



Call for papers for the consultation

**"DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN GLOCAL CONTEXTS"**

24-26 October 2016  
Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Dear Colleagues

The local organising committee is pleased to announce the fourth triennial consultation on *Democracy and social justice in glocal contexts* which will be held in Stellenbosch, South Africa from Monday 24 to Wednesday 26 October 2016.

Proposals regarding this theme, as well as themes highlighted below, are welcomed.

One way to describe Public Theology is to argue that Public Theology addresses three sets of interdependent themes, namely the inherent public contents of faith, the inherent public rationality and reasonability of faith and the inherent public meaning, significance, implications, impact of faith.

Various public theologians emphasise some of these sets of questions more than others. Others attempt to attend to all three questions simultaneously. It is also possible that we emphasise one theme at a point and another one in a different context. For some it is even not possible to distinguish among these sets of themes, let alone separating it.

The distinction above might guide our discussion about a public challenge like justice. The question of justice could be discussed in terms of the public contents, the public rationality and the public impact of Christian faith.

Broad themes like the following might surface when we focus upon the public contents of Christian faith:

- Old Testamentic perspectives on justice;
- New Testamentic perspectives on justice;
- Justice in a church historical perspective;
- Justice in a comprehensive Trinitarian (theological, Christological, pneumatological) perspective;
- Justice in a missiological perspective;

- Justice and ecclesial practices like *leitourgia*, *diakonia*, *marturia* and *koinonia*.

The question can also be addressed in terms of the rationality, reasonability and intellectual accessibility of the Christian faith. With an emphasis on intra-disciplinarity amongst theological disciplines, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity various justice theories, systems and models might be freshly explored.

The theme could also be unpacked in terms of the meaning of the Christian faith for specific justice challenges in the world, amongst others ecocide, poverty, unemployment, inequality, oppression, violence, racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, ageism, handicappism, afropessimism, and xenophobia.

The notion of glocal in the theme of the conference refers to the impact of global developments on local life, as well as the importance of local initiatives for the transformation of global perspectives. The focus upon justice will hopefully enable members of the Global Network for Public Theology to learn from each other's contextual discussions, and to rediscover the indispensable wealth of the Christian tradition as we face the threatening forces of injustice and dehumanization in various forms in different parts of the world.

These discussions will take place within the framework of democracy in societies. The guiding question will be whether democracies succeed in delivering the promise of the democratic vision, namely a life of dignity and justice, freedom and peace for all. With regard to democracy's role in justice, themes like the following deserve special attention:

- The issue of minorities (religious, racial, linguistic or ethnic) and the problem of 'majoritarianism' in a democratic state. How can Public Theology support minority groups and challenge government policies?
- At a global level, responses to climate change, terrorism, refugees, and (religious) 'militantism' are challenges to all the citizens in general and religious communities in particular.
- In what way does Public Theology enhance the democratic values of equality, freedom, and rule of law and at the same time critique government policies when they are not compatible with democratic values and scriptural teachings?
- How does Public Theology support the democratic state from various threats, amongst others from the market? What could be the contours for a state theology as part of Public Theology?
- How can Public Theology advance the task of democracy to bring forth justice for all?

We hereby invite all scholars interested in the study of Public Theology to submit proposals of no more than 300 words by 1 June 2016. These can be submitted electronically to [maritasnyman@sun.ac.za](mailto:maritasnyman@sun.ac.za).

Please remember to add a title (or provisional title) to your abstract. The presentation language will be English – please inform us should you require any translation services.

Registration for attendance will open on 1 February 2016 and can be found on the following website: [www.sun.ac.za/bnc](http://www.sun.ac.za/bnc). Please feel free to distribute this call for papers to other interested parties.

For further enquiries kindly contact Marita Snyman at [maritasnyman@sun.ac.za](mailto:maritasnyman@sun.ac.za).

Sincerely, *in verbondenheid*

Prof Nico Koopman  
Chair: GNPT Executive Committee  
Beyers Naudé Centre for Public Theology  
Faculty of Theology  
Stellenbosch University  
Stellenbosch 7600  
South Africa

