understanding of history Schmitt had developed in 1922/23 his method of a 'sociology of juristic concepts'. He theorized that a structural analogy between the juristic spirit of the church and the secular age could provide for a structure of the state that fitted the demands of Modernity. Throughout history the metaphysical image a particular epoch had of the world was of the same structure as that which was immediately understood to be an appropriate form for the political



organization of that age. In his theory's application he praised the institution of the Roman Catholic Church as the heir of Roman jurisprudence and its 'jurisprudential invention' of the office of the Pope. Directly authorized by Christ this human being represents the idea of God on earth and is at the same time deemed to be the sovereign of a state. And using juristic rationalism the Church unified oppositional thoughts in a *complexio oppositorum*. Thus analogically to divinity entering humanity in the office of the Pope - when the idea "becomes human" - the content of a political program becomes personality within the jurisdiction of the office of the sovereign. A representative figure of self-significant personality could overcome the abstraction of content from subject and unify the people in a form (*Gestalt*) and in synchronized identity with the decision, the *Dezision*, that implements the political idea of differentiating between friend and enemy.

For Bonhoeffer instead 'everything depends on Jesus's existence in history.' He offered an alternative understanding of history as a journey from God to God, from the Fall to Christ's reconciling *Stellvertretung*. Based on faith in the Cross as the central focal point of reality he emphasized that every form of a *docetic* 'distinction between idea and appearance' must be rejected. Because *Docetism* turned Christ into an idea that eliminated individuality and personality from Christ's nature this heresy was to be rejected in the Church as well as in other institutional forms. A theory of state that attempted to implement the allegiance to one human being of sole significance and a racial unity presented a *status confessionis* of 'too much law' of the state and racist persecution. Such a theory of state separated with an abstract idea of God divinity from humanity and made it known before revelation and independent of the human element. But Christ's incarnation was not simply an incidental appearance of the godhead in history, but is rather the essence of God's nature. Relevant is not the question of *how* God "becomes human" (*Mensch werden*) but *who* "became human" (*Mensch geworden*) because the former makes room for deifying humanity while the latter emphasizes the One-ness of the Trinity and the once-ness of Christ in history. The focus is not on identity but on Trinity; not on synchronized unity of a people (*gleich-schalten*) but on the wholeness of the human being (*gleich-gestalten*) as it was intended by God. Decisive is not juristic form (*Gestalt*) over jurisdiction and content, revealed by a representative, deified, and self-significant sovereign personality, but God's decision, the theological form (*Gestalt*) over jurisdiction and content that the Trinitarian identity of the God-human Christ revealed in the once-ness of the person of Jesus Christ in history.

**Rayson, Di** *University of Newcastle, Australia*

## **THE JOY OF GROUNDED WISDOM: BONHOEFFER, EARTHLY CHRISTIANITY, AND THE ANTHROPOCENE**

The Anthropocene heralds a period of unprecedented suffering: the greatest forced human migration and loss of life through food and water shortage, loss of habitat, disease, severe weather events, civil unrest—effects which have commenced and threaten the stability of nations, economic collapse and fostering division and political unease (IPCC, 2014). Loss of habitat and climate disruption has also initiated a mass extinction event (Ceballos et al. 2016), the sixth such but the first provoked by the actions of a single species: *Homo sapiens*. Such irrevocable loss of life in our fellow Earthlings forces us to challenge theologies of dominion and the human relationship with nature. This paper discusses Bonhoeffer's contribution to an ecotheological interpretation of 'worldly Christianity' as 'Earthly Christianity' that recognises the particularity of the Anthropocene. Using elements of 'After Ten Years' (DBWE 8, pp. 37-52) it considers the climate crisis, searching for an ethical response that can provide hope and a way of living in a desperate age. "Time is the most precious gift at our disposal" (DBWE 8, p. 37) becomes almost satirical given the urgency of needing to cease burning fossil fuels and prevent further land use changes. However, the Christian imperative for ethical action remains.

Bonhoeffer's contribution to ecotheology has been demonstrated through his reliance on a Christology that recognises the innate sociality of the network of life that is creation (Rayson, 2017; Rasmussen (Rasmussen,

2015). This paper extends such thinking to demonstrate that wisdom is ecologically fostered and that flourishing is nurtured through an ecologically informed relationship with Earth and her creatures: those ‘below’ and most likely to suffer (DBWE 8, p. 52). Drawing on Bonhoeffer’s repeated references to ‘groundedness’ (eg *Creation and Fall*, ‘Thy Kingdom Come’, *Fiction*, ‘After Ten Years’), I assert that a deeper engagement within the biosphere drives human flourishing appropriate to the Anthropocene. Such a move entails understanding ourselves as *Homo cosmicos*: citizens of and responsible for the community of which we are a part.

Contextual, responsible action [*Sachgemäßheit* and *Stellvertretung*] in the face of climate disruption offers an ethical framework for Christian engagement with the age (Rayson 2017). Bonhoeffer contends, furthermore, that joy must be present ‘for a work to be ethically good’ (DBWE 9, p. 382). By paying attention to Bonhoeffer’s references to ‘joy’, a case is built supporting Christian hope in a time of crisis. ‘Where joy abounds it becomes the source of all virtues,’ according to Bonhoeffer (ibid.), beyond even the wisdom revealed by Aristotelian-Thomist ethics (DBWE 8, p. 45). In connecting the ideas of wisdom and joy, I suggest that a grounded wisdom has the effect of both eliciting and centring joy, even in the face of despair. Is it inconceivable that the costly task of responsible action in the Anthropocene has embedded within it, markers for joy that make its restoration a possibility? Is Christian hope, in the Anthropocene, not so much one of eschatological fulfilment, but rather in the joy of engaging fully and responsibly with the Christ-embedded creation?

**Rios, Jeremy** *University of St Andrews, Scotland*

#### **PLASTICITY AND POLITICS: THE LOGIC OF MARTYRDOM AND THE POLITICIZATION OF THE CHURCH, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DIETRICH BONHOEFFER, MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., AND OSCAR ROMERO.**

In 1963 Martin Marty speculated that Bonhoeffer’s appeal lay in his placement as “the dislocated, displaced inhabitant of a secular world.” This liminality has manifested itself in the intervening years in a certain plasticity—Bonhoeffer can be made, and is in fact made, to champion and stand for a variety of causes. But is this plasticity a consequence of something innate in Bonhoeffer’s thinking, or could another metric be at work? This paper suggests that Bonhoeffer—as well as several other 20<sup>th</sup> century figures—has been subjected to what I want to call the Logic of Martyrdom, a process by means of which the church commodifies, then spends, the image of the martyr. This ‘spending,’ in turn, has the potential to operate in the service of a variety of political aims, many of which may not align with the original convictions of the martyr. To argue this case, the paper defines the Logic of Martyrdom and lays out three test cases, concluding with a discussion of the image of the martyr and political action.

