

'Within the enclave' – Profiling South African social and religious developments since 1994

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The paper investigated religious and social transformations within a specific religious tradition in South Africa. After clarifying the charged concept of 'transformation', the authors showed that transformation is about more than changed systems and structures, for, on a deeper level, it is also about the change in relationships and attitudes between the different cultural groups in South Africa. The argument was supported by making use of data from the *SA reconciliation barometer 2010* and the *2009 Transformation audit*. In the next part of the paper, the authors took a closer look at the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) as a case in point. The basic question they asked was how do these social transformations affect the religious transformations within the DRC and vice versa? By making use of Mary Douglas's concept of 'the enclave' it was proposed that a new enclave developed in the DRC after 1994, the characteristics of which were investigated in the remainder of the paper.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to consider religious and social transformations within a specific religious tradition in South Africa. Before turning our attention to the interaction within that specific tradition, we need to ask what is happening in general in South Africa in this regard, specifically in terms of social transformation. It is only when the bigger picture is identified that we can make sense of what is happening within a particular tradition.

'Transformation' is, of course, a charged concept. Du Toit (2010) writes:

Transformation remains fundamental to the building of a just and equitable post-apartheid state. Few words in South Africa's political lexicon are vested with so much currency and moral weight. Without risking exaggeration, it is safe to say that the concept has become the central reference point that provides the momentum for the rebuilding of the South African state from its apartheid ruins.

(Du Toit 2010:ix)

Different people and communities, in fact, understand transformation differently. To the majority of people in South Africa:

'transformation' as it is currently used, means that the status quo is reversed or corrected until all facets of the government, the economy, media and educational and civil social institutions ultimately reflect the composition of the population.

(Spies 2010:14)

According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC; 1999:vol. 1, 106), transformation is related to the reversal of circumstances of great inequality and injustice and the recognition of the suffering this entailed. In this way, it is related to the injustices of the past which must be rectified so that those who were previously disadvantaged are empowered and those who were previously advantaged are prepared to share these advantages with others.

'More than structures'

However, one aspect which is often forgotten in the process of affirmation is that transformation is not only about changing systems and structures, but that on a deeper level it is about the transformation of relationships and attitudes between the different cultural groups in South Africa. This is where the interaction implied in the title of this article gains particular meaning. It is a simple human principle that it is often experienced only through exposure to one another, through 'inter-action', through seeing and experiencing face to face, that the opinions and approaches of people change over time. As we shall indicate later on, it is in exactly the failure to face the other, rather opting for the safety of the enclave, that a major stumbling block for transformation in South Africa can be found.

In this regard – specifically where face to face 'inter-action' is concerned – one cannot underestimate the value of, for example, large-scale sporting events hosted by South Africa, such as the Rugby

World Cup in 1995 and the very successful FIFA 2010 World Cup soccer tournament. Of course, the question remains: what are the longer term effects of these tournaments and the interaction they generate? Particularly if one bears in mind what has happened in our country since then – drawn-out strikes leading to disruption, conflict and the loss of millions of rands, reluctance on the part of the government to resolve the conflict, the ongoing problem of poor service delivery in the public sector, the discussions about Black Economic Empowerment that often degenerate into arguments about racism, the quota system in sport which is back in the spotlight, and many more. From these examples it is clear that transformation cannot take place without ‘reconciliation’. Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu (2010) encourages us when he says:

South Africans too need to keep talking about reconciliation so that our journey towards a rainbow nation can continue. Much remains to be done, both in terms of implementing the recommendations of the TRC and more broadly in building an inclusive, tolerant and peaceful country.

(Tutu 2010)

But then, distressingly, he adds:

I am saddened that after 12 years we await an appropriate conclusion to the TRC process. Government’s lacklustre response to many aspects of the Commission’s recommendations remains a source of deep disappointment. Beneficiaries of apartheid have also failed to adequately acknowledge the generosity of their victims’ forgiveness. On both counts it is the victims, those brave men and women who came forward to tell their stories, who have lost out.

(Tutu 2010)

Finally, Tutu (2010) also states:

More broadly, South Africans need to work more concertedly towards unity. Perhaps we have begun to take reconciliation for granted. Yet, major socio-economic and racial fault lines persist as the IJR’s¹ Reconciliation Barometer and Transformation Audits continue to show each year. Nobody seriously believed that the rainbow nation would be built overnight. Yet cynics are keen to point to our lack of progress as proof that, yet again, an African nation will fail.

