



Transforming Mutuality in a Theology of Mission: A Missiological Evaluation of a Colombian Congregation Case Study

by
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DECLARATION

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I, Renee Rheinbolt-Urbe, declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third-party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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December 2023

ABSTRACT

In this missiological, creative, and contextual case study, the use of the slogan or watchword, ‘the evangelization of the world in this generation’ is problematic and a new slogan is sought. The main concern is the *God-image* developed upon a vanquishing Christ ‘bent on conquest’. The slogan propelled a rapid growing denomination (1979–2003); the International Church of Christ (ICOC) is depicted in the study as an expanding global train, followed by a trainwreck. The inner workings and consequent collapse of a USA-born and funded Christian denomination, termed a religious branded organisation (RBO), and the effects on a satellite congregation, ICI Colombia, are explored. The primary focus is the subsequent regrouping of the congregation as a gathered community (2004–2021).

The concern around the concept of this slogan has been addressed within missiology from different denominational perspectives for over a century, such potential ethical considerations considering the need for self-imposed limitations when furthering the message of Christ from Global North to Global South. The study views these from a triad thrust of expansion: main message or interpretation of biblical text; decision making over funds/resources; and use of structure—including legal and media (propaganda). The study is grounded in a triad of conversation partners (David Bosch, Ivan Illich, and Roland Allen) for *a view from the inside*, by an insider/outsider creative researcher. The researcher sought a radical shift in her positionality within the congregation due to the lessons of the collapse. Creativity is applied in various manners such as the development of data visualisation through constant images (i.e., train, trainwreck) and four vignettes. A maternal-thinking perspective, based on personal life experience and a Colombian matricentric society, is used throughout. This *thinking-with-the-womb* allows for a view of reality with an understanding of an interconnectedness of the universe.

The findings of the study, which focused primarily on grassroots participants using semi-structured, in-depth interviews, reveal the shifts of self-understandings and practices of mutuality that have shaped the mission and ministry of the congregation since the forementioned trainwreck. After collecting the empirical and interpretive data, these results are conspicuously observed: Resilient spirituality and togetherness or *conviviality*. A new slogan is developed, an expressive poem inspired

by the compiled data. It is an alternative application of a *God-image* inspired by Illich's account of the boundary-crossing Samaritan parable, and Bosch, Illich, and Allen's view of Luke's mission theology of table-fellowship. The findings primarily fit into theology of mission, a sub-discipline of missiology, as aqueous challenges to mission effort we contend will offer test grounds for developing a contextualised transforming mutuality as a theology of mission. The applicability could be broader: spirituality, managerial missiology, World Christianity, and Mother Studies.

Keywords: managerial missiology, resilient spirituality, maternal-thinking, conviviality, empirical missiological research, mutuality, intergenerational mutuality

OPSOMMING

In hierdie missiologiese, kreatiewe en kontekstuele gevallestudie is die gebruik van die slagspreuk of wagwoord ‘the evangelization of the world in this generation’ [die evangelisasie van die wêreld in hierdie generasie] problematies en word na 'n nuwe slagspreuk gesoek. Die grootste bekommernis is die *God-beeld* wat ontwikkel is aan die hand van 'n oorwinnende Christus ‘wat op verowering ingestel is’. Die slagspreuk het 'n vinnig groeiende denominasie gedryf (1979–2003); die International Church of Christ (ICOC) word in die studie uitgebeeld as 'n uitbreidende globale trein, gevolg deur 'n katastrofiese ongeluk. Die innerlike werking en gevolglike ineenstorting van 'n VSA-gebore en befondsde Christelike denominasie, wat 'n godsdienstige handelsmerkorganisasie (RBO) genoem word, en die uitwerking op 'n satellietgemeente, ICI Colombia, word ondersoek. Die primêre fokus is die daaropvolgende her-vorming van die gemeente as 'n versamelde gemeenskap (2004–2021).

Die besorgdheid oor die konsep van hierdie slagspreuk word al vir meer as 'n eeu binne missiologie vanuit verskillende denominasionele perspektiewe aangespreek; sulke potensiele etiese oorwegings neem die behoefte aan selfopgelegde beperkings in ag wanneer die boodskap van Christus van Globale Noorde na Globale Suide bevorder word. Die studie beskou dit vanuit 'n driehoekige uitbreiding-dryfaksie: hoofboodskap of interpretasie van Bybelteks; besluitneming oor fondse/hulpbronne; en gebruik van struktuur – insluitend die reg en media (propaganda). Die studie is gegrond op 'n drietal gespreksgenote (David Bosch, Ivan Illich, en Roland Allen) vir 'n *uitsig van binne*, deur 'n binnestaander/buitestaander kreatiewe navorser. Die navorser het gesoek na 'n radikale verskuiwing in haar posisionaliteit binne die gemeente as gevolg van die lesse geleer van die ineenstorting. Kreatiwiteit is op verskeie maniere toegepas, soos die ontwikkeling van datavisualisering deur konstante beelde (d.w.s. trein, treinongeluk) en vier karaktersketse. 'n Moeder-denkperspektief, gebaseer op persoonlike lewenservaring en 'n Colombiaanse matrisentriese samelewing, word deurgaans gebruik. Hierdie dink-met-die-baarmoeder maak voorsiening vir 'n siening van die werklikheid met 'n begrip van 'n onderlinge inter-verbondenheid van die heelal.

Die bevindinge van die studie, wat hoofsaaklik gefokus het op voetsoolvlak-deelnemers deur gebruik te maak van semi-gestruktureerde, in-diepte onderhoude, onthul die verskuiwings van selfbegrip en praktyke van wedersydseheid wat die missie en bediening van die gemeente sedert die genoemde 'treinongeluk' gevorm het. Nadat die empiriese en interpretatiewe data ingesamel is, is hierdie resultate opvallend waargeneem: Veerkragtige spiritualiteit en samesyn of *geselligheid*. 'n Nuwe slagspreuk is ontwikkel, 'n veelbetekenende gedig wat deur die saamgestelde data geïnspireer is. Dit is 'n alternatiewe toepassing van 'n *God-beeld* geïnspireer deur Illich se weergawe van die grensoorskrydende Samaritaanse gelykenis, en Bosch, Illich en Allen se siening van Lukas se sendingteologie van tafelgemeenskap. Die bevindinge pas hoofsaaklik in by die teologie van sending, 'n subdissipline van missiologie, aangesien die water-agtige uitdagings vir sendingpoging waarmee ons te kampe het, toetsgronde bied vir die ontwikkeling van 'n gekontekstualiseerde transformerende wederkerigheid as 'n teologie van sending. Die toepaslikheid kan wyer wees: spiritualiteit, bestuursmissiologie, Wêreld-Christendom en Moederstudies.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to

All of us, who since a young age, have dedicated our lives into pursuing God's heart in Latin America. Consequences of idealistic and passionate decisions for decades of can now be felt in our bodies, our loved ones, our marriages, and our children. My hope is that we will continue to seek the Christ who transcends boundaries. This hope is born (inspired) by a Colombian (Latin American) kitchen theology – where mothers and grandmothers greet an unexpected visitor with a warm and welcoming echale mas agua a la sopa (let's add more water to the soup). My prayer is that this research could be a motor towards a greater joy, peace, and love as we approach the end of this journey called life.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Anglican Communion
AFR	Africa
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AR	Argentina
BEC	Base Ecclesial Communities
BR	Brazil
CC/COC	Christian Church/Church of Christ
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CO	Colombia
COC	Church of Christ
COCZ	Church of Christ in Zimbabwe
COVID-19	Coronavirus
DE	Germany
DECC	Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council
DOC	Disciples of Christ
DODC	Doctorate in Organization Development and Change
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church
ESP	Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel
EVAN	Evangelical
GRMP	Grassroots Mission Practitioner
GT	Guatemala
ICC	International Christian Church
ICI-CO	ICI Colombia
ICOC	International Church of Christ
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IEHC	India Every Home Crusade
IMC	International Missionary Council
JAM	Joint Action in Mission

KNN	Kingdom News Network
LA	Latin America
LCU	Lincoln Christian University
MCD	Membership Categorisation Device
MX	Mexico
OCRPL	Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PROT	Protestant
RBO	Religious Branded Organisation
RC	Roman Catholic
SA	South Africa
RM	Restoration Movement
SCT	Stone-Campbell Tradition
SU	Stellenbosch University
TLMP	Translocal Mission Practitioner
TNMP	Transnational Mission Practitioner
TTL	Together Towards Life
UCA	Uniting Church in Australia
UK	United Kingdom
UNAM	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNISA	University of South Africa
USA	United States of America
WCC	World Council of Churches
WCCC	World Convention of Churches of Christ
WLC	World Literature Crusade
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
ZW	Zimbabwe

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

1.0 PREFACE

This section introduces the study entitled: *Transforming mutuality in a theology of mission: A missiological evaluation of a Colombian congregation case study*.¹ At centre stage of the empirical study is a congregation in Colombia (CO) known as ICI Colombia (ICI-CO), in Latin America (LA). David Bosch (1991a:389) paves the way confirming the *creative tension* between: “[T]he church is both a theological and a sociological entity, an inseparable union of the divine and the dusty”. In view of this *creative tension* of *dusty* and *divine* - the preface is divided into two parts: (i) explains what is meant by ‘it’ (a congregation as a sociological and empirical entity) and (ii) outlines the work of the chosen conversation partners who have a similar meaning of ‘She’ (defined as the incorruptible and mystical body of Christ on earth).

1.0.1 ‘It’ for social analysis

Chapter 1 elaborates on the basic procedure of the research process but goes beyond as it builds the intellectual and historical framework. The above section already jumps into a vital distinction for this empirical and theological study, making a clear distinction between ‘it’ and ‘She’. Mason (2018:1-19) allows for this *creative tension* in research as she introduces research as an intellectual puzzle. This dissertation is built as pieces of a puzzle. Each chapter is a piece of the puzzle. The largest pieces – Chapters 1, 2 and 4 – are the longest. These are the key theoretical and conceptual pieces, upon which the other chapters are based. Chapter 3 is a comparative

¹ This title an adaptation of (Bosch (1991a), *Transforming mission: Paradigm shifts in theology of mission*. Transforming mission is a play on words, a word-game (1991a:xv), which I choose to apply with the term *transforming mutuality*. Bosch (1991a:xv) “‘transforming’ is, therefore, an adjective that depicts an essential feature of what Christian mission is all about”. Here Bosch (1991a:xv) points to the Christian faith: as its deepest level has “its purpose to transform reality around it”. *Transforming mutuality* is therefore a conceptual and theoretical framework illustrated throughout this study and applied to this case study of a missiological evaluation of the congregation in CO. It also links to Bosch’s (1979) *missionary spirituality* or *spirituality of the road* (see sections 1.7; 2.3.5 & 2.3.6 for more details), as a personal (I/we) walk of *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission (or mode of mission).

puzzle, as comparisons are done to guide the reader's understanding of the denomination presented in the case study. Chapter 5 is a causal/predictive puzzle which is also an experiential puzzle, where I pose a puzzle as to what long-term influence does a mother have on a son, and then extend that thinking to the congregation in the case study. Chapters 6 and 7 are processual puzzles, supported by examples from the interview process (data analysis and interpretation). Mason (2018:12) indicates, processual puzzles reveal: "[H]ow things change, interact, and influence each other". Chapter 6 is climax point or turning moment in connecting the puzzle pieces. Chapter 8, the summary, is an ecological puzzle, as the *interconnectedness* of the main threads sought to be intertwined. Each chapter is written as a stand-alone chapter, but the beauty of the research is best achieved when all the pieces of the puzzle are read together as a whole.

As stated in the first paragraph, another piece of the puzzle can be described simply as the interlapping study of 'it' and 'She'. This is the way Ivan Illich, who will be introduced in the following section, explained missiological research. 'It' – the social institution, where social analysis and tools are welcomed. The denomination in the case study is identified as a religious branded organisation (RBO).² Where the focus of this research is seeking the invisible and spiritual of the 'She' – the mystical and invisible aspect of God's presence. This distinction is complex, and opinions vary as to how these distinctions should be done. There are multiple ways to understand the interplay of the *dusty* (human) and the *divine*. Leao's (2022:33) definition, drawing on Illich, is the approach adopted in this research project is found in the footnote below.³

² A term inspired by this research, *religious branded organisation* (RBO), can be applied to this case study. RBO has been created (adapted from White 2019; White and Pondani 2022); and the USA-born, funded, and managed RBO in this study is the denomination ICOC.

³ Leao (2022:33) defines:

"It is important to make a clarification regarding the use of the words church or Church (capital C) throughout the text. When I use church, I mean the institution, the 'it', which embraces the bureaucracy, the administration, and the apparatus of the Catholic tradition. When I use Church, I mean the Mystical Body of Christ, the 'She', not always visible nor necessarily under the wings of the church. By making such distinction I am not saying that the Catholic church is not within the Mystical Body of Christ, to which I call Church, where Christ is the head (see St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians, his first and second letter to the Corinthians and his letter to the Colossians). I rather use Church to embrace communities and forms-of-life not necessarily under the approval or recognition of the church to avoid narrowing the Mystical Body to one institution. If the analysis of this essay was one concerning the Lutheran church, or the Baptist church or the churches of Christ I would follow the same method of differentiation between the church 'it' and the Church 'She'. The

Smith (2017:2, 260) asserts that religions grow but also shift, change, and fail. The following study links sociology of religion (cf. Wuthnow 2003; 2010; 2011; 2020; Smith 1991; 2010; 2014; 2017) to the sub-discipline of sociology of missions (cf. Montgomery 1999:1-14; 2012). The present research seeks to fill a lacuna of knowledge by studying a *critical incident* (Flanagan 1954) – the collapse of a United States of America (USA) mission organisation and the consequences for a satellite church community in CO. The case study focuses on understanding the breakage to cohesion of a new group identity as well as what can be interpreted as *resilient spirituality* in the participants (cf. Jensen 2009; Hertig 2019; Nolty 2019; Riley 2022).

Wuthnow (2020:2) establishes *lived religion* as: “[An] ethnographic sociology on grassroots activities outside of religious organizations rather than the formal theological teaching of those organizations”. A link between *lived religion* is drawn to *maternal-thinking* with Segura-April (2014:781-789); she places a special emphasis on the interplay between religion and family. Armas (2021:12) confirms *kitchen theology* and *abuela theology* (grandmother theology); locating familial intimacy as a place of learning and talking about God. These are *spaces created* for ‘talking about God’ are grassroots activities outside of the boundaries of the formal teaching.⁴

Wuthnow (2010) in *Boundless faith: The global outreach of American churches*, speaks to the USA context of the case study: identifying the current stage of USA Christian world involvement and expansion. Although the latest phase is World Christianity *from everywhere to everyone* is identified clearly (cf. Escobar 2003; Sanneh 2008; Tiénou 2010; Johnston 2011; Young 2021, among many), but from the standpoint of this case study, Wuthnow is correct. The case study

distinction, not the way I apply it, between the church ‘it’ and the Church ‘She’ can also be seen in Ivan Illich, *The powerless church* (2018)”.

⁴ These are *spaces created* for ‘talking about God’ are grassroots activities outside of the boundaries of the formal theological teaching.

discovers a recent phase of globalisation in the context of a USA-born 1980s RBO.⁵ ⁶ A post-colonial assumption is appropriate. Bosch (1991a) speaks to a post-colonial world seeking missiological and theological answers. And *Indigenous knowledge methodologies* speak to this assumption (Chilisa 2020:198): “There are countless chapters of what the world needs to know about the postcolonial and Indigenous people’s histories and their resistance to colonizing ideologies of their former colonizer”. Yip (2014; 2018) proposes *post-postmodern*. A current term is *decolonial* (cf. Esteva and Prakash 1998; Grosfoguel 2011; Escobar 2017; Dussel 2012; 2019⁷). *Decolonial* implies an aspect more profound than visible power structures, it has to do with the way of thinking (*mazeways* a term used by missiologist Hierbert [2008]). Missiology giants – David Bosch, Ivan Illich, and Roland Allen – allow for this perspective.

Due to the complexity of this study, the reader must keep in mind several items. First, a reminder that this dissertation does not follow a linear argument (Weatherall 2019) but should be understood as uneven pieces of a puzzle. Second, images⁸ built into vignette representations have been chosen for the sake of clarity for the reader. Finally, this method of data visualisation of the findings to the gatekeeper. If the gatekeeper decides to reveal the findings, it is deemed important to communicate in a way that the ICI-CO community⁹ will be able to ‘see’ the data, pointing to

⁵ The ICOC held these features: nondenominational, *entrepreneurial evangelical ecclesiology* (Cameron 2001); *hyphenateds* (Tickle 2008:142); *megachurch*⁵ as a standalone denomination (Hey 2011). Hey’s (2011) excellent research⁵ on the Christian denomination – Hillsong – connects to a similar international panorama of the current religious flow. Hey (2011:3) identifies that although globally the megachurch phenomenon has grown quickly; it is not exclusive to Pentecostalism. Also helpful for this concept, Einstein (2008) in *Brands of Faith*, uses the concept of **brands** in a general sense for the marketing of religion in this commercial age.

⁶ This specific context of globalisation gave birth to McDonaldisation (Ritzer 2013) and influenced the theology and mission methods of the Church Growth Movement (Bosch 1991a:409-420). The ICOC goal was clearly to evangelise the world in this generation with its slogan being ‘the evangelization of the world in this generation’ (Castellanos 2011:33; Lappeman 2014:31). At its core, *self-preservation* is an aspect that links all these concepts together.

⁷ All these authors listed were friends and influenced by Ivan Illich, after his forced removal from the area of missiology and theology. Cayley (2021:16-19) divided his life work into four stages, they are travellers of his 2nd to 4th stages.

⁸ See Appendix Q for complete guide as to the meaning of the images.

⁹ For more general information on CO, see United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG, (n.d.).

the value of Roland Allen's *three-selves concept*,^{10 11} and the conflict between Allen's concept in tension with denominational *self-preservation*. The data highlights the *resilient spirituality* in which it faced the messy collapse of the RBO, the International Church of Christ (ICOC). This lived experience, as *lived religion*, has led to the following assertion.

1.0.2 'She' – *mystical body of Christ*

I¹² have a problem with the historical and recent application of 'the evangelization of the world in this generation' (Mott 2020; Castellanos 2011:33; Lappeman 2014:31), due to its use in the denomination of the case study. This adaptation of the biblical text (Matt. 28:18-20) has been a *slogan* or *watchword*¹³ (Bosch 1983; 1991a)¹⁴ for many Evangelical/Protestant (EVAN/PROT) missionary endeavours (title of book written by Mott 2020).¹⁵ I am not alone with this concern as

¹⁰ Allen held that mission work should be from its beginnings: financially self-funded, self-government, resulting in self-expansion. This is the "three-selves" concept in a nutshell (Bosch 1991a:378; Sanneh 2008:2). This theory or concept was not original to Allen; Rheinbolt-Urbe (2013) outlines the historical background and the application for ICI-CO. It is important to note that the first two missionary statesmen who used the term were Henry Venn, General Secretary of the AC Missionary Society (UK), and Rufus Andeson, General Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. They were the first to use the term *indigenous church* in the field of cross-cultural missionary engagement (cf. Bosch 1991:450).

¹¹ There are several ways of expressing the same concept. Bosch (1991a) uses *three-selves* and links it to a 'policy' (:307), a 'formula' (:378), a 'model' (:450), and 'the aim of mission' (:450). For this research, I choose a variation of Bosch's *three-selves*, *three-selves*. I use the term concept with it. I understand it as a conceptual framework.

¹² A dynamic of self-naming and third-person pronouns will be found throughout the dissertation. This *view from the inside* cannot be done without *self-mention* (Kafes 2017; Tao 2021:118-134). Tao explains how different disciplines are being conducted more and more with self-mention as research positionality is increasingly accepted and understood as being contextual. Richards (2013) Stellenbosch dissertation applies *self-mentioning*. (Wepener (2015:272) discloses his own thinking behind *self-mentioning* in the SA theological context, "I write this article mostly in the first person singular, seeing that both my person and identity as a researcher as well as my own experiences while doing research are of integral importance in order to develop the argument I would like to advance here". In unison, Kanyoro (2002:11) states, "Thus, I write from within and that is reflected in I inclusive pronouns, such as 'we' and 'us', which violates the rule; I am part of this story and must write from within".

¹³ Bosch applies both terms. In 1978 he repeats the word *slogan* and then in 1991a he primarily uses *watchword* but also *slogan* in the way I am using it. In two occasions he refers to 'the evangelization of the world in this generation' as a *slogan* (Bosch 1991a:324), the other mentions are in the context of *watchword*. Following footnote continues this analysis.

¹⁴ Carefully reading of Bosch (1991a) finds that he is repeating this over 10 times. Most are in reference to the 1910 Ecumenical surge, with Mott at front. But he also identifies another moment, 1960, when the *watchword* is used in a conference in Chicago: "Evangelicals rallied around a revival of the SVM *watchword* about "the total evangelization of the world...in this generation"; a congress of the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association" (1991a:339, italics added). Cf. Bosch (1991a:530) for a well-rounded explanation of Mott's ideal.

¹⁵ Bosch (1991a:340) explains that the appeal to Matthew 28:18-20 has been mostly applied by evangelical Anglo-Saxons. After 1910, in the USA it became a driving motive for engaging in mission. He (1991a:341) believes that hardly any effort had been made to understand the biblical text from the original biblical context, and that it "removes the church's involvement in mission from the domain of *gospel* to that of *law*" (italics in the original). Bosch (1983) wrote on Matthew 28:18-20, delving missiologically into the biblical text and its missiological misuse. This connects to my personal concern with the *slogan* and its USA context.

from their own standpoint other missiologists have held a similar *gut-theology* (Hendricks 2004:167, 169). These missiologists Bosch, Illich, and Allen have held a similar view.

Illich, a contemporary of Bosch, held similar concerns also from the USA-LA dynamic. Illich (2015:n.p.) alerts to the study of missiology, stating: “[I]t must be remembered that the missionary church today everywhere in the world does not find itself facing just an individual state structure, but rather a world of international development”.¹⁶ Allen, a century ago, was also concerned and wrote half a century on these themes (Rutt 2018a; 2018b; Allen as a post-colonial thinker).¹⁷

The linking of these three missiologists provides a solid theoretical and conceptual framework (Chapter 2) for this empirical and theological study. The texts at the centrefold for each are: Bosch (1991a) *Transforming mission: Paradigm shifts in theology of mission*;¹⁸ Cayley (2021) *Ivan Illich: An intellectual journey*; and two works by Rutt: Rutt (2018a) *Roland Allen: A missionary life* and (2018b) *Roland Allen: A theology of mission*.¹⁹

Transforming mission (Bosch 1991a) envisions a new paradigm. The first third of the book is a biblical study; the second third is a historical study; and the final third is an envisioned paradigm describing thirteen (multi)dimensional aspects of mission that must be held in creative tension (Kritzinger 2011:32-34). This research project holds to Bosch’s (1991a:47) underlying assumption: “[T]he early Christian mission involved the person of Jesus himself. It remains impossible, however, to fit Jesus into a clearly circumscribable framework. Schweizer rightly

¹⁶ Illich’s concern was with the influence of the USA as a dominate culture and its influence on LA.

¹⁷ Rutt (2018a:69-70) unpacks: Allen’s “examination of the early church’s expansion challenged him to develop a missionary ecclesiology rooted in a socio-spiritual commitment to transform the weak, the disenfranchised, and the poor. He began to formulate a ‘charismatic’ understanding of an empowered ministry-from below”.

¹⁸ Annemie Bosch, Bosch’s widow is an active and constant participant in this research project. In personal communication expresses her view: “*Transforming Mission* is also excellent and a very important read for missionaries, and those who support them - a basic kind of work from which people can extrapolate and use that which applies to their own particular interests”.

¹⁹ I am aware of the difference, as the second two are secondary texts compared to Bosch as a primary text. An exhausted and comprehensive book by a single scholar regarding Bosch’s life and work would be a great asset, as Rutt and Cayley have embarked upon.

calls him ‘the man who fits no formula’ (1971) . . . In all our discussions about Jesus’ mission we should keep this perspective in mind”.²⁰

1.1 LOCUS OF ENUNCIATION

Grosfoguel (2011) explains the *locus of enunciation*: “[T]he geo-political and body-political location of the subject that speaks. In Western philosophy and sciences, the subject that speaks is always hidden, concealed, and erased from the analysis”. Penner (2018:193) explores the SA missiological approach – the *seven-step praxis cycle* – which uses more than one word to describe this important step in research and communication, namely: (i) insertion into action (Kritzinger); (ii) agency (Kritzinger); and (iii) identification (Karecki). I prefer *locus of enunciation* due to the image it produces as naming the ‘place’ of where the announcing, discourse, or dialogue has been formed or influenced by.

Although each of the conversation partners has been formed from a different context and different contents, they share similar theological insights for a new missiological understanding of being church. They also allow for a theological study which is then brought into conversation with the empirical point of view of this qualitative-driven study. The theological and empirical perspectives develop a hermeneutical circle of *mutuality*. Following more specific details of their place of discourse or their *locus of enunciation* is described as a puzzle. This *locus of enunciation* puzzle has several parts: (1) the conversation partners Bosch, Illich, and Allen - linked by the moratorium debate; (2) the researcher: an insider/outsider, creative, and shaped by motherhood and ecclesiastical legacy of *historylessness*; (3) the importance of African scholarship; and (4) the Colombian matricentric context. These pieces of the locus of enunciation puzzle come together to provide the reader with a comprehensive view of the study’s *locus of enunciation*.

²⁰ Bosch (1991a:512-518) concludes his multidimensional concept of mission around six major ‘salvific events’ portrayed in the New Testament: (1) the incarnation of Christ; (2) Jesus’ death on the cross; (3) Jesus’ resurrection on the third day; (4) Jesus’ ascension; (5) the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost; and (6) the Parousia. None of these events relate to a formula or strategy.

1.1.1 Locus of enunciation: Bosch, Illich & Allen

The *locus of enunciation* of the chosen missiologists: Bosch, Allen, and Illich was within a specific embodied context, not only as males – white and Western-trained – along with this following list: historically, ecclesiological, geographically, politically, and even their recorded practices of spirituality. What they all have in common, with all the readers of this dissertation, is that they were born of a mother biologically and were nurtured by caregivers at a tender age. This nurturing was of utmost importance to their development and the formation of their vocation in life. It was through this care that they were instilled with the values and beliefs that would become the foundation of their missiology. Table 1 lists some of their biographic information:

Table 1: Biographic details of main conversation partners

David Bosch (1929-1992)	South African (SA) Afrikaner	Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) minister
Ivan Illich (1926-2002)	Dalmatian-Austrian <i>Errant Pilgrim</i> (Illich 2002:234)	Roman Catholic (RC) Priest
Roland Allen (1868-1947).	British (UK)	Voluntary Anglican Clergy (AC) Priest

The research shows (Chapter 5) that this care they received was important in their vocation of a lifetime of reflective thinking and publishing as well as the constant support of their wives, children, and/or closest friends. This support was essential for their success as missiologists and provided an environment of encouragement and guidance that enabled them to pursue their passion and to reach the highest levels of achievement. The presence of their families, friends, and colleagues provided a network of support and understanding that allowed them to fully explore and express their missiological views and ideas.

It is clear that the care and support they received throughout their lives had a profound impact on the development of their missiology and their commitment to service, which has had far-reaching implications for the world. The work of these missiologists has left an indelible mark on the field of missiology and has served as an inspiration to countless others who have chosen to pursue similar paths.

Their closest friends and family created places for emotional and/or financial support. Especially after delinking themselves financially from their denominations (by force [Illich]; by ethical commitments [Allen]; or for a broader platform of outreach [Bosch]). From these *liminal spaces* or *thresholds* (Turner 1995) in *liminality* (Turner 1995) or a chosen path of *spirituality of liminality* (Wepener 2015; Wepener and Nell 2021); all three decided to live their vocations as missiologists and theologians. They *created spaces* (Haig-Brown 2003) or hubs for research. From a foundation of missiological thought, they confronted the pressing questions of their day.

Illich moved in several hubs, what he called *researching with people*. His first hubs were based in Mexico (MX) and Brazil (BR), and later shifted to MX, USA, and Germany (DE). He created a concept of research in *dining room consultations* and/or *living room consultations* (Cayley 2021:4, 422-23). Illich always held close to his RC Tradition. Cayley (2005:31; 2021:460-61) identifies Illich's identification with the gospel as his main inner motor and guidance for his thinking, analysis, and critique. Cayley (2021:83-93) is aware that this might surprise the readers of Illich as he kept this hidden for decades – when engaged in the secular sphere. This decision was after the inquisition he faced at the Vatican where he promised not to address RC audiences. But Cayley (2021:86) highlights: “Illich neither left the Church nor renounced his priesthood. Rather he ‘suspended’ all exercise of his official functions”.

*Conviviality*²¹ was key for Illich (Cayley 2021:383) illustrates: “He to whom you as a free human being establish your personal proportionality by turning to him in love and inviting him to the *mutuality* of love which is usually called friendship” (*italics added*). Illich envisioned a theology of mission or mode of mission – where families (and friends) gather face-to-face *around a table* instead of an impersonal *around the altar*. Illich (2019:108) highlights (Cayley [2021:66] confirms): “Celebration will sanctify the dining room”. This concept can be connected to Bosch's New Testament inspired, *table-fellowship* concept (see section 2.2.1). And it can link to Allen's *family rite* (Allen 1983:137-147; Rutt 2018a:54, 56, 139; Rutt 2018b:174).

²¹ Leao (2022:77) provides the precise definition of *conviviality* for this study: “In this sense, ‘convivial is a technical term to designate a modern society of responsibly limited tools.’ That is why the term is applied to tools rather than to people. A shared house, therefore, in the context of how Illich uses the term, is not necessarily convivial, although people are ‘living with’ one another. What determines a convivial society is a relation between people and their tools and to which extent this relation sprouts new collectively”.

Bosch's research base was the University of South Africa (UNISA). (Previous lived over a decade in the Eastern Cape, then called the Transkei, where he and his family lived and worked with the AmaBomvana Tribe of the Xhosa Nation, and at the Decoligny Theological School near the then, Umtata.) Allen as a freelance *missionary methods-analyst* (first in China; then in the United Kingdom [UK]; and his final decade in Kenya) (Rutt 2018a:43; Allen 1995). This provides not only an abundant source of insight for this specific research project, but also a source of inspiration for the researcher. This insider/outsider research connects to *a view from the inside* (Bosch 1991a:26), as he, Allen, and Illich researched from this *liminal space*. (Bosch borrows this phrase from Nell's [1988] *critical hermeneutics*). Their personal biographies provide clues to Guider (1996: 151-161) integrating Bosch's texts (1991a), for practical clues for those who seek to be emergent, *postmodern*, ecumenical mission practitioners. Bosch (1979) discusses *missionary spirituality* and *spirituality of the road*, but his personal biography is the best way to grasp it (see sections 2.3.5 & 2.3.6 for more recent developments of these concepts).²² Bosch, Illich, and Allen all were involved in what is known as the *moratorium debate*. The following sections link their interactions around the same event.

1.1.2 Locus of enunciation: Linked by moratorium debate

The study is grounded in Bosch but is a constant movement of intertwining of all three. Bosch also dialogued with them.²³ The theme that links them is what is known in missiology as the *moratorium or the moratorium debate*. In 1967, Illich published an article in the Jesuit publication *America*²⁴ that voiced his worries about the US RC tradition and its adaptation of a similar mission to 'the evangelization of the world in this generation' (Mott 2020) with particular attention to LA RC (cf. Kirk 2000:185; Barnes 2013:314-15; Cayley 2021:51, 82). In the PROT/EVAN Traditions, Allen's writings were rediscovered during this *moratorium debate*, bringing his thinking into the fury of the heated missiological conversation (cf. Castro 1975). Hurbert Allen

²² Annemie Bosch (personal conversation March 18, 2023) asserts *A spirituality of the road* (1979) as one of his most important works. She points out a lesser-known work as his most important, according to fellow missionaries amongst the amaXhosa. The book is called *Vuthelani Ixilongo* (eds. Mbenenge, et al. 2009) 'Blow the trumpet'; it unites 41 excerpts from Bosch's sermons mainly from 1957 to 1965. A translation to English of this book, written in Xhosa, as well as its incorporation to Bosch scholarship is noted for further research projects.

²³ Bosch (1991a:436, 493) dialogues with Illich, and Bosch (1978:288, 1991a:40, 114, 123, 378-79, 307, 450) with Allen.

²⁴ This *moratorium call* was launched in Illich's (2018:90-99) article, 'The seamy side of charity'. Illich was not a liberation theologian but brought together the main thinkers within LA liberation theology. He created spaces for the development of their research in Cuernavaca, MX and Petropolis, BR (Smith 1991:118-19, 121, 142, 154, 168, 261 n.8).

(1995:1, quoting McLeish) connects his grandfather's work to the context around that time period, "[H]is use of Scripture and methodology seem to align him with the liberation theologians of today").^{25 26}

In the midst of the *moratorium debate*, Bosch (1978) outlines his concern and challenges in the article, 'Towards *true mutuality*: Exchanging the same commodities or supplementing each others' Needs?' (italics added). Bosch highlights his envisioned future, with an idealistic *true mutuality*. Thirteen years later, Bosch (1991a:518) only uses the word *moratorium* once. In the context of describing the moment and listing the first PROT to make the *moratorium call*, Gatu²⁷ and Nacpil (in 1971).²⁸ It is important to note that this call was four years after Illich's.

Bosch (1991a:379) displays his profound admiration for Allen: emphasises, "The first person to have attacked this entire edifice head-on was Roland Allen" – in reference to Allen's first book, published in 1912, *Missionary methods: St. Pauls' or ours?* In email communication (Dec. 7, 2022) Annemie Bosch links Bosch and Allen: "*I just wanted to add, we used the work of Roland Allen when we were in the mission, and we studied it very thoroughly and intensely – Missionary methods: Saint Paul's or ours – and we were very impressed with all of it*". My parents also built their medical mission endeavours (1970-1985) in Guatemala (GT) grounded in Allen's thinking.

²⁵ The LA liberation theologians attempted to make a break with the logical and systematic approach to theology in the 1960s and 70s. There is a myriad of philosophical, historical, theological, sociological, anthropological, cultural, and economical influences on this epistemological break which has affected theology around the world. Smith (1991) *The emergence of liberation theology: Radical religion and social movement theory* and Barger (2018) *The world come of age: An intellectual history of liberation theology*, both highlight the theological motor of the liberation theology movement. In general, the base line in liberation theology is the importance of people-centered theology. Bosch (1991a:423-432) explains, the common point of reference, "preference for the poor" can be applied to "those on the periphery". Bosch (1991a:432-447) – discusses in this section 'Mission as liberation'. Cayley (2021:57, 81) addresses this historical shift in theology in LA scholarship. Cf. Neely (1978); Kirk (1979; 1980); Gutiérrez (1973); Santiago-Vendrell (2010); Boff and Boff (2013); Barger (2018). Of these Bosch (1991a) dialogues with Boff (1983; 1984; 1986); Kirk (1986); Gutiérrez (1988). Cayley (2021:57, 81) addresses this historical shift in theology in LA scholarship.

²⁶ My research has drawn an assumption that Allen has largely been misunderstood and that there is much to draw from his work for this day and age. More research is needed to discern the conclusions drawn upon his books 'discovered' in the 1960s and 1970s. I find that the lens used to read them were mainly the Church Growth Movement (connected to *managerial missiology*) and some post-colonial nationalistic revolutionaries. My reading finds that his voice has much more to say to this day and age. They might have missed much of what Allen had to say.

²⁷ Cf. Gatu (2016) autobiographic description in *Fan into flame*.

²⁸ More current work on the topic of international partnerships, the dynamics of mission partnerships and enterprises that I have consulted include Ross (2010); Dean (2013); Barnes (2013; 2016); Cueva (2015); and Young III (2021). I continue to believe (Rheinbolt-Urbe 2013:18, quoting Materson [1978]) that the issue at the heart of this discussion, "The old truism still holds that the source of funds is the seat of authority".

As part of this research journey, I made an examination of the missiological scholarship of the 60s and 70s in my father's library. I observed a repetitive cycle in my research topic.²⁹ Barger (2018:1-10) recognises a similar pattern. By understanding this circularity, I felt an intellectual connection to the theorists – Bosch, Allen, and Illich. As I delved deeper into their works, I found that their views aligned with my own thoughts and perceptions. But I will now describe a bit of my *locus of enunciation*.

1.1.3 Locus of enunciation: Researcher

I am also white, USA middle class, mainly Western-educated, and was profoundly moved by this *slogan*: ‘the evangelization of the world in this generation’. This moved me in all my mission endeavours (before the collapse of the RBO).³⁰ Even since first embarking on a mission planting expedition to MX as a volunteer mission practitioner (GRMP). I was an undergraduate student at Universidad Nacional de Mexico (UNAM) pursuing a degree in International Relations and planting a campus ministry. My parents worked as medical mission practitioners in the Church of Christ denomination for the Stone-Campbell Tradition (SCT) in Guatemala (GT) and Mexico (MX).^{31 32} My parents were profoundly moved by this *slogan* from their youth.

In that context, my parents read Roland Allen. Below is a quote that my father, Dr. Richard Rheinbolt, wrote me in email communication. I used the quote in a final paper,³³ where I set ICI-CO within the context of having applied the *three-selves concept*, after the collapse (Rheinbolt-Urbe 2013:18-19):³⁴

²⁹ Tillich's (2014) hypothesis is anxiety lead societies towards order or chaos, and it tends to hold a cyclical pattern.

³⁰ Although I would describe myself more as an infusion (such as in herbal tea) of diverse avenues of gaining experience and knowledge, as this dissertation attest to. As a child I only lived in the USA for five years, and as an adult for only three (from age 18 to 20 in a college dorm at Tufts University, and in 2020-21 due to circumstances around the COVID-19 pandemic and this research project).

³¹ Nugent (2022:21-22) defines: “[O]ne of the largest Christian traditions indigenous to the USA – almost 4 million adherents”. Nugent (2022) identifies three main denominations within this tradition: (i) Church of Christ (COC); (ii) Christian Church/Church of Christ (CC/COC), and (iii) Disciples of Christ (DOC). DOC is a founding member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and is involved with the Ecumenical Movement.

³² (Cf. Olbricht 2012a:149-50, 238, 240; Hile 2016 for details).

³³ This final paper was prepared of IC 672 (History of christian mission) taught by Dr. Michael Lee, at LCU.

³⁴ Allen's thinking, for example his understanding of the *three-selves concept* captures much of what has been evidenced in the research (Bosch 1978:288; 1991a:40, 114, 123, 378-79, 307, 450). This was assumed beforehand (Rheinbolt-Urbe 2013), and the research confirmed this. This links to the contents of Chapter 7. (Image of *walking together* in the Christian faith in contrast to being on a fast-moving **global train system**).

“Renee, yes, we were very much into Roland Allen's mission ideas and were well grounded in his books. People worry more about being able to support their families than to support the spontaneous expansion of the Kingdom. They want to be able to control the movement as well, the same things have held back the church everywhere. Among the Quiche [Indigenous People Group in GT] we were convinced of what needed to be done and paid quite a price in the Church of Christ politics to do so, but today there are over 100 congregations and 1000's of believers in Christ because we did!!!! But very few learned the lessons and still 50 years after George Gurganus³⁵ started teaching the three-selves, the Church of Christ and many others are still making the same mistakes, yet there are spontaneous movements in the 3rd world [Global South] which got things going on their own or pulled away from the missionaries from US or Europe. I believe much prayer and fasting are indicated”.

True, each generation must figure out how to live out their understanding of God's mission. And, the past is past, but it can be reflected upon to seek the best today and tomorrow (Bosch's definition of *postmodern* 1991a:531).³⁶ But these words ring as true for me today as I have delved into this case study:

Whilst the zeal for mission and the self-sacrificing dedication evidenced in these circles must be applauded, one cannot help wondering whether they are really rendering a valid and long-term solution. Our spiritual forebears may perhaps be pardoned for not having been aware of the fact that they were facing a crisis. Present generations, however, can hardly be excused for *their* lack of awareness (1991a:7, *italics* in the original).

1.1.4 Locus of enunciation: Insider/Outsider researcher

At the time of the collapse, my husband and I were in Argentina, as the hub of the expanding South American mission work was now Buenos Aires. We had been in Bogota working with ICO-CO since the beginning of the church planting in April 1992 until leaving for Venezuela in Oct. 2000. Below is a quote from Personal Reflection #5 that sheds light into my role:

*“My positionality is central as I am actively engaged in building the **global train system**, in ICI-CO and other countries. In 1992 I came to Colombia and brought the system, and after a few months, I was left in charge by the USA couple that left to lead a main base congregation for ICOC LA. I*

³⁵ Gurganus, unpublished dissertation at Penn State (1964), based on the three-selves concept: An audience analysis of three missionary-supported and three-indigenous Christian congregations in Tokyo, Japan.

³⁶ Bosch (1991a:531), basing his understanding on Kung and Martin, he defines *postmodern* as a “term ‘post’ looks backward and forward at the same time”. For him it is a “heuristic notion, as a search concept”. He recognises that it is an ‘awkward term’, which he replaces with ‘ecumenical’. I understand it as the way Bosch in the present looks at the past, envisioning the future. I try to do the same in this dissertation. Bosch (1991a:183) details this relationship between the present, past, and future: “We do not do this for ‘archaeological’ purposes, that is, just to satisfy our curiosity about the way past generations perceived their missionary responsibility. Rather, we do it also, and primarily, with a view to getting a deeper insight into what mission might mean for us today. After all, every attempt at interpreting the past is indirectly an attempt at understanding the present and the future”.

played a key role up to 2000,³⁷ when my husband and I left for Venezuela. Although there were many of us involved in the congregation that was growing and expanding, locally, nationally, and internationally, my fingerprints were widespread”.

The shift with the collapse was drastic, as I describe in section 7.1 – ‘First step: Assume responsibility’:

“Previously, I was basically, alongside my husband, the Chief Executive Officer of the ICI-CO, and now I was figuring out how to make the budget to put food on our table, walking long distances as there was not enough funds to pay for city buses, and adapting to drastic changes in health care and educational systems for our children. I understood these shifts in lifestyle choices as part of my repentance for the previous participation in the international corporate RBO, whereas high-level management allowed for privileges that were not ethically correct for a Christian worker.”

This personal quotes from the dissertation allow for a view of the dynamics of the insider/outsider researcher position.

1.1.5 Locus of enunciation: Motherhood

I found that connecting with my personal *motherhood* experience allowed me to liberate myself, but I had to build this for myself (Appendix L: Motherline Identity). What this looked like for me varied depending on my specific situation. Having three babies within two years, being far from my own *motherline*, and the health issues we faced in the first two years forced me to question many aspects of the mission organisation I was a part of. The research journey has shown that much of the paradigm shift I identify with the collapse of the denomination, is actually closely linked to the pregnancy of twins in 1998. I was confirmed to have a long-term bed rest and then confined for many months after their premature births. The mission methods and theology of mission did not provide answers for this experience. William (2018) describes this theologically as *thinking with our bodies* and the flexibility of movements between dependence, autonomy, and receiving. These are movements that can be experienced with *maternal-thinking* and *thinking-with-the-womb*.

³⁷ Although the effort to remember and ‘connect dots’ led to realising that I was not that involved with many day-to-day ministry activities since my second pregnancy with twins. Caring for three babies under two years old was extremely challenging.

The following sources influenced this *maternal-thinking*: Kiboko's (2001:213) *thinking-with-the womb*; Kanyoro's (2002) African perspective on *feminist cultural hermeneutics*; and Marcel's (2021) *Mother of invention: How good ideas get ignored in an economy built for men*. It is family-centred, over female-centred, inspired by *womanism*. Armas (2021) provides *abuela theology*. O'Reilly's (2021) *Matricentric feminism* is another term that helps to understand this maternal-thinking lens and logic. O'Reilly states that it is vital to continue to use the terms 'mother' and 'mothering' (gender neutral term for caregiving of children). In the shift to the term 'parenting', issues around *motherhood* are erased, as the term confirmed in research on academic mothers during the COVID-19 pandemic (:26). O'Reilly's view is consistent with my own experience as a mother in a high-level management role in a mission organisation.

Motherline (Lowinsky 2009) has been the way I found to confront the legacy of *historylessness* in the denomination. This has contributed to the *maternal-thinking* lens.³⁸ Inspired by Moltmann's (2000) *Experiences in theology: Ways and forms of Christian theology* and in Kanyoro's (2002:3) statement: "theology is but a tool to help tell the story of God's doing in Bware".³⁹ The current research knits together, with empirical data, a *transforming mutuality* in a contextualised theology of mission (cf. Bosch 1991a:489-498; Kirk 1997; Bevans and Schroeder 2004; eds. Ott, Straus and Tennent 2010; Kritzing 2011; Whiteman 2020).

This image once again is inspired by Mason's (2018:169) *researcher-generated materials* – an understanding of eight potential stages of a female maternal body. This is inspired in a concept Stoljar (2017) explains as *relational autonomy*⁴⁰ and Williams (2018) *thinking with our bodies*. It highlights the flexibility of the heart and mind, especially when reversal of roles stage is initiated. When one's children begin their young adult years, as they continue their search for personal

³⁹ Bware, Kenya, is Kanyoro's hometown.

⁴⁰ *Relational autonomy* (Stoljar 2017) is a philosophical concept constructed especially by females, where it understands that due to love, out of freedom, a human can submit to situations, difficulties, and pain. This makes sense in Bosch's description (1991c:208-209) of the *victim-missionary* with the idea of a broken Christ and a God who "suffers with, co-suffers". Bosch highlights (1991c:207) "The broken Christ is the one who heals the broken world". When deciding to become a mother, one must accept the risks that come with it: physical, emotional, economic, and spiritual. But these risks also have the potential to yield great rewards in those same areas. One can only discover the positive outcomes by moving forward with this decision. This concept has beautiful parallels with missional implications.

identity and *self-understandings*. I suggest the following two terms I created aid this description: *creating space to give space* and *leaning in* (joining one's child and learning from them instead of direct conflict). Also, I found a theological concept: *mutual distancing* (Lovelace 1980:309-313). This is a freedom that leads to a shift in the relationship. This is inspired by Illich's research on *embodied knowledge* (Cayley 2021:244-277, 339).⁴¹

Vaughan (2015; 2020) contributes from an alternative perspective, *maternal gift economy*, encourages a *maternal-thinking* about this issue of gift and debt. Back to the case study, as trust was shattered, for some of us freedom was a 'return to mother' or to the *motherline*. The social *glue* with the biological mother turned out to be much stronger and reliable than the RBO; for me personally, but also in the case study, this is a thread throughout the study. Armas (2021:40) explains my experience when I turned towards the *motherline* in *abuela theology*:

The journey of spiritual conocimineto [knowledge], of inner and divine exploration, that many of us find ourselves on is a task of going backwards, of reaching into the past to reclaim the wisdom of our *abuelas* [grandmothers] and our ancestors. I believe part of this wisdom includes their understanding of the *interconnectedness* of all people, nature, and God (*italics added*).

This *motherline* movement of – in the present, going to the past, to be stronger tomorrow, links with Bosch's definition of *postmodern* already provided. The *interconnectedness* Annemie Bosch mentions, is also found in Bosch, see section 2.2.1.

⁴¹ Other religious knowledge and practices such as *Ashrama*, the Hindu four stages of life⁴¹ (Eid 1971) elucidate these thoughts. Additionally, Jewish mysticism (Cayley 2021:235-36, 454) in Luria's *Tzimtzum*, where God in creation, as an infinite light, in a sense of *mutuality*, to allow for *conceptual space*, goes through *self-contracting* (ed. Alexander 1994:302). Missiology, as a space of interreligious dialogue, opens the door for these dialogues (Bosch 1991a:474-489). Mission as 'witness to people of other faiths' can 'surprise' in assistance with 'unsolved puzzles' (:483). Rutt (2018a:21-48, 117-126) indicates, Allen also gained insight into the Christian faith through his dialogue with Confucianism and Taoism. Rutt (2018a:21-48, 117-126) emphasises Allen interaction with Islam; and similar to Bosch, Rutt (2018a:37) explains Allen held to the "claims of Christ's uniqueness as revealed in biblical revelation". Encyclopedia Britannica (2023) provides a brief outline of the four stage of *Ashrama*: (1) the student (*brahmachari*), marked by chastity, devotion, and obedience to one's teacher; (2) the householder (*grihastha*), requiring marriage, the begetting of children, sustaining one's family and helping support priests and holy men, and fulfillment of duties toward gods and ancestors; (3) the forest dweller (*vanaprastha*), beginning after the birth of grandchildren and consisting of withdrawal from concern with material things, pursuit of solitude, and ascetic and yogic practices; and (4) the homeless renouncer (*sannyasi*), involving renouncing all one's possessions to wander from place to place begging for food, concerned only with union with *brahman* (the Absolute).

We return to Illich who Cayley (2021:431, quoting Hoinacki) notes was “doing theology in a new way”. Cayley (2021:433-34) describes Illich’s social analysis as meant to envision a time when: “the understanding of religion will shift away from the prevalent picture of exclusive clubs that provide ‘identity’ to those who hold a membership card”. The CO context of a matricentric society sheds light into the liminal spaces between the understanding of religion or Christian churches as ‘exclusive clubs’ that create a *bubble identity* and the interact with a society where identity provided from the kin unit or residential unit where a mother is the emotional centre.

1.1.6 Locus of enunciation: Creative researcher

The impact of facing a profound awareness of participating in the collapse of the RBO has guided me towards embracing a role as a *creative researcher* (Mason 2018).⁴² The case study research of a Colombian congregation is approached with ample creativity (Chapter 4 outlines the methodology). An aspect of this creativity is using not only concepts but also images to describe the research and as a way of visualising the data.

I also take the cue from Schreier (1985:66-70). He mentions that missiological research can be seen as an attempt to understand the signs, codes, messages, and metaphors that make up a culture. By studying the boundary markers of a culture, it is possible to get an idea of that culture's general identity. The edges of codes can also provide insight into how those codes work; what effect they have on the signs they contain. Continuing to be nudged (Schreier 1985:62-63), cultural texts add robustness to missiological analysis of World Art (music, poetry, and plastic arts). It provides the richest data. He explains that it is the most difficult to analyse but worth the effort as it illustrates how people build up and maintain themselves. It is an act of cultural self-presentation and a medium in which people present themselves to others. Chapter 5 is a robust example of using Colombian cultural texts in relation to the cultural texts, which I find illustrates aspects of *motherhood* in Colombia not captured throughout other means. It is also used for Western/Global

⁴² Mason (2018:169-173) encourages creative observation and researcher-generated materials.

North cultural art and symbols, for example a **train** symbolising progress, and a **HAND** as “the **HAND** of God”.⁴³

This approach links to Bosch (1991a:531 quoting Stackhouse): “We also need the dimension of *poiesis*, which he defines as the ‘imaginative creation or representation of evocative images. People do not only need truth (theory) and justice (praxis); they also need beauty, the rich resources of symbol, piety, worship, love, awe, and mystery”. The legacy of the SCT of a pragmatic, predictable, and rational approach to understanding the spiritual is identified in the early 19th century in the USA. Noll (1983:184), specifies: “[T]hey were less successful at teaching people to bow in awe and wonder, admitting that a person’s destiny does, in fact, lie outside one’s own hands”. An aspect of this pragmatic, predictable, and rational approach was a cutting from the past or *historylessness*.

1.1.7 Locus of enunciation: Historylessness of denomination

Extensive research into the overall history of the denomination has discovered a theological *historylessness*⁴⁴ (cf. Paden 1994; Shipps 1995; Veracini 2007) as a legacy. There is a theological stance of disregarding the ecclesiastical past. Crises, for example, were not embraced. As a result, *structural evil*, *structural sins*, and *systemic sins* tend not to be recognised or dealt with. The solution tends to be to start a new group.

I was born with this legacy, as my family goes back many generations in the Stone-Campbell Tradition (SCT) or also known as the Restoration Movement (RM). This theological *historylessness* began in this broad Christian tradition. A theological path for cutting off from the past was built by the most influential SCT theologian and social critic, Alexander Campbell. He is identified as the **locomotive engineer** for the SCT (imagery in bold will be explained in section 1.3.1).

⁴³ RISD Museum (Providence, RI) displays the sculpture, *The hand of God* (Rodin 1917), as it is “evoking the act of a divine creator (in dramatic contrast) with the delicate bodies intertwined in a primal embrace”. This metaphor of the hand, I connect to *missio Dei* (see section 2.2.1).

⁴⁴ *Historylessness* is a term used to explain the Latter-Saint restorationism view of history (Shipps 1995) and settler colonialism in Australia (Veracini 2007). Additionally, Paden (1994) uses the term to connect the COC and ICOC. The more common term is ahistorical. Its theological underpinnings have been found in Barton Stone, Alexander Campbell, and Walter Scott. These SCT key ministers were creators of this theological thinking in the USA (Ellingson 2000:210, 405; Noll 1983:170, 184, 210-211).

The ability to start fresh and form Christian organizations that are seen as ‘purer’ or the only ‘true’ Christian community is a significant part of religious history. Theologically, this can lead to some individuals viewing those who were previously believers or belong to other faiths as non-Christians. This provides an easy explanation for misdeeds by saying ‘they did these things because they aren't (or weren't) Christians’. Chapter 3 explores these ideas further regarding SCT, COC, ICOC and its impact on ICI-CO.

1.1.8 Locus of enunciation: African scholarship

African scholarship provides a vantage point for this case study. Research on ICO-CO by Castellanos (2011) and Diaz Castro (2014) invites an African perspective. Castellanos (2011) provides a detailed account of the historical background of the denomination; its emergence in Colombia; the institutional consequences of the collapse; the way the congregation (now a network of congregations throughout Colombia) faced the crisis; and the rebuilding of the ICI-CO from an insider and institutional perspective. Diaz Castro (2014) builds upon Castellanos (2011) with a missiological concern, providing a method of evangelism, developed on his understanding of the first century mission endeavours, *Soy igual que mi vecino* (My neighbour and I are the same). His view is that ICI-CO has lost its evangelistic zeal, concluded by the qualitative and quantitative data analysis; his data interpretation of the numbers (the declining numerical growth since the collapse) and focus groups method.⁴⁵

This research builds upon the following research projects: Castellanos’ (2011) undergraduate thesis in theology in CO; and Diaz Castro’s (2014) master’s theological studies at Laurel University (USA). This present doctoral research undertaken from a distinct *locus of enunciation*, in a combined programme with SU and OCRPL. It builds upon the previous well-researched and robust work in relation to a small congregation. I believe the *locus of enunciation* from the perspective of another continent from African scholarship is essential.

⁴⁵ Bosch (1991a:409-420) discusses mission as evangelism in depth in section ‘Mission as evangelism’.

Keeping in mind the context of Colombia, in a 2016 conversation Dussel and Hinkelammert guide the way stating that the answers for LA lie in Africa (Filosofia 2018).⁴⁶ Colombian historian Uribe (2014:17, 22), building on the assumption of Africa as the world's mother, and consequently, is also Colombia's '*Africa la madre*' (Africa, the mother). Parallel to learning more about the indigenous groups such as the *Muisca* (original people group in the Bogota area prior to the arrival of the Spanish). The African heritage that makes up so much of Colombian *ethical-mythical nucleus* (a concept used by Dussel 1996:119-120, borrowing from Ricoeur). For several reasons, which include the large number of enslaved Africans who play a vital role in the historical narrative and consequent cultural influence (obvious in the ethnomusicological research as a background for the context of this research project, listed in section 4.8).

Almost a century ago missiologist Mackay (2001:3-4) pointed in the same direction, recognising Africa's historical spiritual impact on South America. As a large portion of missiological research is undertaken in universities in Europe or the USA, this research project at a SA university is a vital location for this case study. African missiological and theological research on identity is robust; hence, several African studies were consulted for this research.⁴⁷

Another aspect of African scholarship that is embraced is the location of the mother or the maternal as part of knowledge-making, such as the African concept *thinking-with-the-womb*. This

⁴⁶ Bosch, and other white scholars from SA who identify as Africans, is parallel to most LA liberation theologians who identify from LA even though they have European ancestors and doctorates from European universities. Identity can be an unclear subject and has led to critiques of Bosch's work. From my perspective, if Bosch is not African then consequently, LA liberation theologians such as Dussel or Boff might not be identified as from LA. Barger (2018:238-247) describes the complexity of identity issues among liberation theologians in the *Theology in the Americas* conference (Detroit 1975). For example, USA black liberation theologians undervalued the white LA. While those from LA identify the USA black theologians' relationship with the USA Empire. And to complicate matters further, the class and race struggle was compounded by the gender issue. The only woman from LA present took sides with her male colleagues from LA. This is an example of how complex these issues can be, as many factors make up our identity. Bosch (1991a:24) uses the term which he borrowed from Nel's *critical hermeneutics* (1988), *intersubjective*, to help explain this reality as interpreted reality based on *our self-definitions*. He continues, based on the shift in self-definitions of the early Christians, "reality changes if one's self-definition changes". Bosch bases this argument on Meyer (1986), which will be expanded in sections 2.2 and 2.3.4.

⁴⁷ A few of the scholars are: Kiboko 2001; Kanyoro 2002; Pemberton 2003; Hendricks 2004; Ferdinando 2007; Saayman 2007, 2010; Gathogo 2008; Simon 2009; Banda 2010; Mbaya 2011; Gatu 2016; Niemandt 2016a, 2016b; Forster 2019; White 2019; Masengwe 2020; Kaunda and Alubati 2021; Niemandt, D. and Niemandt, M. 2021; Wepener and Nell 2021; Kritzing 2022; White and Pondani 2022.

links to the case study which is in CO. Below is a brief description of the *locus of enunciation* built on scholarship around the maternal in CO and LA.

1.1.9 Locus of enunciation: Colombia as matricentric

When connected, keeping in view the collapse and rebuilding of ICI-CO (Smith 2017), relational causal influences are kept in view. From the social sciences, the ‘it’, there is an attempt to identify causal influences and causal powers. An aspect of causal powers kept in centrefold of this empirical work, is the relationship of mother and *motherhood*. This is from lived experience and the context of Colombia, where the matricentric tendencies continue. A powerful social *glue* and the private domain continues to be an important space for communal *togetherness* (cf. Brusco 1995; Gutiérrez de Pineda 1997; 2000; Serrano 2016:235-240). Nida (1974:128) locates what is still true in much of Colombia: “in Latin American society the mother is the emotional centre of the family”. Brusco (1995:144) extends this to the context in CO: “An attitude or belief characteristic among Colombian women is that the conjugal unit should cooperate to promote the well-being of ‘the family,’ which I will leave loosely defined as an important residential or kin unit”.⁴⁸

The home (residential or kin unit) is identified as a location of Christian teaching, fellowship, and Christian revival, of the EVAN/PROT groups (Brusco 1995:2, 143). Also in the RC tradition, gaining even more strength after Vatican II.⁴⁹ Barger (2018:76) explains these home Bible studies involving *conscientization* (Freire 1970). These communities are termed *base ecclesial communities* (BECs).⁵⁰ This connects to the kin or residential unit as the centre of rural Colombian economy and social *glue*. This is the focus of the ethnography work of Gudeman and Rivera (1990) in *Conversations in Colombia: the domestic economy in life and text*. This links to Brusco (1995:170) as she points to the fact that Colombia’s economy is still very tied to agriculture, to

⁴⁸ Fromm (1956) held a similar opinion, as did hooks (2018) who used Fromm to guide her argument. According to the author’s wishes, her name is spelt in only lower case, bell hooks.

⁴⁹ Bosch (1991a) mentions and expands on the implications of Vatican II (1962-1965) (cf. Bosch 1991a:238, 365, 369, 372, 374, 378, 379, 384, 385 to list a few of the references). Bosch (1991a:327) points to the 1968 conference of RC LA Bishops in Medellin, Colombia, as a turning point for liberation theology.

⁵⁰ Smith (1991:154, 187) notes Freire’s work with adult literacy led to this description of a ‘new’ relationship between knowledge, teacher, and student. Cf. Bosch 1991a:470-72 in dialogue with Boff as to the *ecclesias* or *critical congregations*.

the land, to the *domestic economy*.⁵¹ As noted in the previous paragraph, the maternal is vital within the Colombian residential or kin unit. Identifying these aspects of *locus of enunciation*, although extensive, provide a more specific view of how the research path will be taken for the case study at hand.

1.2 ICI COLOMBIA AS A CASE STUDY

A case study method allows for mixing methods (Mason 2018:37-42). The findings are displayed in several ways, including narratives in vignettes⁵² (such as suggested by Chilisa 2020:21). As a case study method is for exploring a research concern and its context from various angles to reveal multiple aspects (Silverman 2020:65, 73-76). Silverman (2020:74) emphasises: “[N]ot [to] worry that case studies are often reported as a complex narrative”.

The Global South perspective and primarily grassroots participants lead to Bosch (1991a:470-72).⁵³ Also, these drastic shifts can be understood, repeating Smith (2017:2, 260): “[R]eligions grow but also shift, change, and fail”. Bosch frames *Transforming mission* (1991a) and others, such as: *Mission to the world* (1980); ‘Re-evangelisation’ (1991b); and *The vulnerability of mission* (1991c), in the theme of crisis and even collapse.⁵⁴

ICI-CO provides the opportunity for a localised case study (Mason (2018:6, 206-210) of a missiological ‘shift, change, and fail [ure]’. A case study embraces a holistic view, so a narrative is important. It is important to note that ICI-CO could be defined as a stand-alone denomination, as it has its own legal entity and has functioned independent of any international ecclesiastical overseers since the international collapse of the international denomination in 2003. But the

⁵¹ Although new research (Bartel 2021) connects to problems that are surfacing as the growing movement of evangelical Christians, in Colombia, accumulate more credit card debt. She applies the term, *free market spirituality*. Further research could seek to connect the concept of RBO within Bartel’s findings.

⁵² See Appendix R1, R2, R3, and R4 for the vignettes.

⁵³ Bosch (1991a:378-380) discusses the ‘Apostolate of the laity’ under the section, ‘Mission as ministry by the whole people of God’ and sub-section ‘Rediscovering the local church’.

⁵⁴ Bosch (1991a:1-4) introduces this subject: (i) ‘Mission: The contemporary crisis’; (ii) ‘Between danger and opportunity and the wider crisis’; and then (iii) ‘Where the early church failed’- Bosch (1991a:50-52) delves into difficult questions in this regard.

researcher has given importance to its continued association with the denomination, ICOC and the broad tradition SCT (Chapter 3 describes this indepth).

The ‘it’ of the case study has a ‘legal name’. The name is *Iglesia ICI* (translated as ICI Church). ICI is not an abbreviation, it is a ‘legal name’. The process of legalising the congregation after the collapse was a long road. The process was finalised in 2010 (Castellanos 2011:81). Participant 112 was key in the success of this endeavour. He explained the complex process with much detail. I read the 100+ page legal document and asked him many specific questions. Participant 112 estimates that he spent at least 1,000 hours of his free time to this effect, as he served the community as a nonpaid grassroots mission practioner (GRMP) following the collapse. This line of questioning is not included in this dissertation so as not to identify the participant. The following sections give a snapshot of the ICI-CO community: now, in the collapse, and prior to the collapse.⁵⁵

1.2.1 ICI Colombia 2022 (now)

The current data allow for quanatative information of the community-at-large. For example, in December 2022, the ICI-CO community had 1,300 followers on YouTube and 1,350 subscribers on Facebook. This data suggests that many people were interested in engaging with ICI-CO during the pandemic. Due to the pandemic, to further their reach, ICI-CO created constant material on their YouTube channel by March 29, 2020. They began offering Sunday Services, Wednesday Classes, monthly Women's devotions, and family workshops online. Additionally, other congregations within the ICI-CO network as well as congregations in CO and abroad through virtual means. My husband and I additionally contributed to this effort through our Facebook account JESUSconversatorio (2023) which has 1,120 followers; its most viewed video was live on April 26th, 2020 with 14,597 views while a total of 95,584 views have been recorded from March 30th 2020, to December 27th 2021.

⁵⁵ ICI-CO follows a similar pattern to the ICOC in BR identified by five stages by Leao et al. (2017): (1)1986-1988 (church planting); (2) 1988-1993 (building the foundation); (3) 1993-1998 (building national leadership); (4) 1998-2003 (building megachurches); (5) 2003-2018 (rebuilding).

Castellanos' data show (2011:83) in 2010, 686 with a total in the Bogota congregation, and in the 17 congregations that are listed around the country, a total of 838 members. Cities listed by Castellanos (2011:83): Medellin, Cali, Zipaquirá, Duitama, Neiva, Ibagué, Barranquilla, Cartagena, Tuquerres, Barrancabermeja, Caldas, Santa Marta, Armenia, Villavicencio, and Yopal. Ten years later there are many more cities and towns to listed here. This propagation without the USA funding and governance, after the 2003 collapse, could also be a fascinating study. Insider knowledge is aware of the important role of the *motherline* and mothers in this organic propagation, due to the matricentric society. It mimics the researchers' understanding of Allen's *three-selves concept* (Rutt 2018a; 2018b).

1.2.2 ICI Colombia 2003 (collapse)

Castellanos (2011:75077) describes the context of 2003. ICI-CO underwent a dramatic reduction in its membership (1,600 in 2002), resulting in the termination of all ministry staff (30 people). This is directly related to what is termed by the denomination as *the letter*. It was a letter written by a minister in the UK (Feb. 2003) that was leaked and quickly found itself around the world by email. It was the spark that led to the collapse of the denomination (see section 7.1 for more details). Despite this mass exodus, the remaining 100 members remained committed to continuing their fellowship within the ICOC international community and transforming as a Christian community. To this end, they followed legal and administrative procedures as a guide for how to proceed to establish the congregation in Colombia. Aiming to grow together as a Christian fellowship, 'She' is based on the insights gained from the collapse.

1.2.3 ICI Colombia 1992-2002

Stanback (2005:229) provides quantitative data within the ICOC denomination; detailing the 1987 Mexico City church planting (2005:100-101). The Mexico City congregation which is ranked #2 on Stanback's list (1,330 members in 1994 to 4,090 members in 2002). On April 12, 1992, the church planting in Bogota was sent from the Mexico City congregation: a group of ten (seven Colombians and three from the USA). The church planting was very successful numerically, as the numbers boomed, and before the end of the year there were 135 baptised members. Castellanos (2011:65) attaches a table showing the membership for Bogota and its church plantings (Quito, Caracas, Medellin, and Cali). By 2002 there were 1,483 members in Bogota; 748 in Quito; 116 in

Caracas; 81 in Medellin; and 29 in Cali. Castellanos (2011:64-65) notes that the largest event in Bogota hosted an attendance of over 5,000, on the celebration of the 10th anniversary (July 2002). Stanback places the ICOC-Bogota congregation (now ICI-CO) in #12 place in overall growth in membership worldwide (249 members in 1994 to 1,624 members in 2002), compared to all the other 435 congregations in 171 countries.

1.2.4 Data sources

Below in Table 2 that lists the documents gathered for the research project:

Table 2: Documents consulted to obtain data

ICI Documents:	Literature obtained from RBO insiders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal document of the religious entity (See Appendix C1 & C2 for full Theological Statement) • Summary of March 21, 2021, yearly meeting, <i>asamblea</i> • Nov. 2021 letter from the dissent group (presented on the YouTube ICI Colombia channel⁵⁶) (see letter in Appendix D1 & D2) • YouTube channel: <i>ICI Colombia</i> (data sent from gatekeeper) • Thesis: ICI-CO (Castellanos 2011; Diaz Castro 2014). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA book framing theology and methods of mission (Giambarba 1988) • MX catechism text distributed in LA (Lamb and Lamb 1991) • USA published master's thesis (Stanback 2005) • USA-based literature (Jones 2007; Fleming 2010; 2018; Carrillo 2009; Staten 2018) • SA unpublished master's thesis (Lappeman 2014) • BR book (Leao et al. 2017)

1.2.5 Research Population and sample

The research population is the ICI-CO congregation – the focus of this case study. SU Ethical Committee approval was given Nov. 26, 2020 (see Appendix S). Then the main population sample was chosen based on two main sampling criteria (Mason 2018:57-58). Taking into consideration the language barrier, (i) members of ICI-CO fluent enough in English to engage in an interview

⁵⁶ Iglesia de Cristo International (2021) the link at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2btPG2_o2tw.

via Zoom,⁵⁷ and (ii) experienced the 2003 breakdown of the congregation. Ten of the 12 participants are CO citizens. Two alternate views were sought from LA not from CO (Participant 117 and Participant 118), who also experienced the ICOC collapse in their local LA congregation. As stated below, one had a previous relationship with ICI-CO and the other one provides an alternate generational perspective (Participant 117 was only 14 at the time of the collapse).

Most interviews were undertaken during the time span of Jan. 17, 2021 – May 26, 2021, after the pilot interview on Dec. 8, 2020. Twelve (12) participants formed the sample of this study⁵⁸ for a total of 24 recorded interviews. (All the roles and opinions of participants was only until 2021.)

Membership Categorisation Device (MDC) (Silverman 2020:318-327-494) inspired these terms used for identification as shown in Table 3 below. A number identification system was used (100s for males, 200s for females), so as to identify the female participants from the male participants. Below are three tables. Table 3 summarises the terms that were used to identify the categories of the participants; Table 4 identifies markers for the three groups of participant categories; and Table 5 lists the participants in each group:

Table 3: Terms used for identification

GRMP	Grassroots Mission Practitioner (nonpaid involved member of the congregation)
TNMP	Transnational Mission Practitioner (paid staff in country other than own)
TLMP	Translocal Mission Practitioner (paid staff in other part of his own country)

⁵⁷ The circumstances and adhering to ethical protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 made this necessary. The project faced delays due to the pandemic. The interviews were done in English. There is no need for a large translation project in the data gathering and transcription stage. There were a few Spanish interviews conducted at the end of the interview stage due to a specific request by Participant 104. They agreed to the terms on the consent form if they understood the English that it was written in.

⁵⁸ Twenty (20) potential participants signed consent forms. One of those was in the pilot study (Silverman 2020:121). As the data was extremely robust from the other participants, I decided to not proceed with the rest of the interviews due to *saturation*. *Saturation* (Bryman et al. 2012:159-160) due to three reasons: (i) rhythm of personal life; (ii) prolonged period in a marginal position; and (iii) the research questions had been answered or the categories had been ‘thoroughly saturated’.

Three alternate views were added:	
	1) Participant 104 is from CO, not a current congregant in ICI-CO, and a TNMP at the time of the collapse.
	2) Participant 118 from was a TNMP at ICI-CO prior to 2003.
	3) Participant 117 from LA who was 14 at the time of the collapse (his family was directly impacted as his parents were TLMPs).

Table 4: Identification of groups

ID	Number of Participants	Gender Composition	Role prior to 2003	Role in 2021
Group 1	7	3 females / 4 males	7 GRMP	6 GRMP / 1 TLMP
Group 2	2	2 males	2 TNMP	2 GRMP
Group 3	3	3 males	2 TNMP / 1 teen (TLMP parents)	3 GRMP
Totals	12	4 females / 8 males ⁵⁹	7 GRMP / 4 TNMP / 1 teen	11 GRMP / 1 TLMP

Table 5: List of participants in each group

Group 1 – Participant 112 & Participant 212 (married couple); – Participant 114 & Participant 214 (married couple); – Participant 120 & 218 (married couple); – Participant 115.
Group 2 – Participant 107; Participant 111.
Group 3 – Participant 104; Participant 117; Participant 118.

⁵⁹ The cause of not conducting more interviews with female participants was a result of certain difficulties encountered during the research process. Some of the data provided by possible female participants were in written form, which I had not specified in the consent form. If I could go back and do it again, I would include three changes: (i) that written communication may be used in the consent document; (ii) include more female participants; and (iii) include participants who are not married.

Of the 24 recorded interviews, 18 are of the Group 1 (see Appendix K for pie chart). The grassroots perspective⁶⁰ in this collection of people, who are not typically given a voice in mainstream discussions in the RBO, share their thoughts and experiences on a wide range of topics, especially in regard to three life cycles: (i) family life; (ii) their personal spiritual walk; and (iii) their experience in ICI-CO, with special attention to the collapse. The in-depth interviews with individuals who experienced the collapse first-hand provided pivotal insight into how these individuals coped and what helped them stay together. It is noted that the topic of the lived experience around the collapse in these semi-structured, in-depth interviews gave much richer data than expected (see Appendix H, Appendix I, Appendix J, and Appendix K).

1.3 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The background of ICI-CO as a case study covers the researcher's experiences, data collected from the field, and literature related to the topic. Images have been chosen to illustrate the background information. Figure 1 (Appendix Q [Part 1]) lists vital aspects for understanding the background of this study. These are illustrated with images as metaphors. The following paragraphs will describe the background of the study through the chosen images. Most of the images are emphasised in a bold font as to build a mental image of the background of the study.

1.3.1 Background of the study in images

According to Hiebert (2008:245, 253-55, 273), mental images are an individual's perception of their reality or worldview. As an example of this concept in action, I use a **train** as a metaphor for Christian mission (Bosch 1991a:530). The **locomotive** is seen as the force behind the theology of a Christian denomination; the **locomotive engineer** is identified as a person who motivates an expansive global movement; and **train tracks** can be understood to show where it has gone before and where it is going. Lastly, the **train fuel** that propels this train can be seen as three sources or motivating factors (see Appendix R2).

⁶⁰ For Cambridge Dictionary (n.d. – b) defines this as “the ordinary people in a society or an organization, especially a political [organization]. For this study, the term is applied to voluntary (nonpaid) mission practitioners in a congregation. It is aligned to Allen's concept of voluntary clergy, possibly his main concern of all these missiological concerns (1983:95-124). Illich addressed this issue in his first of four stages of writing (Cayley 2021:16), described in length in his article published in 1967: ‘The vanishing clergyman’ (Illich 1972:69-94).

The incident of the **trainwreck** could be attributed to the displacement of the **locomotive engineer**, as well as other forms of **railroad sabotage** (Luttwak 2016:174). This concept of **railroad sabotage** encapsulates sentiments associated with *insurgent consciousness* (Smith 1991). The complexity surrounding this event also included international and national **railroad sabotage**, represented by a certain letter known as *the letter* (Castellanos 2011:69-71); potentially referring to something like a bomb that derailed the **global train system** identified as *the system*. This links to Smith's (1991, 2014) terms *insurgent consciousness* and *disruptive religion* which are related to liberation theology in Latin America. Smith identifies movements driven by 'from below' by religious passion. These acts of **railroad sabotage** are connected to Chilisa's (2020:198) assertion: "[T]heir resistance to colonizing ideologies of their former colonizer". ICI-CO may have seemed like an innocent bystander during the RBO collapse, but ultimately it was realised that grassroots members were instrumental in changing their reality.

The concept of **brand** ties to *bubble identity* or *social imagination*. These concepts in the case study are connected to the **global brand** not the Colombian matricentric home context. The simplest way I have found to describe these concepts is using the image of *glue* as the central idea. *Propaganda* through the media options, are the ways that **brands** are transmitted, constructed, and maintained in the social imagination.

A *slogan* or *propaganda* is often used by a **brand** as another way of representing it. My personal problem with this relates to its application in the USA context, specifically an adaptation of Matt 28:18-20: 'the evangelization of the world in this generation', which has been adopted as a

denomination's slogan. This connects to the *God-image* expressed by theology of mission and mission methods *Bent on conquest* (Giambarba 1988); Jesus as conquer.^{61 62}

A **tree** is a powerful image that symbolizes the flourishing of Christian *togetherness* within the context of local limits. The branches and the trunk of the tree represent the empirically experienced reality; the **soil** reflects the actual reality; and the **roots** represent the hidden, unseen reality. A **tree** is a powerful metaphor has multiple implications. Firstly, it reflects the interconnectedness between all things. Secondly, it serves as a reminder of the importance of using local resources wisely and efficiently. Finally, it symbolises *critical realism*, which is the understanding that not everything is visible and that there are many unseen realities which must be considered.

Similarly, a **HAND** is used as a metaphor for *missio Dei* – the mission of God. This metaphor speaks to the idea that God is actively involved in the world and is actively working to bring about a better future for all of humanity. It encourages us to look beyond our own limited perspectives and to reach out to those in need, to share the love of God with the world. Through this metaphor, we are reminded of our responsibility to be a part of God's mission and to be intentional in our efforts to bring about positive change in the world. Below in Figure 1, provides background details of the denomination, linking images as metaphors:

⁶¹ The title borrowed from Revelation 6:2 proves to be controversial. Jooste in a church workshop on Revelation (Stellenbosch Gemeente 2022) brought this to my attention (the YouTube video has a record of the conversation between Jooste and I). So, I discovered that this biblical text has been used by many theologians as a presentation of a conquering Jesus, but other scholars point to the possibility of the rider on this white horse, could likely be the anti-Christ. It is a debated interpretation (cf. Ladd 1972:99; Osborne 2002:272-277; Wright 2011:59, 61; Wilcock 2021:40-41, 130-31).

⁶² The *God-image* connects to one's theology and consequently mission *slogans*, quoting Tozar (Rheinbolt-Urbe 2017:2): "The most important thing about a man [woman] is what comes into his mind when he thinks about God". (Cf. Counted 2015; Louw 2015:278, 293, 571; Roux 2019:4, 13, 16 for detailed studies as to the concept of *God-image*).

Part 1.

IMAGES AS METAPHORS

Specific to denomination in case study pre 2003 collapse.