The Logic of (Christian) Martyrdom involves a developing, five-stage process between the ecclesia and the individual martyr. In Stage 1, the ecclesia establishes a relationship to the individual (Ego). In Stage 2, the Ego encounters and is captivated by a form of kerygma (here, *a message with a burden to be spoken*) that the Ego witnesses (martyrs) in two directions, both *to the Church*, and *to the World*. In Stage 3, the effect of kerygma, witnessed by the Ego, brings either the ecclesia or the world into sharp conflict with the Ego, resulting in either the death or silencing of the martyr. In Stage 4, the martyrological event is subtly transformed into a currency of the Church, by *sealing* the martyr in his or her testimony, *iconifying* the martyr by converting him or her into an image, and then *commodifying* the martyr as an exchangeable quantity. In Stage 5, the currency of the martyr is finally spent, but at this point a crucial separation exists between the *original testimony* of the martyr, and the *image of the martyr as utilized in the Church*. It is in this way that a given martyr—sealed, iconified, and commodified—can be utilized for political ends within the ecclesia.

The paper then considers three 20<sup>th</sup> century martyrs from within the Logic of Martyrdom: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King Jr., and Oscar Romero. Each figure has been converted to a ‘currency’ utilized by the

Church for political ends, and each exhibits a plasticity (as images) with respect to their image and use in the *political* action of the Church. The paper concludes with an examination and critique of this process.

**Root, Andrew** *Luther Seminary, USA*

## **BONHOEFFER AND THE YOUNGER GENERATION: RESPONDING TO THE AGE OF ANGER**

In mid-January 2019 a teenager in a red “Make America Great Again” hat became the center of a national controversy. He became a poster child for everything that was wrong with America. After more information was released, and cracks began to appear in the conclusive contention that this boy was every stereotype that those on the political and theological left despised, most in these camps doubled down, saying that though the story was more complicated than it first appeared, the boy nevertheless deserved the derision he received. In journalist David Brooks’ New York Times article, unpacking the cultural impact of the incident, he says, “The occurrence had everything that makes the left limbic system seize with pleasure. He was white (boo), male (boo), preppy (double boo), a Trump supporter (infinite boo).” Watching the incident unfold, I was taken back to Bonhoeffer’s radio address, “The Younger Generation’s Conception of the Fuhrer.” In the lecture Bonhoeffer avoids in every way blaming the young, but instead shows how the young can be used as political pawns. In January 2019 this boy was used by both the left and right in their gladiator battles over identity politics. There was little sense that this boy was in some way our own, or a human being at all. Pan-kaj Mishra in his book *Age of Anger*, argues with great erudition that modernity always creates a group who is mobilized by *ressentiment* (a narrative of loss, which blames others, living out of a story of injury and revenge-seeking). Against the backdrop of mid-January 2019, it is not hard to see how particularly white middle class boys of privilege (who, not coincidentally, have been every American school shooter) could be (are being) radicalized by the far right through narratives of *ressentiment*. Such Fuhrers will use incidents just like those in January to tell these boys that they have had *their* America taken from them and therefore they must fight to take it back. This paper will provide a cultural analysis, before turning to Bonhoeffer’s radio address and his direct ministry to young people. The paper will explore how Bonhoeffer never blames the young—even those taken into the *ressentiment* stories of the SS—for these actions. But rather, the whole of society—and particularly those in power—had dehumanized, and therefore misused, the young. Like Archbishop Tutu, Bonhoeffer would put not particular boys on trial, but the whole system. Following this, the paper will take us deeply into the most important moment of societal change, which, though ripe for *ressentiment*, avoided conceding to it through a deep theological commitment that has many similarities to Bonhoeffer’s thought. This is Archbishop Tutu’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission. By placing Bonhoeffer in conversation with Tutu, this paper will present a way of defusing the *ressentiment* narrative.

**Scheffler, Eben** *University of South Africa*

## **DIETRICH BONHOEFFER AND THE HISTORICAL JESUS**

This contribution probes to what extent the earthly Jesus played a role in the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The question is asked whether Bonhoeffer pays explicit attention to the “scientific” quest for the historical Jesus (as summarised for instance by Albert Schweitzer) and whether his theology and ethics was directly influenced by such knowledge. It further asks the question to what extent his ethics and theology was influenced “implicitly” or “unconsciously by the Jesus of history or whether it was rather inspired by “the Bible in general” or other influential Christian authors (e.g. Thomas à Kempis).

**Schulze, Alexander** *Friedensau Adventist University, Germany*

**“DIE TAGE IN ZINGST ... WAREN UNGESTÖRT SCHÖN.” – 85 JAHRE NACH DEN ANFÄNGEN DES PREDIGERSEMINARS AUF DEM ZINGSTHOF [BONHOEFFER AND ZINGST – 85 YEARS LATER]**

Im Gegensatz zu vielen anderen, der für das Leben und Wirken Dietrich Bonhoeffers bedeutsamen Orte, ist der Zingsthof erhalten geblieben. 85 Jahre nach dem Predigerseminar der Bekenntenden Kirche auf dem Darß fasziniert, was hier zuerst gedacht, ausgesprochen und praktiziert wurde, noch heute.

Fokus des Referats soll keine verklärte Rückschau und kein Ausrufen eines Wallfahrtsortes sein, sondern die kritische Würdigung dieser vergleichsweise kurzen, jedoch nachhaltig prägenden Zeit im Frühjahr 1935 für die Seminaristen und nicht zuletzt für Bonhoeffer selbst. Dazu greift das Referat Unterthema 3: “Bonhoeffer and the question of tradition. How are faith and religious traditions transmitted and/or betrayed?” auf und untersucht anhand von Zeitzeugnissen, welchen nicht nur spirituellen Praktiken auf dem Zingsthof Bedeutung beigemessen und was neu eingeordnet bzw. aufgegeben wurde. Darüber hinaus wird in einem zweiten Schritt der Versuch einer Gegenwartsbestimmung gemeinsam gelebter Spiritualität unternommen, die sich den Herausforderungen Generation, Herkunft und Konfession nicht als trennenden, sondern als verbindenden Größen stellen möchte.