(Tutu 2010)

So, following Tutu’s lead, let us now briefly examine the *SA reconciliation barometer 2010* (Lefko-Everett *et al.* 2010) and the *2009 Transformation audit: Recession and recovery* (Hofmeyer [ed.] 2009) to help us to understand the change in relationships and attitudes between different cultural groups in South Africa.

SA reconciliation barometer 2010

The *SA reconciliation barometer* survey is a nationally representative public opinion poll conducted annually by the IJR, which focuses on progress in reconciliation in South Africa. Key issues addressed within the survey include: human security, political culture, political relationships, dialogue, historical confrontation and race relations. In other words, the barometer aims to deduce how the abovementioned aspects influence reconciliation in South

1. Institute for Justice and Reconciliation.

Africa. It is a joint project of the IJR and the Khayabus opinion poll of Ipsos-Markinor, which collects data through interviews with a nationally representative sample of 3487 South Africans. There is a presumption that 95% of the data is accurate and a possible deviation of 1.7% is calculated. The barometer indicates the following²:

- Racial relations remain under pressure. The percentage of people who agree that relations between the different races have improved has decreased from 61% in 2006 to 49% in 2009.
- Optimism about a joint future has dropped by 24%. In 2009, only 62% believed in ‘a happy future for all races’ as opposed to 86% in 2005.
- From 2003 to 2009, there was no significant improvement in intergroup socialisation and contact. One in four South Africans (24%) said they ‘never interact with people of another group on a normal work day or otherwise’. Almost half (46%) said they never socialise with people of other races or groups.
- We still struggle to understand one another. Altogether, 59% said it is difficult to understand the habits and manners of other groups.
- Inequality remains a big obstacle. In 2009, only one in four (25%) South Africans believed that there was any improvement in the division between rich and poor, whilst only 21% thought there were more job opportunities.
- The biggest divisive factors in South Africa are (in order of significance): economic inequality, political parties, class, disease (such as HIV and Aids), religion, race and language.

From the above, Spies (2010) makes a number of deductions, of which two are directly related to this contribution:

- He writes that the harsh reality is that we do not really know one another in this country; people do not do enough on their own initiative to break through barriers and build relationships. In this regard he asks penetrating questions about what prevents us from reaching out to one another.
- Another harsh reality he highlights is that religion does not really have an effect in terms of changing how people think and act. He asks whether religion is only practiced in places of worship (churches, mosques, temples and synagogues), or whether religion truly makes an impact on the everyday lives of people?

2009 Transformation audit

Whilst the *Reconciliation barometer* specifically focuses on race relations, the *Transformation audit* (Hofmeyer [ed.] 2009) is a project of the Institute for Justice and Peace, which strives to make a contribution about the progress (or lack thereof) in dismantling those structures in our society which engender inequality. They do this through key statistics and in-depth analyses in four different areas: the macro economy, the labour market, skills and education, and poverty and inequality.

2. We concur with the summary of Spies (2010), which concentrates specifically on the important aspect of relations, and which is also the focus of this article.

Since the first edition of the audit was published in 2004, the report has commented on the massive development challenges facing our country as we strive for a fair and equal division for all citizens. Various obstacles have been identified and advances recognised, with the macro context including the growth of government income and a decrease in the levels of poverty and unemployment. Yet, the levels of inequality in the country are still shockingly extreme. This led Du Toit (2010) to write the following in the preface to the 2009 audit:

With the effects of an international financial crisis reaching our shores, the context has changed markedly. Shrinking government revenues, clear indications of growing material insecurity and a substantial decline in employment levels are all emerging. This edition of the Audit, titled *Recession and Recovery*, traces the impact of South Africa's descent into negative-growth territory for the first time in 17 years. The editorial team, headed admirably by Jan Hofmeyr, once again has managed to assemble some of the country's leading researchers and specialists to make sense of this environment with lucid analysis, presented as an accessible resource to all who are concerned about the promotion of social justice in this country ... Viewed as a whole, this compilation of articles provides a mixed picture and suggests that, from a material perspective, 2009 provided limited scope for the creation of a more prosperous and equitable society. On the one hand, it highlights significant gains over the past 15 years, which (at least from a fiscal vantage point) have allowed the country to be more resilient than several of its peers in the face of a hostile international environment. On the other hand, it casts its eye/focuses its attention on a population that remains highly unequal and particularly vulnerable to an economic downturn. Structural unemployment and an under-performing education system add a distinctly entrenched quality to this vulnerability. In a sense, the adverse economic conditions have served to accentuate these weaknesses, as well as the need for a sustainable growth path that places much stronger emphasis on the development of the country's human resources ... This indicates the need for responsible political leadership that empathises with and supports citizens through this trying period. Such leadership should not imply command and imposition from the top, but rather the ability to inform, listen and respond to the plight of those whose dignity has been profoundly affected by conditions beyond their control.