- 1.1 **Brand:** ICOC (International Church Of Christ)
- 1.2 **Funds/Resources:** Generous donors/tithes of church members/volunteerism.
- 1.3 **God-image:** "Bent on conquest" (book outlining Latin American mission theology and methods, Giambarba 1988).
- 1.4 **Locomotive:** Fuel that made train move (triad: myth, funds, structure).
- 1.5 **Locomotive engineer:** Kip McKean (1954-)
- 1.6 **Myth:** Line of prosperity theology:
"Awesome families" in "God's family"; "We're changing the world";
"We are true disciples of Jesus"; "We are followers of Christ".
- 1.7 **Parent:** (Mother) Church Of Christ (COC).
- 1.8 **Propaganda:** Church bulletins, books, int'l conferences, KNN videos...
- 1.9 **Railroad sabotage:** 2003: First, outing of "Locomotive engineer";
then, "insurgent consciousness" (Smith 1991) fueled by "the letter".
- 1.10 **Slogan:** "Evangelize the world in this generation".
- 1.11 **Train:** World-wide rapid expansion [1979-2002, 1 congregation in Boston to
435 congregations in 171 nations; 2002 membership 135,046 (Stanback 2005)].
- 1.12 **Trainwreck:** Finalized in 2003 (after 10 years of internal crisis).
- 1.13 **Triad of fuel:** Myth (authority over interpretation of biblical text); Funds/
Resources; Structure (Legal/Administrative & Propaganda-use of media).

Figure 1: Background of denomination in images (copied from Appendix Q)

Figure 1 introduces details of the denomination refined in Chapter 3. A social tool was developed.

1.3.2 Background of denomination – developed social tool

Smith (2017:20-76) distinguishes what religion is from why people do religion, allowing a practice-centred view of religion. This case study identifies the *teologia de la casita* (theology of the **little house**) from a practice-centered approach. The *high-boundary religious movement* (Jenkins 1996, 2003, 2005) with an emphasis on *one-on-one discipling*.⁶³ (For data visualisation

⁶³ This tool was developed with Getz (1977) and Jones (1984) among other influences.

in vignette fashion see Appendix R3. And for personal reflection as to the tool one-on-one discipling see Appendix P. Reflection from insiders and outsiders, including Jenkins (1996, 2003, 2005) conclude that ICOC promised *awesome families* and *amazing marriages*; within a *high-boundary religious movement*. Smith's (2017) suggests religion is complex; this links to Chilisa (2020) concern about power, authority, continuity, etc.

Smith's (2017) aids the study researching into a RBO which began in a living room and expanded nationally and internationally, investigating their shared practices. To further study these groups with no ties to traditional branches of religion, an analytical tool has been created that asks questions over three areas: (i) who authority over biblical text interpretation (its myth,⁶⁴ blessing and/or prosperity theology evoked)?⁶⁵ (ii) who has authority over the funds/resources?; and (iii) who has authority over the structure and media/propaganda? This tool to help answer questions that were not easily answered due to the lack of written policies, texts, and authorities. This enabled data analysis to identify practices of the denomination and formulate a research problem statement.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The research seeks to gain a better understanding of the *glue* that has held the Christian congregation of ICI-CO together. This research focuses on how GRMPs have navigated the international and national **trainwreck** resulting from the collapse of a USA denomination. Three main questions will be asked in order to gain a deeper understanding of the congregation and its strong sense of *togetherness*: (i) why did the ICO-CO collapse; (ii) how did the congregation manage to stay together in the face of such adversity; and (iii) what was the nature of that *togetherness*? It is hoped that by getting to the heart of the congregation's resilience, this research can provide insight into *resilient spirituality* as an aspect of *missional spirituality*.

⁶⁴ Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.- a) definition used, “a traditional story, esp. one which explains the early history or a cultural belief or practice of a group of people, or explains a natural event”.

⁶⁵ *Prosperity gospel* is the term found in Bosch (1991a:319). Bosch (1991c:206) emphasises that Christianity too often marketed with “things-go-better-with Jesus wrapping” by American preachers such as Dr. Norman Vincent Peale and Kenneth Hagin. This is an example of Bosch’s application of the term *prosperity gospel* or *prosperity theology*.

A new narrative is needed as the research on ICI-CO has assumed a dependence on the USA and have not highlighted the self-reliance and growth that has taken place since the collapse. I find that this is a problem that I wish to address as Chilisa (2020:198) expresses: “There are countless chapters of what the world needs to know about the postcolonial and Indigenous people’s histories and their resistance to colonizing ideologies of their former colonizer”. As an insider of the community, I have observed this first-hand and believe ICO-CO would benefit from gaining confidence as to the work of the *missio Dei* since the collapse in a ‘bottom up’ manner.

Trust is a central concept here (Harries 2013, 2019). The question: Who does one trust? links identity and *self-understandings*. As well as where and how of one's individual and communal *practices of mutuality*. Trust is one aspect but so is debt. An assumption for this study is that debt is also a common *glue* for all social connections. Barclay (2015) in *Paul and the gift* theologically delves into this theme connecting theology, sociology, historically, biblically, and philosophy around the concepts of, debt and gift. Graeber (2011) in *Debt: The first 5000 years* with the lens of economic anthropology deals historically with this theme and shows the concept of debt historically is connected to the inability to pay back one's biological mother. Graeber (2011:65, 216) on the other hand, states that the first written word for freedom ‘return to mother’ *armargi*.⁶⁶ *Transforming mutuality* allows for a shift of power dynamics which makes this possible, even with one’s mother.

This begs the question of this problem statement, how does ICI-CO continue with its *togetherness*, as this breakage led to cohesion of a new group identity as well as what can be interpreted as *resilient spirituality* that stood out to the participants?

1.5 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

In light of the research problem, the **main research question** of the study was formulated as follows: *In view of the collapse of an international USA-based RBO, how have shifts in self-*

⁶⁶ Confirmed in primary source (Kramer 1963:78-79). Also confirmed with Sara Afshari (2021), an Iranian theologian in personal conversation (Jan. 26, 2022). She described its usage in the family setting, especially in relation to grandmothers.

understandings and practices of mutuality shaped the ministry and mission of the Colombian congregation?

1.6 RESEARCH AIM, PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

The aim of this research is to evaluate the changes in ICI-CO, a CO congregation in CO, from missional, creative, and contextual angles; it seeks to examine how the collapse of a fast-growing USA-based denomination affected the identity and practices of this satellite church community. The underlying purpose of this study is to formulate a new *slogan* to replace the overused, outdated, and misused: ‘the evangelization of the world in this generation’ understood as interrelated to the communal *God-image* and theological framework. The aim of the study will be achieved through the following related objectives, related questions, and found in the subsidiary chapters:

- (1) To create a conceptual and theoretical framework with *mutuality* in the centre. What is the conceptual and theoretical framework? This is knitted together in Chapter 2.
- (2) To describe the denomination in the case study. Why is the term RBO used for this USA-born/inspired (free-market, seeker-friendly, nondenominational, non-creedal [creedless], *non-tradition tradition*⁶⁷) international Christian group? Why is *historylessness* the main characteristic identified? This is described in Chapter 3.
- (3) To identify research design, methodologies, and methods for this specific study. What is a *sentipensante* logic? How to study the unseen in *missio Dei*? This is expanded upon in Chapter 4.
- (4) To expand a *maternal-thinking* logic in a missiological study. How can a *maternal-thinking* or a *thinking-with-the womb* logic be used missiologically? This is displayed in Chapter 5.
- (5) To identify the main themes in the pre-analysis of the empirical data. What are the main themes? How does the researcher manage her positionality? How can an analysis of active

⁶⁷ Term suggested by Rollin Gram (May 20, 2022) in a personal conversation.

prayers as spirituality be undertaken and what are the findings? How is *resilient spirituality* identified? This is the subject of Chapter 6.

- (6) To locate Kähler's "mission is the 'mother of theology'" as a framework for understanding the date. How does this missiological *maternal-thinking* apply to this study? How do I approach my obvious positionality? This is what Chapter 7 expands upon.
- (7) To summarise the findings in a creative manner. What recommendations are suggested? How does the *maternal-thinking* logic guide a *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission? How to display the conclusions of the dual sociological and theological academic movements, through data visualisation, or vignettes? What new *slogan* was developed? In Chapter 8 this objective is detailed.

1.7 CONCEPTUAL & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual and theoretical framework, although intertwined with the previous sections of this chapter, will be expanded upon in Chapter 2. As noted, the framework is primarily grounded in Bosch but Allen and Illich are active in the development of the concepts and theories. The logic for this decision has been established. The two main concepts vital for this study are thus: *mutuality* and *self-understandings*. And a third concept is introduced, Bosch, as a storyteller or a term created in this study – *history-whisperer*. Bosch guidance leads to take the two previous concepts within his thinking. As *historylessness* has been highlighted within the theology of the denomination, Bosch's view of history is vital.

Introducing the two main themes is Bosch as a *history-whisperer*. Bosch frames both main texts (1980; 1991a) around the collapse he is seeing around him. Bosch continually confronts his reality and allows the context of this case study to listen to his answers for some of the questions. The Christian understanding of *brokenness* and *vulnerability* is a central topic in his thinking.

First, *mutuality* has been found to be a vital but underdeveloped concept. *Mutuality* is understood within *missio Dei* and illustrated by a **HAND**.⁶⁸ This research endeavoured to find a working

⁶⁸ See Section 2.2.1 for a detailed description of *mutuality* linked to *missio Dei*.

definition for the study. The best option was to use Bosch (supported by interviews with his widow, Annemie Bosch). *Missio Dei* (see section 2.2 for definition) is assumed as the ideal and a constant reality (an image of a **HAND** represents this vital theological concept) (Bosch 1991a:389-393). I have experienced their *togetherness, conviviality* (cf. Illich 1973; Ewell 2019; Addy and Ulla 2021; Leao 2022:77) and *walking together* (*Together towards life* [TTL], ed. Keum 2013); as we walked through a broken or collapsed institutional structure. I had found that it took place mainly in *spaces created* in the realm of the private, domestic, or communal. I had observed friendship as a theology of mission⁶⁹ in *mutuality* (cf. Heuertz and Pohl 2010; Robert 2018, 2019; and eds. Scott et al. 2021).

Secondly, *self-understandings* is another key concept. This research established that there is a close relationship between *self-understandings* and identity. In this study, *self-understandings* are a product of how one perceives and interprets reality, one's epistemology. *Liminal spirituality* is introduced with different names as it is key in Bosch's thinking, viz.: *missionary spirituality*, *Christian spirituality*, *spirituality of the road*, *victim-missionary*, *re-evangelisation*, to mention a few. He quotes (1991a: 232-233) Henry's 1987 with a "spirituality for the long-haul". This title of his 1991c text: 'The vulnerability of mission' reveals the importance in his work. His *self-understandings* embrace *brokenness* and *vulnerability* (cf. Bosch 1978; 1991a; 1991b; 1991c).

Identity or self-definition can also be used to replace *self-understandings*. *Practices of mutuality* is the other main concept. *Mutuality* is related to the *glue* that connects one to others and to the unseen (in this case study understood as the biblical God). The logic that follows is as such: what practices does one enact or partake in, especially repeatedly and habitually, regarding others and with the Creator? What research design and methodologies can be used within this philosophical assumption?

⁶⁹ Theology of mission can also be understood as a mode of mission (Nussbaun 2005:22-40).

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGIES

Mason (2018:46) views the research process as an intellectual puzzle and encourages epistemologies exploration; while Babbie and Mouton (2001:72-75) liken the research design to a house's architectural blueprint. The logic of the process involves formulating an idea, deriving a research question, constructing a research design, and employing methodologies. Babbie And Mouton (2001:75) suggest these three questions: (i) focus is the end-product ask – what is the plan and aim of the results?; (ii) point of departure so ask – what is the research problem or question?; and (iii) logic of research ask – what kind of evidence is required to address the research question adequately?

Addressing these three questions will give a basic blueprint of the research design: (1) The research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used: The case study will result in a missiology that is based on empirical evidence from interviews and official documents from ICI-CO. A special literature search has been conducted to find texts from the RBO in different areas of the world; (2) Point of departure: The research problem and research questions are forementioned; and (3) Focus on the individual (not linear) steps in the research process and the most ‘objective’ unbiased procedures to be employed: The logic can be understood as *sentipensante*⁷⁰ which is a way of acquiring knowledge that is both logical and emotional. This study used maternal thinking and poetic inquiry to understand realities that cannot be grasped by logic alone. In many parts of the world, oral tradition is the dominant way of acquiring knowledge (cf. Samuel [2023] for examples of the oral tradition in India).⁷¹ The methodology is based on a specific logic which is describes below.

⁷⁰ Fals-Borda a CO sociologist (a PROT liberation theologian) who developed participatory action research (PAR). Robles Lomeli and Rappaport (2018:608) explains: “this interlocking idea of politics, research, and sentiment through his [Fals-Borda] notion of the *sentipensante*, the ‘thinking-feeling’ actor who was a protagonist of history” (brackets added).

⁷¹ For the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (n.d.) definition of orality: “The oral traditions and expressions domain encompasses an enormous variety of spoken forms including proverbs, riddles, tales, nursery rhymes, legends, myths, epic songs and poems, charms, prayers, chants, songs, dramatic performances and more. Oral traditions and expressions are used to pass on knowledge, cultural and social values, and collective memory. They play a crucial part in keeping cultures alive” (n.p.).

1.8.1 Methodology

The logic of the research design has pointed to *maternal-thinking*, *sentipensante*, and a poetic focus, all inspired by the real-life empirical research problem (Babbie and Mouton 2001:75). This type of logic can be found within a triad combination of philosophical assumptions: (i) *Indigenous research methodologies* (Chilisa 2020); (ii) *critical hermeneutics* (Nel 1988; Bosch 1991a); and (iii) *critical realism* (cf. Smith 2010, 2017; Bryman et al. 2012:368;⁷² Taylor 2020; Wright 2020). The metaphor of a **tree** aptly illustrates *critical realism*: the branches and the trunk of the **tree** is the empirically experienced reality; the **soil** is the actual reality; and the **roots** are the hidden (unseen) reality.⁷³

Taylor (2020) uses *critical realism* to view the unseen of *missio Dei*, and she connects *Indigenous knowledge* and *missio Dei*. Taylor (2020:54) quotes a Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) document: “God has been at work in nurturing and sustaining the First Peoples, people who had already encountered the Creator God before the arrival of the colonizers”. Taylor uses the same methodology that the current study uses. Chapter 4 will review this in more depth.

1.8.2 Research approach

The research context refers to the social, cultural, political, and historical factors that shape the research question/s and research design. It also influences the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon under study. The context is important because it provides a framework within which to locate the research. The SA missiological approach has been chosen due to its ability to adapt to the contexts listed above: social, cultural, political, historical, and then also theological. The *seven-step praxis cycle* is used to guide the research in a way that is intersubjective and connected.⁷⁴

⁷² A clear definition is provided: “A realist epistemology according to which the study of the social world should be concerned with the identification of the social structures in order to change them and thereby counteract inequalities and injustices . . . maintains that the structures may not be directly perceivable” (Bryman et al. 2012:368).

⁷³ A reminder, the **tree** has several meanings that are interrelated. Three meanings: (i) *interconnectedness* between all things; (ii) the limits of local resources; and (iii) *critical realism*.

⁷⁴ A component of the approach that has weaved throughout the research process is the embracing of spirituality as one of the steps of the *seven-step praxis cycle* approach, understood to be at the centre. Another of Bosch’s students, Karecki (1997) and (Lepori and Karecki 2022), was key concerning the emphasis of spirituality. Karecki continued

1.8.3 Methods

A ‘dance’ continues. I followed Mason’s (2018:42-47) *facet methodology*, a qualitatively-driven approach to mixing methods: She lists six enabling principles to this methodology, namely: (1) a multi-dimensional, entangled, and connective ontology; (2) facets are simultaneously methodological and substantive; (3) use of *flash of insight*; (4) casting and refracting light; (5) overturning assumptions; and (6) *playing with epistemologies*. The creativity provided by this guidance has already been observed in the previous sections.

The empirical study was based mainly on interviews. These were conducted in a semi-structured format, and the questions were designed to elicit information about the participants' experiences with the congregation, ICI-CO. Three cycles of life were included in the conversation: (i) family history (includes relationship with their mothers); (ii) spirituality history; and (iii) their history within the congregation (with special attention to the collapse). The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and the data were analysed using Mason’s mixed methods approach while leaning much more towards a qualitative approach (cf. Wuthnow 2003:24-25; 2011:1-12).⁷⁵

1.8.4 Data analysis

The data analysis phase was guided by the idea of following a *flash of insight* which Mason (2018:45, 206) describes: "holistic or ecological approach to organization of data which involves ways of feeling your way through and sorting your data". Mason explains goes beyond a single type of reasoning: but also “imaginative, creative, and intuitive”. I understand this method is best by comparing it to cooking a meal on a low flame, mixing the flavours, and then serving it up in

research with Kritzinger after Bosch’s untimely death and worked with on this central issue. It also links with *Indigenous research methodologies* (Chilisa 2020).

⁷⁵ The use of *facet methodology* explains the way the research has been approached and the seemingly unrelated chapters of data analysis and interpretation (Chapters 5–7). Mason (2018:43) describes: “The rigour as well as creativity of the approach come ultimately from research skill, inventiveness, insight, and imagination, in deciding how best to carve the facets so that they catch the light in the best possible way”. My hope is that the reader will capture the light shining through as a cut gemstone in this open and entangled approach.

a dish that makes one unique taste.⁷⁶ This is a ‘simmering’ method of analysis. Smith quotes Polanyi (2010:171) (on whom Bosch [1991a; 1995] relies on as an ally for his arguments) to explain a concept of *dwelling in* the subjects.

The chosen method to integrate all the data is a hybrid of content analysis (Neuendorf 2019; Humble and Mozelius 2022) and reflective thematic analysis (Clarke and Braun 2014:359-360). This hybrid connects well with the data from the in-depth, semi-structured interviews.

The data analysis and interpretation has been discussed in the previous sections with a broad overview of the main historical markers, institutions, concepts, and images that were found in the study. As a creative researcher, I was inspired by CO sociologist Orlando Fals-Borda (1971) in *Historia doble de la costa*, which comprises hand-drawn comics. This classic in CO sociology, is a double story: comic and academic.⁷⁷ An adaption of Fals-Borda’s method was used in this study co-created with a CO graphic designer, Rene Galvis also part of the ICI-CO community.⁷⁸

This calls for further study. But to step in that direction was the creation of a ‘multivocal poetic narrative’ (June 2022), which was based on the transcriptions made into *data poems* (Mason 2018:214-216) in different ways. This was sent to all the participants as one of the several layers of *member-checking* (Lincoln and Guba 1985:301, 314-15, 373), as *respondent validation* (Mason 2018:241-42; Silverman 2020:96) was a priority to ensure the *trustworthiness* of the study. Silverman (2020:97, quoting Fielding and Fielding (1986) treat member validation: “[A]s yet another source of data and insight” (see sections 4.12 and 6.1 for examples).

⁷⁶ One way I applied the simmering method was when I spent a day in a relaxed position with my data. I came to understand the concept of *dwelling* with the data.

⁷⁷ Fals-Borda was led by the principals of PAR, guided by a *sentipensante* (thinking/feeling) logic and epistemology. His goal was that with this method of data visualisation, transformation from the bottom up could be more accessible to the CO communities he was working with. He co-created easy-to-understand data visualisations as comics with the data from his grassroots participants.

⁷⁸ As a creative researcher and guided by Mason's (2018:44-45, 212, 246) applying *flash of insight*, connects the data analysis as a link between traditional CO matricentric societal *glue* and CO orality (cf. Samuel 2023 for continual influence of orality in India). This led to the discovery of the participants’ use of ethnopoeitics⁷⁸ (Hymes 2003; 2016); specific examples can be found in sections 4.11; 6.1.4.2; and 6.1.4.5).

1.9 SCOPE & LIMITATIONS

Despite the difficulties inherent in conducting case studies, their benefits outweigh the drawbacks. With proper awareness of potential limitations, case studies can provide insights that other research methods cannot (Katarni 2021). Silverman (2020:72-75) discusses case studies. It allows for mixed methods (Mason 2018:37) within this creative approach in a non-Western context (Silverman 2020:47, 104, 409). Silverman (2020:47) points to (in tune with Fals-Borda): the option of “reveal(ing) local practices through which given ‘end products’ (stories, files, descriptions) are assembled”. A new ICO-CO narrative (see Appendix R1) is in contrast with the official narrative of the RBO.

Another limitation is that the research is small, with only a few people interviewed; however, this can also be seen as an advantage, as my first-hand experience with the subject matter has revealed. And the discovering of the previous research projects (Castellanos 2011; Diaz Castro 2014) facilitated the collection of preliminary, historical data, as well as allowed my priority to seek data from grassroots participants. Research in BR (Leao et al. 2017) into the same denomination gave the opportunity to triangulate the data in another congregational context within LA.⁷⁹

The impact of the collapse of the RBO has profound personal consequences. It allowed me to explore and reflect on what has been the core of my identity as a mission practitioner. This research has allowed for greater awareness and the possibility to clearly identify the shifts in my own *self-understandings* and self-definitions, which has led to a radial re-shaping of my personal and communal *practices of mutuality*. The first step was to radically shift my horizons. I understood that the **global train system** towards ‘the evangelization of the world in this

⁷⁹ I found Ismail-Allouche's (2010:12) story to be similar to my own journey in many ways. As this author describes her previous career in an adoption agency that helped children in Lebanon, I could relate to her struggles in finding a new path, realising that transnational and transracial adoptions had consequences she had not foreseen. I followed her lead, applying *Indigenous research methods* as a non-Indigenous researcher to better understand my own positionality and highlight that of my participants. Ismail-Allouche (2010:12) reflects, despite her years of work on reforming child welfare systems in the Arab world and internationally, she is still an outsider when it comes to speaking on behalf of stakeholders. She acknowledges that this positionality can reinforce oppression and has committed herself to undertaking a journey of self-reflection to decolonise her approaches. Ismail-Allouche has learned to trust the process of collaborative research with Indigenous peoples and to demonstrate an understanding of the colonial legacy and its perpetual systemic racism.

generation’ was not the one I wanted to be on. I decided to walk. Once again, I am guided by Bosch (1991a:125-129). Bosch (1991a:126) identifies Paul’s transformation when as Paul embraced his ‘call’; following his own *critical incident* on the road to Damascus (cf. Wright 2018; Olbricht 2018b). I also find a parallel with Paul as I too (Bosch 1991a:127): “[N]ever abandoned the theological views he inherited from the *hellenistai*; at the same time he soon went beyond”.

In the research journey, I opened myself to *deep listening*⁸⁰ as well as profound *sentipensante* thinking and theorising. I did not realise that my participants had invested so much of themselves also trying to understand what had happened. This was one of the many surprises. And I embraced a prolonged period of a personal journey of what Armas (2021:1-18) defines as *research grief*.⁸¹ I allowed myself to be put into the narrative and my previous role and positionality with the pre-collapse RBO was laid bare in the interview 114.3 (see section 6.1.4.1). Taking this difficult path permitted the opportunity to reopen old wounds and memories, as well as to discover new aspects that I never would have thought of before. Eventually, I was transformed by this process, as the participants played a role in ‘healing’ me by sharing their stories, theories, and conclusions. As hooks (1994:74) conveys: “[I]t takes courage to face our pain and turn it into theory, but it is worth the risk”. I understand this a personal experience, a walk of *transforming mutuality*.

1.10 SIGNIFICANCE

Six areas of possible significance are listed. This study has the potential to contribute to several different areas, including: (1) *self-understandings* of ICI-CO; (2) *self-understandings* of the denomination ICOC; (3) potential contribution to the SCT/RM missiological scholarship; (4) missiological evaluations of the current *from everywhere to everyone* global dynamics; (5) additionally, as spirituality was a strong theme in the data, this study could also contribute to academic conversations around missionary and missional – spirituality and resilience; (6) finally,

⁸⁰ Rooms (2012) addresses *deep listening* within missionary anthropology. *Presencing*, from Scharmer’s Theory U (2009) also applies. A missiological application of *presencing* is found in Spicer (2020).

⁸¹ Armas (2021:1) explains *research grief* as follows: “Colonizer or colonized, oppressor or oppressed – there’s a moment after the deep, dark, often lonely work of becoming our own archaeologist that pangs hit”.

this study also has the potential to draw attention to the benefits gleaned with *maternal-thinking*, suggesting Mother Studies⁸² as a sub-field of missiology and/or practical theology.

1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the topic under study and discussed the main elements of the research process. The following chapter will review in depth the three main aspects of the conceptual framework: Bosch as a *history-whisperer*; *Missio Dei* as a theological response to **trainwrecks**; and an overview of the concept of *self-understandings*.

⁸² Mother Studies is discussed in section 5.0, although the implications are felt throughout the dissertation, as a *maternal-thinking* lens is consistently applied. *Journal of Mother Studies* (n.d.) describes it in the following paragraph:

“Mother Studies is an interdisciplinary *postmodern* critical field that identifies a nexus of m/otherness as a determining force of action and expression. While many academic interpretations including (psychology and sociology) acknowledge the relational status of human beings, Mother Studies focuses on the lived experience within a variety of circumstances with attention to the procreative, creative, and long-term experience of m/otherness and its transformative nature. This is determined by the making/dividing, connection/disconnection status of procreation, adoption, surrogacy, and caregiving”.

CHAPTER 2:

CONCEPTUAL & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the objective listed in Chapter 1: To create a conceptual and theoretical framework with *mutuality* in the centre. And answers the question: What is the conceptual and theoretical framework? And the chapter builds concepts related to *mutuality* and self-understanding. *Mutuality* is connected to *missio Dei* with the assistance of the Bosch, Illich and Allen. Smith's (2017:6) provides triad of theoretical influences: (i) *critical realism*; (ii) social theory of *personalism*; and (iii) a substantive, practice-centred view of religion, building upon his previous work *What is a person?* (2010). Smith's *personalism* gently guides the knitting together of a conceptual and theoretical framework of *self-understandings*, *mutuality*, and *practices of mutuality* in this chapter. Chapter 1 sought to answer some of these basic questions. Bosch is the 'who', the *history-whisperer*. Bosch as a *history-whisperer* guides these descriptions and the connection with the case study.⁸³

It is important for the reader to keep the **main research question** at the forefront his/her mind:

⁸³ Bosch is relied upon heavily in this study but not without critique. Following are some of the critiques within the text. His view is clearly reflecting idealism (section 5.5.2 highlights this) which does not allow for a more realistic analysis as he continually takes the road of creative tension. Although some of his final texts (1991b & 1991c) seem to have brought out more of the realist (section 2.2.2). Bosch's characteristic *creative tension* leads to outlining the 13 multi-dimensional aspects of 'mission as'. Kritzinger (2011) analyzes these Bosch's multi-dimensional mission aspects in depth, in conversation with Bevans and Schroeder; then with Schreier (section 2.4). Kim (2000:172) lists three areas that Bosch 'hardly mentions': (i) feminism as a theological or philosophical movement; (ii) ecology as a perceived environmental crisis; and (iii) *indigenous spiritualities* or the *spiritualities of Indigenous People*. I agree to an extent with Kim but believe that a careful reading of Bosch's overarching work and *Transforming Mission* (1991a) shows otherwise. Bosch (1991a:15-16) opens his overarching argument with Schussler Fiorenza (1976), one of the leading feminist theologians, but her name is not in the index of authors.

Careful research shows that many more scholars from LA are quoted and then listed in the index, in partial response to Sugden's critique of the lack of voices from the 'two-thirds world', especially LA, mentioning Escobar and Padilla (1996:148). This dissertation expands upon the latter, for example Chapter 4 displays how well Chilisa's (2020) *Indigenous research methodologies* weave together with Bosch's philosophical assumption and view of reality. The present study addresses Guider's (1996) critique as to the lack of application for mission practitioners within Bosch's *postmodern* or emergent or ecumenical paradigm (section 7.1). Guider contributes to a practical description of what she terms *transforming missionaries*.

In view of the collapse of an international USA-based RBO, how have shifts in self-understanding and practices of mutuality shaped the ministry and mission of the Colombian congregation?

Other ways of presenting the same question, include:

- Example 1: The collapse of an international, USA-based RBO made it difficult to determine how mutuality and self-awareness have impacted the ministry and mission of the Colombian congregation.
- Example 2: The collapse of an international, USA based RBO has led to questions about the ministry and mission of the Colombian congregation.
- Example 3: With the collapse of a USA-based RBO, how has their self-understandings changed, and how is it impacting the ministry and mission of the group in the country?

The restructuring of the **main research question** allows for the observation of some nuances, which will be shown in the data. The collapse makes it hard to determine how mutuality and self-awareness has impacted the congregation. The collapse has led to questions, as is made clear in the second example. The third example highlights how *self-understandings* has changed and how it is impacting ministry and mission. How do you measure or determine these types of shifts? Personal observation is one way, as well as *deep listening or presencing* of others who also experienced these shifts.

There is a maternal metaphor which speaks about what the collapse gave birth to. In Spanish, it is known as *me nacio hacer esta investigacion*, meaning ‘It was born inside of me to do this research’ or ‘something deep inside of me moved me to engage in this research journey’.⁸⁴ It implies not just an emotional response but something deeper that includes thought. This maternal metaphor is a different type of metaphor in English. One of the challenges of the research is its nature. The question is, what did the collapse give birth to? This maternal metaphor is mainly used in English if it is a metaphor for a mother's giving birth to her child. It does not reflect the

⁸⁴ This explanation was given to me by one of my sons in a conversation (Nov. 2023).

same emotional, gut level meaning that is found in Spanish. The Luke account of the parable of the Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37) when studied in Greek, points to the motivation of the Samaritan by an embodied force, *splagchnon* – ‘in his guts’. This understanding of the gospel, as a gut level movement motivating *boundary-crossing* or *frontier-crossing*, is central to Illich’s thought and practice (Cayley 2021:351-59; Leao 2022:37-38). This links with Simon’s (2009) *mission as frontier-crossing*. And it could be viewed in light of the forementioned *gut-theology*.⁸⁵

To answer this question, we need to define several concepts. This is the purpose of the current chapter. The chapter thus focuses on *self-understandings* and *practices of mutuality*, and their impact on the relationship to ministry and mission. A reminder of the main images introduced in Chapter 1: **train**, **global train system**, **locomotive**, and **locomotive engineer** of the USA-born and managed denomination; **trainwreck** is the collapse; **roots** is what is hidden: and **tree** is interconnectivity or *self-imposed limitations* of the ICI-CO without the USA funds and governance. Bosch is ascribed a descriptive title: *history-whisperer*. Intertwining the definitions of *mutuality*, *self-understandings*, and *practices of mutuality* will be gathered to seek greater clarity in view of the research question.

2.1 BOSCH: HISTORY-WHISPERER

Looking back at history is one way to approach a research problem. One can seek to solve the problem with others if they have already figured it out. Maybe someone has already figured out at least one aspect of the problem which can then shed light on a specific area. That is how this conceptual and theoretical framework begins. It explains concepts and theories to help answer the **main research question**. Bosch is the primary text for this historical search.

2.1.1 Crisislessness & historylessness

Bosch’s main texts are framed by the concept of collapse. In *Mission to the world*, Bosch (1980:248) concludes that: “Christendom has collapsed” . . . continues: “Many have lamented and

⁸⁵ Hendricks (2004:167) in the context of studying congregations in AFR and the conflicts that one faces inside of congregations, defines gut as: “the inner important beliefs one has about conflict”.

still today it is a liberation”. Bosch (1991a:2-3) frames his text of 2000 years of the history of Christian mission highlighting the crisis he observes in Christian mission. He asserts that it is an everyday affair for Christians to live in a situation of crisis.⁸⁶ Borrowing Kraemer’s argument Bosch (1991a:2-3) asserts: “It should never have been different. . . Strictly speaking, one ought to say that the Church is always in a state of crisis and that its greatest shortcomings is that it is only occasionally aware of it”. Bosch (1991a:3) views the West as not embracing crisis: [T]he “atmosphere of *crisislessness*. . . this is simply the result of a *dangerous delusion*. Let us know that to encounter crisis is to encounter the possibility of truly being church” (italics added). Continuing, Bosch (1991a:3, Koyama’s contribution is expanded upon in 1991b) emphasises Koyama’s contribution from his Japanese perspective, ‘crisis’ as where danger and opportunity meet; it is the place where: the “future is in the balance and where events can go either-way”.

Bosch shows that crisis and collapse can be seen as part of the Christian identity and heritage. The location where the collapse of the congregation occurred was a moment in time, where they had their future in the balance and where the events could have gone either way. He might have in mind Christian groups that have embraced *historylessness*, such as this USA RBO, when using the word *crisislessness*. I have learned from careful reading of Bosch that many concepts need to be held in *creative tension*, to understand them. I think *historylessness* and *crisislessness* support one another. I argue that holding a position of *historylessness* allows for the potential of a *delusional theology* which tries to avoid a crisis. *Crisislessness* connects to Illich’s *myth of perfection* (Cayley 2021:464).

⁸⁶ Bosch does not use ‘crisis’ as a negative concept in the Christian narrative and nor do I. My purpose of highlighting the concept of ‘crisis’ is to show how the Christian message and much of Christian history embraces difficulty as an important aspect of the *lived religion* and in seeking to apply the original teachings of Jesus. Bosch (1991a:41-46) describes the ‘crises’ of the development of the early Christian mission as the self-definitions of the Jews and Gentiles collided but led to the widening of the horizons of the early *followers of Jesus*. This is just one example of many found in the New Testament of a crisis being an opportunity for the *followers of Jesus* (1991a:3). This understanding is at the heart of the argument of this dissertation, the embracing of brokenness or crisis as a vital aspect of the Christian message. Bosch (1991a:178) explains in Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians a positive missionary gospel of ‘unconditional love’ and ‘unmerited grace’, as well as in his letter to the Philippians, Romans, and even in the first letter to the Corinthians (1:9; 23f). In this same page, quoting Sanders, that Paul’s mission was “on the basis of ‘solution’, not of ‘plight’”, Bosch concludes Paul’s to be an overarching positive message.

Historylessness is the basis for the theology of ICI-CO has its legacy within the USA SCT has its **roots** in a version of post-colonial theology, SCT founder, Campbell (1778–1866), as other primitivists, held the following view. Noll (1983:21) describes: they saw little use for the “accumulated wisdom of the centuries . . . this ahistorical approach flourished in a republic which took pride in an ability to put aside the decaying traditions of Europe”. Noll (1983:210) explains further: the primitivists were able to label by the 1800 years of history as a “story of aberration and corruption”; which was best to be disregarded or ignored. On the other hand, Bosch, by embracing the whole of Christian history, with all its ‘aberration and corruption’; discloses its potential for ‘liberation’. Bosch’s view of history is discussed in more detail below.

2.1.2 Trains, brands & missions

Bosch interrelates **trains** and **brands** with mission history – these are recurring themes. First, Bosch (1995:33) contributes: “mission is more than and different from recruitment to our **brand** of religion; it is alerting people to the universal reign of God” (bold added). Bosch (1991a:530) connects Mott with progress, **trains**, and ‘exportation’ of Christian brands, which I describe with the image of a **global train system**. Bosch provides details following in the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference, of which Mott was the organiser. Mott published a book right after the conference. A photograph of a train faces the title page, with the caption “**Railway** penetrating the old wall of Peking”, in *The decisive hour of Christian mission* (1910) (bold added). Bosch concludes (1991a:530): it “make perfect sense to Mott since it portrayed the ‘advance’ of the gospel”. Bosch (1991a:338) explains this link, as Bosch conveys the mood of optimism and confidence of the progress that typified the Edinburgh conference.

Bosch (1991a:518) also provides a background narrative between Mott and Kähler. Mott asked Kähler right before the Edinburgh Conference: “Do you consider that we now have on the home field a type of Christianity which should be *propagated* all the world?” (italics added). Bosch records that Kähler expressed his grave concerns over this propaganda; especially as to the ‘exportation’ of the **brands** of Christianity. After this brief interaction, Bosch notes that Mott continued with Bosch’s interpretation of that USA mission epoch (1991a:334-339): “missionary

fervor, optimism, and pragmatism”. As a steam engine or **locomotive** pressing forward at full speed, so the USA optimism in Christian mission was exuberant at that time in history.⁸⁷

This phase of fervour among the main PROT groups in the USA collapsed during the epoch of the 60s and 70s (Hollinger 2017). And liberation theology was flourishing not only in LA but also in the USA (Barger 2017). It is an interesting historical moment in which I was born. Bosch’s description of this epoch in USA mission history⁸⁸ seems to connect to a new cycle of a similar “missionary fervour, optimism, and pragmatism”. This is observed in the RBO prior to the **trainwreck**. I am drawing parallels based on broad trends without delving into the specifics of the historical context in which Mott is a key actor. Bosch places Mott in the fifth of the following historical paradigms of mission: modern Enlightenment paradigm. Bosch (1991a:181-82) lists the historical paradigms of mission: (1) apocalyptic paradigm of primitive Christianity; (2) Hellenistic paradigm of the patristic period; (3) medieval (RC) paradigm; (4) PROT (Reformation) paradigm; (5) modern Enlightenment paradigm; (6) emerging ecumenical paradigm.

Bosch (1991a) frames all his main points, utilizing these basic epochs based on Kung’s (1984) theological adaptation of Kuhn’s (1970) thinking on paradigm shifts. Bosch establishes the international context around the conferences mainly situated in the fifth paradigm, and he seeks to show a way towards the sixth.

2.1.3 International conferences: Insights into trainwrecks

Bosch gives testimony to the issues raised in the international organisations in the last century about difficulties, collapses, and crises faced by the Christian Church. It contributes to the investigation of the research problem as there have been many discussions around the case study. ICI-CO is not aware of the resource, as the RBO, following its ‘parent’s’ tradition, it has not participated in any of these discussions.⁸⁹ Bosch (1978:286-287), makes a historical overview of

⁸⁷ As Mott and Allen were writing at the same time and contributed with such distinct theologies and methods of mission, a comparison of their work would be a valuable missiological research project.

⁸⁸ The 1960 conference (1991a:339) could be a historical marker but this would need further research.

⁸⁹ Of the SCT only DOC have participated in the IMC and WCC. The research has not found any of the denominations of the SCT participating officially with Lausanne.

the relational theme and the *slogans* within nine conferences of the International Missionary Council (IMC) and the WCC, as follows:

- (1) Edinburgh (1910) slogan introduced ‘the evangelization of the world in this generation’; relational issues not really touched upon (but surfaced with V.S. Azariah, memorable plea, “Give us FRIENDS”);
- (2) Jerusalem (1928) frequent references of partnership, equality, cooperation, community, mutual relationship and solidarity;
- (3) Tambaram (1938) very little added to the subject;
- (4) Whitby (1947) real progress made, in a spirit of optimism coined the *slogan* ‘partnership in obedience’;
- (5) Willingen (1952) admitted that the *slogan* ‘partnership in obedience’ was operating with difficulty, new emphasis on ‘mission in unity’;
- (6) Ghana (1958) “no magical *slogans* concocted here” (:286);
- (7) Mexico City (1963) formulated JAM (Joint Action in Mission), which began (ESP) Ecumenical Sharing of Personnel;
- (8) Uppsala (1968) discussed multilateral relations;
- (9) Bangkok (1973) “urged a fundamental revision of bilateral structures and relationships” with the concept of ‘mature relationships’ (:287).⁹⁰

Bosch (1978:287) concludes: “So, clearly all the *slogans* had failed – and also the restructuring among multilateral lines – at least in the eyes of the younger churches” (*italics added*). He makes this strong statement not as a sign of giving up on the whole thing but as an opportunity to continue forward. An example of the opposite of *crisislessness* and *historylessness*. Embracing crisis and history, in *creative tension*, as part of the Christian walk, as part of the Christian practice, as part of the Christian theology. Bosch (1991a:519) provides another example of this position: “Throughout most of the church’s history its empirical state has been deplorable. This was already

⁹⁰ Bosch excludes the following conferences in this text: Delhi (1961); Nairobi (1975); EVAN Mission Conferences (Berlin 1966 & Lausanne 1974; and RC Conferences (1919, 1926, 1957, 1962-65 [Vatican II] and 1975).

true of Jesus' first circle of disciples and has not really changed since. We have been fairly good at orthodoxy at 'faith', but have been poor in respect of orthopraxis, of love".⁹¹

Bosch was shown as a *history-whisper* in this section. The overview of history allows a concern as to the possibility of a connection between *crisislessness*, *historylessness*, and the potential creating a *delusional theology*. The context of the USA scene of mission enterprise around the 1900s, using metaphors as **trains** and **brands**, mirrors the context of the USA-born RBO, prior to the collapse. The resources of the international mission organisations are highlighted by his description as well as his personal example of *resilient spirituality* that embraces crisis and difficulty as a personal walk, in a practical manner, and theologically. This contrasts with the SCT legacy of cutting off the old traditions of Christian Europe.

2.2 *MISSIO DEI*: THEOLOGICAL RESPONSE TO TRAINWRECKS

The international conferences convened amidst global events, tensions, collapses, and unsolvable problems. Bosch (1991a:363) specifies the context of the times:

Events of world history have shaken Western civilization to the core: two devastating world wars; the Russian and Chinese revolutions; the horrors perpetrated by the rulers of countries committed to National Socialism, Fascism, communism, and capitalism; the collapse of the great Western colonial empires; the rapid secularization not only of the West but also of large parts of the rest of the world; the increasing gap, worldwide, between the rich and the poor; the realization that we are heading for an ecological disaster on a cosmic scale and that progress was, in effect, a false god.

Bosch (1991a:518) boldly admits, as does Robert (2019:188) that new images must be found in Christian mission. Willingen (1952) is a conference that had breakthroughs that can contribute to answering the research problem. These huge ramifications for mission endeavours after the World Wars and the Chinese Revolution. The model, *missio Dei*,⁹² was born out of collapses, which gave birth to a theological concept.⁹³ This was an enormous shift in the understanding of the

⁹¹ This quote should be understood within crisis as an opportunity, as already stated as the overall assumption. Secular historians, such as Holland (2019), correct some of the one-sided picture of Christian history. Holland intersects with Illich's thinking as to the formation of Western civilisation by Christian ideals. Hollinger (2017) is another such author. Another excellent work read exhaustively for the purpose of this research is Stanley (2018).

⁹² For this research, an exhausted outline of the history of the development of the vital theological concept *missio Dei* is not prioritised. Much has been written, for example Flett (2010) is an in-depth study.

⁹³ Cf. Bosch 1991a:370, 390-91, 502, 511-12, 514 for his discussion of the birth of the concept *missio Dei*.

interrelationship of the church and the mission. This term uses the idea of the Trinity as three in one as the inspiration for all relationships. God is a missionary God. God is always at work in the world, always ahead of the church and mission. The focus of the mission is a God-centred one, which includes the church but not church-centred. Allen's thinking⁹⁴ was on the cutting edge of mission around the same time frame as Mott's engagement. He was extremely critical of the mission theology and methods of his time. He describes them as *systems*, and questions their use of *propaganda*, the reliance on foreign funds and programmes, among many other issues; as did Illich. I would think he would agree, if he were alive now, with the depiction of a **global train system** to represent the Christian **brands** of his time. Although his thinking was disregarded during his lifetime, his view on the Holy Spirit's role in mission, and other issues of control, systems, programmes, racism, and colonialism, impacted the framing of the theology of *missio Dei*.⁹⁵

2.2.1 *Missio Dei* = *Mutuality* = *Hand of God*

My definition of *mutuality* has been developed for the past four years. A careful reading of Bosch and interviews with his wife, Annemie Bosch, have led to this finding, *mutuality* is *missio Dei*. *Mutuality* has been assumed in missiological literature but not defined with a lot of detail. As it is a concept that is gaining popularity in several disciplines, it is starting to be used in missiological literature.⁹⁶ Although, Bosch (1978) used the term and concept half a century ago: 'Towards true mutuality'. A careful reading of that specific issue of *Missiology: An International Review* (1978), has *mutuality* as the principal theme throughout.⁹⁷

My findings show that *missio Dei*, though used the same context for the discussion of partnerships, is much broader and wider. Although literature with the concept of partnership has provided links. Cueva (2015:417) defines partnership: "[A] kind of mystery of two or more co-participants in

⁹⁴ His first publication in 1912, actively writing as of 1900; a complete list can be found in Rutt (2018a:145-148).

⁹⁵ Cf. Bosch 1991a:40, 114, 123, 307, 378-79, 450; Rutt 2018a; 2018b

⁹⁶ Cf. Articles: Kolimon (2016) '*Mutuality* in mission'; Barnes (2016) 'Whither partnership? Reflections on the history of *mutuality* in mission'; and the book by Heuertz and Pohl (2010) *Friendship at the margins: Discovering mutuality in service and mission* (italics added in the titles).

⁹⁷ A careful reading of that specific issue of *Missiology: An International Review* (1978), has *mutuality* as the principal theme throughout. Between 'Towards true mutuality' and 'Mutuality in mission: A case study' (Staples 1978) is nestled a revealing article on the PROT contribution to liberation theology: 'Liberation theology in Latin America: Antecedents and autochthony' (Neely 1978).

doing mission, working in harmony, and expressing differences, phases, characteristics and policies of the same missionary matter". This is an application of the social, horizontal aspect of *mutuality*, whereas the original thinking would seem to be understood as a vertical relationship, an awareness of a Creator or God. This dual aspect of the vertical and horizontal connections or *glue* makes it a difficult concept to construct; although it is at the same time simple as it speaks of a dual movement. Bosch (1991a:36) speaks to this dual movement within what is known as *the greatest commandment* (Mk. 12:28-34); a parallel narrative to Luke 10:25-28. The interrelationship of the horizontal, love of God and the vertical, love of one's neighbour. Although in the concept of *missio Dei*, the emphasis is placed on God's love and presence (cf. Flett 2010; Taylor 2020).

A **HAND** is used as a metaphor for *missio Dei*. This is the understanding described above that God is already there before any communicators of the gospel arrive. The **soil** represents what is already there.⁹⁸ God does not need human tools to be known, but humans and their tools or systems can participate in the expanding love of God. The dialogues in the international conferences, as Bosch noted in 1978, have not found or discovered the answers – all the answers – but continue trying (ed. Keum 2013). Bosch (1978:287) with his usual honesty maintains “all the *slogans* have failed” (*italics added*). Thus, thinking through the problems and embracing their complexity, is a wonderful resource for RBOs and other Christian groups that have not joined the dialogues. Interreligious dialogue can also contribute to more robust understandings of *mutuality*. In this regard, I find Gandhi⁹⁹ sheds light on the understanding of *mutuality* as being like *glue*. Gandhi (2018:214) calls religion “that which binds”; using the Hindu concept of *Dharma*, as “that which holds”.¹⁰⁰ Gandhi (2018:214) comprehends: “When morality incarnates itself in a living man it becomes religion, because it binds, it holds, it sustains him in the hour of trial”. Gandhi's

⁹⁸ Carefully reading Bosch (1991a:40, 114, 379, 450) directly and indirectly links Allen as a forerunner of *missio Dei*, although not indexed.

⁹⁹ Tolstoy had profound influence on Gandhi, leading Gandhi to the Sermon on the Mount for an important cornerstone of his theoretical framework of nonviolence. And then, both profoundly influenced Martin Luther King, Jr. (Yancey 2001:11-41, 147-177).

¹⁰⁰ Bass (2015:236) from the Christian Tradition confirms Gandhi's definition of religion, “to bind together”.

description allows us to confirm this simple idea of *mutuality* as *glue* with the Absolute, Great Spirit, or specifically the biblical God in the case study.¹⁰¹

I am searching for what it was that bound the interviewed participants of ICI-CO when they faced the drastic collapse of their congregation. Like Bosch conveys, Christianity is seen in the failure not in the success. This is where the *glue* can truly be tested, as Gandhi speaks of the ‘hour of trial’. This makes seeking *mutuality* in missiological evaluation quite complex, as it will not be found in numbers, it cannot be measured in tangible ways. But it can be perceived in many ways; this is obvious in Jenkins (2008) as he revisits the ‘lost history’ of Christianity in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. It is impactful to review the evidence of what Jenkins (2008:28) illustrates: “destruction of churches and Christian communities”.¹⁰² Here, Jenkins (2008:28) provides an important piece of the puzzle when trying to study religions and their impact: “The success of a particular religion or faith tradition in gaining numbers and influence neither proves nor disproves its validity”.

A thread that runs throughout Christian history that is impossible to trace, or measure is tied to women and to mothers, namely meals and *table-fellowship*.¹⁰³ I believe it to be vital for the growth and continuation of the Christian faith but as cooking, serving, and eating is usually considered a norm not a spiritual activity there is a gap of knowledge. Once I saw a sign which depicts a general sense of this observation, ‘Everyone wants a revolution, but no one wants to wash the dishes’. Bosch (1980:248) mission as: the *church-crossing-frontiers-in-the-form-of-a-servant* links to this (see section 2.4).

Jenkins’ statement adds complexity to this missiological study on *mutuality*, how can it be measured or described? It is the assumptions of this research that sometimes even words cannot

¹⁰¹ Mutuality as ‘super glue’, could also be used in contrast to ‘glue’ could be applied. ‘Super-glue’ that “sustains him [her] in the hour of trial”. And *resilient spirituality* could be understood as those who utilize the ‘super glue’.

¹⁰² Jenkins (2008:28-29) notes: “[D]eChristianization is one of the least studied aspects of Christian history”, alongside his statement: “Theologians seldom address the troubling questions raised by the destruction of churches and of Christian communities”. With a *maternal-thinking* lens, Jenkins points to women: biological mothers (:63, 176) and spiritual mothers (:73) as a mode of continuation of the Christian faith, even among the described contexts of extreme persecution.

¹⁰³ Cf. Bosch 1991a:41-46, 107, 167, 199; Bosch’s view of *table-fellowship* in Luke is examined in Goheen 2005.

adequately describe missiological *mutuality*. Intimate nonverbal communication such as tears, weeping, crying (springing from joy or sorrow) are messy aspects of this *mutuality* (see Personal Reflections #1 – #7 for specific examples). Bosch (1991a:353) explains his concept that metaphor, symbol, ritual, sign, and myth are all ways of evoking integration of the mind and will. They not only touch the mind and its conceptions, but also evoke action with a purpose and compel the heart. And later in the text, Bosch (1991a:493) highlights poetic expression as an example, pointing to Illich:^{104,105} “In poetic language Ivan Illich gives expression to this” (Bosch 1991a:493). Then Bosch continues with Illich’s (1974) poetic definition of missiology:

the science about the Word of God as the Church in her becoming; the Word as the Church in her borderline situations; the Church as a surprise and a puzzle; the Church in her growth; the Church when her historical appearance is so new that she has to strain herself to recognize her past in the mirror of the present; the Church where she is pregnant of new revelations for a people in which she dawns.... Missiology studies the growth of the Church into new peoples, the birth of the Church beyond its social boundaries; beyond the linguistic barriers within which she feels at home; beyond the poetic images in which she taught her children.... Missiology therefore is the study of the Church as surprise.

Previously, Illich (1970:87) defined: “Missiology approaches theology with an ‘increased receptivity for the poetic, the historical, and the social aspects of reality’”. Illich’s poetic view draws upon maternal imagery to vividly define missiology: Church is “pregnant of new revelations”; “birth of the Church beyond her social boundaries”; “poetic images. . . taught her children”. I find inspiration in Illich for identifying with the concept of as Cayley (2021:244-277) describes, *embodied knowledge*, which I connect with *maternal-thinking*.

¹⁰⁴ Kritzinger and Saayman (2011:140-41) confirm Bosch and his attraction to poetry as a literature genre. His honours degree (Master’s in Arts) in Languages (Afrikaans, Dutch, and German), held Afrikaans poetry in as the most important subject of study. Carefully reading of Annemie Bosch (2011:1-37), as well as quotes from this research display the two points. First, show their connection around poetry, and secondly, the way Annemie expresses her thoughts about *mutuality* through her favourite poet, Gibran (see Poem 1 and Poem 2).

¹⁰⁵ Satia’s (2020) *Time’s monster: How history makes history* was the most eye opening of all the books I read regarding revisiting the past or the discipline of history. The main insight I captured as I understood that the best way of entering history is not by writing history but by poetry. Within the context of the Urdu-speaking people, Satia shows how poetry was used to express their feeling and their identity, even motivating robust social movements. She contrasts this with the British use of the discipline of history. She constructs the writing of history as a vital tool for empire building and colonial control. She questions profoundly the discipline of history. She contrasts the discipline of history with poetry and highlights poetry as a vehicle of connecting the past with the present.

The running themes in Bosch's texts and lived experiences I describe with the word *mutuality*. I have not found the same consistent clarity, although he does not apply the exact word that often. He does define *mutuality* (1978) to a greater degree than more of all my wide-range research of missiological and theological texts. Bosch, in the main text (1991a:135), only uses the word once:¹⁰⁶

Faith in Christ creates a *mutuality* of indebtedness; it recognizes that the believer is as deeply indebted to unbelievers as to Christ. Yet in no sense does it depend upon the tangible contributions of the creditors to the debtors, only and wholly upon the gift of God in Christ (*italics added*).

Before listing the three aspects of *mutuality* identified in Bosch, Annemie Bosch's contribution is vital. Of the greatest joys in this research journey was the triad of interviews with Annemie Bosch. In this section I give the definitions of *mutuality* she provided by email, after thinking months about it. The first two she makes clear are original to "*Kahlil Gibran, Lebanese Poet (1883-1931)*". The first is the most concise (email communication June 13, 2022):

Poem 1: Poetic definition. . . Mutuality (Annemie Bosch)

"A mutually beneficial relationship. 'And to the flower a bee is a messenger of love, and to both, bee and flower, the giving and receiving of pleasure is a need and an ecstasy'".

Previously (email communication April 25, 2022), she writes: "*It speaks to me, and I love the metaphors. Perhaps it will do the same for you!*" And she quotes Gibran's 'Marriage Poem':

Poem 2: Poetic definition. . . Mutuality (Annemie Bosch)

*"Let there be spaces in your togetherness.
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.
Love one another but make not a bond of love: Let it rather be a moving sea between the
shores of your souls.
Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.
Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone,*

¹⁰⁶ Cf. section 'Mission in Paul' (Bosch 1991a:123-180).

*Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music. Give your
hearts, but not into each other's keeping.
For only the HAND of Life can contain your hearts.
And stand together, yet not too near together:
For the pillars of the temple stand apart,
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow" (bold and capitalisation
added).*

In this poem I can grasp the concept of *mutual distancing* as an aspect of *mutuality*.

And in Annemie Bosch's following reflection on mutuality, there are many layers of meaning, with *intergenerational mutuality* as the main theme. She describes this 'silver tread of grace':

*"In my extended family of 3-4 generations about whom I know, you will find many examples of almost anything traditionally regarded as sin - and sometimes examples of horribly being sinned against... If I look at and think of all these people and how they have lived, (the parts I know of), I can only thank God for each of them... I do not know of a single one who, on the whole, did not live for, or care for others less, or more fortunate than they were. And that I believe, is what the HS [Holy Spirit] worked in and through them. In spite of our warts and sins and 'human-smallness and frailties', **a silver thread of grace**, genuine love and good will binds us all together in a kind of mutuality as the one you thought you saw between David and his mother.... Something godly and pure sifting down through the generations of people who have sought to show their gratitude towards a loving Father by serving God and their fellow human beings and tried to work for justice for every person.... some by simply living their lives and some through the professions they chose and were trained for.*

Mutuality, I think, is the essence of all healthy human relationships— or should be. That is, if I correctly understand what mutuality is..." (email communication June 24, 2022).

Annemie Bosch, adds a poetic dimension to Bosch's work on *mutuality* and concepts which I identify as *mutual distancing*, as in *maternal-thinking*. I understand it as *creating space to give space* and *intergenerational mutuality*. But the main message I see is about healthy human relationships, "*mutually beneficial relationships*", and partaking in a "*message of love*" ("*a need and an ecstasy*"). She recognised that, "*a silver thread of grace, genuine love and good will binds us all together in a kind of mutuality as the one you thought you saw between David and his mother*" (see section 5.4).

There are many layers of meaning to unpack in these concepts. It connects with one of the few definitions for *mutuality* I have found in theological dictionaries, in *An A to Z of feminist theology* (eds. Isherwood and McEwan 1996:155-56). Heyward (2016:155) defines *mutuality* as “a relational process in which all persons, or parties are empowered, thereby experiencing themselves as able to survive, affect others creatively, and make a constructive difference in the world around them”. Heyward continues: “[E]thically and practically, *mutuality* is a slippery concept, hard to define in practice, yet essential to right-relations” (italics added). Is it possible that *mutuality* is found in feminist theological writing due to some of the reflection provided by *female-maternal-embodied-knowledge*?

Robert (2019:190) suggests a link in this argument: “Women experience the church as a primary friendship network, and feminist and *womanist* theologians often point out that relationality characterized women’ approach to God, theology, and Christian practices” (italics added). Heuertz and Pohl (2010:78) provide this missiological description of *mutuality*: “*Mutuality* does not come from everyone doing the same thing or making the same contributions. It comes from shared humility, respect and appreciation for the other person, and some sense of shared vision or purpose” (italics added). Heuertz and Pohl (2019:80-82) continue discussing *table-fellowship* in the context of the gospel. They (2019:81) state: “[M]eals are also at the heart of the Christian story”. They (2019:81) believe that Jesus is not saying that we should ignore our family and friends but “make our circle larger”. Heuertz and Pohl (2019:83) continue suggesting we ask ourselves three vital questions: (i) with whom am I eating?; (ii) who is invited?, and (iii) who is left out?” Heuertz and Pohl (:83) use the word *mutual-hospitality*, as a way of indicating that *mutuality* interlocks with *table-fellowship* and *mutuality*. But someone must clean, plan, cook, and serve the meals, so I suggest that *mutuality* as making meals for table-fellowship be researched as part of a working definition of *mutuality*, so I add a fourth question: “Who is cleaning, planning, cooking and serving the food for *table-fellowship*?”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Rheinbolt-Urbe’s (2015) research involved this line of questioning as an aspect of the role of some missionary mothers throughout the ages and personal reflection was integral as that was much of my ministry and mission focus after the 2003 RBO collapse. Feeding and serving my immediate family and inviting many others into our home was the theological and missiological praxis I developed as my personal understanding of a *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission (or mode of mission).

Now, I connect all the above for a working definition of *mutuality*, which have divided into a triad: (i) personal walk; (ii) practical; and (iii) theological.¹⁰⁸

Mutuality as: –

- (i) Personal Walk: As walking within *liminal spaces*. It describes Bosch's *creative tension* or living as *in-between people*.¹⁰⁹ The connection of opposites, while retaining their uniqueness. The following quote from Bosch (1991:367) describes his and Annemie's chosen walk and attitude towards life:

This means that both the centrifugal and the centripetal forces in the emerging paradigm – diversity versus unity, divergence versus integration, pluralism versus holism – will have to be taken into account throughout. A crucial notion in this regard will be that of *creative tension*: it is only within the force field of apparent opposites that we shall begin to approximate a way of theologising for our own time in a meaningful way (italics by author).

In a personal email (March 20, 2023), Annemie Bosch locates this personal walk:

"Don't worry about the criticism some people express about David. In-between people: people who stand between clashing personalities and groups, people who believe they are called to be mediators, who believe they have been called to work for mutual acceptance, understanding, forgiveness and reconciliation are often accused of not being radical enough - of not choosing 'the right side' and not being strong enough to further one specific view in difficult situations..."

If you try to see more than one viewpoint and to understand different people from where they come and from what they experienced, the 'other group' think you are weak.... But that is what David and I saw as being 'really strong' ... To understand and accept the validity of opposing views and opinions and try and bring people to a point where they can agree to differ without rejecting each other or seeing each other as enemies. A certain, specific vulnerability which is, in some way, also strength, is needed in such situations."

- (ii) Practical: The potential for *mutual transformation* Bosch (1991a:355) asserts that we recognise each other as *brothers and sisters*, all children of *Mother Earth*. Bosch also applies the term *humanisation*. Bosch (1991a:493-494) in the description of the relation of the church and mission: "It is *missio Dei*. It is mediating the love of God, the Father who is the Parent of people, whoever and wherever they may be". Claassens (2012:92-93) demonstrates the Old Testament female metaphors for God (mourner, mother, and

¹⁰⁸ This triad framework is adapted from Leao's (2022:28-33) unpublished research on Illich. It allows for adaption in various ways throughout the dissertation.

¹⁰⁹ *In-between people* title of Bekele's (2011) book linking Bosch and Bekele's missiological study of Ethiopia.

midwife). Claassens (2012:11) explains that *mutual transformation* cannot be forced, demonstrating that these metaphors are rooted in the “values of love, relationality, *mutuality*, and compassion”. *Mutual-hospitality* or *table-fellowship* is a practical aspect of *mutuality*.¹¹⁰

- (iii) Theological: Bosch (1991a:264, 355) believes in the *interconnectedness* of the Creator with the created (human and nonhuman). This is a link with *Indigenous knowledge*. Raja (2020:1) expresses the same essence: “*Interconnectedness*, interrelatedness, interdependency, interactivity, interlinked, mutual-presence, cooperation, networking, intentional engagement are essential characteristics of a Triune God as a community of difference beings” (italics added).

In many ways, Martin Luther King Jr., (1963:n.p.) expressed these similar ideas in *Letter from the Birmingham City Jail* also known as, *The negro is your brother*. Here, King defines the concept of *inescapable network of mutuality* framed from his theological training (the Creator is not included in this quote, but it was vital in King’s theological perspective):

In a real sense all life is inter-related. All men are caught in an *inescapable network of mutuality*, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be, and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be... This is the inter-related structure of reality (italics added).

These three aspects of *mutuality* are vital for this study. It is the underlying assumption of this study that true *practices of mutuality* are born out of what is inside – not imposed, not domination. *Practices of mutuality* are those practices that truly draw us closer to other, with a special focus on the unseen aspects. So, the above three definitions of mutuality are not describing financial or administrative aspects of society or church life. The *interconnectedness* is there, with the unseen and with the seen. But what practices strengthen this awareness of that *glue*, that *togetherness*?

¹¹⁰ The best grasping of this concept I have found in the anthropological work of de Piña-Cabral (2013) as *mutual transformation* in his article, ‘The two faces of mutuality: Contemporary themes in anthropology’. *Mutual transformation* is connected to *mutual understanding*.

Maternal-thinking, facilitates the complexity of evaluating motivation. If I call my mother because she will worry about me, is that imposed? How do we discover what is born from inner freedom and what practices are imposed? A possible answer can also come from *maternal-thinking*. If I call my mother because she says that if I do not call, she will no longer consider me her daughter. That would be domination, in my *maternal-thinking* definition. This could provide insight into the *practices of mutuality* in the case study. Describing the theology as *teologia de la casita* (theology of the **little house**) in its personal, practical, and theological aspect, leads to a dominating conclusion (see Appendix R3). If it is taught that you are only with God inside of that **house** and only those inside of that **house** are right with God, are granted salvation, and going to heaven.¹¹¹ That could easily be interpreted, “if you are not in this **house**, you are not my child”.

2.2.2 *Bolder humility?: Bosch’s final texts*

In Bosch’s final writings, he delves deeper and deeper into a concern beyond his early concerns (1978) as to the relationships and the power dynamics of between sending and receiving congregations. Bosch (1991c:123) identifies: “There is little hope of any quick ‘*re-evangelisation*’ of the Western community world-wide” (italics added). His concern is more regarding *humanisation*, which at the core what I have gathered from his texts and Annemie Bosch’s contribution as his definition of *mutuality*. Bosch (1991c:124) maintains: “[A] *new mutuality* of evangelising, for the termination of one-way mission, for black and white Christians discovering one another and rediscovering themselves and, in this way, getting involved together in the mission of the church in this country” (italics added). Bosch (1991c:127) emphasises that *re-evangelisation* involves decolonisation and due to the context is obvious that *mutuality* is an aspect of this shift.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Bosch (1991a:409-420) examines the idea of mission as evangelism and how it relates to the theology of salvation. Additionally, Bosch (1991:315-319) discusses premillennialism in the USA and describes its view of salvation, which is characterized by being ‘saved from the world’ (:318). Furthermore, Bosch (:319) connects this with various aspects of the US religious context such as the New Religious Right. and Hagin’s *prosperity gospel*. This is similar to De Mez’s (2020) recent analysis on white evangelicals’ connection to these movements and their resulting increase in *prosperity theology* preaching. Bosch explains how the idea what I identify as *managerial missiology* connects to premillennialist churches and organizations. This link accepted without question, even though they were preaching separation from the world while simultaneously running their religious institutions like a business. He further explains how this relationship between mission and modernization in the US was embraced by both ecumenical and evangelical groups (:319).

¹¹² This statement links to the current *decolonial* thinking (see section 2.3).

In this text, Bosch concludes by drawing upon a reflection of *God's gratuitous love*. Bosch (1991c:131) then moves towards those who have been blinded by “material and political power, prejudice, racism, and selfishness to radical conversion, also about their complicity in *structural evil*. Looked at from this perspective, the ministry of evangelization is an intensely *humanising* ministry, precisely because of its deep commitment to reconcile sinners to a gracious God” (italics in the original). He is emphasising missiologically what a *new mutuality* could ‘look like’ in his own SA context, anticipating the inevitable collapse of ‘life as they knew it’ in the political rule of Afrikaners in SA.

Bosch (1995, published posthumously) communicates in a more direct way his view of *mutuality*. In this text, he describes the pollution of the Enlightenment on the very being of Christianity and mission. At this point I hear Illich talking on the ‘same frequency’. In their writing careers, Illich would be a realist and Bosch an idealist. Bosch’s constant attempting to hold opposites together, as an act of *creative tension* (Nussbaum 2005:154) could make him out to be an idealist. My view is that Bosch’s later works should be invited into the conversation as they have not been as present in post-mortem discussions. I locate these triad of Bosch’s final texts (1991b, 1991c, 1995) in the realist camp over the idealist camp but more research is needed to confirm this view.

This leads to a shift to the concept of *self-understandings*. Meyer’s (1986) shapes Bosch’s (1991a) thinking.¹¹³ Meyer’s (1986:26) defines *self-definition* a triad movement: (i) *horizons* - “the sum and limit of what one knows and cares about”; (ii) then *self-understandings* - involves questions that are worth considering: what am I? what ought I to be? Or what do I really want to be?; and (iii) final moment, *self-shaping* and *self-definition*, which is the definition of *identity*.

2.3 SELF-UNDERSTANDINGS

*Self-understandings*¹¹⁴ is also identity. But to be more specific, it has to do with a relationship with knowledge. Kirk (2019:6-7) points to distinguishing features of being human. One of the features is the process of acquiring knowledge. Humans learn through instinct. They also learn

¹¹³ Bosch’s (1991a) index lists these pages where Meyer is mentioned: 15f, 23f, 26, 39f, 42-46, 87, 96, 126, 128.

¹¹⁴ I have deliberately kept this plural for the purpose of this study.

through a close relationship with other humans, gaining wisdom through the experience of others (theme in Chapter 5).¹¹⁵ Another way humans learn is through their mental capacity to think and ask questions about life. Kirk asserts that humans are ‘questioning creatures’. Kirk specifies that these are universal human features.

Self-understandings, individual and communal (I/we) can be understood through many of these concepts.¹¹⁶ The research has gathered six main concepts that shed light on self-understanding:

- (1) *God-images* (as the communal and personal perception of God [Counted 2015; Louw 2015:278, 293, 571; Roux 2019:4, 13, 16]). This is theological anthropology (Pannenberg 1985). Bosch (1991a:584) discusses Pannenberg work;
- (2) It can also be defined as the mental images of one’s worldview or *mazeways* (Hiebert 2008:245, 253-55, 273);
- (3) Another description is the *social imagination* (Taylor 2004) or *imagined communities* (Anderson 1991);
- (4) Where your imagination connects you to others and the spiritual (Smith 2009:65-67). Smith connects the *social imagination* with worship, worldview, and cultural formation;
- (5) Current missiological work (eds. Sechrest et al. 2018) is seeking to address the *Whiteness Project*, as a manner of addressing the *white supremacy* embedded into much of the USA Christian expressions and organisations. As a tool of *self-understandings*, for those of us who are white, and Christian might be lacking self-awareness or *self-understandings* (Jones 2017; Hughes 2018; Olbricht 2018a; Du Mez 2020; Gorman 2020);¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Annemie Bosch articulately communicates this vital concept that acquiring knowledge due to relational influences, as an important finding in this research project (see section 4.1.2.5 and 5.2).

¹¹⁶ See Chapter 1.

¹¹⁷ *Whiteness Project* as a concept is assumed and not expanded upon in this dissertation. I view it as a tool for *self-understandings* for my own background and context not as a binary (white vs. black) racial colour issue. I understand colour of skin to be complex as I have lived my entire life in LA among *mestizos* who are in the majority a liminal racial mix of black, indigenous, and European (see footnote below). *Whiteness Project* has provided insights into my own racial tendencies which have been shed light on personal issues but also a USA-born RBO. This specific RBO is known for its racial and ethnic integration, but the main initiators have been from the USA, white, and middle-class. The position I assumed in the congregation, which has borne fruit in this research project, comes from a personal application of my construction since 2003 of a *transforming mutuality* as a theology of mission. My husband addresses his own theological understanding of this reversal of roles as a theology of mission (Uribe 2006).

- (6) Dussel takes it further using the complex concept of *ethical-mythical nucleus* (Dussel 1996:119-120, borrowing from Ricoeur¹¹⁸). This is an important concept in *decolonial* thought (Esteva and Prakash 1998; Grosfoguel 2011; Escobar 2017; Dussel 2012; 2019).

All the above allow different views of the same theme of *self-understandings*. They are listed to capture the widest view possible.

There are also contextual ways of gaining knowledge. The researcher has had the opportunity to gain knowledge from varied sources. This study comes from a certain Global North view (due to parents and academic formation) which is a certain analysis (taking apart to learn something, like taking apart a machine). This thinking has influenced thought in CO which at the same time preserves aspects of Global South epistemology (instead of taking apart, it looks at the whole). Also, *tacit knowledge* is vital. Smith (2010:46) describes *tacit knowledge*: “we can know more than we can tell”. Smith supplies Polanyi’s definition (2010:171): “it is not by looking at things, but by *dwelling in* them, that we understand their meaning”.¹¹⁹ Bosch (1991a:353) adds: “True rationality thus also includes *experience*” (italics in the original). *Tacit knowledge* many times includes and *intergenerational wisdom* transference process. The assumption of this research is that this transference between generations is flexible, where the dynamics of ‘who teaches who’ can shift.

Another way of viewing the difference is the manner of confronting sickness. In the Global North manner, the ‘why’ of the illness is looked for by ‘taking apart’ research on the illness, thinking

¹¹⁸ Dussel (1996:78) takes Ricoeur to the LA context: “Every civilization has a meaning, though said meaning is diffused, inconsistent and it may be difficult to make out. This entire system organizes itself around an *ethical-mythical nucleus* which structures the ultimate intentional contents of a group, and which may be discovered by the hermeneutics of fundamental myths of a community” (italics added). Dussel describes the LA context (:79), due to five centuries of the *mestizaje* process, influenced by three *ethical-mythical nuclei* but focuses mostly on the clash of the European and Indigenous people in American continent. The European, he identifies as rooted in a triad *ethical-mythical nucleus*: (i) Greek; (ii) Semite, and (iii) Christian.

¹¹⁹ Bosch (1991a) interacts robustly with Polanyi (1991a:272, 349, 351, 353, 358-61). He (1991a:359) evaluates: “In this way Polanyi hopes to re-equip us with the faculties which centuries of critical thought have taught us to distrust. He advocates the primacy of commitment of ‘tact’ or ‘personal’ knowledge (cf. the title of his book) over ‘objective’ knowledge, knowledge without a knowing subject (Popper). . . But the point is that nobody (and certainly not the Enlightenment scientist) is really completely without a commitment”. In this quote the concept of *tacit knowledge* is used.

through the patterns of the symptoms, going from specialist to specialist. Whereas a *tacit knowledge* way of viewing illness is asking the question ‘why?’. In another manner it is more like asking a supreme being: ‘Why is this happening to me?’ or “Why am I (or my loved one) sick?’ In SA, among those who hold closer to *tacit knowledge*, the Book of Job in the Bible is a favourite book, as the ‘why’ question is phrased many times.

2.3.1 Understandings and knowledge

Smith (2010), Kirk (2019), and Wright (2020) do an excellent job in seeking a definition of ‘self’. Smith, Kirk, and Wright can be applied in a universal fashion, as understood within theological anthropology. Smith (2010:98-104) defines ‘self’ within *personalism*. He lists six areas that make up a human being, namely: (1) soul (spiritual); (2) body (material); (3) mind (psychological); (4) brain (intellectual); (5) combo (volitional); and (6) heart (emotional).

As reviewed in the previous section as to the distinguishing geature of being human is the process of learning, Kirk’s (2019:6-7) speaks humans as questioning creators that learn by asking questions. From a philosophical point of view informed by theism, Kirk (2019:6-11) lists six more: self-consciousness, moral values, capable of aesthetic appreciation, capable of reasoning, capable of giving and receiving love, and able to perceive and experience a nonphysical reality. Furthermore, Wright (2020:n.p.) lists seven ‘signposts’ of the ‘human vocation’: justice, beauty, freedom, truth, power, spirituality, and relationships. Smith, Kirk, and Wright’s definitions are quite similar as they point to the complexity of a human being.

The Global North’s manner of reaching knowledge can be understood as taking apart to learn something, such as taking apart a machine. This is necessary within the Global North context, and Bosch (1991a:273-274), referring to this reality, says: “It is not possible to ‘unknow’ what we have learned”. He contiues, the Enlightenment (Global North knowledge) has provided ‘real light’ and should not be discarded. He suggests (1991a:274 quoting Newbigin 1986): “move beyond it,

taking what is valuable in it—with the necessary caution and critique—along with us into a new paradigm”.¹²⁰

2.3.2 Definition of self-interconnectedness from Indigenous knowledge

It is important to contrast these definitions with concepts with the thinking of three Indigenous groups: (i) an AFR concept; (ii) a MX/GT Indigenous community concept; and (iii) one from a USA/CA Indigenous community.

First, the SA *ubuntu* is an AFR philosophy of life, a vital AFR *social capital*, described by Gathogo (cited in Mbaya 2011:1): “brotherliness, solidarity, and *togetherness*” (italics added). Achebe (2018:54) defines *ubuntu*: “A human is human because of other humans” In *maternal-thinking* logic, *I am because you are* (I would not be a mother if I did not have children).

Second, In Indigenous groups in MX, *autonomia* (autonomy) is not an individual autonomy but a communal autonomy (Escobar 2017). I found this same meaning for ‘self’ in a GT Indigenous group (*Quiche*). This is the community I grew up in.

Third, the Lakota Community in USA/CA hold a concept of *mitakye oyasin* (*all my relations*). Villanueva (2018: 11, 181) defines this concept, “we are all related, connected, not only to other humans but to other living things and inanimate things and the planet, and the Creator. The principle of *all my relations* means that everyone is at home here”. Villanueva in this description takes the concept of ‘self’, as with previous two concepts, as not only connected to their communities and their Creator but also to the created world and universe.

A superficial comparison between these specific Global South and Global North definitions of ‘self’ is as follows: The extension of the definition of ‘self’, this connection beyond oneself and

¹²⁰ The research (Smith 2010:89) has shown a definition of self as a ‘legal person’. As of 1886 in US law, corporations are treated as a ‘legal person’. Smith explains, “Corporations enjoy many of the same rights as natural persons”. Based on this fact, a corporation could be interpreted as a ‘self’. This definition is beyond the scope of this study but deserves more research as US mission agencies are legal corporations. I believe there are many connections, and these implications have a missiological reach, especially if linked to *self-preservation* and *managerial missiology*.

your community, interconnects with Kirk (2019) “perceive and experience nonphysical reality”; Wright (2019) ‘spirituality’; and Smith (2010) ‘soul’. Kirk (2019) defines the relationship aspect as “capable of giving and receiving love” and Wright (2019) as the “vocation of relationships”.

Global South definitions are usually combined with a *tacit knowledge*, ‘you just know what you know’, or in Smith’s (2010:46) definition: “[W]e can know more than we can tell”. For these groups it is obvious that people need people. The popular phrase ‘it takes a village’ (AFR Proverb) and ‘no man is an island’ (Donne) are understood in the Global North, and capture some of the essence of this *tacit knowledge*.

#1 Personal Reflection by Researcher:

From my personal experience and academic background, it is challenging to embrace the communal manner of acquiring knowledge. I am trained to seek to reach knowledge by 'taking apart to understand' so it has been a quite solitary task. Immersed in CO culture with a distinct view of the path to knowledge has led to a personal transformation. An example below can shed light on the transition.

The CO ritual is for a woman to stay at home and rest for the first forty days after having a child, la cuarentena (isolation for forty days). When I was first introduced to the practice, it had no scientific backing, just an 'old wives' tale. I did not follow this practice when my first child was born. I would sometimes get aggravated with mothers who did not take part in the church community during this phase. This is not just an issue of cultural practice it was also concerning knowledge and self-understandings: knowledge in that it is 'scientific' proof in contrast to the wisdom gained through intergenerational wisdom, this would be an aspect of intergenerational mutuality. Self-understandings, according to my home culture, would consider only a 'weak' woman would take that much time at home resting, while in CO it is the opposite. A "'strong' woman stays at home (staying at home is key to having strength later).

When my twin boys were born, circumstances led me finally to accept this tacit knowledge as wisdom, which transformed my own self-understandings. I began to view myself as a 'strong' woman as I cared for my own health and my small babies in 'self-quarantine' (quarantine and cuarentena are the same word but with different meanings). This painful paradigm shift was acquired amidst extreme vulnerability as my premature twins were between life and death. On the other side of this experience, I discovered a new-found bond with a community of women whose knowledge I valued and accepted. My horizons were expanded due to the spiritual connection in a community so different from my own. This led to shift in my self-understandings. This shift leads to a transformation in a communal self-definition and identity.