**Sell, Wilhelm** *Lutheran School of Theology in São Leopoldo, Brazil*

**DIETRICH BONHOEFFER BEFORE THE GERMAN NATIONALISM OF THE THIRD REICH: ANALYSIS AND THEOLOGICAL IMPULSES FROM CREATION AND FALL TO CONTEMPORANEITY**

Nationalism unfolds in the prejudice of considering the nation itself better than others. It has its origin in the idea that some deity would have chosen a people, a certain nation, as elected and, therefore, would be above others. In this way, the marginalization, exclusion, and even elimination of those considered inferior are justified. Examples of nationalism we find in the history of the Hebrews as an elected people; in the history of Japan, which regarded the Emperor as the Son of the Sun, symbolizing the concrete bond between the people and the divinity; in Germany already during the construction of the German Empire by Otto von Bismarck, but mainly in the period after the First War, with the Third Reich of Adolf Hitler. However, the evil of the existence of nationalism is not confined in the past. Nowadays, even if different, it can be perceived in the pretensions of superiority of some developed countries, especially the Great powers, which easily result in expansionist and aggressive economic policies with the clear conception of the inferiority of other nations and people, which unfolds development of xenophobia and racism.

Given this reality, the proposal of this paper is to present theological perspectives, from the lectures of Genesis 1-3 of Bonhoeffer presented at the University of Berlin during the winter semester of 1932/1933 (which resulted in the work *Creation and Fall*) for the evangelical engagement in defense of the other, of the excluded and marginalized, in the face of contemporary nationalism. Joining God's revelation to concrete reality from an uninterrupted interpretation of the social situation, based on Scripture-based Christian faith, Bonhoeffer dealt with the *völkisch* movement, the ethnic-nationalist movement with its romantic and folkloric vision of supremacy, in an engaged and courageous evangelical way. At the time of his lectures, Bonhoeffer emphasized the lordship of Christ, the God made human, who is in the *middle*, between the *beginning* and the *end*, that is, spheres of reality that belong to God, but for which the humanity in the *middle*, in contradiction, turns proudly against. Thus, trying to cover up its “nakedness”, caused by not being “clothed by, in and under God,” the hu-

manity manifests its guilt in its endeavor to clothe itself with what is at its disposal, “fig leaves.” The humanity becomes connoisseur of good and evil, however, its knowledge adds to its loss, since it is to know without God and, in the rupture caused, it generated disconnection with itself and with the other.

But the pride drives the humanity forward. As a *sicut deus*, the humanity is capable of creating structurally religious nationalist movements, in the anxiety of justifying its existence and installing an apparent “good” in the same pious language as the “serpent.” These movements sometimes take on unimaginable proportions and manifest themselves concretely when the next is placed on the margins, liable to exclusion and death. It is the tip of the iceberg that reveals the human inability to sprout genuine life from itself as the *centre*. It is in this direction that Bonhoeffer then presents Christ, the God who presents Godself in the *middle* as the *centre*, source of life, where, through *conformation*, comes forgiveness, life and hope, bursting with signs of his Kingdom of justice and peace.

**Simon, Christiane** *Stellenbosch University*

### **‘CHRISTIAN FREEDOM IN A “WORLD COME OF AGE” – BONHOEFFER IN CONVERSATION WITH LUTHER’**

In this paper I would like to show that freedom in and through Christ – the notion brought to prominence by Luther and taken up by Bonhoeffer – applied on an individual as well as on a societal level is (still) one of the key concepts for understanding what Christian faith is all about and for engaging in dialogue with the world of today. The specific focus will be on the strong parallels between Luther and Bonhoeffer in terms of their understanding of the human person and of Christ-related and Christ-mediated freedom. In agreement with Michael DeJonge, I argue that Bonhoeffer was deeply influenced by Luther’s theological reasoning and his spiritual approach and that he developed his own views in constant conversation with the Reformer.

Within the introduction I will try to specify ‘Christian freedom’ in demarcation from other more ‘general’ current freedom notions in a world that no longer needs the “working hypothesis” of God. After selecting a few key aspects of Luther’s understanding of Christian freedom, I will then set out some of the corresponding concepts in Bonhoeffer’s thinking before pointing out the analogies between the two approaches. The relationship between human and divine freedom, the understanding of humanity in connection with the notions of justification and redemption, responsibility and commitment will be addressed in this context. As a further step I will look at Luther and Bonhoeffer’s understanding of the application of this freedom in the wider context of society and at the relationship between Church and State. To this end, I will present a source-based account of Luther’s much misunderstood and vilified two-kingdoms-thinking and then expand Bonhoeffer’s appropriation and modification of it. In conclusion I aim to illustrate in which way Bonhoeffer and Luther’s notions of freedom are still relevant in the current challenges and how their considerations on freedom in society can be useful for a dialogue with Non-Christians.

**Tarassenko, Joanna** *Cambridge University, United Kingdom*

### **SPIRITUAL RESONANCE: POLYPHONY AND PNEUMATOLOGY IN DIETRICH BONHOEFFER**

This paper presents a pneumatological reading of Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s appeal to the phenomenon of musical resonance through his use of the metaphor of ‘polyphony’ and related musical casts of mind. In so doing, it provides an alternative reading of Bonhoeffer’s ‘late theology’ by establishing a connection between *Letters and Papers from Prison* and *Ethics* through his use of musical metaphors. I argue that the limitations of visual-spatial metaphors, over which Bonhoeffer laments in *Ethics*, are overcome by his discovery of ‘polyphony’



in *Letters and Papers from Prison* as a metaphor which conceptualises God and the world operating in a single realm or space. 'Polyphony' is seen to be a potent metaphor for illuminating the Spirit's work as that which enables unity, distinction, and dynamic relationality between God and the world in the church. This musico-pneumatology illumines our understanding of the relationship between Bonhoeffer's Christology and ecclesiology.