(Du Toit 2010:ix)

'Collapse into modernity'

The conclusions of the above analysis stand within broader influences and changes that help to explain why the interaction between religious and social transformation is still facing serious challenges in the post-apartheid environment. South African society is currently experiencing what Smit (2008:92) calls a 'collapse into modernity'. According to Vanhoozer (2003:7), modernity in this context would imply 'social forces and institutional forms – secularization, industrialization, and bureaucratization – that embody the Enlightenment ideals of rationality, individual autonomy, and progress'.

Smit (2008:93–95) goes on to discuss six material claims which explain this unfortunate collapse:

- Firstly, during the past 15 years in South African society, major social transformations were effected which have been radical, dramatic and comprehensive. Smit reiterates: 'The country moved overnight into a process of what could be called radical modernization and in many ways it still finds itself in the dynamics of this historical process.'
- Secondly, the churches 'were part and parcel of this transformation' because the Protestant and, in particular, Reformed Churches were previously involved in the formation and justification of apartheid. Some Reformed Churches were, however, deeply involved in the struggle against apartheid and strove for democracy, freedom and social justice.
- Thirdly, 'no single theoretical approach' can describe what has been taking place in South Africa to date. According to Smit, these theoretical frameworks may contribute valuable insights but no ready-made theory will be sufficient as such. In this sense, it is better to view modernisation as an ongoing process which is difficult to define.
- Fourthly, a global perspective, that is, one which makes use of contemporary theories of globalisation, will be of great importance in order to comprehend the changes taking place in the country. In this instance, Smit concludes: 'It is therefore helpful to see globalization as in fact the intensified and accelerated form of modernization ... and it is in this form that South Africa today is being challenged and transformed by processes of modernization.'
- Fifthly, one has to understand that the churches in South Africa are themselves on the receiving end of these contemporary global processes of modernisation. 'They are not merely actors, but they are being acted upon. It is not as if they are totally free to decide whether they will contribute to modernization, to development and progress. They themselves first of all undergo modernization ... in these particular forms.'
- Lastly, Smit discusses the way in which one uses the term 'church', because the church exists in very specific 'concrete and visible, social forms'. Smit distinguishes three basic forms of the church, namely, (1) regular worship and local congregational life, (2) the policies and practices of denominations and the ecumenical church and (3) the spirituality, witness and actions of individual believers. It is interesting to note how reconciliation became problematic during the past 15 years in all three forms of church life which Smit distinguishes.

The Dutch Reformed Church: A case in point

We now turn our attention to the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) as a case in point of the interaction between religious and social transformations in South Africa. For the purposes of our investigation we asked: how do these social transformations affect the religious transformations within the DRC and vice versa? Before attempting to answer this question, however, let us first take a step backwards. One

of the basic theological frameworks within which the DRC sought to guard its identity during the apartheid era could be described in terms of a triangular movement, namely the search for security (with the help of an 'eternal' myth), the appeal to national 'potential' to overcome adversity, and the projection of guilt onto the enemy as the 'other' (Cilliers 2006:15f). Within this theological framework or triangle, the DRC was not only *seeking a safe haven*, but it was also backed unashamedly by the powers of the state and vice versa. With the demise of apartheid, the relationship between church and state obviously has changed profoundly: whilst the state controlled the DRC to a large extent under apartheid, the church has been left in a type of vacuum after the dawn of democracy, seeking new theological frameworks to redefine its identity – in effect, seeking a new safe haven (Cilliers 2010).

Of interest for this paper would be the question of whether the stereotypical theological structure that characterised the DRC during apartheid has, in some way, survived and perhaps re-emerged in different forms? For the sake of comparison,³ we will discuss certain contemporary trends using keywords that are reminiscent of the theological triangle as described above, namely 'stabilising' (or de-stabilising), 'emigration' (that is, inner emigration) and (once again!) 'separation'. The common denominator in all of these keywords, however, is the search for a (new) *identity* that permeates the young South African democracy and which, in our opinion, also has an impact on contemporary DRC theology, that is, one which impacts on the interaction between religious and social transformations within Dutch Reformed traditions in South Africa. In order for us to interpret this 'new' theological triangle, we must first take a brief look at the so-called enclave theory.