2.3.3 Connecting: Understanding (knowledge) & 'self'

These definitions of 'self' in mind give a broader understanding of 'self' within the compound concept of *self-understandings*. It is of vital importance to show the formation and influence by Global North philosophical thought on the concept of 'self', to capture the concept of *mutuality*

within mission. Bosch (1991a:342) depicts the Enlightenment ideal as: “free, emancipated, and autonomous”. This Enlightenment knowledge which informs the concept of ‘self’ is rejected. As Allen’s *three-selves concept* informs this study, it is vital to know the context of the word ‘self’ when he was writing within the period when the Enlightenment view was held in high regard. The findings lead me to believe that Allen did not hold this view of ‘self’ in the same manner as was commonly held at that time.

#2 Personal Reflection by Researcher:

Although from maternal-thinking, lived experience and confirmed through scholarship; I believe this to not show a clear picture of the times regarding mission endeavours (and others in the Enlightenment project). There is a missing view of parents, and especially the mother. As mission endeavours have progressed throughout the globe in these centuries, mothers have paid a high price. On one hand, the mothers bid her child good-bye (maybe to never see their child again), and on the other hand, mission practitioners as mothers. This voice on the periphery of mission studies is found in (Rheinbolt-Urbe 2015). Also ed. Priest (2014) in the book (The missionary family: Witness, concerns, care) displays how important the topic is to current mission praxis. The best term I have found to describe this is in philosophy, relational autonomy (Stoljar 2017, n.p.).

But I have also pondered, it is possible that a common myth could motivate mission endeavours, as historically has happened in war, where a communal narrative allows for a sense of sacrifice (even of one’s son or daughter) for the common good. But that does not mean that the mothers do not suffer deeply. A historical study of letters between mothers and international mission practitioners could reveal important gaps. Reading family letters from my grandmothers to my parents and to me, as well as our leaders to them, shows a path in this direction. More research is needed. I am wondering how this aspect will play out in from everywhere to everyone, as a large majority of mission practitioners are now from Global South family systems where the interconnectedness of family is recognised and practiced as an important social glue. Jonas (2022) speaks to some of this in the historical empirical research seeking to capture the reality of the lives of black evangelist (DRC) and their families in the Cape Province of SA during the 20th century. The case study has potential for this type of study for future research, particularly regarding the long-term consequences of TNMP following a USA conception of “free-emancipated, and autonomous” familial practice laid out in the RBO (see Chapter 3).

Global South knowledge is used to add robustness to the Global North knowledge by those who have identified this issue (Smith, Kirk, and Wright). ‘Self’ for this research has been defined with inner complexities which go beyond the material and is an important part of a community: there exists an interdependence with other human beings who are also complex. In turn, *self-understandings* go beyond an individualistic knowledge of one’s own inner complexities but also includes others. The logic of *sentipensante* applies. *Sentipensante self-understandings* is an awareness of one’s own ‘feeling/thinking’ and the communal ‘feeling/thinking’.

2.3.4 Identity

Smith (2010:254-255) defines identities as “*self-understandings* derived from occupying particular, stable locations in social, behavior, mental, and moral space that securely define who and what somebody is, for themselves and for others”. The author continues: “Every normal human animal reject[s] being *something* and drives mightily to be a *someone*” (italics in the original). Smith (2010:72) builds upon Buber’s (1996) proposition of I-Thou to say: “persons, as I am defining them, sustain their selves in loving relationship with other personal selves and with the nonpersonal world”. There is a direct link to the *ubuntu* concept previously mentioned in this chapter: *A human is a human through other humans, or I am because you are*.

Yip (2014:400) from missiology, describes identity from a modernist view: “culture is a unifying system with minimum variations. . . culture traits are interconnected into a system” and the result is “clear cut boundaries”. Yip (2014:407) states that it is thought, in a modernist lens, they are missiological questions are answered in a “changeless self-identity over and against change and difference”. And then Yip (2014, 2018) locates missiological answers within a postmodernist view. The contribution is valuable as it answers questions in the current reality of identity in its fragmented and incoherent state, identity is the context of flux. Yip shares this viewpoint with Hiebert (2008:245) who asserts “identity now as has many faces”.¹²¹

¹²¹ Meyer’s (1986:26) self-defining triad movement asks questions as to identity: (i) who am I?; (ii) what ought I to be?; (iii) what do I really want to be?

A modernist view is held by the denomination in the case study: A RBO that is born from the Church Growth Movement. As mentioned previously, Hiebert (2008) identifies *bubble identity* as an aspect of globalisation that builds corporate identities that can transcend local identities to create monoculturalism. *McDonaldisation* is the sociological description of this phenomena (Ritzer 2013).

The research involves questions about identity. The original church planting of ICI-CO held a type of *bubble identity*, an international identity built within the mission organisation. Connecting self-understandings – identity and *mutuality* and their interrelationship, brings many questions. Who decides the *bubble identity*? Why are people drawn to these types of groups where the *bubble identity* overrides their own cultural and familial identity? What happens when this *bubble identity* bursts, as in the collapse of the case study? How do people go forward in the areas of identity and *self-understandings*? In the case study, this was an aspect of reflection and discussion. As a result of the collapse, many realised that USA cultural practices had been imposed as part of the RBO international church identity. This included several aspects, namely: ‘imported’ template of wedding ceremony logistics (Participant 208); an ‘imported’ idea from the USA of ‘babysitting’ children who are not your own family (Participant 208); linguistically – an inclusion of what someone described broadly as ‘Americanism’ (Participants 212 and 115); church teen ministry replacing family authority (Participants 212, 214, 218, 114, and 115); spending all of Sunday in church activities instead of with family (Participants 112, 212, and 115); not spending enough time at home with parents and extended family (Participants 112, 212, and 115), to name a few.

It is important to note that a Colombian identity is a newer construction (cf. Yunnis 2003; Serrano 2016, 2018; Losada Cubillos 2018; Gomez Buendia 2021). Up until around 100 years ago or less, the identity marker was **rooted** in the regional identity; in the family’s specific location within the country. There are also strong identities forged from the political wars fought between the rigid two-party system: liberal and conservative political parties. This political turmoil led to over half a century of armed conflict. Furthermore, due to this conflict, the deaths are set at 222,000; 25,000 people have disappeared; and seven million were internally displaced during this 50-year

period (Council of Foreign Relations 2017).¹²² So, the study involves complex issues about identity, and its flux.

2.3.5 *Liminality: Embracing trainwrecks*

Recent research has shed light on that *in-between space, betwixt and between, threshold-ness* – the spaces between culture, identity, and the social situation. The term is *liminality* (Turner [1995] building on van Gennap’s previous work). This term is applied within practical theology and missiology. Wepener (2015) and Wepener and Nell (2021) use the term *spirituality of liminality* to describe their position in SA academia as: theologians, males, white, middle-aged, and privileged. Wepener and Nell (2021:4) define a missiological stance of *liminality* for this research: “*Liminality as an in-between space is a space with considerably less power, it is uncomfortable and makes those in liminality vulnerable, it is however also a potentially creative space*” (italics added). They continue: “A *spirituality of liminality* thus goes hand in hand with ontological and epistemological hospitality. However, there should be a reciprocity and students should try to do the same” (italics added).

Bosch (1979) in *A spirituality of the road* describes the concept, *missionary spirituality*. This text is Bosch main text for his thinking in this theme. Bosch (1991c) also uses the phrase *victim-missionary* to illustrate his understanding of *missionary spirituality*. These concepts supply a missiological lens for a more profound understanding of the nature of *cross-culture gospel communicators* or those who view *mission as boundary-crossing*. Terms such as *mission as identity formation* and *mission as frontier-crossing* (Simon 2009) have been developed, *mission as boundary-crossing* could be used interchangeably. Throughout Christian history, we find examples of many *liminal* people, possessing *missionary spirituality* and as *victim-missionaries*, have used their ability to walk between different *self-understandings* to build bridges. What does this mean during a collapse, a **trainwreck**? In Bosch, as well as Allen and Illich, we find them embracing crises. Using their own eye, as insiders, to continue searching out for the problems,

¹²² Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) (n.d.). IDMC researches internal displacement populations. It places CO as the second highest in global internal displacement, after Syria. Numbers provided are 5.6 million, 85% of rural population has migrated to urban centers due to the conflict and violence.

giving the problems names, and then possible answers. For my extensive research into their work and lived experiences, they do not expect *crisislessness* as an aspect of a Christian walk.

How do we see Bosch (1991c) apply this *mission as boundary-crossing* in his own country? This extensive analysis of *mutuality* and *self-understandings* has shown that *mutuality* is not to be at the service of the Enlightenment project or an expanding **global train system**, ‘in the name of Christ’. Crisis (also the logic could extend to collapse) as Bosch suggests, can lead either to danger or opportunity. This analysis has allowed me to confirm that the term *missio Dei*, which allows us to see God working without the funds, resources, and structures of the West, was born out of collapse. In collapse is where *mutuality* as vital within the *missio Dei*. It was disrobed of its Western clothing and at the sight of what it meant to those of the biblical text. *Indigenous knowledge* helps to grasp this as there is less Enlightenment influence on their thinking.

2.3.6 Missional spirituality ‘gives birth to’ resilient spirituality

Bosch’s numerous terms for his understanding of spirituality, especially *Christian spirituality*, and *missionary spirituality*, have been an important area of conversation in missiological scholarship (Helland and Hjalmarons 2011; Hastings 2012; Niemandt 2016a; 2016b; Niemandt and Niemandt 2021). *Mission spirituality* is also an important term. RC scholars Bevans and Schroeder (2004:363) borrowing from USA Catholic Conference document, highlight many examples of *table-fellowship* in Luke’s gospel, “like those who first ate and drank at the table of the Lord, we who gather today at that table . . . the Eucharist nourishes our *mission spirituality*” (italics added). *Mission spirituality* here speaks to aspects of this study, as the subject of *table-fellowship* is central, but I believe it has an implied ‘top-down’ or *missionary spirituality* aspect. Also from the RC Tradition, Leport, and Karecki (2022) research involves transformational *mission spirituality*.¹²³

Adding to the discussion, Saayman (2010) seeks to distinguish between missionary and missional. He concludes that bottom line it is connected to the context. And states that missional is used in the Global North (he uses term North Atlantic). And missional must be defined clearly in the AFR

¹²³ As noted previous the SCT denomination DOC, has engaged in dialogue with the RC Tradicion (see Disciples of Christ–Roman Catholic Church International Commission for Dialogue and Council on Christian Unity [1982]).

context, so as have clarity as to the academic discipline and the practice (cf. Knoetze 2022 for current scholarship in the AFR context within this subject). Saayman's conclusion points to the missional movement has gaining force in the USA and Europe. This growth has led to a *missiological spirituality* as an organizational focus. It seeks to provide practical and specific guidance for congregations seeking to be missional; and educational endeavors such as new Missional University in the USA. Two other examples are: a USA organisation, New Beginnings (links to the denomination in case study as SCT denomination DOC clergy and congregations are key in project) and the UK missional movement, Fresh Expressions.

The academic discipline *missional spirituality* is the focus from the SA missiology context. Regarding spirituality within theological education, Niemandt and Niemandt (2021:1) delineate the interrelationship between these two main terms:

Missional spirituality is a spirituality that plays an important role in re-establishing an important dimension that was lost. 'Missional' has become a supporting word, scaffolding, and missional spirituality can be understood as pointing towards authentic *Christian spirituality*. *Missional spirituality* is a spirituality that ignites and nurtures a way of life for the sake of others" (italics added).

The concern with term of *Christian spirituality* is tendency towards self-focused experience or church-centered (*temple spirituality* in Helland and Hjalmarsons 2011:27). Whereas *missional spirituality*, as Helland and Hjalmarson (2011:27, 30) emphasise as Bosch (1991a:36) the constant dual movement: (i) the vertical – love of God; and (ii) horizontal – love of neighbor; and vital to its definition is the quality of transformational (Niemandt 2016b). Niemandt and Niemandt (2021) take this argument further and create a term, *missional metanoia* to demonstrate the transformational aspect of a *missional spirituality*. Niemandt (2016a) emphasises that this *transformational missional spirituality* (exact terms in text are *mission as spirituality* or *transformative spirituality*) is a thread in throughout the WCC document (TTL) (ed. Keum 2013).

Missional spirituality seems to fit best to describe Bosch's understanding of spirituality as part of the *missio Dei*. Bosch links its purpose within theological education (1991a:492-498 in sections 'From a theology of mission to a missionary theology and 'What missiology can and cannot do'). Clearly, for Bosch, it is also a practice or way of life. Bosch (1991a:232-233) uses Henry's 1987

“spirituality for the long-haul”. He also uses concepts such as: *A spirituality of the road* (1979) and *victim-missionary* (1991c). This way of life embraces *vulnerability* as an integral to a missional spirituality.

This comparison concludes that *missionary spirituality* or *mission spirituality* are not the right terms, as the role of missionary traditionally refers to a paid mission practioners whose ‘job’ or ‘role’ implied, on the other hand, *missional spirituality* can be used academically seeking a transformational view in theological education, as well as can apply to a practice open to all who desire to seek to participate in the *missio Dei*. It can be practiced by the ‘ministry of the laity’ (Bosch 1991a:470-472; 1995:59); *from everywhere to everyone*; and the grassroots mission practioners (GRMP) in the present case study. *Missional spirituality*, grounded in *missio Dei* cannot be confined to academic or Christian mission agency ‘walls’, as reviewed in missiological **trainwrecks** throughout history. As Gandhi (2018) expressed, true ‘religion’ will function as *glue* to bind and hold: “[I]t sustains him in the hour of trial”. *Resilient spirituality* is a *spirituality of the road*. *Resilient spirituality* as discovered of this study; leads to the conclusion that ‘true’ *missional spirituality* ‘gives birth to’ *resilient spirituality*.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter unpacked several vital concepts related to *mutuality* and *self-understandings*. First, Bosch as a *history-whisper* was analysed due to his historical connections to this case study. Furthermore, this analysis led to the conclusion that *mutuality* is *missio Dei*. *Mutuality* can be understood as the invisible *glue* of trust, *togetherness*, with the Creator and with others. *Practices of mutuality* are the visible way of showing that connection, that *glue*.

Bosch, Allen, and Illich embrace the history of Christianity and are aware of the crisis and of collapse. They embrace history contrary to the case study’s *historylessness* and, in turn, embrace crisis. Bosch (1980:248) boldly declares: “Christendom has collapsed”. He continues, “Many have lamented and still today it is a liberation”. Bosch (1980:248) missiological response to collapse: “Mission is the Church-crossing-frontiers-in-the-form-of-a-servant”. Bosch (1991a) shifts from ‘mission is’ to ‘mission as’ (and described its 13 multidimensional facets). Kritzinger

(2011) discusses this shift and then extends the dialogue of ‘mission as’ with Bevans and Schroeder and Schreiter. Simon (2009:91, 96) summarises Bosch: “Missiology is, after all, theology-crossing-frontiers. . . God is the source of mission and takes the initiatives to encounter human beings”.

The response to this love *in a space of freedom a church-crossing-frontiers* or *church-crossing-boundaries* is motivated to the dual movement: love of God and of neighbour. In this day and age, where the gospel can be discovered in a plenary of mediums, the aspects of identifying one’s *God-image* (personal and communal) and seeking to continually disrobe it of Enlightenment influence, is vital in missiology. *Mutuality* and *self-understandings* can be responded to missiologically within *practices of mutuality* in a space of liminality and *relational autonomy*: Mission as the *church-crossing-frontiers-in-the-form-of-a-servant*. Finally, *missional spirituality*, grounded in *missio Dei* cannot be confined to academic or Christian mission agency ‘walls’, as reviewed in missiological **trainwrecks** throughout history. *Resilient spirituality* as discovered of this study; leads to the conclusion that ‘true’ *missional spirituality* ‘gives birth to’ *resilient spirituality*. The next chapter discusses the denomination under study, focusing on the crisis that arose.

CHAPTER 3:

A DENOMINATION IN CRISIS

3.0 LOCUS OF ENUNCIATION

This chapter focuses on the objectives enumerated in Chapter 1: To describe the denomination in the case study. And answers: Why is the term RBO used for this USA-born/inspired (free-market, seeker-friendly, nondenominational, non-creedal [creedless], non-tradition tradition¹²⁴) international Christian group? Why is *historylessness* the main characteristic identified? It describes a denomination in crisis. It provides an outline of the historical Christian tradition where ICI-CO has drawn its theology, missiology, and thinking from. The broad context of this denomination has been outlined in the previous chapters. This chapter seeks to unite valuable texts and resources, while engaging in data analysis and interpretation. As already highlighted, *historylessness* is a theological and practical characteristic that has been inherited by ICI-CO. Figure 2 is evidence that participants have investigated the ecclesial history. If the desire is to comprehend the nature of the RBO, an attempt at a wide historical overview is unavoidable.

Maternal-thinking also guides this chapter (although this concept is explained more in depth in Chapter 5). This *maternal-thinking* allows for a view as to why this congregation's story unfolded in a certain way even though its origin is a USA-born and based RBO.

Guided by *maternal-thinking*, I have researched the 'parent' or 'mother' of the broad tradition, all the way back to its Jewish roots. First, Bosch (1991a:43) states: "The Antioch community was indeed amazingly innovative. Soon Barnabas was sent there by the Jerusalem church (Acts 11:22), not least to keep an eye on developments which already at that stage were causing some alarm in the parent community". And in the conclusion of the section: 'Where the early church failed', Bosch (1991a:54) also took this approach and discovered (quoting Harnack [1962]):

¹²⁴ Term suggested by Dr. Rollin Gram (May 20, 2022) in a personal conversation.

Such an injustice as that done by the Gentile church to Judaism is almost unprecedented in the annals of history. The Gentile church stripped it of everything; she took away its sacred book; herself but a transformation of Judaism, she cut off all connection with the parent religion. The daughter first robbed her mother, and then repudiated her!

This links to McLaren (2022:13-20) lists this reason as one of the potential reasons not to continue within the Christian Tradition. McLaren (2022:15) specifically states: “First victim of its hostility was its own mother: Judaism” and continues (2022:20): “turned so viciously on its own mother”. Bosch and McLaren are giving faint initial links to *historylessness* (not recognising one’s mother or parent), as a thread found in the denomination of the case study.

In contrast to the tendency towards *historylessness* in my denomination, I have decided to embrace my ecclesial past with its joys and failures. I have sought to embrace my familial belonging in the broad SCT and denomination COC. My personal *self-understandings* and *practices of mutuality* are shaped by my family's legacy that spans over five generations on the paternal side, and three generations on the maternal side. As well as my parents’ lifework as medical mission practitioners in GT and MX.¹²⁵ My parents missiological training in the late 1960s and early 70s and read Coleman’s *The master plan of evangelism* (1994) first published in 1963 (a guiding text of the COC and ICOC).¹²⁶ And a conference they attended so the important theme of *world evangelism* at the time. It was the theme of the 1971 Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectures. and a book edited by their main mentor, *Guidelines for world evangelism*, Gurganus (1977). The research journey has led to becoming more aware of my parents’ context at the time I was born and the consequences to this day.

So, this extensive research has led me to a deeper understanding that was obtained through self-discovery and *self-understandings*. Pillay’s (1990:110, quoting Kung [1987]) view has been embraced: “[Theologies] embody unique socio-political, economic, religious (and even ideological) life-situations that have influenced Christian perception and *self-understanding* and have moulded faith experiences and thought-processes” (italics added).

¹²⁵ Cf. Olbricht 2012a:149-50, 238, 240; Hile 2016 for detailed description of my parents’ work in Guatemala.

¹²⁶ Other foundational texts, esp. in regard to the lordship of Jesus, Standback (2005:29) lists: Ortiz (1975) *Call to discipleship* and Bill Bright’s Campus Crusade for Christ literature and guidelines.

I can see from the vantage point of SA, through Bosch, a recurring pattern; a recurring missiological wave¹²⁷ or pattern. A historical seeking of developing **global train systems**, although more research would need to confirm this. Bosch identified the two main waves, the first at the turn of the century (with emphasis on Mott) and the second in the 1970s-1980s, in the Church Growth Movement (with emphasis on McGavran). The main persona of the **locomotive** is the **locomotive engineer**, and these are both Mott and McGavran are influential figures for a USA missiological **global train system**. This study goes back further to the SCT reformers and theologians, with special attention to Campbell. It is important to note that McGavran's denomination is Disciples of Christ (DOC), which is part of the larger Christian tradition SCT.

Due to the links between the Broad Tradition SCT/RM of Campbell, McGavran, and the case study,¹²⁸ I boldly state that I perceive a similar pattern is noticeable as soon as you jump forward to this case study. The **locomotive engineer** in the pre-collapse ICOC **global train system** was Kip McKean.¹²⁹ This comparison is for the sake of seeking to grasp a pattern, as there is much more information needed to truly make any type of comparison. Much more research is needed to draw links and to place each man in a historical moment in the USA. In the following, Table 6, I can only highlight what I capture as a USA characteristic that Bosch describes (1991a:224-339).¹³⁰

¹²⁷ The term 'wave' is borrowed from Saayman's (2007) historical study of the 350 years of the DRC in Southern Africa.

¹²⁸ Mott's background was the Methodist Tradition.

¹²⁹ Du Mez (2020) insights links with this pattern in the USA, with the idea of the "idol of rugged masculinity". Further research would be required to draw more specific evidence.

¹³⁰ Many other USA-born Christian denominations could be evaluated. Or some of the religions based on contextualisation with Christianity, such as the largest USA religion born in the USA (Latter-Saints, Mormonism). Shipps (1995) has done valuable research on Latter-Saints as an outsider. Recent Latter-Day scholarship has compared Joseph Smith and Alexander Campbell (SCT), as there are many parallels and links (Benson 2017). SCT scholar, Thomas H. Olbricht, helped with supervision and wrote the foreword. (Personal note: Olbricht was my informal mentor from within my tradition until his death in Aug. 2020, see acknowledgements section). For a valuable study of a missiological evaluation of the largest and most global expanding USA-born Christian related groups (Mormons (Latter-Saints), Seven-Day Adventists, and Jehovah Witnesses) see Lawson and Cragun (2012).

Table 6: Biographical details of mentioned locomotive engineers

Alexander Campbell	1788-1866	SCT/RM (Bethany College)
John Mott	1865-1955	Ecumenical Movement (YMCA)
Donald McGavran	1887-1990	Church Growth Movement, (Fuller Theological Seminary)
Kip McKean	1954-	ICOC (1979-2002) & post-2003 ICC

The main purpose of this chapter is to give a summary of the robust scholarly work my conclusions are based on. However, I encourage readers to explore the links provided for more in-depth exploration. The breadth and depth of what is available on these topics is staggering, and beyond the scope of this research.

3.0.1 Review from previous chapters

Before delving into the context of the denomination's missiological **trainwreck** and ICI-CO involvement that narrative; the general context of the denomination will be outlined. What do we already know? The previous chapters briefly pointed out some aspects of the denomination. The study is located in the USA and is part of a larger group, linked to nondenominationalism, SCT (Cf. Noll 1983; Ellingsen 2000; Lewis and Rollmann 2005; Hughes 2008; 2014; Gordon 2016; Benson 2017; Clanton 2019; Cook 2019; Foster 2020). Disciples of Christ (DOC) is a branch of that tradition, and a member of the WCC (WCC n.d.).

Being USA-born has been the most common identifier of the denomination. Returning to Bosch (1991a:334-339), 'Missionary fervor, optimism, and pragmatism', these are connected to the context of the denomination in the case study. A word search analysis of Bosch (1991a) reveals these words in relation to USA mission endeavours: triumphalism; were more measurement-focused, pragmatic, effective, voluntary, and ahistorical (*historylessness*); comprising self-evident truths; and confident. In the previous chapter, Bosch describes Mott and the connection to the **train** symbolising progress. Kähler's (1971) concern as to the propagation of Christian **brands** in contrast to Mott's exuberating confidence is obvious. The metaphor of the **train** and an expanding

global train system was used in this section. Mott's confidence and drive could be connected to the metaphor of a **locomotive**. The funds and resources available, as the USA rose to its position in the global market, rising above the previous European dominance, would seem to be linked to this type of USA confidence. As Illich stated, in Chapter 1, the reality of international development must be factored into mission endeavours. If the USA did not have all these funds/resources, would there be the same confidence and triumphalism to 'export' these specific **brands** of Christianity? Would the many different **brands** have grown as much as they have? These questions are not going to be answered in this chapter but are some of the many questions guiding the research, as I integrate my own *self-understandings*.

The terms *Whiteness Project* and *white supremacy* were also used in relation to this tradition as a part of the broad USA *Whiteness Project* (Cf. Dull 2005; Hughes 2018; Gorman 2020). The view of the SCT international mission endeavours, and the Church of Christ in Zimbabwe (COCZ) from the AFR perspective, facilitate the interrogation of this question (Cf. Masengwe 2020; Masengwe and Magwidi 2021; Mudzanire, 2022; Mushayamunda 2022).

The SCT provides the theoretical and theological framework – built by the theologian and social reformer, Campbell. He arrived in the USA in 1809, a young Scottish Irish (Scotch-Irish) Presbyterian minister. His main philosophical influences were Locke and Reid (ed. Clanton 2019), and he was directly impacted by the 18th century EVAN Transatlantic Mission Movement (Gorman 2016). Campbell (1974) main and most well-known work (first printed in 1835) an extremely long and descriptive title: *The Christian system: In reference to the union of Christians; And a restoration of primitive Christianity; As a plea in the current Reformation*.

The title of the book expresses much of what he believed. He penned a systematic theology, in which he called for the union of all Christians. Campbell believed that he was restoring primitive Christianity¹³¹ as a continuation of the PROT Reformation. Barton Stone, of the Stone-Campbell combo, held unity above restoration. Restorationism is another way this is defined.¹³² The tension

¹³¹ This is the definition of a primitivist.

¹³² A recurrent theme found in the SCT legacy is a theological justification for the lack of history, meaning instead of embracing Christian history, to jump over it, that is restorationism.

between the Campbell and Stone diverse legacies of restoration and unity is at root for many differences between the different denominations within the SCT. COC focuses on restoration, while DOC prioritise Christian unity. This explains why DOC is a founding member of the WCC, while COC has not participated in ecumenical organisations (Nugent 2022).

Campbell creatively construed a theological path to jump directly from the New Testament text to the present. The messy aspects of the history of Christianity from the Early Christian period to the beginning of the movement is not needed to be explained or embraced (Noll 1983; Ellingsen 2000). However, Ellingsen (2000:210) asserts that the SCT: “[E]mbod[ies] America[n] Christianity’s nondenominationalism”. My research has led to the finding, that at this time in history, nondenominationalism is the Christian religion of the USA. It is extremely complex to define, categorise, or track, and even more so with the ‘exportation’ of a myriad of Christian **global brands**: that free-market, seeker-friendly, nondenominational, non-creedal. And it is a template of a **brand**, so it can be adapted without any connection with the USA. This merits future research.

3.0.2 Self-understandings of the research population

Data from the interviews will be used for this section, although the Methodology Chapter is in the following chapter. The following graph, of all the recorded interviews, allows a possibility of getting a general sense of the denomination’s *self-understandings*. The Speak.ai category: **Church History/Context** is applied. The summary of which is provided below in Figure 2:

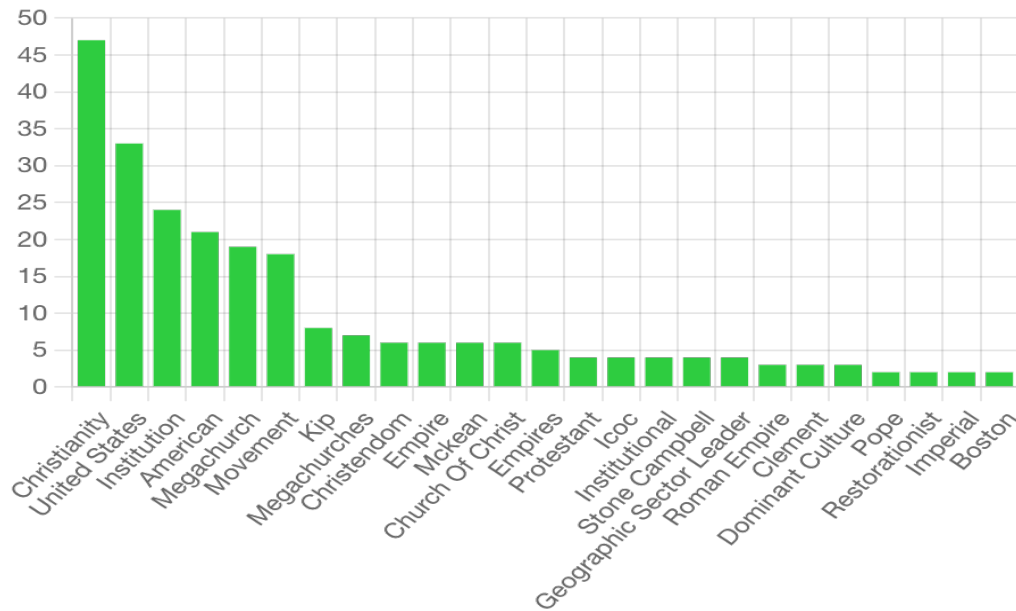


Figure 2: Content analysis of denominational self-understandings of the Participants

The method developed allows for a summary of a text(s) to be made from the word frequency in the software Speakai.co (section 4.2.1 & 4.11 give more detailed information as to the use of this software). A summary of the data interpretation of this graph is below:

The 'United States' and 'American' is one of the most frequently used words. The other words with high frequency are 'Megachurch'; 'Megachurches'; 'Church of Christ'; 'Stone-Campbell'; and 'Restorationist'. They also mention words related to the ICOC denomination or **brand**, such as: 'Kip', 'McKean', 'ICOC', 'Geographic Sector Leader', and 'Boston'. 'Megachurch' and 'megachurches' are in reference to the ICOC **brand**, as well. It is interesting to note, that the most used word by far, is 'Christianity'. The identity, self-definitions, and *self-understandings* aligned the broad tradition of Christianity shows to be much greater than to the specific ICOC *bubble identity* or **brand**.

This long introduction connects the previous information on the denomination, the researcher's *locus of enunciation*, and data from the interviews. Now is to delve into the thread of *historylessness* that runs through 200 years of the SCT all the way to connect with the RBO, ICOC; the international expansion of the **brand**; and then the **trainwreck** with international consequences, as felt in ICI-CO. All this will only be touched upon, as they are extensive themes with many viewpoints. Leao et al. (2017:104-137) provide a parallel narrative in ICOC BR.

3.1 STONE-CAMPBELL & HISTORYLESSNESS

‘Denomination’ is a word that is not accepted by the SCT. The SCT was born out of a rejection of denominationalism, during the religious fervour of the Second Awakening, following the USA Revolutionary War in 1776. Maimela (1982) states a similar position in, ‘Denominationalism is an embarrassment for the church’. Maimela (1982:1) expands:

Acute awareness that in fact there is no such thing as the church of Jesus Christ but rather numerous fragments of the church, fragments which are correctly labeled denominations. Indeed, denominationalism thrives on the fact that the church, by which we mean fellowship of all believers in Jesus Christ, has miserably and regrettably failed to become the church; it has not lived up to the hopes that Christ had for it (Jn 17:20-23).

The SCT was born out of a similar opinion as Maimela, Campbell believed that creeds divided Christians and advocated returning to Christianity's roots in order to unite the church (Cf. Hughes 2008; Claton 2019; Cook 2019; Foster 2020). It is a creedless tradition, as creeds were rejected and anything else that had seemed to have divided the PROT traditions. This is one way of approaching the seeking of Christian unity. In contrast, Bosch (1991a:421) holds that:

‘Churches,’ in the sense of bodies which claim an ultimate and uncontestable correspondence between their own teachings and the divine revelation, became ‘denominations,’ bodies of like-minded individuals, each of which magnanimously conceded to others the right to exist and practice its faith in the way it chooses.

Going back to the previous chapter (section 2.1.1), Bosch uses the word *crisislessness*, and links it to *historylessness*. Bosch does not advocate denominationalism as a sin as Campbell or see it as Maimela (1990:1): “[A]s an extreme failure”. Bosch accepts this reality of a communal religious history. His thinking seems to be, as he was a great seeker of Christian unity, not to tear down the denominations but to build a bridge to each other. Consequently, Bosch assumes a crisis is an aspect of the Christian faith and not the lack of such.

3.1.1 View from outside

Restoration History, Restoration Histories, and Stone-Campbell Scholarship is a growing branch of what is known as American Religious History. Several texts were listed in the above section. It is a relatively unknown branch of religious history, so this chapter includes outside sources to

help frame the case study. The main source is the *Handbook of denominations in the United States* (14th edition) (Olson et al. 2018:248-255). Olsen et al. (2018) under the category, ‘Christian and Restorational Churches’, identifies these six denominations: (1) Disciples of Christ – DOC; (2) Christian Churches/Churches of Christ – CC/COC; (3) Christian Congregation, Inc; (4) Church of God, General Conference (Winbrenner); (5) Churches of Christ – COC; and (6) International Churches of Christ – ICOC. The four denominations from this list mentioned in this research project are the following: DOC, CC/COC, COC, and ICOC.

Olson et al. (2018:xxvii) use the COC as a specific example of how complex it can be to define a denomination. A Christian group can be defined as a denomination no matter how formal or informal their definition or alignment of affiliation (groups of churches, congregations, assemblies, or religious meetings). Olsen et al. points to the COC which does not have a headquarters, or hierarchy, or even a formal connection. Olsen et al. illustrate their argument describing COC with over 1,000 congregations in the USA; all congregants look to certain publications, educational institutions, and have a certain assurance that the worship on Sunday will be similar everywhere. This is an example of a potent *social imagination* and *mazeway* for this non-tradition tradition, beyond the limits of an overarching ecclesial structure. (In contrast, this is the exact opposite of how ICOC¹³³ was set up from 1979 to the collapse in 2003, as it was a centralized denomination, practicing a chain of command, and visible headquarters.)

Olson et al. (2018:245) note that this restorationist message connected with the politics of the time (early 19th century) as it was assumed that the USA had ‘restored’ Greek democracy, so it was also believed that “the structure and the doctrine of the original church” could also be restored “in the new land”. There was a complete break with Europe, so the European ‘malignment’ of the Christian message and structure could be written out of the Christian history or skipped over, which could be understood as a proto post-colonial theology. Noll (1983:170, 184, 210-211) comes to the same conclusion. This *historylessness* is a common feature throughout the denomination that has played out in the case study.

¹³³ Also known as the Boston Movement (Stanback 2005:71); the identify of International Church of Christ began in 1992 as coined by John Vaughn editor of *Church Growth Today* (Stanback 2005:73). Vaughn is also mentioned in section 3.2.

3.1.2 *View from the inside*

This section seeks to provide a framework; identify scholars, and to provide a short list of SCT literature; with special attention to COC as the ‘parent’ denomination of ICOC.

The WCC website provides two ecumenical organisations in which SCT congregations participate: World Convention of Churches of Christ (WCCC) and Disciples Ecumenical Consultative Council (DECC). WCCC, states on their website,¹³⁴ nine common and uniting characteristics of congregations within SCT, namely: (1) a concern for Christian unity; (2) a commitment to evangelism and mission; (3) an emphasis on Scripture; (4) a call to peace and justice; (5) a simple confession of faith; (6) believers’ baptism; (7) weekly communion; (8) congregational leadership; and (9) freedom and diversity. This extensive list helps to identify the basic unifying points in this broad tradition, from the perspective of the DOC.¹³⁵

The SCT, although all the denominations, except for the DOC, hold to local autonomy (congregational leadership) as the ecclesial blueprint. SCT has numerous colleges and universities. A few of the most known are Pepperdine University (COC); Texas Christian University (CC/COC); Abilene Christian University (COC); Lincoln Christian University (CC/COC); Lipscomb University (COC); Emmanuel Seminary (CC/COC); and Bethany College (DOC). Bethany College is the first SCT university, opened by Campbell in 1840.

There are many well-known theologians who have their roots in the specific COC tradition. To list a few, I will begin with Abe Malherbe (from SA). And the rest are from the USA: Everett Ferguson, Thomas H. Olbricht, S. Scott Bartchy, L. Michael White, Lemoine Lewis, Jack Lewis, Carl. R. Holladay, Greg Sterling, Jim Robert, Jack Scott, Bill Martin, David Balch, Bob Randolph, Robin Meyers, and John Fritzgerald. All except for two are mentioned in Hughes (2022),

¹³⁴ Their website can be viewed at: worldconvention.org

¹³⁵ Cf. Disciples of Christ--Roman Catholic Church International Commission for Dialogue and Council on Christian Unity (1982), *Apostolicity and Catholicity: Report of the Disciples of Christ - Roman Catholic International Dialogue: First Series 1977-1982* for a report as to the dialogues seeking unity between DOC and RC.

answering the question, ‘How can we account for the extraordinary culture of biblical and religious scholarship in Churches of Christ?’

The most well-known missiologists from the broad SCT are Donald McGavran, John Moody McCaleb, Samuel Guy Inman, and Orlando E. Costas. All four have a strong connection with the DOC and documented on the BU School of Theology, History of Missiology website. The missiologists from the COC who trained my parents were George Gurganus (1963; 1971) and Wendall Broom. SCT has always given priority to mission in foreign lands. A new missiologist in the COC is Greg McKinzie (2019), although there are many.

Hicks (2020) within USA political theorists places David Lipscomb (COC minister), is one of the most well-known political theorists on the sub-discipline of Political Theory, Christian Anarchy. Max Lucado (once a COC mission practitioner in BR), now a prolific writer and minister of Oak Hills Church in San Antonio, Texas.

A search for COC International scholarship has led to the discovery of two recent COCZ PhD graduates. They are based at SA universities researching their denomination (COCZ), namely: Mudzanire (Stellenbosch University [SU] 2022) and Masengwe (University of South Africa [UNISA] 2020). There is other academic work from bachelor and master’s level regarding the COCZ as they search for their identity in a new century and difficulty (cf. Mafohla 2017; Masengwe and Chimhanda 2018; Mushayamunda 2022). Masengwe and Magwidi (2021) describe the tradition they have inherited, including the Manifest Destiny. (SCT scholar Hughes [2018] describes this American myth in *Myths America lives by*. More research is needed, as the COCZ scholarship, as to the ‘exportation’ of mission intertwined with the SCT ideals). The SCT first came to Southern Rhodesia now Zimbabwe (ZW) in 1898 through the efforts of the New Zealand (NZ) COC.

With this academic overview of the SCT, especially the COC scholarship, I am trying to provide more of a framework for the following aspects of the study. Also, the COCZ scholarship could be used in future research to find links in the findings comparing a LA (specifically CO).

As the literature will demonstrate, it is as all the history of Christianity that is jumped over (1700 years) and there is a direct connection with the early Christianity. I return to the concept of ahistorical or *historylessness*. Applying *maternal-thinking*, there is a sense of not recognising a mother or father. Olsen et al. (2018:254) uses this analogy in regard to the RBO in mention: “have begun to heal the rupture between the ICOC and its ‘mother movement’”.

3.2 RBO = DENOMINATION = ICOC

The **brand** ICOC is given the term, *religious branded organisation* (RBO). It is identified as a religious **global brand** ‘exported’ from the USA to other countries, with a USA way of doing church. ‘Controversial group’ was also used to describe the group (cf. Jenkins 1996, 2003, 2005; Lewis and Rollmann 2005; Gordon 2013). Jenkins (2003) describes it as a *high-boundary religious movement*. The use of **brand** to identify a denomination is not new; it has historical roots, as identified in the previous chapters.¹³⁶

Olson et al. (2018:254) provide a balanced view of this controversial group. As an insider of this RBO, I have been determined to read literature from diverse perspectives, which was the first step in the research journey.¹³⁷ So, I find Olsen et al.’s (2018) account very balanced and honest as to the pre-collapse description. Also, Jenkins (1996; 2003; 2005) is profoundly insightful.¹³⁸ Then, I can bring together three points in the research questions to develop these categories: personal, practical, and theological (Appendix R3 displays a vignette of triad-sided theology of RBO):

- (i) *Personal*: Olsen et al. (2018:254) describe: “each member of the church commits themselves as a disciple and vow[s] to bring new disciples into the fold”. This has a twofold focus: (i) personal discipleship; (ii) and practical, as a method or tool. The tool – *one-on-one discipling* is described below.

¹³⁶ White (2019) asserts the gap in defining missional branding of Christian **brands**: the Church of Pentecost as a case study. White and Pondani (2022) extend the argument to innovating in missional franchising, “church-franchise”, in the context of Neo-Pentecostal and Neo-Prophetic churches in AFR.

¹³⁷ Insider, Fleming (2010; 2018), and his extensive ICOC insider research, provides the original links to help connect the dots (cf Stanback 2005:61-73).

¹³⁸ Jenkins is an ICOC outsider, undertaking master’s level and PhD research, within discipline of sociology of religion, on ICOC. She worked intensive (over the span of five year) using ethnography as the main method.

- (ii) *Practical*: Olsen et al. (2018:254) explain: “This new recruitment method, evangelical method, is called ‘discipling’. The definition is that ‘each member of the church commits themselves as a disciple and vow[s] to bring new disciples into the fold’. . . ‘Discipling is based on voluntary obedience to the church-assigned ‘discipler’. . . In the past, all personal decisions, including dating and marriage, were subject to the approval of the discipler. . . expected to confess all of their sins, which could be recorded for future reference’” (Personal reflection the *one-on-one discipling* tool found in Appendix P).
- (iii) *Theological*: Olsen et al. (2018:254) delineate: “The ICOC teaches that a believers’ baptism by immersion is necessary for salvation and many times those baptized in another denomination are ‘considered damned’ and sometimes members were encouraged to ‘sever ties with those not baptized’”.

Olson et al. (2018:254) identify McKean as the founder of this denomination (1979). They also observed that in 2003 there was a shift with the resignation of McKean. Olsen et al. (2018:254) further recognise the effort on the part of the ICOC to reach out: “to other Churches of Christ for recognition and fellowship. . . to heal the rupture between ICOC and its ‘mother movement’”.

Olsen et al. (2018:254) rightly do not avoid the controversial category used for this group by clarifying: “[S]ome critics calling the ICOC a ‘cult’”. They connect the 2003 **railroad sabatoage** as a reaction to: “heavy-handedness of the past”. Olsen et al. (2018:254) describe the authority structure of the ICOC prior to 2003: “ICOC had McKean at the top of a pyramid structure of authority and obedience and all members were carefully instructed in scripture according to the interpretation given by McKean”. This view is what makes the ICOC a controversial denomination as mentioned by one of the participants interviewed in this study – Participant 114 (Chapter 5). Olsen et al. (2018:243) reveal a radical change since 2003. This radical change is evident in all the texts I reviewed. But a new theological framework to replace *teologia de la casita* is a gap.

A review of the two texts written by the ICOC in LA confirm these triad teachings. A study series to prepare for baptism (Lamb and Lamb 1991) and a text on mission theology and methods, *Bent*

on conquest (Giambarba 1988). Data visualisation of my interpretation of the triad teaching (*teologia de la casita*) has been produced with vignette (see Appendix R3).

Remembering Tickle's (2008:123-163) term *hyphenateds* to describe what she views as the current emerging expression of Christianity, she describes the growing nondenominational leanings of the USA Christian landscape, especially since the 1980s. So, ICOC as a denomination, beginning in 1979, is identified as *hyphenateds*, which is expressed as such:

Church of Christ + Church Growth Movement = ICOC

The Church Growth Movement has a profound impact on the theology of the EVAN/PROT world since the 1970s. Fuller School of World Mission was born out of missiological concerns. Bosch (1991a:381-82, 410-11) identifies the Church Growth Movement's visible head,¹³⁹ McGavran, with similar qualifying words as in describing Mott. He talks about McGavran's missiological tendencies including triumphalism, measurement-focused, pragmatic, effective, voluntary, ahistorical, self-evident truths, and confident. Bosch criticises the Church Growth Movement for its excessive focus on numerical growth over other important parts of the church's mission. He thinks that effectiveness is held in higher esteem than ethical considerations.

Theories within the Church Growth Movement also provided the theoretical framework for the current surge of megachurches (understood as a corporation owned by a family that runs as a church, not only the 2,000+ membership).¹⁴⁰ Escobar (1991; 2002; 2003) describes this concern with *managerial missiology*. This is key to the understanding of the ICOC, as there are direct links to McGavran and the Church Growth Movement (cf. Stanback 2005; Leao et al. 2017; Fleming, 2018). Stanback (2005:108-110) applies and describes the term - *superchurch* - as the ideal ecclesial model in the ICOC during the 1990s.

¹³⁹ For further research, identifying and comparing the individuals behind these 'visible heads' would provide robust data in understanding the noted phenomena.

¹⁴⁰ The research as to the profound and current influence of the Church Growth Movement on World Christianity, is beyond the scope of this research.

Bosch (1991a:534) emphasises Cook's (1985) scholarship: "[T]he best missiological study of the Latin American movement, from a Protestant viewpoint" (and emphasises Boff [1986] as the best RC evaluation). Consequently, Cook (1994) in the context of LA uses the term *transnational churches*, organised as an RBO. Cook (1994:265) provides a detailed account:

Organized in many cases on the model of modern transnational enterprises or corporations, they come with organized teams, mass communications media. ... Originally mainly in the 'new righteous right' in the United States. ... But they are now also originating in Latin America (in Brazil, Colombia, Puerto Rico, etc). They are not all necessarily connected with the religio-political religious right in the United States, although they frequently share their ideological position.

Cook above provides the closest definition to what I am describing as a RBO in the context of Latin America.

Tickle (2008:145) raises the following question when one is studying upheaval: "Where now is our authority?" This has been addressed in Chapter 1. I have developed a basic unit for structuring a religious group, it can be applied from a home-based church community to an international RBO, as in the case study. It helps to identify specific questions: Who is the one interpreting the text? Who is managing the funds and resources? Who is managing the structure, the legal framework, bank accounts, and the media (official communication)? (See Appendix R2 for a complete vignette of the research tool). Figure 3 below reveals the first of the six sequences:

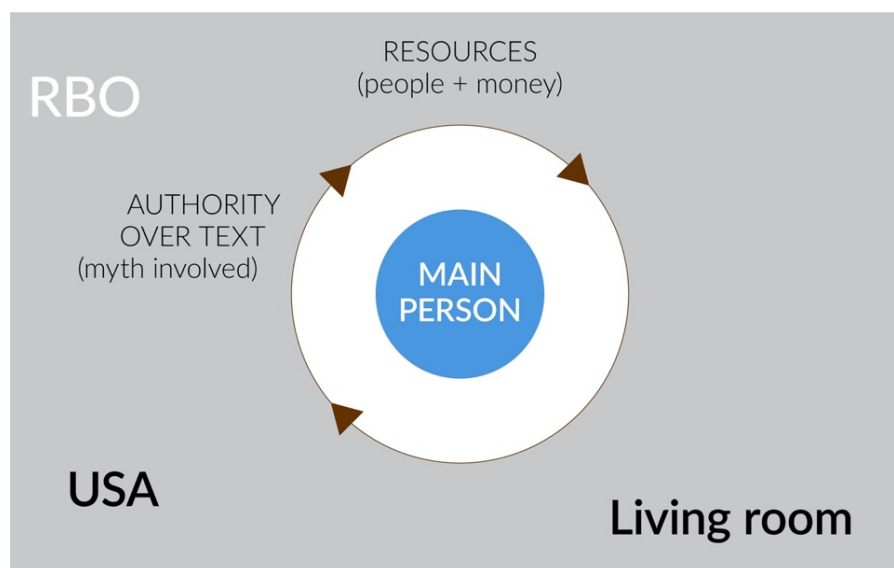


Figure 3: Basic template for the study of RBOs (1st of 6)

ICOC insider scholarship since 2003 confirms the data (cf. Carrillo 2009; Fleming 2010; 2018; Castellanos 2011; Diaz Castro 2014; Lappeman 2014; Leao et al. 2017; Staten 2018). This research adds a perspective that the ICOC is part of a larger phenomenon connected to communal experiences. Returning to Pillay (1990:110): “[Theologies] embody unique socio-political, economic, religious (and even ideological) life-situations that have influenced Christian perception and *self-understanding* and have moulded faith experiences and thought-processes” (italics added).

The easiest and most common way of explaining the 2003 missiological **trainwreck** is to blame the **locomotive engineer** and not to attempt to describe the other factors which led to one participating in a project of such magnitude. I conclude that there has been a degree of USA influence since the beginning of the SCT that has given a certain reading and interpretation of the biblical text. As reviewed with Bosch as a *history-whisper* (see section 2.1) a pattern in the USA is identified. My *self-understandings* in this research has led me to interrogate my ‘Americanism’ (USAism does not sound right).

Many questions are left to be answered, such as: What about this phenomenon led to the creation of a large congregation in CO and its participation in the expansion of the **brand** throughout South America? What is the attraction of this type of phenomena? Why was it so easy to ‘export’ to other countries? Why is it so hard to classify into a category of sociology of religion? What about it did not cross-cultural boundaries, for example, in ICI-CO? Does it invite a global bubble-identity, instead of seeking to connect with the local expression of faith and life? These questions cannot be answered in this dissertation but could be pursued in future research.

The corporation structure and effective use of media (*propaganda*), such as Kingdom News Network (KNN) videos,¹⁴¹ were effective for expanding the work throughout the world, as well as a tool for constructing the *imagined community*; *social imagination*; and *bubble identity*. This

¹⁴¹ See website International Church of Christ Disciples Today (n.d.).

KNN video announces, Vaughn's report, as editor of *Church Growth Today*. The report is in 1997 nine ICOC congregations were on the list of the 100 fastest growing Christian churches in North America, with the Los Angeles congregation #1 (11,723) in Sunday attendance. Another highlight in the KNN video is the HOPE Unity Award, with pictures of McKean giving the awards to Nelson Mandela; Mother Theresa; and Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter.

This construction of the *imagined communities* were constructed in LA in the texts in review. And two points from the how-to book on mission theology and methods (Giambarba 1988) and study guide (Lamb and Lamb 1991) seem pertinent. The first signals the *historylessness* thread. And the second, the application that is given to the relationship with one's family of origin (compared to spiritual family = church family).

The ICOC has used a Bible study series, a type of catechism for preparation for baptism (Castellanos 2011:43-45). The MX edition of this catechism, *El Movimiento de Jesús: El mensaje vivo para un mundo moderno* (Lamb and Lamb 1991), in the sixth study on the church is called "*La familia de Dios*" and based on Ef. 2:19-22 states: "*La iglesia es la familia de Dios*" (The church is the family of God). Hence, 1700 years of Christian history are ignored and judged, as is common in the Restorationist perspective. Chapter 6 in Lamb and Lamb (1991) on the biblical teachings on the church begins with this introduction to Christian history: "*Durante los últimos 1700 años, los grupos religiosos han destruido el concepto de lo que es la iglesia. Este estudio nos ayudará en el entendimiento de lo que fue la primera iglesia, sin tradiciones, ni enseñanzas humanas*" (For the last 1700 years religious groups have destroyed the idea of church. This study will provide more understanding as to the first church, without traditions or human teachings). Giambarba (1988 foreword) expresses the same view.

The LA mission theology and strategy was built upon an assumption of what USA family life looked like and made universal application throughout (Giambarba 1988). My *maternal-thinking* zoomed in on Giambarba (1988:5) methods of mission approach to the extended family:

As the gospel expands across the globe, encountering family systems much stronger than those in the United States, the disciple's love for Jesus must never be rivaled by his love for a person, whether father or mother, wife or children, brother, or sister. If he loves one of

them or himself more than following Jesus, he has failed the test of discipleship. Jesus will not name him among his own.

A theological study of this biblical text within a missiological context would merit future research. Cultural sensibilities are vital in a theology of mission, *mission as boundary-crossing*. This case study shows a glimpse of some of the issues brought about due to the interpretation Giambarba is extending to the LA methods and theology of mission (confirmed in Standback 2005:29).

Drake's (1965) *The home: Laboratory of life* is a text that describes what family systems in the USA 'should look like'. It could be used for a historical and cultural interpretation of this section of the text for future analysis. This passage of the text is crucial, as it could lead to a complex application as to the relationship with one's own family. Aspects of this will come out in the case study. The maternal lens of my study brings out aspects of this biblical interpretation and direct application, bringing a distinct facet to light.

3.3 ICOC IN COLOMBIA

Castellanos (2011) and Diaz Castro (2014) provide detailed historical overviews of the ICOC in CO. A church planting mission team arrived on April 15, 1992 (the same day as Bosch's untimely death). Ten people arrived, one of them is this researcher. It was not a trained team, and the group did not know each other previously. CO nationals had been recruited from different congregations around the USA and MX. The lead couple were USA nationals but left after five months to take on the LA headquarters for the RBO in Mexico City. This sudden move left me and my then boyfriend, in charge. We were married a few months later (in December 1992).

The church planting was very successful, as the numbers boomed, and before the end of the year there were 135 baptised members. Castellanos (2011:65) attaches a table showing the membership for Bogota and its church plantings (Quito, Caracas, Medellin, and Cali). By 2002 there were 1,483 members in Bogota, 748 in Quito, 116 in Caracas, 81 in Medellin, and 29 in Cali. Castellanos (2011:64-65) notes that the largest event in Bogota hosted an attendance of over 5,000, on the celebration of the 10th anniversary (July 2002). Stanback (2005:229) provides more quantitative data within the ICOC, placing the ICOC-Bogota congregation (now ICI-CO) #12 in

overall growth in membership (249 members in 1994 to 1,624 members in 2002), compared to all the other 435 members in 171 congregations. Bogota was planted (1992) from the Mexico City congregation which is ranked #2 (1,330 members in 1994 to 4,090 members in 2002).

In 2003, at the Bogota RBO base, there were at least 30 full-time staff members. This did not include the CO working in other countries as transnational mission practitioners. From 2003, after the departure of the USA leadership, I was and have been the only USA national involved in ICI-CO. I never worked directly for ICI-CO, as I was paid from the USA with a work commitment with an USA mission agency, the legal structure necessary for the transfer of funds between the countries. The mission agencies in the USA have changed legal names often, so there is not only a theological *historylessness* but there is also a legal historylessness in the ICOC. This is an aspect that is not understood by any of the literature I have consulted.

Empirically-speaking, ICI-CO was a booming church up to 2002. Although Castellanos (2011:72-77) describes the power struggles in the few years prior and during the collapse stage. By this time, my husband and I oversaw much of the RBO in South America (Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Argentina, and Uruguay). From May 2001, Buenos Aires, Argentina (AR) became the the official base or headquarters for this area of South America and our home base. The context of the RBO internationally were already being addressed before the collapse. And in ICI-CO internal discussions and power dynamics among the main leadership in Bogota were boiling up. With the international collapse some after came the national collapse of ICI-CO. Castellanos (2011:76) shows the membership in Bogota at less than 200 members in 2003 during the **trainwreck** stage.¹⁴²

¹⁴² Castellanos' data show (2011:83) in 2010, 686 with a total in the Bogota congregation, and in the 17 congregations¹⁴² that are listed around the country, a total of 838 members. Cities listed by Castellanos (2011:83): Medellin, Cali, Zipaquirá, Duitama, Neiva, Ibagué, Barranquilla, Cartagena, Tuquerres, Barrancabermeja, Caldas, Santa Marta, Armenia, Villavicencio, and Yopal. This propagation without the USA funding and governance, after the 2003 collapse, could also be a fascinating study. Insider knowledge is aware of the important role of the *motherline* and mothers in this organic propagation, due to the matricentric society. It mimics the researchers' understanding of Allen's *three-selves concept* (Rutt 2018a; 2018b).

3.4 CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

There are many questions to be asked? To start off with, why would someone from CO join a RBO like this one, considering the implications noted already? Who devoted themselves in CO to create this fast-growing church and network? What were the consequences on their lives to have participated as paid workers for a collapsed **brand**? Where are they now? What do they think about that now? How do they explain their involvement to their children? Intriguing as they are, these questions are for further research. This research dealt more specifically with the grassroots members who stayed during the collapse, this is the core of the research project. There are other voices, but the main core is the grassroots members who decided to take on the consequences of the collapse and seek *togetherness*. Why did they stay? How do they view that past? How do they understand what happened, in the **trainwreck**? Where have they sought answers for their lingering questions (for example what academic disciplines? theological resources? And/or personal biblical insights?); The thread of *historylessness*, conceived in the post-Revolutionary War USA, by the SCT is revealed in this case study. As there is no history in the RBO, and the official biblical interpretation was based on a single person, and that person is no longer there. How does one read the Bible now; what lens does one use? As mentioned before, this feels like a slippery fish. Who has authority over the funds and resources within the gathered community? Who decides the place to meet, the structure, the legality, and the structure of communication-media? These questions were asked in the process of the interviews but in an unstructured manner. The focus was attempting to seek how did they pursue *togetherness*, amid this devastating missiological **trainwreck**.

The following graph provides a context analysis view of the participants' understanding of the 2003 panorama. The category: **2003** is utilized as a lens on all the interview data. Below, in Figure 4, is a word/phrase frequency graph:

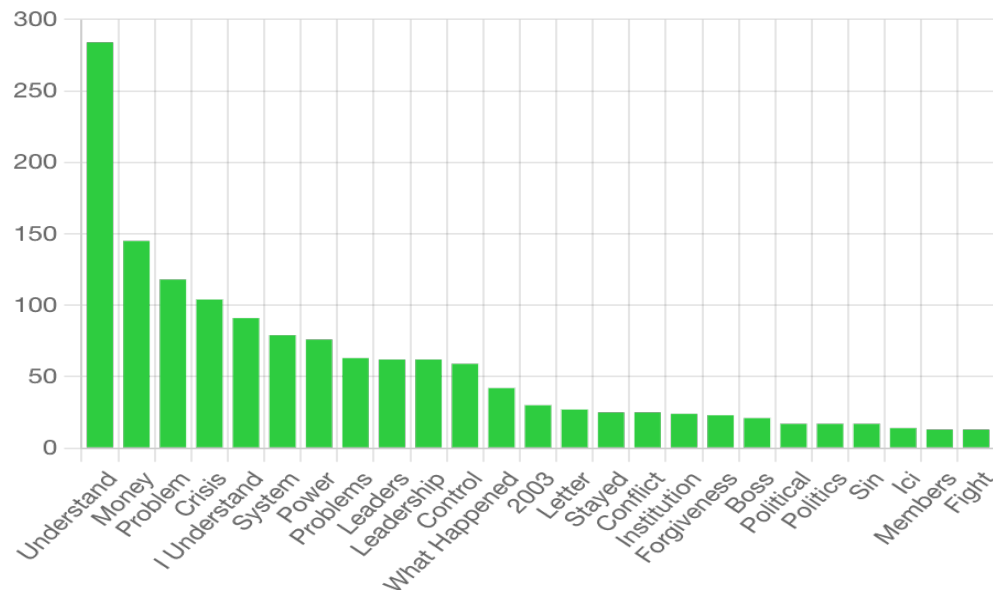


Figure 4: Context analysis of the participants' understanding of the 2003 collapse

Money is the most talked about issue in this data analysis. If the first few words are connected to make sense of the data, it can be understood this way as presented in the word summary below:

I understand that money was the problem of the crisis. I understand that *the system* was fuelled by power, and it led to problems in the leaders and leaderships trying to control. What happened in 2003? There was a letter. I stayed despite the conflict in the institution. I pursued forgiveness. There was a boss and it all seemed political. There was sin. In the ICI [ICO-CO] members were fight[ing].

This is an example of the way I use this context analysis tool to explain large amounts of data, using the word frequency as a guide. Throughout the chapters I have inserted short paragraph descriptions such as this one above, to help interpret and make sense of the data. It is important to keep this in mind, so that these snippets make sense to the reader. As I am well acquainted with the data; I can add the extra words to guide the interpretation. This will be explained further in the following chapter that deals with the methodology.

Maternal-thinking is used to seek connection with their physical families or kin groups prior to 2003 and post-2003, potentially as the way that *togetherness* was achieved. The theology of mission and strategy of mission employed was for members to prioritise the church family over their extended families. I was wondering if thematricentric society of CO was an aspect of this

pursuit of *togetherness*. As the home could replace or guide the artificial boundaries set by the RBO. The key in this study is *togetherness*. This *togetherness* is understood as the hidden *glue* that connects, was sought to be discovered and described. As the RBO had collapsed internationally, the **brand** did not officially or unofficially bind them anymore, the data analysis will reveal aspects of this.

3.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has sought to outline the historical Christian tradition where ICI-CO has drawn its theology and thinking. A detailed literature review was provided to offer guidance for others who seek to continue searching for historical communal *self-understandings*. *Historylessness* has been identified as a theological stance from the original SCT literature to the RBO that collapsed in 2003. This legacy of *historylessness* is deemed to be important and Bosch provides a way of addressing this in his own context. The collapse of the ICOC denomination and its consequent impact on ICI-CO is viewed primarily through the lens of *historylessness*. The following chapter presents the methodology employed to conduct the research.

CHAPTER 4:

METHODOLOGY

4.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the objective listed in Chapter 1 is developed: To identify research design, methodologies, and methods for this specific study. These questions are answered: What is a *sentipensante* logic? How to study the unseen in *missio Dei*? A priority is given to create a *sentipensante* way of acquiring knowledge that is both logical and emotional; thinking and feeling; formal knowledge and wisdom; and between Western and non-Western ways of knowing.

For this qualitatively-driven approach to mixing methods, utilizing *facet methodology*, a triad of philosophical assumptions have been chosen for this study. Choosing *mutuality* as the guiding light, namely: (i) *Indigenous research methodologies* (cf Smith 2008; Chilisa 2020); (ii) *critical realism* (cf. Smith 2010; 2017; Wright 2020; Taylor 2020); and (iii) *critical hermeneutics* (cf. Nel 1988;¹⁴³ Bosch 1991a). The thread that ties together the triad of the philosophical assumptions is the belief that reality includes the unseen. This is understood by the *critical realism* metaphor of a **tree**. Walsh and Evans (2014) illustrate: The branches and trunk of a **tree** can be experienced empirically, the **soil** is what is actual, and the **roots** are hidden (assumed to be there even if they cannot be seen). If you seek to see the **tree roots** (buried underground) that is the reality (research results). The question addressed in this chapter is: “What philosophical assumptions, methods and tools can provide ways of seeking that hidden reality?”

Chilisa's (2020) *transformative postcolonial Indigenous research paradigm* has been chosen to outline the presentation of this chapter. The following chapter will discuss the various aspects of this paradigm that have been employed in this study.

¹⁴³ Cf. Nel's (1988) unpublished PhD dissertation, ‘*Critical hermeneutics as a model for missiological research*’ (italics added).

4.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL ASSUMPTIONS

Understanding reality is largely about observing what is happening. A *philosophical assumption* is a description of how one, as a researcher, views reality. I believe that a holistic, interconnected approach is often the best way to comprehend reality. My study is grounded in Bosch's view of reality, and I find that his view fits well with AFR scholars, such as that of Botswana Indigenous research pioneer, Chilisa (2020). Chilisa (2020:22) describes a five-pronged approach which she compares to a 'dance floor',¹⁴⁴ with various paradigms representing different 'dance partners'. To this I add, that for the purpose of this research, Bosch and Chilisa are involved in a 'dance' which will be described in the following section. Consequently, the imagery shifts from **trains** and **brands** to dancing in this chapter. Although the images of **tree**, **soil**, and **HAND** continue strong.

Each paradigm has its assumptions about the nature of reality, knowledge, and values. Wilson (2008:108) uses these terms: *Ontology*, *epistemology*, *methodology*, and *axiology*. Wilson illustrates this with a circle, where each one of the four aspects speaks to each other. Wilson (2008:108), compared to Chilisa (2020:46-47), in the following four points: (1) Wilson's ontology is Chilisa's nature of reality; (2) Wilson's epistemology is Chilisa's knowledge; (3) Wilson's axiology is Chilisa's values; and (4) Wilson's methodology is Chilisa's concept: "[R]esearcher must choose according to the above criteria, as they inform each other, in an act of *mutual transformation*".

4.1.1 Decision making process

Babbie and Mouton (2001:48), writing from a SA social science perspective, describe the assumptions of the relationship between the metatheories (metascience), methodological approaches, and the real world (without addressing the *Indigenous research paradigm*). They illustrate the concept of *three worlds* in social research, as follows: World 1 is the place of the

¹⁴⁴ This dance analogue works well for a case study set in CO, as in CO many times one learns to dance before walking. Dance is at the heart of the culture as an embodied practice of *mutuality* (*glue of togetherness*). For SA readers, they can be reminded of the CO singer Shakira at the 2010 World Cup inauguration in Cape Town. She represents CO expression in dance (and music). Sept. 2022, at a visit in Stellenbosch, attending an elementary school's choir presentation in an EBOSCH cultural event, where one of the songs was Shakira's *Waka, Waka* (This Time for Africa).

social phenomena; World 2 is the place of the methodological paradigms; and World 3 is the place of the metatheories of the social sciences.

Babbies and Mourton point to these potential assumptions: (i) *positivism* uses quantitative methodology as an external observer looking into the social phenomena; (ii) *phenomenology* uses qualitative methods as an internal observer describing the social phenomena; and (iii) *participatory action research* (PAR)¹⁴⁵ is where the researcher is a participant engaged with the context of the social phenomena (as an insider/outsider).

Another way of understanding the traid of *three worlds* is by examining the three parts of a large **tree** as already noted when describing *critical realism*.

What is the best theory (metatheory) and best (methodology)? And what is your positionality that best suits a study of the social phenomena (as an outsider, insider, or insider/outsider)? There is no one answer to these questions as they depend on the specific phenomenon being studied and the goals of the researcher. However, some general approaches that could be taken include using a variety of research methods (e.g., interviews, surveys, observation) and theoretical frameworks to try to understand the hidden reality. It is also important to consider one's positionality when conducting research, as this can impact the findings.

Chilisa's (2020:22) 'dance floor' of paradigms provides five possible 'dance partners', namely: (1) post-positivism; (2) constructivism; (3) pragmatism; (4) transformative; and (5) indigenous paradigms. She states that Euro-Western research books mostly describe three dominant paradigms: positivist-postpositivist, interpretive, and transformative. Loosely compared to Babbie and Mouton's categories, they correspond as follows: (i) post-positivism is Chilisa' positivism (she places *critical realism* here); (ii) interpretive is Chilisa's phenomenology; and (iii) transformative is Chilisa's PAR.

¹⁴⁵ As already pointed out, Fals-Borda is identified as creating this methodology.

Chilisa describes the previously possible ‘dance partners’ (2020:34-47) regarding their ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology. And then, with a table format (2020:46-47), she compares all five of the ‘dance partners’. This extensive breakdown of all the philosophical assumptions is what has helped me define the philosophical assumption for this study. As I continue with a *sentipensante* mode of acquiring knowledge (cf. Moncayo 2010; Rappaport 2020; Robles Lomeli and Rappaport 2022), I ‘listen’ to my feelings and intuitions. I follow the leads provided by *flash of insight* and *insightful knowledge* (Mason 2018:44, 45, 212, 246). I first feel then I seek to think through the feeling to figure out what is true or adequate for me. This *sentipensante* way of knowledge can be understood in this simple fashion or formula: feeling (sensing) + thinking (reasoning) = knowledge (insight). This underlies all my research.

This also connects with a *maternal-thinking* lens and *thinking-with-the-womb*, as maternal (womb) logic is connected to heart and mind. Chapter 2 brought in a subtle difference between ‘give birth to and *me nacio*. So, with *maternal-thinking*, the philosophical assumption is that an inner mix of thinking and feeling are intertwined inside and at some point, what comes out is the knowledge that was formed through that internal process. This could be understood in a communal formation of knowledge but in this case of this individual research report, it is understood to be my own process.

Chilisa (2020:34-77) lists eight features to compare philosophical assumptions, these are: (1) the rationale for conducting the research; (2) the underlying philosophy; (3) the assumptions about reality; (4) the role of values in the research process; (5) the nature of knowledge; (6) what is true; (7) the methodology; and (8) the techniques for collecting data.

4.1.2 Review of Chilisa’s eight categories

Each category is presented and discussed under its own respective sub-heading below.

4.1.2.1 The first category: Reason for doing the research

The *Indigenous research paradigm* challenges negative thinking and inaccurate descriptions of those who have been colonised, and creates a body of knowledge that promotes hope, transformation, and social change among the oppressed. This paradigm considers the role of

imperialism, colonialism, and other oppressive ideologies in Euro-Western research paradigms, which are often ignored (Chilisa 2020:6, 46). This view is vital for reflexive missiology from a USA mission organisation (RBO) to an assumption of the positionality implied in the geopolitical and dominant culture. Awareness of this is vital for this research. A new narrative for ICI-CO was deemed important; as it illustrates how the congregation flourished after the collapse without the imported **house**, as part of a **global train system** but with the limited resources provided by the local **soil**. But most importantly a new *slogan* based on a shift in *God-image*, which means a shift in theology of mission. This is understood as a *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission.

4.1.2.2 The second category: Philosophical underpinnings

An aspect of this research is the *maternal-thinking* lens as part of my lived experiences. Chilisa (2020:306) describes AFR *womanism*: "emphasizes the centrality of *motherhood* in AFR households and family organizations and the agency and power of mothers as the source of solidarity" (italics added). She (2020:308) asserts: "endarkened feminist epistemology gives rise to a healing methodology". *Womanism* provides the type of lens that has been applied to the study from the beginning, a type of *maternal-thinking*. Chilisa (2020:300 citing Mohanty) states: this type of female knowledge is on the outskirts of feminism, not typically embraced by Western feminisms which takes the West as the norm for all women. Drawing from Weiner, Chilisa (2020:300) puts Western feminism in three broad categories: (i) liberal (or bourgeois or individualistic) feminism; (ii) radical feminism, and the Marxist socialist feminist theory; (iii) Global South feminism, she describes a vital Chicana perspective, *borderline-mestizaje* feminism (cf. Anzaldúa 2012). An alternative way Chilisa (2020:300) explains the history of feminism (explained from a USA-centric view): first wave, second wave, and third wave.

Chilisa's concept also connects with Kiboko's (2001:213) thinking-with-the womb, Kanyoro's (2002) AFR perspective on a *feminist cultural hermeneutics*, and Marçal's (2021) argument in *Mother of Invention: How good ideas get ignored in an economy built for men*. I believe Chilisa's *Indigenous knowledge methodologies* aligns more adequately with what has been experienced in a lifetime of engaging with females and mothers. This is the *maternal-thinking* lens applied in this research, which will be used in the following chapter.

4.1.2.3 *The third category: Ontological assumption*

Chilisa (2020:46) states: “socially constructed multiple realities shaped by the set of multiple connections that human beings have with the environment, the cosmos, the living and the nonliving”. This is the ontological assumption for this research, as described in Chapter 2. It connects with the stated definition of *mutuality*.

4.1.2.4 *The fourth category: Place of values*

The research is based on (Chilisa 2020:46): “[R]elational accountability that promotes respectful representation, reciprocity, and rights of the researched. Appreciative inquiry and desire-based perspectives on social justice inform the ethics theory”. This describes the ethical commitment made with the SU Ethical Committee (see Appendix S).¹⁴⁶ I have sought to include an appreciative inquiry, in discussion of complex issues. I have also sought a learner’s position, for example Participant 114 (interview 114.5). The theme of that specific talking circle (of the series of six), on my request, was a lesson on Participant 114’s view of the Letter to the Romans in the biblical text.

4.1.2.5 *The fifth category: Nature of Knowledge and six categories - What counts as truth*

Chilisa (2020:47) emphasises: “Knowledge is relational, as are all the *indigenous knowledge* systems built on relations” (italics added). In section 5.4 Annemie Bosch (email communication Dec. 7, 2022) captures this:

“I think that the discovery you describe here, is significant. Likely the most important paragraph in this section! Maybe even in the whole of your dissertation(?). . . I really think this discovery you made about creative power being unleashed through knowing you are loved - knowledge which creates a feeling of safety and security - is something which is true, very special and meaningful”.

This aligns with my theological understanding of the biblical narrative describing a Relational Creator (Grenz 1994:77-97). Hikota (2022:50) ephasizes the Triad Godhead as ‘a dance’ of Three Relations who are One. The chosen imagery is of a **HAND**. This relates to the sixth category of ‘What counts as truth’. Chilisa (2020:47) explains: “Truth is informed by the set of multiple

¹⁴⁶ The importance of this step is emphasised by Bryman et al. (2012: 229); Mason (2018:93); and Silverman (2020:157-60).

relations that one has with the universe". My biblical perspective understands that a Creator (understood as a biblically informed God) knows ALL REALITY, but all creation can provide clues to this reality. Forster (2022:5) affirms: "The Christian tradition confesses that God, who created the world is good. Moreover, Christians confess that what God created is good, and God's good creation is intended for good. This is a political claim that has consequences for both faith and public life". Forster in a sermon on July 31, (StellenboschGemeente 2022) provides practical applications of this view for Christian believers and communities.

One's relationship with the Divine, or with the Universe, is often described as being like that of a child to a parent. In many Indigenous religious philosophies, the Universe is seen as a Greater Being, or Creator, who is sometimes referred to as Mother Earth or Parent. Bosch uses this way of describing the Divine to emphasise our connection to and dependence on this greater power.

Bosch (1991a:270) describes it as a sharp break with the Deism; on which much of (Enlightenment) Western scientific work is framed. Neither Deism (an unconcerned Creator who left his Creation to figure its way to flourishing on their own) nor a full-blown Pantheism (God = Universe) would be the assumptions for this manner of seeing truth, somewhere in between, as Bosch has pointed the way. Bosch (1991a) is attempting to describe a transformation in this mode of thinking, devoting the last third of his text: 'Toward a relevant missiology'. Holding in *creative tension*, as we have stated was characteristic of him states (1991a:355):

A basic reorientation is thus called for. One should, again, see oneself as a child of *Mother Earth* and as sister and brother to other human beings. One should think holistically, rather than analytically, emphasize *togetherness* rather than distance, break through the dualism of mind and body, subject and object, and emphasize 'symbiosis' (*italics added*).

Bosch (1991a:493-495) here uses the term Father and then Parent when referring to the Creator, in the same section where he is interacting with Illich:

Mission goes beyond the church. Illich is therefore correct when he also calls mission 'the social continuation of the Incarnation,' 'the social dawning of the mystery,' 'the social flowering of the Word into an ever-changing present' (1974:5). To say that the church is essentially missionary does not mean that mission is church-centered. It is *missio Dei*. It is trinitarian. It is mediating the love of God the *Father* who is the *Parent* of all people,

whoever and wherever they may be. It is epiphany, the making present in the world of God the Son (cf. AG 9). It is mediating the presence of God the Spirit, who blows (*italics added*).

Bosch has different opinions on how far people should go when interpreting texts. In some cases, he believes that people should be more open-minded and consider a wider range of interpretations. However, in other cases he feels that people go ‘too far’ when they try to find hidden meaning in texts, and that they should be more sceptical. He expresses the view that Capra, although building on some of Capra’s thinking, expressed (1991a:354): he had gone ‘too far’ in his ‘New Age perspective’.

So, it is hard to pinpoint Bosch’s position, but it is somewhere as *in-between space* - a complete subject-object barrier and no barriers at all. He does not hold to a dualistic view, nor a Taoist or Buddhist view of reality. He posits his approach as *critical hermeneutics* (cf. Nel 1988; 1991a:23, 40, 527). Bosch (1991a:527) clarifies:

It means that I accept that I am open to change and to reexamination of my existing convictions. In the case of theology, *critical hermeneutics* recognizes that Christians will disagree in their understandings of Scripture and the Christian faith, but that they share a commitment to the same Lord (*italics added*).

I believe that the holistic approach taken in this research is what is sought by Bosch’s *critical hermeneutics* with *a view from the inside*. The free license as a creative researcher (Mason 2018) alongside the triad of philosophical assumptions: (i) *Indigenous research methodologies*; (ii) *critical realism*; and (iii) *critical hermeneutics* turn into a congested dance floor, but as Mason (2018:46) suggests, it is an opportunity to have fun and spend time *playing with epistemologies*.

4.1.2.6 The seventh category: Methodology

This includes mixed methods. *Indigenous research paradigms* also encompass a mixed methods approach that integrates arts-based research techniques. This can include anything from drawings and creative work with circles to vignettes and hand drawn, colourful, and large conceptual maps that illustrate research findings. However, the most prominent area is the use of poetic inquiry. This method relies heavily on oral tradition rather than written texts for acquiring information and knowledge.

Orality is defined by UNESCO (n.d.) as follows:

The oral traditions and expressions domain encompasses an enormous variety of spoken forms including proverbs, riddles, tales, nursery rhymes, legends, myths, epic songs and poems, charms, prayers, chants, songs, dramatic performances and more. Oral traditions and expressions are used to pass on knowledge, cultural and social values, and collective memory. They play a crucial part in keeping cultures alive (n.p.).¹⁴⁷

CO has been identified in Chapter 1 as having profound roots in an oral culture. And Chapter 5 will be built upon this with more evidence.

4.1.2.7 The eighth category: Techniques for collecting data

This category comprises a method in *Indigenous research methodologies*, namely *circle talk*, for dialogues or *talking circles*¹⁴⁸ (Chilisa 2020:33, 256-57; Wilson 2008). The main research method used in this study was interviews conducted in small groups of two or three people (virtually via Zoom). As with Indigenous *circle talks*, where communal rituals are embraced; active prayer was used as a form of spirituality during the interviews. Each participant understood the *seven-step praxis cycle*, informing that spirituality is at the centre. The option of our communal understanding of prayer was provided as a choice. It was embraced by the participants. Consequently, an active prayer, as part of our practice-centred communal spirituality, was spoken by any of the participants (including the researcher) at the beginning or end (see Appendix G).

The *taking circle* ritual of dialogue rounds conducted 4 or 9 times were not used. A symbolic feather or other object was not used, as it is not a part of our religious practices. The virtual interaction in Zoom was treated with a certain degree of formality allowing ample time for asking questions and listening. One person would speak at a time, which could parallel the giving of the feather or other symbolic talking stick.