Firstly, 'polyphony' functions as a metaphor for Bonhoeffer's Christology and his ecclesiology. That is, the human and divine natures in the polyphonic Christ each retain their full integrity and distinction whilst also being in a dynamic relationship in which the finite is enabled by the infinite. Similarly, the polyphonic church exists in full relationship with God and the world, a relationship in which the world retains its integrity and is also enabled by God through the church. Secondly, understanding 'polyphony' as a metaphor for the Spirit's work in each of these relationships provides conceptual clarity (maintaining the distinctiveness of the parts in relationship), challenges narrow Christological interpretations of Bonhoeffer's use of the term and expands interpretations which see the potential of 'polyphony' to be a vehicle for a pneumatology. This presses beyond the explicit references to the Holy Spirit in Bonhoeffer whilst maintaining a Christological centre, adumbrating a pneumatology which strengthens his emphasis on a Chalcedonian Christology and provides a Trinitarian backstory to this.

For the church today, understanding 'polyphony' and related musical casts of mind as metaphors for the work of the Spirit—musico-pneumatology—helps us to reimagine the church's relationship with the world as a nonterritorial and noncompetitive one. In particular, musical imagery lends itself to thinking of the spiritual reality of the church.

By appealing to the phenomenon of musical resonance in which musical voices played simultaneously can be heard distinctly and also enlarge the sound of each other, we can better imagine unseen spiritual realities. For instance, we can conceptualise the physical, though invisible, presence of Christ in the church—and through the church, in the world—as one which exists without compromising the integrity of the finite creation or human freedom, just as two melodies can play together without either compromising the other. Thus, the concept of 'polyphony' becomes a kind of heuristic device for the discernment of the guidance of the Holy Spirit as the one who creates 'resonance' with God and the world, in Christ and through the Church.

**Taylor, Derek** *Whitworth University, USA*

## **ON GIVING UP CONTROL IN THE COMING GENERATION: AN ATTEMPT TO DE-COLONIZE BONHOEFFER**

The basic question animating this paper is whether Bonhoeffer's theology can speak to a global church in a post-colonial world. By directing our attention to his concern for "the coming generation," the theme of our gathering provides a unique entryway into this question. In "After Ten Years" Bonhoeffer reflects on the task of taking "responsibility for the course of history" in order to create a world in which future generations can go on living. While much scholarly reflection has focused on the challenge of ethical responsibility and the necessity of accepting guilt in the face of radical injustice, I want to interrogate the more fundamental assumption that the church ought to be concerned with controlling history. In order to use Bonhoeffer's theology today we must grapple with the fact that we have an option that wasn't available to him—the option of imagining a world beyond colonialism and western hegemony.

Bonhoeffer's vision of control becomes especially acute when he employs the Old Testament motif of exile to map his experience of history. He believes that the rise of National Socialism and the disintegration of bourgeois cultural values had thrust the church into exile. It had lost control of the land. He therefore longs for



a time when exile will end and cultural stability will be reestablished. This longing becomes especially evident when he reflects on the task of preserving the historical heritage of the west (*Abendland*). Although Bonhoeffer's mature works don't display the overt *Lebensraum* thinking evident in some of his youthful writings, we nevertheless must consider the ways in which his vision of historical control echoes the German colonial imagination. We must consider, in other words, the extent to which Bonhoeffer's theological imagination remains trapped within a certain form of western exceptionalism. And we must therefore consider the extent to which the gospel is bound to a cultural project.

North American indigenous theologians are uniquely situated to diagnose this tendency. On the one hand, Bonhoeffer's theology of the *Abendland* perfectly represents the western penchant for cultural imposition that indigenous thinkers must reject. Yet on the other hand, indigenous theology holds open a constructive possibility. By distinguishing between temporal and spatial depictions of reality, indigenous theology provides a lens that allows us to identify two competing "land ideologies" in Bonhoeffer's imagination. This dual tendency becomes evident when we closely examine his use of the exile motif. While he indeed speaks of exile in historical terms (i.e., he looks to a literal time in history when exile will end), he can also speak of exile in eschatological terms (i.e., the church lives in exile until God's kingdom comes). These two visions of exile—these two land ideologies—represent two different postures of Christian life. When exile is construed historically, the gospel remains bound to a larger project of cultural imposition. But when exile is construed eschatologically, the church is disentangled from totalizing historical projects and thereby freed to embody forms of missional faithfulness that harmonize with the contours of its place.

**Thomas, Günter** *Ruhr-University of Bochum, Germany*

### **"... (T)HE ONE REALM OF THE CHRIST-REALITY". A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF A POWERFUL THEOLOGICAL INSIGHT.**

The paper will critically examine Dietrich Bonhoeffer's far-reaching and highly influential theological insight: "The one realm of the Christ-reality" (*Ethics*, DBWE 6, Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005, 58). This theme lies at the center of Bonhoeffer's Christology and is a cornerstone of his political theology and ethics. Bonhoeffer convincingly rejects both simplified and famous models of the two spheres and two kingdoms of God. Several of today's theologians consider this insight Bonhoeffer's to be essential for their project of a Public Theology.

At the same time, however, it is necessary to assess those problems, which do not disappear with rejecting the wrong solution of the classical doctrine of the two kingdoms. At least two closely connected questions represent – metaphorically speaking – the still powerful hot magma underneath these doctrines: How can we distinguish inside the one realm of Christ the Church and surrounding 'worldly world'? And: How can we distinguish in this 'worldly world' beyond the Church between structures and processes of manifest sinfulness and destruction on the one side and on the other side still agonistically structured structures and processes which nevertheless enable the enhancement of individual and communal life? The latter structures and processes neither represent redemption or the kingdom of God, nor are they simply to reject as representations of sinfulness and evil. And yet, they should be vital for the flourishing of a good and just life.

Without this second distinction, the Churches are facing two – only seemingly opposite – temptations: Either to retreat from the 'worldly world' of politics or to over-moralize the space of politics and hence, as a matter of fact, deny the worldliness of the world of politics.

Arguing 'with Bonhoeffer against Bonhoeffer,' the paper will propose a dynamic understanding of Christ, which takes the worldliness of the world serious and argues for distinctions in Christ's presence and absence. Instead of reasoning in the framework of a theology of creation (as it was done in classical two kingdom doctrines), the presentation will explore the conceptual space between the various forms of Christ's presence

and the absence of the final redemption. The goal of this dogmatic adventure is a christologically grounded, transformative, and hopeful ethical realism.