The enclave

The anthropologist Mary Douglas (1993:48f) distinguishes between three social contexts, namely the Market, the Hierarchy, and the Enclave. According to her, an enclave is formed usually by a dissenting minority who develop a social unit in order to maintain strong boundaries (Douglas 1993:45–49). The 'religious nature and claims' of the enclave are of specific importance for this paper. Douglas (1993) describes the interaction between cultural and religious claims in the enclave as follows:

An enclave community can be recognized and described. It is not mysterious or unique. It starts in characteristic situations and faces characteristic problems. These invite specific solutions, the institutions in which the solutions are tried call forth a specific type of spirituality

(Douglas 1993:49)

An enclave – for instance, such as that formed around 'Afrikaner identity' before and during apartheid – differentiates itself from other groups in order to create internal cohesion (Aaboe 2007). An enclave is directed against the 'other', which could, again in the instance of historical

3.This of course implies delimitation: many other trends could be identified, according to the perspective from which one views the contemporary South African scene.

Afrikaner identity, be seen as 'other' empires (such as the British – during the Boer wars), 'other' races (as expressed during apartheid), 'other' languages (as exemplified during the so-called 'language movement' or '*Taalbeweging*') and so on. Enclaves often operate with syndromes of anxiety (the 'black danger', or the 'red – i.e. Roman Catholic – danger'⁴, etc.) and (often extreme) efforts to maintain the 'purity' of the enclave. In typical enclave mentality, you are either 'in' or 'out'; no compromise, no grey areas – things are black and white. Indeed, writing about 'black and white', Douglas (2007) says the following:

Seeing things in black and white is definitely a limitation. When you miss the colour, you miss the nuance, the 3D effect is softened, and facial expression is less vivid. We know this from black and white photography and old black and white cinema. I am using this title to talk about certain forms of social organisation that promote anger. This limited vision divides the world into two kinds: on one side ourselves, our fellow members, our friends; and on the other side, all the rest, outsiders. In the extreme case, insiders are saints and outsiders shunned as sinners. Inside is white; outside is black. In extreme cases it makes a world of saints and sinners. A wall of virtue keeps the two apart, the saints refuse to have anything to do with the outsiders. There can be no negotiation and the word 'compromise' means betrayal.

(Douglas 2007)

So, the haunting question remains: is a new 'enclave' in the process of being formed in the DRC? Julie Aaboe (2008) is quite convinced of this:

In the opinion of many the DRC stands today rather as safe haven, a frame within which different Afrikaner identities is developing and or re-constructing as clearly identified in the strong pietistic influence within the DRC today, mirrored in the influence of Charismatic and Pentecostal faith traditions, foreign to reformed theology. This represents a problem. If one looks at the different strategies of re-constructing Afrikaner identity in contemporary SA, this development follows not only in the footprints of its own history, but follows also a general global development where ethnic and religious communities, enclave themselves in a modern day *laager*.

(Aaboe 2008)

In what follows, we attempt to trace some characteristics of this new (triangular!) enclave.

Stabilisation

During the days of apartheid the church-going members of the DRC were told time and again that they had an anchor in analogical biblical histories. Security lay in the fact that the God of these histories was on their side, against their 'enemies'. Over many decades, and through thousands of sermons, this myth was shaped and kept intact: if the Afrikaner household acted according to (this specific interpretation of) the biblical histories, all would be well. God would secure their future (Cilliers 2006:15f).

After the demise of apartheid and the shattering of the myth, it is clear that many of these people are desperately

4.The 'red danger' in the form of the Roman Catholic Church referred to here should not be confused with the 'red danger' of Communism, which was also later perceived to pose a threat to the apartheid state and Afrikaner identity in general.

looking for (a new) security, historical links and anchors – as an expression of their search for identity. They have been *fundamentally disillusioned* by the church and specifically also the preaching within this church that has indoctrinated them for so long. Many people no longer trust the church, or at least have lost their blind and naïve loyalty to the church. The anchors that kept them tied to their moorings have been cut. Stability has become instability; a defined identity has been replaced with the search for a new identity. The shattering of the old myth has opened up a vacuum – the question now is: what new myths are being embraced by the disillusioned? And, how do you preach to such disillusioned people? The primary problem facing the church is simply that many of these people are no longer present; the audiences who listen to sermons are rapidly decreasing. The past decade has seen a dramatic decline in the membership of the so-called mainline churches in South Africa (specifically also the DRC), mostly in favour of the charismatic movements, accompanied by a phenomenal growth in the African Independent Churches (AIC).