4.1.2.8 Decision of a two-eyed approach

This category adopts a *two-eyed* approach (Chilisa 2020:31, 33-34, 159), where one eye will view with *Indigenous research methodologies* and the other one with Western *critical realism* and

¹⁴⁷ Quote can be viewed at: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/oral-traditions-and-expressions-00053>

¹⁴⁸ Throughout the dissertation, the terms *talking circles* and 'interviews' are used interchangeably. The implication is that the 'spirit' of the interviews was *talking circles*.

critical hermeneutics. Before explaining this choice, I will mention why pragmatic and phenomenology approaches were not chosen.

The pragmatic philosophical approach, which is native to the USA, seeks to solve problems (cf. Escobar 1991:11; and Legg and Hookway 2021 point to the USA philosophers – Pierce, Dewey, and James). What is truth or reality is whatever knowledge leads to pragmatic solutions. The mandate of science, according to this approach, is not to find truth but rather to facilitate human problem solving. This research has found that the USA RBO is based on this pragmatistic approach and deems that it lacks ethical arguments. Problem-solving in the context of the *seven-step praxis-cycle* approach is a holistic search for solving problems. Bosch (1991a:425 citing Rayan) explains this within its religious, ethical, and non-dualistic context: “In our methodology, practice and theory, action and reflection, discussion and prayer, movement and silence, social analysis and religious hermeneutics, involvement and contemplation, constitute a single process”.

In the *seven-step praxis cycle*, aspects of phenomenology can be found, a German-born philosophical movement (Husserl, Heidegger). Bosch emphasises he does not subscribe to this belief, as he maintains that there is truth. Bosch (1991a:527) establishes: A “*critical hermeneutics* recognizes that Christians will disagree in their understandings of Scripture and the Christian faith, but that they share a commitment to the same Lord” (italics added). A content analysis study on Bosch's use of the words ‘true’ and ‘truth’ was conducted in two of his texts (1978, 1979, 1991a) to comprehend his perspective. Bosch applies these words quite often. Three examples of many (capitalisation added): (i) in title (1978) ‘Towards TRUE mutuality’; (ii) seeking ‘TRUE Christian spirituality’ (1979:12, 32); and (iii) in quote below (1991a:367):

The agenda was always—consciously or unconsciously—one of reform, not of replacement. The same will be TRUE of my reflections on the emerging ecumenical paradigm. There will be no attempt at propagating a complete substitution of the previous paradigm, at casting it aside as utterly worthless. Rather, the argument will be that—in light of a fundamentally new situation and precisely so as to remain faithful to the TRUE nature of mission—mission must be understood and undertaken in an imaginatively new manner today.

Phenomenology was a radical attempt to shift the object-subject divide. Chilisa (2020:39) explains it, as an attempt to understand the essence of “human thinking, perceiving, and other mental or physiological acts and spirituality ... phenomenologists or interpretivists believe that

research should produce individualized concepts of social phenomena and personal assertions rather than generalizations and verifications". It seeks a communal understanding, the reality/truth is what is understood by the united realities of all. It's connection with many scholars, categorised broadly as *postmodern* thought, can be seen as 'truth is what we decide upon'.

Back to Chilisa's paradigm dance floor (2020:22), I chose to dance with *critical realism* (cf. Smith 2010, 2017; de Souza 2013; 2014; Walsh and Evans 2014; Taylor 2020; Wright 2020). But before proceeding to describe *critical realism*, I must state that I disagree with Chilisa's positioning of this philosophical position (2020:35, 46, 154). She allocates critical realism within a positivist/post-positivist paradigm. All my research has shown it to be within the interpretivist paradigm. But it takes the interpretivist paradigm a step further; the assumption is that reality exists even if it is hidden. As mentioned above, the **tree** analogy is helpful. The branches and trunk of a **tree** can be experienced empirically, the **soil** is what is actual, and the **roots** are hidden (assumed to be there even if they cannot be seen). *Critical realism* takes in the complete reality (seen and unseen). Taylor (2017; 2020) uses *critical realism* as her main lens to offer an ontological framework within which to explore the hidden workings of the *missio Dei*, the **HAND**. A belief in a loving Creator who desires communication and interaction with creation is possible within *critical realism*.

I chose to 'dance' with *critical realism* alongside *Indigenous research methodologies*, in order to take a *two-eyed* approach. *Critical realism* allows for the assumption of a Creator who desires communication and interaction with creation. This makes it possible to research *mutuality*, or the relationship between humans and the divine, within this Western philosophical position. Taylor (2020:52-77) mentions: "*missio Dei* represents a significant advance in contemporary missiology; recognizing that God's agency and impulse precedes and lies behind human engagement in mission" (2020:52).

4.2 MIXED METHODS APPROACH

This study employed a qualitatively-driven approach to mixed methods (Mason 2018:37-47). A hybrid of which included qualitative and quantitative methods (Wuthnow 2003:24-25; 2011:1-

12). The qualitative focus is on analysing words and concepts as units, but a quantitative approach is used to count keywords in the text. When conducting a content analysis, qualitative researchers often focus on identifying the presence of specific words, themes, or concepts. This can be done by analysing the language used in the text, analysing the themes that are discussed, or looking for specific examples that support a particular theme. In addition, qualitative researchers may also look for patterns or similarities in the data (Kritzing 2011; Penner 2018; Nel 2019; 2020). I tried the method for months and it proved effective in displaying information in the text or data. The way the method has been set up allowed me as the researcher to summarise the text from the word frequency. As the sole researcher, with a *sentipensante* knowledge of the data, I can make summaries, poems, and even prayers in relation to the word frequencies. I do this by adding only a few extra words. This method was used in this study (see sections 3.0.2; 3.4; and 4.11).

4.2.1 Data analysis tool: *Speakai.co*

The website Speakai.co is the chosen tool for the quantitative content analysis. This is a method developed throughout the research. Speakai.co allowed me to create a specific lens for this study using keywords and phrases, inside of categories. One of the benefits of this method is that any text can be placed inside my account and under the 'lens' that I developed. This has already been displayed in data visualisation within the previous chapters. Using this data analysis tool allows a certain objectivity when analysing texts, which is one of the strengths of context analysis (Vaismoradi and Snelgrove 2019; Humble and Mozellius 2022). Furthermore, it is recommended for religious studies (Nelson and Woods Jr 2011:109-121). Additionally, among other advantages, the website notes that it is a tool for analysis that can help with large amounts of unstructured data, which has proved true in this project. Two disadvantages, however, are that generalising results can be difficult and it does not allow for cause-and-effect conclusions. These affected the current research to a degree but the hybridity with thematic analysis allowed me to overcome these limitations to a certain extent.

A limitation of this method is that the text is taken as a complete text, so my questions are also included in the word/phrase frequency number. On the other hand, it could be understood as a holistic approach to the data, embracing the total conversation of the talking circle instead of just the participants' responses. As subsequent chapters will show, it also allows going straight to the

certain location in the text. The potential with this software is great although it does not follow the framework of the six steps that are recommended in thematic analysis (Clarke and Braun 2014).

4.3 APPROACH: SEVEN-STEP PRAXIS CYCLE

The SA *seven-step praxis cycle* approach (cf. Kritzinger and Saayman 1990; Banda 2010; Kritzinger 2011, 2013, 2022; Banda and Saayman 2015; Penner 2018; Nel 2019, 2020) was chosen for this missiological evaluation as it covers more areas of study and allows for a more comprehensive analysis. Also, ‘the spiritual at the heart’ connects the intellectual with the conversion and transformational experiences. Nel (2019:n.p.) assumes research in an “atmosphere of celebration and an ethos of prayer”. The researcher believes that delicate shifts of agency, power, and reflexivity will be uncovered with the questions pertaining to the research question. This approach provides guidance on how to document and track the different contexts within the case study.

The seven steps of the ‘praxis cycle’; ‘circle of praxis’; or ‘praxis matrix’ include:¹⁴⁹ (1) spirituality; (2) agency, identification, or *locus of enunciation*); (3) contextual understanding (social analysis); (4) ecclesial scrutiny; (5) interpreting the tradition (theological interpretation); (6) reflexivity; and (7) discernment for action (envisioned future or prophetic imagination). Each step is important for a missiological evaluation such as this case study. The ministry must be founded on spirituality and have a deep connection to the community it serves. It is crucial to understand the context of the community and the people within it, as well as ensuring that the theology being presented is properly understood. The ministry must be reviewed by the church to ensure that it is following the guidelines, and theological interpretation is ideally done. So, it is necessary to understand the meaning behind the specific Christian group. The conclusion (envisioned future or discernment for action) should be a description of a potential future based on the evaluation. Below in Figure 5 is an illustration of the approach:

¹⁴⁹ It is adapted from Holland and Henriot (1983) and LA liberation theology, such as Freire (1970); cf. Moreno (2018).

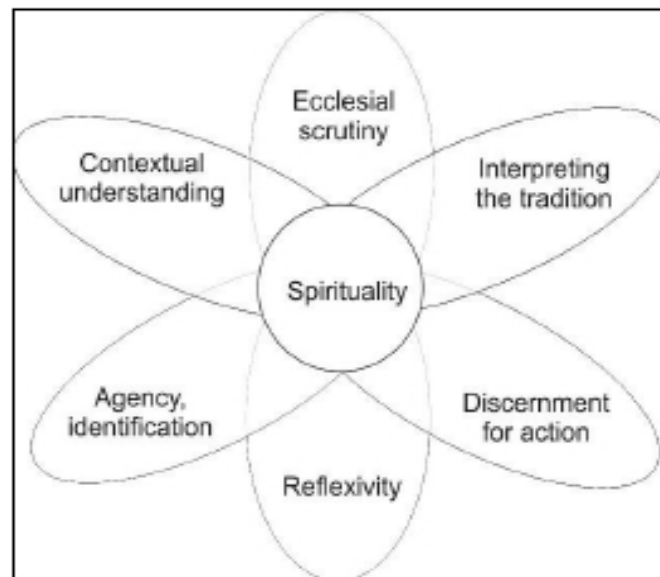


Figure 5: Seven-point praxis matrix
(Source: Kritzinger 2013)

The approach of *critical realism* is also integrated within the approach of the *seven-step praxis cycle*. Wright (2020) borrows Lonergan's *critical realism* approach. He describes, Lonergan assumption human knowing is the posture for beginning research within theology. The cyclical process of 'knowing' is as follows in four steps: (1) experiencing (gathering data); (2) understandings (what does the data mean?); (3) history corresponds to judgement (place and time of the context is important); and (4) deciding (seeks a comprehensive view to examine the conflict within the data).

Lonergan's approach includes the idea of conversion, whereby the Christian life is an ongoing process of transformation. This transformation is dynamic, constantly evolving, and unfolding. Conversion, in this sense, is like Bosch's idea of a paradigm shift, where mission leads to transformation. This concept of 'conversion' as a paradigm shift is relevant to this study as the shift is the focus of the case study: "How have the shifts in *self-understandings* and the *practices of mutuality* shaped the ministry and mission of the Colombian congregation?"

4.4 MATERNAL-THINKING LENS

The *maternal-thinking* lens was addressed previously. This maternal perspective employed in this research is significant because of the cultural context in which it is taking place and the missiological terms and images applied in the study. Historically, missiology and theology have used maternal terminology such as ‘Mother Church-Daughter Church’; also, an understanding of mission as spiritual ‘reproduction’; and Illich (1970) uses the concept of “mission and midwifery” and the forementioned “Mission is the ‘mother of theology’” (cf. Chapter 1) (cited by Bosch 1991a:16, 521; cf. Kähler 1971:190).

Within the current missiological reflections around agency and power, a ‘mother's experience’ can provide nuances to the complexity of this discussion. Power can be interpreted in broad terms as the tangible aspect, something that can be seen. Many mothers are aware that the reproductive capacity is as Spivak (2003:386) beautifully depicts: “a natural power we carry within ourselves”. From a mother's perspective, power and agency supply a perspective as an unseen side of the beauty but also complex issues of *mutuality*. The power within *motherhood* is many times hidden from the academic side of mission history as it is taken for granted (Rheinbolt-Urbe 2015; Robert 2019:190).

AFR terms, texts, and authors allow for a more robust definition of this ‘voice’. Crowders’ (2016:27, 82) *womanist maternal thinking* is built upon the SA concept of *ubuntu*; although the term *womanist* is original to Walker (2004). Chilisa (2020:306-309) links *womanist* expressions to the integral aspect of AFR philosophy. The maternal embodiment of this philosophy undergirds the whole theoretical framework of this study, a I/we hermeneutics (Chilisa 2020:27). The definition highlights the communal aspects of family while naming a specific identity within the communal, the mother. Another implication is that the mother, though important, does not exist without the communal. The interdependence of a family unit, in its different social organisation depending on cultural values and economic exchanges, is vital for its existence.

Sections 1.4 and 2.3.2 already provide ample descriptions of a matricentric culture in CO. Serrano (2016:235-240) narrates the history of the matricentric aspect in the communities developed over

500 years when it was first a Spanish colony. This familial structure was brought by the families who immigrated from Spain, but it was much more robust in the societal structure of the Indigenous community in that area, the Muisca. Gutiérrez de Pineda's (1997; 2000) research on the Muisca (arrived in the area 1270 BCE) describes them as traditionally matriarchal and matrilinear. The implications of *maternal-thinking* need to be explored further as the research continues – Chapter 5 is the centrefold of this theme.

4.5 DATA SOURCES

The gatekeeper sent these documents (Nov. 27, 2020) and continued sending relevant documents. I was granted the full approval and support of the ICI gatekeeper (Silverman 2020:265). (For documentation of this process view Appendices A1 & A2 and B1 & B2.) Below in Table 7 the documents gathered for the case study are listed:

Table 7: Documents consulted to obtain data

ICI Documents:	Literature obtained from RBO insiders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal document of the religious entity (See Appendix C1 & C2 for full Theological Statement) • Summary of March 21, 2021, yearly meeting, <i>asamblea</i> • Nov. 2021 letter from the dissent group (presented on the YouTube ICI Colombia channel¹⁵⁰) (see letter in Appendix D1 & D2) • YouTube channel: <i>ICI Colombia</i> (data sent from gatekeeper) • Thesis: ICI-CO (Castellanos 2011; Diaz Castro 2014). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA book framing theology and methods of mission (Giambarba 1988) • MX catechism text distributed in LA (Lamb and Lamb 1991) • USA published master's thesis (Stanback 2005) • USA-based literature (Jones 2007; Fleming 2010; 2018; Carrillo 2009; Staten 2018) • SA unpublished master's thesis (Lappeman 2014) • BR book (Leao et al. 2017)

¹⁵⁰ Iglesia de Cristo International (2021) the link at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2btPG2_o2tw.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION

The primary focus of this empirical research project is data from the interviews. The data collection began as soon as the final approval from the Ethics Committee was received November 26, 2020 (see Appendix S for approval letter). The pilot interview was undertaken on December 8, 2020. The main interview process began January 17, 2021, and was finalised May 26, 2021 (Appendix G provides details of dates of the interviews). Giving time for the holiday season and to find a place to stay during the main interview process, the first official interview began on January 17, 2021. The data collection process is explained in more detail under the following headings.

4.7 RESEARCH POPULATION & SAMPLE

The research population is the ICI-CO congregation, which is the focus of this case study. The main population sample was chosen based on two main sampling criteria (Mason 2018:57-58): (i) members of the ICI who spoke English well enough for an extensive conversation via virtual interview;^{151 152} and (ii) who had been part of the congregation in the 2003 breakdown. Two alternate views were sought from LA not from CO, who also experienced the ICOC collapse in their local LA congregation. As stated below, one had a previous relationship with ICI-CO and the other one provides an alternate generational perspective (this participant was only 14 at the time of the collapse).

Twelve (12) participants formed the sample of this study¹⁵³ (for a total of 24 recorded interviews). The young age of the participant in 2003 is noteworthy (total average of the 12 participants is 30

¹⁵¹ The circumstances and adhering to ethical protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 made this necessary. The project faced delays due to the pandemic. The interviews were done in English. There is no need for a large translation project in the data gathering and transcription stage. There were a few Spanish interviews conducted at the end of the interview stage due to a specific request by the variant 104. They agreed to the terms on the consent form if they understood the English that it was written in.

¹⁵² CO is a Spanish-speaking country. A research project in English created certain challenges as an obvious language barrier exists. The researcher is fluent in Spanish and English, and most of the participants are fluent in English.

¹⁵³ Twenty (20) potential participants signed consent forms. One of those was in the pilot study (Silverman 2020:121). As the data was extremely robust from the other participants, I decided to not proceed with the rest of the interviews. *Saturation* (Bryman et al. 2012: 159-160) due to the three reasons mentioned: (i) rhythm of personal life; (ii) prolonged period in a marginal position; and (iii) the research questions had been answered or the categories had been 'thoroughly saturated'.

years old in 2003; and in Group 1 is 26 years old¹⁵⁴). Also, that there were more males who participated than females (8 males and 4 females participated in the interviews; of those who signed consent forms 13 males and 7 females).¹⁵⁵

All the participants were married, although that was not observed until after data collection. Socioeconomic backgrounds cannot be observed in this dissertation as it would reveal details of the participants' lives that could identify them. I have data that reveals that, although most spoke English, their socioeconomic backgrounds were diverse. Self-identification of race was not specified in the interview.

Membership Categorisation Device (MDC) (Silverman 2020:318-327-494) inspired these terms used for identification, as Table 8 displays:

Table 8: Terms used for identification

GRMP	Grassroots Mission Practitioner (nonpaid involved member of the congregation)
TNMP	Transnational Mission Practitioner (paid staff in country other than own)
TLMP	Translocal Mission Practitioner (paid staff in other part of his own country)
Three alternate views were added:	
	1) Participant 104 is from CO, not a current congregant in ICI-CO, a TNMP at the time of the collapse.
	2) Participant 118 from LA who served as a TNMP at ICI-CO prior to 2003.
	3) Participant 117 from LA who was 14 at the time of the collapse (his family directly impacted as parents were TLMP).

¹⁵⁴ Although, taking out the two older ones in Group 1 (who were 41 & 39 in 2003), the average age of the other five GRMP is 21 years old in 2003.

¹⁵⁵ The cause of not conducting more interviews with female participants was a result of certain difficulties encountered during the research process. Some of the data provided by possible female participants were in written form, which I had not specified in the consent form. If I could go back and do it again, I would include three changes: (i) that written communication may be used in the consent document; (ii) include more female participants; and (iii) include participants were not married.

Also, a number identification was used (100s for males, 200s for females), so as to identify the female participants from the male participants.

After the pilot interview with a female GRMP on Dec. 8, 2020, the researcher began the interview process (see Appendix F for interview question guide). The following in Table 9 identifies markers for the three groups of participant categories. And Table 10 lists the participants in each of the three groups. They are grouped together as such:

Table 9: Identification of groups

ID	Number of Participants	Gender Composition	Role prior to 2003	Role in 2021
Group 1	7	3 females / 4 males	7 GRMP	6 GRMP / 1 TLMP
Group 2	2	2 males	2 TNMP	2 GRMP
Group 3	3	3 males	2 TNMP / 1 teen (child of TLMP)	3 GRMP
Totals	12	4 females / 8 males	7 GRMP / 4 TNMP / 1 teen	11 GRMP / 1 TLMP

Table 10: List of participants in each group

Group 1: Participant112 & Participant 212 (married couple – talking circle); Participant114 & Participant 214 (married couple – talking circle); Participant 115; Participant 120 & 218 (married couple – talking circle).
Group 2: Participant 107; Participant 111.
Group 3: Participant 104; Participant 117; Participant 118.

Of the 24 recorded interviews, 18 were conducted with Group 1. The grassroots perspective in this collection of people, who are not typically given a voice in mainstream discussions in the RBO, share their thoughts and experiences on a wide range of topics especially in regards to three life cycles: (i)family life; (ii) their personal spiritual walk, and (iii) their experience in ICI-CO, with special attention to the collapse. The in-depth interviews with individuals who experienced the collapse first-hand provided rich insight into how these individuals coped and what helped them stay together. It is noted that the topic of the lived experience around the collapse in these semi-structured, in-depth interviews gave much richer data than expected. (The overwhelming amount of data from the Group 1 is obvious by comparing word count: Group 1 – **151,749** words;

Group 2 – **24,709** words; and Group 3 – **38,194** words). See Appendix K for a pie chart where the number of words used in interviews by these defined groups.).

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The data analysis has been conducted over an extended period, as the data is extensive and highly personal. The list of all the written material that is found in the Appendix demonstrates much of the data analysis.

After initially using main themes (Chapter 6 – Part 1), I began using Speakai.co. This tool allowed me to create a lens (based on the main themes in the data) to look at any of the text with specific themes using content analysis. The formulating of this software was done mostly in December 2021 to January 2022. Speakai.com also has a feature, where sentiment values are ordered by a built-in algorithm. This is also used for analysis, as it provides an outside source (although a machine) to give attention to certain aspects of the texts, classified as the positive, negative, and neutral sentiments.¹⁵⁶ These tools are used throughout the text.

So, for the writing of this dissertation, a hybridity of content and thematic analysis suggested by Neuendorf (2019:221-223) was chosen. The strengths of content analysis and reflective thematic analysis (Clarke and Braun 2014) work well together for this study. Mojtaba and Snelgrove (2019) describe both and Neuendorf's hybrid option is chosen.

Mixed methods include a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. In addition, arts-based research methods (Leavy 2017; Kara 2020a; 2022) were also employed, such as using art to seek to understand the data and to dwell in it. For example, in July 2022, I used watercolour painting, collage art, vignettes, and crayons to develop conceptual and theoretical concepts in several ways. Seeking to connect the main concepts in simpler ways that could be expressed clearly is one goal of this method. Some of this work has already been viewed with data

¹⁵⁶ Appendix J displays an excel sheet with each interview listing their individual word count as well as the percentages of each specific sentiment. Another feature of Speakai.com offers an Ai paragraph summary, a snapshot, of each interview (see Appendix K).

visualisation inspired by arts-based research methods. *Researcher-as-instrument* was also applied (Pezalla et al. 2012; Wa-Mbaleka 2020). Although a wide range of data analysis tools were used along the way.

Throughout the research journey, writing as a ‘method of and for research’ (Kara 2020a; 2020b; 2022) was the main way of localising the Mason’s (2018) *flash of insight* and *facet methodology*. This underlying manner of analysis is within an eclectic and holistic array of data analysis tools, ten of these tools are listed below:

- (1) Poetic inquiry (Shidnehr 2014; Leavy 2017; MacKenzie-Dawson 2018; Vincent 2018; Cloud and Faulkner 2019; Faulkner 2019; Kaunda and Alubafi 2021; Doctorate in Organization Development and Change [DODC] Program 2021).
- (2) Comics (Fals-Borda 1979) and vignettes (Blodgett et al. 2011; Chilisa 2020:21),
- (3) Critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Gee 2014; Silverman 2020; Mason 2018),
- (4) CDA tool--#26 Figured World Tool (Gee 2014:156, 174-78, 177),
- (5) Duoethnography (Sawyer and Norris 2012),
- (6) Institutional ethnography (Smith 2005; Smith and Turner 2014),
- (7) Ethnomusicology (Ngoya Kidula 2013; Giraldo 2016),
- (8) Ethnopoetics (Hymes 2003; 2016),
- (9) Emails—undertaken as letter writing¹⁵⁷ (Stamper 2020),
- (10) Journaling (online and on paper) (Kara 2020a; 2020b; 2022).

The listed extra data analysis tools applied also include the scholar who was used for the guidance of the use of the tool.

All these methods of data analysis must be recognised for the part they played in the result. Just as all the people whom I have engaged with throughout my life have also played an integral part in the result. I cannot list each person that has ever influenced my life to be who I am today, but I have nevertheless tried in the Acknowledgements section. The findings are a combination of all these different ways of this *sentipensante* project.

¹⁵⁷ An example is found in Appendix O.

The following section describes how *trustworthiness* was achieved in the study.

4.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Lincoln and Guba (1985:290; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation 2008) list five areas to ensure *trustworthiness*, which are vital for qualitative research, namely: (1) internal validity; (2) external validity; (3) reliability, objectivity, or credibility; (3) dependability; (4) confirmability; and (5) transferability. Mason (2018:7, 29, 34-35, 50, 67, 96, 245) uses the term ‘validity’ to describe the main idea behind *trustworthiness*. In a research project which, as an insider, much thinking was continually involved in the validity of the research process. A distance was sought during this research process with the congregation, to not risk any misspoken word or comment. The data retrieved through the interview process was difficult to process. The difficult road was decided upon, displaying the positionality of the researcher as open as possible, assuming responsibility for past actions. The temptation was to gloss over this or find a way around it, as it is a part of life that I would have wanted to forget. I would have preferred not to display in an academic text. Chapter 6 - Part 1 is in the text to enhance the validity, as it is the data analysis where the positionality was discovered directly. Only light editing has been applied to Part 1, to show the *sentipensante* process. This is one example of evidence of validity, which connects with Lincoln and Guba (1985:290) previously mentioned: internal validity; external validity; reliability; and objectivity. Many of these ways of seeking validity are listed in previous sections (e.g., section 4.8).

In a search for objectivity, the chosen software, Speakai.co (described previously), was trained as a lens to view any text. As the categories were built, based on the main themes found in the data, to seek certain word/phrases, it is as if I trained an AI assistant. Not only this aspect, but the sentiment analysis provided by the software allowed for another ‘objective’ view. The study was done with constant communication with many of the participants, especially the outliers – Participants 114 and 214; Participants 112 and 212. Conclusions based on preliminary data analysis and interpretations were consulted.

All participants were sent the ‘multivocal poetic narrative’ (June 2020) for their view and opinion, which will be discussed further below (the poetic narrataive is not found in the dissertation, as it was too long). This was one of the ways *member-checking* (Lincoln and Guba 1985:301, 314-15, 373) was used, as well as *triangulation*. *Triangulation* (Lincoln and Guba 1985:305-306, 329) was also used in comparing texts from insiders and outsiders as well as Global South and Global North insider views. One example of *triangulation*, interviewing Participant 104 who is no longer a member of the congregation and seeking his experience of the 2003 collapse as a TNMP. In conclusion, data was constantly being analysed and compared in the application of prolonged engagement and persistent observation (Lincoln and Guba 1985:109, 301, 304-05).

Trustworthiness has also been achieved through thick descriptions used throughout the study and in this paper (Lincoln and Guba 1985:125, 214, 359) as an aspect of transferability. Beyond the already mentioned *triangulation* and implied reflective nature of the study (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 76, 109, 167, 186); inquiry audit (Lincoln and Guba 1985:319, 321); and audit trail (Lincoln and Guba 1985:319, 322) were also used.

4.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section deals with the ethical requirement underpinning the empirical research. This was addressed in full when the ethical paperwork was filled out, approval was obtained in Nov. 2020 (# 15155). In the appendices see the template of the informed consent form and the guide for the interview questions (see Appendix E). Figure 6 below, indicates a section of the consent form, outlining what has been done in the study:

5. PROTECTION OF YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND IDENTITY

Any information you share with me during this study that could possibly identify you as a participant will be protected. I will not use your given name. You can provide me with a unique name, if not, I will take the liberty to use a pseudonym (for example, change Barbara to Doris).

Only I will have access to the interview, its recordings, and data. The data will be applied for the purpose of my PhD dissertation, although there is always the possibility that I could publish

in the future (articles, books, chapters of books, and/or presentations at conferences). Please contact me if you have any issues with publication of your data beyond the dissertation.

The interviews will be recorded by Skype video or Zoom video unless you express the desire to not be recorded. If so, I would only take notes during our interview.

The interviews will be password protected in my computer and on password protected Microsoft OneDrive.

If there is a written transcript of your interview, I will send it to you for your revision. The recordings will be erased after my research is done and will only be preserved in written form in the password protected manner mentioned above.

I have a written consent from the board of ICI Colombia for this missiological evaluation.

I confirm that I have complied with these ethical considerations throughout the study.

Figure 6: Snippet from the Consent Form

4.11 VERIFICATION

The interviews were conducted in person and were transcribed by a professional service (through a contact at SU). The transcription in Spanish was translated automatically using the software Trint, and then I reviewed the translation. All the interviews were formatted by the same person, to have consistency in formatting. The number identification was used (100s for males, 200s for females) instead of names, so that the participants would remain unidentified. This decision is in line with ethical agreement with the interview. The first layer of verification was done by Feb. 8, 2022, when I then sent all the written transcripts back to each participant for review. This verification process is commonly referred to by several terms, namely: *member checking* (Birt et al. 2016); *respondent validation* (Mason 2018:241); and *member validation* (ed. Bayman 2012:138-139), to name a few.

Two responses are: “*Muchas gracias a ti Renee. Saludos a la familia.*” (Thank you, Renee. Greetings to your family.) (Participant 112 on Jan. 4, 2022); “*Hola nos alegran tus avances en tu*

trabajo esperamos salga bien todo. Saludos.” (Hello! Glad your study is advancing. We hope everything works out well. Greetings.) (Participant 120 on Feb. 10, 2022). All the participants who responded expressed gratitude and affection. Both messages above asked about my family, which is common in the culture of CO.

The second and third phases of *member checking*, already mentioned, culminated in the sending of the ‘multivocal poetic narrative’ (a chronological narrative of what I had heard in the interviews).

In the second phase, I sent the participants specific poems I had generated from their transcripts. The responses I received were positive (four responses: 2 females and 2 males). Although Participant 115 clarified that his poems did not reflect the whole meaning of the experience, which I confirmed I was aware of and would note in the dissertation. Participant 115 wrote (March 25, 2022):

“What comes to mind is that if I had been hand in hand with Jesus in the midst of the situation that was experienced at that time, I would not have felt isolated, I would not have felt empty, I would not have felt shocked even though the whole system and structure was crumbling. I think that's what I regret the most. Suddenly it would have been nice if the poem reflected, if it had really been like that in my life, that in the midst of the collapse I was firm, in the midst of the emptiness I was full, in the midst of despair I was at peace. I think so” (Participant 115, translated using Google Translate).

His response reflects a poetic rhythm that I have often found in my interviews, which I immediately responded to with the poetic rhythm I had captured. He did not respond to this. I believe that I have captured an ethnopoetic¹⁵⁸ rhythm in many of my interviewees, due to my poetic inquiry approach as part of the intuitive, *sentipensante* general approach. This is one of the findings of the research, a glimpse of this ethnopoetic manner of expression, which is common in oral based cultures (cf. Hymes 2003, 2016; Schrag 2007). The following data poem displays this finding:

Poem 3: Ethnopoetic evidence (Participant 115)

¹⁵⁸ Hymes (2016:178) points to the rhythm and order that is in non-Western texts and verbal communication. Additionally, Hymes (2003:223-24) highlights the importance in ethnopoetics inquiring into the ways of thinking expressed in these texts such as verse analysis, patterned relations found in seeking to divide the text by lines, and in that way reveals differences in emphasis, shape, and interpretation.

*que en medio del desmoronamiento yo estaba firme,
 en medio del vacío yo estaba lleno,
 en medio de la desesperación yo estaba en paz*

(‘In the midst of the collapse, I was firm
 In the midst of the emptiness, I was full
 In the midst of the despair, I was at peace’).

The final step in the *member checking* process is vital. In June 2022, I gathered all the interview data findings into a ‘multivocal poetic narrative’ and sent it to 18 people in total (16 of whom I used their interviews or written communication to construct this narrative, the official gatekeeper of ICI-CO, and the graphic designer helping me construct the visual data of the data analysis). I have kept a record of the responses. (Six of the 18 responded: three females and three males). There were no negative responses or comments regarding a petition to add or subtract information. I also reflected that the extremely creative way I presented the data could have been difficult to capture, due to the language barrier. All the interviewees who all hold English as their second or third language.

Below is the complete quote, as they allow the reader an example of reflexivity of the participants. It is also used as another example of how I have used the main tool – content analysis and sentiment analysis – with Speakai.com. This quote from Participant 214 was one of the outliners used for seeking the main themes, the subject of Chapter 6 - Part 1. The category: **All** from her response is applied a three-fold manner: (i) a graph; (ii) a summary; and (iii) a table displaying the most positive and most negative sentiments expressed (according to the inbuilt algorithms of Speakai.co). Below, in Figure 7, is the graph of the category: **All**:

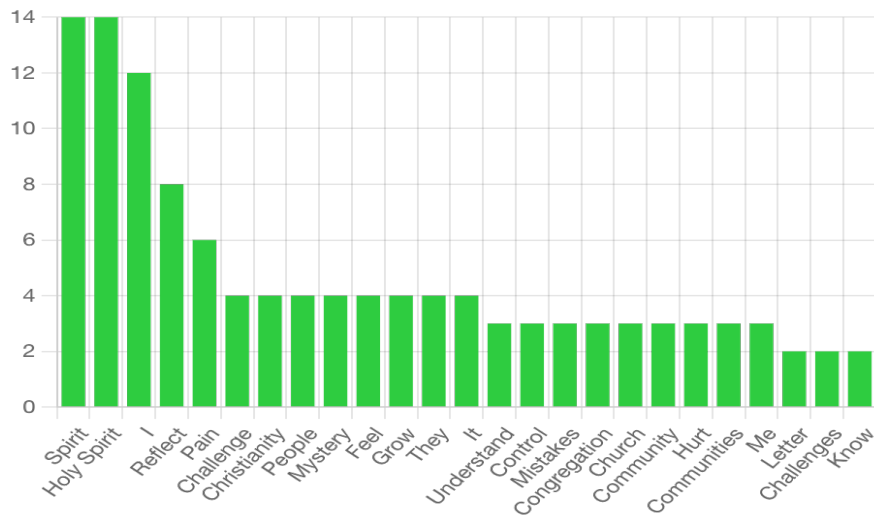


Figure 7: Content analysis Participant 214 response to multivocal poetic narrative

Following is a summary based on the word frequency guide based on the context analysis of Figure 7 and Table 11 with the Participant's 214 most positive and most negative statements:

The Spirit, the Holy Spirit, on which I reflect on the pain. Is a challenge to Christianity? People know the mystery; they feel it grow. They seek it and try to understand control and the mistakes of the congregation and church. The community hurts. Communities and me (I) know that *the letter* challenges what we know.

Table 11: Participant 214's most positive and negative statements

Most positive statements	Most negative statements
1) <i>Despite the changes after the letter, and that this developed country identified that there is a hierarchy and the desire to control the teachings so that they fit the perspective of obeying the authorities that have been created.</i>	1) <i>Same with poverty or pandemic and war (other people's pain).</i>
2) <i>These perspectives are shared in the pulpit, with people in authority like an elder.</i>	2) <i>The re-birth/new birth part made me reflect that our communities are ultimately human and that it is inevitable to hurt ourselves and make mistakes.</i>
3) <i>The part of the Holy Spirit is very interesting.</i>	3) <i>Another important thing we learn here is the view that there is no better place than this.</i>

These give a glimpse into the robust method of *member checking*, (see section 4.9 on *trustworthiness*). With the two main *talking circles* (Participants 112 and 212; Participants 114 and 414), an ongoing conversation developed on the process, where they learnt from each other, data verification took place, and opinions on the data interpretation were provided.

Many aspects of *triangulation* were used to determine the validity of the data. In addition, academic work on ICI-CO (Castellanos 2011; Diaz Castro 2014) was consulted. ICOC academic work in SA (Lappeman 2014) and an ICOC book in BR (Leao et al. 2017), as well as literature from the USA also provide evidence.¹⁵⁹

The researcher's own lived experiences as an insider are also part of the validation process, which is undertaken with what Pillow (2003:175, 192-93) terms *reflectivity of discomfort* and *uncomfortable reflexivity*. Pillow is convinced that this provides better data and is a more valuable methodological tool than comfortable reflexivity. It allows room for this discomfort of a reflective study and allows *a view from the inside* that is sought within *vulnerability*. It is not a comfortable position for the researcher as the researcher is connecting herself with the messiness of the past. This adds validity to the case study. Pillow (2003:175, quoting Geertz), links: “All ethnography is part philosophy, and a good deal of the rest is confession”. Although this is not an ethnographic work, this quote defines the *uncomfortable reflexivity* as the messiness of the past has been faced. Pillow (2003:176) explains: although most researchers use reflexivity without defining it, it is especially used by critical, feminist, race-based, and post-structural theorists to “better represent, legitimize, or call into question their data”.

Clandinin and Connelly (2004:2-3, 29, 50) describe this process allowed not only to question the facts but also my internal experiences and emotions, while taking into consideration the environment and the temporal aspects of the past, present, and future. It is suited to *a view from the inside* provided by *critical hermeneutics*. I am confronting what Haig-Brown (2003:415) terms *impossible knowledge* – knowledge that is beyond our grasp because of the limits of our

¹⁵⁹ Another aspect of verification was sought but without response. The complex international nature of the study was confirmed by the lack of response to emails asking about the current structure of US-based mission organisations. The ICI-CO office and gatekeeper do not know how this process works, and I believe that this could be a pragmatic line of inquiry to pursue (April 2021), but I was unable to find any answers.

language and lived experiences. She encourages us to allow ourselves to be with the unknown, to recognise our limitations. The following section, ethics of care, addresses the limitations that I dealt with as a researcher and how I approached this vital area with my participants.

4.12 ETHICS OF CARE

The ethical clearance letter included the statement that mental health support was provided for those who required it. Ethics of care (Mason 2018:241) is vital for this type of research journey. At the beginning of each interview series, I repeated this to the interviewee(s). No participants sought the services of the professional. I was the one that sought mental health support. This is the email message I sent to the mental health support person (Aug. 14, 2021):

“I’m realizing that I’m somewhat paralyzed with this part of my research and I was thinking about asking you for an emotional support appointment. You may suggest some tactics or something for the management of listening, transcribing, and analyzing the 50 hours of interviews I have to work on.

I decided to be ‘brave’ and listen to a whole interview. It’s one of the most intense, I think. I was very happy during the interview. But the idea of transcribing it, seems too much. It’s a feeling of getting too close to things that also affected me deeply.

These months I have worked on putting distance with the interviews and my reality. And I’ve made quite a bit of progress, but I feel like I need your help if you’re willing. It was something I just realized. I identified what has me paralyzed in the sense of interviews (and it’s the focus of my research). I thought it was more of a concentration problem, which can also be partially a reason” (original text in Spanish; translated using Google Translate).

Our first of four virtual appointments was held on August 20, 2021, and the last one on March 23, 2022. This support was important as I dealt with the journey through the *uncomfortable reflexivity*. This confirmed what I highlighted in the original research proposal. Priest (2012 n.p., cited by Yip 2018:267) definition of missiology: “[I]s not passive as in ‘armchair activity’ but a ‘walking around’ activity”. Although, in this research project, much of the ‘walking around’ has been virtually; it has *created spaces* where my participants and I have ‘walked together’ virtually.

Ethics of care was done at the conclusion of the interview process. I kept the interview process open until the end in case I had any final questions (except with Participants 114 and 214, as they are involved in the co-creation). On June 25, 2022, I sent an email to each participant to let them know that the interview process was officially over, attaching the ‘multivocal poetic narrative’. I

requested comments or suggestions on the interview process. I did not receive any response on that point, only a response to the poetic narrative (from six of the 17 participants). I assume that ‘no news is good news’. I am in constant contact with almost all of the participants since most of us are in the same church community in Bogota. I believe that if there were any issues, they would let me know.

Several participants during the interview process mentioned how they perceived it as a positive experience and mentioned that they felt it was meaningful or useful I then asked several who emphasised this and asked them if they could be more specific. These are two of the responses (email communication in English):

“It is of my interest to understand these dynamics, and hope that the research will not only be useful for my understanding, but also to prevent this type of situation for others in the future. Last but not least, it has been an enjoyable opportunity to help and share in your work as a friend and fellow scholar. This experience has been enriching for me” (Participant 112, Sept. 24, 2022).

“My motivation to participate is to help me understand the evolution of events and different trains of thought that have led the Bogota ICOC congregation to the leadership crisis it has gone through. It has been a pleasure to reflect and meditate on the many topics we shared during our interviews” (Participant 212, Sept. 27, 2022).

4.13 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the approaches and research methodologies utilized in this study. Chilisa's (2020) *transformative postcolonial Indigenous research paradigm* in dialogue with Bosch (1991a) was interrogated with respect to eight categories: reason behind research; philosophical underpinnings; ontological assumption; role of values; nature of knowledge; what is accepted as truth; methodologies; and techniques for collecting data. It was explained that a combination of *Indigenous research methodologies* and *critical hermeneutics* with *critical realism* was chosen, constituting a *two-eye* approach – ‘one-eye’ from a Western perspective (*critical hermeneutics* and *critical realism*), the ‘other eye’ from an *Indigenous research paradigm* outlook. The chapter indicated the use of the approach and described the data sources, data collection, research population and sample, data analysis, data analysis tool (Speakai.co) *trustworthiness*, ethical considerations, verification, and the ethics of care.

In the subsequent chapter, the examination of the data set with the *maternal-thinking* logic will be further explored.

CHAPTER 5:

DATA INTERPRETATION WITH MATERNAL-THINKING (THINKING-WITH-THE-WOMB¹⁶⁰)

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter fulfils the objective listed in Chapter 1: To expand a *maternal-thinking* logic in a missiological study. And attempts to answer the question: How can a *maternal-thinking* or a *thinking-with-the womb* logic be used missiologically? Consequently, it provides important insights on how the use of maternal imagery to describe mission and missiology can provide foundations for a *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission. As well as the use of cultural evidence to describe the matricentric society in CO. The first cultural evidence is the described below.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez in 1967, creates a sense of drama and suspense in his novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (Garcia Marquez 2003a)¹⁶¹ by using magical realism. The mother and son¹⁶² in the novel are connected by an invisible bond, which allows them to communicate and understand

¹⁶⁰ *Thinking-with-the-womb* is found in Kiboko (2001:213). She describes a Bible study (John 4, narrative of Jesus and the Samaritan woman) among Sanga women (ethnic group mainly in Democratic Republic of Congo). Kiboko notes the insight of a 98-year-old woman regarding the Samaritan woman: “She has a womb, the matrix of knowledge”. Kiboko remembered that her own mother had taught her that a woman not only thinks with her head and heart but also with her womb “the center of life”. Kiboko’s mother would say: “God surely thought that one needs to think from that centre of life, because he chose it as a matrix capable of nurturing the Savior”. I have not found reference to this concept anywhere else. Realizing a gap in missiological scholarship, I suggest the development of a sub-division of Mother Studies. This term, *thinking-with-the-womb* links to Mother Studies.

¹⁶¹ In the foreword of *Pedro Paramo* (Rulfo 2019), Garcia Marquez links Rulfo’s novel as a direct influence on his inspiration of *Cien Años de Soledad* (2019:ix-xii). A careful reading of this nonlinear novel shows many maternal connections in a tale in a town in MX during the bloody Mexican Revolution and the invisible *glue* between the living and the dead. The back cover highlights: “*Vine a Comala porque me dijeron que aca vivia mi padre, un tal Pedro Paramo. Mi madre me lo dijo. Y yo le prometi que vendria a verlo en cuanto ella muriera*” (I came to Comala because I told my father, a Pedro Paramo, lives here. My mother told me. I promised her that I would come to see him once she died).

¹⁶² Sharing with my son, in the film, *El abrazo de la serpiente* (2015) and one of Garcia Marquez’s (1982) autobiographies, I experienced a *flash of insight*. I will never truly understand the complexities of what has happened in ICI-CO, but I can try to learn a different way of knowing to gain a deeper understanding. I thought there are aspects that are more connected to magic realism than my own Western ways of knowing. This insight has guided my research.

each other without words.¹⁶³ ¹⁶⁴ Rushdie (2014:1) publishes this famous passage from *One Hundred Years of Solitude*:

As soon as José Arcadio closed the bedroom door the sound of a pistol shot echoed through the house. A trickle of blood came out under the door, crossed the living room, went out into the street, continued on in a straight line across the uneven terraces, went down steps and climbed over curbs, passed along the Street of the Turks, turned a corner to the right and another to the left, made a right angle at the Buendía house, went in under the closed door, crossed through the parlor, hugging the walls so as not to stain the rugs . . . and came out in the kitchen, where Úrsula was getting ready to crack 36 eggs to make bread. “‘Holy Mother of God!’ Úrsula shouted.”

Something utterly fantastic is happening here. A dead man’s blood acquires a purpose, almost a life of its own, and moves methodically through the streets of Macondo until it comes to rest at his mother’s feet. The blood’s behavior is “impossible,” yet the passage reads as truthful, the journey of the blood like the journey of the news of his death from the room where he shot himself to his mother’s kitchen, and its arrival at the feet of the matriarch Úrsula Iguarán reads as high tragedy: A mother learns that her son is dead. José Arcadio’s lifeblood can and must go on living until it can bring Úrsula the sad news. The real, by the addition of the magical, actually gains in dramatic and emotional force. It becomes more real, not less.

A dramatic manner to introduce the chapter on the *motherline* as a theme, as it allows, in a CO context, of seeing what is difficult to show empirically, the connection between a mother and her son. Bringing in an aspect of Mother Studies into missiological scholarship heightens awareness of reference to *motherhood*, maternal images, and mothering/caregiving.¹⁶⁵ Smith (2017:200) confirms that women tend to be more likely than men to seek help including the help of superhuman powers. Smith continues and attributes this both to: “the dependencies of the biology of *motherhood* and in the socially structured vulnerabilities of commonly male-dominated social systems” (italics added). Social science tools can provide insight into why and how these shifts and flows occur from an insider’s perspective and *maternal-thinking*.

Mother Studies was developed in a master’s thesis (Rose 2015). Reading this thesis (March 2022) was a piece of the puzzle to pursue a *maternal-thinking* logic at a doctoral level. This chapter is

¹⁶³ ‘Magic in service of truth’ – Rushdie (2014).

¹⁶⁴ This connection was pointed out to me in a casual conversation in the Stellenbosch Faculty of Theology Library by Ilse Erasmus (Aug. 2022).

¹⁶⁵ Intercultural Studies MA Capstone (Rheinbolt-Urbe, 2015) and Bible & Theology MA Capstone (Rheinbolt-Urbe, 2017) both used a maternal lens.

just a foretaste of the possibilities that this lens provides. On the one hand, it seeks cultural references of the *motherline* in the CO context but connects to research in the SA context (cf. Chazan 2015). Also, this content analysis is used to highlight a variant in the data, namely a relationship with a mother (in this data, the mother is the biological mother, but mothering/caregiving can be a wider category). This alludes to the *missio Dei* that could be implied or strengthened within the mother-child connection. And *missio Dei* can be observed throughout Christian history when in dark times in the history of Christians, as Jenkins (2008:176) narrates: “women were a critical factor in preserving underground faith”. Armas (2021:12) answers the question: “What if the world’s greatest theologians are those whom the world wouldn’t consider theologians at all?”. This was inspired in the *kitchen theology* she experienced from her grandmother. The mothers of the main conversation partners (Allen, Bosch, and Illich) are embraced in the research, seeking to perceive their influence or legacy on the adult child. And this aspect of the study led to a finding that can be considered for an insider-relational missiological evaluation, an Illichian adaption of a RC theology, *the church is my mother*.

The data collected from my participants from CO speaks to my lived experience in CO the past three decades. The interviews reveal interesting insights into the inner workings of families in CO and how *motherhood* is experienced in this culture.¹⁶⁶ This research has led to a heightened awareness of the pivotal role that mothers play in CO society. Encanto (2021), a Walt Disney Features film, tells a powerful matricentric narrative. Which is another cultural reference developed in matricentric CO society (Pineda de Gutiérrez 1997; 2000; Serrano 2016:235-240). I will be illustrating the relationship of an adult son with his mother¹⁶⁷ in a CO context through the

¹⁶⁶ One recent area of study is the historical account of the considerable number of original colonial settlers to CO, who were recent converts from Islam, known as ‘new Christians’ (Serrano 2016, 2018). Research to understand some of the implications of this connects with Nida’s description of public and private domains (Nida 1974). Musk (2004), also from the perspective of a Western missiologist, describes his perspective of these spaces in the world of Islam, and broadly, the Middle Eastern culture. This connects with my previous reading of 1950s ethnography in an Iraqi village (Fernea 1989). Some of the rituals within the private domain, I have found in these texts, such as strict enforcement of a *dieta* or *cuarentena* (40 days of rest after the birth of a child). Gudeman and Rivera (1990) point to several factors that continue to tie the rural economy to the home economy, emphasising the importance of self-sufficiency and local control over large corporations. Three initial areas that could be explored further include: (i) historical account of colonists in CO; (ii) the implications for public and private domain theory; and (iii) Musk’s perspective on Islamic life in society and the potential applications in CO.

¹⁶⁷ The chapter is mainly focused on mother-son relationships. Further study could explore similar themes in relation to mother-daughter or father-daughter or several other combinations of relationships. Any of these would be

lived experience and songs of the international CO singer/songwriter, Juanes. Then I will apply this lens to a discussion of specific findings from my raw data and my conversation partners. Thirdly, I will draw conclusions to display how the maternal lens is being used for the findings.

5.1 DRAWN TO THEIR MOTHERS?

There is something about *motherhood* that I can't help but be drawn to. Claassens (2010:41) explains a similar horizon in her academic pursuit. Connecting with my own *motherline* was the way I overcame the *historylessness* I faced in the 2003 collapse. This journey towards my *motherline* is encouraged as I am a mother myself, or because I have such a close connection to my own mother, grandmothers, and paternal great-grandmother.¹⁶⁸ ¹⁶⁹ Either way, I am intrigued with the way mothers can positively or negatively influence, even after their deaths. This 'reality' is usually hidden away, in ways that can't be measured or evaluated. I'm always searching for the narratives surrounding *motherhood* – the hidden stories that often go untold. Or returning to Saayman et al. (2012:368): “*critical realism* maintains that the structures may not be perceivable” (italics added). And this 'magnetism' for these hidden narratives is something that runs throughout my research.¹⁷⁰

I spoke with Participant 117 about my research and some of my findings, connecting the findings from studying Allen, Bosch, and Illich's mothers and the potential hiddenness of the maternal. I

fascinating and add to the body of missiological scholarship. This is the focus of Appendix L: Motherline Identity, as my reflection with my mother, grandmothers, and great-grandmother.

¹⁶⁸ In my childhood in GT, community is everything and mothers play a significant role in that. Here in CO, when we are invited into someone's home or invited on a trip with friends, it is not uncommon for their mother to be included as part of the gathering. Even with friends whose mothers have passed away, their memory often comes up in conversation. This research is not the place to explore this as a wider phenomenon, but I think it is safe to assume that there are many other cultures around the world that could be similar.

¹⁶⁹ Claassens (2012:65) explains what could be termed as a vital part of the *motherline* in the context of the midwives (Old Testament text) as a transgenerational passing of knowledge from mother to daughter, *intergenerational mutuality*.

¹⁷⁰ I have sought to 'get to know' several of the mothers. It is quite intriguing and must be for another research project. As I have tried to continue to understand Marx as a thinker who has influenced almost like no other, I also pursued his relationship with his mother. Gabriel's (2012) biography on Marx's wife, Yenny Marx, allows the view of the mother. Marx and his mother had a conflictive relationship until her death. He was close to his father but not his mother. This would be a topic to explore. Dussel spent five years working with several students, reading all of Marx's work in German in chronological order. The result is Dussel's text *Las metáforas teológicas de Marx* (2013) where he links all of Marx's theological analogies and thinking. It is another way of getting to Marx's theological 'parent' (his mother). to

communicated the link I had found in my data analysis of a male in ICI-CO whose spiritual influence I observed in the congregation as ‘mothering’. I state: *"This man to me is one of those, he's someone like that nobody sees"*. Actually, I ended up connecting two males: Participants 112 and Participant 111 with a ‘mothering’ role in the post-collapse ICO-CO. I was impacted by both men, as through the interview process, I discovered their dedication, commitment, and generosity. They were vital in rebuilding the community ‘from below’. Below is the dialogue between me and Participant 117:

Renee: *"For example, David Bosch. When I saw him and also Roland Allen and interviewed their relatives, the one who influenced them the most to make them incredible was their mother"*.

Participant 117: *"Yes, I imagine Renee and it's something that nobody admits"*.

Renee: *"That it can be a bad power. Because it is also very complex, because the mother can have horrible power. But on the other hand, I have found in my conversation partners, whose work was mainly rejected their whole life, like Roland Allen. And Ivan Illich. Oh no, Ivan Illich I don't know about. Also, in David Bosch's case. Until the end he never declined in his faith and in his struggle for his country, his church, to his faith. I don't know. . . everything. I observed the difference his mother made in his life. But also, their wives [Allen and Bosch], and the support of their children. But, and that's a very radical thing to look with this lens. Because what I'm talking about, this man to me is one of those, he's someone like that nobody sees"* [brackets added].

I introduce this short dialogue as it reflects much of my thinking regarding this subject. I believe that there is much to learn when one finds out about the biological mother, as well as those who helped raise someone. These beginning influences in someone’s life many times are not recognised publicly or academically. At the same time, I am not idealising mothers, as I also emphasise: *"because the mother can have horrible power"*. This aspect will be drawn in towards the end of the chapter. Participant 117 confirmed my hypothesis as to the potential hiddenness of the maternal: *"it's something that nobody admits"*.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ The hiddenness I am referring to may be connected to the fact that, in societies prior to the development of text-based communication, oral traditions were the primary means by which social groups passed knowledge and wisdom from one generation to another. In most cases in Christian mission history, mission endeavours have prioritised literacy, which has led to a situation in many contexts where the stories and narratives held by older members of a community are skipped over in favour of giving voice to the younger, literate Christian believers. Casey (2013:113) argues that this has interrupted the social structures of oral communities. This viewpoint could be an example of a complex question within the subject of orality. In a text-focused society, many valuable stories and narratives are unknown because they exist only in oral form.

In my experience, mothers in CO are many times in the forefront, especially in the private and cultural domain.¹⁷² I have listened to their voices and stories for three decades within the ICI-CO community, but it is not as recognised institutionally (public domain). I believe the maternal influence has been a *causal power* and *causal influence* (Smith 2017) which influenced the *togetherness* experienced in the congregation after the collapse. And has contributed to its growth since (strengthening the private domain). As already discussed, Illich's 'it' and 'She'. The 'it' is the public/institutional domain and the 'She' is in a less visible and not measurable domain. Illich says the 'it' can be studying using sociological tools (2015). Participant 111 describes it this way: *Ecclesiastical mutuality* vs. *tripartite mutuality* (see Appendices N1, N2 & N3 for complete documents). The 'She' is connected to *missio Dei*. The collapse in the case study, was the collapse of the public domain 'it' but that did not mean the private domain had collapsed – 'She' was still knitting the *togetherness* (Chapter 6).

5.1.1 Colombian singer/songwriter Juanes and the maternal

Juanes is an internationally recognised and well-known CO singer/songwriter (Woodridge 2017; Marie 2019). Juanes often brings up the subject of his mother (see Marie 2019; Juanes 2020; Hernandez 2021) – about her influence in small ways throughout his life. I interpret the importance of her in his career with his statement (Juanes 2020): "*I'm doing what I believe I was brought up to do*". Juanes (2020) in a virtual concert during the COVID-19 pandemic, shares the gratitude he feels for the spiritual legacy he received from his parents. They gave him a RC faith and he now admits taking it to a more personal direction. He is practicing a distinct spirituality springing from his parents' legacy. It is consistent with all his statements regarding the interrelationship between his personal life, his mother, and his music. I find this and other examples of *intergenerational mutuality* in his statements (Juanes 2020; Hernandez 2021) about his mother, wife (actress Karen Martinez), and three children, as well as song lyrics.

¹⁷² The current vice-president of CO is a mother of two children, Francia Marquez. She is the second female vice-president and the first Black Vice-President (Turkewitz 2022: n.p.). The United Nations Security Council (2022: n.p.) reports the number of females voted into political offices (Garrastazu and Serrano 2020:n.p.). Statistics on females in political offices show that: "Women represent 50.9 percent of Colombia's population yet are underrepresented in the political space, with women making up only 23 percent of Colombia's Senate and 18 percent of the House of Representatives. At the subnational level, these numbers are even lower: Just two of the 32 governors and twelve percent of mayors are women".

Juanes (Juanes 2020; Hernandez 2021) is not afraid to admit that his mother has been a hidden force in his professional life. I continue to add evidence such as this one; it hints at the reality of a matricentric influence, as well as academic. CO art expression also confirms this, such as in the CO documentary film: *Jericó, el Infinito Vuelo de los Días* (2016).¹⁷³ This film is described: “A colorful, poetic, and lush journey in this beautiful Colombian village Jerico, through the eyes of eight women of all ages and social conditions”.¹⁷⁴ Juanes’ mother (Niño Morales 2006; Marie 2019) is from this region of the country and her strength and resilience are an inspiration to Juanes (Juanes 2020; Hernandez 2021). And he knows that she is not alone in her wisdom and experience (Hernandez 2021).

Through a close analysis of Juanes, a central theme of mothers, *intergenerational mutuality*, and common humanity is explored. Several of his songs speak to the powerful connection. Juanes’ songs explore the difficult reality of life in CO, often referencing the theme of *motherhood*. In ‘La tierra’ (Juanes in Ekymosis 1997) encourages listeners to love their homeland and appreciate their roots. ‘Odio por amor’ (Juanes 2008) is a powerful song expressing a desire for peace and a better future. And in ‘Fijate bien’, (Juanes 2000) laments the forced displacement of people due to landmines and other violence. “*They are the children, the elderly, the **mothers**, all of us **walking together***” (**bold added**). Throughout these songs, Juanes masterfully weaves together the complex reality of life in CO (cf. Niño Morales 2006; Wooldridge 2017) with the powerful idea of *motherhood*, reminding us that our mothers have the potential to provide us with identity and **roots**, even in the most chaotic of situations.

¹⁷³ *Jericó, el Infinito Vuelo de los Días* (Jerico, The Infinite Flight of Days). (2016). Miravus, Saviadulce.

¹⁷⁴ For a brief summary, see <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5678440/>:

The film is a journey of intimate portraits featuring women of different ages and backgrounds who live in the CO village of Jerico, in the Andes Mountains. It evolves like a kaleidoscope, revealing their stories, pains, secrets, beauty, humour, wisdom, and authenticity. Over the course of these unique encounters, the village's everyday life unfolds – its colourful houses, stunning landscapes, and ever-present music. The film seeks to celebrate and preserve this intangible heritage, composed of words, laughter, tears, actions, and songs, through these strong, sensitive, and dignified women, who have such an unbridled passion for life.

This is an example of one CO individual's experience with his mother, but the popularity of the songs suggests that they resonate with a wider population.¹⁷⁵

5.1.2 Mother theme in Talking Circles

The rich and robust data allowed me to explore the maternal thread that was evident in each participant's relationship with their mother, except for one participant. Figure 8 below, is the word frequency graph for all the category: **Motherhood** as applied to all the interviews:

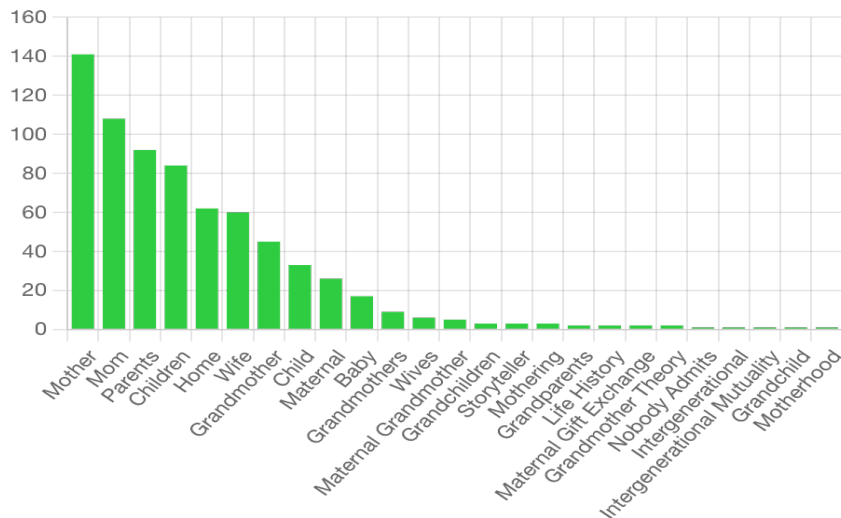


Figure 8: Content analysis of motherhood mentioned in all interviews

Based on the content analysis and detailed record¹⁷⁶ of the interviews conducted, it was evident that most participants had a close relationship with their mother. The word ‘mother’, ‘mom’, and ‘maternal’ were used over 270 times throughout the interview data. There was one participant, however, who admits to not enjoying a close relationship with his mother.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ Niño Morales (2006) provides an alternate view of Juanes, linking him as a possible ally to the right-wing CO President (2002–2010), Alvaro Uribe. Niño Morales considers the possibility of Juanes’ music as an ally of Uribe for solidifying the CO identity. More research could potentially confirm or deny this link. For the purposes of this research, his political inclinations or allies are not an issue. His potential to reach the CO audience is a confirmation that his lyrics do speak to CO reality, such as the importance of mothers.

¹⁷⁶ Google Spread Sheet used for this record keeping of family/mother related information.

¹⁷⁷ It is common, in the congregation, that mothers (and fathers) eventually also become a part of the congregation. This would be interesting data to collect – data from a wider sample.

For Participant 112, when the narrative of his family history came about, he expressed that his relationship with his mother was quite frustrating.¹⁷⁸ The following quote frames his experience:

"It was almost non-existent, so that's very hard. In my heart I think probably around that time, but I don't remember. That's a big void in my head. I don't remember much of my childhood. I don't remember any close relationship with my parents. That said, I even went for counselling about that, but that hasn't worked". Participant 112

Those interviewed all spoke about their unique experiences growing up in their family dynamic. One theme that arose was the shift from dependence to independence, and how this played out differently for everyone. Some exercised more control during this time, while most trusted their children as they transitioned into adulthood. This showed a more natural progression from child to adult, with the parent emotionally and spiritually depending on their child as they went through this transition. One of the ways I express this stage in *female-maternal-embodied-knowledge* is *creating space to give space*.

In the participants this was not related to a physical moving out but was related to an economic independence. I understand their transition into adulthood as a decision to trust their child when they begin to work or step out. For Participant 114 this stage began at the age of 11 or 12 as his father travelled extensively for work and his mother was basically left alone. Participant 114 perceives: *"I think my mother was also fairly hands off back then. I think there was a lot of trust in me. . . my temperament is already quite independent"*. Participant 120 shared that he was still at home until he got married but started working at the age of 8 or 9 to help support his mom and siblings. Participant 115 kept living at home, until he got married. He supported himself financially. He expressed that his independence began at age 22. Some of Participant 115 remarks include: *"If I could find money, I was independent"*; *"Money gave me freedom and my parents too"*; *"I did not need permission, just kept them informed as to my location"*. When asked specifically who he needed to keep informed, he answered – his mother.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ After the data compilation, I sent him the information I gathered about all that he had said about the relationship with this mother, from the overview of the six interviews. I let him know its availability and he asked for a copy.

¹⁷⁹ The interview data as to the inner workings of families in Bogota is extremely robust, as the questions, with the Group 1 interviews gave opportunity for ample description. Their answers have a range of four noted categories: (1) the spiritual influence of their grandmothers; (2) details of their primary caretaker 'mothering'; (3) the regional

Participant 104 related an interesting story about his relationship with his mother from the moment he was conceived. She had just recently committed her life to God when she conceived him. She viewed him (Participant 104) as a gift from God. All through his spiritual search during his early adulthood, she trusted that he would find his way.¹⁸⁰ At 27, when he first committed to Christ and was baptised in ICI-CO, he experienced a spiritual rebirth. It was a spiritual journey together until her death four years ago.¹⁸¹ During difficult times, such as with the collapse of ICOC, when he and his wife served as TNMP, his mother always had faith that things would work out. She was very devoted to prayer, praying for him daily. He described her faith as simple but powerful. He recounted the details of her last days before she passed away suddenly, which was something for which she had prayed for years. Even the way she died; he understood it as a gift from God:

“But my mother was a woman of prayer, of faith. She could spend three hours praying for all her children. She was having fun. She had fun in her relationship with God”. Participant 107

“Well, I was very much loved, very much loved. And let's say my mother was looking forward to me and although the economic situation was difficult. It was always difficult at home, but my mother told me very nice things. She told me that I never made her suffer, not even when I was born. So that was very special because I was kind of born. And what did she feel? Well, pain. I got up early on December 8 at about 3 in the morning and I was born, and it was super, super easy for my mother, but she was also very nice”. Participant 107

“She always would tell me but as Mary told us, the truth is I think I was very loved by God, since when I think I was conceived differently. [The context is: Mary, is the biblical Mary, Jesus' mother]”. Participant 107

His mother was always supportive, never judging him for his choices or the new things he was exploring while at university. He enjoyed coming home each night and talking with her about his day, sharing all the new things he was learning and discovering. They would talk for hours, and she always provided gentle guidance and encouragement:

background of their parents; as well as (4) stories of physical, sexual, and mental abuse experienced personally and in their extended families. All these stories flowed naturally. The participants spontaneously shared these personal stories of abuse, as part of their life history, not as an answer to a specific question. They had full awareness (consent form) of the mental health support provided in the study and I emphasised it during the process. None of the participants decided to use this free service.

¹⁸⁰ I'm not sure if this is due to cultural dynamics or the teaching at ICI-CO, or a combination of both.

¹⁸¹ She practiced her faith in another Christian community.

“Well, I had a very, very close relationship with my mother. We talked a lot, but a lot, almost all the evenings. We talked about a lot of topics, and I think maybe she was waiting for me to talk about these things”. Participant 107

Some of the quotes and narratives offer a glimpse into the intimacy of my interviews, revealing the emotional climate. In many of my interviews, the participants take the opportunity to divulge intimate details of their familial lives. The contrast between the way Participant 112 and Participant 104 experienced ‘mothering’ from their biological mother frames the next section. Allen, Bosch, and Illich maternal experiences.

5.2 CONNECTION: DATA AND BOSCH/ALLEN/ILlich

Three main reasons I chose and kept Allen, Bosch, and Illich as my main conversation partners are thus: (i) all three men were highly intelligent, highly education, and devoted to a lifetime of missiological reflection; (ii) they were deeply committed to their work and beliefs; and (iii) they held a had strong personal connection to the maternal. These three conclusions are confirmed by the interviews with family members (Allen and Bosch) and friend (Illich).^{182 183} I will share details about these interviews below:

- Ivan Illich: I joined an interview session with Ivan Illich’s close friend, Gustavo Esteva (Nov. 2019), Neto Leao has the original transcripts. I am in written communication with another of Illich’s close friends, David Cayley. Cayley has approved the quote (email communication Sept. 13, 2002, and Nov. 13, 2022).
- Roland Allen: I enjoyed two interviews by Zoom with Hubert J.B. Allen, Roland Allen’s grandson (Jan. 25, 2021¹⁸⁴ and Sept. 27, 2021). He confirmed conclusions I had arrived to from his book (Allen 1995) and Rutt (2018a, 2018b), in regard to the influence of Priscilla

¹⁸² I recognise the privilege of private interaction by creating spaces with them. It could be an aspect of my positionality that some of these doors opened for me.

¹⁸³ These observations as to the relationship between the authors and their mothers come from second-hand sources (grandson, wife, and friends); this is different from the CO participants who spoke from direct experience. The speculations as to the long-term impact on the author’s lives are worthy of consideration keeping this in mind.

¹⁸⁴ Looking back, I wished that I had waited to interview him. His was one of the first interviews and I was still learning. But the data is rich and there was extra information he provided, such as the sermon he had preached the previous day (in an inter-religious event in Oxford, UK), and the first chapters of the book he was compiling of his mother’s diary. His mother was born in MX, which is a link to this case study in LA.

Allen on Roland Allen. Hubert Allen is over 90 years old. I have not been able to reach him for permission to use the exact quotes, so I have not used the transcript.

- David Bosch: I had three interviews and written communication with Annemie Bosch, David Bosch's widow (April 30, 2021; May 26, 2021; and June 25, 2021¹⁸⁵). She also confirmed and extended the written text she authored (eds. Kritzinger and Saayman 2011:11-37). In email communication (Dec. 7, 2022), she approved and provided extra information.

5.3 ALLEN'S MOTHER: PRISCILLA ALLEN (NEE MALPAS)

Rutt (2018a:6-10, 143) asserts Allen's early years were shaped by his mother's faith. Priscilla Allen was a widow with seven children, and her financial situation was difficult.¹⁸⁶ Now a single mother, she moved in with her parents when Allen was seven; they died when Allen was ten. Rutt (2018a:9) suggests that it was his mother's evangelical faith, within the AC, that influenced Allen's spirituality and thinking the most. Rutt (2018a:143) also stresses: "It was his mother's evangelical faith that provided the main formative influence, and this shaped his spirituality".

Hubert Allen (1995:175-76) narrates that in his later years Allen abandoned the Anglo-Catholic structure and belief system he had adopted while at Oxford as part of the Tractarian Movement. Connecting Rutt's assertion, I had a *flash of insight* that into the influence of Allen's mother, namely her: (i) personal walk of faith; (ii) practical way of practicing her spirituality; and (iii) theology – her practical biblical thinking. These three aspects of his maternal legacy ended up having the most influence on Allen's life. I was able to confirm this in an interview with Hubert Allen. He agreed that Roland's mother's personal faith provided the main formative influence on his spirituality.

¹⁸⁵ This interview was not recorded, which was a mistake on my part.

¹⁸⁶ Hubert Allen (1995:10-11) provides details as to the sudden death of his great-grandfather, Charles Fletcher Allen. He heard three different versions: (i) the charitable one, that he 'dropped everything' to serve as a missionary in Belize; (ii) the consequence of yellow fever; and (iii) *delirium tremens* because of chronic alcoholism. Allen (1995:11) admits that the third version: could be 'equally founded'. Allen admits that the past of his great-grandfather was not a topic of conversation as a young boy of 12 (last time he saw his *Granfer*). Allen (1995:11) remembers his grandfather: "seems to have been warned . . . about 'a family tendency' towards drink and drugs – even though none of their relations can recall any other examples of this". I admire and am inspired by Hubert Allen's authenticity as an insider researcher. And this narrative vividly displays a piece of the puzzle of his grandfather's '*walking together* through systems broken beyond repair'.

Hubert Allen (1995) highlights three previously mentioned aspects about Allen's mother. First, was her personal walk. Allen (1995:13) describes Priscilla Allen's active prayer life - based on an account of Roland's nephew, Peter Allen:

Her serenity I never saw disturbed, and her praying – almost always, even when alone, vocal – was the completely natural communion with the in-dwelling Christ. . . she passed from one to the other (talking to Christ or anyone else) with the utmost simplicity and without effort—so slight was the barrier between the two worlds: in both she was at home, and altogether herself.

Active prayer as spirituality was intertwined in all aspects of her life, not compartmentalised. It is the *lived religion* that Allen experienced from his youth. Allen (1995:12) continues to narrative more details: “Priscilla was of a strongly evangelical persuasion: some of her relatives were Plymouth Brethren, including her younger sister. . . but she was very determined, not to say obstinate, person (characteristics which Roland seems to have inherited)”.

The second and third aspects: practical way of practicing her spirituality and theological – her practical biblical thinking are depicted by the following example. H. Allen (1995:14) quotes a letter Allen penned to the Bishop of Assam, George C. Hubback, in 1927 referencing Priscilla Allen:

My mother was certainly right when she taught me that to speak of oneself as obeying the Church, and to speak of oneself as obeying Christ are not identical. It makes a great difference to our life whether we think habitually in terms of Christ or any other than Christ, whether we habitually say Christ gave me this work to do, or someone else gave it to me to do, and it affects others to whom we speak.

Allen himself points to his mother as providing that template to differentiate the difference between what Illich defines as the ‘it’ and ‘She’. He highlights the maternal influence on this practical manner of living out the theological; and how to walk in broken Christian systems. Allen (1995:14) confirms that from Priscilla Allen, his *Granfer* emphasised to his own son: “[I]n the Church there is a point at which rebellion is justifiable for the good of the Church, not for any personal end”.

Priscilla Allen's imprint can be found in hidden but important ways throughout her son's life and work. Applying the *critical realism* analogy of reality being like a **tree**, the roots representing Priscilla Allen are what hold up and give strength to the trunk and branches (her son's life and work). Also, there are aspects that allow for links for building a theology of mission embracing a *transforming mutuality*.

5.4 BOSCH'S MOTHER: HESTER HELENA BOSCH (NEE SWANEPOEL)

It is difficult to find information on Bosch's mother. There is more information available on his father, who is mentioned in some biographical texts. These texts do not paint Bosch's father in a particularly positive light; he cut off relations with his son for a period when Bosch told him of his decision to minister to black people.¹⁸⁷ I discovered Bosch's hometown in Kuruman, Northern Cape.¹⁸⁸ I continued searching for information regarding his mother and found a chapter written by his widow, Annemie Elisabeth Bosch (nee Roberts). The chapter, 'My best friend: My husband' (2011:11-37). The following is in her concluding thoughts (2011:37):

David's father was the parent who spurred him on to excel in all he did – something he always aimed to do. I will also remain thankful for the way David's mother loved him and raised him, for the way the teachers who taught him, managed to motivate him – facts that nurtured that emotional security, an attribute without which all other gifts could not have flourished and matured the way they did.

Annemie Bosch kindly gave me the opportunity to uncover the story I was searching for. To begin she shed more light on the connection between her son's legacy and his mother:

¹⁸⁷ As in Roland Allen's case, Bosch also willingly faced uncomfortable truths within his family and was willing to face it and found resolution and peace. They had full awareness of the *broken systems* within Christianity that touched their lives, even events in relation to their own fathers.

¹⁸⁸ Kuruman has a historical connection with the PROT Interdenominational Mission in SA. There Robert Moffat, in 1821, built the first mission station for the London Missionary Society. This was where David Livingston arrived for his first missionary position in 1841. Bosch's parents were members of the DRC. In the future it would be interesting to see if any links exist between the Bosch family's spiritual journey within the DRC and the Moffat family and their influential work.

Renee: *"I was remembering. One of the first questions I had for you, which is about the relationship, David Bosch, with his mother, you say in the chapter that it was very key for him, as to be the person he was. That he was very even keeled. You say, at one point, you say that has to do with his mother"*.

Annemie Bosch: *"His mother? Yes"*.

Annemie Bosch: *"Yes, but his mother I think what I was talking about is emotional intelligence –something David was blessed with. He was secure in the constant love and acceptance of his mother. So, later in his ministry to others he didn't have many old emotional hurts to deal with"*.

Annemie Bosch: *"But his mother accepted him from the beginning, always. And she was the one who moaned in his father's ear when he was not allowed at home. She kept on saying, 'I want my son. I want my son. I want my son'. So that's the way it was there".* [She made a hand motion as to someone speaking into someone's ear, as she shared this emotive interaction].

Renee: *"How long did that last, [the father's decision to distance him from the family]?"*

Annemie Bosch: *"Three years. After three years the father relented. And then they were reconciled. By the time I got to know him and his family, it was already behind him. Uh huh. But it's extraordinary. Emotional equilibrium and intelligence – I think those were the attributes which made him what he was. Those were the things which gave him the ability to always put himself in another person's shoes. He could understand other people because he had struggled with many a problem, but later didn't have to deal with his own old issues anymore. He had worked through them, resolved them, and he felt safe in the love of his parents and of my love"*.^{189 190 191}

¹⁸⁹ In a personal email (Dec. 7, 2022) Annemie Bosch reveals more details:

"I thought I gave you a wrong impression of David's dad. He and his wife, Hester Helena Swanepoel had, as children, experienced what used to be called 'The Boer War' when the 'Boers' felt enormously threatened by Britain. There was no official Apartheid Policy at that time, but essentially apartheid (separateness) and racial discrimination were simply a fact of life. Whites felt superior to Blacks and treated them as "third class" citizens. Then in 1948 the Nationalist Party took over and created all the horrifying discriminatory apartheid laws. That is the world in which they grew up. Being a very poor, but hardworking farmer who lost everything he owned a number of times, but 'got up' and built up a new life every time – he must have felt inferior to the 'learned and sophisticated' (and hated) the British who governed the land, but proudly superior to the Black Africans who were regarded as, at most, labourers – or similar to how 'European' (white) Americans saw the indigenous Indians of America, as 'implements'. Having grown up the way he did, with a minimum of schooling and never being exposed to different people save his own, or to books besides the Bible, cut off from any 'foreign' opinions and ideas, it is totally understandable, that he was intensely shocked, felt affronted and even 'attacked' when his beloved, highly intelligent and educated son believed God had called him to take part in the 'midwifer'" task to the new church to be born amongst the indigenous people of our country. What a miracle and a blessing that three years before David left for his doctoral studies in Switzerland, father and son were reconciled to each other!"

¹⁹⁰ In the same interview, Annemie Bosch gave a glimpse of Bosch's father's childhood:

"So, both of them only finished the fourth grade in school. Then they were considered old enough to start working on the farm with their father... I think David's father had the same level of intelligence David had, but he didn't have the opportunities his younger son had, so he wanted David to excel, which David did to the best of his ability".

¹⁹¹ Bosch's family was a rural Afrikaans family. David's father grew up raising silk goats and had no academic opportunities. He and his brother, David's uncle, took turns going to school. Every second day one would stay with the goats and the other one would go to school.

What struck me were the similarities between Bosch's mother and Allen's mother. I see how these biological mothers influenced their sons in ways which I am not empirically able to prove, but the trunk and branches speak to the strength of the **roots** in these two specific people. I am moved by a mother, whose legacy is still felt through the life and work of a man such as Bosch, in the way she provided him with emotional equilibrium and emotional intelligence.