**Thyssen, Ashwin** *Stellenbosch University*

## **QUEERING BONHOEFFER'S ECCLESIOLOGY: SAINTS LIVING TOGETHER IN COMMUNION**

The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer has and continues to exercise an influential command over the religious imagination of many Christians. In a quite profound manner, Bonhoeffer's ecclesiological thought has deepened church life throughout the world, not least in South Africa. Given this, a study into his ecclesiology may be worthwhile in our time.

Yet, an investigation into Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology may have to use a hermeneutical lens that seems strange. Thus, this paper uses queer theory and queer theology as hermeneutic that explores the contours of his theology and ecclesiology. Primarily, attention is afforded to the development of such a queering of the church in his works *Sanctorum Communio* and *Life Together*. It is argued that already in these publications Bonhoeffer presents the church as a community that is altogether strange, truly wholly queer.

Using the insights and impetus of queer theory and queer theology, the paper sets out to address three questions. First, how may a queering hermeneutic inform and enrich Bonhoeffer's theology? As such, attention will be afforded to his experience as an eccentric figure in the German Lutheran society of his time.

Second, in which ways do a queering of Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology present the church as Christ existing in community? Most central to his entire ecclesiological understanding was the assertion that the church is the corpus Christi (that is, body of Christ) insofar as it exists as a community of sinners and saints. Thus, focus will be given to the church as a community that exists for others who are rendered queer by society.

Third, what has the reception of Bonhoeffer's theology been in South Africa, and how does this present the case for a queering its ecclesiological life? Various South African theologians found Bonhoeffer to be a useful theological resource in the fight against apartheid. This third question, then, seeks to chart the contribution of those theologians inspired by Bonhoeffer's ecclesiological vision by considering their activist work in relation to people who are LGBTI+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and sexual minorities).

Most fundamentally, then, this paper makes no attempt to argue for a hagiographic depiction of Bonhoeffer as queer. Rather, it argues that the reception of Bonhoeffer may be considered queer; given that it seeks to present the church as Christ who exists for others.

**Trowbridge, Kyle** *Christian Theological Seminary, Indiana*

## **POLITICAL THEOLOGY ON CURSED GROUND; OR, TOWARDS A POLITICAL THEOLOGY OF FEAR: A CONVERSATION BETWEEN DIETRICH BONHOEFFER AND JUDITH SHKLAR**

A growing body of research has begun to examine Dietrich Bonhoeffer's contributions to political theology. This paper offers a modest account of Bonhoeffer's political theology to that end, specifically focusing on the tumultuous years of 1932-1933. As Bonhoeffer described it, it was an age of "political extremes against political extremes, fanaticized against fanaticized, false gods against false gods," which eventually saw the rise of Adolph Hitler into the Chancellorship of Germany.

To unpack Bonhoeffer's political theology, we need to understand his view of the state. Two doctrinal foci make up the logic of Bonhoeffer's account of the state: Christology and hamartiology. This paper will focus primarily on the latter. Bonhoeffer's deep hamartiological focus (or, the "curse" he talks about throughout this period) anchors his political theology, formulates Bonhoeffer's response to the growing totalitarian threat of the Nazi state, and suggests how the church's witness checks and contains the state in extraordinary circumstances.

What Bonhoeffer might have missed and did not develop is a political theology that's attuned to the ordinary accounts of state violence. To answer the challenge of this conference, along with Bonhoeffer's own challenge, "how is the next generation to go on living?" it is critical for political theologians to not only deal with extraordinary circumstances of a totalitarian threat. It is critical, too, to diagnose and consider the very ordinary occurrence of state-sanctioned violence in the world. The paper argues that Christian political theologians might need to move beyond Bonhoeffer on this question and follow political theorist Judith Shklar. Shklar's work in the late 80s and 90s pivots around the concern of state violence and cruelty. Shklar argued that political theorists should put cruelty first, and later developed what she would style the "Liberalism of Fear." In other words, political theologians should political cruelty from the extraordinary to the ordinary and place political cruelty first among the questions they address.

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## **AND YOU WILL KNOW THE PAST, AND THE PAST WILL SET YOU FREE? BONHOEFFER'S CONFESSIONAL TRUTH-TELLING**

The contextual problems of truth-telling faced by Dietrich Bonhoeffer in Nazi Germany compelled him, true to his theological proclivity for embodied, relational theology, to bear witness to the truth. This witness has left us with theological contours that can be reconsidered from new perspectives. Bonhoeffer's hermeneutical question of what it means to tell the truth does not take the position that the truth that needs to be told is something obvious or clear, and that all that is required is the moral courage to speak it. He rather poses that it is something that needs to be discerned or learned. I consider how a "coming generation" of white Christians in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa can reconsider truth-telling as responsible ethical embodiment; contextual and relational faith that questions social location and identity in post-1994 South Africa.

**Van der Westhuizen, Henco** *University of the Free State*

## **BONHOEFFER IN SOUTH AFRICA?**

It has often been noted that the theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer have had a definite impact on the way many theologians responded to realities in South Africa – particularly before, but also after 1994. This article traces the reception of Bonhoeffer in South Africa, asking how theologians drew from his thought in search for a response to the question, inter alia, of 'how a coming generation is to go on living'. This is particularly interesting because of the shifts that took place after 1994. It will, thus, be asked how the reception of Bonhoeffer – that, of course, should not be over interpreted, as if he was the only significant theological influence – at least in a way led to the coming generation's living.

The following works, which will be critically interpreted in their particular contexts and in light of their very particular influence in South Africa, will be discussed: John De Gruchy's unpublished *The dynamic structure of the church. An exposition and comparative analysis of the Ecclesiologies of Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, and an interpretation based on this exposition and analysis of the basic principles which should determine the

structure of the church in our situation today (1972); Johan Botha's *Skuldbelydenis en plaasbekleding: 'n Sistematiese-Teologiese ondersoek na die rol van die Skuldvraag in die denke en praxis van Dietrich Bonhoeffer tussen die jare 1924-1945* (1989), Carl Anthonissen's *Die geloofwaardigheid van die kerk in die teologie van Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (1993); and *Discipleship as transformation? Towards a theology of transformation* (1994), by Russel Botman. In addition, it will look at the work, for example, of Robert Vosloo, Nico Koopman, and, more recently, Patrick Dunn. It will, thus, be asked how different generations received the theologies of previous generations taking Bonhoeffer seriously, how they responded to the question of the coming generations anew, in light of what they received.