From these trends it is clear that many of the institutional (mainline) churches are now fighting for survival. Not only are the institutions⁵ of these churches viewed with scepticism, but also the theology, or basic dogma, is no longer accepted as obvious. The argument is understandable and can be summed up as follows: if the church misled us once in such a fundamental way, how are we to know that it will not do the same again? The emergence of the so-called ‘New Reformation’, which challenges traditional confessions of the church such as the immaculate conception, the historicity of the resurrection, the authority of scripture and the validity of promises concerning the second coming of Christ, perhaps exemplifies this break-away in a tangible way (cf. Müller 2002). Others simply no longer engage in dialogue with the church.

This ‘syndrome of apathy’ could also be ascribed to the accelerated dawn of modernity on South Africa (or collapse into modernity, as described above) since 1994. Whereas the country was isolated up to this point in time, its borders are now open to all the influences of globalisation. Processes of ‘secularisation’ and ‘privatisation’ (cf. Pieterse 2008:1–8) have been condensed into 16 years of democracy, with the expectation that South Africans should digest this in a much shorter time span than was the case in many other countries. All of these factors contribute towards the trickling and, in some cases, flooding away of members from the worship services. One the one hand, preaching has become *more tentative* than before, no longer emanating from the certainty of a fixed and stable ‘truth’. One the other hand, preachers tend to be very *pragmatic* in their approach, desperately trying not to rock the (sinking) boat too much. Preaching has to an extent taken on the ‘mode of maintenance’, rather than being an expression of innovative theology.

5. It is interesting to note how many DRC congregations no longer use the name ‘Dutch Reformed’ on their billboards and in their marketing. Names such as The Community Church, The Family Church, The Hospitable Church, The Cross Church, et cetera, are preferred and seem to be popping up everywhere. For some, the link to their historical roots has become an embarrassment.

Paradoxically, another strand could be identified in the various efforts that are made to retain those members who still show up for worship services, with liturgical experimentation and innovation taking place within the DRC in a way that few would dare have dream of before. In many cases, congregations are structured according to market-driven and consumerist considerations, coupled with the copious use of modern technology. Preaching and liturgy have become geared towards the attraction and entertainment of people. One often has the feeling that now, because the controlling power of the church no longer exists, members of the church, and preachers and liturgists in particular, are frantically searching for new forms of security and identity, to the point where they may become guilty of cultic smuggling across dogmatic borders, without giving much thought to the theological (homiletic and liturgical) consequences of doing so (cf. Noordmans 1939:5).

Emigration

A common denominator in most of these homiletic and liturgical practices seems to be the fact that they are fundamentally *introversive*. Whilst many (mostly White) South Africans have emigrated to other countries, those remaining in South Africa seem to be ‘emigrating inwardly’ (cf. Durand 2002:60). They seek the safety of the enclave, rather than facing the ‘other’. The hermeneutical movement of the apartheid era into the potential of the people’s pietistic reserves now takes on different forms: no longer to rectify the state of society according to certain nationalistic ideals, but simply to escape from all responsibilities regarding the new South African society. This stance is sometimes embodied in what could be called an ‘ascetic liturgy’, in which, for instance issues such as the macro economy, the labour market, skills and education, and poverty and inequality – as highlighted by the 2009 *Transformation audit* – are not reflected at all (cf. Cilliers & Wepener 2004, 2007).

But this is nothing new. Research done on trends in Afrikaans religious programmes as far back as 1987 indicates that the religion that was offered to ordinary Afrikaans-speaking people then was almost always *imperative* in nature, but not as an appeal that affects the daily and concrete reality (Müller 1987:44–46). Rather, it was a type of ‘alien-to-daily-life’, nonexistential appeal on the grounds of pietistic potential. The programmes’ contents said virtually nothing about the issues that, for instance, received attention in the daily press. This research, conducted in conjunction with the Department of Journalism at the University of Stellenbosch, found that *not one* of the ten most commented on issues of the day was reflected in the sermons that were broadcast.