I will repeat and extend Annemie Bosch's understanding. He felt so safe in the love of his mother, wife, and children; that he was able to take on the goal of making it his life's endeavour to face unravelling the theological underpins of the apartheid racist system and to use his skills to help people with differing backgrounds accept and respect each other and learn how to work together for a better future for all in the country. He also provided an alternative theological *social imagination* for his country. He did this from the academic side (*theoria*), from the practical and lived side (*praxis*), and from the magnet of beauty (*poiesis*) of his life – a life which continues to draw people to his writing – an extension of this relatively unknown woman.¹⁹²

I find that Bosch succeeds what he illustrates (1991a:431): “[I]n holding together in *creative tension theoria, praxis, and poiesis* or, if one wishes, faith, hope, and love. This is another way of defining the missionary nature of the Christian faith, which seeks to combine the three dimensions”. I have learned from this example that the power to create change comes from feeling safe in someone's love. Is there a connection between feeling safe in someone's love and being able to build bridges between different perspectives? Is this an aspect of *mutuality*? Of *missio Dei*? I am reminded of the feelings shared by Participant 104 about his relationship with his mother. He felt very loved and had a close, supportive bond with her. I appreciate how this parallels Bosch's experience of feeling safe in his mother's love.

¹⁹² I return to this quote, Annemie Bosch's reflection on this paragraph (email communication Dec. 7, 2022): “I think that the discovery you describe here, is significant. Likely the most important paragraph in this section! (Maybe even in the whole of your dissertation(?)). . . I really think this discovery you made about creative power being unleashed through knowing you are loved – knowledge which creates a feeling of safety and security – is something which is true, very special and meaningful”.

5.4.1 Bosch's maternal metaphors (1991a)

Kritzinger and Saayman (2011:134-35) describe Bosch as highly engaged with his seven children and his wife; holding his family as their primary place of Christian witness and service. Annemie Bosch as the mother of his children and partner in life, may have influenced his use of maternal metaphors in the 1991a text.¹⁹³ A content analysis shows (obviously, I would have to compare to other missiological texts to have a point of reference): Mother (15 times); children (37 times); give birth (3 times); womb (3 times); miscarries; waits for them to grow; hospitality (10 times); embraces (9 times); engender (4 times); impregnated (1 time); immature children (1 time).

As reviewed previously in paper, Bosch's view of common humanity, linked to *humanisation* (1991b): "One should see themselves as a child of Mother Earth and as a brother or sister of other human beings" (1991a:355). This is a reference to his ecological concerns and his concerns with technology, which Illich holds as well. The following quotes link Bosch to Illich.¹⁹⁴

There are five indirect and direct links I have found between Illich and Bosch: (1) Bosch (1991a:265) does not quote Illich here, but it sounds Illichian: "Conception, birth, illness, and death lost their quality of mystery; they turned into mere biological-sociological processes"; (2) careful reading of Bosch (1991a) reveals his use of Dapper 1979 and then research reveals Illich in Dapper's work; (3) Annemie Bosch creates a potential link to Illich (1974) *Mission and midwifery* (email communication Dec. 7, 2022) comments: "*I can however clearly remember that David repeatedly referred to mission as the midwife assisting at the birth of the church*";¹⁹⁵ and direct link as Bosch quotes Illich directly in two places. (4) Bosch (1991a:436) first quotes Illich speaking to the current development model and the reaction of the poor who: "refuse to dream by order"; (5) Bosch (1991a:493) then cites Illich's definition of missiology, which is brimming of maternal imagery (see section 2.2.1 for full quote).¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ I believe these metaphors are related to his lived experience, but Annemie Bosch could not confirm his exact motivation when I asked her. She did mention that she is a trained theologian and Bosch would not give a talk nor send in a book or article for publication, without her reviewing it. They worked together in all aspects of their life.

¹⁹⁴ David Cayley could not find any direct link between Illich and Bosch.

¹⁹⁵ This does not directly link Illich to Bosch and is not a reference to the *motherline* but is interesting.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. Illich (1974) *Mission and midwifery: Essays on missionary formation* (printed in Southern AFR, Gwelo (Gweru): Mambo Press). A link between Illich and Southern AFR.

In the above section, three areas have been confirmed: (i) Bosch's relationship with his mother has been described through different avenues; (ii) evidence of overwhelming amount of maternal imagery and concepts in his text (1991a); and (iii) direct and indirect links have been made to Illich scholarship. There is a common connection in Bosch and Illich, with the common theological conception of the church as female (the Bride of Christ). The use of maternal imagery to describe 'mission' and 'missiology' can provide foundations for a *transforming mutuality* for a theology of mission.

5.5 ILLICH'S MOTHER: MISSIOLOGICAL LINK

The inclusion of Illich in this missiological conversation with *maternal-thinking* may seem out of place to some. There are exceptions: for example: Bosch 1991a; Bonk 2006; Ross 2010; Ewell 2019. He is not a common dialogue partner in EVAN/PROT/SCT missiological texts. However, he is deemed vital for the creation of the arguments in this research project. One area is his contribution to the idea of *motherhood* and missiology, which allows for the relational maternal connection for a missiological critique. First, I will describe his biological mother and then his view of his spiritual mother.

5.5.1 First: Illich's biological mother Ellen 'Maexie' Illich (nee Regenstreif)

Cayley (2021:20-27, 474n) provides the broad framework to introduce Illich's mother. Ellen Illich belonged to a family of converted German Jews in Austria. Ellen Illich an EVAN and was baptized as an adult.¹⁹⁷ She married Piero Illich, from a wealthy RC family in Dalmatia. When their marriage broke down in 1932, Ellen Illich returned to her father's house in Vienna. Now a single mother, with her three young sons. As Hitler took over Austria in 1943, she and her sons were forced into exile due to their Jewish blood. Ellen wrote a handwritten family history *Family chronicle* (Cayley 2021:474n). Further research is required as to the factors that influenced Illich's decision to become a RC priest at an early age. He was only 25 years old when ordained in Rome. He obviously followed his paternal legacy. Consequently, his religious communities and commitment seem to have replaced his biological family.

¹⁹⁷ This fact points to an adult conversion experience, but I do not have enough evidence to have clarity as to when she began to identify as an EVAN.

5.5.2 Second: Illich, “The Church is my mother”

Illich boldly asserts (in Cayley 2021:235, 242): “The Church is a whore, but she is also my mother”. I found this statement in the original 1972 interview with Jean-Marie Domenach with its primary source (Goetel 2020), it is the following:

That I have my roots in the church, makes it a mother, in a sense. We're stuck with her for life, like you with your wife. And I also know from the Bible that she is a whore. And I wouldn't be a Roman, a Roman Christian in the church that the Lord founded, if I didn't have the courage to identify myself as the son of a whore. . . . Let's accept the ambiguity of being sons of a mother who is unworthy but not one of us. It helps clarify our attitude towards the institution.¹⁹⁸

Illich's controversial statement can be interpreted to mean that the RC institution: a messy mix of ‘it’ and ‘She’; while flawed, is still a vital part of his personal identity. Cayley (personal communication Aug. 22, 2022) explains: “Let's accept the ambiguity of being sons of a mother who is unworthy but of which we are a part nonetheless”. And Illich figured out a way to interaction with his personal identity to intertwined with his Tradition. Cayley (2021:87) sheds light into Illich's position dealing with the creative tension of dusty and the divine: “The Church had withdrawn the space in which he could play the part of the obedient son of a wayward mother – critical and faithful at once”.

By contrast, Allen and Bosch have the same emotional connection to the Church, but regarding their theological traditions it is not as common to use Illich's RC imagery.¹⁹⁹ Although I suggest

¹⁹⁸ Cayley provides a more detailed explanation in personal communication (Aug. 22, 2022):

“I haven't been back to the Domench interview, where my halting French probably wouldn't be much more help than yours anyway, but I would discount ‘not one of us’ as nonsense - whether as mistranslation or slip of the tongue it doesn't make any sense - not one of whom? Ivan more than once described the Church as mother and whore, so this is reliable, and what he must have meant to say was something like: Let's accept the ambiguity of being sons of a mother who is unworthy but of which we are a part nonetheless. His great reference on this point, as you probably know, was von Balthasar's essay ‘Casta Meretrix’, and he mentions in ‘How shall we pass on Christianity?’ – reprinted in The powerless Church – that he ‘got into trouble’ – I think he says – when he had this essay translated and distributed.”

This is not a commonly used quote, and I have not found a discussion as to its possible meaning. However, in personal communication, Cayley pointed me to the influence of von Balthasar, specifically his work ‘The chaste prostitute’. Cayley (2021:75-79, 342, 480n) delves into this link. I feel confident bringing this up as I am an insider: a devoted daughter and granddaughter; a biological mother; and many years of mothering (caregiving). I am confident that as a mother I can engage in humble reflection of the maternal imperfections and its potential for even ‘horrible power’.

¹⁹⁹ Carefully reading of Cayley (2021:501) indirectly connects Illich with Roland Allen. Cayley uses Donovan (1978) text on the use of Allen's theology of mission. Kirk (2017) discusses Donovan (1978), exploring this connection of Allen's thinking in Donovan's work with Maasai communities.

that historically PROT/RC have the same common Latin Church background, using 1054 as a historical marker (the marker of the official break between West and East Church). And the Western world created in the past 500 years by RC and PROT faiths have common ground, both having a Eurocentric focus. One of the main common theological foundations in the core belief in the Trinity; also, a common agreement on the nature of humans “sin came into the world through Adam”; and practices such as prayer and church attendance encouraged. Another contrasting aspect is the delicate matter of PROT and RC involvement in colonialism, directly and indirectly. As there have been epochs of history of the marriage of state and church, in both RC and PROT nations. The context of the case study is in the RC Western world (placing it within Bosch’s medieval RC epoch), whereas the denomination is from the PROT Western world (placing it within Bosch’s modern Enlightenment epoch). The influence of both is profound, although this research focuses mainly on the context of the second due to the denomination.

EVAN Pastor, Smith (2021) in text, with the following subtitle: *Imagining church beyond the baggage of Western culture*. She addresses the same concept as Illich (2021:82): “If there’s some way the church has become a whore, it’s because *we* have sold her, *we* have used *her*. We have made her into an army, an institution, a corporation, a factory. We have boxed her in buildings and **brands**” (italics in the original and bold added).²⁰⁰ In the endnote, Smith (2021:207) explains that even though the language is offensive, she wants her readers to feel her revulsion. She clarifies that she does not want to perpetuate the shaming of women who have been caught up in sex trafficking but find that term important. Smith attributes this statement to Augustine, but SCT theologian Beck (2014:n.p.) disagrees. Beck directs the quote to Dorothy Day – the RC, anarchist, and civil rights champion in 1967 – who wrote: “As to the Church, where else shall we go, except to the Bride of Christ, one flesh with Christ? Though she is a harlot at times, she is our Mother” (Day 2022:n.p.).

Another side of this theological theme is approached by Punt (2020) in his article, ‘An apocalyptic womb? The great harlot of Revelation 17-18’. He connects the womb of Babylon with interplaying with the of power of empire. Which is detailed further in this quote from the creator of The BEMA Podcast, Marty Solomon:

²⁰⁰ It is worth noting in this research on Christian brands Smith links the church as a whore and **brands**!)

“I think the idea of wanting to ‘return to mother’ in a Holy Roman Empire sense is quite interesting. From what I hear and the little I know; I have always connected it to a leadership that was shaped by military-based efficiency and conquest objectives... I wonder if the overarching umbrella to both realities is the approach of ‘Empire.’ We long to WIN, when we are called to DIE. We want to CONQUER, when we are called to SERVE. That is what the Holy Roman ‘Mother’ did and that is what our American ‘Father’ does and we seek to perfect the system to get the results we wants...”

But the truth of the matter is that neither of them is our true spiritual parents. Like Joseph having to come to grips with his identity — is Pharaoh his father or Jacob? — we also have to decide if Pharaoh/Empire is our father or the way of the Slain Lamb” (personal communication Nov.12, 2021, capitalisation in original).

Solomon (2023) is offering an argument in connection to the findings of my study, as I reached out to seek dialogue. The extension of my argument merits further research, especially with applying the lens of ‘Empire’ to the data. Truly, a *maternal-thinking* lens provides to be very powerful as one searches and links literature connected to the maternal!

Illich provides a way to contrast the *historylessness* and *motherlessness* of the RBO of the case study. His unique perspective on social issues shaped by experience and his interactions with different cultures is important, along with his use of the philosophy of technology as a tool to interrogate the ‘it’. This allows him to see the world from many different angles, and to find value in places where others might not. And this relational positionality of missiological critique I believe to have much potential for those who do not hold to the RC tradition. Illich is able to make a wide missiological and theological analysis, as his assumption is that Western civilisation is rooted in the message of the gospel, although it has been transgressed. Cayley (2021:5-8, 20, 351-59, 368, 375-79, 413-15) details Illich central theological concept: the *corruption of the best is the worst* (*corruptio optimi pessimal*) Introvigne (2021 n.p.) translates, “the corruption of the best is the worst of all corruptions”. Introvigne explains for Illich it implies both an apology and a criticism of Christianity. It connects with Bosch’s sentiment (1991a:386) of feeling *deeply pained*.

According to Bosch,²⁰¹ (1991a:495) the theological study of mission must consider the effects of colonialism and modernity (Enlightenment) to create a more accurate understanding of contemporary missionary work. He uses Illich to make a robust argument in support of this idea,

²⁰¹ See the section, ‘From theology of mission to a missionary theology’ (Bosch 1991a:492-495).

noting that much of what was done in the name of Christianity in the past has had negative consequences that are still being felt... Illich's realism fills a gap due to Bosch's idealism. I believe Bosch's idealism as trying to always hold everything in *creative tension* is his strength, but his weakness is not identifying specific aspects of structures, as Illich and Allen do. Although section 2.2.2 'Bolder humility?: Bosch's final texts', brings up questions as to a potential shift in his writing at the end of his life.

It would be unnecessary to argue for the missionary dimension of Old and New Testament studies if it had not been brought up earlier in the text. Church history is the history of the mission of God. However, Bosch (1991a:495) concludes that Christian mission been turned into a series of denominational histories. He continues (quoting Hoekendijk): where it "simply writes its own chronicles, carving the faces of its own fathers into its 'private totem-pole'" From a missional perspective, church history asks different questions concerning issues such as why the early church failed in accommodating the Jewish people²⁰² and what happened to churches in North Africa, Arabia, and the Near East. Missional studies also question the official attitudes of churches towards non-Christians and how complicit churches have been in colonialism and exploitation.²⁰³ By looking at church history from a missiological viewpoint, provides insights that the Western or Global North church might still be still struggling to come to terms with.

My understanding of Illich and Bosch leads me to believe that both are trying to describe the complicated and often disappointing legacy of the Church. For Illich, the Church is like a mother who can both be loving and nurturing, but also manipulative and destructive. Bosch digs into this point (1991a:474-489). In the section titled: 'Mission as witness to people of other living faiths'²⁰⁴ he (1991:485) contributes:

²⁰² And yet another maternal comment, already quoted in section 3.0 (Harneck 1962, cited by Bosch 1991a:54), where Harneck places the Gentile church as mistreating its mother or parent.

²⁰³ There are many missionaries who were a thorn in the side of colonialists. Mission practitioners have sometimes used their vantage point in their liminal spaces to see the injustices committed by the colonialist. That is the reason I chose Bosch, Illich, and Allen, as I see them in this regard. History shows Fray Bartolome de las Casas and Anton Montesino as these type of courageous individuals (Bosch 1991a: 236, 310, 433, 443, 475, 532). Hollinger (2017) describes the PROT missionary movement as giving birth to profound transformation in the USA, especially the Civil Rights movement. Missionaries and children raised by missionaries, came back to the USA, and spoke truth to their own nation. Their view of reality had shifted due to their experiences abroad around the Christian faith.

²⁰⁴ Which Annemie Bosch asserted as one of her two favorite sections in *Transforming Mission*, which she rereads continually (interview July 2, 2021).

True repentance and humility are cleansing experiences which lead to renewal and renewed commitment. Humility also means showing respect for our forebears in the faith for what they have handed down to us, even if we have reason to be acutely embarrassed by their racist, sexist, and imperialist bias. The point is that we have no guarantees that we shall do any better than they did (quoting Stackhouse). We delude ourselves if we believe that we can be respectful to other faiths *if we disparage our own* (italics added).

Indigenous knowledge research methodologies (Wilson 2008) direct the path to transformation, and self-knowledge is not to seek adventures far from home but to get to know your roots. You find yourself when you get to know your roots. This *indigenous knowledge* direction links to Bosch, in the sense that when you seek to get to know your own roots there will always be facts that one would rather avoid or reject. This is also the opposite direction of the forementioned *historylessness*. Recognising one's parents, one's mother, is a first step to address *motherlessness*.

Maternal archetypes can be described using Jungian thinking (Jung 2014) as devouring and nurturing. However, this is beyond the scope of this study. According to Illich's analysis, I can be confident that analysis as Christianity as the *corruption of the best is the worst* is the best way to posit this dilemma. According to Illich, the nurturing mother is Christ, 'She', who represents the gospel message. The devouring mother, 'it', is the institutional management of that gospel message. I recognize the *creative tension* in this definition. It can be hard to understand, but that ambiguity is important to this attempt to figure out what we don't know.

Illich's (Cayley 2021:449-468) two most outstanding impacts was as a *philosopher of complementarity* (or Nicolas of Cusa's term a *coincidence of opposites*, which Keller [2015] discusses in depth) and his example of living out that view of life (:450-51). Cayley (2021:150, all three points are drawn from this page) draws out a triad to illustrate Illich's *philosophy of complementarity*: (i) no one can have a complete view of reality, "Only complementary perspectives can disclose the whole of reality; no one sees it all"; (ii) "everyone carries a shadow". Whatever sheds light, be the same token, generates shadow" and "a shadow must be acknowledged if it is not to exert unconscious power over that existence" (citing Jung); and (iii) "Balance – opposites held together in tension – is, therefore, the best to which we can aspire".

The first definition of *mutuality* - personal walk - links to this *creative tension*. Cayley (2021:464) provides other names for the same concept: “[A] balance or tension, synergy or contradiction, proportionality or paradox”. Behal (2014) contributes with the term *negative capability* (borrowed from Keats). Behal’s research is similar to this case study as it is a phenomenological exploration of lived experience at the edge of certitude and incertitude. Behal points to this ability, called *negative capability*. Taleb (2012) devotes a book to his view of this same theme with the term *antifragile*.

The third definition, “Balance – opposites held together in tension – is, therefore, the best to which we can aspire”, links directly with Bosch’s *creative tension* (see section 2.2.1).²⁰⁵

Cayley (2021:464), delving into Illich’s idea of wholeness, the *creative tension* of opposites, gives a most interesting example that also connects with Bosch. Illich in (Cayley 2021:464) locates wholeness in what: “[C]an only be sustained when the opposites that compose the whole are each given their due – by music and laughter as much as by more tragic styles of awareness”. In section 2.2.1, Bosch’s thinking along similar lines was discussed, within the use of poetry (his and Annemie’s and how he linked to Illich on this subject). Repeating Bosch’s (1991a:353) *sentipensante* epistemology: metaphor, symbol, ritual, sign, and myth can all evoke a sense of integration between the mind and body. They not only affect the mind and its thoughts, but also can cause someone to act with a specific goal in mind. These things touch the heart as well.

I connect this point to *spiritual resilience* or *resilient spirituality*, to be able to walk among *broken systems*, as already shown in the powerful examples of Allen’s, Bosch’s, and Illich’s lives. The link has been made to their mothers as contributing to this ability (in Allen and Bosch). Theoretically, Illich, Bosch, Behal, and Taleb have been shown to hold to a similar view. Keller (2015) also explores this from the view of negative theology. Enn (2016) even employs the idea of the ‘sin of certainty’. And McLaren (2022:162-165) provides this as a key to ‘stay a Christian’. He displays a table showing perceptions in four different categories

²⁰⁵ Bosch (1991a:489, quoting WCC 1990) expresses this *creative tension* succinctly, “We appreciate this tension and do not attempt to resolve it”; this precise wording was his vital contribution to the San Antonio (1989) WCC conference document. It could summarise what I have captured as to his life and thought in this research journey.

(simplicity/complexity/perplexity/harmony).²⁰⁶ ‘Harmony’ is McLaren’s way of describing this point of the ability of walking through *broken systems* without frustration and accepting multiple perspectives without the need for immediate understanding or resolution.

In the final interview with Participant 114, I connect missiology interlinked with *vulnerability*, and *brokenness*:

“I feel like missiology is the study of the brokenness that’s come about because of the Christian message. Because it’s trying to say how can we still look at Christ, even if people who say they’re followers of him have made all these obvious messes? It’s just to face the reality of 2,000 years of Christian missions and to say Christ still exists and is worth following, it’s very hard. I see that you have to go to the brokenness of Christ and not the conquering Christ” (Renee Rheinbolt-Urbe).

So why do I say that Illich, Bosch, and Allen are all trying to live in this paradox? First, they talk about the complicated history of Christianity and how they relate to it. Illich calls it ‘his mother’ and Bosch says it’s about “showing respect for our forebears in the faith ... even if we have reason to be acutely embarrassed by their racist, sexist, and imperialist bias” (1991a:485). They admit that such a physical family can be *broken systems* (as studied within the family systems theory),²⁰⁷ so is the family of faith. Second, Illich and Bosch place themselves and their own beliefs within the messy story of Christianity. They admit that Christianity has always been a flawed system (just like any physical family), but they still believe in its potential.

Bosch embodies the tension (1991a:387) between the ideal Christian community and the flawed reality of it, referring in a way that could be understood as a communal pain (the term *re-evangelization* gives this perception 1991c:124). Three specific quotes are identified to express this sentiment: (i) Bosch (1991a:386) specifies this as a communal pain: “Every church member who loves the church will also be deeply pained by it”; (ii) equally blunt (1991a:386) as Illich

²⁰⁶ McLaren’s book was recommended by Prof. Jurgens Hendricks (email June 4, 2022).

²⁰⁷ Family systems theory, first developed by Kerr and Bowen (1988), can be applied to congregations and religious groups (Friedman 2011). The assumption is the extended family functions as an emotional unit and then the same is true for Christian congregations, denominations, or religious groups (such as a Jewish synagogue). There are eight interconnected concepts of family systems theory: (1) differentiation of Self; (2) triangles; (3) nuclear family emotional process; (4) family projection process; (5) cutoff; (6) multigenerational transmission process; (7) sibling position; and (8) societal emotional process.

asserts: “the empirical church will always be imperfect”; and (iii) in his conclusion, Bosch (1991a:519).takes this to another step: “Throughout most of the church’s history its empirical state has been deplorable”.

Bosch, Illich, and Allen emphasise that following the institutional church (‘it’) and following Christ (‘She’) are not the same thing, but at the same time hold to their inherited faith. This is in line with what Allen's mother – in her personal walk, practice, and theology – taught him. It speaks of obeying the Church vs. obeying Christ, are not necessary the same. The point of highlighting these specific quotes is to show that when one loves and feels a part of something – *interconnectedness*, then blunt critiques with love go hand in hand. I believe that admitting that the empirical church is a broken system, does not disqualify the Christian message of the richness of Christian history. As all humans are broken people to one extent or another, as part of our common humanity.

On the other extreme, the *historylessness* of the legacy of restorationist Christian groups has cut them off from this history and, it could be said, their hands are not dirtied. They are not immersed in the paradox described above which requires living in uncertainty, tolerating frustration, and making room for multiple perspectives. So, as in the denomination of the case study – ICOC – patience and passive acceptance are not the common traits of these types of groups.

I can attest from personal experience that this inner struggle and turmoil is very real. In the literature of the denomination, the early Christinaity in the book of Acts is referenced as the ideal. Giambarba (1988) is an example of a restorationalist view; 1800 years of history are jumped over. In some ways, it feels like a statement that says: ‘I have no mother. I came to this earth out of nowhere’ or *motherlessness*. Links could be sought connecting this to the self-made man of the Enlightenment epoch, as Bosch (1991a:267) depicts: “emancipated, autonomous individuals”.

Bosch (1991a:332-34) explains the PROT Reformation was an epoch when the gospel was freed from the RC Church, potentially freeing humanity from its control. At the same time, it also saw the rise of new spontaneous religious movements and new denominations. The SCT is an example of a restorationist movement that broke away from the past to thinking that they were only

following the Bible, and ‘Christians only’. This tendency is evident in the continual splits of groups and the formation of new groups who claim to follow the Bible more closely.

The SCT tends to start anew rather than wrestling with accepting their ‘mother’. My assumption is that it is due to the repetition of the same patterns without recognising a connection with that ‘mother’. It seems to lead to a lack of wrestling with one’s legacy as it is easy to begin anew with a new Christian group. In the context of these *non-tradition tradition* and *historylessness* systems, it could be concluded that they, continue to be broken and beyond repair. Different from churches that accept their past and identify with a tradition, Bosch understands respect for our forebears in the faith to mean acknowledging and learning from their mistakes, even if those mistakes as racist, sexist, or imperialist. He believes that this is the only way to move forward as a church community, as developed in section 2.1: ‘Bosch: *history-whisperer*’.

We invite Illich into our missiological discussion to bring in a different perspective that has not been included in the ongoing conversation among PROT/EVAN/SCT missiologists. Bosch invited him to contribute to his text, and more recently, Illich has been the main interlocutor in the academic work of an USA EVAN locus of enunciation called *Faith seeking conviviality: Reflections on Ivan Illich, Christian mission, and the promise of life together* (Ewell 2020).

In Illich (1970:87) expresses the belief that to create new paradigms of thought, it is necessary to be open to the poetic, historical, and social aspects of reality. This is welcomed as Bosch (1991a:518) quotes Rutti (1972, 1974), stating that a new image is needed today, the inherited ones connected to Western colonialism are polluted. Bosch (1991a:519) final sentence in his *Summa Missiologica* is this statement: “[M]ission is quite simply, the participation of Christians in the liberating mission of Jesus . . . It is the good news of God’s love, incarnated in the witness of a community for the sake of the world”.

5.6 CONCLUSION: PUTTING THE MATERNAL-THEME PUZZLE TOGETHER

First, the hidden story of the mother is apparent in the way that the mother is often absent in many of the narratives, or only present in a limited capacity.

Second, in the CO context, there is a visible connection between the maternal and life experience, as shown through Juanes and his music, and other cultural references.

Third, one interviewee had a frustrating relationship with his mother, while another had a beautiful story of a healthy connection of love and a relationship that shifted throughout his and her stages of life.

Fourth, the hidden legacy that I have tried to uncover is one of *mutuality*. Both Allen and Bosch, from their childhood and familial life, experienced the broken system of Christianity. Their mothers' lived experience of accepting this and continuing to walk together showed them that Christianity was not about perfection but about *walking together* within imperfection. In diverse ways, they showed spirituality or what I am describing as *mutuality* and *missio Dei*. The link is built between the maternal, *mutuality*, and *missio Dei*. This argument being developed weaves examples expressed in this case study of what a mother taught in love about God and its influence on their child. In this chapter, several sons have been looked at. The findings demonstrate Annemie Bosch's intuition (personal communication Dec. 7, 2022) as the main idea of the dissertation (from section 5.4):

I think that the discovery you describe here, is significant. Likely the most important paragraph in this section! (Maybe even in the whole of your dissertation(?)). . . I really think this discovery you made about creative power being unleashed through knowing you are loved – knowledge which creates a feeling of safety and security – is something which is true, very special and meaningful.

The connection between learning and feeling loved is vital for reflection and connects with the rejection I find of the *God-image* of Jesus as a conquer connected to the RBO's *slogan*, 'the evangelization of the world in this generation'. A Jesus as a conquer does not reflect a loving

Jesus or a loving God, even if God's love is the message. It is not a problem of the message but of the lack of self-limits in the tools that are used, such as the example of the expanding **global train system**. This highlighting of the self-limitation of tools is an important aspect of Illich's thinking about *conviviality* (see section 7.3.1).

Fifth, *the church is my mother* in Illich's thinking in which he looks at the church through the lens of *motherhood*. In doing so, he reflects on how the church has been both a loving and critical mother throughout history. His vivid poetic imagery provides a way to view the past in a relational and equally critical manner. It is embraced as a potential beneficial metaphor for this case study.

Sixth, in this chapter, I argue that we can learn a great deal about mothers by observing and interacting with their adult children. By analysing the work of Bosch, Illich, and Allen, we can gain additional insights into their contributions to missiology. All three thinkers were grappling with how to remain faithful to the gospel while also acknowledging the harm done by institutions in the name of Christianity, including their own broken religious systems. This is a global perspective – one that considers the history of Western civilisation and asks how all these things could have been done by people who professed to be Christian. I examine a specific case study involving the collapse of a denomination in 2003. Through this lens, we can explore the tension expressed in the paradox of Illichian thought, *the corruption of the best is the worst*.

These six findings confirm a strong connection between the authors' mothers and their shared experiences within the Christian faith. Despite the challenges and their *brokenness*, they faced within their own Christian system, each one found the personal strength to explore and question their belief system. Hubert Allen (1995:176) introducing some of Allen's last writings, links vocation of asking questions: to "his birth and up-bringing". Hubert Allen (1995:176) quotes his grandfather: "I might be taking a very different view. To decide great religious issues for myself was plainly a very dangerous and slippery business. . . But where I was really touched. I was convinced by my own inside. I was simply compelled to do that. I had no choice". Allen was practicing *gut-theology*, as Hubert Allen notes: "I was convinced by my own inside. I was simply compelled to do that". Allen divulges that he felt propelled by a force greater than himself and links to the maternal "his birth and up-bringing". In a faint way it links to Juanes (2020) when he

states: “I believe that I am doing what I was brought up to do”. It strongly implies the invisibleness and *interconnectedness* that Garcia Marquez (2003a) was illustrating in the son and mother connection even after death.

With *maternal-thinking* I am propelled to remember so many life experiences I have heard, including in the interviews, of how mothers are the last ones to give up on someone, when her child is faced with dire health, disabilities, disappearances, addictions, to name a few. A gut instinct (*gut-theology*) possibility, although the opposite is true as well. This gut movement connects to *thinking-with-the-womb*. A mother can also make the life of her child impossible, even after her death through memories. Confirming Illich thinking, *the corruption of the best is the worst*.

In the following chapter, the research journey continues, as it reflects how I was simply *compelled to ask* questions that were difficult to ask. I continued to seek the lead of the empirical data. The first part points to the identification of the three main themes in the data, and then the second part is an in-depth data analysis of one of those three themes, namely: *spiritual resilience*.

CHAPTER 6:

DATA ANALYSIS

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the heart of the study, as it centers upon the objective listed in Chapter 1: To identify the main themes in the pre-analysis of the empirical data. These questions are answered: What are the main themes? How does the researcher manage her positionality? How can an analysis of active prayers as spirituality be undertaken and what are the findings?

There are two parts to the chapter. **Part 1** is a pre-analysis chapter (written in Nov. 2021). Three main themes were identified: (i) ‘active prayer as spirituality’; (ii) ‘*the system*’; and (iii) ‘friendship/relationality’. **Part 2** is the analysis of the one of the three identified main themes: ‘active prayer as spirituality’ (written in Dec. 2021). It is a double-blind analysis as neither I nor the participants were giving much attention to our active prayers at the beginning or closing of each talking circle. In Dec. 2021, I zoomed into the active prayers, as a subject of the data analysis. The results that emerged were fascinating. They shed an intimate view on what was described in Chapter 4 in the philosophical assumptions of the Creator or God and insight into their individual and communal *God-images*.

As indicated above, **Part 1** proceeds with the data analysis, from which three main themes emerged: (i) ‘*active prayers as spirituality*’; (ii) ‘*the system*’ (as the way of identifying the pre-collapse congregation); and (iii) ‘*friendship/relationality*’ (as a reason to stay in the congregation). Additionally, my positionality emerged as a vital actor in the pre-collapse RBO.

6.1 PART 1: “...IS NOTHING SHORT OF A MIRACLE” (PARTICIPANT 114)

Part 1 is the result of the initial data analysis. I believe it to be the heart of the dissertation. This ‘pre-analysis chapter’, as I named it, was never meant to be published. I decided to add it, as I slowly embraced my clear-cut positionality within the pre-collapse RBO and the transition of my positionality is highlighted. I believe this to be an aspect of *transforming mutuality*, as a relational shift is emphasised.

As the amount of interview data was vast, I began with a series of six interviews with Participants 114 and 214 (a married couple). Consequently, Part 1 I only focused on the *talking circles* with these two participants. It is written spontaneously, as I was analysing and interpreting at the same time. It allows the reader into the spontaneous manner the main themes were discovered and provides a window into how this specific researching was undertaken. The editing has been light, to capture the moment in the best way possible.²⁰⁸

6.1.1 Analysis of outliner talking circle series (Participants 114 & 214)

This chapter acknowledges the influence of my positionality (as a researcher) on my data analysis. I discuss how Participants 114 and 214 relate to each other, and how my personal experiences influence my analysis. In this regard I utilise Mason's (2018:45, 214-217) suggestions of *data poems* and *flash of insight* to guide my analysis.²⁰⁹ The closest template for understanding the method applied is duoethnography (Norris and Sawyer 2013), although this term was only discovered after writing the text.²¹⁰ Included are verbatim quotes from the participants to show the progress of the conversation and the flow of the theme.

²⁰⁸ In Appendix J it displays the Excel sheet with data. The most negative sentiment rate of all the 24 interviews was the interview 114.6 with 13.9% and the interview 114.1 & 214.1 was the highest neutral sentiment rate 53.1% (whereas Interview 115.1 was the overall highest positive sentiment rate 46.8%). It is interesting to view this analysis a year and a half after this piece was written.

²⁰⁹ That was a pivotal moment in the research journey that had led to the long path of *research grief* (Armas 2021:1-18). Also, it displays a robust example of the *researcher-as-instrument* (Pezalla et al. 2015).

²¹⁰ Much of the analysis is intuitive, drawn upon a lifetime of reflection and experience. The research journey has allowed the discovery of the scholarly work around those acquired analysis methods.

The best way to summarise the following analysis is from these quotes (between the researcher - Renee and Participant 114) extracted from the written communication, right after the analysis was completed:

Renee stated: *“I still feel like I am participating in a **miracle**”*.

Participant 114 responded: *“is nothing short of a **miracle**”*.

These quotes are extracted from an email communication between the researcher and the Participants 114 and 214. The first quote is from an email from the researcher on Oct. 23, 2021 (original language of text—Spanish):

*“I feel distance from what they say about everything that happened before, during and after the ‘crisis’ but it is strong to live with this information. But I’m already at a point in my life that I’m ready. But it doesn’t make it easy. But at least I’m doing it. and I’m not in inner ‘collapse’, as has happened to me in previous months with some topics of the interviews. I tell them I’m personal, so, I can’t talk to anyone else, so, it’s confidential. I still feel like I am participating in a **miracle**. That we can still talk about what we talk about in the interviews; considering the panorama that you paint of what ‘the system’ was like. It’s beyond incredible that we can dialogue at this level. And there’s still a part that Participant 114 tells me, ‘I feel safe to tell you these things’. Looking at it on the human side, it is impossible to think that you could say something like that, with the context you paint”* (Renee Rheinbolt-Urbe, bold added).

And the second quote is from email communication from Participant 114 (with cc to 214) to researcher, on Oct. 24, 2021 (original language of text—Spanish):

“Thank you for sharing your feelings. Thank you also for the latest emails. Despite the much ink and conversations about these topics between us, each paragraph reveals one more layer of all the experiences that clarify and enrich your analysis and current experiences. Personally, I don’t think that in the kind of theology you practice,

*it is possible to separate your life from your professional practice.
Which makes it fascinating.
But at the same time leaves you suddenly exposed in other aspects,
which is understandable.
I see your emails as a kind of poetic prose.
And I am glad that,
in addition to being a creative escape valve,
it helps you in your process of clarifying and formulating your ideas and feelings.
I appreciate the opportunity to be part of this process,
which serves to also educate and inspire me.
And what you describe of being able to say such strong things against a system
and at the same time being able to have intimate relationships within the group,
at least nominally part of it,
is nothing short of a **miracle**” (Participant 114, bold added).*

6.1.2 Setting the stage

This exchange of emails between the researcher and one of the interviewees²¹¹ sets the stage for the data analysis in this chapter. The reason for using the word ‘miracle’ for the interview process is key to describing the interview process.

Who are the participants in the dialogue? A short answer provides an initial answer. However, at the conclusion of the chapter, the reader should be able to grasp the deeper layers beneath the description of miracle in the interview process. Returning to the the previous quote, the researcher states: “*I still feel like I am participating in a miracle*”. And Participant 114 respond, “*And what you describe of being able to say such strong things against a system and at the same time being able to have intimate relationships within the group, at least nominally part of it, is nothing short of a miracle*”.

This *transforming mutuality* links with section 2.2.1, where *mutuality* is described as a mystery. *Mutuality* is an intangible aspect of mission that the researcher assumes cannot be measured or quantified. Ross (2010:146) describes love in Christian mission as follows: it “cultivates mutual sharing, mutual serving, mutual forgiveness, and mutual suffering”. From the collected data and email correspondence, some of the aspects of this mystery (and miracle) of *mutuality* are evident and will be described, as the researcher personally experienced them in her qualitative research.

²¹¹ And indirectly his wife, another of the interviewees.

Missiology encompasses participation in the mystery and surprise as has been evidenced throughout the paper.

The researcher spent months doing a mental pre-analysis and actual paper analysis. The first step was to code the first batch of data obtained from Participants 114 and 214. The initial mental stage of the data analysis in this *sentipensante* fashion comprised ‘simmering’²¹² with the data – like a stew that cooks on a low temperature for a long period of time so that all the ingredients can combine, and the flavours intertwine. This metaphor aptly captures the process followed in the initial stages of the analysis. To elucidate further, Mason (2018:206) describes this process as a holistic or ecological approach to data organisation that involves ways of feeling your way through and sorting your data. These are processes that I followed in making sense of my own data. After ‘simmering’ with the data, the paper pre-analysis followed. The final stage of data analysis also involved the software – Speakai.co – one of the latest researcher tools.²¹³ This helped ensure the validity of the data.

The conscious decision taken by the researcher during the preliminary coding of the data obtained from Participants 114 and 214, was to attempt to block out the previous themes from the ‘simmer’ stage and paper stage, and view the data without preconceived themes, as inspired by grounded theory.

The researcher had decided to utilise the *seven-step praxis cycle* described previously. Spirituality is accepted as the centre of the research approach. It is understood as a search for discernment, including prayer, meditation, quiet, reading of the biblical text, and the freedom to involve feelings. The researcher understood this as part of the initial process of ‘simmering’ with the data. The term of the pre-analysis within spirituality and discernment – ‘simmering’ – is more graphically stated by the researcher as “*inner collapse*”, and the participant describes the process as a theology that includes the personal and private life with consequences that “*leav[e] you suddenly exposed*” within a “*process of clarifying and formulating your ideas and feelings*”.

²¹² The researcher connects research terms and methods with the science of food preparation, from her maternal/grandmother’s voice and lens.

²¹³ The generational technological jump from typewriter in first degree (1985–1990) to the use of high-power technology, such as Speakai.co, have been a steep learning curve.

As the initial ‘simmering’ of the data has been undertaken by the researcher within the spirituality and discernment sought from the start to the finish of this research project, she is aware of the broad themes that are in the data. Bosch (1991a: 77, 161, 165, 265, 343) describes mission as mystery, surprise, and puzzle and Bosch cites Illich, definition of missiology, where he uses the word ‘miracle’ in relationship to missiology.

6.1.3 Time frame and background details

This outlier series, with married couple - Participant 114 and Participant 214; include six *talking circles* over the time span of Jan. 19, 2021 to May 26, 2021. The interviews were done virtually, using Zoom, each one ranged from an hour to an hour and a half. In the first interview 114.1&214.1, they self-identify as part of ICI-CO. They moved to another country over a decade ago to Oceania. They highlighted friendship/relationality as the reason for their continued profound connection to ICI-CO (i.e., Participant 212 mentioned her parents as active congregants in ICI-CO as one of her main reasons). This feeling of considering themselves active participants of the community-at-large of ICI-CO is evidence of the relational feelings and *inconnectivity* that can be felt in the faith community over the years. This underscores the understanding of ICI-CO as a community-at-large over a solely institutional focus.

6.1.4 Emerged themes

This section presents the themes that emerged from the analysis of the data. Table 12 is given to easily visualize the emerged themes:

Table 12: Summary of the main emerged themes

Theme	Description
Theme 1	Active prayer as spirituality
Theme 2	The system
Theme 3	Friendship/relationality

6.1.4.1 Theme 1: Spirituality (analysis of active prayers in interviews)

The data analysis begins with the final prayers that were given at the end of the first four interviews. In the final interview, labelled - 114.6, prayer was mentioned but not performed, as demonstrated in the following quote:

Renee: *"Yes. If you can just keep us in your prayers as we jump back into that"*.

Participant 114: *"All the time"*.

Renee: *"It's not easy"*.

Participant 114: *"All the time. We'll keep thinking and praying"*.

The sub-theme of 'prayer' within the interviews, as spirituality was the heart of the research, with an explanation of the *seven-step praxis cycle* approach, was provided by the researcher from the beginning in the context of *"our thoughts about God, our thoughts about spirituality"* and *"just to know this is something where we're dealing with a spiritual concern and heart and everything"*. It is suggested in each interview. In the second quote, the researcher encourages a *sentipensante* atmosphere: *"any type of motor of your spirituality you feel is touched, I would love for you to comment"*.

"A very important part of this is our thoughts about God, our thoughts about spirituality. That's at the heart of it. I would also like after each of our interviews if we can end with a prayer and just to know this is also something where we're dealing with a spiritual concern and heart and everything. As you answer questions along the way, I want you to feel free to, I would love to know your, even if it's not the direct question, if you feel like there's a scripture or spiritual thought or any type of motor of your spirituality you feel is touched, I would love for you to comment upon it because that would make it so much richer (Renee Rheinbolt-Urbe).

At the conclusion of the first interview 114.1 and 214.1, the researcher suggested that Participant 214 lead the prayer. Participant 214 responded: *"Yes, of course, I would love to do so"*.

Lines that stand out in the prayer are: *"come together and remember"*, *"it is easy to forget"*, *"please guide Renee in her research"*, and *"Please keep us close to you"*.

Renee: *"It would be easier, yes. Maybe, who knows. Do you think [Participant] 214, you could pray for us to finish?"*

Participant 214: “Yes, of course, I would love to do [so]”,

Dear Father God, thank you for this time that we can come together and remember our work with you. Sometimes it's easy to forget how much we have worked in our lives to keep us faithful and to be as close to you. Thank you for this time. Please guide Renee in all her research and studies and please keep us close to you, Father God. Thank you for using Jesus. In His name I pray. Amen.

Renee: “Amen”.

Interview 2 – (# 114.2 & 214.2)

For the second interview, the time was running out. The researcher suggested a “*quick prayer*”:²¹⁴

Renee: “*Okay. I’ll just do a quick prayer and then I’ll be going, Dear God, thank you for giving us this opportunity to think about you and how we’re trying to bring you into our lives. [Phone rings]. Thank you for [Participants] 114 and 214. In Jesus’ name, Amen*”.

Interview 3 – (# 114.3)

In the third interview, 114.3, Participant 214 cannot participate in the rest of the interviews due to a less flexible work schedule as a pre-school teacher. The previous two interviews had been during her summer vacation (Jan. and Feb.). Participant 114 prayed after the researcher asked him to do so. He emphasises that it is ‘my afternoon’ and ‘his morning’ in his prayer, which is due to our geographical distance. Thankful to God for “*all . . . we can learn*”; “*all . . . we can share with each other*”; “*Thank you for this study*”; “*Thank you for Renee and the opportunity to be part of this research*”; “*Please be with us*”; “*Please be with everyone*”.

Participant 114 then prays for spiritual and emotional healing, which is a theme of the pre-collapse systems that were mentioned in detail in this interview (114.3). “*Talking about people that might have been hurt or might have bitter feelings against other people*”; “*please help everyone heal*”; “*please help everyone become closer to you over time*”; accepts that “*it’s really difficult sometimes*” but “*you model this for us*”.

This prayer is very profound as it links the past, with the present and the spiritual. He realises the need for healing, even to this day, for people who had participated in *the system*.

Although the following section 6.1.4.2 delves into the second emerging theme of *the system*, it is deemed important to show a content analysis was done with the concept *the system* in this series of interviews. This allows for a deeper understanding of Participant’s 114 prayer in interview 114.3. Table 13 below provides the way the concept *the system* was used in the *talking circle* series with Participant 114 and Participant 214:

²¹⁴ However, there was an interruption in the background on the researcher’s side – a telephone rang. This shows the reality that outside noises and interruptions cannot always be controlled. Especially when doing interviews by using virtual means, such as Zoom during a pandemic. Completely private spaces can be harder to construct.

Table 13: Search for the concept: ‘The system’

Results oriented THE SYSTEM – “ <i>baptize a lot so that it looks good</i> ”
High boundaries in THE SYSTEM
Unspoken ‘texts’ in THE SYSTEM “ <i>whether it was verbalized or not, it was the case</i> ”
Creating favouritism within THE SYSTEM
Leadership in THE SYSTEM
Dating within THE SYSTEM
Control with THE SYSTEM
Dependence in THE SYSTEM
Campus ministry as a strategy in THE SYSTEM
Specific issue with THE SYSTEM
Cultish practices in THE SYSTEM

As the researcher analysed the prayer, she remembers that this was the interview where she later cried. The following paragraphs reveal the researcher’s personal reflections on this matter:

#3 Personal reflection by researcher:

Most of the time he referred to cultish practices but then stated that bottom-line he believed it was a cult. And I asked him something along the lines of, “then Flavio and I you would consider at that time ‘cult leaders’ under your description” and he said “yes”. I was in a type of shock at that time and did not react at that moment but later it hit me. Soon after, I shared this moment with Prof. Simon, my SU supervisor and cried some tears. I also wrote to [Participants] 114 and 214 to let them know that it had been a bit of a shock but at the same time thankful for their perspective, as I wanted to keep an authentic relationship with them through this process. My assumption is that the theme of that interview, brought us even closer together. As I read this prayer, I can perceive that [Participant] 114 is aware that I might be feeling vulnerable, although he does not mention or ask me directly.

A separate personal reflection by researcher follows. The previous one is focused on the emotive aspect of recognising her positionality within the narrative. The following personal reflection highlights specific details as to the RBO practices and biographic information:

#4 Personal reflection by researcher:

Our network of churches (ICOC) recognised its cultish practices in 2003 in many public apologies. My husband travelled from Buenos Aires to Bogota three times during the 2003 crisis to face the issues and ask forgiveness for his participation in those practices. At that time, I was overwhelmed by the whole crisis and did not travel with my husband to Bogota but stayed caring of our small children. In AR, the concept of the network of churches being a cult or having cultish practices was discussed in depth and led to many profound insights and repentance on my part. With the move back to Bogota, I assumed this was a theme that would be discussed openly as well and was surprised that it was not. This interview gave me the opportunity that [Participant] 114 and (“hundreds of others”, according to him) had discussed in the community of ICI-CO through this lens of cultic practices. Possibly it no longer seemed appropriate to continue discussing these themes once we moved back. I am not sure.

The miracle/mystery that is mentioned at the beginning of the chapter is understood to a greater degree with this personal reflection. Bosch’s personal definition (1978:72) of *true mutuality* is the need for mutual dependence on each other and acceptance of one another, “We become, to one another, open doors in lieu of doors which have remained”. Bosch provides two robust examples (1979:72): one where a black minister in Johannesburg grabs a white man by the collar, “shook him violently while at the same time pouring a torrent of accusations on him and all white people for what they were doing to blacks”. The white man soon realised that he had been in an act of *mutuality*, as the black man felt he could let go of his pent-up fury to one of the few white men he truly trusted.

The other scene Bosch provides (1979:73) is when four black ministers had table-fellowship with four white ministers, where the former were overcome with emotion as sorrow was communicated through stories of daily experiences of apartheid in SA, but, in the context of fun and laughter.

Bosch (1979:73) comprehends: [A] “sign of acceptance and mutual dependence”.²¹⁵ The research identifies this as a personal walk of transforming *mutuality*.

Using this definition of *mutuality* within Bosch’s texts, confirms that *mutuality* is a partaking in a mystery, and many times during the interviewing experience, it could even be considered a miracle. Although Bosch’s definition of *mutuality*, which I have divided in three broad categories: (i) personal walk; (ii) practical; and (iii) theological. All this hold true in the interview process (see section 2.2.1 for a review of the definition of *mutuality* for this study).

Interview 4 – (#114.4)

The fourth and final spoken prayer was during interview 114.4. I suggested that Participant 114 say a prayer as in interview 114.3:

Renee: “*Can you do a prayer for us? Is that possible?*”

Participant 114: “*Sure,*

“Thank you, God, for the opportunity to be together this morning. Thank you for Renee and for all the things that she’s been thinking about and studied about. Thank you for the intelligence that you have given her and the ability and the discipline to conduct these studies. Ultimately, we’re talking about people and we’re talking about people’s feelings and people’s experiences. Please help us always think about that and always everything we learn to be able to contribute to other people’s welfare, other people’s closeness to you and closeness to their faith.

Thank you, God, for the opportunity that you give us to have this relationship, this friendship that keeps growing over the years and are now enriched by all these common interests. But, again, it’s ultimately people and Jesus gives us the example and sets the path forward for us to love ourselves and love others as much as we want to love you. Thank you, God, for these things, for Jesus’s example. In his name we pray. Amen”.

Once again there is much to highlight from the prayers: “*opportunity to be together*”; giving God the credit for the researcher’s “*thinking, study, intelligence, ability, and discipline*”. There is a poetic triad movement and organisation within the language and structure of the prayer:

²¹⁵ Cf. Sechrest et al. (2018:202) connect the relationship between *mutuality* and *vulnerability*; Harries (2013; 2019) on the missiological link between USA funds (money), trust, and *vulnerability*; and Havea ed. (2021) connects these concepts along with *body theology* or *embodied theology* in the text *Vulnerability and resilience: body and liberating theologies*.

- (i) *“Ultimately, we’re talking about people;*
- (ii) and we’re talking about people’s feelings;*
- (iii) and people’s experiences”.*

“Help us always think about that. . . everything we learn to contribute to

- (i) Other people’s welfare;*
- (ii) other people’s closeness to you;*
- (iii) and closeness in their faith”.*

He is thankful: “[For the] *opportunity, this relationship, this friendship that keeps growing, now enriched by all these common interests*”. He emphasizes: *“But, again, it’s ultimately people and Jesus gives us the example and sets the path forward for us to love ourselves and to love others as much as we want to love you”*.

These prayers are quite poetic, the common word is *‘people’*. His prayers bring triad thoughts around the idea of people and their expedencies being an aspect of research and dialogue. A respect for people is strongly communicated, as well as Jesus as an example and model (as in the previous prayer) for setting *“the path forward for us”*. Prayer is concluded with another triad: (i) *“Love ourselves”*; (ii) *“Love others”*; and (iii) *“Love you”*.

This dual movement of the (I/we); the individual and communal identity and practices (see section 6.2.3) are at the heart of the biblical text and of this study. Beginning with a focus on ‘active prayer as spirituality’ (Chapter 6 - Part 2), and then continuing (Chapter 7) with the aspect of the communal reality prior to the collapse to demonstrate the messiness of the study.

6.1.4.2 Theme 2: System (Keyword for understanding collapse)

As the spiritual assumption has been established and anchored with the interviewees (in this case, Participants 114 and 214), the next vital theme is the discussion around the 2003/2004 crisis. In the ‘simmering’ and working on paper stages of the data analysis, it has been obvious that all the participants *scripted* (Silverman 2020:347-348) this event or process with the concept or term: ‘the system’. As I noticed this from the first interview, I asked each interviewee to describe what

‘the system’ in this context meant to them specifically. In this section of the data analysis, I will begin with verbatim quotes from Participants 114 and 214, to draw attention to the way this word is defined and described. The purpose is comparing and then contrasting their views with that of the other interviewees in the later analysis. Uniting the different constructed meanings of the ‘the system’ by all the participants will enable the data to be vividly displayed.

In an email communication (Oct. 2021) mentioned in the introduction of the chapter, the concept ‘the system’ is used:

Renee: “*Considering the panorama that you paint of what ‘the system’ was like*”

Participant 114: “*And what you describe of being able to say such strong things against a system*”.

Clearly articulated thoughts about *the system* and its strategies are expressed by Participant 114. He goes into in-depth description of the elitist society in Bogota and how he viewed *the system* as intertwined with this elitism or the same elitism in society and *the system*. He and his wife make connections and link the Eurocentric/US education in CO and the similarity with the culture of *the system*. Participants 114 and 214 provide much detail on the bubble identity of the *the system*. They can see their own culture from a distance, which aids with their analysis as they moved to another country 12 years ago. They relationally consider them part of the ICI-CO community-at-large.

Participant 114 states the following:

“I’m going to say something that I don’t think I’ve said before, but there was also an understanding that the way to reach to more people was to get influential people into the church. That was a very clear strategy. It was explicit. That was one of the reasons the focus was on these campuses, is because it was understood that influential people will come from there. If you reached out to them, then they can have influence and reach out to way more people. And similar people to them. In a sense you create a pool of influential people that have reached to other people”. Participant 114

Questions that come to mind with this emerging theme are the following. I do not know where the concept *the system* originated in this crisis. I think I heard people in other countries use that definition. Why is *the system* used while discussing a church? System can mean method or

organisation, which would seem to apply in this context. This is part of the larger context of the crisis in discussion. All the definitions given to *the system* in the interview series will be joined together at the end to provide a robust understanding. This will be compared to a literature review of others discussing the communal *bubble identity* of *the system* in ICI-CO texts and other texts in the USA, SA, and BR. Although, all the authors of these texts are paid mission practioners in ICOC or have been paid mission practioners (TNMPs or TLMPs). Whereas in the present case study, the grassroots participants (GRMP) are not paid mission practioners.

6.1.4.3 Theme 3: Friendship/Relationality (reason to stay)

In the previous section, the concept '*the system*' is used to describe the pre-collapse ICI-CO. And then in the reason to stay in the congregation, I found words in context of '*friendship/relationality*'. Relational reasons as a *glue* of the *togetherness* experienced after the collapse. This is the case in this first series of interviews where the context analysis connected with the reason for staying in ICI although the realities they observed beforehand.

This discussion illustrates some of the main codes within the theme '*friendship/relationality*' as a reason to stay in ICI-CO and its networks for Participants 114 and 214. This is confirmed by the following excerpts:

"For me, I think I'm still very much ... First of all, it's the same family of churches and some of the aspects are still fairly uniform across, in my experience, from the interaction that I've had with other congregations around the world and people". Participant 114

"But also, it was the tradition in the congregation where I was converted, where I started my Christian walk. So, I do care a lot about the congregation. Some of my best friends are still members of it. And those relationships pretty much were very formative for me and remain a very important component of my life. I'm sure I haven't had an in-real-time type view of what has been happening at every single moment, but I think I'm pretty confident I know roughly what has been happening in the last 12 years in the congregation in Bogota and generally in the Colombian congregations of ICI". Participant 114

"When we came to [other country], we were looking for cities where to stay. We wanted to continue in the church where we were in Colombia. So, we researched the churches, and we found this congregation was from the same family of churches. Many of the convictions and the way that we study the Bible are the same". Participant 214

"For me, I'm still connected, my parents are part of the church and many of my best friends are still a part of the church. Somehow, I find out what is happening. My parents share with

me what they're doing in the Bible talks. So, there is still a connection. Yes, basically that's it". Participant 214

In the third interview (114.3), Participant 114 provided clarification on his decision to stay at ICI-CO and the role of friendships in his life. Following an interpretation, four specific quotes are given: (1) a profound understanding of grace - *"we're going to sin against each other"*; (2) reality of common humanity (*humanisation*) - *"it's a group of people"*; (3) an attitude of *togetherness* - *"we just have to hang in there and see where this heads"*; (4) a communal feeling of responsibility - *"keep going and help the congregation heal"*; and (4) non-judgemental of other paths - *"others took different attitudes, which is understandable"*.

This is the specific quote is where Participant 114 expresses what is listed above:

"Many of my close friends had a very similar attitude to mine. Well, it's a group of people, we're going to sin against each other, we just must hang in there and see where this heads and God is faithful, and we just have to keep going and help the congregation heal. Others took different attitudes, which is understandable". Participant 114

6.1.4.4 Friendship between the researcher and the participants

The relationship built with Participants 114 and 214 when the researcher and her family moved back to Bogota in Nov. 2004. It provides a personal window into friendship within the post-collapse reality, although the researcher had not explicitly discussed any of these subjects with Participants 114 and 214, until the interview process. As the interviews continued, it became obvious the amount of thought, analysis, and study the interviewees had invested into the theme around the research question. At this time, it had transformed into a continual dialogue, as the email exchange on Oct 22 2021 and Oct 23 2021 demonstrates. The dynamic of the relationship has been one of learning from each other – as co-learners. For example, interview 114.5 is a lecture on the Letter to the Romans at the researcher's request.

6.1.4.5 Study of text within context

Participant 114 since the collapse has devoted himself to the study of the biblical text, theology, and missiology, seeking understanding for what he saw in the years of close involvement with ICI-CO; as well as what he witnessed during the crisis; and then how he has attempted to live

since then, with spirituality at an individual and communal level remaining a priority. He is a grassroots lay intellectual, with postgraduate education within his field of study.

Furthermore, Participant 214 is equally intentional with biblical study and spirituality as an individual and in a communal way of life, although she states that she has less time and has a bit more of a practical approach to biblical study than her husband. There are three couples included in this interview process. Thus, it would be interesting to note if there is a gender difference in the study of the biblical text or other aspects. From the ‘simmering’ data analysis, I found this to be a pattern. The males – with more of an intellectual study of the biblical text, and the females with more of a practical approach in their spirituality and search for truth and guidance in the biblical text. These couples are a very small sample to generalise conclusions or identify patterns in this area of gender in the CO context.

It is important to note that Participant 114 follows his own version of stoic philosophy (Marcus Aurelius) as an area of his personal Christian practices. One of the interviews (114.4) included the researcher in a learning position to understand this approach to life. His stoic practices are intertwined with his rational approach to life. The stoic philosophy is background information but will not be interrogated in this analysis. His view on the biblical text within the present context, is the focus. He has also approached the larger historical context as can be seen in the following excerpt:

“Yes, I would say I’m a practical theologian as well. But in a sense, I’m always trying to find the essence of things, but at the same time I don’t shy away from the bigger questions and the bigger trajectories and the bigger, long-term dynamics in the Bible and history.

It always comes back to what does it mean to be the people of God’s land or to be a Christian today. It comes back to those questions and those definitions. That’s why it’s so important for me personally to unpack the cultural contexts, because that gives it... You can take the meaning at surface level, but I think meaning can deepen once you get the big picture, the big trends, the big movements in the biblical history and in the history of Christians.

Yes, Christianity didn’t have any texts for 500 years, canonised texts. When you say this is the church of the first century, well, they clearly didn’t care as much as you did about being that sort of exclusive movement at all”. Participant 114.

These quotes provide important information regarding Participant 114's self-definition and *self-understandings*, which offers certain clues about what has upheld his personal and communal spiritual practices within the reality of his views and assumptions as to the pre-collapse ICI-CO context. The main thread of Participant 114's thinking: "*I'm always trying to find the essence of things*". It can be 'seen' in the data poem below:

Poem 4: Essence of Things (Participant 114)

(The double use of the previously mentioned ethnopoetic use of triad is found in **bold**.)

While not shying away from
Bigger questions,
bigger trajectories,
And the bigger, long-term dynamics.
Dynamics of what? in Bible and history.
What does it mean to be people of God's land or a Christian today?
It comes back to those questions,
and those definitions.
While it gives a deeper meaning,
if you look at and unpack the cultural context.
Keeping in view:
Big trends
Big movements in Biblical history
and
History of Christians

The second quote provides another vital clue, as his study of the history of the biblical canon has led him to the realisation that it took 500 years. The view of the early *followers of Jesus* take a different perspective to him, "*they clearly didn't care as much as you did about being that sort of exclusive movement at all*". Contrasting what in this research has conceived of the RBOs *teologia de la casita* as a *high-boundary* approach within Christianity and the church of the first century. This statement sheds some light on his continuance with the ICI-CO and the international network. He has made it very clear that friendships have been a powerful motivator but so has his view of the biblical text that is described here. The researcher is assuming that his reference to *exclusive movement* is a reference to ICI-CO pre-collapse, as he had described it in depth as exclusive. His view of the biblical text has provided a way of bridging the text with the context providing the meaning and the understanding for the continuing and growing commitment with the church community:

"But I can see Jesus fairly inserted into the apocalyptic story, but at the same time fairly inserted in the world around him too and challenging that thinking head on. For me that's the lens, really. It's Jesus in the world is the lens, and as you say, definitely the empty tomb, at the end of Mark particularly.

I really like the original ending of the gospel. For years I struggled with why they didn't finish and someone else had to come and finish the story. But the more I read it, the more I really like it because everyone around him fails. You just know at the end of it there's an empty tomb. Apparently, the women didn't tell anyone. So, in a sense it's up to me to either continue the story or just giving up like everyone else.

For me it's so inspiring just to try to do... It's very little that I can do, but I will never compare to that path, but at least to wrestle with the idea and to the best of my ability train myself theologically and in all these other things, but also in the opportunities that I have in my community of faith and outside of it, to bring these points to the attention of people".
Participant 114

In this last quote, from the final interview (114.6), there is the ability to see his vision for 'Jesus in the world' as his biblical lens. As well as the spiritual motivation inspired by a powerful mental image of 'the empty tomb' narrative. He mentioned at other times this concept of 'the empty tomb'. Followed by, "it's up to me to either continue the story or just give up like everyone else". This connects with what we have seen in this section in terms of the intellectual training he has pursued, "train myself theologically and in all these other things" and "in my community of faith and outside of it". This last statement reflects his commitment to his own congregation and its international network but not limiting himself to it. His inclusive approach has been developed through a communal commitment with friends in ICI-CO but is not limited to that. He understands the pre-collapse ICI-CO and its international network as exclusive, but he is inclusive in his own philosophy of life and manner of practicing his Christian faith. This has been knitted together in his identity and practices (communal and personal) which reflect *mutuality* and *resilient spirituality*.

After analysing the transcripts, I began a difficult process of deciding how to approach my positionality in this research project. I was encouraged by the resilient spirituality I found as one of the main themes in the analysis. Immediately, I began working on that stage of the project. Part 2 thus elaborates further on one of the main themes that emerged in Chapter 6 – Part 1.

6.2 PART 2: ACTIVE PRAYERS – RESILIENT SPIRITUALITY

The study found that people who are *resilient* feel that difficult times are a normal part of life, and their spirituality helps them get through these times. This spirituality includes personal walk, practices, and theology. This was perceived throughout: during the *talking circles*; whilst *dwelling in* the interview data; and then when the data analysis was formalised as Part 1 of the chapter introduces. This *resilient spirituality* also inspired recent works: Jensen (2009) *subversive spirituality*; and Nolty (2019) *Spirituality: a facet of resilience*. *Resilient spirituality* is connected to *maternal-thinking* linking to Hertig (2019) *Yinist spirituality*; and Riley (2022) in her intergenerational narrative as “spirituality, liberation, and the stories that make us”. There is an aspect of *resilient spirituality* that is also liberating and/or ‘subversive’. It could be tied to *insurgent consciousness*; although what I perceive in the data is a long-term walk, not only temporary religious, or spiritual motivation of transformation of reality. It is a lifetime approach to life. The following will explain further.

6.2.1 Active prayers display resilient spirituality

The results of the initial analysis showed that all the active prayers in the *talking circles* were related to the theme of *missiological spirituality* or *resilient spirituality*. I therefore made these prayers part of my personal prayer life, praying them as my own. I find them to be missiological prayers, when spirituality is assumed to be the heart or centre of research, especially when researching as an insider in one's own faith community. All the prayers are in the Appendix H. Smith (2017), Hoshikawa and Staudigl (2017), Wuthnow (2020), and Ladd (2021) all discuss the importance of researching the active prayers of religious communities.

In Part 2, first, a *sentiment analysis* is used. Then, three themes are focused upon: (i) individual vs. communal language; (ii) use of the names of the Godhead; and (iii) specific themes (with special focus on a *theology of vulnerability*).

After analysing the prayers, it was discovered that most aspects of the *seven-step praxis matrix* were mentioned. Not only were there beautiful poems about experiences with God, but also

connections to all the areas important in this research approach. There were several levels of data analysis within the active prayers.

6.2.2 *Setting the stage (sentiment analysis)*

The initial analysis of the active prayers (Appendix H) did not specify the layers of complex situations in the context of the interviews. When the sentiment analysis (tool on Speakai.co) was applied, it brought forward the reality of the four layers of complexity during much of the interview process, as a very high percentage rating of positive sentiment measured.²¹⁶ A comparison of each prayer and its sentiment percentages is attached (Appendix I) at the back of the dissertation. The four layers I have identified are: (1) discussing the collapse of our congregation; (2) the complexity of life in CO; (3) the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic; and (4) an emerging crisis within the congregation (made evident on March 21, 2021 at the legal *asamblea* meeting [see section 8.5]). The first three layers were all present in the interviews, and the last layer was evident in the last ones, especially 112.5, on March 25, 2021 (four days after the *asamblea*):

“Father God, I thank you so much for this time, for the opportunity to reflect on our lives, on our walk with you along with a community. I pray that these times would be of good use for the purposes of [inaudible]. We’re all spiritually immature. Help others in these situations and others that may benefit from this purpose. I pray that you bless this time and that you guide us with your spirit. I pray this in the name of your son. Amen”. Participant 112

What has always stood out from this prayer is the statement: “*we’re all spiritually immature*”. Even more so when I realised the context of the emerging congregational crisis days earlier. The communal aspects of his prayer will be observed in a section below.

Below in Figure 9 is an analysis of the overall sentiment analysis of the prayers of Group 1. As mentioned above, I felt this was an important finding, when the four levels of complexity are recognised:

²¹⁶ This sentiment analysis based on artificial intelligence (AI) technology is understood as extremely subjective as a software created for mainly marketing purposes, with robust Canadian-based data. Keeping this in mind, it still provides a type of measurement that is valuable.

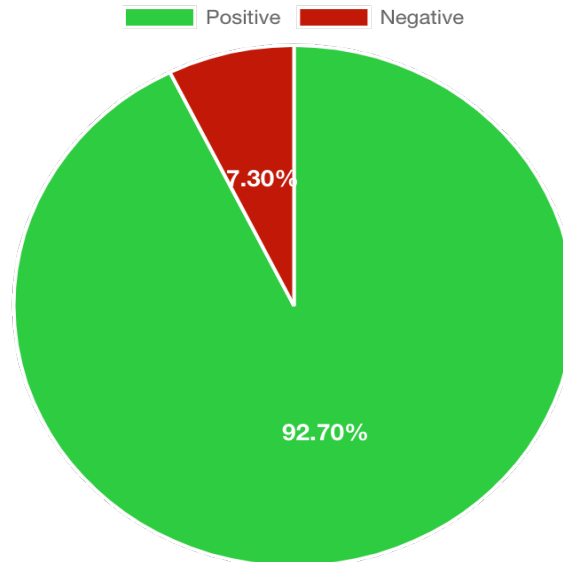


Figure 9: Sentiment analysis of active prayers in talking circles

Another tool available within the Speakai.co sentiment analysis tool, is a ranking of the sentences as to the most positive and the most negative. I decided to list the top three most positive and the three most negative in the following Table 14, as an example:

Table 14: Top 3 positive and negative statements in Group 1 active prayers

Most negative sentences:	Most positive sentences:
Interview 218.2 – <i>“No matter the pain or difficult situations we have to face”</i> .	Interview 112.3 – <i>“Dear Father God, I thank you so much for the way you have treated us and all the experiences that we have been able to have, all the service that we have been able to do in our lives, for you, for people”</i> .
Interview 115.2 – <i>“That this very strange and difficult situations we are living and things”</i> .	Interview 112.5 – <i>“Father God, I thank you so much for this time, for the opportunity to reflect on our lives, on our walk with you along with a community”</i> .
Interview 112.1 – <i>“I know that people currently are negative”</i> .	Interview 114.3 – <i>“Thank you God for the opportunity to be together this morning or afternoon”</i> .

Highlighting these most negative and most positive sentences in the prayers, gives a way to view some of the texture of the prayers. It is important to visualize the four contexts/realities mentioned previously. The most negative 218.2 & 115.2 are both days apart (Feb. 9, 2021 & Feb. 11, 2021), in which on Feb. 9, 2021, I found out a few hours before the interview that a married couple I

knew in MX had both died of COVID-19 that day. In both interviews, I asked for prayers for my friends' family and loved ones. It could possibly show an example of how I, as a researcher and a friend, can influence the research process by sharing my own suffering as part of the research journey during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The positive prayers reflect the opportunity to be a part of a community of faith. The *interconnectiveness* and interrelationships of being a part of a Christian community made the research more robust (Interview # 114.3 has been mentioned in section 6.1.4.1.) In comparison, I have the prayer of Participant 117, who was 14 at the time of the collapse. His prayer during interview 117.1 is given the highest positive sentiment analysis: 84.6%. His most positive statements in his prayers are noted in Table 15 below:

Table 15: Participant 117's most positive statements in active prayer

Interview 117.1 – <i>"I'm thankful for this friendship, thankful for the trust that Renee has put on me to conduct this very special moment of her research and allow me to honour this trust and to be able to be completely open to your guidance, to the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout this conversation"</i> .
Interview 117.1 – <i>"along with us towards things that we cannot fathom, things that we cannot understand or grasp with clarity, but that we trust, and we hope to be surprised by you, by your love, your HAND conducting us"</i> .
Interview 117.1 – <i>"And thank you so much for the opportunity to do what we're doing, which is things we love to do and we're so thankful for your love"</i> .

This interview with Participant 117 (Feb. 8, 2021) was the day before the heart-breaking news of the death of my friends in MX, whom he also knew. His understanding of spirituality as an integral aspect of missiological research is obvious in his prayer. These three sentences the software identified as the most positive sentiments. The percentage of positive sentiments was measure at 84.6% positive. It is difficult to highlight specific phrases as all three sentences are so rich. Friendship is connected to trust as a way of conducting research. The Holy Spirit's guidance is asked for as it is understood that the research topic is difficult to see with human eyes. Research as seeking to be surprised by God is emphasised, while recognising that God has given us both the opportunity to conduct research, which Participant 117 and I love to do. His prayer also links

to the visual image of *missio Dei* as a God's **HAND**, “*but that we trust, and we hope to be surprised by you, by your love, your **HAND** conducting us*”.

Part of the findings of this research project is the ability to learn from those much younger than me, such as Participant 117. This is also seen in the above ‘pre-analysis’, as I take a learning position with Participant 114, as described previously. I describe this as *intergenerational mutuality*. I also engage this type of learner’s position with my own young adult children, and view this in many of the participants’ relationship with their mothers (a reversal of roles).

6.2.3 Theme: Use of individual vs. communal

Part of the research, as emphasised in Chapter 2, within the concept of *self-understandings*, is the difference between individual vs. communal *sentipensante* logic. The Group 1 prayers display a strong communal emphasis, as can be seen below in the graph. The use of the words: ‘us’, ‘we’, ‘our’, they are much higher than: ‘I’, ‘me’. It is also obvious that the prayers had my research as an important theme, as my name is used frequently. I can assume that the word was used many times in references to the research project; as much of the prayers have the central theme of the research project. Figure 10 is the content analysis of the pronouns used in the active prayers:

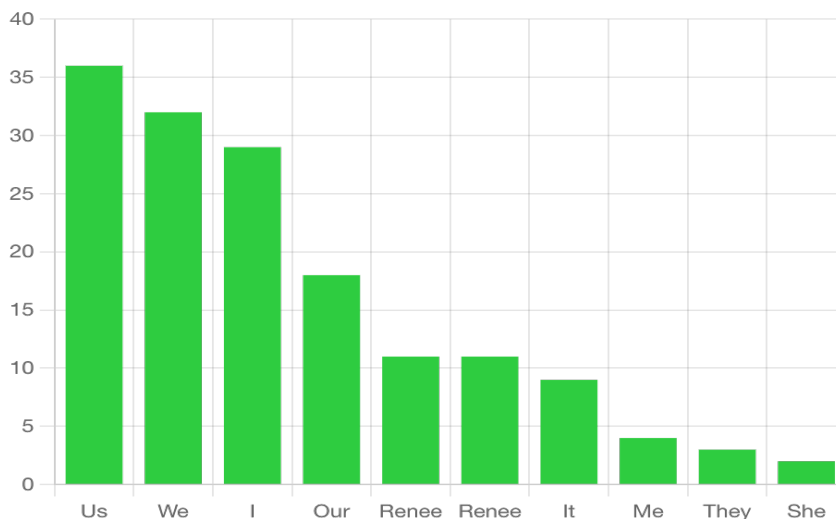


Figure 10: Content analysis of pronouns in active prayers²¹⁷

²¹⁷ I do not know why the graph shows my name, Renee, twice. It is a mistake.

Hiebert (2008:287) argues within a section on individual/group (I/we): “As individuals we find our true being only in relationships”. This is the same concept outlined in Chapter 2 as one of the definitions of *mutuality*, the *interconnectivity* of the Creator and the created, *the network of mutuality*. Turner (2012:9) quoting Ntumba, describes *ubuntu* as *Us-ness*, in the context of *liminal communities or communitas*. The results of these prayers show this to be true.

6.2.4 Theme: Names of the Godhead mentioned in prayer

Figure 11 is the context analysis displaying how the Group 1 in their active prayers within the *talking circles*, address the Godhead (at least in this context):

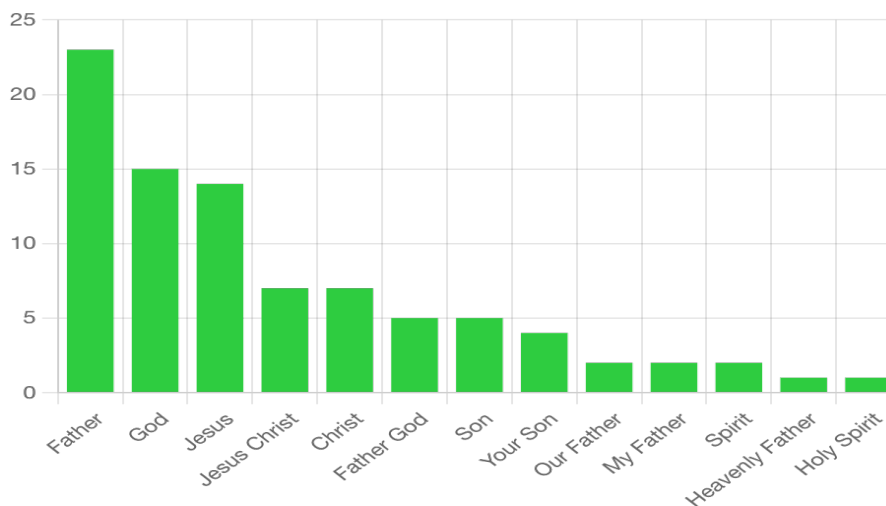


Figure 11: Content analysis of names of Godhead in active prayers

It can be seen that ‘Father’, ‘Father God’, ‘God’, ‘Our Father’, ‘My Father’, and ‘Heavenly Father’ are the most used to address the Godhead. Although ‘Jesus Christ’, ‘Christ’, ‘Son’, ‘Your Son’ is also used frequently. The ‘Holy Spirit’ and ‘Spirit’ are used less frequently to address the Godhead.

In comparison, returning to Participant 117. He addresses the Godhead as ‘Spirit’ and ‘Holy Spirit’ an equal number of times as ‘Christ’ and ‘Jesus’, while only using ‘Father’ once. This can be identified below in Figure 12:

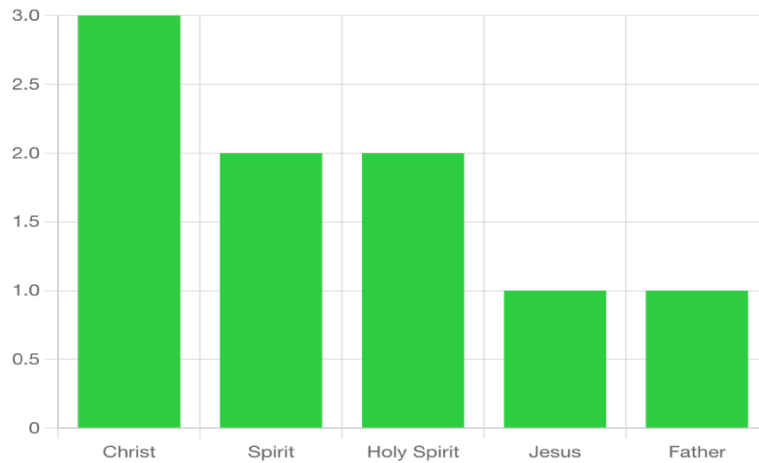


Figure 12: Content analysis of names of Godhead in Participant 117's active prayer

An extremely interesting aspect of Participant 117's prayer within the sentiment analysis is that it is rated by Speakai.co with an 84.6% positive sentiment. I believe this points to the hope in the younger generation, but much more research would need to be done to confirm this. It can be taken as a glimmer of hope for the older folk who are concerned with the future. This could point to an aspect of *intergenerational mutuality* 'in reverse', the younger generation inspiring the older generation. This was my experience in relation to interaction with Participant 117.