Although Bonhoeffer's reception in South Africa have been traced before (for example, by the Bonhoeffer scholars De Gruchy and Vosloo), and although it has been argued, for example, that a responsible historical hermeneutic when dealing with Bonhoeffer in South Africa asks that the situatedness of Bonhoeffer, the reader of Bonhoeffer, as well as the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of different readings within this differentiated situatedness are taken into account, a detailed analysis of the in-depth research done in different periods in South Africa – that of Apartheid, transition to democracy, and democracy – have not been dealt with adequately. In light of this in depth reading of Bonhoeffer's reception history in South Africa, the question of the reception of Bonhoeffer in South Africa today will be asked anew – specifically, it will be asked how a coming generation is to go on living.

In light thereof the question of reading Bonhoeffer in South Africa today will be asked anew – specifically, how we might respond to the question of the calling of the church in times of polarizations, that is, particularly also the polarizations in the South Africa after 1994.

### **Van Tilburg, Aad** *Dutch Bonhoeffer Society*

#### **RESPONSIBILITY WITH RESPECT TO POWER IMBALANCES IN VALUE CHAINS WITH BONHOEFFER'S ETHICS AS A REFERENCE**

Food-producing family farms around the world experience the consequences of fierce competition among supermarkets. Low consumer prices usually imply low farm gate prices. A value chain of a product or service connects primary producers with consumers. Producers, processors, traders and brokers aim to add value to a product. The distribution of power among successive stages in the channel affects the financial compensation which participants obtain. Small-scale producers in food chains who are not engaged in collective action tend to be victim of extreme demands for efficiency by supermarket chains. Individually operating small-scale producers in market-driven value chains are a weak party within value chains implying low rural incomes, a lack of adequate health care and low participation rates in education. Mission-driven value chains represent institutions, norms and values that stimulate collective action of small-scale farm households and offer benefits to their communities which results in better prospects for present and future generations.

My question is what responsible action – in the sense of Bonhoeffer's *Ethics* – may mean for decision-makers in value chains. Responsibility implies that the Christian responds to the Word of God addressed to him in Jesus Christ. Bonhoeffer defined the structure of responsible action in terms of *freedom* in decision-making; *guilt* by taking decisions with an unknown outcome and putting the outcome into God's hands; *vicarious representative action* ("deputyship", "Stellvertretung") implying that one is willing to suffer to liberate others from misery; and *correspondence with reality* implying that one looks at the world from the perspective of the weakest, those who suffer, or the oppressed.

Is responsibility something that arises at the edges of life, like in the case of Bonhoeffer, or can it also be something that is part of the structure of Christian life every day? Responsible action in a more ordinary form focuses on the four divine mandates which address the society in the essential structures of human life. Bonhoeffer defined divine mandates, including labour, as the legitimation and warrant for the execution of a divine commandment by an earthly agent. The bearers of a mandate act as representatives of God.

What does responsibility - according to Bonhoeffer's Ethics - mean for decision-makers in a value chain? To this end, the following criteria have been selected: i) Vicarious representative action: Put oneself in someone's other's position. What does this mean for decision-makers? ii) Reality: To what extent do decision-makers balance the interests of the various participants in the value chain? iii) Freedom: Are decisions in the value chain made according to predetermined principles or primarily in the interest of the participants? iv) Guilt: Do decision-makers dare to accept guilt for the consequences of their decisions?

These concepts will be used in the discussion of two selected case studies concerning a Nile Perch chain originating in Kenya and a Rooibos tea chain originating in South Africa..

**Van 't Slot, Edward** *Groningen University, The Netherlands*

## **THE YOUNG BERLIN YOUTH-PASTOR ON BEING CHURCH (1932)**

When the 25-year old Dietrich Bonhoeffer became a Berlin pastor for the first time, by the end of 1931, the Berlin church was in a state which may show striking resemblances to the state our 21<sup>st</sup> century churches are wrestling with. There was no self-evident reason at all for many an official church member, to feel a real connection with the church one officially belonged to. In Wedding, the Berlin suburb Bonhoeffer was sent to, unemployment rates were running enormously high, and hence, poverty, poor education, and societal indifference or political left- and right-wing extremities were very common – while, to the view of local citizens, the local Zionskirche may have had to offer no answer at all to the most urgent societal questions.

The young Bonhoeffer had only recently returned from his exchange-year in the United States. He had seen all kinds of church-forms over there, and he was considerably impressed especially by the Afro-American congregations he had visited there. His feeling for the urgency of (a Christian answer) to ethical questions had been awakened. So, the young doctor who started working in the Zionskirche was not quite the same theologian as the brilliant student who wrote his first book on the *Sanctorum Communio* (1927). His American experiences and his troubles and joys in and around the Zionskirche urged him to think in new ways about what it means to be the church – or at least: to rethink the concepts of his doctoral dissertation in a new light. In his lectures as private university teacher, he developed a radical new view on the place of the church in society. Bonhoeffer's own manuscript has – regrettably – been lost. There are, however, lecture notes by two of his students, Hanns Ruppel and Wolf-Dieter Zimmermann. In DBWE II they can be found. Bonhoeffer is highly critical about a middle-class-church which chooses its own 'place' in society, and postulates that it is the church's essence to be on any spot where God will situate church. Bonhoeffer offers new insights, even compared to his rich doctoral dissertation.

As such, this much-neglected ecclesiological text of Bonhoeffer's is highly actual; and it deserves new attention in our own era, and in our thinking about the future of the church.

Recently, I published a new reconstruction of Bonhoeffer's lectures in Dutch (see <https://www.boeken-centrum.nl/de-levende-kerk>). In my paper, I would like to draft the new and urgent insights that might be learned from the young Bonhoeffer's lectures. In my Dutch reconstruction, I already drafted what the Bonhoefferian urgency might look like in our Dutch context. It would be very interesting to discuss the same

issue in an international context. In my paper, I would also sketch out how an English reconstruction of these lectures might look like.