Through research⁶ that was done over the period 1996–2000, it became clear that the *basic moralistic trend* that also characterised the apartheid sermons was alive and well in preaching within the ‘new South Africa’. But, whilst this trend was coupled to certain nationalistic ideals under apartheid, it seems to have become more individualistic in

6. Documented in Johan Cilliers (1996, 1998, 2000).

the new dispensation. Now it is no longer up to the nation to save the day (it is, in any case, too divided for that), but rather the pious individual. Ethical preaching that impacts on societal issues still seems to be glaringly absent.

This inward emigration of DRC preaching and liturgy takes on many forms. One tendency that is often commented on is the so-called *charismatic spirituality*⁷ that has taken root in many DRC congregations, with liturgies becoming more informal and orientated towards personal experience. Preaching, as such, seems gradually to be losing its prime position and role in worship services and is often reduced to a short 'conversation' towards the end of the service. In some cases the inward movement also represents a *movement over*, and thus avoidance of, the harsh realities of the South African context, with a strong emphasis on *celebration* and virtually no expression of *lament* (Cilliers 2007b:155–176).

Another interesting trend that could be described as 'inward' is the phenomenon of 'meditative worship services', with a return to symbolism and aesthetics⁸ – although one must hasten to add that this movement is not necessarily pietistic or contra-society.⁹

Separation

It is clear that South Africa, as a young democracy, is struggling to find its identity (Cilliers 2007c:1–19). In the euphoria of the political transition in 1994, much was made of the uniqueness of South Africa symbolised by a sense of 'unity in diversity' and epitomised in Archbishop Desmond Tutu's colourful phrase: 'rainbow nation'. The dark days of ethnocracy seemed to be over. Since then, however, there have been some indications that people are again retreating into ethnic categories when trying to define their identity, sometimes even in fundamentalist ways.

That the church and its preaching have been affected by this seems to be evident. A sad expression of this is the fact that the church (at least the Reformed Family of Churches) is still, to a large extent, separated structurally. The process of unification between the Dutch Reformed Church and the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa (URCSA) seems to be derailing – with a large contingency of (White) members and ministers of the DRC indicating in a recent survey that they will not accept the Belhar Confession – which forms the heart of URCSA theology and church life. Therefore the *unified, prophetic voice* of (Reformed) churches in South Africa is absent: it is as if the church has lost its energy to protest against societal evils such as poverty, corruption, crime,

7.We are not evaluating the charismatic movement as such here, nor postulating that this movement is a-societal in its approach. One of the charismatic mega-churches in South Africa, headed by Pastor Ray McCauley, for instance, is well known for many outreaches into society and ethical (even prophetic) declarations on societal ills.

8.We are very positive about this development; for too long the Reformed tradition has neglected the value of aesthetics, specifically also for liturgy. But there seems to be a renewed interest in this. cf. Johan Cilliers (2007a:55f).

9.The Centre for Christian Spirituality, an ecumenical body constituted by none other than Archbishop Desmond Tutu, is doing sterling work in this regard by developing ideas concerning meditation, mysticism, spiritual mentoring and contemplative worship, as well as those coupled with ethical responsibility. It seems as if serious theological reflection on this subject, however, is still in its early stages.

stigmatisation, et cetera. It is as if the myth of separation between 'us' and 'them', so integral to the ideology of apartheid, has come back to haunt us. The legalised borders of the enclave may have been abolished, but that does not necessarily mean that the spirit of the enclave is not still alive and well in South Africa, at least within DRC realities. This is a reality also painfully underlined by both the findings of the *SA reconciliation barometer* and the *Transformation audit*.

Conclusion

It is difficult, if not impossible, to predict how future scenarios in South Africa will turn out with regard to the development of new enclaves. What is clear in our opinion, however, is that the different churches (denominations) will have to *cross borders* in order to be enriched and guided by the other. We will have to move beyond *denominationalism*, if we hope to have any impact on society. We will have to revisit the 'hermeneutical space of the ecumenical church' in order to address societal ills in our country. For it is exactly within this hermeneutical space that we may discover not a self-destructive 'stability', but rather our true identity; not a misleading introversion, but rather vocation (to help transform society); not stigmatisation of, and separation from, the other, but rather the experience of facing the other and, in doing so, facing ourselves – and in the end, hopefully, the Other. It seems as if the 'safest' haven indeed lies outside 'our' haven.

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Authors' contributions

Dr Ian Nell was responsible for the first part of the paper, up to the section 'The Dutch Reformed Church: A case in point'. Prof. Johan Cilliers was responsible for the remainder of the paper.

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