6.2.5 Themes: Within the active prayers

Smith (2017:190-199) suggests a focused manner of empirical research into what motivates religious people to practice religion, which is to ask what they pray for and about. This was discussed in the *talking circles*, but since active prayer was brought into the *talking circles*, there is the possibility of probing directly into their prayers (Dec. 2021 analysis). This analysis showed two vital aspects: (i) a robust Trinity-focused in the way of addressing God, and (ii) a communal way of addressing (us/we/our used much more than I/me). At this time, the following eight themes will be located, as Smith suggests, what stands out is the everyday life being brought into prayer:

- (1) the interview - talking circle;
- (2) this research project;
- (3) sensitive topics addressed, ICI-CO collapse, in the interview (i.e., Interview 114.3);
- (4) COVID-19 related topics;
- (5) my family and their family;

- (6) the church community – *brothers and sisters*;
- (7) *vulnerability* shown in statements such as in interview 112.5: “*we are all spirituality immature*”;
- (8) *thank you* is the most used word in the prayers.

The following Figure 13 specifies this analysis:

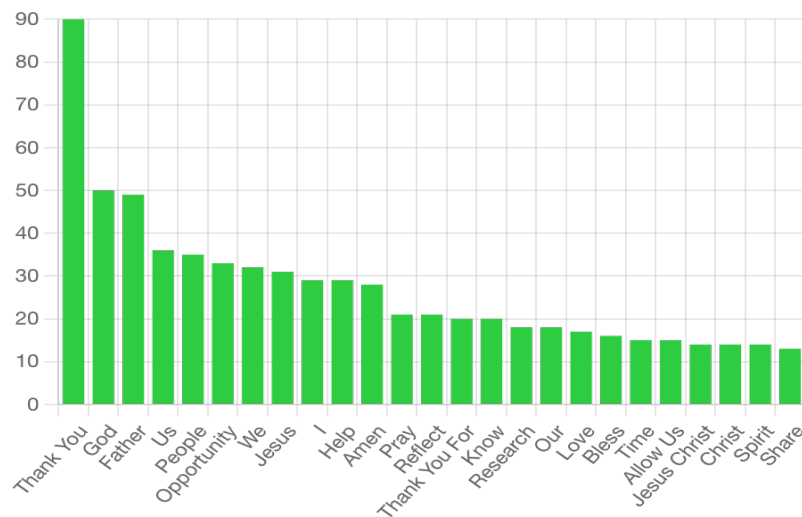


Figure 13: Content analysis of all the keywords in all the active prayers

A prayer, in poetic format, made from the above content analysis follows:

*Thank you God, Our Father.
 Us, as people. Have the opportunity.
 We, Jesus, I ask for help. Amen.
 I prayer that we reflect that we thank you for.
 I know this research is made with our love.
 Bless this time. Allow us to know Jesus Christ, Christ.
 And the Spirit share.*

One of the categories developed in Speakai.co is **theology of vulnerability**. This is applied to the complete ‘active prayer as spirituality’ data. This is shown below in Figure 14:

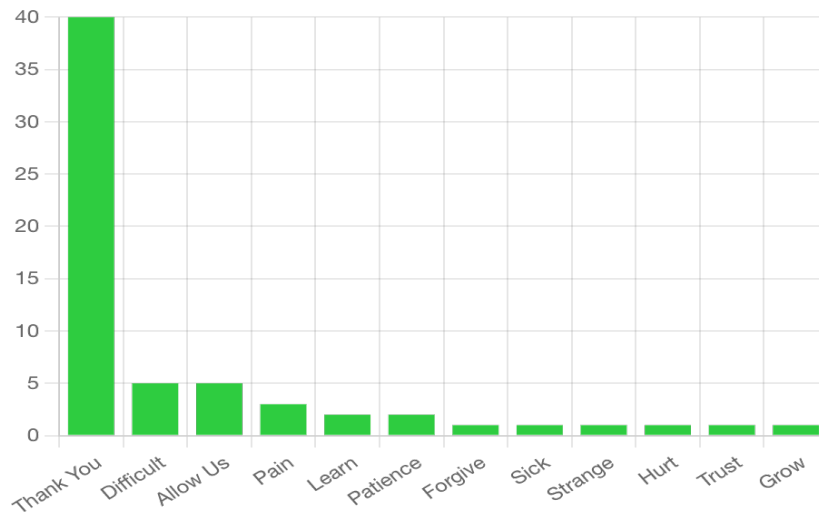


Figure 14: Content analysis of category theology of vulnerability in all active prayers

In this context analysis, a bit further, it is possible to connect ‘thank you’ to all the ‘negative’ aspects that are mentioned. This is a confirmation of the *resilient spirituality*. I will turn it into another mini prayer, in poetic format:

*Thank you, Lord, for the difficult aspects you allow us to experience.
In pain, we learn patience and to forgive.
Even when sick in these strange times (COVID-related line).
We are hurt but trust You as we grow.*

In this manner I have turned all the prayers into one prayer, using the category of *theology of vulnerability*, summarising what I perceived from all the prayers. I understand this *theology of vulnerability* as a vital aspect of a *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission. I discerned a *resilient spirituality* which embraces crisis as part of the spiritual journey.

6.3 CONCLUSION

The analysis of the data in this chapter was divided into two parts.

Part 1 provided an overview of the preliminary coding process for the six talking circles with Participants 114 and 214. I described how I identified the main themes of the study, namely: (i) ‘active prayers as spirituality’; (ii) ‘*the system*’ (description of pre-collapse congregation); and

(iii) '*friendship/relationality*' (as a reason to stay in the congregation). The first and third themes have to do with the *glue* of *togetherness*, relationality, and spirituality: '*friendship/relationality*' (as a reason to stay) and 'active prayers as spirituality'. This analysis also reveals how my own positionality was discovered during the interview process, leading to unexpected but transformational consequences.

Part 2 gave a more in-depth analysis of the data on the active prayers of Group 1. This included a sentiment analysis to uncover any possible unseen areas of the participants' lives. Then three themes in the active prayers are viewed: (i) individual vs. communal pronoun usage; (ii) usage of the names of the Godhead; and (iii) specific themes that are touched in the prayers, focusing on a *theology of vulnerability*. The main finding of this analysis is the *resilient spirituality* that is displayed by the participants. This surprising finding provided insight into the lived experiences of ICI congregation members and how they navigate their faith journey. The next chapter is built around the specific findings of **Part 1**, as my positionality became obvious in the pre-collapse ICI-CO. I begin with an official apology, using the obtained data as a guide. And then a final interpretation of the data is described.

CHAPTER 7:

“MISSION IS THE ‘MOTHER OF THEOLOGY’”

7.0 KÄHLER’S “MISSION IS ‘MOTHER OF THEOLOGY’”

This chapter delves into the objective set in Chapter 1: To locate Kähler’s “mission is the ‘mother of theology’” as a framework for understanding the data. It makes important statements concerning Kähler’s “mission is the ‘mother of theology’”. The questions that drive this objective are: How does this missiological *maternal-thinking* apply to this study? How do I deal with my own positionality?

The collapse of the congregation is described as a birth, liberation, and a new beginning. The collapse showed important truths about the denomination; it was a faceless, bodiless, and motherless system. And there was nothing that they could do to fix the past, but they could walk in the present toward s a future with *bold humility*. The **train** metaphor is used to describe this newfound mission. The findings in the case study are that ICI-CO decided not to continue in a fast-paced **global train system** but participated in a communal decision to *walking together* in the Christian faith.

As presented earlier in the paper, the use of the word ‘mother’ within missiology is not new. Bosch (1991a) begins building the argument for his book on the German systematic theologian, Kähler’s, well known phrase, within missiological circles: "Mission is ‘mother of theology’" (1991a:15-16). The first chapter, ‘Reflections on the New Testament as a missionary document’, begins with the section titled, ‘The mother of theology’. I found it interesting that Bosch spends much time discussing the New Testament scriptures and their application to mission. He provides a clear argument that the New Testament is the missionary document for the church and highlights the different theologies of mission within the New Testament (Matthew, Luke, and Paul). Bosch (1991:54-55) makes it clear that there was not one universal theology of mission in the New Testament text. The triad theologies of mission Bosch expands upon are such: (i) ‘Disciple-

making: Matthew's model of mission' (1991a:56-83); (ii) 'Transcending class and ethnicity: Luke's model of mission' (1991a:84-122); and (iii) 'Making the most of the grace period: Paul's model of mission' (1991a:123-178).

Applying *maternal-thinking logic*, that different ways of expressing and emphasising the path of a *follower of Jesus* (term used repeatedly by Bosch in 1991a) in the personal walk, practical, and theological. A mother knows that each one of her children, although growing up in the exact same environment (even twins, connected from the womb), will be different. This is very simplistic but confirms Bosch assertion with a womb-logic or thinking-with-the womb.

"Mission is the 'mother of theology'" is Kähler's (1971:190) quote that is used throughout the logic of the research. It is indeed radical to an Enlightenment – and modernist-influenced church. Bosch (1991a:269) critiques the rise of reason in response to the Enlightenment as: "[T]horoughly anthropocentric (in which) there was no room left for God". Kitto (2013) reviewing of Bosch's work concludes: from the rationalism of knowing, reading, and speculating - contextualisation is permitted and even encouraged by Bosch. I completely agree with this statement. Bosch (1995) radically approached Enlightenment theology. He critiques the Enlightenment's narrow focus on reason and argues that there is no room for God in this way of thinking.

McGraw (2020) in book review Hastings (2012) *Missional God, missional church*. McGraw (2020:n.p.) singles out the phrase, "Mission is the 'mother of theology'", emphasising the framework Kähler for missions in the past century. McGraw emphasises Hastings' final argument (2012:249): that mission and theology are corollary, for "theology (specifically that of participation) is the 'mother of mission'".

Akin (2019:7-21) in "The missiological motivation of 1 Peter" discusses Kähler in Bosch (1991a). He states that according to Kähler, mission is the root of theology. Akin (2019:7) agrees with Bosch, the New Testament writers created theology in response to the missionary needs of the early church. Akin (2019:19) contributes to Kähler in a footnote:

Bosch provides this insight with his own translation of Kähler's work '*Die Mission – ist sie ein unentbehrlicher Zug am Christentum? In Schriften zu Christologie und Mission*, ed. Martin Kähler (Munich: Kaiser, 1971). A more literal translation of Kähler's argument would be that 'the oldest [first] mission became the mother of theology' (*Die älteste Mission wurde zur Mutter der Theologie*).

Kähler suggests that the original and oldest mission of the *followers of Jesus* was not to proclaim a universal, ahistorical, *historylessness* message, but instead to focus on the old and first mission given to them by Jesus himself. Bosch uses 'first' and 'oldest' as his starting point, heavily relying on Meyer (1986) and a myriad of other scholars. The focus is the shifts of *self-understandings* and self-definitions of the first *followers of Jesus* and then with Paul seeking to clarify what shaped their horizons, identities, and their practices (as outlined in Chapter 2).

Tiunou (2010) in a lecture, *The mother of theology: Christian mission and the renewal of theology*, strongly emphasises that theology is best developed in places where people are coming to faith, rather than in intellectual conversations among those who previously belonged to the faith. He introduces many AFR theologians and missionaries; emphasizes the voices of World Christianity as a vital source for theology. As I believe, *Indigenous knowledge methodologies* speaks to this, as highlighted throughout the paper so far. *Followers of Jesus* as Bosch (1991a:26) attributes, do not need the *God-images* and *slogans* of the West to come to know and follow the Middle Eastern and Jewish Jesus, in the "concrete historical context".

I find all the previous interactions with this phrase to be lacking robustness. I hope to add to the dialogue in a meaningful way, especially from the lens of *maternal-thinking*. This conversation must include a link between "mission is the 'mother of theology'" in Illich's view (and how this impacts when one links the concepts of church and 'mother'). Illich's assumption is that *the corruption of the best is the worst*. What could the implications be if we approached mission from a different perspective? Do we have to assume that it is always a positive statement? This is something that needs more research to be understood fully. How does a *historylessness* congregation and denomination (RBO) handle such a concept? How do individual actors within the current case study approach this ordeal?

7.1 FIRST STEP: ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY

As a researcher and an insider, the previous chapter laid bare my own positionality in the construction of what is termed as *the system: exclusive, cultic practices, legalism*, and all the other ways that are described. I had come back to Bogota in 2004 with a shifted identity and I set to start over. I was reminded of my past intrinsic complicity. I believe that it is evidence of a radical shift in my positionality, that the whole research was undertaken in the manner that is shown here. The participants desired to share their views and experiences – six *talking circle* sessions with two groups (approx. nine hours in total); and three *talking circle* sessions with another two groups (approx. four and a half hours), to give an example. As I analysed the data, I realised that in their prayers as well as directly, they mentioned the importance of this research. It was obvious to me that they viewed me as a *researcher-as-instrument*, as someone to whom they could present their thinking and that it would be of value in some way. I asked the main outliners (Participants 112 and 212; Participants 114 and 214) if I was correct with this interpretation. One of them wrote back: “*It is of my interest to understand these dynamics, and hope that the research will not only be useful for my understanding, but also to prevent this type of situation for others in the future*” (email communication Sept. 24, 2022). This reflects what the communal feeling and thinking I perceived during the process with each one.

The second aspect in this assumption of my positionality, is *me nace* (‘give birth to’, as described in the Spanish understanding, something that comes from the gut, like the Samaritan in the parable told by Jesus). This *me nace* is beyond a feeling, I understand it within *maternal-thinking* as an inner concept and idea, and it is now time to ‘give birth to’. It is not spontaneous, feeling based, but “knitted together in the inner self”. I have been knitting together since 2003 a systematic and theoretical framework for what happened prior to the collapse, what happened during the collapse, and what was the path forward with *togetherness*. I could not articulate my thinking until now. Only poetry could express that reality in 2004 (see Appendix M for the researcher’s poetic reflection). The first two lines of one of the poems I wrote in 2004 are below:

Poem 5: Fragment from 2004 poem (Researcher)

*Amiga, mi vida ha cambiado y no sé cómo decírtelo.
No encuentro las palabras necesarias para expresarte que no sigo en la misma lucha.*

(“Friend [feminine], my life has changed, and I don’t know how to say it
I don’t have the necessary words to express to you that I am no longer devoted to the same
cause”).

My return in 2004 was with a profound awareness of the previous positionality. Sechrest et al. (2018:181) outline the extent of how I perceive my journey of *transforming mutuality* after almost two decades: “White folks must engage to resist the sociopolitical order of whiteness”, and prescribes these five practices for re-evangelisation: (1) repentance for complicity in systemic sin; (2) learning from theological and cultural structures that are not our own; (3) choosing to locate our lives in places and structures in which we are necessarily guests; (4) tangible submission to non-white ecclesial leadership; (5) hearing and speaking the glory of God in unfamiliar cadences (2018:181).²¹⁸

Returning to the congregation, under the submission of the CO grassroots leadership, these five re-evangelisation practices were undertaken. I know that nothing can undo the past, and I have attempted to walk amidst the broken system instead of running away or beginning anew somewhere else. I have learned the beauty of admitting my *brokenness*, as a broken healer or *wounded healer* (Nouwen 1979). I have learned this from many in the congregation and it was evident in the participants’ lives and what I observed in the *resilient spirituality* (emphasised in Chapter 6).

This study found that I had never made an official apology to the ICI-CO community for my role in the events leading up to the collapse of their congregation. I returned to Bogota and to the ICI-CO in Oct. 31, 2004, to start anew, understanding it as a process of Bosch's (1991c) *re-evangelisation*. However, by that time, I realised that the congregation was engrossed in

²¹⁸ As noted previously, LA who are mainly mestizos can be white-skinned and from European backgrounds but are generally considered from the Global South and non-Western. In the case study, in my previous positionality prior to the collapse, I approached Colombians, feeling superior to them. So, within my repentance of systemic sin, I believed it appropriate to shift my position to submission.

regrouping and believed that discussing the collapse was best left behind. The disarray in the aftermath of the collapse made for a fragile environment – and I was fragile.

I threw myself into figuring out the new life my husband and I had chosen to be in submission to grassroot leadership and embraced the huge financial implications of our decision. Previously, I was basically, alongside my husband, the CEO of the ICI-CO, and now I was figuring out how to make the budget to put food on our table, walking long distances as there was not enough funds to pay for city buses, and adapting to drastic changes in health care and educational systems for our children. I understood these shifts in lifestyle choices as part of my repentance for the previous participation in the international corporate RBO, whereas high-level management allowed for privileges that were not ethically correct for a Christian worker. I learned, with pain and tears, a Christian worker has been paid by the hard-earned donations of many. There are many ethical questions around this issue that I had not explored until then.

I am reminded of Guider (1996:151-161), as she uses Kegan’s analysis of adult development in relation to Bosch’s *postmodern* ecumenical emerging paradigm. Kegan’s five orders of consciousness is only about *how* one knows and NOT *what* a person knows. This type of knowing Guider (1996:153) reveals: “[S]uggests an evolving inner capacity to make meaning of what the individual knows or experiences in an increasingly more complex fashion”. The fifth order (which she links to Bosch’s definition of *postmodern*) speaks to my findings. Guider (1996:153) explains: “indicates the capacity to generalize across complex system to organize reality in terms of multiplicity of complex systems (a trans-system). It is demonstrated by the ability to move a complex system from subject to object”. (This is found in Chapter 6 - Part 2: Theme of *resilient spirituality*. And in Chapter 5 which make a connection between relationships and the spiritual influence of the biological mother with their adult children in their ability to walk through *broken systems*. Counted’s (2015) research draws a link between one’s personal *God-image* and parent-child attachment, which supports the results of this study.

One of Allen’s main topics was the value and necessity of voluntary clergy.²¹⁹ Allen consistently spoke to his understanding of the Christian message as beyond the dependence on funds,

²¹⁹ Cf. Allen 1983:95-124; Allen 1995:4-5, 124, 143, 145, 129-130; Talltrop 2013 for specific references to Allen’s thinking.

recourses, programmes, and control from the West. Illich²²⁰ insisted with similar arguments as Allen, and he was able to express similar arguments to Allen's. I find that Illich and Allen complement each other. Illich brings Allen's critiques to new life within missiological conversations.

Illich insists that no structure or system can 'produce mercy'. Illich states (as told to Cayley 2005:33) over the past millennium, Christian institutions had become: "[S]ocial machines capable of producing mercy upon demand". That only humans, not institutions or systems, can produce love of neighbour (see his description of the Samaritan in the Luke account of the parable of the Samaritan, in section 2.0). Bosch (1978) confronts this theme 'head on', as to the relationship of funds with mission endeavours. One of Bosch (1978:289; 1991a:450) arguments, quoting Ogbu Kalu: the 'Peter Pan syndrome' – that there is a 'donor mentality' in the West and a 'receiver mentality' in the younger churches. This has been expressed in my data; Participant 112, Participant 212, and Participant 111 state that it was important for ICI-CO to desist from receiving funds from the USA. Bonk (2006) brings to the forefront many of the realities of funds/resources within international mission endeavours, especially when in the direction of the sending to the receiving. The theme of exchange of resources of international partnerships is not the theme of this study but I did mention the vital *moratorium debate* in Chapter 1.

7.1.1 'Money ran the system'

Participant 112 highlighted the complications of churches and money in CO:

*"Yes, of course, to have control. If we want to collect **money**²²¹ from people for whatever reason or for whatever purpose, we do that large scale, 100 people, 200, 500 people, that's illegal to do it without a permit. We may end up in jail if we do that. That's a crime. We have to have a permit". Participant 112*

*"Now, if we have a Bible talk and we say, okay, who can put some **money** and we rent a communal room here in the building and have a meeting, then nobody care about that. We are not collecting **money** as such. Or let's put together some **money** and we buy some groceries for the brother who is having trouble and doesn't have **money** to buy his food. We don't need a permit for that. But if we want to have a program to collect **money** to give*

²²⁰ Cf. Illich 1972:69-94; Cayley 2021:16 for specific references.

²²¹ The highlights are from the software.

away help and food, then you need a permit because that can easily be used for [unclear]”
Participant 112.

In the donation of funds from the USA context to the Global South, such as CO, my experience, and the data show, that there is not an awareness of the receiving context. The preceeding quote is an excellent example of how complex it can be.

Borgall’s (2016) research brings to the forefront a similar situation as this case study, as the USA-initiated, funded, and managed World Literature Crusade (WLC) and India Every Home Crusade (IEHC) campaign in India began to face many internal difficulties and shifts in strategies, which brought emotive issues for the Indian hiring agency and those who lost their jobs. Borgall describes this as the Western thinking of *hire and fire* (2016:81). As in this case study, the Christian message continued in many of the groups impacted by the Christian literature campaign identified as *Christ groups*. The historical usage of this specific USA Christian organisation’s *slogan*: ‘World Evangelization in this generation’, is also evident in Borgall’s case study (2016:70-71). Borgall (2016:81) quotes Prasad who describes firing 520 out of 670 staff in less than two years. Only poetry²²² does justice to such profound emotive communication. Reading Poem 6 and Poem 7 side by side allow for a comparison, especially of the emotions expressed. First by Borgall (2016:81) and then of Group 1 expressed feelings during the collapse of the RBO:

Poem 6: ‘Hire and Fire’ Mentality (Borgall)

Hire & Fire Mentality
Sorrowfulness
Forced
To Follow
Troubled
Minds/Thoughts
Sorrowfulness
Western Thinking
Fire & Hire Mentality

²²² A skinny poem is used (Faulkner 2021; Brewer 2021). A Skinny Poem is 11 lines long, with the same first phrase and the same last phrase. The rest of the nine words are single words (or compound), and lines 2, 6, and 9 repeat the same word.

Poem 7: Multivocal emotive poem. . . ‘Collapse’ (Group 1)

There was a moment when in the middle of the conflict, when I felt, everything was going to fall apart

Sense of void

Shocked

Shocking

Sorrow

Sense of void

Emotionally-isolated

Strange-Weird

Stress

Sense of Void

There was a moment in the middle of the conflict, when I felt, everything was going to fall apart.

Although the second poem is not directly the emotions of ministry people impacted by the collapse, when they lost their job, but it is directly related. As Group 1 were the ones keeping the group together during the ICO-CO due to the ICOC collapse. The findings show that this was due to the action of social agents, an *insurgent consciousness* movement and *disruptive religion*.

I have experienced similar situations of this Western (USA is the context) *hire and fire* mentality related to the case study. It was not only due to the collapse but a way of thinking regarding employment. This data highlights points for further study, as many questions of Christian ethics arise. The data has shown that ethical questions are only important in the case study if they are within the same nation-state, that they share the same legal apparatus. Could it be, as Bosch (1991c:123) asserts: “[S]peaking humanly, people only change when they are forced to?” In CO there is a saying “*ojos que no ven, corazon que no siente*” (eyes that do not see, is a heart does not feel).

I believe that it could be a reason for the profoundly reflexive missiology within SA, as the mission and church endeavours have been inside of their own nation-state. There are not like many cases where these Christian endeavours are focused somewhere ‘far away’.²²³ Bosch

²²³ This link is based on research on the nature of mission organisations and the concept of legal *self-preservation*. (The footnote i.0.1 is regard to Bosch (1991a) and the role of missiology in ecclesiastical *self-preservation* can easily to link to the RBO in this case study.) As mentioned in Chapter 2, one of the definitions of ‘self’, provided by Smith

(1991c:112) describes his vision of the re-evangelisation in SA (in response to Mkhathswa and Kritzinger): “whites re-evangelizing themselves, whites being evangelized by blacks, blacks re-evangelizing themselves, and blacks being evangelized by whites”. These concepts have a direct relation to the political issues in SA at that time (cf. Kritzinger 2022). That is one of the reasons why the SA context has been so valuable for my studies; as researching the emotional, spiritual, and ethical responsibility of the mission endeavours is vital (a recent example, *The Evangelists*, Jonas 2022). I have connected to this research as I have continued to lived among those who felt oppressed by *the system* that I had participated in and built, the Christian **brand** I contributed to ‘importing’ from the USA. In continuation is the data analysis and interpretation that aided to the conclusion that ‘money ran the system’.

7.1.1 ‘Money ran the system’

This is an aspect that is vital in the study, as money was the main theme that appears in the content analysis of all the interviews.²²⁴ Words from categories: *The system* and **2003** are displayed in Figure 15:

(2010:89), is that a ‘legal person’ or corporation is interpreted as a ‘self’. In 1886, the USA law defined self as corporation. Smith (2010:89) notes: “Corporations enjoy many of the same rights as natural persons”. The enormous impact of this on mission is beyond the scope of this paper. The findings show it to be key to the *dehumanisation* of the mission endeavours since their USA inception and probably Western inception (but I have only researched the USA aspect). My case study has shown this to be true in the USA and in CO. The legal organisation, a mission sending organisation or church organisation (understood as the institutional church), is concerned with what could turn into a potential lawsuit for them. The implications for new RBO’s with no ties with international groups such as the WCC, does not have to confront possible ethical issues or even crimes in other countries. It would be necessary to have basic knowledge of international law, large amounts of money, and awareness of the process for international lawsuits. This is the dark side of *historylessness*.

²²⁴ Participant 111(TNMP) emphasizes: “So, of all the foreign [outside of USA] people obeyed, let’s say not blindly, but they obeyed. Because it was set up like that. It was like the voice of the ‘father’ . . . Well, it was like, ‘my father said that, so I will comply’”.

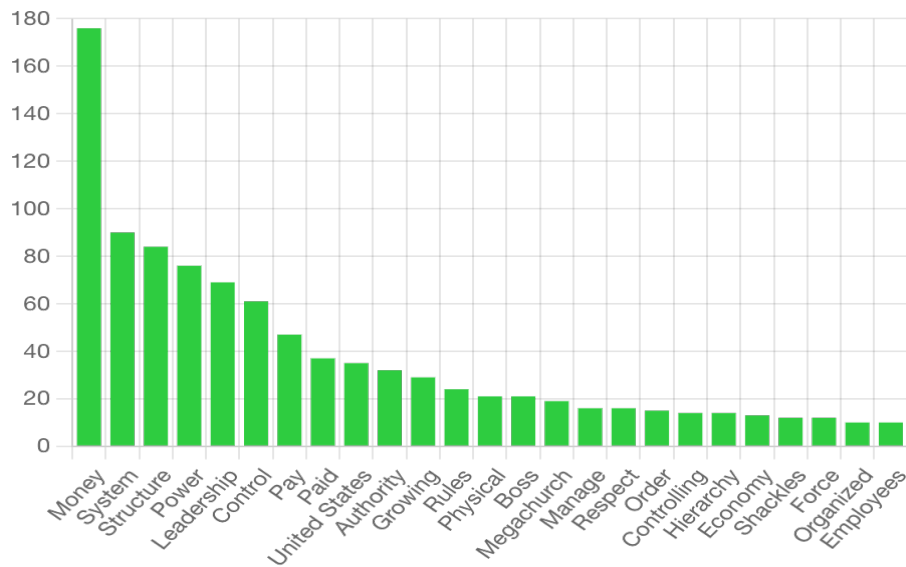


Figure 15: Content analysis of the participants' view of 'the system' and the 2003 collapse

This graph shows how important money is perceived within *the system* (almost 180 times). A way of summarising is connecting the words that are used, as presented below:

Money ran *the system* and the structure. Power in leadership led to control. They were paid by the United States. Authority was growing through rules. The physical boss of the megachurch would manage it all. Respect and order were within a controlling hierarchy. The economy led to shackles of force with organised employees.

The following graph, in Figure 16, depicts the words/phrases in the category: **Keywords:**

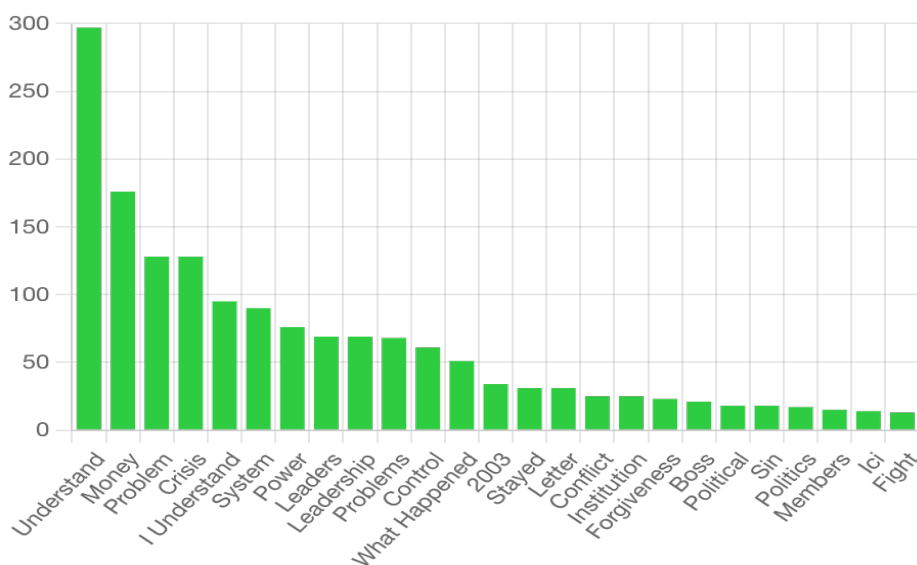


Figure 16: Content analysis of the participants' keywords in all the interviews

The main word that is mentioned is understanding that money was the problem in the crisis. The word summary is as follows:

They said ‘I understand’ *the system* had power in the leaders and leadership with their control. What happened in 2003? I stayed. *The letter* led to conflict in the institution. But I chose forgiveness. The boss of the church was also political. There was sin in this type of politics. Members of the ICI-CO fight (fought).

As mentioned previously, *the letter* was the match that led to the collapse of *the system*. The critique of 2003, *the letter*, has proven to be true by the findings in this research. As previously mentioned, *the letter* is an image for the huge shift that the RBO underwent that led to the administrative and structural collapse (**trainwreck**); as it brought to light much of the *structural evil* and sin. With the forced resignation of the **locomotive engineer** in Nov. 2002, after a year of sabbatical, the main authority in the RBO was gone. Stanback (2005:120-135) describes the details of this period in depth. He (2005:122) signals a “profound identity crisis after these events”. Castellanos (2011:66-72) describes it from the viewpoint of ICI-CO. Castellanos (2011: (:69-71) summarises *the letter* written by Henry Kriete; it is titled: ‘Honest before God: Revolution through repentance and freedom in Christ’. Kriete extensively provides an outline of the ‘bad systems’ (*the system* in this research) in the RBO in a 48-page document: (1) Our corrupt hierarchy; (2) Our obsession with numbers; (3) The result and product of #1 and #2 were our shameful arrogance; and (4) Our attraction to money (mammon).

Castellanos (2011:69) narrates rapid global propagation by email of *the letter* (beginning on Feb. 2, 2003). It was a snowball effect within days after *the letter* was read throughout the USA and LA. Suddenly, the difference between what was taught and the practices of the leadership within the international corporation structure was obvious. An *insurgent consciousness* movement brought to the forefront the corruption within the RBO. (I do not have information about other continents except for what Lappeman [2014] reports). Lappeman (2014:72-73), from a SA standpoint, describes the collapse as an upheaval. He provides this detailed description - although it is lacking details as to the consequences in SA ICOC congregations:

McKean’s 2002 resignation ended the first generation of the Boston Movement. In 2003, an incriminatory open letter was released and circulated within the ICoC. Henry Kriete, a long-

standing minister in the London ICoC, wrote *the letter* which outlined his perspective on, among other issues, the ICoC's hierarchy and obsession with conversions (Stanback 2005) (Kriete 2003). These criticisms resonated with many in the ICoC as 'open forums' were held in churches around the world to discuss issues raised in Kriete's letter (Wilson 2010). Many leaders resigned or were fired by the congregations. Apologies came from various leaders who began to admit to personal and systematic mistakes. Missionaries returned home as growth stagnated further. One estimation is that as many as thirty percent of the ICoC's global membership left in the decade after Kriete's letter was circulated (Taliaferro 2012). Some leaders saw the upheaval caused by *the letter* as divine discipline and a sober call to reform (Wilson 2010) (*italics added*).

Seven descriptions of the same *critical incident* from international ICOC insider scholarship include (listed in chronological order): (1) USA: Stanback (2005) – “As the ICOC strives to rebuild its identity during the current crisis”; (2) USA: Carrillo (2009) – *fire storm*; (3) CO: Castellanos (2011) – *world crisis*; (4) CO: Diaz Castro (2014) – *crisis*; (5) SA: Lappeman (2014) – “the upheaval caused by *the letter*”; (6) BR: Leao et al. (2017) – “moment of learning with God's discipline”; and (7) USA: Fleming (2018) – *organisation collapse*; The variation of descriptive way of identifying the collapse from insiders provides a foci for a text analysis in the future.

Stanback (2005:131-33) lists the structural sins and *structural evil* that were recognised at the Los Angeles ICOC congregation, where McKean had held his base from 1990 to 2002. The elders of the congregation wrote an apology letter listing ten sins and a Scripture which depicts the sin, namely: (1) arrogance of the staff – Matt. 20:25-28; (2) weakening other churches – Phil. 2:3-4; (3) giving through compulsion – 2 Cor. 9:6-8; (4) authoritarian discipling – Eph. 5:21; (5) improper teaching of the One True Church – Eph. 4:1-7; 1 Cor. 12:136; (6) not emphasising the greatest commandment – Matt. 22:37-40; (7) not fulfilling the role of elders – 1 Pet. 5:1-4; (8) abusive accountability – Eph. 2:8-10; (9) not teaching the Bible in depth – Heb. 5:11-6:3; (10) And discouraging older disciples – Eph. 4:11-16. This registers an overview of what was generally acknowledge as sin during the time period of the ICOC collapse.

This spirit of repentance was the one that I observed in ICI-CO at that time. And as I have examined many sides of this moment in the history of the RBO, I believe that the collapse, although traumatic for so many of us (especially TNMPs), I understood it at the time as participating in a spiritual purification and have found much evidence to that effect. As already

noted, Bosch (1980:248) expresses something like the communal feeling of many: “Christendom has collapsed”. And continues, “Many have lamented and still today it is a liberation”.

The collapse frames the case study in 2003, which could be interpreted as a missiological **trainwreck** or as a birth. This is best expressed in the poem by Zoe Skylar (n.d.):

Poem 8: ‘Collapse. . . your Birth’ (Skylar)

*“For a star to be born, there is one thing that must happen: a gaseous nebula must
collapse.
So, collapse.
Crumble.
This is not your destruction.
This is your birth”.*

The collapse as a birth can be confusing, as it is a matter of perspective. They are held in *creative tension* throughout the dissertation. The researcher and the participants view the collapse as a birth; but to understand the birth, what led to that collapse must be identified and described as superficially indicated in this section.

My research has shown that ‘money ran *the system*’ – ICOC. The attraction to ICOC by many that came to be a part of the congregation, was money from the USA (Participant 111 expressed this). The reason it collapsed was money related (stated by both Group 2 Participants – 107 and 111; and Group 3 – Participant 104). Participant 104 provided a specific example. His continued uneasy feeling that the couple that used to serve in the country he was in during the collapse, made 10,000 USD a month, while he and his wife made 1,400 USD. The difference was the previous couple were contracted directly by the USA, while the Participant 104 and his wife were had a contract as someone from LA from one of the LA hubs of the RBO. This was one of the issues in the ICI-CO collapse (Castellanos 2011:75): the ill feelings as to the differences between the salaries between paid mission practitioners. This is illustrated by Uribe (2014:174) in her description of the *silver and gold system* in the construction of the Panama Canal 1904–1914. The white workers were paid in gold and the non-white in silver. She provides a comparison (black and non-whites were paid 99 USA cents per dia, while whites were paid 38 cents per hour).

Those paid from the USA were especially signalled. This is an example of the previous footnote, of the ethical implications of *historylessness* organisations that cross nation-state legal boundaries. This is one example of a multitude of issues that are unresolved, as the RBO collapsed, the leadership and structures were also affected. Some married couples in top leadership positions in LA left the RBO (if they had not done so previously). As I mentioned earlier, the whole system seemed to have ‘vanished into thin air’ for many of us, although in my case, it felt like a liberation.

This was not the experience of everyone, as some congregations in the Global South continued to receive the same funding and somehow avoided dealing with the evident themes in *the letter*. This would be another research project to scan out these different experiences and different approaches within the collapse of the RBO. For example, a comparison could be made with Leao et al. (2017) who deals in depth with the collapse and its effect on the ICOC network in BR or in SA (building upon Lappeman [2014]). Below is a personal reflection by the researcher as to her positionality.

#5 Personal Reflection by Researcher:

*My positionality is central as I am actively engaged in building the **global train system**, in ICI-CO and other countries. In 1992 I came to CO and brought ‘the system’, and after a few months, I was left in charge by the USA couple that left to lead a main base congregation for ICOC LA. I played a key role up to 2000,²²⁵ when my husband and I left for Venezuela. Although there were many of us involved in the congregation that was growing and expanding, locally, nationally, and internationally, my fingerprints were widespread.*

In 2003 I had an awareness of my complicity, but now, in 2022, I am more aware than ever. I have repented before God and have asked God for forgiveness in a deeper way than ever. I believe that he has forgiven me, as he forgave me when I could see in part. I have felt the forgiveness in the ICI-CO community-at-large and hope that if there is anyone who continues to be held captive by this past, that

²²⁵ Although the effort to remember and ‘connect dots’ led to realising that I was not that involved with many day-to-day ministry activities since my second pregnancy with twins. Caring for three babies under two years old was extremely challenging.

God will guide them out of it. This research could provide a possible framework to understand what happened to some, to find liberation as I have gradually experienced.

From the maternal lens, I can see -- the corruption of the best is the worst. I betrayed my highest ideals for the sake of a cause, which turned out to be something institutionally empty. I have a clear memory of realising in 2003 that the cause behind the slogan, 'the evaanglization of the world in this generation' had become an idol to me (confirming Escobar's [2003:58-59] link between the culture of globalisation and potential idolatry). That is why Illich's thinking makes so much sense to me. Illich (as told to Cayly 2005:33) believed that church as an institution, 'the system', had become a "social machine capable of producing mercy upon demand I had given it a higher priority than God, himself. These sentiments expressed by Participant 115 reveal my own sentipensante reflection of that time.

Poem 9: Misplaced Loyalty (Participant 115)

*Misplaced Loyalty
Absorbing, controlling.
Wasn't loyal, to Jesus, loyal to.
I could never believe it.
System*

How did I stay? How did I return to ICI-CO, from AR, after the collapse? How did I do this? While taking on the identity of a mother, not a missionary or mission practitioner, I returned to ICI-CO as a relational insider not as a TNMP insider. Now clothed with a theology of mission or mode of mission, mission as presence and mission as silence. In contrast to the earlier theology of mission which involved authoritative teaching, management of people, and administration. The work of keeping the home and caring for my family (three small children) kept me extremely busy. I sought to live within the ICI-CO community understanding it as an extended family not as a leader of a religious organisation or CEO (top manager). Illich (2018:43-48) describes this as missionary silence. Leao (2022:43) highlights Illich's: Eloquence of silence. A personal practical application of applying Bosch's Postmodern-Emerging-Ecumenical theology of mission seeking re-evangelisation (1991b). It could also be called, transforming mutuality in a theology of mission.²²⁶

²²⁶ Inspired in Bosch (1978:283-296), 'Towards true mutuality'.

But I have been inspired by several SA Afrikaner missiologists and theologians (Bosch, Kritzinger, Saayman, Hendriks, to name a few^{227 228}) who have embraced their identity of the participation of their people group in awareness that there is nothing they can do to fix the past, but they can walk in the present towards a future with bold humility or humble boldness (Bosch 1991a:420).

7.2 TEOLOGIA DE LA CASITA

The research problem stated the triad theological position within the RBO: (i) personal, (ii) practical, and (iii) theological. Data visualisation provides the ability to grasp the exclusiveness of this identified and interpreted, *teologia de la casita* (**little house** theology or theology of the **little house**) (see Appendix R3). Bosch (1991a:376, 384, 474) describes this church-centred theology of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside the church there is no salvation). The above data displayed in graphs, quotes, and poetry, allows for insights into the consequences of this type of theological framework. It was an effective mission method, based on Church Growth Movement methods (Chapter 3), but effective ministry, in this case, obviously does not mean that it is done ethically. This is one of the points Escobar critics of *managerial missiology*.

I allowed this wrong biblical construction of church = family = kingdom = this movement to guide my own life and that of others. The ICOC was not a family and not God's kingdom, as it is impossible to fit God's kingdom into a **little house**. Bosch (1991a:420 citing NIE 1980), concluding his thoughts on evangelism I find to be the opposite of what I have found in the *teologia de la casita*, evangelism cannot be delineated:

[T]oo sharply, too precisely, and too confidently. We cannot capture the evangel and package it in four or five 'principles'. There is not universally applicable *master plan for evangelism*, no definitive list of truths people only must embrace to be save. We can never limit the gospel to our understanding of God and of salvation²²⁹ (italics added).

²²⁷ The path laid out by the SA Afrikaner missiologists, such as David Bosch, Klippies Kritzinger, Willem Saayman, and others, led me to address the problem I see in my home country and church. Bosch, Kritzinger, and Saayman had different approaches but walked together through the academic space created to face the seemingly insurmountable situation by their own people group and the religious arm.

²²⁸ As already noted in section 2.3.5, a *spirituality of liminality* (Wepener 2015; Wepener and Nell 2021) can describe the approach I have witnessed first-hand and in the writing.

²²⁹ The italics are added in this quote to connect with what would seem to directly link his concern with the Church Growth Movement by indirectly mentioning its popular text *Master plan of evangelism* (Coleman 1994).

This is the opposite of the way of understanding evangelism, not only by the RBO, but also its parent denomination, COC. Below is the type of message that my parents, and then I, received, about a lost world and those of the COC have the truth. Howard (Howard et al. 1971:9) in the lecture ‘The lost and the gospel’:

Ladies and gentlemen, if I believed the people of all religious denominations, members of all different cults and sects, as well as the non-religious, were saved; I would not be here tonight addressing you on this great and profound subject, ‘The Gospel and The Lost’; neither would I devote any more time, effort, and money to the support of the church and her mission in this world. I think I would just ‘check out’ and devote my time to business, wealth, and honor among men and just be a ‘good Joe’ to everybody for nobody is really lost, according to such unscriptural, fallacious reasoning. If this conclusion were true, why encourage missionaries to make sacrifices to take the gospel to heathen lands? Why not all missionaries come home to their loved ones and their families? Why not silence the gospel press, discontinue all radio and TV broadcasts of the gospel? Why not just be content to ‘keep house’ for the Lord - just ‘hold our own’ and really not attempt to preach and teach any part of the gospel that would prick the conscience of our own brethren. Much less to convert lost souls to Christ, for, after all, the gospel is a relative thing; sound doctrine is out of date; and the gospel is not really the power of God to save the believer. May it never be so!²³⁰

Howard pleads that the need is to go and save them, even if at a grave personal cost. This is the sermons and lectures I grew up with and then continued to hear as an adult mission practitioner within the ICOC.

The *historylessness* as applied in the RBO, as a legacy of the restorationism of SCT theology, especially in the understanding of the COC denomination (subject of Chapter 3). This theology that jumps over history and makes a bridge between a view of the New Testament Church and a now, does not acknowledge the triad sources: (i) authority over the interpretation of the biblical text; (ii) authority over funds/resources; and (iii) authority over the structure (legal and media-means of communication). So, the theology makes it seem that we are just following the Bible’, ‘we are simply disciples of Jesus’, ‘we are a New Testament church’. And it compounds Bosch

²³⁰ With *maternal-thinking*, my focus in this passage, I asked myself, ‘Why not all missionaries come home to their loved ones and their families?’ As a child of mission practitioners, I am aware of the high price families can pay for mission endeavors. I know the toll it took on our family as we lived far from our extended family. I have always felt that I have lost something that I can never regain. In 2003 that motivated my desire for our children to grow up in their father’s home country and my decision to provide the most stable environment possible. What is the purpose of translocal and transnational mission practitioner vocations, if it is not ‘savings souls for eternity’?

(1991a:3) concern a theological delusion or “a dangerous delusion”. Self-preservation of a Christian **brand** through its three-pronged theological **little house**.

It is new in the sense of the tools that are available, obviously new religious groups have been a common occurrence throughout history. In Christian history, although there are certain constants through the 2000 years of history, there have been many ways of understanding and practicing the Christian faith. These currents many times are tied to an individual who proposed different ways of thinking and practicing at that specific time and place in history, i.e., Franciscans, Mennonites, Lutherans, and Calvinist. Although it might have not been the intention of that person to begin a separate **brand** of that time, this is the consequence of his/her religious thinking/practices and the propagation of that thinking/practices.

Bosch (1991a:218) recognises the common Christian teaching throughout the ages, an observance and practice of high-boundaries within a Christian denomination or group: ‘There is no salvation outside of the church’. Bosch (1991a:462) surveys one of Vatican II’s groundbreaking outcomes. A radical shift in RC theology in this regard: shifting from “‘separated brethren’ to ‘the brethren divided’ (or separated from us)”. It is also intertwined historically with PROT theology. Weber (2005:94) provides an example of historical high-boundaries outside of the RC Tradition:

The sect to which Menno Simons in his *Fondamentboek* (1539) gave the first reasonably consistent doctrine, wished results for the first Baptist communities, and this principle of avoidance of the world never quite disappeared so long as the old spirit remained alive. Like the other Baptist sects, to be the true blameless Church of Christ, like the apostolic community consisting entirely of those personally awakened and called by God. Those who have been born again, and they alone, are brethren of Christ, because they, like Him, have been created in spirit directly by God. A strict avoidance of the world, in the sense of all not strictly necessary intercourse with worldly people, together with the strictest bibliocracy in the sense of taking the life of the first generations of Christians as a model.

Interestingly, Stanback (2005:13,136) links the missionary paradigm of the ICOC with the 16th century Anabaptist movement. Bosch (1991a:245-247) in the context of the high-boundaries of original Anabaptists: they considered all RC and PROT to be pagans, outside of the Christian fold, understanding all Europe to be a mission field. I assert that the RC boundary-crossing theological transformation, as well as most Anabaptist theology shifts should be followed by groups such as the ICOC. A personal reflection as to this theme follows.

#6 Personal Reflection by Researcher:

*As I look back, with the gift of hindsight, I thought that I was devoting my life to something that was of great meaning. I really thought I was “changing the world for Christ”. I saw many lives transformed as they sought forgiveness and healing in Christ. I saw families reconcile. My understanding of salvation leaned much towards ‘other world’, as the purpose of ‘this world’ was to get more and more people prepared for the ‘other world’. It was a cyclical understanding of salvation, the ‘other world’ purpose, gave an everyday purpose of ‘seeking and saving the lost’. Praxis for real life problems as Castellanso (2011:50-57) describes the development of the medical clinic and school in Bogota for those from socioeconomic challenged situations. This made ‘the system’ seem even more meaningful. All this spoke to my desire of feeling like I was making a difference, as I believed that I was involved in a profound eternal project. Although I continue believing this, but not in a *teologia de la casita* way. This theology provided a sense of certainty for people like me who had a need or desire for certainty and the appeal of a high- boundary group.*

Liquid modernity (Bauman 2007) provides some *self-understandings*, as to why people can be drawn to religious fundamentalism which *teologia de la casita* can be placed. Bastian (1982:313-350) provides a robust explanation as to how the PROT/EVAN churches are adapting the previous hacienda models, with authoritative leadership models which were not previously used in the early PROT/EVAN congregations in LA. This reference provides understanding why the pre-collapse ICOC system in CO might have been so effective. And it is the model used that I observe and have researched of the growing urban EVAN congregations in CO (Cook 1994:264) that could be described as an RBO, but more research is required for any confirmation.

Escobar (1991; 2002; 2003) provides three modern missiological approaches: (i) post-imperialistic, (ii) *managerial missiology*, and (iii) holistic. We have identified the pre-collapse RBO within the *managerial missiology* approach, a use of the corporate business model applied to ‘winning the world for Christ’ or ‘the evangelization of the world in this generation’. A holistic approach, which does not confine people into the narrow categories that the *teologia de la casita*

has been provided (see Appendix R3). As Illich highlights the need for (Cayley 2021:430-434) [A] “shift away from the prevalent picture of exclusive clubs that provide ‘identity’ to those who hold a membership card”. This membership card links to the concept of a *high-boundary religious movement*. The theological stance within the image of a **global train system** with a **brand** and a *slogan*, has shown itself to be effective. This **trainwreck** gives the opportunity to view the inside of this one specific context. In Chapter 2, Bosch as a *history-whisperer* has already outlined a historical view of USA mission methods and theory: missionary fervour, optimism, and pragmatism, in the case of Mott and McGavran and the larger Church Growth Movement, and then I added the SCT **locomotive engineer**, Campbell.

This paradigm shift that I experienced in 2003 with the collapse I sought a more robust *God-image* (Rheinbolt-Urbe [2017] is an exegesis to that affect, inspired in maternal images of the divine, with special focus on Isaiah 66:10-13). A conquering God must be replaced with a loving and embracing God (Olbricht 1980; 2000; Volf 2019). When you really think about it, the *teologia de la casita* is so limiting (see Appendix R3), so different from the encompassing, undefinable God we can read of in the biblical text or meditate on when we view the universe and creation. Escobar (2002:19), explaining *managerial missiology*: “Reality is taken as a fixed datum, and no attention is paid to the changes that are needed or that may come as the result of the transforming dynamism of the gospel”. Chapter 4 sets this view with Bosch as well as linking it with *Indigenous knowledge methodologies* (Chilisa 2020; Wilson 2008). A personal reflection illustrates below.

#7 *Personal Reflection by Researcher:*

The past cannot be undone. Greater healing can come, and this has been the case of this research as I have sought self-understandings. Bosch (1991a:531) explains this movement as a heuristic notion, as a search concept, using Kuhn and Martin to describe his way of understanding the term ‘postmodern’. The term ‘post’ looks backwards and forward at the same time and ‘does not mean a simple return to precritical, premodern, preliberal discourse, but a ‘pro-volution’ towards an emerging new. . . paradigm’. He says that ‘postmodern’ is an awkward term, replacing it with ‘ecumenical’. This continues to show what Guider (1996:161) reveals – how much the demands of the postmodern world make on mission practitioners individually and collectively. There do not seem to be ways to teach about having the higher-level consciousness. They cannot be forced nor taught (not predicated on levels of

intelligence, experience, or commitment). Guider citing Bosch (1991a:245-24) points to the inner structure of the human person as the guide: the way “in which he or she makes meaning out of the content of his or her life”. What I have experienced in the shifts described in this study cannot be taught. I went from being a young zealous university student mission practitioner to a high-management level administrator. Then experienced this insurgent consciousness movement, leading to a radical shift within the same congregation.

This has been an issue as I attempt to figure out how to present the findings. The findings of a congregation in collapse, is mainly focused on *spiritual resilience*. And this is something that cannot be taught. My findings have shown that it is possible that one’s mother can influence an adult’s *spiritual resilience*. But these findings are on such a small scale. Although a *maternal-thinking* lens can seek to focus on mothers and mothering individuals who might not be present in many of the aspects of the congregation due to their caring activities. Kanyoro (2002) and Kiboko (2001) are just two examples of the potential of *abuela theology* (Armas 2021) which could be explored with mothers in the ICI-CO community.

7.3 THE CHURCH IS MY MOTHER?

After assuming my own positionality, with much detail, I turn to a larger context. There is a children’s book in the USA, *Are you my mother?* (Eastman 1960). It reminds me of the *historylessness* in the legacy of the SCT. As viewed in Chapter 2, Bosch uses the term *crisislessness* which I place in tension with *historylessness* and then connect with *motherlessness*. These terms speak to the heart of what I see in the *historylessness* legacy of ICOC, which has a theological framework from the beginning from the SCT. At that time in history, ties needed to be cut with Europe, as a process of *self-understandings* in the new nation. But at this point, we must rethink. This dynamic of *historylessness* and *crisislessness* has led to *delusion theology*, such as the *teologia de la casita* (see Appendix R3). As I absorb the implication of this theological position, I have felt much anger; how can we have held on to a theology where we possibly believe that our own children (who have yet to get baptised, fallen into moral weaknesses, or at another Christian congregation) would be outside of God’s kingdom, outside of God’s family, outside of God’s movement? The assumption is that this theology is no longer valid, but I have not found it to be officially replaced.

One of Bosch (1991c) texts has guided much of the interpretation of the data. Bosch (1991c:122) points to the Enlightenment (as in 1991a, 1995) role in: “submission of the Third World peoples and the introduction of the system of colonies”. Bosch (1991c:122) then links: with an “inclusive sense of humanity that eludes whites more than anything else”. Bosch (1991c:123) then: connects racism as a “modern phenomenon and a child of the Enlightenment”.

Although the Enlightenment is an accepted marker; scholarship in LA tends to go farther back in history. LA scholarship establishes the beginning of the modernity project at 1492.²³¹ Illich zooms into a historical watershed as the 12th century, when the religious institution of the day began to institutionalise caregiving: “social machines capable of producing mercy upon demand”. RC and PROT traditions both have that common heritage.

Illich’s thinking on *mutuality* include the concept of *freedom to love* and the *art of friendship* (see section 2.4 where these concepts link to Bosch: mission as love as a response *in a space of freedom*). Many other themes in Illich’s texts have drawn me to him. He holds a view that takes Bosch centuries back (as Bosch points to the Enlightenment as a vital shift; and SCT always points to Constantine as when Christianity shifted its focus). Illich describes the shift, the *dehumanising* shift, as starting from around 1,000 years ago. That is where he points to, when the church as an institution began to take over what before had been relational and face-to-face interactions.

Illich, in his secular work (fuelled by his previous missiological work) devoted the final phase of his life to identifying the age of systems (Heyck 2015). He was extremely concerned with the advances of technology and the system thinking that was constructed theoretically in the 1980s. Cayley (2021:244-277; Esteva 2020) explains that Illich began to critique what he was perceiving in the age of systems; Cayley and Esteva identify Illich’s lens: *system analytic lens* or *system*

²³¹ 1492 is the date Dussel (2012) uses as a reference. Europe first expanded itself beyond its borders, with the ‘discovery’ of the Americas, and the final expulsion of the Moors from Spain. Illich (1981:34-35) contributes with a parallel historical watershed. 1492 is the same year a plan was presented for a systemised education to Queen Isabel. The purposal outlined an education plan throughout the kingdom in the ‘mother tongue or the ‘Queen’s tongue’ – Castille (Spanish). Consequently, of vital importance the Jesuit Order began soon after in 1540, developing the educational plan, *Ratio Studiorum* (1599). This educational plan later influenced the elites of the Enlightenment. (Cayley 2021:283-88 delves more into these themes from Illich’s perspective.)

analytic discourse. He saw the corrupting effect it was having on people's understanding of themselves. Cayley (2021:250) explains Illich's concern: "People had begun to see themselves as 'self-regulating, self-constructing system (s) in need of responsible management". Illich saw that the focus on systems "threatened depersonalization". He gives a parallel view of *liquid modernity*. Cayley (2021:252) gives Illich's view: "[T]hrough the age of systems the world takes on a fluid, kaleidoscopic character in which even the most permanent structures are only a phase of change".

Cayley (2021:250) provides this Illich's perspective - that in this age of system: "We become a part of a system, as if a part of a computer". We now longer use tools, as it had been previously: "A system. . . incorporates me when I enter it-I become part of that system and change its state". Illich, even more than Bosch, allows an interpretation of the data. Illich (in Cayley 2021:383) identifies this as a 'womb-less world' where: "[E]very frontier leads not to a beyond but only to more of the same". The collapsed RBO is a 1980s system. There is no bodily mother, the 'mother' is a system.

Participant 115 expresses a similar thought about life in *the system*:

"I think that about this kind of way of thinking about these people, that they have a strong connection with God and a system. I think that they couldn't make a difference between God and the system they learn. If these people don't have the system, they think that they don't have God in a sense, in a way.

It's very strong, it's very profound in their lives, and it's very difficult to change that. It's very difficult because, I don't know, it's like the way that they're born to the church. They were made by a system and it's the only way that they think that God and to be a Christian could be. It's very hard for these kinds of people, I think, to change their way of thinking" Participant 115.

Participant 115 continues, providing his opinion that there are dangers for one's faith inside of a church and I summarise his thoughts in a prayer format:

God,

People are in a system.

In church it is difficult to change one's way of thinking.

Dangers and Danger. . .

Jesus . . . it is hard to learn to be a Christian.

The relationship with God they know is born in this church, *the system*.

And there are lots of dangers that we can find in the church.

Amen.

Participant 115 recognises this system thinking of Illich and his similar concern. But what happens in a collapse of a Christian organisation or system?

The collapse showed it to be a **failed religious innovation**. Its message of *myth of perfection* was a message of changing the world with Christ (*prosperity theology* of the **brand**: a myth of the potential of building *awesome families* and *amazing marriages* [Jenkins 1996; 2003; 2005]). Leao et al. (2017:93-94) use term, *a modern utopia* which links to the term *myth of perfection*.

Funds/resources came from the USA. The ‘passport’ or ‘door’ into this system or **house** was the *teologia de la casita* (see Appendix R3). Once you were ‘inside’, you were in ‘God’s kingdom’, ‘God’s family’, ‘God’s church’, and ‘Jesus’ movement’. That is, until it was challenged and collapsed. Jenkins (2003:224) concludes, it collapsed because it was “a kingdom that promised too much”.

But the 2003 collapse, showed it for what it was, a faceless, bodiless, wombless, and motherless system.

7.3.1 *Conviviality*

Illich consistently emphasises *conviviality* as the way he viewed the gospel. Cayley (2021) reveals four facets of Illich perspective: (1) in (2021:460) states Illich’s view of the gospel he understood as “nakedly following the naked Christ”; (2) in (2021:461) describes Illich’s renewed Christianity: “He understood the Gospel primarily as an invitation to live in freedom rather than to invent law, bureaucracy, and pastoral edification on a previously unimagined scale. And he understood this invitation as self-limiting, never setting aside Christian dogma, but deemphasises it”; (3) Illich’s dual view of prayer: (i) in (2021:460) “prayer as the search for the presence of God” and (ii) in (2021:318) as a way of learning to lose; and (4) in (2021:461) friendships as the proper places to

‘search for truth’ and sought to *create spaces for togetherness* on mountainsides, in marketplaces, and in dining rooms

Dining rooms link directly with to the concept built by Bosch of *table-fellowship*.²³² Allen’s view is similar, Rutt (2018a:92) Allen’s insistence: *smaller is better* and *less is more*. Allen was an unstoppable and untiring energy as a voice of reflection seeking the “empowerment of the local congregation”²³³ which continues to be relevant to this day.

This *conviviality* is connected to mutuality, as defined in Chapter 2. Cayley (2021:383) describes Illich’s thinking. In the context of the Luke account of the parable of the Samaritan Cayley contributes: “‘Who is my neighbor?’ He [Illich] answers, ‘He to whom you as a free human being establish your personal proportionality by turning to him in love and inviting him to the *mutuality of love* which is usually called friendship’” (italics added). Leao (2022:77) gives the exact definition for the use of Illich ‘convivial’:

In this sense, ‘convivial is a technical term to designate a modern society of responsibly limited tools.’ That is why the term is applied to tools rather than to people. A shared house, therefore, in the context of how Illich uses the term, is not necessarily convivial, although people are ‘living with’ one another. What determines a convivial society is a relation between people and their tools and to which extent this relation sprouts new collectively.

There are many concepts that would need more explanation such as tools. In the case study, the *teologia de la casita* (Appendix R3) shows itself to be a tool. Not only as a guide for biblical study to be allowed into the *casita* – **little house** but also the *one-on-one discipling* tool (Appendix P), where everyone has someone ‘in charge of them’ and each congregation also has an overseer married couple outside of that congregation. A very structured system based on rigid, corporation, business thinking, the ways of *managerial missiology* and *McDonaldisation*. The *International handbook on ecumenical diakonia* (Ampony et al. 2021) has several chapters focused on *conviviality*. Chapter 56 on ‘Seeking conviviality’ (Addy and Siirto 2021:399-411) define

²³² I believe that Bosch would have connected Illich’s thinking on many levels. As I have read both widely, I can ‘feel’ Illich in certain sections of Bosch (for example in 1991a:262, 355). One of the reasons I see Illich and Bosch share a *humanising* way of viewing other human beings as their interpretation of the gospel.

²³³ Cf. Rutt (2018a; 28, 50, 69, 142; 2018b: 10, 14-15, 24, 186) for more details to Allen’s thought and lived experience in this area.

conviviality and the third definition is Illich's concept. Addy and Siirto (2021:401) stress the importance of Illich in the present-day discussion: Illich is "critical of the dominant economy and economic growth". The authors (2021:401) pinpoint Illich's approach as "rooted in the idea of the incarnation and the idea that Christians should adopt an incarnational perspective in practice". Addy and Siirto (2021:401) do not bring into the discussion the limitation of tools, which is vital for this research. The authors (2021:401) highlight *covivality* as the pursuit of: "[A]bundant life together therefore in shared relational responsibility".

Returning to the case study, reminding the reader of the three main themes discovered in Chapter 6 - Part 1: (i) 'active prayer as spirituality'; (ii) '*the system*'; and (iii) 'friendship/relationality' as the reason for staying in congregation. This last theme connects with *conviviality*.

Below is the content analysis of the category: **Friendship/relationality** in Figure 17:

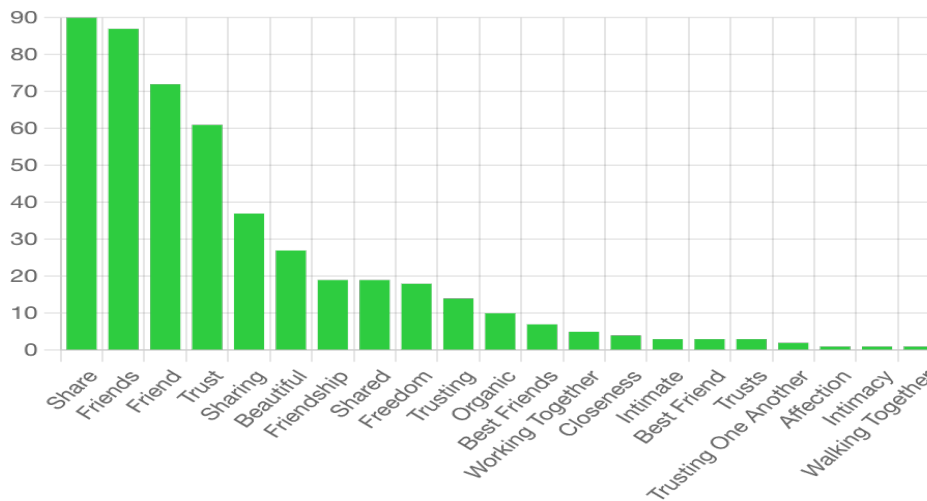


Figure 17: Content analysis of the participants' words/phrases on friendships

A summary of the word frequency for this is as follows:

Share with friends. A friend is someone you can trust. Sharing is beautiful in friendship. It is shared freedom. Trusting is organic. Best friends working together. There is closeness. It is intimate. A best friends trust. It is important to trust one another. Affection and intimacy while *walking together*.

Below is the context analysis of the category: **Creating spaces**, in Figure 18:

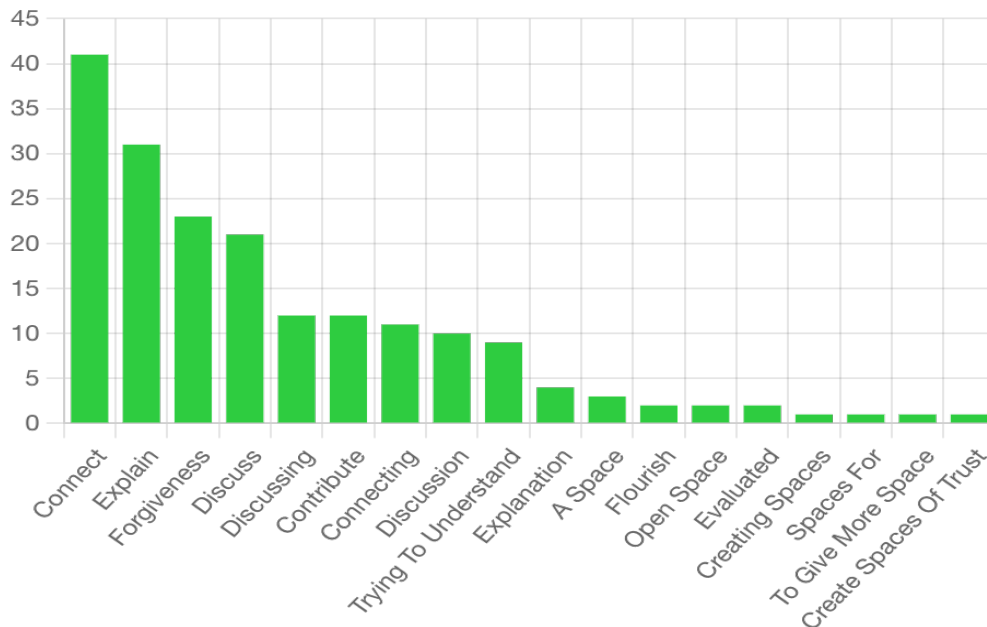


Figure 18: Content analysis of the participants' words/phrases around creating spaces

The paragraph below presents a summary of the word frequency for this phrase:

Connect to explain. A place for forgiveness and to discuss. Discussing contribute to connecting. Discussion while trying to understand. Explanation in a space to flourish. An open space is evaluated. *Creating spaces*, spaces for, to give more space, to *create spaces* of trust.

Below is the content analysis of the category: **School of thought**, in Figure 19:

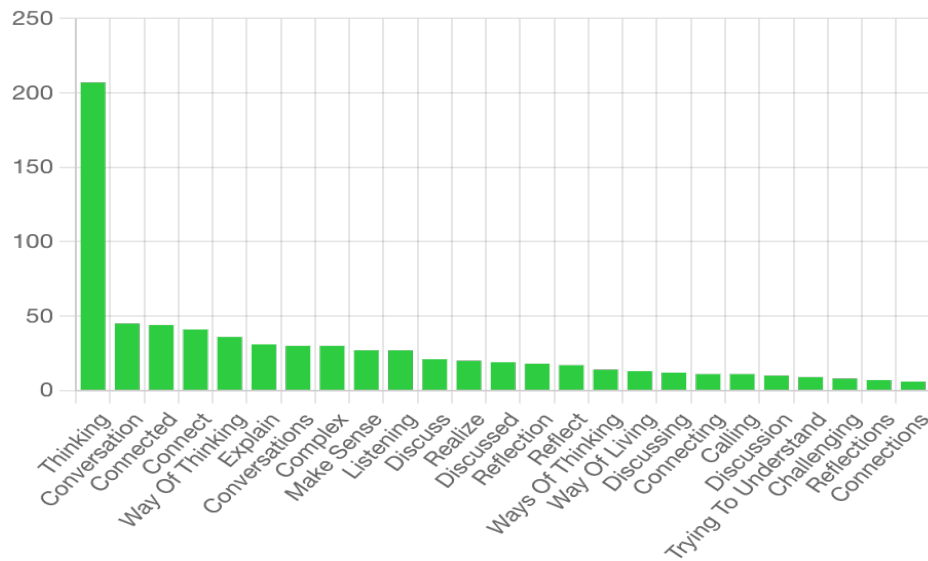


Figure 19: Content analysis of the participants' words/phrases around school of thought

Summary from the word frequency:

Thinking in conversation. Connected so as to connect with the way of thinking. Explain in conversations, so that the complex makes sense. Listening and discuss. Realise discussed reflection. Reflect on ways of thinking, way of living. Discussing for connecting. Calling into discussion. Trying to understand the challenging reflections and connections.

Below the context analysis of the category: **Hospitality**, in Figure 20:

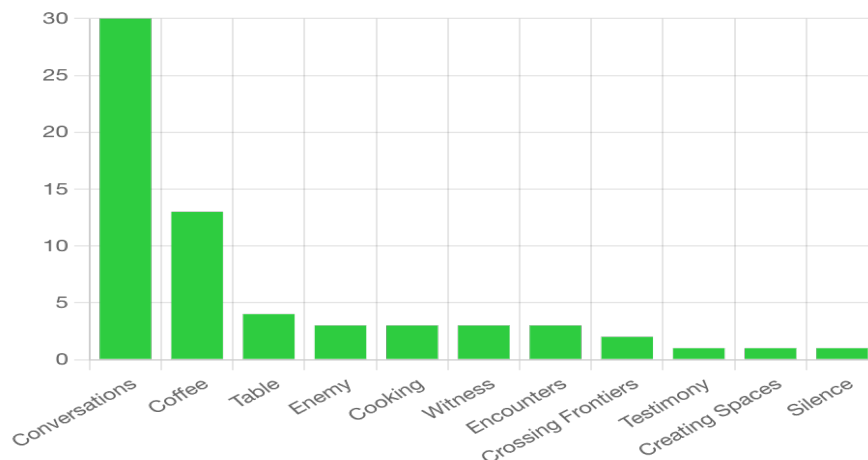


Figure 20: Content analysis of the participants' words/phrases around hospitality

Summary from the word frequency:

Conversations around coffee, *around the table*. Even with one's enemy. Cooking and witness encounters. Crossing frontiers in testimony. *Creating spaces* even in silence.

7.3.2 *Conviviality: Lived religion*

The above data shows what would take many quotes from the interviews to show. After the common experience, of the collapse, which left us, each in their own way, realising that *the system* was not real. As the previous interpretation showed, a faceless, bodiless, and motherless system. We wouldn't have been able to articulate this concept, but I think that if I were to ask each of my participants, they would most likely agree. With the collapse, I focused on what I found to be real: (i) Christian spirituality (with a focus on the Sermon on the Mount); (ii) my body (my small children as a connection to my own body); and (iii) close relationships (my husband and a few friends). *Practices of mutuality* shifted immensely. From structured *one-on-one discipling* relationships to building trust through spontaneous friendship/relationality. As I review the data results and review Illich's thinking on age of system and *conviviality*, I make links. The current conviviality is in sharp contrast to the pre-collapse *practices of mutuality* as 'felt' in these poems:

Poem 10: Instant Family (Participant 212)

Instant Family

Teenagering, teen working.

Impose, measuring, following up.

Making the world go around.

System

Poem 11: Instant Friends (Participant 212)

Instant Friends

Very, awkward.

Didn't work, had to do it, whoever landed.

I felt peculiar.

System

In contrast to the sentiment of the pre-collapse structure, Figure 17 shows the results from the category: Friendship, ‘sharing’ is the most used word; ‘friends’, ‘friend’ and ‘trust’ follow. In the category: Creating spaces, the summary from Figure 18 is so rich and expressive as to what I personally experienced and the data collected in the interviews:

Connect to explain. A place for forgiveness and to discuss. Discussing contribute to connecting. Discussion while trying to understand. Explanation in a space to flourish. An open space is evaluated. *Creating spaces*, spaces for, to give more space, to *create spaces* of trust.

Spaces were created around the limits of one’s own life, *self-imposed limitations*. Breaking from ‘money ran the system’; these spaces were not created with funds provided from ICI-CO or from the USA. Category: School of thought, in Figure 19 shows the top frequency of ‘thinking’ and ‘conversation’ in the category; next words are ‘connected’, ‘connect’, and ‘way of thinking’. Then Figure 19 follows, in the category: Hospitality, with linking ‘conversations’ with ‘coffee’. People in CO love to have conversations around coffee. That can be done at any place, on a low budget. My husband and I decided to have many people over for meals, *around the ‘table’*, another high frequency phrase in Figure 20.

One of my main theology of missions or mode of mission revolved around cooking, even for those whom I perceived as my enemies, as Figure 20 links conversations, coffee, table to enemies. So much of our life, since we returned in 2004, could be described as *creating spaces* for *table-fellowship*. Conversations *around the table* which could be understood as crossing frontiers or boundary-crossing in conversation. But also, a mode of mission is listening in Figure 19. Figure 19, also links ‘thinking’ with ‘conversations’ is a frequently used word. It reflects the quality of conversations, connecting, listening, and trying to make sense of the complex. It reflects the process of learning together, as we all lived the collapse and sought *togetherness*. This analysis draws upon Smith practice-centred research within sociology of religion.

7.4 CONCLUSION

Yes, admitting my positionality and agency in the pre-collapsed ICOC makes me feel very vulnerable. I would have liked to hide my past. But as researchers must follow the data, I had to follow my data. I am reminded of the hooks (1994:74) contribution: “[I]t takes courage to face our pain and turn it into theory, but it is worth the risk”.

As I began the section on *conviviality* and reviewed the data analysis on the categories I developed in Speakai.co: ‘friendship’, ‘creating spaces’, ‘school of thought’, and ‘mutual-hospitality’. This analysis reminds me of what I found as real following the **trainwreck**. That experience of the real, is what made this research project possible. I have walked through my own ‘valley of death’ and found refreshment on the other side.

If I had given into my legacy of *historylessness* and begun anew somewhere else, with new people, a new church group; I would not be who I am today. I faced the past – and I am thankful.

If “mission is the ‘mother of theology’”, first we have viewed the type of theology and structure that leads to *dehumanisation*. A *theologia de la casita* developed in the 1980s, the age of systems. Religious branded organisations (RBOs) have expanded as well as corporaton such as Walmart have boomed towards global expansion mirroring **global train systems**. The collapse of this RBO provides the opportunity to see beyond and dig deeper. In this case study, that theology is deemed motherless. As the little bird that was flying around asking *Are you my mother?* – the ‘mother’ has been found; it name is ‘*the system*’. The *self-understandings* have shifted from a limited *bubble identity* to a broader one. And the *practices of mutuality* have shifted from structured relationships based on the tool *one-on-one discipleship* to more spontanous ones. The matricentric context in Colombia was factor, as it served as a social glue that contributed to the *togetherness*. But those in the case study, ICI-CO, discovered together the meaning of *mutuality*, as they created spaces while *walking together* through a system broken system beyond repair.

The following chapter concludes the study by recapping the findings, making recommendations, and presenting an overall summary.

CHAPTER 8:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

8.0 INTRODUCTION

In line with the objectives of Chapter 1, this chapter seeks: To summarise and conclude the study. The questions that guide the chapter: What is the summary of the study? Can the findings be displayed in a creative manner? How does the *maternal-thinking* logic guide a *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission? How to display the conclusions of the dual sociological and theological academic movements, through data visualisation, or vignettes? What recommendations are suggested? What new *slogan* was developed?

A review of the research problem is important. In a nutshell this brief question describes it: “How does ICI-CO continue with its *togetherness*, as this breakage led to cohesion of a new group identity as well as what can be interpreted as *resilient spirituality* that stood out in the participants? This research problem or concern led to the formulation of the **main research question**: In view of the collapse of an international USA-based RBO, how have shifts in *self-understandings* and *practices of mutuality* shaped the ministry and mission of the Colombian congregation?

The summarised answer to this question is the following: It has been perceived that the participants have an attribute of *resilient spiritual* amid *liminal* situations that have been confronted since the collapse. This is identified as a practice of *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission (or mode of mission) in contrast with the tools and methods of *managerial missiology*. *Resilient spirituality* has been identified as the ability to walk among *broken systems*.

This chapter concludes the dissertation with phrases and images describing a new way of ministry and mission; understood a *transforming mutuality*. *Mutual-hospitality* and *table-fellowship*; coffee together and meals *around the table* were vital for *togetherness*. Spaces were created around table-fellowship in coffee shops, living rooms, and dining rooms. There was always room

for someone else at someone's home. The focus is on being open, inclusive, and vulnerable. *Mutuality* invites flexibility and the potential for transformation, especially within the context of *maternal-thinking* and *female-maternal-embodied-knowledge*. And a new *slogan* is suggestion in poetic form (in contrast with the previous *slogan* focused on conquering the world for Jesus).

Although in general, I believe that I am dealing with what Haig-Brown (2003:415) calls *impossible knowledge* – knowledge that is beyond our grasp because of the limits of our language and lived experiences. Haig-Brown encourages *creating spaces* to allow ourselves to be with the unknown, to recognise our limitations. In this research project, I have *created spaces* for *deep listening or presencing*. I decided to listen to the other side of the collapse narrative, or the **trainwreck**. I only knew my own side and mainly the side of those in leadership positions.²³⁴ By doing so, I have been able to learn much more about the experience of international and local collapse from those who experienced it first-hand. And I have created a narrative with an eight-scene vignette (Appendix R1).

Words cannot do justice to the experience of hearing voices, which is why in Feb. 2022 and June 2022, I undertook chapters with an *arts-based poetic inquiry*. At that time is when I discovered the term ethnopoetics, as a sub-discipline in anthropology. And then in June 2022, I generated a creative output, a '*multivocal poetic narrative*'. This experience was incredibly profound and unique. This dissertation is an academic and more appropriate scholarly expression of the findings.

I have attempted to show my positionality and my distance as I listened to the stories told and questions answered by the participants. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 have especially shown the way of intertwining data analysis and data interpretation. I have attempted to manage the *liminal position* holding a insider/outsider positionality. Within *maternal-thinking* I am an insider. My thinking is now based in maternal ways or *thinking-with-the-womb*. Previous so the collapse, I used to think more like my father, as I was trained by him and by my culture to work and run systems. Eventually realised that I needed to connect with my *motherline* as well. This was a shift in

²³⁴ Castellanos (2011) provides ample perspective of ICI-CO leadership, and the other authors in the ICOC literature reviewed in Chapter 3 provide a leadership perspective.

thinking that I learned from experience. I discovered in this research journey that I am a mix of my father's and mother's different ways of thinking and acquiring knowledge inside of me. This inner mix of my father and mother has created inner tension within me, as each side had their own unique way of looking at things.²³⁵ This insight came as I was grappling with the vulnerability of the fear and shame as I accepted my past positionality in the collapsed RBO. Whilst simultaneously acknowledging and enjoying the profound theological shifts that inform my present and future.

8.1 SUMMARY: INTERTWINING THE DATA FROM THE THREE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

This research journey has been full of insights, but only a few can be highlighted. Some of the most important insights include:

The aim and objectives of the study have been accomplished (listed in section 1.6). A few are enumerated and described below:

First, in **Chapter 2**, a working definition for *mutuality* was created as the theoretical and conceptual framework was built.