**Verhagen, Koert** *University of St Andrews, Scotland*

## **MAKING THE FUTURE PRESENT: THE CHURCH'S TEMPORALITY AND THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT**

As anxious questions regarding the future of the church becomes increasingly common place— especially in the west—all too often the proffered answers depend on speculative prediction. Often, the natural impulse is to extrapolate from the present situation, positing a series of imagined steps which will unfold between now and an ambiguous future. However, the problem with such an approach is that the future that is posited will inevitably reflect the confidence and/or anxiety of the present. Now, to be sure, there is a place for prophetic witness when it comes to critiquing and building up the church for the next generation. Indeed, Bonhoeffer's return from the USA in 1939 and enigmatic theological formulations in *Letters and Papers from Prison* all spring from the urgent need he felt to concretely contribute to the future of Germany and the German church after the war. Yet, prophetic witness based on the penultimate must be held in dialectical tension with the word of the ultimate which comes from the future and determines the present. To that end, the basic thesis of my paper is that a church of the future, fundamentally, is a church that allows the word of the Spirit to determine the present through it bearing witness to Christ. Only when the church is attentive to the Spirit as the interpreter of its temporal situation, will genuinely prophetic witness arise.

My argument will, then, unfold in three parts. First, I shall look at the manner in which Bonhoeffer redefines the present according to the witness of the Spirit in his Finkenwalde lectures on "Contemporizing New Testament Texts." Although, his concern in these lectures is primary hermeneutical, I shall suggest that this vision for the Spirit's work carries through into Discipleship, where the Spirit plays a similar role in reconfiguring and interpreting the present by binding the disciple to Christ. In the second section, then, I shall turn to Bonhoeffer's Ethics manuscript, "Ultimate and Penultimate Things," in order to show that in binding the church to Christ's body, the Spirit defines the present according to the eschatological reconciliation between God and the world which has taken place in Christ. In other words, the Spirit defines the present according to a future which Christ graciously makes present. However, insofar as the penultimate maintains its integrity the church is neither expunged of its guilt for the past, nor its responsibility of the future. Rather, it lives from the *Christuswirklichkeit*, under the yoke of Christ, bearing the guilt of the past in repentance and prophetically preparing for the future. In conclusion, then, I shall suggest that proper preparation for the future of the church must begin with attentiveness to the Spirit who makes the future present. Only then can the church courageously bear its guilt for the past through repentance and concretely prepare for the future in a prophetic manner.

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## **IS GOD BRAZILIAN? A COUNTRY, A MOVIE AND BONHOEFFER'S ETHICS**

This paper has as its point of departure the present political situation in Brazil. Strong religious support and religious overtones have brought Jair Messias Bolsonaro into the presidency. His motto is "Brazil above everything, God above all people". The country is laden with religious significance – and with the task to exterminate "communism" and "socialism", supposedly atheistic – and "God" the guarantee of a highly conservative morality that can be combined with a liberal economy and with the extermination of "bandits" by the police or "good citizens". The first part of this paper consists, thus, in a contextualization and critical interpretation of religion and politics in today's Brazil.



On a second note, the paper recalls that the idea that “God is Brazilian” is commonly – and differently from the idea presented initially – used with a smile and a good dose of irony. The movie “God is Brazilian” (directed by Cacá Diegues, Brazil 2003) gives a great number of hints asking for theological reflection with a special focus on ethics. Based on João Ubaldo Ribeiro’s (1941-2014) short text called “The Saint that didn’t believe in God” (1991), the film counts God’s passage through North-eastern Brazil looking for a substitute to have some holidays from all the pleas that come daily to God’s ear. Morally questionable moments abound as life is full of ambiguities. Unfitting candidates abound, but there is only one person adequate as substitute, a person living in solidarity among indigenous people. The problem is he is an atheist and has no desire whatsoever to substitute God. His project is to promote humanity. As he cannot be convinced to rethink his position, God returns to heaven without holidays – leaving, nonetheless, people transformed as a rogue and a prostitute find true love.

This resounds with Bonhoeffer’s poem “Christians and heathens”, from 1944. The Brazilian context as depicted in the Brazilian movie might be less dramatic than was Bonhoeffer’s in 1944, and yet suffering abounds in various forms in that reality where precariousness and death are, for many, a daily experience. As in Bonhoeffer’s poem, not the most “religious” is the real Christian, but the one that stands by God present in those who suffer, in the midst of the ambiguity of the penultimate. For Bonhoeffer, God is not a *deus ex machina* just to fill in the gaps left by humans, but a God who is effective right in the centre and indeed the entirety of life – through representation. While this gives a great responsibility to believers in their discipleship, which can imply risk for themselves as they resist the powers in place, they exercise it in the conscience of living under the promise of the ultimate in the midst of the penultimate. The Christian’s task is to live a “profound this-worldliness”. And precisely by doing so, “we throw ourselves completely into the arms of God, taking seriously, not our own sufferings, but those of God in the world – watching with Christ in Gethsemane.” This is, for Bonhoeffer, faith, and metanoia, making people human and Christian: participating in the sufferings of God in secular life, in opposition to a totalizing, religiously overloaded political project.

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## **TRUTH AND JUSTICE SEEKING COMMUNITY. DIETRICH BONHOEFFER’S EARLY ECUMENICAL ETHICS AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR OUR TIME**

“Truth and justice seeking community. Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s early ecumenical ethics and its significance for our time.” – In one of his early speeches at a peace conference within the ecumenical movement in 1932 Dietrich Bonhoeffer pointed out the principle need for ongoing theological reflection of the ecumenical movement as Church in Jesus Christ in order to be able to deploy the ethics of the Church on this fundament. Without theological reasoning the Church exposes itself to and is depended on political fluctuation and power struggles. In Bonhoeffer’s view the Church is a truth and justice seeking community in Jesus Christ. Truth and justice are the fundamentals of the community founded on God’s peace. Bonhoeffer’s early reflections on ecumenical theology and ethics provide instruments to discern the signs of time which can help to respond to rising nationalism, populism and racism in our current time. In deploying Bonhoeffer’s early ethical reflections which are based in his complex ecclesiology this proposed paper seeks to outline the significance of his thoughts for our time and the future of the Church.

**Wolff, Michelle** *Augustana College, USA*

## **COLLECTIVE ACTS OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE: HOW KARL BONHOEFFER'S MEDICAL ETHICS & DIETRICH BONHOEFFER'S POLITICAL THEOLOGY MUTUALLY INFORMED ONE ANOTHER**

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's confrontation of the Nazi regime represents to many Christian theologians and ethicists a welcome model for religious resistance to unjust systems. The influence of father Karl Bonhoeffer's medical ethics on son Dietrich Bonhoeffer's political theology is the focus of this paper. During his eminent career as a psychiatrist at the University of Berlin and as head of the psychiatric and neurological department of the Charité hospital, Karl Bonhoeffer (1868-1948) developed a remarkable medical ethic rooted in his personal and political experiences of trauma—including responding to the Spanish flu and having witnessed Nazi soldiers beat a suspected communist to death in his apartment. Karl Bonhoeffer was hardly enthused that his son Dietrich pursued the pastorate and theological education, however father and son found common ground in their opposition to Adolf Hitler. Prior to their overt collaboration towards the end of Dietrich's life, I argue that Dietrich Bonhoeffer's political theology and social ethics bear traces of his father's medical ethics. Namely, Karl Bonhoeffer's advocacy for persons with mental illness was not unlike Dietrich Bonhoeffer's theology of "the proximity of the crucified one to the invalid." Father and son had different spheres of influence, one inside and the other outside of the church, yet were able to mutually inform one another's vocation. Their life together demonstrates the possibility of broader social impact when community leaders and religious leaders mutually inform one another prior to collective acts of civil disobedience. Stoking hope in the midst of crisis requires a broader vision of life together—one that is ecumenical and interfaith, perhaps born of trauma but necessarily interdependent.

**Wüstenberg, Ralf** *University of Flensburg, Germany*

## **"SCARRING OVER OF PAST GUILT" – BONHOEFFER'S IMPACT ON A RESPONSIBLE ENGAGEMENT WITH THE POST-APARTHEID PAST**

In his ethic fragment "Guilt, Justification, Renewal", Bonhoeffer argues that guilt can scar over ("Vernarbung von Schuld"). Bonhoeffer distinguishes the idea of "scarring over of political guilt" from the "forgiveness" that "Jesus Christ gives to the believer". It will argue that his concept of "scarring over the past guilt" resembles in the transitional justice discourse as "Vergangenheitsbewältigung", "dealing with the past" or "political reconciliation". In my paper, I will contextualize Bonhoeffer's very compact argument and draw conclusions.

I will contextualize his opinion that "in the historical conflict of the nations... something like forgiveness takes place" though such forgiveness "is only a weak shadow of the forgiveness that Jesus Christ gives to the believer." For forgiveness in its political dimension, Bonhoeffer claims: "Not all wounds that were made can be healed, but it is crucial that no further wounds be inflicted." As a condition of such political or "intra-historical forgiveness" remains "the scarring over the guilt, in that justice emerges out of violence, order out of arbitrariness order, peace out of war. Where this does not happen .... there can certainly be no talk of such forgiveness."

I will conclude by drawing three impulses upon Bonhoeffer's argument, namely, first, the *preciousness of the Christian concept of forgiveness*. According to Bonhoeffer, forgiveness does not mean a gradual healing process, but the "complete break with guilt and a new beginning (...), which is given by the forgiveness of sin." With clear differentiation, his conception hinders any strategic abuse of forgiveness in politics. Second, *the appreciation of what is politically possible*. According to Bonhoeffer, the contrast between "intra-historical" forgiveness

and the forgiveness that Christ gives the believers can lead to the appreciation of what is politically possible. In other words, can and may more politically be expected than that “justice emerges out of violence, order out of arbitrariness order, peace out of war”? What will it mean to apply Bonhoeffer’s views on aspects of the South African political transformation process, such as the differentiation between forgiveness and amnesty? Forgiveness is something other than amnesty; and prosecution of the perpetrators does not mean that forgiveness at the moral level must be necessary. Finally, I will explore the connections between Christ reality, forgiveness of guilt and radical new beginning, on the one hand, and mere scarring of guilt or intrahistorical reconciliation on the other. Metaphorically, Bonhoeffer speaks of a “shadow” that also falls on political forgiveness, and it will be worth to shed some light into this “shadow” and get at the connections.

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### **BONHOEFFER, POLITICS, AND THE NATURAL LAW TRADITION**

This paper contributes to the slowly growing research into Bonhoeffer’s recovery of the natural for Protestant theology, its historical background and implications for political theology. We know from a letter to his grandmother that Hitler’s euthanasia program moved Bonhoeffer into reflections on natural from a letter written in this context to his brother in law, the jurist Gerhard Leibholz. Bonhoeffer relates in this letter that he “thought and read much about our old discussion topic [of natural law]. . . Are there legal principles [*Rechtsprinzipien*] in creation that one should consider as absolutely valid? Or is law tied to actual historically extant power [*faktische Macht*]?” On this question of “*lex naturae*”, Bonhoeffer seeks a middle path between the Catholic and Protestant positions. Catholics confidence in positive natural law, he fears, “relativizes revelation,” and Protestants’ overemphasis on revelation denigrates “of the historical, of creational norms.” His own preference is to follow Barth in relating and orienting “all orders of creation strictly to Christ. He wants to recognize a natural law that is concretely but only partially realized in actual historical laws that aim at justice, and remain open to Christian love and righteousness. He surmises that “the ultimate meaning of all earthly law [*Recht*] . . . should ensure the possibility of love in the Christian sense without ever desiring or being able to become identical with it.”

In his continuing and maturing reflections on this question of the *lex naturae*, Bonhoeffer recovers the natural law tradition of the early Reformers, something Brunner also attempted after the war by appealing to the *imago dei*, before he was shouted down by Karl Barth’s famous “No” to natural theology. The rejection of any reliance on natural law in Barth’s 1946 essay, “The Christian Community and the Civil Community,” demonstrates how strongly this reaction was influenced by the political situation of Nazi Germany. It is all the more remarkable that Bonhoeffer, in the same situation, chooses the opposite path of retrieving the natural. He thus consciously retrieves the connection between the Decalogue and natural law that had remained unbroken from the patristic tradition to the Reformation, until its demise in the latter half of the eighteenth century when Lutheran and Reformed theologies succumbed to rationalist currents of thought.

Bonhoeffer’s thinking on natural law culminates in the *Ethics* fragment on “Natural Life,” in which he recovers, as the only Protestant theologian of his day, natural human rights. This paper will place Bonhoeffer’s recovery of the natural into the greater context of Protestant (Lutheran and Reformed) and also Catholic natural law traditions (drawing on the work of Jacques Maritain, Jean Porter, and Russell Hittinger), to demonstrate the abiding relevance of Bonhoeffer’s retrieval for current questions concerning human dignity and human rights.