Second, in **Chapter 3**, this research found that it is difficult to describe the type of denomination, which has led to the creation of a new term, *religious branded organisation* (RBO), see Appendix R2 for a full vignette - six slides - of the research tool. It is links to the image of **train fuel**. Figure 21 below depicts the shift from a living room (see Figure 3) to a larger local group:

²³⁵ The collapse of the RBO that my parents and I actively participated in as mission practitioners in LA is a vital part of our family history and a theme of constant discussion. The questions we have raised as we muse on the common past have fueled much of this research.

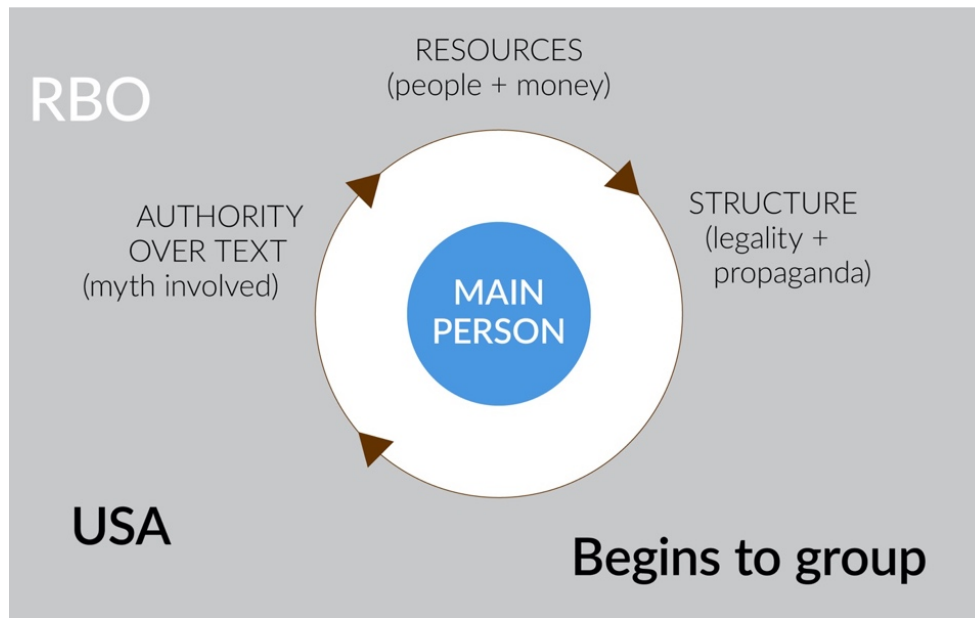


Figure 21: Basic template for the study of RBOs (2nd of 6)

The way this group functions in a transnational diffusion is beyond the scope of this research but a graphic depiction is illustrated in Figure 22 below:

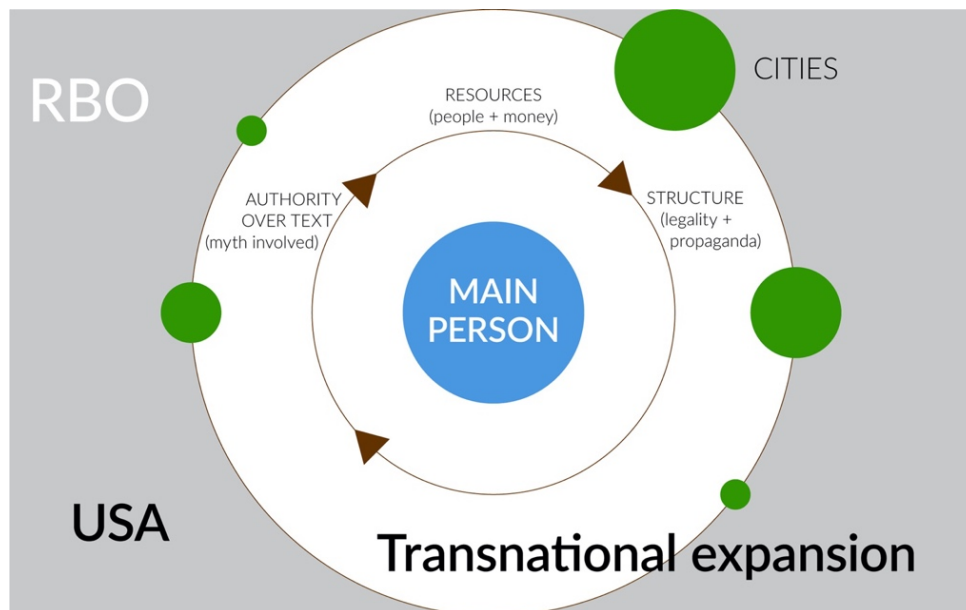


Figure 22: Basic template for the study of RBOs (3rd of 6)

Slides 4 and 5 can be viewed in Appendix R2. The Slide 4 illustrates how the transnational expansion begins small previous to developing a legal and administrative structure. And Slide 5 is a list of potential ways a RBO expands when expanding in another country.

And, finally, Figure 23 demonstrates how a RBO can be expanded to another country:

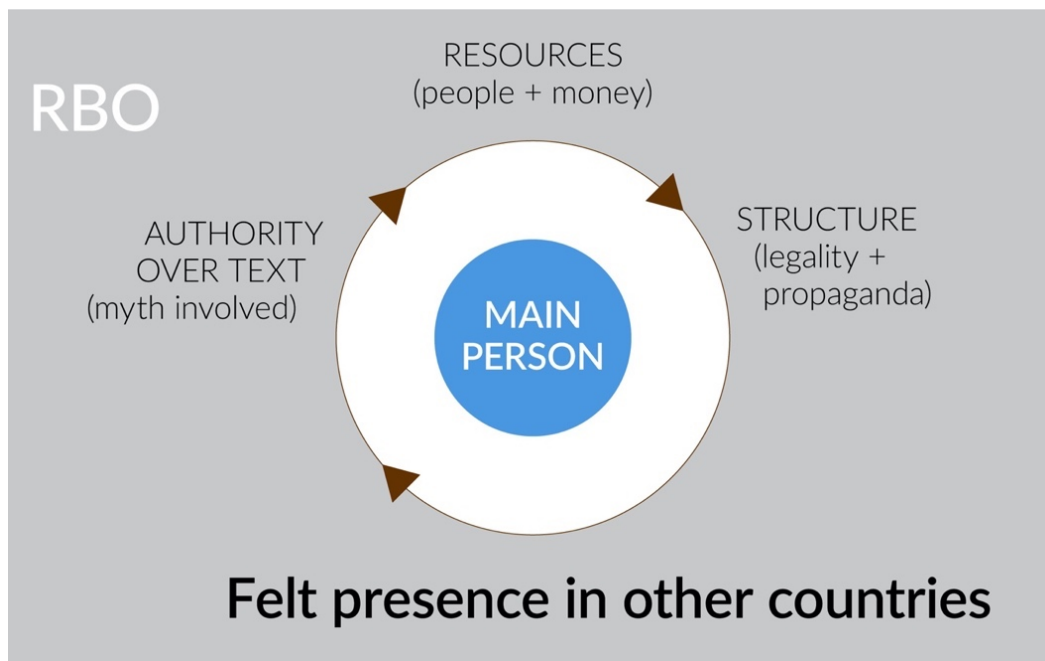


Figure 23: Basic template for the study of RBOs (6th of 6)

This tool could potentially be used within the sociology of mission to ask questions in all size religious groups, especially when they are not guided by policies or structures of historical traditions.

Third, in the objective of using empirical methods for research, sought in **Chapter 4**, the pandemic was used to seek creativity to confront the research challenges. Although research is typically conducted under standard conditions, in times of crisis such as a worldwide pandemic, creativity is necessary. I was personally transformed by the natural adaptation of the shifts due to COVID-19 policies and was able to find new ways of thinking and working that actually provided more opportunities than limitations. This process confirmed and contributed the *sentipensante* way of knowing.

Fourth, the objective of applying *maternal-thinking* was achieved in **Chapter 5**. And the study found in **Chapter 7** that the pre-collapse system in the case study was defined as motherless, and that the *togetherness* of the congregation has been shown to be an aspect of *conviviality* which can faintly be connected to the matricentric society of CO.

Fifth, the objective of undertaking creative means of doing and displaying research was achieved throughout. When it comes to undertaking academic research, it is often helpful to have an insider perspective or *a view from the inside*. However, this can be a challenge such as late-blooming academics, like myself. This means that I may not have the technological savvy or other skills that diverse individuals may have, but I do bring a lifetime of experience to the table. Thankfully, I was able to face this challenge directly and was able to find creative ways to approach my research. The results of my work are detailed in **Chapters 5, 6 and 7**.

8.2 MAIN CONCLUSIONS ADAPTING MATERNAL-THINKING

As this research concludes that the RBO-type of Christian mission is incompatible with Allen's *three-selves concept*. I believe the only reason that Allen's concept can be applied in this case study, is due to the collapse. The dependence on funds/resources as well as the necessity of the *bubble identity* of a **brand**. A **brand** would seek to maintain a consistency in *self-understandings* and *practices of mutuality*), which contributes to rigidity in functioning. Using logic and lived experience of eating at McDonald's in many countries, I made this following comparison. Although McDonald's, as a local franchising, is self-funded, there are many specific aspects of McDonald's that are internationally standardised, to recognise the McDonald's **global brand**. If the many items that make it a recognisable **brand** are not met, the **brand** name would no longer apply.

The research has concluded that ICOC is a **brand**, it is understandable that there must be consistency internationally. The data of this study implies that a top-down control from a central headquarters is necessary to guide and enforce compliance. Graeber (2011) introduces debt as a way of enforcing compliance and control. More research is needed to explore this potential missiological implication. I conclude this finding to be incompatible with Allen's *three-selves concept* due to the motor of institutional *self-preservation*. The collapse experienced in ICI-CO, heard from a majority GRMP perspective, allows for this understanding. Research on non-USA RBOs (especially in the Global South, such as the ones initiated and funded in CO) would be extremely interesting to compare and contrast with these findings. With the current *from everyone*

to everywhere, the missiological implications of *managerial missiology*, associated with the USA are entering new frontiers.

These conclusions bring the importance and relevance of bringing a maternal perspective with *maternal-thinking* into missiological research. The study found that by using this lens, it was possible to develop a theoretical framework and undertake more research in this area. It is hoped that this type of endeavour will contribute to a better understanding of missions from a sociological perspective.

Describing my three-fold positionality was vital for arriving at the conclusions in this dissertation: (i) as a mother; (ii) involved in mothering; as well as (iii) my pre-collapse role in ICI-CO. These aspects of my positionality are highlighted through the dissertation. I identified *maternal-thinking* in **Chapter 1** and **Chapter 4**; consequently, analysing the implications of this in **Chapter 5**. In that chapter, I found that the potential for viewing the *missio Dei* in the lifetime relationship of several sons with their mothers allows for and can lead to a critique of one's tradition or church in an intimate and relational manner. Additionally, Counted's (2015) research draws a link between one's personal *God-image* and parent-child attachment contagion, which supports the results of this study. This, in turn, led to my examination of *motherlessness* and its interconnectivity with *historylessness* and *crisislessness* in **Chapter 7**.

“The Church had withdrawn the space in which he could play the part of the obedient son of a wayward mother – critical and faithful at once” (Cayley 2021:87). This guided Chapter 7 as I tried to apply *the church is my mother*, but realised why it does not work. As the broad tradition, SCT, and even more so, the 1980s *hyphenateds* version, ICOC, is a lifeless system.²³⁶ Like being inside of a computer with no original source. Something was wrong with the original system, as evidenced by ICI-CO experience. This is confirmed by Jacoby (personal email communication, June 3, 2022):

“In one sense *the system* is not just broken,
it was has [original wording] suffered a fatal flaw from inception.

²³⁶ Reminder of Chapter 3 quote by Lewis (2005:533), “The ICOC was the Church of Christ on steroids, what the Restoration Movement might have looked like had it been invented by sun Myung Moon or L. Ron Hubbard instead of Alexander Campbell and B.W. Stone”.

I wish I knew what to do....” (italics added).

This response has a poetic feel to it!

The concepts of ‘life’ and ‘technology’ are interconnected in a way that Illich's thinking is vital to understanding, as his thinking is missiological framed. Systems are given life-like qualities through myth and play a significant role in shaping our lives. While debt is often seen as an economic issue, Graeber's (2011) research provides a historical perspective that shows how it is also rooted in the relationship between a mother and child. Exchange is a complex concept that can be difficult to understand, but Barclay's (2015) work provides insights that help us grasp its importance. Vaughan's (2015; 2020) work on *maternal gift economy* allows us to rethink some of our assumptions about the world. The philosophy of technology offers valuable insights into the impact of fast-paced technological advances on our lives. This is one of the areas where I find that the reflection in the 60s and 70s speak to the current situation; the cyclical pattern mentioned in Chapter 1. All these areas are important for understanding the ways in which we belong to various communities and networks. Bosch (1991a:265, 355) dialogues with Illich on this theme are highlighted; both read and participated in discussions about this subject.

The horizon for many people today seems to be the sum and limit of what they know and care about (Meyer 1986:26). This question challenges the idea of evangelising the world in this generation, asking if it is possible or sustainable. It also raises questions about *self-understandings*, such as who someone is and what they believe they ought to be. From a *maternal-thinking* perspective, one's body, heart, and mind can only love and care for a limited number of humans. Another question is how identity is shaped, specifically in relation to a sense of profound belonging. In this case study, the participants showed that the collapse of *the system* shifted their identity to a broader understanding of their Christian identity. However, it is unclear if these Christian **brands** (RBO's) provide a sense of profound belonging today or if they are more superficial. It would be interesting to explore similar discussions from a century ago, such as Kähler's profound concerns (Bosch 1991a:518). Participant 111 (see Appendix N1, N2 & N3) discusses in length the difference between the definitions: *Tripartite mutuality* and *ecclesiastical mutuality*, shedding much light into the case study.

These questions about *self-understandings* are related to trust and identity. Who or what do I trust? For the difficult times, who can I rely on? I believe that the way someone perceives that *glue*, or the *trustworthiness* of who they are attached to, is their most important *self-understandings*. During the Enlightenment in Europe, there was a greater development of colonialism. And in turn, the project of nation-states. So, people were encouraged to trust the nation-state. The assumption was that the nation-state would care for its citizens. ‘Give your life for us and we will take care of you’. In the expansion of the West, it was common for men to leave their families, as well as young couples leaving their extended families (many times they would never meet again). The autonomous (or motherless) individual was the ideal during this time. Could the connection of this and the interrelations between colonialism and the expansion of Christianity to the non-West provide clues as to some of the missing links? If Christian societies were encouraged to build family systems, along lines like motherless ones in Europe (and then USA); could there be similar results as analysed in the collapse or **trainwreck** in this case study? Below are three literary works that might provide some clues.

First clues are in Garcia Marquez's (2003a) powerful imagery of the invisible bond, through the thread of blood in the town, between a dead son and his mother, we see a clear example of the cultural context and its impact on understanding. The second clue is the story of a little bird searching for his mother (Eastman 1960) relates to a potentially Western way of looking at things in a lack of clarity as to who is truly one's mother, although finally figuring it out. The final literary work, Nielson (2022) *Motherless Creations: Fictions of artificial life*, validates the potential link and dynamic between *historylessness*, *crisislessness*, and *motherlessness*. Nielson, in the genre of speculative fiction, illustrates Enlightenment science fiction (British, German, French and USA); describing motherless creations were made with technology. She concludes that men, as creators of ‘life’, would then become the ‘mothers’. A missiological examination of this theory could be worthy of research.

A study into the history of *motherhood* and each epoch of Christian mission is important. There is something there that needs to be understood. I am certain of this. Graeber brings into question,

is it a reaction against the debt that one can never repay to one's mother? Tickle (2008:85-87)²³⁷ traces the changes in the USA's religious panorama to less influence from 'Grandma', as cars (technology advancements) allowed for Sunday road trips instead of going to Grandma's for dinner. Tickle (2008:112-115) then specifies another important shift, after World War II: "We lost the traditional mother. We lost the traditional or nuclear family". She indicates the new question: "Where now—or what now—is the basis for our social order?". She brings this up not as a call to go back to the past but to seek to understand the future. Tickle concludes with the same question that guided her research of each upheaval (a pattern of every 500 years – an upheaval which impacts Christianity). Tickle (2008:145) suggests the most important issue is: "Where now is our authority?".

The previous question guides the way the tool developed for the study of the current *hyphenateds*, emerging religious groups, home church movements, RBOs, or even Allen's *family rite* can be analysed. See Appendix R2 for the vignette of the tool. This is just a beginning of research into the nature of religious organisations in the mode of RBOs, especially Christian ones. How can the tool that was developed to study current *hyphenateds* religious groups be used to analyse other religious groups? Even when the 'solution' to all religious institutional ills is to participate in a *house church*, there are always important questions to be asked in a triad: (i) who is viewed as the authority over the biblical text?; (ii) who is providing funds/resources?; and (iii) who is in control over the structure: legal and media (*propaganda*)?

How can we be restored and move forward in our Christian faith traditions? This is a question that has been asked for centuries, but it is especially important in times of crisis or collapse, when there is a lack of answers. To avoid responsibility for the past or the present, some people may try to claim *historylessness* as the legacy of their tradition (as in the RBO). However, Christian traditions have been attempting to answer these questions for a long time, and more depth can be pursued in research on dialogue in the WCC, Lausanne, for example. Bosch, as a *history-whisperer*, provides a model for this case study. But an aspect of this is also the inability of understanding, due to positionality. Bosch pursues this line of reasoning.

²³⁷ I found out about Tickle's theory of this pattern of change in Christianity every 500 years in a lecture by Prof. Jurgens Hendricks at Stellenbosch Faculty of Theology, Sept 20, 2019.

Bosch (1978:289-91) discusses the idea of *in-between spaces* or a *liminal* position that is situated between the West and the rest. In the context of the *moratorium debate* at that time (see Castro 1975), this perspective could be used to explore new ideas and ways: “the *moratorium call* is directed primarily at the missionaries themselves who are unable to foster meaningful relationships” (*italics added*). And then in response to the many questions asked in the *moratorium debate*:

All these are serious questions which demand careful and penetrating answers. . . But I would like to say that when all these answers have been given, logically and theologically correct, and when all has been said and done, the real issue might still have remained untouched. We might still not have penetrated the profundity of the *moratorium call*. At its deepest it is a cry that says, ‘Please hear us! Please take us seriously!’ It is the same cry as the one sounded by Azariah at the Edinburgh Conference. . . ‘Give us FRIENDS’. . . (quoting Bangkok conference) the *moratorium* springs from our failure to relate to one another in a way which does not *dehumanize* (*italics added*).

Bosch’s reflections on the case reveal a deep understanding of its underlying complexities. – the impossible knowledge. Bosch has a clear vision.

The **trainwreck** of ICI-CO and the consequent shifts have been beyond my ability to understand using theological or logical explanations. I have attempted to use a *critical realism* framework, guided by *maternal-thinking* and my own experience of *motherhood*, to better understand what has happened. This has led me to study the history of the denomination, the socioeconomic and cultural situation in CO and the USA, and my own positionality. Bishop Azariah's memorable speech in 1910 inspired many to look beyond the barriers of discrimination and embrace unity.²³⁸

Using *critical hermeneutics*, I have tried to capture the research with *a view from the inside*. I have tried to capture my positionality, which was evident in the empirical data in **Chapter 6**. It is

²³⁸ Harper (2000:143-153) provides many details. A careful reading of Bishop Azariah's experience points to his frustration with Isabel Whitehead, "Whitehead's energetic wife". He travelled with her from India and was so frustrated with her that he addressed his feelings in public. It seems that he did not feel comfortable addressing her directly about his frustrations. I am not saying that people need a mother, but they do seek true friendships – the *glue* of horizontal *mutuality*. And in the case study, the system did not provide this during the collapse. The relationships are described as forced or artificial, not necessarily built on freedom. But as the active prayers as spirituality show an awareness and agency of the Unseen, this unseen acted as an invisible *glue*.

my reality and the collapse helped me gain awareness. I have continually sought greater awareness, as shown in this dissertation. But even as I attempt to voice the stories, views, comments, opinions, and lived experiences of my participants, I could be too energetic. As expressed in Chapter 1, in Jan. 2020, as my son and I read Garcia Marquez (1982) and watched the CO film *El abrazo de la serpiente*, I experienced a *flash of insight*. I understood that I will never totally understand. Kenyatta (1965:124) expresses this sentiment eloquently when he describes the difference for a European (or someone with my specific USA background) ‘living’ among a people and ‘knowing’ them. I have lived among people from LA my whole life and specifically in CO for over three decades. In my study I conclude that there is still so much I do not know, even if my own husband and children are from CO.

I think that one thing that Christian organisations and mission agencies need to keep in mind is to be aware of the meaning and implications of using the image of family. Family has not become a marketing hook. The extensive research into the concept of family revealed that it is an extremely complicated term. It can easily be manipulated that that is way I recommend caution as to its application in this missiological context. As in the case study literature, the converts were encouraged to distance themselves from their families, using biblical teachings out of context (i.e., ‘hate your mother and father’). I think this is something the West has much to learn about, especially when it comes to the image of the family. More research is merited as to what does this image mean to different culture groups and possible miscommunication or misconceptions that may have resulted long term, especially for those who have worked for this specific RBO as TNMPs moving around to different LA countries.

I also think that missiologists need to be aware of how indigenous thinking can be incorporated into these systems in an unethical way, camouflaged within an impersonal system. For example, just because an organisation in the USA or anywhere else, uses the concept *ubuntu* or *all my relations* does not mean it knows what it originally means in the context where the philosophical view originates. Awareness could provide ethical guidelines. Smith (2017:15) posits vital questions: “Who ‘owns’ the religious cultures and traditions and why? How is the religion authorship maintained, even at the expense of ethics?”

I think that some of what Bosch was trying to express is understood from the AFR philosophy he was immersed in, “A human is a human because of other humans” (Mbaya 2010:372); “A human is human because of other humans (Achebe 2018:54); or the Lakota principle: *all my relations* “means that everyone is at home here” (Villanueva 2018:11, 181); or as expressed with *maternal-thinking* in Chapter 2, *I am because you are*.

In CO, with *maternal-thinking* and supplied by the table-fellowship concept, I best understand this as *bienvenidos, siempre se puede hechar mas agua a la sopa* (welcome, we can always add more water to the soup, meaning that there is always room for more *around the table*). This is what I conclude as the shift in the *self-understandings* and *practices of mutuality* of the participants of ICI-CO. They understood that the Christian message is not exclusive and decided to take down the *high-boundary* walls of the *teologia de la casita* (see Appendix R3). *Mission as boundary-crossing* is seen here. More study would need to be done to identify the exact shifts and changes in the theology and practices of the ‘walls’, but below is evidence that the walls have shifted significantly.

A letter written on Nov. 3, 2021 (see Appendix D1 & D2) allows one to see the new shape the congregation has taken since the collapse. But first, the why, how, and what of the shifts. Although what I have understood from my participants is their understanding of Illich’s *conviviality*, as expressed in poetic manner at end of the paper.

8.2.1 The ‘why’ of the collapse of the system (built on ‘sacred ground’)

A general conclusion cannot be made, but as seen in Chapter 7, the concluded *motherlessness* contrasts vividly with the *motherline* of the matricentric society in CO. A simple comparison in the forementioned books: USA book *Are you my mother?* (Eastman 1960) in contrast to Garcia Marquez’s (2003a) imagery of the blood of the dead son finding its way through town to his mother. One of the reasons for the collapse is what I believe to be cultural arrogance, of believing the USA’s way of ‘doing family’ to be a universal application. This is not a new problem within missiology, as there has been a tendency for the family practices of the sending church dominate culture to have a blind eye to including their culture with the gospel message.

I have much evidence of this in my data as to this USA dominate culture permeating the culture in CO, including the family dynamics. But at the same time, in ICI-CO, many mothers followed their children into the congregation (examples in findings and lived experience). So, at the time of the collapse, there was a relational *glue* of family within the congregation, that could have helped with the *togetherness*. After the collapse, the data shows the relational focus of the congregation. Natural or spontaneous friendships were sought and developed (not the pre-collapse *instant family* and *instant friends*). The data showed that this relational reason gave the reason to stay. People's homes became more of a base for their Christian activities as Participant 115 explains in depth. That led his whole family to become a part of the congregation after the collapse. This is just one example of many. The content analysis in the previous chapter showed the category of *mutual-hospitality* and *table-fellowship*: coffee together and meals *around the table* were vital for *creating spaces* for the *togetherness*.

8.2.2 The 'how' of the communal togetherness (relational 'leaning in')

How did this *togetherness* happen? Spaces had to be created, as the places and systems had collapsed, in many ways. The lack of trust had to be created again spontaneously. *Creating spaces* is a neutral term that can be used in this case. The research shows many spaces used, mainly around *table-fellowship*: coffee shops, living rooms, and dining rooms. But also, a rented place for meetings, and so on. When *the system* collapsed, those who wanted to continue together figured out ways to be together, many options are within *table-fellowship*. This is the seeking of *conviviality*. That *togetherness* is sought Leao (2022:77) defined as: "a convivial society is a relation between people and their tools and to which extent this relation sprouts new collectivity". When the 'imported' tools (USA funds/money that fuelled *the system*; the tool of *one-on-one discipling*; and paid staff that continued text interpretation from the centre [main person]) were basically gone, as well as betrayal of trust in the RBO, *conviviality* describes these other ways of connecting, beyond those tools. In this study, about the hidden aspects of *mutuality* - *glue*, this continued *togetherness* is difficult to describe but the data has given evidence.

Another possible idea, that goes along with the *maternal-thinking* mentioned in the paragraph above, but much more research would be needed to confirm the following theory. Could it be that due to the matricentric society, many mothers joined their children (applying *leaning in*), in this

innovative Christian group as a desire to be together? Is it possible that a theology of reversal of roles, that is sought in missiological discussion on power dynamics, could benefit from more research in this area? The research was very clear, in these intimate accounts of the dynamic between mother and adult children, the mother taking a learning attitude from her adult child. The concept is *intergenerational mutuality*. In many cases, an emotional and spiritual dependence. More research would have to see what factors could explain or expand this possible middle size theory (Montgomery 2012). Questions such as, is there a difference between male or female adult children? Did I observe a CO cultural aspect or is it due to the common understanding of the biblical text from the same community of faith? Is there a difference between how the mother treats her children publicly than in the privacy of their relationship? I was surprised by this reversal of roles that my data revealed. In the public sphere, I have not seen the mothers in this reversal of roles position.

A possible biblical study could be sought in viewing Mary as a biological mother of a human Jesus. There are examples of her resistance to joining Jesus during his ministry years, but it is obvious that immediately after his death and resurrection, she seems to apply the term *leaning in* and became his follower (a *follower of Jesus*). This reversal of roles as an aspect of *intergenerational mutuality* could provide insight for many issues within congregation studies and missiological dilemmas.

8.2.3 The ‘what’ of that togetherness (*echale mas agua a la sopa*)

The main ‘what’ of this *togetherness* in the *boundary-crossing* after the collapse. As the high-boundaries that had been taught and established in the RBO. The *high-boundaries* were kept in place by the tool *one-one-one discipling*. This is not easy to identify, and as Participant 115 ascertains, if you have been born in a system, that is *the system* that feels comfortable for you and that you ‘find’ God in the system (see section 7.3). This insight could help explain the recent issues with ICI-CO, as the dissent group has expressed a desire to return to some aspects of the pre-collapse (more details following in this section).

But the reflection I found in the interviews was obviously that they had rethought their Christian identity to be much wider than this RBO. I found them to be grasping the definition of *mutuality*,

as I understand and developed from Bosch. First, the personal walk: *Creative tension* of living within the uncertainty, the unknown, and between opposites. Second, the practical: *mutual transformation* we can experience in relationships built on common *vulnerability*. And third, the theological: *interconnectedness* of Creator with creation and the *interconnectedness* of all humanity (basis for concept of *humanisation*). And I perceived for all the participants a spirituality and relational focus beyond the limits of a Christian organisation or institution. *Mutuality* invites flexibility and the potential for transformation, especially within the context of *maternal-thinking* and *female-maternal-embodied-knowledge*.

I understand what I say in a common CO expression used traditionally by mothers when an unexpected guest shows up for a meal, ‘*No hay problema, solo echale mas agua a la sopa*’ (Don’t worry, I will just add more water to the soup). It is a sense that is what I have felt in the 30 years of living in CO, that there is always room for someone else at someone’s home. A sense of hospitality even without planning or forewarning, ‘the more the merrier’. I believe that this is a colloquial way of expressing Allen, Bosch, and Illich’s theology of *transforming mutuality*, there is always room for more. God’s love is freely given. John 3:16²³⁹ states that God gave a gift (freely and in love), that gift was Jesus. Bosch (1991a: 50-62) discusses Matthew 10:8b in the context of sending out his twelve disciples. Jesus states: “Freely you have received; freely give”. Jesus promises the Spirit to be given freely, as well. *Maternal gift economy* as she contrasts the logic of exchange vs. gift giving. This view has the potential to shed light on John 3:16, God is a God who gives. ‘God so love the world’ that ‘he gave’. I find this logic very similar to *maternal-thinking*.

The way of knowing through *maternal-thinking* linked to *mutuality* allows for an embodied view. It is a way of knowing that can be adapted and changed to create better relationships. While this is not always understood or put into practice, it offers a unique perspective that could benefit many people if embraced. *Mutuality* as a theological concept is not popular, although mentioned briefly in scholarship. In September 2022, an effort was made to look at each theological and missiological dictionary in the US Faculty of Theology Library. Finally, a definition of *mutuality*

²³⁹ Bosch (1991a:339) highlights that each epoch has tended to emphasise one Bible verse connected to their missionary task. Matthew 28:18-20 is the verse used for the fourth and five epochs (:340-41). Whereas the Greek patristic epoch’s understanding is best understood with John 3:16 (:208, 339).

was found in *An A to Z of feminist theology* (eds. Isherwood and McEwan 2016:155-56).²⁴⁰ Is it possible that *mutuality* is found in feminist theological writing due to some of the reflection provided by *female-maternal-embodied-knowledge*?²⁴¹ The research project only focused on the word *mutuality* seeking a theological definition, and in turn a missiological definition was merited, as the gap is vast. A *maternal-thinking* lens and logic, as in this study, illuminates the term.

This popular expression in CO, *echale mas agua a la sopa* would be heard more in lower income houses than those from a higher income bracket. It reminds me of what I saw in my own experience and then in the interviews, of how people were very generous when it came to helping others in their community. The collapse gave the opportunity for the community to seek financial self-reliance, but it became a decision to continue down that road. Even after funds became more available when the USA-based RBO became more settled, the collapse is still seen as liberation from *the system*.

The congregation has undergone a radical shift in the past 18 years. But in 2021 it became obvious that some members are now desiring strong leadership from the top down. This was expressed in a letter written by over 20 discontented community members. One of the main issues addressed was the desire for a more traditional leadership structure and more of the aspects of the identified pre-collapse system.

Figure 24 below, illustrates a few of the main words/phrases, using the category: **System**:

²⁴⁰ As stated in section 2.2.1, Heyward (in eds. Isherwood and McEwin 2016:155): “*Mutuality*. . . a relational process in which all persons, or parties are empowered, thereby experiencing themselves as able to survive, affect others creatively, and make a constructive difference in the world around them”. It is assumed that it is “ethically and practically, *mutuality* is a slippery concept, hard to define in practice, yet essential to right-relations” (italics added).

²⁴¹ Rolheiser (2019:63-66) lists four aspects one learns in mothering (either by mother or father) as: (1) (2019:63) it “stretches the heart, just as a womb is stretched in pregnancy”; (2) (2019:64) movement of welcoming; (3) f (2019:64) lexibility, a “flexible heart is a discerning heart”; and (4) (2019:66) being a parent (or mothering) should “shape your heart for reconciliation. Love is all about forgiving, again and again and again. Families survive only if this happens”.

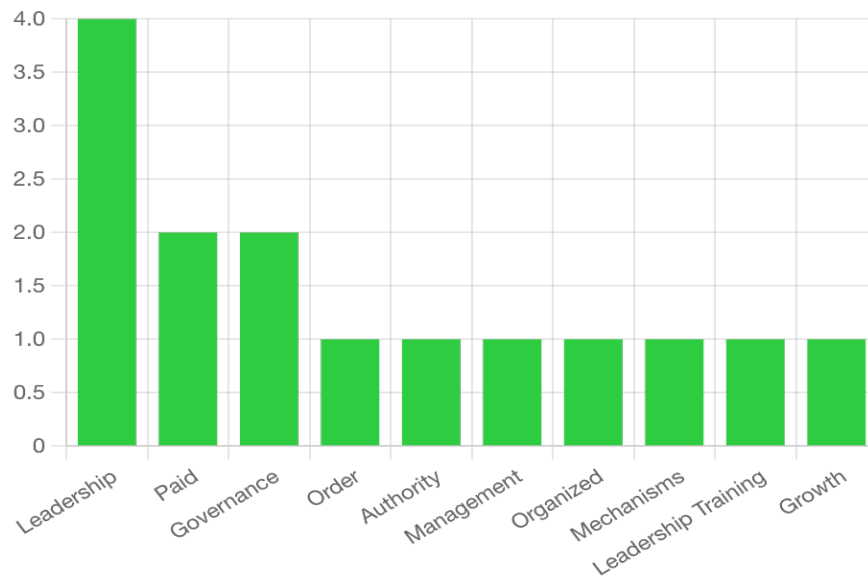


Figure 24: Content analysis of Nov. 21, 2021 letter

The purpose of showing this letter is not to dispute if these changes are necessary but to give evidence of the ‘shifts that shaped’ the **main research question**. The collapse in 2003 brought about a bottom-up leadership; voluntary-focused community; and equality in salaries for the few paid mission practitioners. I discovered the opposite was being asked for in the 2021 ICI-CO crisis (March 2021 legal *assemblea* summary and Nov. 2021 letter): top-down leadership; paid staff to manage the community; and a difference of salary sought for ministry staff. These issues imply a renewed dependence on funds and governance from the USA. My recommendation to the ICI-CO gatekeeper to review the research findings so to seek a clearer future path. A renew the past system, which implies funds/resources (‘money ran *the system*’) is extremely obvious in the data.

The collapse gave the opportunity to live within the limits of the culture and the strengths of the matricentric society providing much of the strength for the *togetherness* that came after such a traumatic collapse. Awareness is necessary that the past system is being desired, even if it is not being stated explicitly; the research shows that the way the congregation has been shaped up to now, is very different. This must be recognised for the purpose of *self-understandings* as a community. To see the way forward with more clarity. Recognising that *historylessness* is part of our denominational legacy can help as decisions are being sought to be made ‘only with the Bible’.

Missio Dei allows for a way forward without such concern for imposed or artificial social control of the community. As *the system* collapsed, so did the tool for social control *one-on-one discipling* the practical key in the *teologia de la casita*. How? The collapse of the mechanisms of social control have allowed for uncontrolled service by many mothers and grandmothers, which has been very valuable for the community. It is an attempt to centralise all ICI-CO pastoral and teaching work, to make it more efficient. I can envision to break up some of these networks of trust and spiritual teaching that have been built over the years in an uncontrolled fashion. It is an area of *creative tension*, as some areas need to be taken care of by the administrative and pastoral leadership of the congregation but at the same respecting the natural lines of relationship and ways the Spirit works (*missio Dei*). I understand this decentralised manner the congregation has developed over the past 18 years as *echale mas agua a la sopa*. This is not just in the city of Bogota but throughout the country. I was not able to reach this specific area with my research, but the gatekeepers of the congregation are aware of the 20+ groups around the country (and other countries) that in many ways are initiated and sustained by mothers and grandmothers. I find that in CO, an understanding of family is porous and expandable and allows for a transformation theology of mission or mode of mission.

8.2.4 Knitting together a transforming mutuality in a theology of mission (echale mas agua a la sopa)

What would I suggest at the end of this research project, beyond what was written in the previous section? Smith (2017:15) asks the question: “Where are boundaries of religion unacceptable and therefore, exclusion drawn, why are they drawn there, and how do they change in time?” This study speaks to this specifically, as the *teologia de la casita* has been identified (see Appendix R3) and the shift away from that but the shape of what has happened is not clear (as far as theologically). But at this moment, in the following recommendations section, I present four options for the ICI-CO gatekeeper. The new issues that ICI-CO are confronted with in 2021 (shown with the Nov. 2021 letter in Appendix D1 & D2) allows for a different view within the community.

An exact theological description or study guide has not replaced the previous *teologia de la casita* (see Appendix R3). This research pointed to the necessity but did not produce such a guide. The suggestion is to use the WWC, *Together towards life: Mission and evangelism in changing landscapes: with a practical guide* (ed. Keum 2013), commonly known as TTL. DOC, from the common SCT/RM, were active partners of creating this document.²⁴² The DOC trajectory holds to the same common rituals (adult baptism and weekly Lord's Supper) and the restoration **roots** seeking unity among believers, can provide some light as to the path that has been paved by the ICI-CO *togetherness* through the collapse and its consequent rebuilding of trust through a relational and not an 'imported' religious system, including the tools funded by USA funds (especially *one-on-one discipling*).

TTL (ed. Keum 2013; Niemandt and Lee 2015; Niemandt 2016a) seeks to answer three vital questions that the case study addresses: (i) where do we come from? (in contrast to a theological *historylessness*); (ii) what is happening now? (the need to studying the dynamics of the collapse of the RBO and aftermath *togetherness*); and (iii) what could the future look like? (with the current pressures in the congregation, this question is vital). The accent in TTL on *mission as spirituality* or *transformative spirituality* speaks to the findings of *resilient spirituality*, as well as the method and approach which places spirituality in the centre. As the paper closes, some recommendations are outlined in the following section.

8.3 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Throughout the study there are mentions of recommendations, especially for future study. This section seeks to identify a few of the recommendations. Prior to listing the recommendation for theologians and missiologists; academia; and themes for future research, I will provide my specific recommendations for the gatekeeper of ICI-CO.

²⁴² The word *mutuality* is found four times in TTL, but as is most other missiological texts, the definition is assumed. It points to the gap that this research journey has discovered as to the need for an extensive definition of the word *mutuality* for missiological scholarship.

8.3.1 Recommendations: ICI Colombia

In a practical manner I find four possible options as the congregation finds itself once again at a crossroads like it did in 2003. First, return to a dependent relationship with the RBO, which is the desire expressed by the leadership of the RBO. Having the same **brand** is a strong connection and gives a sense of belonging to the same **brand**. As mentioned above, the costs must be counted concerning the implications of agreeing to being a part of a **brand**. Things must be done as the **brand** does it; if not, one is not a part of that **brand**. Second, create a new **brand** in CO, as many popular and successful mega-churches have done. Third, decide to continue down the same road, being a part of the **global brand** without totally complying with all the requirements. Four, legally disband the group. It could be too hard to continue forward considering the past. Most people I interviewed would not accept a return to the USA-based **brand** (RBO), as they have much clarity as to the negative aspects of that system and understand it as a system broken beyond repair. There is a relational identity with the common fellowship with other ICOC congregations around the world but not a financial or governance dependence.

The findings of the study show our congregation has a legacy of a dynamic of *historylessness*, *crisislessness*, and *motherlessness* which has led to a *delusion theology*. This is how I qualify the *teologia de la casita*. I recommend that ICI-CO to be taught about this SCT/RM historical legacy. And the matricentric cultural strength of the culture to be highlighted as to its value in the congregation. I believe that it gave strength to the congregation in the collapse and the regrouping as it combated the ecclesiastical *motherlessness* that is also part of the dynamic of this legacy. As outlined in the previous section, I recommend TTL (ed. Keum) as a guide for theological training and teaching in the congregation.

8.3.2 Recommendations: ICOC mission agencies

It would be interesting to further explore the partnerships between the congregations of the ICOC cooperation outside of the USA. What kind of power dynamics are at play within the denomination that are influencing the continuation of USA funded international mission endeavours? In this regard, Solomon's use of the 'Empire' lens in Section 5.5.2 of this study could be a helpful tool in understanding the power dynamics at work. Furthermore, it would be interesting to examine the extent to which financial and governance issues are the primary basis

of these partnerships. It may be the case that certain congregations are being afforded certain privileges and advantages due to their financial capabilities or other such considerations. Moreover, an investigation into the ways in which the denomination has evolved over time could be beneficial in understanding the current dynamics of power within the ICOC cooperation.

I suggest that research should be conducted into the non-USA ministers who have worked in Latin America over the decades. While many of these individuals have gone on to continue working for the RBO in the USA, there are countless others have spent more than 10 years in Latin America and whose stories and experiences should be given a platform. It is essential that we recognise the importance of *deep listening* to the narratives of those who have worked in Latin America for the RBO, both in the past and in the present, and give them a voice. Doing so will provide valuable insights into the nuances of working for a USA-based RBO outside of the USA, as well as shed light on the unique challenges and successes experienced by these individuals (with special emphasis on TNMPs, raising their children far from their extended family). It will also be an opportunity to recognise the dedication of these individuals and to celebrate their contributions to the RBO.

8.3.3 Recommendations: missiologists and theologians

I recommend research, in section 1.0.2 the gap in research David Bosch's reviewing his life work, as in Cayley's (2021) *Ivan Illich: An intellectual journey* or Rutt's (2018a) *Roland Allen: A missionary life* and (2018b) *Roland Allen: A theology of mission*. I recommend this work to be carried out by one person, as in the forementioned texts. Also, I observed a possible shift in Bosch's later works (his final year), which I suggest in section 2.2.2 "Bolder humility?: Bosch's final text". I believe seeking to answer this question is important with Bosch scholarship.

I recommend following the lead uncovered by Annemie Bosch as to the importance fellow missionaries amongst the amaXhosa give *Vuthelani Ixilongo* (eds. Mbenenge et al. 2009) published posthumously. This work, 'Blow the trumpet', which unites 41 excerpts from Bosch's sermons mainly from 1957 to 1965 should be translated into English from Xhosa. And I recommend its incorporation into Bosch scholarship.

Research solely focused on Annemie Bosch is recommended. This research project has been able to reveal some of her thinking and contribution to her husband's work, but there is a huge gap as to an account of her missiological legacy in SA. I envision a research project along the lines of 'Mutuality in conversation with Annemie Bosch'.

I have made an introduction and application of Ivan Illich's work to PROT/EVAN/SCT missiology, in conversation with Bosch and Allen. This could be extended in other research project, as the potential of Illich's work is vast and I deem necessary in the context of LA.

I recommend continuing with the work I achieved with interweaving of Chilisa's *Indigenous research methodologies* and Bosch thinking *critical realism* and *critical hermeneutics*. I find that it allows for robust studies into the *missio Dei* as this current one (following the lead in Taylor 2017).

8.3.4 Recommendations: academia

I recommend a new category within sociology of religion and sociology of missions for RBO's. This term is recommended for groups such as in the case study, that do not fit into the available academic categories. It is based on structure and practices more than beliefs. The potential for this category is vast as it can potentially be applied to other religious groups, not exclusively Christian groups. And the sociological tool developed for this study (see Appendix R2: Vignette: Template for Research of RBOs) is recommended for use in these type groups that begin in living rooms, dining room, parks, or garages. In-depth research into RBOs would include several disciplines such as economics, organisational studies, international business, international law, human resources, and international relations.

A research project is merited on the word *mutuality*: its etymology, as well as, historical, theological, missiological, and sociological applications. It is a term that is used increasingly more often in many fields, including missiology, but this research project has discovered that it is not defined in an adequate manner. I have begun this project by the development of a working definition for *mutuality* and using it throughout the study (see section 2.2.1).

Assuming my conclusion, that as in my case study denominations seek expansion and work as **brands** (RBO); how Allen's thinking be applied? What is a current application of his *three-selves concept*? Especially regarding the newer dynamics of *from everywhere to everyone* I was not able to include this in the present study due to the limitations of the empirical data.

For missiologists seeking to research a community where an obvious shift in their positionality is acknowledged, this study can provide guidelines. The continual personal reflections throughout the dissertation can be helpful.

This article recommends Global North Christian communities become more aware of the power dynamics in mission endeavours. To do this, a Critical Discourse Analysis should be done on websites and sermons to understand how Matthew 28:18-20 is used within particular churches or organisations as well as what grassroots participants think about it. This can also help compare sending congregations with receiving ones.

The potential of applying maternal-lens to missiological and theological research is vast. I recommend for this lens to be developed in a more robust way and to use it within Biblical scholarship (Old and New Testament), congregational studies, Church history, intercultural studies, to name a few disciplines where I envision its' potential.

8.3.5 Recommendations: future research

Potentially there is much room for academic conversations around the themes of spirituality and resilience, in special regard to mission practioners; *mutuality* (with special attention to *transforming mutuality* and *intergenerational mutuality*); Mother Studies (with special attention to the logic of *maternal-thinking* and *thinking-with-the-womb*); and World Art²⁴³ (with special attention to ethnopoeitics, ethnomusicology, and comics/vingettes). These three themes have interlinked throughout the study and merit future research. I found huge gaps in all these themes during the doctoral research journey.

²⁴³ World Art is a missiology related discipline I recently discovered given at Dallas International University, at the Center for Excellence in World Art, more information is found on their website: <https://diu.edu/cewa/>.

A new *slogan* to replace the overused, misused, and outdated: ‘evangelization of the world in this generation’ was stated as underlying research purpose in view of the research concern or research problem (see section 1.6). After a final overview of the whole project, this final section concludes with the new *slogan* that has been developed in view of the empirical and interpretative data.

8.4 FINAL CONCLUSION: A NEW SLOGAN

The case study of ICI-CO has given rich data. The main research puzzle has been completed to create a visible whole picture. The intellectual puzzle has been described in depth. **Chapter 1** has delineated the intellectual and historical influence of this research journey, highlighting the missiological influence of the triad: Bosch, Illich, and Allen. **Chapter 2** has delved into main sections: Bosch as a *history-whisper*, as well as the concepts of *mutuality*, *practices of mutuality*, and *self-understandings*. **Chapter 3** unpacked the historical, theological, and cultural aspects around the denominational influence on ICI-CO. **Chapter 4** described in depth the methodologies employed in this study guided by the concept of ‘dancing’ or *playing with epistemologies*, which I pursued as a *creative researcher*. **Chapter 5** is an example of the potential around using *maternal-thinking* and *motherline* as a broad lens over all the data, with profound missiological implications. In **Chapters 5 to 7**, I have sought to bring as much of the data to light through the *mixing of methods* in the data analysis and data interpretation phases.

Maternal-thinking, *female-maternal-embodied-knowledge* or *thinking-with-the-womb* allows for a unique view of Allen’s *three-selves concept*. Kähler’s “mission is the ‘mother of theology’” not in reference to birth or nurturing but the stage of *creating space to give space* or *intergenerational mutuality* with flexibility is implied in the life cycle of a maternal female body. The data has shown this (aspect of *interconnectivity*, theological definition of *mutuality* – section 2.2.1) relational closeness even when identities are sought to be forged outside of the reference of the mother and without financial dependence. Sanneh (2008:239) observes: “The Maasai had tutored Donovan well”. Sanneh (2008:239 quoting Donovan [2003]) expresses it this way: “The final missionary step as regards the people of any nation or culture, and the most important lesson we

will ever teach them—is to leave them”.²⁴⁴ This is not to create dependence from the outside but assumes a relationship. Bosch (1991a:378) describes this ideal which Illich and Allen hold to:

The church-in-mission, primarily, the *local* church everywhere in the world. This perspective, as well as the supposition that no local church should stand in a position of authority over and against another local church, both fundamental to the New Testament (cf. Acts 13:1-3 and the Pauline letters), was for all practical purposes ignored during much of Christian history (*italics in the original*).

The *God-image* of the Maasai identified the practical definition of *mutuality* (see section 2.2.1), as the *mutual transformation* Donovan expresses (2003:33) as he gained understanding through their view of male and female as part of the biblical God. Donovan continues, illustrating with a maternal image in the biblical text in “the words of Isaiah (49:15): ‘Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you’” (cf. Claassens 2010; Rheinbolt-Urbe 2017). Donovan’s point connects with the findings of Chapter 5, regarding Counted’s (2015) research on the influence of the parent-child attachment and one’s *God-image*. In the future a vignette of eight potential *female-maternal-embodied knowledge* could be created to elucidate these concepts.

In contrast to the relational *God-image*, *managerial missiology* depicts the **global train system** analogy or potentially a conquering God or Jesus. Escobar has added a more robust theoretical and conceptual framework with Bosch, Illich, and Allen, adding to the significance of this case study. Illich in Cayley’s (2021:464) validates [placing *managerial missiology* within the project of modernity]: “[W]e can’t stop the **train**. . . [or] slow it down. . . we ought to look to find how the direction in which we are blindly bound was set” (bold added). Illich illustrates a communal *self-understanding* as vital. Bonk (2006:161) also highlights Illich’s thinking (1970) in the same regard: “‘There is no exit’ from a way of life built on large and ever—increasing amount of money”. Bonk (2006:58, citing Galbraith 1929) pinpoints the connection: “Nothing so gives the illusion of intelligence as personal association with large sums of money”.

²⁴⁴ Cf. Kirk (2017) where he narrates Donovan missiological approach base on Allen’s thinking.

The link in the case study between the RBO system, money, and its collapse, is crucial. Bonk (2008:163, quoting Bosch 1987) speaks to: “[T]he most difficult but unavoidable lesson the Western church will be compelled to learn, ‘how to become again what it originally was and was always supposed to be; a church without privileges, the church of the catacombs rather than of the halls of fame and power and wealth’”. This quote by Bosch echoes concerns and conclusions of Allen (i.e., *Mission Methods: St. Paul’s or Ours?* [2002]) and Illich (i.e., *Powerless Church* [2018]). We have confirmed from his widow, that Bosch relished Allen in his early years as a mission practitioner, as well as possible influence by Illich’s writings.

Historylessness has been identified as a factor that does not allow the learning from the past. And its connection to *crisislessness* (which connects to the *myth of perfection*). Another way of expressing this is blindness to ‘the **train tracks** that are set for us’ or ‘blindly bound’ as Cayley previously emphasises. Research tools developed in this research (see Appendix R2) for studying these types of groups can allow for greater awareness for identifying the **train tracks**. The case study is focused on a USA RBO, but further research could be sought identifying the RBO structure in this current missiological phase as within the Global South *from everywhere to everyone* context. Church organisations run like the RBO in this case study on national funds in the Global South could be a following research project.

The **trainwreck** of a RBO, in this present study, allows for reflection and understanding of the inner workings of an RBO. Allen (1960:189) views shortage or collapse: as an answer of prayer and a lesson “which God is plainly teaching us”. This case study with a collapse in centre fold has been eye opening. The collapse is seen as a liberation, and to many ‘an answer to prayer’, from a system that is fuelled from this USA – ‘imported’ RBO. This has been described as a **brand** identified with a **global train system**. It has been perceived that the participants have an attribute of *resilient spirituality* amid *liminal* situations that have been confronted since the collapse. As well as the **railroad sabotage**: *resilient spirituality* intertwined with *insurgent consciousness*, as to the events around *the letter* is display. This is identified as a practice of *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission (or mode of mission) in contrast with the tools and methods of *managerial missiology*.

Walking together or *conviviality* was possible within the community as the shifted ‘bottom up’ approach was a way to continue forward as a community (this links to the personal definition of *mutuality*, *creative tension* of opposites – section 2.2.1). As *the system* with its tools that ran on money was rejected, *conviviality* is the correct word for the *togetherness* observed in the shift of the *practices of mutuality* based on friendship/relationality (Robert 2018; 2019). Giving up the *myth of perfection* was inspired in the gospel but now has been seen in the case study that the *corruption of the best is the worst*. Also described as a certain amount of creative tension, or a *philosophy of complementarity* while *walking together* through a system broken beyond repair, or as Bosch (citing a WWC 1990 document) stated: “We appreciate this tension, and do not attempt to resolve it” (Bonk 2006:58 describes a similar conclusion).

Another aspect of the research is personal. As a researcher, returning to this traumatic collapse, particularly during a global pandemic, turned out to be a transformational experience. I believe that the research process, and especially the process of the *talking circles*, led to more profound healing, as I had to confront more deeply my positionality prior to the collapse. This was understood as a process of *mutual transformation* (practical definition of *mutuality* – section 2.2.1), this is the (ii) practical definition of *mutuality*. This *mutual transformation* was found within *liminal* position and *in-between spaces* which is the (i) personal walk definition of *mutuality*. I also found general links in all my data, between maternal influence and *resilient spirituality*, which merits future research. I have provided recommendations to ICI-CO, considering the new challenges in 2021. The WCC document TTL (ed. Keum 2013) is suggested to ICI-CO as a way of emphasising the congregation’s *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission, in contrast to the RBO’s *teologia de la casita* (see Appendix R3). This links to the (iii) theological definition of *mutuality*, the *interconnectedness* of the Creator with the created (human and nonhuman). It is deemed to align more closely to the CO *maternal-thinking* inspired theology, *echale mas agua a la sopa*. The research has provided a historical narrative of ICI-CO (see Appendix R1) in which displays the interpretation of the data.

This CO cultural adaptation of an AFR perspective of a *feminist cultural hermeneutics* of a *transforming mutuality* as a theology of mission (or mode of mission), can serve as a guiding light to continue shifting towards the direction of the ICI grassroots *insurgent consciousness* and

disruptive religion. After the collapse in 2003 we embarked upon a new way of Christian *togetherness*. A shift in the communal *God-image* has led to a *transforming mutuality* in a theology of mission. The purpose of this study has been accomplished, a new *slogan*, has been developed to replace ‘the evangelization the world in this generation’. The poetic recapitulation, found below, of the data analysis is powerful.

The final concluding thoughts are the following: We can agree that the gospel as a gift can be communicated in multiple ways and it not dependent on funds or an ‘imported’ system. *Missio Dei* has shown that God’s **HAND** is constant in the world, beyond the human *broken systems* made in God’s name. Can be created in the *in-between spaces* and *in-between people*. The ICI-CO community has shown that *resilient spirituality* can lead to *creating spaces* of dialogue and *table-fellowship* as a Christian *togetherness*. *Creating spaces* is a neutral term, a rented auditorium can be a place of *togetherness*, but most enjoyably face-to-face around a dining room table or even while drinking Colombian coffee (see the vignette of the poetic *slogan* found in Appendix R4):

Poem 12: Mutuality is. . . (Conclusion)

*Mutuality
Is
Creating spaces
While
Walking Together
Through
A System Broken Beyond Repair.*

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APPENDICES

Appendix A1: ICI Colombia: Letter Requesting Permission (Spanish)

14 de mayo de 2020

Estimados hermanos y hermanas:

Como les he informado informalmente con anterioridad, estoy empezando una investigación académica en la Universidad de Stellenbosch en Sur África. La investigación se llevará a cabo en la Facultad de Teología dentro del programa de Teología Práctica, específicamente en Misiología.

La idea dentro de la investigación es poder entrar más profundo a los impactos de los cambios en la congregación desde 2003/04, cuando la congregación tomó medidas y decisiones acerca de su autonomía. La idea es hacer preguntas buscando descubrir cambios de entendimiento acerca de la comunidad a raíz de ese periodo de la historia de la congregación. También es explorar cómo estos cambios pueden ser entendidos con la vivencia familiar para aportar luz a las enseñanzas bíblicas donde comparar la comunidad de fe con una familia.

La universidad por sus normas de ética dentro de la investigación me pide tener una carta oficial de ICI Colombia. Por medio de esta carta estoy pidiendo permiso a la administración de la congregación ICI Colombia para acceder a información que no es parte del dominio público y poder hacer entrevistas a individuos que trabajan para esta institución y miembros de la comunidad ICI Colombia.

Con cariño y agradecimiento por su arduo trabajo por la comunidad.

Renee Uribe

Appendix A2: ICI Colombia: Letter Requesting Permission (English)

May 14, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As I have informed you informally before, I am starting an academic research at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa. The research will be carried out in the Faculty of Theology within the Practical Theology program, specifically in Missiology.

The idea within the research is to be able to go deeper into the impacts of the changes in the congregation since 2003, when the congregation took action and decisions about its autonomy. The idea is to ask questions seeking to discover changes of understanding about the community in the wake of that period in the history of the congregation. It is also to explore how these changes can be understood with the family experience to bring light to biblical teachings where to compare the community of faith with a family.

The university for its rules of ethics within the research asks me to have an official letter from ICI Colombia. Through this letter I am asking permission from the administration of the ICI Colombia congregation to access information that is not part of the public domain and to be able to interview individuals who work for this institution and members of the ICI Colombia community.

With love and gratitude for their hard work for the community.

Renee Uribe

Appendix B1: ICI Colombia: Letter Granting Permission (Spanish)

IGLESIA ICI

Nit: 800212926-7

Carrara 72 B No. 52 A 20 Normandía - Teléfonos 4572001
icibogota@hotmail.com-iglesiaici@icicolombia.org

Bogotá, 18 de mayo de 2020

Señora

RENEE MARIE URIBE

Ciudad

Apreciada Renee,

En respuesta a su solicitud de querer hacer una investigación más profunda sobre los impactos de los cambios en la congregación desde 2003/04, cuando la congregación tomó medidas y decisiones acerca de su autonomía.

También explorar cómo estos cambios pueden ser entendidos con la vivencia familiar para aportar luz a las enseñanzas bíblicas donde comparar la comunidad de fe con una familia.

Nos permitimos informarle que estamos dispuestos a apoyar en lo que necesita para avanzar en su investigación que llevaras acabo con la Facultad de Teología en la Universidad de Stellenbosch.

Cordialmente,

Iglesia ICI
Nit. 800.212.926-7

JAVIER SERRANO

Presidente Junta Directiva

Appendix B2: ICI Colombia: Letter Granting Permission (English)

IGLESIA ICI

Nit: 8002L2926-7

Address and telephone number: Carrera 728 No. 52 A 20 Normandía - Teléfonos 4572001

Email and Website: icibogota@hotmail.com, iglesiaici@icicolombia.org

City and Date: Bogota, May 18, 2020

Mrs.

RENEE MARIE URIBE

City

Dear Renee,

This is in response to your request to want to do further research on the impacts of the changes in the congregation since 2003/04, when the congregation acted and made decisions about its autonomy.

Also, to explore how these changes can be understood within a family model to shed light on biblical teachings by comparing the community of faith with a family.

We want to inform you that we are ready to support you in whatever you need to advance in your research, which you will carry out with the Faculty of Theology in Stellenbosch University.

Sincerely,

JAVIER SERRANO

President, Board of Directors

Appendix C1: ICI Colombia: Theological Statement (Spanish)

La doctrina de la **IGLESIA ICI** se basa en los siguientes principios Bíblicos Fundamentales:

1. Creemos que la Biblia es la inspirada, infalible e inerrable Palabra de Dios, es cortante poderosa y efectiva, revelada al hombre por medio del Espíritu Santo, y por lo tanto la única regla de Fe y conducta para todo creyente en Jesucristo. *2 Timoteo 3:16-17; Hebreos 4:12.*
2. Creemos y rendimos nuestras vidas al único Dios que creo los cielos y la tierra y la vida de la humanidad. Adoramos y alabamos al Padre que simplemente habló al mundo de su existencia, alabamos y adoramos a Jesús, el hijo de Dios que murió en la cruz para redimirnos del pecado. Adoramos y alabamos al Espíritu Santo que es el sello de nuestra salvación.
3. Creemos en un mundo espiritual formado por cielo e infierno, en la existencia de los Ángeles buenos como servidores del Dios Altísimo enviados en ayuda de quienes van a recibir la salvación. Así mismo creemos en malignas fuerzas espirituales que tienen mando autoridad y dominio, y en Satanás como su Jefe *Hebreos 1: 14; Efesios 6: 11-12.*
4. Creemos que el hombre fue creado a imagen y semejanza de Dios, y que fue dotado de libre albedrío para que tuviera o no una relación con Él.
5. Creemos que la desobediencia de Adán y Eva, fue el pecado que ocasiono la caída de la humanidad y que fue la manera en que el pecado entró en el mundo y que la Biblia describe a partir de ahí el esfuerzo de Dios, por rescatar al ser humano de la perdición del pecado.
6. Creemos que el pecado produce una separación entre Dios y el Hombre *Isaías 59:1-2* y que por lo tanto ningún esfuerzo humano podrá rescatarlo, restablecerlo y reconciliarlo en una relación con Dios.
7. Creemos que nuestra salvación depende totalmente de la obra de Dios, inspirado por su propia misericordia y gracia, no por nuestras buenas obras. Esta obra redime a aquellos que escuchan, creen y obedecen el mensaje del evangelio por medio del bautismo en Cristo a través de su fe en el poder de Dios y continúan siendo fieles hasta la muerte. *Efesios 2:8-10; Colosenses 2:12; Hebreos 10:32-39; Santiago 1:12.*
8. Nuestra conversión comienza con la creencia en Jesús como el Hijo de Dios en su muerte y resurrección. Pasos subsecuentes deben incluir evidente arrepentimiento de pecado, aceptación del discipulado y la confesión de “Jesús como nuestro Señor y Salvador” Finalmente nos hacemos cristianos en el milagro del nuevo nacimiento al ser sumergidos en agua, para el perdón de nuestros pecados y la promesa de que Dios nos dará el Espíritu Santo. *Juan 20:31; Lucas 14: 25-33; Hechos 2:38-41; Romanos 10:9; Tito 3:3-5.*

9. Creemos que la Iglesia es el cuerpo de Cristo y que es una sola, y que fuimos bautizados para formar un solo cuerpo por medio de un solo Espíritu. Que como miembros compartimos los mismos derechos y deberes y que son nuestras relaciones, el amor los unos por los otros lo que construye el cuerpo, “Que nos necesitamos unos a otros para caminar juntos”. Así mismo que la iglesia esta levantada sobre los fundamentos que son los Apóstoles y profetas y Jesucristo mismo como la Piedra Angular y Cabeza de ese cuerpo que es la Iglesia. Creemos que Dios ha querido dar dones a los miembros de la iglesia para la edificación de la misma. *Efesios 4: 4; 1 Corintios 12: 12-31; Efesios 2:20-22; Colosenses 1:18.*

10. Nuestra alabanza comunitaria, incluye nuestro estudio de la palabra de Dios, oración, confraternidad y la celebración de la cena del señor, partir el pan y tomar el fruto de la vida juntos como un recordatorio de su sacrificio y el cumplimiento de su voluntad de “hagan esto en memoria de mí” *Lucas 22: 19-20.*

11. Como una comunidad imitando los discípulos del primer siglo damos un sacrificio voluntario a Dios, como un sacrificio fragante y como señal de nuestra gratitud. Ya que todo lo que disfrutamos en esta vida es un don de Dios, estamos de acuerdo en contribuir con alegría y sacrificio a las finanzas de la iglesia para que el ministerio de Jesús permanezca en nuestras comunidades y alrededor del mundo. *Hechos 2: 42-47; 2 Corintios 9:7-14.*

12. Creemos que el liderazgo fue instituido para preparar al pueblo santo para una obra de servicio para la edificación del cuerpo de Cristo, para cuidarlo como pastores y ser un ejemplo. Así mismo que la iglesia tenga respeto, amor y estima por quienes los dirigen. *Efesios 4:11; 1 Pedro 5:1-5; 1 Tesalonicenses 5:12, 1 Timoteo 2:11, 1 Timoteo 3:1-13. Tito 2:3-5, Romanos 16:1-2.* Las personas servirán con sus diferentes dones de acuerdo a las escrituras.

13. Creemos que como discípulos estamos llamados a predicar el mensaje de salvación de nuestro Señor Jesucristo y cumplir con la gran comisión de ir y hacer discípulos a todas las naciones *Mateo 28:18-20*

14. Creemos en la Segunda venida de Jesucristo, en la resurrección de los muertos y en el Juicio Final.

15. Creemos en Cristo como el Camino la Verdad y la Vida y como el Único a través del cual podemos llegar al Padre. La Piedra Angular de nuestra fe es Jesucristo. Todo lo que es precioso de nuestra fe se origina en sus palabras y forma de vida.

16. Creemos que Cristo es la Fiel imagen de lo que Dios es y que en el reside toda la plenitud de Dios y que Dios creó todo lo que hay en el cielo y en la tierra tanto lo visible como lo invisible. *Juan 14:6; Juan 12:47-48; Hebreos 1:3; Colosenses 2:9.*

17. Creemos que el Espíritu Santo procede del Padre, que es consolador, defensor, ayudador y revelador de la obra de Dios y de sus verdades. Y único representante de Jesús en la Tierra. *Juan 14:15; Juan 16: 4-16.*

Appendix C2: ICI Colombia: Theological Statement (English)

The doctrine of **Iglesia ICI** is based on the following Fundamental Biblical principles:

1. We believe that the Bible is the inspired, infallible, and inerrable Word of God, it is powerful and effective shear, revealed to man through the Holy Ghost, and therefore the only rule of faith and conduct for every believer in Jesus Christ. 2 *Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12.*
2. We believe and surrender our lives to the one God who created the heavens and earth and life of mankind. We worship and praise the Father who simply spoke to the world of his existence, praise and worship Jesus, the son of God who died on the cross to redeem us from sin. We worship and praise the Holy Ghost who is the seal of our salvation.
3. We believe in a spiritual world formed by heaven and hell, in the existence of good Angels as servants of the Most High God sent to the aid of those who will receive salvation. We also believe in evil spiritual forces that have command authority and dominion, and in Satan as their Hebrew Chief *1:14; Ephesians 6: 11-12.*
4. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, and that he was endowed with free will so that he may or did not have a relationship with Him.
5. We believe that Adam and Eve's disobedience was the sin that caused the fall of humanity and that it was the way sin entered the world and that the Bible describes God's effort from there to rescue the human being from the doom of sin.
6. We believe that sin produces a separation between God and Man *Isaiah 59:1-2* and that therefore no human effort can rescue, restore, and reconcile it in a relationship with God.
7. We believe that our salvation depends entirely on God's work, inspired by his own mercy and grace, not on our good works. This work redeems those who hear, believe, and obey the gospel message through baptism in Christ through their faith in God's power and continue to be faithful to death. *Ephesians 2:8-10; Colossians 2:12; Hebrews 10:32-39; James 1:12.*
8. Our conversion begins with belief in Jesus as the Son of God in his death and resurrection. Subsequent steps should include evident repentance of sin, acceptance of discipleship, and the confession of "Jesus as our Lord and Savior" Finally become Christians in the miracle of the new birth as we are submerged in water, for the forgiveness of our sins, and the promise that God will give us the Holy Ghost. *John 20:31; Luke 14: 25-33; Acts 2:38-41; Romans 10:9; Titus 3:3-5.*
9. We believe that the Church is the body of Christ and that it is one, and that we were baptized to form one body through one Spirit. That as members we share the same rights and duties and that it is our relationships, love for each other that builds the body, "That we need each other to walk together". Likewise the church is raised up on the foundations

that are the Apostles and prophets and Jesus Christ Himself as the Cornerstone and Head of that body that is the Church. We believe that God has wanted to give gifts to the members of the church for the building up of the church. *Ephesians 4: 4; 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31; Ephesians 2:20-22; Colossians 1:18.*

10. Our communal praise includes our study of the word of God, prayer, fellowship, and the celebration of the Lord's supper, split bread, and take the fruit of the vine together as a reminder of their sacrifice and the fulfillment of their will to "do this in remembering me" Luke 22:19-20.

11. As a community imitating the disciples of the first century we give a voluntary sacrifice to God, as a fragrant sacrifice and as a sign of our gratitude. Since everything we enjoy in this life is a gift from God, we agree to contribute joyfully and sacrificially to the church's finances so that Jesus' ministry may remain in our communities and around the world. Acts 2: 42-47; 2 Corinthians 9:7-14.

12. We believe that leadership was instituted to prepare the holy people for a work of service for the building up of the body of Christ, to care for them as shepherds and to be an example. Likewise, the church has respect, love, and esteem for those who run them. Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 5:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:12, Timothy 2:11, Timothy 3:1-13. Titus2:3-5, Romans 16:1-2. People will serve with their different gifts according to the scriptures.

13. We believe that as disciples we are called to preach the message of salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ and to fulfill the great commission of going and making disciples of all nations Matthew 28:18-20

14. We believe in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the Last Judgment.

15. We believe in Christ as the Way of Truth and Life and as the Only Through which we can reach the Father. The Cornerstone of our faith is Jesus Christ. Everything that is precious of our faith originates in his words and way of life.

16. We believe that Christ is the Faithful image of what God is and that in him resides all the fulness of God and that God created all that is in heaven and on earth both the visible and the invisible. John 14:6; John 12:47-48; Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 2:9.

17. We believe that the Holy Ghost comes from the Father, who is a comforter, advocate, helper, and revelator of God's work and truths. And the only representative of Jesus on Earth. John 14:15; John 16: 4-16.

Appendix D1: ICI Colombia: Nov. 2021 Letter from Dissidents (Spanish)

Observaciones Carta Solicitando apoyo para la iglesia en Bogota.

Bogotá, Noviembre 3 /21

Señor

Sebastián Javier Serra

**Coordinador Continental y Facilitador de Ancianos de
Latinoamérica**

Apreciado hermano en la fe

En nombre de la congregación de la Iglesia ICi Bogotá y como feligreses activos, dentro del marco del amor de Dios y la gracia de Cristo en nosotros, apreciamos de todo corazón su amoroso apoyo y propositiva disposición ,para pedirles su valiosa y muy necesaria ayuda espiritual para nuestra congregación en Bogotá.

Es claro que los tiempos están cambiando de una manera dramática y veloz. La iglesia como cuerpo de Cristo no puede mantenerse con modelos de pensamiento, que pudieron ser útiles en el pasado pero que si se mantienen, la pueden frenar, impedir su desarrollo espiritual, mermar su alcance evangelístico y no crecer en misericordia por los más necesitados. Es claro que a Dios es soberano y que Cristo es la cabeza de la iglesia. También debe ser claro que como parte del cuerpo de Cristo, todos tenemos dones y responsabilidades que contribuyen a la edificación y que por lo tanto necesitan ser desarrollados.

Con el propósito de seguir avanzando en la fe de manera individual y como comunidad solicitamos ayuda de ancianos y maestros como mediadores en este proceso de varias

necesidades en nuestra congregación, para que el cuerpo refleje mucho más el carácter de nuestro Señor Jesucristo.

A continuación expresamos algunas de las necesidades más apremiantes, no sin antes expresar nuestra gratitud al actual grupo de internos, junta y administración. Sería insensato negar su servicio y dedicación durante estos años.

1. Evaluación del modelo que la iglesia ha construido los últimos años, en aspectos como evangelismo, entrenamiento de líderes, cuidado de la congregación, autonomía congregación al y financiera, relaciones con otras Iglesias de nuestra comunidad, aislamiento. Aclarar bíblicamente quien lidera la Iglesia.
2. Enseñanza Bíblica teniendo en cuenta las necesidades de la congregación
3. Cuidado espiritual unos a otros.
4. Orgullo en el liderazgo principal.
5. Falta de resolución de conflictos.
6. Enseñanza sobre el voluntariado que apunta a una iglesia liderada por sólo voluntarios, impidiendo la contratación de más internos, o ministros pagos. En la actualidad hay tres hnos pagos para más de 600 miembros.
7. Restructuración administrativa
8. Planes organizados de ayuda a necesitados, que involucren la congregación.
9. Evaluación del modelo actual del liderazgo.
10. Crear mecanismos para que los hermanos practiquen y desarrollen sus dones)
11. Implementar un nuevo modelo de gobierno. Un equipo de pastores, potenciales ancianos, que funjan como máxima

autoridad, cuando los internos no tienen experiencia o les falta madurar.

12. Evaluar la falta de crecimiento numérico la última década.

16. Revisar y evaluar el modelo actual de selección y elección de internos, no existe la figura de Ministros, Evangelistas, Ancianos o Pastores.)

17. Apoyar en una transición para cambiar el modelo actual de liderazgo, buscando, nombrar un cuerpo de ancianos o pastores que asuman el gobierno de la congregación.

Nuevamente agradecemos la bondad de Dios por darnos su Santo Espíritu, mirarnos con misericordia en medio de nuestra fragilidad y debilidad humana; seguimos confiados en la promesa de la salvación; sabemos que él nos está enseñando en medio de esta prueba a cada uno. Que nos dará lo que necesitamos para seguir forjando el carácter de Cristo y mantenernos fieles y firmes de su palabra hasta la eternidad.

Con profundo Aprecio;

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Hernán Flórez +57 3125929889

Clara Perez +57 3133239382

Isaac Charry +57 3188582295

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Jhony Rincón + 57 3118471448
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Appendix D2: ICI Colombia: Nov. 2021 Letter from Dissidents (English)

Observations Letter Requesting support for the church in Bogota.

Bogotá, November 3 /21 Mr. [] Continental Coordinator and Facilitator of Elders of Latin America

Dear Brother in the Faith On behalf of the congregation of the Church ICi Bogotá and as active members, within the framework of the love of God and the grace of Christ in us, we appreciate with all our hearts your loving support and proactive disposition, to ask for your valuable and much needed spiritual help for our congregation in Bogotá. It is clear that times are changing dramatically and rapidly. The church as the body of Christ cannot be maintained with models of thought, which could have been useful in the past but if maintained, can slow it down, impede its spiritual development, diminish its evangelistic reach, and not grow in mercy for those most in need. It is clear that God is sovereign and that Christ is the head of the church. It should also be clear that as part of the body of Christ, we all have gifts and responsibilities that contribute to edification and therefore need to be developed. In order to continue advancing the faith individually and as a community, we ask for help from elders and teachers as mediators in this process of various needs in our congregation, so that the body reflects much more the character of our Lord Jesus Christ. Below we express some of the most pressing needs, but not before expressing our gratitude to the current group of interns, board, and management. It would be foolish to deny their service and dedication during these years. 1. Evaluation of the model that the church has built in recent years, in aspects such as evangelism, leadership training, care of the congregation, congregational and financial autonomy, relations with other Churches in our community, isolation. Clarify biblically who leads the Church. 2. Biblical Teaching taking into account the needs of the congregation 3. Spiritual care for one another. 4. Pride in senior leadership. 5. Lack of conflict resolution. 6. Teaching on volunteerism that targets a church led by only volunteers, preventing the hiring of more interns, or paid ministers. There are currently three paid interns for more than 600 members. 7. Administrative restructuring 8. Organized plans to help the needy, involving the congregation. 9. Evaluation of the current leadership model. 10. Create mechanisms for brothers to practice and develop their gifts) 11. Implement a new model of governance. A team of pastors, potential elders, who function as the highest authority, when

the interns have no experience or lack maturity. 12. Assess the lack of numerical growth in the last decade. 16. Review and evaluate the current model of selection and election of interns, (there are no Ministers, Evangelists, Elders or Pastors.) 17. Support a transition to change the current model of leadership, seeking to appoint a body of elders or pastors to assume the governance of the congregation. Again we thank God for giving us his Holy Spirit, to look at us with mercy in the midst of our human frailty and weakness; we remain confident in the promise of salvation; we know that he is teaching each of us in the midst of this trial. That He will give us what we need to continue to forge the character of Christ and to remain faithful and firm of His word into eternity. With deep Appreciation;

[All the names and signatures have been removed]

Appendix E: Research Process: Template Consent Form

I



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STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Renee Uribe

Bogotá phone number
International phone number (USA)

Dear _____,

I am approaching you as a possible participant because you are a member of the ICI Colombia congregational extended family. We have had many adventures together as a church family. And it would be a privilege for me to be able to interview you to be a part of this research. I am involved in an academic study at the Faculty of Theology, Stellenbosch University (South Africa) with a project entitled **Self-understanding and the Practicing of Mutuality in Mission within Roland Allen's Three-Selves Theory: A Missiological Evaluation of a Colombian Case Study**.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The title of my research could sound complicated, but simply stated, the study springs from a desire to gain a greater understanding of the process that the *Iglesia ICI* has gone through since the 2003/04 crisis. I have my own experiences of this global crisis within our mission organization from the perspective of my own experience in Argentina. In 2004, the *Iglesia ICI* began a new phase and that is what I would like to begin to ask you about. I am not looking into **why** this crisis happened, but **how** you see you, the congregation, and the mission network, may have evolved through this process. My focus is especially in the area of relationships. There are two parts. First the crisis and second, the way the congregation went forward, for which I too was in Bogotá, but your viewpoint is vital.

2. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to have an interview with me by virtual means (due to COVID-19 policies). The initial interview would last from an hour to an hour and a half. Most likely, I would initiate for a second interview for a shorter amount of time (30 minutes to 1 hour). A review of the written transcript of our interview would be sent to you for review and approval. This would be the extent of your commitment to this research.

3. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

I believe that this opportunity to discuss the past during the interviews will be an overall encouraging experience. But, going back to old memories always has the potential of recalling painful experiences. If after the interview you believe that the interview session has led to emotional distress or discomfort, I have a mental health practitioner who will discuss this with you at no cost. He will be available for you for a period of two hours (in two, one-hour sessions or one, two-hour session) at your convenience. The mental health professional's information will be provided for you.

4. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE SOCIETY

There could be a benefit of this study for the church-at-large. It could potentially provide the opportunity for other congregations to benefit from the experiences of ICI Colombia. For example, a consequence of the current COVID-19 public health crisis could lead to similar dilemmas that ICI Colombia faced in 2003/04.

A potential personal benefit is, as it is said in Spanish, "recordar es vivir" (to live is to remember). Taking the time to relive the past during the interviews, and the access to my subsequence documentation, could lead to a historical narrative of our community of faith.

5. PROTECTION OF YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND IDENTITY

Any information you share with me during this study that could possibly identify you as a participant will be protected. I will not use your given name. You can provide me with a unique name, if not, I will take the liberty to use a pseudonym (for example, change Barbara to Doris).

Only I will have access to the interview, its recordings, and data. The data will be applied for the purpose of my PhD dissertation, although there is always the possibility that I could publish in the future (articles, books, chapters of books, and/or presentations at conferences). Please contact me if you have any issues with publication of your data beyond the dissertation.

The interviews will be recorded by Skype video or Zoom video unless you express the desire to not be recorded. If so, I would only take notes during our interview.

The interviews will be password protected in my computer and on password protected Microsoft OneDrive.

If there is a written transcript of your interview, I will send it to you for your revision. The recordings will be erased after my research is done and will only be preserved in written form in the password protected manner mentioned above.

I have a written consent from the board of ICI Colombia for this missiological evaluation.

6. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you agree to take part in this study, you may withdraw at any time without any consequence. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and remain in the study.

7. RESEARCHER'S CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Renee Uribe at Bogota phone number 571-680-0142 and/or the supervisor Dr. Xolile D. Simon (Stellenbosch University in South Africa) at

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS: You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; ++27 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development. You have right to receive a copy of the Information and Consent form. The phone number provided is a number in South Africa, I have provided the South African area code so to be able to dial from Colombia.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the attached Declaration of Consent and send it back to me by email at

DECLARATION BY PARTICIPANT

By signing below, I _____ agree to take part in a research study entitled Self-understandings and Practicing Mutuality in Mission within Roland Allen's Three-Selves Theory: A Missiological Evaluation of a Colombian Case Study and conducted by Renee Uribe.

I declare that:

- I have read the attached information leaflet and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.
- All issues related to privacy and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide have been explained to my satisfaction.

Signed on January 11th 2021

Signature of participant

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to Sandra Liliana Muñoz. Se was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English.

Signature of Investigator

Date

Appendix F: Research Process: Interview Question Guide

Thank you for taking the time to discuss important issues concerning your experience in the congregation ICI Colombia. We will start with a few easy questions, to have a record of the people with whom I am having this conversation. 1. Name (first name) 2. What year did you become a part of the congregation—ICI Colombia? 3. What year did you become a Christian? 4. What is your official role (if any) in the congregation at this time? 5. If you were in the congregation in 2003, what was your role then (if any)? 6. Have you ever held a salary position within the congregation? 7. What is your marital status? 8. Do you have children? 9. Were you raised by one parent? By both parents? Or a grandmother? Or someone else? 10. Do you have half-brother (s) and/or sister(s)? 11. Where were you born? 12. What year did you move to Bogota, if you were not born here? 13. How many of your family members are also members of the ICI-Colombia congregation (in Bogota or its mission network)?

The following set of questions first deal with the crisis of 2003/4 that the church faced locally and internationally. Second, I will ask some questions as to your view of the changes in thinking that came about after 2003-04. The third category of questions is more personal since they are concerning your family life. You are free to not answer these questions if you feel uncomfortable. The final set of questions deal with the area of Christian forgiveness.

Crisis Questions Since 2003 ICI Colombia has taken a gradual change to become self-governing, self-supporting, and self-expanding. In missionary theory this is described as the *three-selves concept*. Would you like me to share more about this theory? Send you more information concerning this theory? What is your awareness about this gradual change? If you are aware of this, what can you describe as the most impactful difference this shift has brought about? What is your view of this change or process from a biblical point of view? Were there any aspects of change due to cultural issues? (To give you an example, I was told that ways of performing marriage ceremonies were considered to be an adaption of the US culture practices and some members chose to make changes to the ceremony)? Who did you identify as the mother-church (authority) of this congregation up to the 2003 collapse? In your opinion who was internationally responsible for the congregation before 2003? And now? Where and in whom does the congregation look to for maturity now? What parallels (if any) do you see between the crisis the congregation lived through in ICI-CO collapse and the current crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Relationship Questions Since 2003 my understanding is

that there have been changes within the area of relationships. Do you believe that this is true? If you do, what could you describe as some of these shifts? Do you feel freer to build relationships than you did before 2003? If you do, in what ways do you feel freer? If not, why did you feel freer before 2003? There are several biblical texts that present images of church as a family. For example, in Matthew 12:49-50 where Jesus states that all those who do God's will are his brothers, sisters and mother. How do you understand this concept of church as family? How do you practice the concept of church as family? Can you describe one example of where you have practiced this? My understanding is that since 2008 the congregation is self-supporting financially. In the history of Christian mission, economic dependence has been the main uniting factor within the sending and the receiving congregations. What do you believe is the uniting factor with the international family of churches now that there is not a financial or administrative connection outside of Colombia? What is the uniting factor with the mission churches throughout Colombia? Is it financial, administrative or a "family sense" of relationship? Family Questions This study is exploring the relationships of dependence, independence, and interdependence within mission work. It seems that the family life, especially intergenerational relationships, can shed light on ways of living church and mission. Colombia seems a great place to ask questions about this since several generations of family tend to be close. Scholars state that Colombia is a matricentric society. Matricentric is when family life is centered around the mother. In what ways do you agree with this scholar, that Colombia traditionally has been a matricentric society? Has your family life revolved around your mother or grandmother? If so, what are some examples you can think of? What kind of influence have your mother or grandmother had on you personally to motivate you to be who you are now? How do you believe your personal experience of family life has influenced your relationships within the congregation? Forgiveness I would like to ask you about forgiveness. Have you seen the need to practice forgiveness within the congregation or with other congregations in the ICI family of churches? Could the need to forgive arise from barriers within yourself? An example would be discrimination due to perceptions from the past of the country: such as, violence, political, racial, and/or economic divisions. Have you been moved to apply Jesus' teaching of loving your enemies within the congregation? Thank you very much for your time.

Appendix G: List of Record Prayers in Interviews

Overview of all Interviews in View of Active Prayer as Spirituality

Listed in chronological order based on first interview

(All in red have been sent to professional transcription for uniformity)

(IV = researcher)

208 (2003/2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

208.1 Pilot interview Dec. 8, 2020 (did not record, only written notes, no record of explanation of method or prayer)

112 & 212 (2003/2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

112.1&212.1 Jan. 19, 2021 (explanation of method and concluding prayer by 112)
 112.2&212.2 Jan 28, 202 (concluding prayer by 212)
 112.3&212.3 Feb. 4, 2021 (concluding prayer by 112)
 112.4&212.4 Feb. 11, 2021 (no prayer but spirituality mentioned in final thoughts by IV)
 112.5 Mar. 25, 2021 (opening prayer by 112)
 112.6&212.5 Apr. 29, 2021 (opening prayer by IV)

114 & 214 (2003/2021 GRMP: live in other country but sense of belonging to ICI Colombia)

114.1&214.2 Jan. 24, 2021 (explanation of method and closing prayer by 214)
 114.2&214.2 Feb. 3, 2021 (closing prayer by IV)
 114.3 Feb. 10, 2021 (closing prayer by 114)
 114.4 Apr. 14, 2021 (closing prayer by 114)
 114.5 May 12, 2021 (no prayer, 114 teaching IV on NT letter of Romans)
 114.6 May 26, 2021 (prayer mentioned in final thoughts by 114 & IV but not active prayer)

109 (Hubert Allen)

- 109.1 Jan. 25, 2021 (no explanation of method and no prayer)
- 109.2 Sept. 27, 2021 (no prayer)

218 & 120 (2003/2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

Pre-Interview Jan. 27, 2021 (NOTE: Nov. 26, 2021, after a review of dates I realized that I explained the method in this meeting that she asked to have, before agreeing to the interview process. I will look in my journey, but I do not have a record of what we discussed.)

- 218.1 Feb. 4, 2021 (no explanation of method and concluding prayer by 218)
- 218.2 Feb 11, 2021 (concluding prayer by 218)
- 218.3 & 120.1 Apr. 22, 2021 (no prayer, call cut off due to technical difficulty)

115 (2003 GRMP, 2021 TLMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

- 115.1 Feb. 3, 2021 (explanation of method and concluding prayer by 115)
- 115.2 Feb. 9, 2021 (concluding prayer by 115)
- 115.3 Mar. 16, 2021 (concluding prayer by 115)

117 (Latin American GRMP)

- 117.1 Feb. 8, 2021 (explanation of method and concluding prayer by 117)
- 117.2 Dec. 15, 2021 (no prayer)

107 (2003 TNPM, 2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia Membership)

- 107.1 Feb. 12, 2021 (concluding thoughts on spirituality by 107)

111 (2003 TNMP, 2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

- 111.1 Mar. 19, 2021 (explanation of method and opening prayer by IV)
- 111.2 Mar. 25, 2021 (erased recording by accident but have written notes)

104 (2003 TNMP, 2021 member of another congregation not ICI Colombia)

104.1 Mar. 20, 2021 (explanation of method and opening prayer by 104)

219 (Annemie Bosch)

219.1 Apr. 30, 2021 (explanation of method and closing prayer by IV)

219.2 May 26, 2021 (no prayer)

219.3 Jun. 25, 2021 (no prayer and no recording but have notes)

118 (Latin American 2003 TNMP, 2021 GRMP)

118.1 Sept. 29, 2021 (explanation of method and opening prayer by 118)

*I do not have access, at this time, to transcript of Gustavo Esteva interview

Nov. 8, 2019 (There was no prayer or explanation of *seven-step praxis cycle*.)

Appendix H: Prayers: Common Book of (Missiological Research) Prayers

Common Book of (Missiological Research) Prayers

112 & 212 (2003/2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

Interview: 112.1 & 212.1

Participant 112 Yes, okay. Father God, I thank you so much for your patience, especially your unfading love for us which is so much important and [unclear] as humankind to you, to your reward, your love. Please help us these times and please help us that we take, it's going to be used by you for the well-being of any other relevancies, please. I know that people currently are negative. Please give us faith and understanding of your love and your ways of thinking that are so much different from ours, so that we can grow and serve you better. I pray and I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Interview: 112.3 & 212.3

Participant 112 Dear Father God, I thank you so much for the way you have treated us and all the experiences that we have been able to have, all the service that we have been able to do in our lives, for you, for people. Thank you for letting us see, understand, and reflect on these things. I pray that this exercise will be helpful for many other people in their walk with you and in their walk in this earth. I thank you so much for your patience, for your kindness, for your support, for your love for all of us all the time. I pray all this in the name of your son. Amen.

Interview: 112.5

Participant 112 Father God, I thank you so much for this time, for the opportunity to reflect on our lives, on our walk with you along with a community. I pray that these times would be of good use for the purposes of [inaudible]. We're all spiritually immature. Help others in these situations and others that may benefit from this purpose. I pray that you bless this time and that you guide us with your spirit. I pray this in the name of your son. Amen.

Interview: 112.2 & 212.2

Participant 212 Heavenly Father, thank you so much for this time. Thank you for the chance to reconnect with my friend, Renee. Please bless her work, visa. Please make all these interviews go really well. And I am quite sure that they will I know for 112 and I it is helping us so much to reflect on our lives.

114 & 214 (2003/2021 GRMP: live in other country but sense of belonging to ICI Colombia)

Interview: 114.1 & 214.1

Participant 214 Dear Father God, thank you for this time that we can come together and remember our work with you. Sometimes it's easy to forget how much we have worked in our lives to keep us faithful and to be as close to you. Thank you for this time. Please guide Renee in all her research and studies and please keep us close to you, Father God. Thank you for using Jesus. In His name I pray. Amen.

Interview: 114.3

Participant 114 Thank you God for the opportunity to be together this morning or afternoon. Thank you for all the other things that we can learn and that we can share with each other. Thank you for this study. Thank you for Renee and the opportunity for me to be part of this research. Please be with us. Please be with everyone. Just talking about people and talking about people that might have been hurt or might have bitter feelings against other people, please help everyone heal. Please help everyone become closer to you over time. I know it's really difficult sometimes, but thank you so much, because you model this for us and thank you for your son. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

Interview: 114.4

Participant 114 Thank you God for the opportunity to be together this morning. Thank you for Renee and for all the things that she's been thinking about and studied about. Thank you for the

intelligence that you have given her and the ability and the discipline to conduct these studies. Ultimately, we're talking about people and we're talking about people's feelings and people's experiences. Please help us always think about that and always everything we learn to be able to contribute to other people's welfare, other people's closeness to you and closeness to their faith. Thank you, God, for the opportunity that you give us to have this relationship, this friendship that keeps growing over the years and are now enriched by all these common interests. But, again, it's ultimately people and Jesus gives us the example and sets the path forward for us to love ourselves and love others as much as we want to love you. Thank you, God, for these things, for Jesus's example. In his name we pray. Amen
pray. Amen.

218 & 120 (2003/2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

Interview: 218.1

Participant 218 Dear Father, thank you for today. Thank you for the time that you allow us to share with Renee. Thank you, Father, because this is a very useful time, not only for hear stories, but also is a very useful time because we can know more about each other. Thank you, Father, because this is also helpful time because it made me think and reflect about some issues that maybe I didn't consider before that I need to think more and reflect more about. Thank you for this time. And thank you because you give us the opportunity to have our relationship. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

Interview: 218.2

Participant 218 Dear Father, thank you for this time. You allow us to share today to have this time for getting to know more us about our life, thank you, Father, that you allow us to have these kind of relationships. And I think this can be possible because of you because of your Holy Spirit. And because of you will, because you really wanted us to be very close be brothers and sisters. Be your children, part of this family. Their father, I bet you can help people that is facing difficult

situations because of different illnesses but also because of COVID. That's a lot of pain in the world this moment. In MX this family, people having this kind of pain. The other allows to trust you in difficult moments. Allow us to have in mind what you say about your reel that is perfect for us. You're the one who knows what we need what is the best thing for us.

Our Father, allow us to be brave and that was to keep being Faithful. No matter the pain or difficult situations we have to face while we're in this world. I also asked you to help Renee with her studies and the interview appointments. She has wheat. He's professor here, Professor, help here, please, to clearly develop their hair ideas allow Professor Andrew stand here, and healthcare. Do whatever is necessary for here to conduct this study. Thank you, Father for listening to us. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

115 (2003 GRMP, 2021 TLMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

Interview: 115.1

Participant 115 My God. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to talk with Renee, a bless her and a her research. Father, and the give her the wisdom and to use these studies and this researching for to help other people to be more closer to you, Father, to know more about Jesus Christ. And thank you for the opportunity that you gave me to talk with her. And please father, bless them, meeting that we are going to have in some days Thank you father and our life is our our lives are in your life in your hands. And we are praying to you in the name of God Son, Jesus Christ, amen.

Interview: 115.2

Participant 115 Good afternoon. Our God, thank you, for gave us the opportunity to have this time with Renee, I pray to you to bless her research, to bless her family, her relationships. And I pray you, my father, that you give me the opportunity to, to help to continue to help her, with this research. And I pray to you the product, that this research, could be helpful and or other people the from an academic point of view but also from a spiritual point of view. Especially we're

praying to you for these persons that have died because COVID-19 in MX. We pray for their families, for their churches, and brothers and sisters that they are actually maybe they are very sick about this situation. I pray for Flavio, Renee, their feelings about that. And please our Father give us the opportunity to be strong, to help all your people in the in the situation. That this very strange and difficult situations we are living and things. Thank you because we have life where we have helped and we're praying our fire in the name of your son Jesus Christ, Amen.

Interview: 115.3

Participant 115 Father, thank you. My God, our God to give us the opportunity, to gave us, this opportunity to talk with Renee and the opportunity to talk about this kind of things. Father, thank you for your blessings for your. . . [SEP] Uh, for forgive us our sins. And the new opportunity that you always give us through Jesus Christ. Thank you for Jesus Christ, that it's the most important that we have in this world and the world that is going to come. And, I pray to you that you gave, give us the way of thinking, the force to always to be with Jesus. And I pray to you and my father to bless the research that it's, it's making a Renee. Protect her, and her family. And thank you for this opportunity to be in touch with her to, To help in some way to Her studies. And thank you my God, we pray for our lives. For this day that is ending. [SEP] In the name of Jesus Christ we're praying to you. Amen.

117 (Latin American GRMP)

Interview: 117.1

Participant 117 Dear Father, thank you so much for this opportunity to be with Renee and to talk about things that move in us so strong and so deep.

And we trust that you can go tingling [?] along with us towards things that we cannot fathom, things that we cannot understand or grasp with clarity, but that we trust and we hope to be surprised by you, by your love, your hand conducting us.

So, we leave our spirits and our lives into your hands, trusting that the interviews, the work of Renee and the writing of her dissertation, the ideas, the conversations, all this is engagement with people, with missiology and with the gospel and, above all, with you.

There is a purpose that we cannot see necessarily clear today or the effects of it in our own lives and in the life of others, but we trust that you want to use us as part of your plan of touching your creation.

It's a privilege, it's definitely an honor to be visited by your Holy Spirit and to be part of the body of Christ and to be under the only sound hierarchy, which is Christ as the head of the church, which is such a blessing to be seen as a friend and not as a servant and to be taken and embraced as children.

And we pray that you give both Renee and I wisdom and faith and hope and love and trust conducting our researches and, above all, the interviews, this phase, this moment of our research which is talking to people and touching subjects that many times can be very controversial or, at least, reach out to areas that are hurtled or that are still wandered by the past.

Give us wisdom to act with love and patience and conduct this conversation with Flavio in a way that we can learn from each other and learn, above all, more of Christ together.

I'm thankful for this friendship, thankful for the trust that Renee has put on me to conduct this very special moment of her research and allow me to honor this trust and to be able to be completely open to your guidance, to the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout this conversation.

And be with Renee in these next weeks of work, interviewing people.

And thank you so much for the opportunity to do what we're doing, which is things we love to do and we're so thankful for your love.

And we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

104 (2003 TNMP, 2021 member of another congregation not ICI Colombia)

Interview 104.1

Participant 104 Holy Father of heaven, we thank you for this day. We thank you for the infinite opportunity that you have given us, to be your children, to count on your grace. God of heaven, we also thank you for the families you have given us, our spouses, our children. My Father, we thank you infinitely for your grace, your mercy with our lives. We want to ask you to bless this space and this place. Bless IV's life, my life. Holy Father, may you take control, Holy Father, of this time and let it be to enlarge your kingdom, Holy Father, your glory. And may we help with a little bit a little bit of sand, Holy Father, to add to your movement on earth. We thank in the name of Jesus. Amen.

118 (Latin American 2003 TNMP, 2021 GRMP)

Interview 118.1

Participant 118 Our God in heaven, Great Father, we thank you very much for the blessing of being with you. To have life through every action, every moment that you have been guiding us to know you more. Oh, my God, thank you for wanting us to get to know you, to enjoy the life we have by your side. Thanks for the friendships. And for brothers and sisters who have a deep desire to serve you. And that they dedicate their times and lives to being connected to you through your word and through other tools. That lead us to you. Father, thank you also for this time, for Renee, for her research. And I pray that everything will be very useful and that it can be safely used and serviced by other people. Thank you for this time. In the name of Christ. Amen.

Renee Rheinbolt-Uribe's Participation in Active Prayers in Talking-Circles as Researcher

In Interview: 114.2 & 214.2

Renee Dear God, thank you for giving us this opportunity to think about you and how we're trying to bring you into our lives.

[Phone rings].

Thank you for 114 and 214.

In Jesus' name, amen.

In Interview: 111.1

Renee God, we give you thanks for life you have given us. Thank you for the people whom you have put on this path. Thank you that you have put 111 in our path and he and his family appeared. And all that they are mean to us. I ask you to please be in this space. Please manage it, help manage the dynamics and be able to lead towards... I think it can be very essential for this study. God, we put it this interview in your hands. In Christ. Amen.

In interview: 112.6 & 112.5

Renee God, thank you that you love us, that you have given us the opportunity to share so many, so many, so many years. So many joyful, sad, difficult, cool, and funny memories, a mix of everything. And as we tackle these issues, help us keep our eyes on your Son, God. We need you so much, God. So many things are so beyond our reach, our understanding. And I ask you, like you've done for so many years, in so many ways that you've guided at all three, all four of us, in such a special way. Keep guiding every step, God. We ask you so much for our congregation in Bogota, that we have loved so much and wanted to give our best, God. I'm asking you to help them. Help them know how to seek Jesus through so much human as well as issues on the international scene. Whatever happens, help us not to shift our gaze from you. Give us people close, to continuing to help us do that, God. Thank you for this friendship. In the name of Christ. Amen.

In interview: 219.1

Renee Dearest Lord, we come before you thankful for the lives you've given us and you put before us Jesus as he lived between so much *brokenness* and you've let us be encouraged each in our

own way to put our eyes on you and you've given us strength along the way. Thank you so much for Annemarie explaining and telling me more about her own life. And it helps me to see even more Jesus in her to want to follow your son even continually even in even greater ways, as I see in her, God. And just pray you will be with her. She's a lot going on and lots of things. And thank you so much that you've put people like her in this world that can be a guiding light, God, for so many of us. And we just thank you for every person and how special each person in the whole world is for you and help us just to continue to show that more and more to each person that we can come across in some way and that we can be reflections of your love more and more. This world needs you so much. We pray you just continue doing what you can do to help us. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

Appendix I: Prayers: Data Analysis

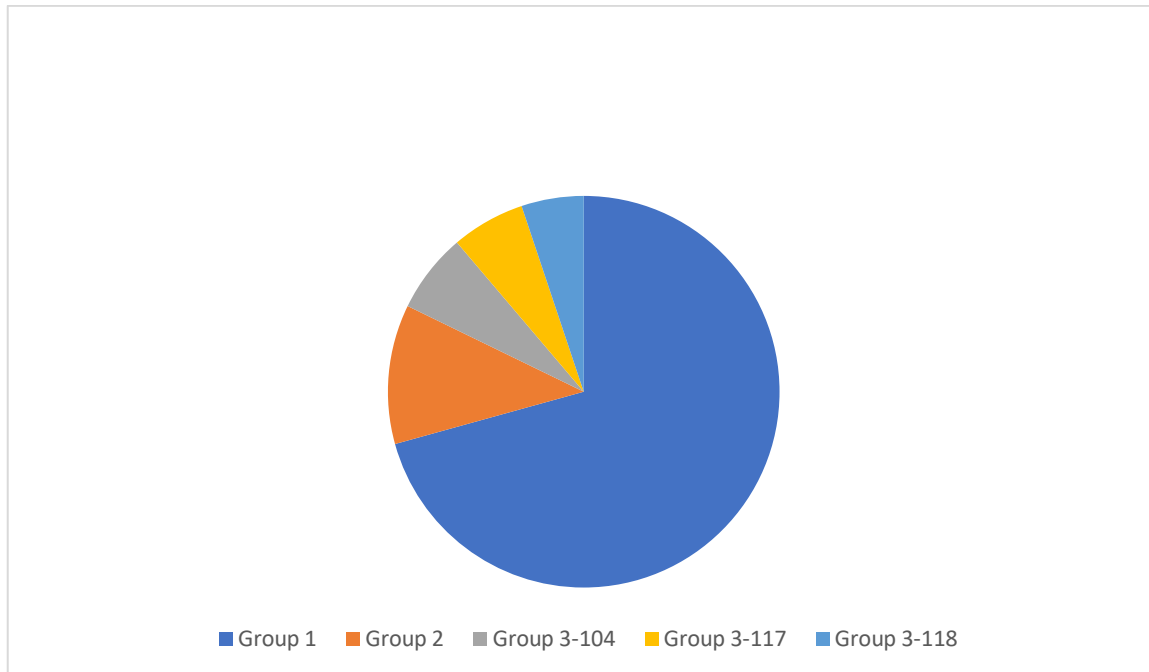
Media Name	Word count	Positive Sent	Negative Se	Neutral Sentiment (1-100%)		
112 Prayers	317	62,5	4,2	33,3		
104 Prayer	134	52,6	0	47,4		
117 Prayer	424	84,6	0	15,4		
118 Prayer	145	47,6	0	52,4		
218 Prayers	366	62,1	13,8	24,1		
114 Prayers	301	65,8	2,6	31,6		
212 Prayer	61	83,3	0	16,7		
Renee s pray	535	66,1	0	33,9		
214 Prayer	80	66,7	0	33,3		
115 Prayers	483	70,6	11,8	17,6		

Appendix J: Interview Data: Excel Sheet

All Interviews

Media Name	Word count	Character count	Positive Sentiment (1-100%)	Negative Sentiment (1-100%)	Neutral Sentiment (1-100%)
115.1	5460	27705	46.8	6.2	47
114.2 & 214.2	7130	37084	38.1	10.3	51.6
104	14133	71369	43.4	9.6	47
112.4 & 212.4	12254	62432	44.4	8.2	47.4
115.2	7529	38302	42.9	9.6	47.5
117.1	7324	39128	48.3	5.1	46.6
112.6 & 112.5	4771	24246	40.3	11	48.7
112.1 & 212.1	11422	60148	37	13.7	49.3
114.5	2995	13220	40.8	13.6	45.5
112.2 & 212.2	9971	52909	43.4	7.9	48.7
112.3 & 212.3	13115	68442	32.8	16.7	50.5
120.1 & 218.3	9923	50667	43.7	13.2	43.1
114.1 & 214.1	9864	51715	42.5	4.3	53.2
114.3	8624	46220	44.3	8.7	47
112.5	8133	43414	36	16.9	47.1
115.3	5881	29375	36.2	12.1	51.7
114.6	8208	38123	41.6	13.9	44.5
218.1	8552	44234	40.2	7.3	52.6
118	13029	55811	41.2	8.1	50.6
111	10598	55885	39.2	8.9	51.9
107	14111	71728	39.5	10.1	50.4
117.2	3708	19064	35.9	12.8	51.3
218.2	10004	51879	42.4	9.9	47.7
114.4	7913	41959	40.8	13.1	46.1

Appendix K: Interview Data: Data Analysis (AI generated summary)



112 & 212 (2003/2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

112.1&212.1--Jan. 19, 2021 (11,422 total words)

I think obviously there would be many things I could ask. But I'm focusing on what I understand as a crisis or a change that there was in the congregation in 2003. The congregation decided to appoint some people in that role of an institution. The administrative board without knowing whether that was an administrative or spiritual. I was just saying, I just have to state that obviously, you know that I was part of things like that at different times. And it is something that I deeply repented of and reflected upon. But most of the congregation I don't even think they know who were the people who sent the money. Yes, I think it is a mistake when you try to help people and you put a lot of money into it and you are not clear.

112.2&212.2--Jan 28, 2021 (9,971 total words)

Learn that that is the way things go and be content. Yes, I think I agree. There is not a unique way to be a church leader. Different people in the group that was elected to assume the administration of the congregation had different ways of thinking and how to handle the situation. What would what would be a type of like spiritual and biblical things that would come to your mind to share with that person from looking back? Yes, within the subject that you are sharing, looking back;

what do you what would you think as far as like biblical images or spiritual thoughts or exact biblical examples? And we need to understand that the way that he wants to do things is not the same as we think it is.

112.3&212.3--Feb. 4, 2021 (13,115 total words)

Yes. At that time we decided let's talk about what is going on because how is it possible that all of a sudden we were supposedly working together, the three of us, we were supposed to be united and to be a team. And all of a sudden one of them left saying that everything was wrong and everything. And never talk about it with us. I don't know if somebody would probably know about it. The fact that I started studying with Douglas and all these processes that I took after this second crisis helped me a lot to understand much better. I think a long way ahead on that with respect to many people here in Colombia. I think that although I know that God loves everybody; I don't see him working through things in everybody's case. But I think it happens when people are a part of his church, in the ministry or in congregation.

112.4&212.--Feb. 11, 2021 (12,254 total words)

I feel like it would be so valuable to see some of that walk throughout in your youth and how did that work a little bit your own faith in God. How did that develop? It sounds like something about that side of God might have somehow you connected with that love of a maternal thing. Then pretty soon after that is when you had this experience with the divine. Through your rational side answered questions. Rational questions that had come up as you studied philosophy and sociology. And then connected with an example you saw in people and then it connected that God did care for you. And loved you and was close to you even when you thought he wasn't. Pretty much in my work, many times what I can do to help and to solve problems. It is to make sense out of what is happening not just take it blindly like many people do. Yes, I think God wants us to give as much as we can.

112.5--Mar. 25, 2021 (8,133 total words)

Besides that also if there are organizations that have influence and control on people; that can easily derive into different other things like cults. I found it interesting that you are saying you will follow the constitution. That you won't let people do if there is also political control, of not

doing something against the government. Coming back to your original question. Yes, at that time we were trying to figure out how to get organized as a congregation and ministry wise. But we were also trying to comply with the requirements of the government to get the license to operate. Yes, it was said in the meeting that that he had a different way of thinking about how to lead and how the congregation should work.

112.6&212.5--Apr. 29, 2021 (4,771 total words)

I do not know because it seemed to me that he shared his inner struggle for so many years and what conclusion he came to. But saying it is not the same because it is not like those who say it is that solutions home church that was a time. Everything must be the same. not the state as if it is his own what he has been seeing but that everyone has different things left not like the way he knows he already found it or not. One does not mean is that it is better or worse but because even in many countries you can talk a lot of these things with ordinary brothers and leaders we have. Because they' re a lot of people who feel like they are part of the church.

114 & 214 (2003/2021 GRMP: live in other country but sense of belonging to ICI Colombia)

114.1&214.1--Jan. 24, 2021 (9,864 total words)

This one would be a little bit maybe longer because we have to do the introductory questions but so if you guys could think if you would want to be part of that you can let me know. I don't know if you guys would agree but I would think on top of just the way society has been built but on top of that even when as women we have so much equality in many things but just when you're having to care for children everything I feel like it's harder to be philosophical. I considered at the time that I was close to God. So when N. invited me to the Bible talk I was like yes of course I know about God. And so when I went it really impacted me that they actually read the Bible and talk about it and I had never done that even though I was going to church to another church.

114.2&214.2--Feb. 3, 2021 (7,130 total words)

I find here in the United States after being used to being in Colombia and other countries where emotions is see like a positive thing. To say you cried. Where here it's like gasps. You cried with your friend? She was very strong in her thinking and things needed to be done the way that she wanted to get it done. Because I feel like sometimes, I wanted things to be done the way that I think because I think they are right. Very soon you realize okay if I want to be in. I must speak the right way. I have to say the right things I have to baptize a lot so that that looks good. It was like you need to do the things this way.

114.3-- Feb. 10, 2021 (8,624 total words)

It's really brilliant in that sense because it's funny and it's fun to read but at the same time it's devastating. Because you know that those things in some way shape or form really did happen. I think there was a view particularly when I became a member of the church. There was a view that the future for leadership was going to come from the campus. And that the way to attract good leadership or the best leaders of the country for the congregation was from the best universities. That's part of I think what s pushed my research because I thought I'd go back, and people would be willing to talk about these things and it wasn't that way. I don't knows what you think a fourth group the people who just gave up on spiritual things?

114.4--Apr. 14, 2021 (7,913 total words)

Also because of M. and because of the way in a sense there are many things that I envision for him. That I didn't know how were they going to come about but they came about through suffering. For himself, even from the struggle even to live. But I do share elements of it with I wouldn't say everyone. I come across but people close enough get a feel as to why do I think in certain ways or do I approach things in certain ways. I think sometimes I especially being in Colombia because sometimes they'd go crazy. People very upset about things that they could do nothing about. And I'd just be in my mind, practical. I'm sure I even said to you, you're wasting your tears. I wouldn't necessarily say that out loud but as I said part of being there for people is sometimes listening to those things and sympathizing with the thinking process.

114.5--May 12, 2021 (114 teaching IV on NT letter of Romans) (2,995 total words)

Adam and Jesus the new creation and all that. But it is for me what Paul is saying is a miracle. And to complete that plan of God of achieving that unity, of achieving that new creation in Christ. Controversially, Paul uses many literary figures. I no longer think he was saying this is exactly how it is going to happen, or this is exactly how it works. Romans 12 stops to appease. Not to think, do not question, not too little and I don't think that is what Paul is saying. It's that I know in the context of what he did not find. For me it is not necessary to be afraid to think and ask questions. Even asking what Paul was saying when he spoke of salvation.

114.6--May 26, 2021 (8,208 total words)

It can be helpful to understand your social structure and I feel like that's a good thing for *self-understanding*. But it doesn't necessarily take you to God and it's easier just to get more discouraged than anything. But the other thing too at this moment the last few weeks I've been thinking I don't know if I told you this; but to bring the case study of ICI Colombia more into did I tell you this more in the world of megachurches. Instead of focusing on ICOC; trying to really downplay that. So it's a little bit of a different position. But since you asked, I think that for me is the struggle is trying to formulate the right type of question; depending on the document that I'm accessing (*italics added for emphasis*).

218 & 120 (2003/2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

218.1--Feb. 4, 2021 (8,552 total words)

Then I remember that when I was maybe 14 years old. I was having a bad time in school because I had the kind of friends that they were misbehaving and doing wrong things. Yes, we spent some time studying scriptures and I was really happy because that was what I wanted to know about God about his plans. That he wanted to have a relationship with me. I felt really happy. And I had lots of expectations regarding the way I would live my new life and understanding many things. For example, relationships with my family having real friends and of course having a relationship with God, because I haven't had that before. I would like to ask him many things; but I think that maybe he's not going to feel good about my questions.

218.2--Feb 11, 2021 (10,004 total words)

But I think that whole year was a good time for me to kind of be prepared to face the situation. It was really hard, but I think it was a good time to put into practice this scripture in my life. And somehow see how God was preparing me and my family for the situation. Not to fight with God, because of the situation or things like that. But understanding this scripture. It was interesting and I remember that I mentioned this to him and I say okay this is something we're talking about and it is good for us to think about it. Not only because, maybe one more detail could be. It is not only the way I think he studies Bible for his own relationship with God, but also the way he shares his learning with others.

218.3 & 120.1--Apr. 22, 2021 (9,923 total words)

Yes, for example, after those four and a half years, because I thought about going back to work. But some work that would allow me to continue and not letting go of my most important task, my role as a mother. Yes, but I need to remember that it is not that way. I know that the problem is not the other person but it is me. That I am wanting to believe that it is left that should be what I should have. Or something like that. But I believe and what I see in the Scriptures is that it is a decision of each person to want to obey what God says or to do things their own way.

115 (2003 GRMP, 2021 TLMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

115.1--Feb. 3, 2021 (5,460 total words)

But I think that before that I was living a process to know God to search God to be close to God. Finally, I found a church when I could heard about the message, the gospel. And it brings me to be baptized; to be a Christian; to be a disciple. It's something that as the time was going on, was changing. And I think that I lost a part of this relationship that I have with Christ. And the church took a very important part or a very important presence in my life, spiritually talking. And in some cases I think that it wasn't a good thing. Yes. Going back to you said. You began to get to know Christ. You found a congregation. You decided to get baptized. And you say you made huge changes in your life.

115.2--Feb. 9, 2021 (7,529 total words)

They just shared all about their lives and their life story. And they had been Christians for a long time and they helped start the church in Oaxaca. They led the church in Oaxaca. They had problems. If you want to go to visit someone who has died and their family and relatives; you're not going to be able. You have to take care about all the things. That you have to pay attention in this pandemic. But so far I feel even though I talked to some people about some very intense things; I've done okay. Except that one day I felt a little bit like... I thought about if my experience or the things that I was saying could be helpful for you for your research.

115.3--Mar. 16, 2021 (5,881 total words)

I think that at that point we have maybe a system to control people and the church wanted to obtain a lot of time from the people. That was the way of thinking at that point of the time. It was for all of us at that point. We thought that it was to give our service to God. But in my common sense or in my way of thinking, I couldn't find a reason for a lot of things that we did at that moment. I maybe can see at this moment, that they talk with that special way. That at that point make me think that they're talking like American people. Yes. It was a difficult period of time because we have a lot of things that we thought that were very strong. That we were very sure that we were doing the right things in the right way, and we were at the right place.

117 (Latin American GRMP)

117.1--Feb. 8, 2021 (7,324 total words)

The other thing is I'm wondering, even though you're giving me a verbal agreement, if I could send you a form that I am sending everybody I'm involved with. Where they just sign and they know that they understand all the confidentiality of what I'm discussing with them and just different specific details. In my mind I can envision all these three things I'm telling you: The levels their life history. And Ivan Illich is connecting with what I understand. Sort of how I've seen you interview. I've seen how you think, what you read, what you do. That could bring in something quite interesting in being willing to interview Flavio. I think it is almost impossible not to get a conversation where I want to bring some thoughts, ideas, concepts or even theological understandings of Illich and see how Flavio interacts with them. Above all because I see him in many ways living in this way.

117.2--Dec. 15, 2021 (3,708 total words)

We have is one thing so it is already a group like who knows what is going to happen to this group. Since I feel like when I went to my grandmother s house and found letters there. Yes from family secrets. But then you tell me that that you are also a little afraid that the most internal situation of the church. The result is that it can cause to the image of the institution or how people are going react. But those are things that I have already overcome more than. I think that the most beautiful way to look at work as yours is from the point of view of someone who continues to believe that if there is opportunity; there are possibilities to give more space to the Spirit to guide the Church.

107 (2003 TNPM, 2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia Membership)

107.1--Feb. 12, 2021 (14,111 total words)

That's the hard thing to recognize that we find in a lot of communities. This incredible people that almost no one knows they're there; except the ones that benefit from their love and their wisdom. And so I did and finally 10 years after we're married I just gave up and said this makes no sense. I'm never going to reach her in the things. To the point when I went back people would still look at me. Like there's this thing that in Colombia we would say. That a crazy person would always say that they're okay. I guess also because I had been doing a lot of thinking the two years before that I was already changing a lot of views and seeing things from a different point of view. So I was like, yes, maybe this could be true in some places; but I guess it's not true in my case.

111 (2003 TNMP, 2021 GRMP: current ICI Colombia membership)

111.1--Mar. 19, 2021 (10,598 total words)

But with the motivation at that time not to be rebellious or anything like that; although I think many interpreted it that way. Well you know that way of doing things, that type of management, let's say. In a sense, those human arguments to say is that I am going to do this is that I do love people. It is that I am good. It is that I am going to teach them to be like me. I don't know what else. Yes, but at the same time, like the Holy Spirit the one who guide and does the work. I'm

not wanting to insist on something that doesn't; but if the idea is not what is another way of approaching theology. Like how people think of God within where they are.

111.2--Mar. 25, 2021 (erased recording by accident but have written notes)

104 (2003 TNMP, 2021 member of another congregation not ICI Colombia)

104.1--Mar. 20, 2021 (14,133 total words)

Let's say it was she had to travel to work, then she was a little absent. But my mom told that I was going to be the president. So she always told me, but as Mary told us the truth. I think I was very loved by God since when I think I was conceived differently. At the National (Univ.), I looked for things to get into; maybe Catholicism. And I wanted to attend a Catholic retreat It was always like a concern in my life and I was going to work on. Then I feel like I identify with the same thing and say I deeply thank God. Who allowed me to act grace on my life and that I am another being and that I was able to have a home and children.

118 (Latin American 2003 TNMP, 2021 GRMP)

118.1-- Sept. 29, 2021 (13,029 total words)

So as we grew up with that idea of doing things right. I think it somehow marked on us or at least it marked me. In the sense that in my childhood and youth all the time I wanted to do the good things. Although obviously it wasn't 100 percent concrete, but that was kind of my idea. And I think, somehow I know it too; I connect it with the spiritual. And she had a great inclination to do the things of good and God. Now at the time I think I connected a lot of what in that part because it was a part of the family, right? Well, first because of the economic thing. But I also think it was a little influenced by everything by one of my uncles. My father himself had studied in public university and was like a role model.

Appendix L: Creative Work: Motherline Identity

Identity

My maternal grandmother began a new identity. When she was 41 when I was born I was the first grandchild. And I gave her the name. So from then on, her people around her didn't call her Doris or mother. They started to call her Memaw. From then on. That was her main name and she was very good. She was connected to be a grandmother.

I think about myself. Say when I was 20, moved to Mexico City. I began a new changed my name from Renee. I decided to call myself because in MX, Spanish speaking cultures, Rene, is a name for a man. So I thought, here I am working with campus. And women especially, and spend a lot of time with them and building friendships and they know each other's houses. And I just felt like it was not a smart thing to go by the name Irene. In conservative households that would not be correct for a young woman to be spending so much time with someone named Rene, and it would just be confusing for these young women. And so I just decided, Okay, I'm going to be just add an I in front and remove the E from the end. And it was also the name of the one of my parents' closest friends and mentors. Her husband's PhD thesis is part of my bibliography. So some of his other work in his influence. Roland Allen really impacted my parents. So I made a name change, that match my identity of the moment, even though it wasn't a legal change.

And then I came to another part of my life when I was 25. I was already by this time living in Bogota, Colombia. I was about to get married, which led me into a new phase of my life. And as well as I was going more towards being a career missionary, having a lot of responsibilities already within mission planting there in Colombia. And the day of the wedding, I asked the man who married us to use my legal name, just renamed, to Renee Marie. In Colombia, it's very common to have use your first and middle thing at all times. So that day, December 13 1992, I began to be wanting to be called Renee Marie. And that was my identity as a married woman and as a career missionary.

The last names were another decision.. Because it wasn't from any country, I decided I would keep my maiden name which, for traditional us culture, it's not common to keep your maiden name. But I would also take on my husband's last name, which is not common at all. in Colombia. Married women keep their names, they don't change their names when they get married. And so I became Rene Marie Rheinbolt-Urbe, sometimes with the dash, sometimes not. So that meant in Colombia, I was strange, because I had to take on my husband's name. And then my circle in the United States, I was strange because I kept my maiden name.

Which is the thing that last, then we decided to give it to our children, which they would be Urbe-Rheinbolt. This would be their legal name in Colombia and the United States.

And then, continuing with the subjects of identity, when I decided not to be a career missionary anymore. I had to figure out what my identity was going to be. The best way to self-define myself or my identity, was missionary mother. And a missionary wife, because I decided to take a supporting role to my husband with his mission work. But I still was a missionary, I felt the gospel cross constable gospel communicator, but not a career missionary.

So missionary mother, missionary wife just seemed the most beautiful way to express this, I even writing a capstone thesis upon called on missionary mothers. And then it comes full circle. Now, because as my children left home, for college, I felt missionary mother did not was not my identity anymore. I had to figure out what is my new identity. And I connect, then, in a way with my maternal grandmother, even though I'm not a biological grandmother. I am a non reproducing female who according to the grandmother's theory or hypothesis is someone who can now be at the service of her family and her community in a new way. So now I'm at the stage in my life where I need to gather a new identity at the age of 53, which is more like a grandmother, cross cultural grandmother, scholar, poet, something along those lines. So maybe it shows that I'm from privilege, I have the opportunity to decide upon my identities or maybe it's part of life cycle then you change your identities depending on what stage of life cycle one is in.

Appendix M: Creative Work: Researcher Identity as Poet

(Written June 2021) Poetic Inquiry is front and center in the production of this project. The development of Poetic Inquiry as a craft, method, and practice (Faulkner 2019), has been built into the research little by little. To illustrate, in 2018 I was exposed to Hendriks (2004), “Poets listen first, They feel the shift intuitively. . . They sense the new rhythm of life and are able to express it. . . With prophetic skills they reveal underlying hidden values. . . has sympathy but criticizes it from a Christian background” (2004:202). I immediately began to identify myself as a missionary poet.

In the Pre-Proposal accepted by Stellenbosch Faculty of Practical Theology and Missiology in July 2019, I communicate the above as well as Ivan Illich’s understanding of missiology approaching theology with an “increased receptivity for the poetic, the historical, and the social aspects of reality (1970:87). And I describe myself, “As a participant in mission from birth and a poet, this definition strikes a cord and it is therefore appropriate to use as a foundation for an auto-ethnographic narrative throughout the study, as a missionary poet.”

My *self-understandings* and self-definition immediately shifted to missionary poet, although the previous fourteen years I had self-identified as missionary mother. (I spent most of my time cooking but also wrote poetry.). As my **main research question** has also explored, my personal *self-understandings* led to shifts in my own practices.

During the crisis of the case study, is when I became a poet. It represents the shift that went on inside of my unconscious, my own rebirth. First of all, because I wrote the four poems in Spanish. English is my first language but then unconsciously in the moment of expressing my deepest feelings I used Spanish. Second, the themes were mainly about dealing with the unknown and wanting to belong, but also describing the shift as I felt it at the moment.

No se como contarte.

Amiga, mi vida ha cambiado y no se como decirtelo.

No encuentro las palabras necesarias para expresarte que no sigo en la misma lucha.

Amor ser mujer por eso voy a dedicarme a ser mujer.

No estoy dejando la lucha por la mujeres dedicandome a ser mujer

Estoy ayudando, pero no se como contarte.

I don't know how to tell you.

Friend (feminine), my life has changed and I don't know how to say it.

I don't have the necessary words to express to you that I am no longer devoted to the same cause.

I love being a woman, that is why I am going to devote myself to being a woman.

I am not letting go of the feminine cause by devoting myself to being a woman.

I am helping it, but I don't know how to tell you.

I wrote to the mental health specialist in Oct. 2021, that I had found a way to unite my inner father and mother, as well as connecting with the poem above. I sent him the poems and wrote,

"Por que explico todo esto? Creo que hoy entendi que mi trabajo es una respuesta a la poesia "Amo ser Mujer". Allí plasmo mi sentir de ese momento, 'no tengo palabras. . .' Creo que hoy en dia, 18 años después SI TENGO PALABRAS."

(Why am I explaining all this? I think today I understood that my work is a response to the poetry "I love being a woman". There I capture my feeling of that moment, 'I have no words. . .' I think today, 18 years later, I DO HAVE WORDS.")

As I reflect upon this poem so long afterwards, I realize that what I could not say, what I did not have the words to say was not related to my gender or the desire to be full time devoted to mothering. It has to do with my realization of what the church system I was in was truly like, with its deeper issues within the current thinking and system-guided church life. My research journey, especially since I began the data analysis, has led to uncovering the deeper meaning of that poem. I have had to come to grips that although full-time mothering was a great activity to have jumped into, there were certain aspects of my lived experience within the megachurch leadership role that I was avoiding. This has been extremely difficult to see and then harder to accept. But the research has led me into a deeper spiritual and emotional peace as I finally close that cycle of my life.

Appendix N1: Creative Work: Participant 111 Tripartite vs. Ecclesial Mutuality (Spanish)

Renee, gracias por compartir tus escritos; considero que es un tema bastante denso para abarcarlo en pocas líneas , y sobre todo sin el calor de unas copas de “añejos vinos” que amenicen la tertulia.

En mi parecer, la mutualidad “eclesiastica” sólo se puede concebir desde el punto de vista físico (lo tangible) (estructuras, jerarquías, economía, estudios, clases, programas , intercambios, etc.), más no de lo intangible (lo espiritual) (dones de DIOS, sabiduría de lo alto, frutos del espíritu, etc.).

Entre éstos dos hay un abismo muy grande, que no es posible unificar; por enfocarme en lo físico, pierdo lo espiritual y viceversa. “Hechos 6:2-4 Entonces los doce convocaron a la multitud de los discípulos, y dijeron: No es justo que nosotros dejemos la palabra de Dios, para servir a las mesas.³ Buscad, pues, hermanos, de entre vosotros a siete varones de buen testimonio, llenos del Espíritu Santo y de sabiduría, a quienes encarguemos de este trabajo (trabajo físico).⁴ Y nosotros persistiremos en la oración y en el ministerio de la palabra”.(trabajo espiritual)

El malvado corazón humano nunca descifrá ni comprenderá la ruta propuesta por DIOS, “Romanos 8:20 Porque la creación perdió su verdadera finalidad, no por su propia voluntad, sino porque Dios así lo había dispuesto; pero le quedaba siempre la esperanza ...”, y podemos observar ésta inquietante voluntad suprema de DIOS, aún desde el Eden (pecado y oposición de Adan), y en cada paso en que él quiso gobernar y dirigir a su pueblo, llegando a solicitar directamente que le fuese nombrado un gobernante humano (estructura humana- física) :“I Samuel 8:5-9«Es un hecho que tú ya eres viejo, y que tus hijos no siguen tu ejemplo. Por lo tanto, escógenos un rey, como lo tienen todas las naciones, para que nos gobierne.»⁶ Pero a Samuel no le agradó esta propuesta de dar al pueblo un rey que lo gobernara; entonces oró al Señor, ⁷ y el Señor le dijo:«Atiende todas las peticiones que te haga el pueblo. No te han rechazado a ti, sino a mí, pues no quieren que yo reine sobre ellos. ⁸ Están haciendo contigo lo que han hecho conmigo desde que los saqué de Egipto: me están dejando para ir y servir a otros dioses. ⁹ Tú, atiende sus peticiones, pero aclárales todos los inconvenientes, y muéstrales cómo los tratará quien llegue a ser

su rey.»

Aunque estaba profetizada la “gobernanza “espiritual (intangible) por medio de Cristo, los judíos ni los gentiles la entendieron, y esperaban y siguen esperando un REY HUMANO, que los salve de sus “penurias”. Aún en éste tiempo tampoco se entiende esa gobernanza, y otra vez el malvado corazón humano pretende descifrarla como la solución física de mis problemas (prosperidad, salud, vida sin problemas, etc.) para lo cual encaminan todos sus esfuerzos en agrupar “fieles” bajo esos preceptos.

La gobernanza intangible es contraria a la física, en que ésta última , por tener fieles a su servicio, coloca grilletes con sabor a libertad (normas, cánones, leyes, dogmas, jerarquías, mandos, dirección, deberes, patrones de “salvación”, etc.), que en el tiempo sólo hacen es más miserable y dolorosa la “peregrinación” del creyente. La intangible, por el contrario, pregona e impulsa la libertad (Juan 8:32 y conoceréis la verdad, y la verdad os hará libres.), basada en el amor a DIOS y al PROJIMO, siendo ésta “ley”, que desde lo profundo del “YO” me impide jerarquizar mi

hermandad, pues siempre buscaré el servicio antes que el “mando”. (Mateo 20:26-27 26 Mas entre vosotros no será así, sino que el que quiera hacerse grande entre vosotros será vuestro servidor, 27 y el que quiera ser el primero entre vosotros será vuestro siervo..). Lo físico en general casi siempre se podrá parametrizar, esquematizar y organizar en causas comunes (mutualidad), pero así como son de diversas las opiniones, así será cada esquema propuesto, sin ahondar en la “malvada” intencionalidad de quién la proponga. En el transcurrir del tiempo, ésto ha sido sustentado históricamente desde lo social, económico, religioso, filosófico, comunitario, etc. y de ahí se han devenido las innumerables guerras, genocidios, conquistas, etc. Es decir, lo mutua, por ser humano, físico, cubre sólo aspectos y necesidades temporales, que según la fuerza que la preceda, se convierte en el nuevo “GRILLETE SALVADOR”. Lo intangible , que procede del espíritu, por su misma naturaleza, siempre estará en contravía con lo físico, y es imposible que se le minimice y encierre en preceptos humanos, que coarten la “libertad”. No se puede establecer un patrón “mutua” para enseñar ésto. Cada uno debe establecer su propio vínculo con DIOS, para desarrollar sus Dones (I corintios 7:7 Más bien, quisiera que todos los hombres fuesen como yo; pero cada uno tiene su propio don procedente de Dios: uno de cierta manera y otro de otra manera)

Lo que si es mutua es el amor entre los hermanos (Juan 15: 12 Y este es mi mandamiento: que se amen los unos a los otros, como yo los he amado), por tanto todo esfuerzo en éste propósito, considero que DIOS alumbrará el camino.

Para desarrollar en otro espacio, veo una mutualidad tripartita en la naturaleza de DIOS, en la siguiente escritura: “ I Juan 5:6 Este es Jesucristo, que vino mediante agua y sangre; no mediante agua solamente, sino mediante agua y sangre. Y el Espíritu es el que da testimonio; porque el Espíritu es la verdad. 7 Porque tres son los que dan testimonio en el cielo: el Padre, el Verbo y el Espíritu Santo; y estos tres son uno. 8 Y tres son los que dan testimonio en la tierra: el Espíritu, el agua y la sangre; y estos tres concuerdan.”

Espero haber podido ayudar en algo al desarrollo de tu escrito.
Con Cariño,

Appendix N2: Creative Work: Participant 111 Tripartite vs. Ecclesial Mutuality (English)

Dec.17, 2019 (document sent by email in response the version of Chap. 2 I sent him on Dec. 15, 2019, I used this text for our interview 111.1 on Mar. 19, 2021).

Renee, thank you for sharing your writings; I think it's a pretty dense topic to cover it in a few lines, and especially without the warm environment of a few glasses of "aged wine" that liven up our discussion.

In my opinion, "ecclesiastical" mutuality can only be conceived from the physical point of view (the tangible) (structures, hierarchies, economics, studies, classes, programs, exchanges, etc.), but not from the intangible (the spiritual) (GOD'S gifts, wisdom from on high, fruit of the spirit, etc.). Between these two there is a very large chasm, which it is not possible to unify; by focusing on the physical, I miss out on the spiritual and vice versa. "Acts 6:2-4 2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3 Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them (physical work) 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." (spiritual work).

The evil human heart will never decipher or comprehend the route proposed by GOD, "Romans 8:20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ...", and we can see this disturbing supreme will of GOD, even from Eden (sin and opposition of Adam), and at every step in which he wanted to govern and lead his people, going so far as to directly request that a human ruler be appointed (human-physical structure): "I Samuel 8:5-9"5 They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."

6 But when they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. 7 And the Lord told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they

have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. 8 As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. 9 Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will claim as his rights. "

Although spiritual “governance” (intangible) was prophesied through Christ, the Jews nor did the Gentiles understood it, and they expected and continue to wait for a HUMAN KING, who will save them from their “hardships”. Even at this time that governance is not understood either, and again the evil human heart aims to decipher it as the physical solution to my problems (prosperity, health, a trouble-free life, etc.) for which they direct all their efforts in grouping “faithful ones” under those precepts.

Intangible governance is contrary to the physical one, in that the latter, by having faithful ones at its service, places shackles with a taste of freedom (norms, canons, laws, dogmas, hierarchies, commands,

direction, duties, patterns of “salvation”, etc.), which in time the only thing they do is to make more miserable and painful the “pilgrimage” of the believer. The intangible, on the contrary, proclaims and drives the freedom (John 8:32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.), based on love of GOD and of the NEIGHBOR, being this “law”, which from the depths of the “SELF” prevents me from hierarchizing my brotherhood, for I will always seek service rather than “command.” (Matthew 20:26-27 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—..).

The phy“ical”in general can almost always be parameterized, schematized, and organized into common causes (mutuality), but as the opinions are diverse, so will be each proposed scheme, without delving into the “evil” intentionality of whoever proposes it. In the course of time, this has been historically sustained from the social, economic, religious, philosophical, communal, etc. and from there, has come about the innumerable wars, genocides, conquests, etc. That is,

the mutual, being human, physical, covers only the temporary aspects and needs, which according to the force that precedes it, becomes the new “SAVING SHACKLE”.

The intangible, which proceeds from the spirit, by its very nature, will always be opposite to the physical, and it is impossible to minimize it and enclose it in human precepts, which restrict the “freedom.” A “mutual” pattern cannot be established for teaching this. Each one must establish their own bond with GOD, to develop their Gifts (I Corinthians 7: 7 I wish that all of you were as I am. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that).

What is mutual is the love between the brethren (John 15: 12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.), therefore every effort (must be) towards this purpose, I believe that God will light the way.

To develop in another space, I see a *tripartite mutuality* in the nature of GOD, in the next scripture: "I John 5:6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement..."

I hope I have been able to help somewhat in the development of your writing.

Appendix N3: Theology of Mutuality (Participant 111)

Theology of Mutuality (111)

Category: System

(Skinny Poems)

Tangible & Visible Ecclesiastical Mutuality

Governance

Hierarchies

Organization

Laws

Governance

Force

Economics

Commands

Shackles

Governance

Ecclesiastical Tangible & Visible Mutuality

Intangible & Invisible Tripartite Mutuality

Spiritual

Love

Freedom

Spirit

Spiritual

Gifts

Faithful

Hope

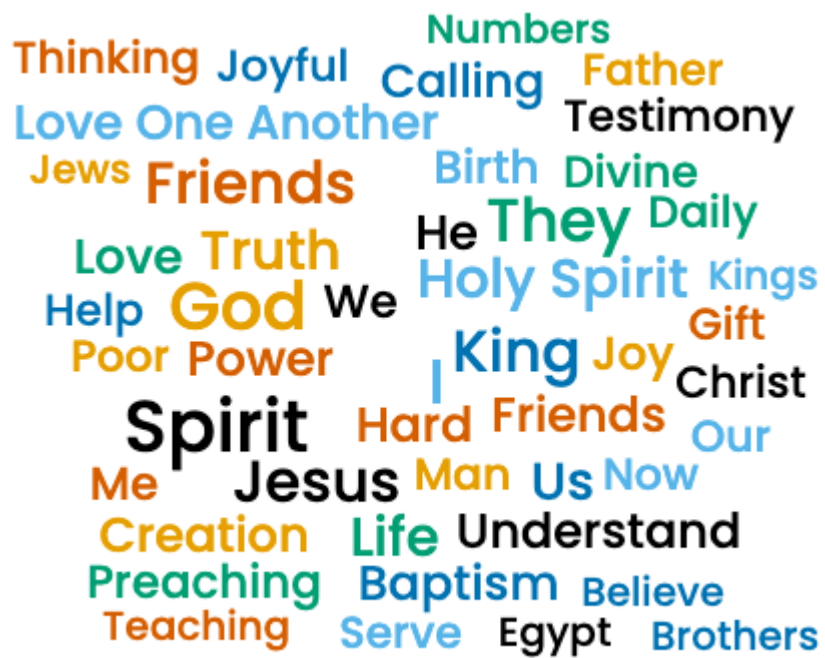
Spiritual

Tripartite Intangible & Invisible Mutuality

Words cloud with category: **Bible**, found below:



List of Biblical text in 111 written text on mutuality: I Sam. 8:5-9, Matt. 20:26-27, John 8:32, John 15:12, Acts 6:2-4, Rom. 8:20, I Cor. 7:7, I John 5:6-8 The word cloud and then poem, before is taking from placing all the scriptures (Message Version) into Speak.ai and using the category: **All**. It is below:



A word cloud featuring various religious and spiritual terms. The words are arranged in a roughly circular shape, with some words being larger and more prominent than others. The colors used for the words include shades of blue, green, orange, and yellow. The words are: Thinking, Joyful, Numbers, Calling, Father, Love, One, Another, Testimony, Jews, Friends, Birth, Divine, Love, Truth, He, They, Daily, Help, God, We, Holy, Spirit, Kings, Poor, Power, King, Joy, Gift, Christ, Spirit, Hard, Friends, Our, Me, Jesus, Man, Us, Now, Creation, Life, Understand, Preaching, Baptism, Believe, Teaching, Serve, Egypt, Brothers.

Spirit, God

I, They

King

Friends

Jesus=Truth

Holy Spirit=Life

Us Power Understand

Creation

Love One Another=Friend Love

Baptism

Hard

Except from interview, where he goes into more depth as to his thinking behind what he had wrote:

IV: And with the scripture of 1 John 5 6 he speaks also of water and blood, and that the Spirit bears witness, water, and blood, and all three agree. As you can see, water and blood seal in your analysis, because it is.

111 It's just that I study as a theological.

IV: Yeah, that's why, if not, but there's little time left to tell you all that.

111 Okay, no, no. Moreover, it is more that he has always been tripartite his composition, that we do not understand it. There are three of them. Yes, and each has its own specific character and its special role and function.

And it's essential. Yes. And almost everyone has his power, his strength, his and his specialty, because even so the Father said to you himself nothing will be to him, from all he will be forgiven. But the Spirit, the one who speaks evil of the Holy Spirit, the one who insults him or whatever, and if not. So the Holy Spirit is not why you can say he is above. Yes, because they are part of the three, it is the three of them who organize. And those who have that authority is how they are organized, what nature it has, we are not going to know that.

Because God is so big. Hmm yeah, even the ways to visualize what we see. What we see right now is a virus that killing people and how does God see it? So I can give a point of view, but not really how does he view it? What does he believe about this? What does he thinks this? When does he approves of some things, and he does not approve of the others? What plan does he have? What is the purpose of this? Is there purpose?

Appendix O: Creative Work: Analysis by Letter Writing

April 23, 2021 Providence, RI

Dear [],

I am going forward with God's strength concerning my research of the missiological evaluation of the Colombian network of congregations. I am close to finishing the interviews and am doing analysis as I go.

You are the person I know who has taken the most interest in individuals and congregations outside of the US. That motivates me to ask you several questions and give you type of review of my findings so far, as well as some of the literature.

1. Do you know of any research that has been published outside of the US, considering mission practices and the like? Most the studies and books I have found are all US--centric. I have a book published in Brazil about their history as a group of the congregation, which is an amazing resource, and the Master's thesis of Fabio Miguel Castellanos on the history ICI Colombia network (2011).

2. Do you have any paperwork or knowledge in regard to how the political structure of ICOC works in dialogue with the mission agencies? I can't figure it out but maybe there is something written down. Although Colombia is self-supporting, it is still in a relationship with the mission agency of AMA and part of what is called Grupo Andino. Although it does not surprise me, emails I have written to some of the visible people involved with these structures have not answered me. At least I can say for the record, that I did reach out and did not get a response. (But I must clarify that Andy Fleming graciously allow me three interviews in 2019.)

3. Steve Staten in his 2018 article states several times that all the congregations in our mission agency are autonomous. Is this what you observe in the "mission", receiving churches as well? How does autonomy if you are still mostly dependent on money from the US? Like a couple who are married and live separately but mainly live off money received from one of their parents. It can work but it is complex. The power dynamics are challenging. These are some of the many questions around my PhD topic. These are not new themes; Bonk (2006) *Missions and money* is a basic text for missiologists.

4. Over hundred years ago it was stated, “mission is the ‘mother of theology’”. There would be no theology if *followers of Jesus* had not gone into their known world with a message. That mission led Paul to his carefully thinking of how to connect the Jewish scriptures and life into a gentile world. I am bringing this out, as it is the "voice" or point of reference for my own thinking. I have found that coming from this perspective provides a more relational reflection and I have been profoundly influenced by becoming a biological mother, mothering, and motherhood. As I have lived most of the past 30 years in the matricentric Colombian culture. I am more aware of the continual maternal molding I have experienced, as well as an amazing mother, very strong grandmothers, and a great grandmother who was larger than life. It provides the opportunity to go into the private and examine the strength that comes from the private contrasting with this time in history when the public is highlighted. I find that industrialization and modernity have trouble identifying the strength of the private, as officially people are measure by their public production within most ideologies. But Jesus was not that way, as we both are very aware of. Both of my LCU capstone/thesis used this lens: “She Did What She Could: Missionary Mothers throughout History” (2015) and “Is. 66:10-13: As a Mother Comforts her Child, I Will Comfort You” (2018).

5. Missiologial study is where a mission practitioner who is also a theologian, interrogates the social and human sciences to help answer their theological questions, especially in regard to the context of the gospel being communicated between different cultures. It used to be in part a mechanism of colonialism, as anthropology and most social sciences (for example, the first lay anthropologists were missionaries). But the MA in missiology (intercultural studies) at LCU and the PhD studies in missiology at Stellenbosch have a postcolonial approach. Another way of understanding missiology is reflecting upon mission work. The main text for the South African perspective is David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm shifts in theology of mission* (1991). He is one of the main theologians that provide with the biblical study to dismantle the biblical study that had put apartheid in place to begin with. It came with a touch personal cost but his teaching and influence was profound for dismantled the Apartheid system. I am in touch with his wife (he died in a tragic car accident in 1992) and she has promised an interview.

In current secular scholarship, the role of the mission agent in colonialism is highlighted, which is a fact. Although I would agree several of the lack of historical knowledge by some of these scholars. Mission History is my strength, so there is a lack of awareness in the present public debate. I wish that more would be recognized in regard to the prominent work of women mission practitioners throughout the ages, as it is widely assumed that mainly men were protagonists.

Another area that could be highlighted from mission history is secular academia and public knowledge is the fact that mission agents throughout history have made public the reality of colonial advancement and conquest. For example, San Bartolome de las Casas, spent 50 years fighting the colonial abuse he uncovered in Mexico as a priest (1500's). My main conversation partner for my study, is the same man who fueled my parents' mission work in the late 1960's Roland Allen. As an Anglican missionary in China during the Boxer Rebellion, he was able to "hear" the voice of the Chinese. The British Empire was at its height, but he saw how the mission work was imitating the ways of the empire. In his extensive biographies Stephen Rutt (2018) Roland Allen: A theology of mission & Roland Allen: A missionary life connects Allen as a foreshadower of the Post-Colonial scholarship and analysis. He spoke and wrote in regard to these themes for 50 years but was not ever paid attention to, actually considered publicly as a nuisance. But in the 1960's, over 10 years after his death in Nairobi his works were revisited. I have been able to interview his grandson, who lives in Oxford, UK.

My father's library is full of books of the same type of reflections by US missiologists (including scholars in the Stone Campbell Movement) concerning US initiated mission that was written in the 1960's and 70's. Protestants Abroad: How missionaries tried to change the world but changed America David A. Hollinger (2019) reveals many links to the Civil Rights movement and many of the challenges to existing structures in the United States felt more during the 1960's and 1970's are inspired by Protestant mission agents or children of mission agents. These agents are not publicly recognized due to their Christian links, according to Hollinger. This book is extremely revealing.

But as far as I can tell, it was put the side with the coming of the economic boom of the 1980's. As Evangelical mission work gained strength (Mainline Protestant had lost their mission zeal by then, much to what these Protestants experienced with the tension between the mission field and the reality of their churches in the US), seems to be pulled into pragmatism and efficiency. Seeking a mission theology and methods with the strategy along the lines of "more bang for your buck". *Managerial missiology* is the 'name of the game.' (A question I ask myself, would the megachurch model have taken over the Boston Movement if there had not been the seemingly unlimited financial funds?) In the context of the growing Boston Movement, the desire to experience measurable results, efficiency; seems to have moved the Gurganus and my parents to Boston.²⁴⁶ (This is a sentence approved by Tom Olbricht and my parents.) I do not feel critical as I understand that we are all products of our times, we can only see what we can

²⁴⁶ This seems to link to Bosch (1991a:319) as the USA PROT/EVAN scene, "Everyone worshiped at the shrine of the cult of efficiency", see footnote in section 2.2.1.

see. And my understanding of God is the lens Tom Olbricht used in all his biblical scholarship, God's Steadfast Love.

Within my field, missiology, these questions, and issues of sending and receiving have been discussed for hundreds of years. There is much academic work on it, but few case studies of a congregation have decided to go into "adulthood" after being a mission church but continue in interdependence outside of a financial relationship. Usually "money makes the world go round", and "debt" fuels the world (Graeber 2011). And from much that I have read and experienced, this is also applied to mission, including within the RBO in this case study. Barclay's Paul and the Gift (2015) as well as some of his more recent unpublished papers he has sent me, connects theologically with this line of thinking. Barclay questions the concept of gift and exchange built within Western thinking and economic affairs since the Enlightenment and connects this to the reading of Paul's biblical texts. Feminist theory highlights something I consider valuable, that those who are not in power understand much more about how the power system works in comparison to those who are "in power." I envision that there is a lot of understanding of how the mission agency system works, from those of us outside of the US. But this is hard knowledge to obtain officially. As most people there is any official contact with, are paid by the US mission agency. *Tacit knowledge* would guide most people, "do not bite the hand that feeds you."

6. Honestly, my main thought was not to get into our church's historical background. I wanted to try to focus the Colombian church without all this context. (This process has a high emotional cost. But I am making it through with God's help, Flavio, my kids, and close friends.) Placing it within the mega-church, Church Growth movement (*managerial missiology*), at Fuller with Donald McGavern (Stone Campbell missionary and scholar). I have the evidence that connects with McGavern, as it is asserting that McGavern stated this was the group that best applied his methods. Andy Fleming scholarship clearly identifies the date when our group officially became a Megachurch movement. And the Brazil historical book that goes into great detail as the devastating consequences of the megachurch model for that mission work. Fabio Miguel does not use the world mega-church in his analysis of ICI Colombia, but he does mention all the workings of the megachurch model and many specifics as to the intense reaction against this in 2003.

All the people I have interviewed have pointed to different aspects of this model, when asked about what the "system" as they personally experienced it then what shifts came about as they sought to change and recover the community that was left. On the other hand, there are others who are desire to have that system back in place. (I am referring to the Colombian context. The LA context is an area I am not mentioning at this time.) It would seem that in this day and age we are always going to be walking among systems, within

systems. Even house churches become a system, as stated in a private conversation of a public advocate for house churches. He reflected that they ended up doing exactly the same they did in the big churches, same system on a smaller scale. My evidence is showing me that it is more connected to believing that there is the possibility of building a perfect or near perfect system in the name of Christ, I find it similar to utopia thinking that is common in modernity. That as human being we can create perfect worlds, in all kinds of flavors and versions.

Since I worked closely with Tom Olbricht for almost three years, he helped me put together some of the links. He connected me with a librarian who sent me George Gurganus's 1964 PhD dissertation (Penn State) on the exact subject I am working on: a missiological evaluation of 6 congregations in Japan as they followed a the *three-selves model* (self-supporting, self-governing and the result being self-expanding). Tom's books that are autobiographic connect many of the themes in my study: my parents, Irene and George Gurganus, Boston Movement, ICOC, CoC, and more.

But more and more I am leaning towards bringing in the ICOC reality as a guide for the Colombian congregation to know what they are dealing with. I have been commissioned by the Colombian church board to do this study (although I am self-financing it). It could provide *self-understandings* of the workings of the mission apparatus.

7. Highfield's recent book (2021) you recommended, helped clarify my thoughts quite a bit. I have read quite a lot of Ivan Illich's theological work and his reflection on the mystery mutuality that Christ provides, profound insights into the incarnational aspect of Christ and mission. I am currently finishing Ivan Illich: An intellectual journey (2021). A young brother in the in Brazil is doing his PhD on Illich and we (he and his wife & Flavio and I) have connected profoundly in research and friendship.

Illich specializes in describing what he determines to be the age of systems (this officially beginning in the 1980's). Systems connected with Stone-Campbell, Campbell's classic, The Christian System (1835). Reading Illich for the past two years has guided me as to be able to put into words and concepts what I have lived and perceived. He states that we spend some much time trying to figure out the contents of the cup, but the problem is the cup itself. He was not very well received during his lifetime, as you can probably imagine. He did much of his mission work (Catholic Church) within Latin America and was able to connect in a profound way with Latin American thinkers. He was a hidden support system for many current Latin American intellectuals along many fields. After the Vatican forbid him from speaking to nuns and priests, he developed a 'living room consultation' way of research and academic pursuit of knowledge based on the

same ideas Highfield publishes in his recent book. Illich was fueled by his vocation of priesthood although he was mainly discussing secular issues.

Post-development Theorists, Degrowth Theorists, Border Thinking Theorists were all people that Illich worked with, as well as many other fields. In Oaxaca, Mexico Nov. 2019, I was able to be in two interviews with one of his students and friends, Gustavo Esteva, alongside the Brazilian couple that I mentioned I am interconnected with and learning from. My son, who graduated from UNC Chapel Hill is friends with a Colombian anthropologist, who has knitted these concepts, Andres Escobar. These post development views are secular, but I am interrogating them with a theological perspective so as to see if there is knowledge to gain from their breath and length of lifelong scholarship within Latin America. The Argentine/Mexican philosopher Enrique Dussel has helped me understand how to gain a view of knowledge beyond a Eurocentric one without disregarding the knowledge production of Europe and the US, as well as many other aspects of study to understand and value Latin American knowledge and scholarship.

I am trying to learn from scholarship from around the world, Priya Satia's, *Time's Monster: How history makes history* (2020). The lectures of Vinay Samuel in India, one of the founders and main professors at the Oxford Centre for Religion and Public Life, provides profound insights into Christianity from a non-European perspective. He is 78 but sets a high standard for all of us as he continues to interact with these types of texts to try to figure out a way to understand Christ more and communicate Christ to those who are rejecting Christ out of their understanding of Christ aligned with the US government and culture. It is beautiful how he publicly acknowledges his personal failings and wrong biblical positions he has taken on his lifetime of Christian scholarship, mission work, and mission involvement.

8. I guess I am giving an account of my research, a sort of literature review of sorts. I have to admit, my research has taken me to scary places, in the sense I have discovered many areas that undermine the present way of living, as well as the mission endeavor. I can see clearly that the mission endeavor is a mirror of what is going on in society, the way things work and move. As these ways of living are being questioned strongly again (as in 60's and 70's), I believe that reflective thinking can help guide as to continue spreading the Gospel without defending what is not defensible. But I consider, more than ever before, that if reflective thinking is not done, Jesus will be viewed as center of the method and the strategy and the structure, intertwined with United States manifest destiny, whiteness project and the like. And I seem to continue finding that it has been imitated and even sometimes considered "national born" to much of what is lived within Evangelical Christian world in Latin America. There is research being done in the Brazilian

context on this phenomenon. I have had email communication with him but have not seen his work.

That even though we (Stone-Campbell) claim that we only following the Bible and everything that we do comes from the Bible (I find this to still be the official mantra), there is a whole lot of human apparatus and decisions going on. I like to bring up a question in these conversations, “biblically should we use toilet paper? Toilet paper is not discussed in the Biblical text and did not exist in those time. But with God's help and following Jesus' example of how he lived within his own human religious structure (s) with love, peace, and stating the facts every once and a while, we can continue towards greater love, faith, and hope. As none of us are owners of God's mission or can contain it. We have the privilege, if we so do desire to daily participate with this Divine sending out of his overabounding love!

Even if I never even publish any of these findings, I am thankful above all is that I can connect on many levels with my three children and their friends. They are profound thinkers, and I am able to connect as I can agree with much of their evaluations of the world as we know it but can highlight Jesus’ teachings. I have decided to learn from them, and they have led me to some of these authors and insights. My research path has also provided the gift of learning from so many people: as I interview them and let them take me into their own walk with God, how they seek to follow Jesus through the common lived experience, how specifically the Bible provides answers and guidance for them and those around them, and the really cool relationships most of them have had with their mothers! That mother-child theme going on there!

Not only these interviews but I have received academic and spiritually mentoring from people who I helped bring to the faith many years ago. With the death of Tom, I felt the need for a mentor to replace him, someone that could understand the Stone Campbell world. And I found that person in a very unexpected place! He is a Colombian who is much younger than me, but totally understands all these subjects that I am dealing with. He feels like a young, non-US version of Tom but within our group. It was one of those God-things! I would have never imagined this and so much more of people I am connected with. As most of us are realistic as to how broken our system is but following Christ’s example and inspired by him. We continue walking with our eyes on Jesus, the originator and perfecter of our faith.

9. Would you accept an interview with me to discuss this subject? Would you and your wife be willing to do it together? My interviews are bound by confidentiality with strict standards. Or if you would like to speak as a public figure, that would be fine too. If you are willing, I would provide more details. I see that you were interviewed by James Lappeman's superb scholarship in his 2014 thesis. (I have met and heard him preach on my visits to Cape Town.)

10. The main thread I desire to pursue with the production of my dissertation is this such. . . Walking among *Broken Systems*. You and your wife have been a profound inspiration and living example for me in this regard. And you were the first theologian, friend, teacher, and ‘living room consultation experience’ that led down this path that I am now on. Thank you.

Appendix P: Creative Work: Exploration of the Tool: *One-on-One Discipling*

I am considering trying to measure a managerial tool which is the corporate style of organization of spiritual relationships within mission: sending and receiving churches. It is the structure where one person is responsible for another (mentoring) called *one-on-one discipling*. Everyone in the congregation and everyone within the mission organization is within a structure where someone is responsible for them. It is very efficient tool for a large group and many mission churches. Everyone is directly connected to someone else, without having the necessity to build the intimacy of one-on-one relationships. It is 'built into' *the system*. It is assumed that the person who is your spiritual guide will be your friend and helps towards the promise of *awesome families* and *amazing marriages*. Exact statistics are very important for this tool, so as to have the information to "organize" all the relationships. It can be an artificial relationship or it can develop into intimacy.

Relationships are basic to the Christian faith. Christianity is meant to be lived within a community. Modern society with its individualistic focus, does not know how to build relationships. This is a tool to help with this. In Colombian society this tool might work for different reasons. I believe it is due to *decolonial* thinking. Even when people are no longer Catholics, there tends to be a Catholic structure in their minds. For almost five hundred years they understood the King to be an instrument from God, as well as the Pope. And the priests were also instruments of God, to pronounce God's specific will. Under 1991, Colombia was a Catholic nation (only then was religious freedom and equality recognized). The education has been through Catholic schools, influencing this hierarchical and lack of critical thinking, which stands out in Colombia compared to other Latin American countries.

I believe this is why the *managerial missiology* works so well here. There are many megachurches that have variations of hierarchical structures where this *one-on-one discipling* tool is applied. ICI-CO used this tool until 2003. During a time of reflection due to an international crisis, one of the issues was the abuses within this *one-on-one discipling* tool. Officially it was decided to not use it anymore in the ICI-CO, since 2003. My husband and I, in AR, reflected profoundly our use of

this tool in mission. We decided not to use it anymore. When we moved back to Bogota, we did not use it. The case study will lead on an investigation on both sides of the use (or disuse) of this tool. The history of a congregation and its mission work who decided to not use a popular missiological tool and how relationships have transformed since, especially in regard to mission work (2003-2019). Parallel to this is the story of my husband and I with a more theological reflection of this tool, standing by the decision not to use it.

Appendix Q: Image Glossary

Part 1.
IMAGES AS METAPHORS

Part 2.
IMAGES AS SYMBOLS

Part 3.
IMAGES AS CONCEPTS OR THEORIES

(in alphabetical order)

Part 1.

IMAGES AS METAPHORS

Specific to denomination in case study pre 2003 collapse.

- 1.1 Brand: ICOC (International Church Of Christ)
- 1.2 Funds/Resources: Generous donors/tithes of church members/volunteerism.
- 1.3 God-image: "Bent on conquest" (book outlining Latin American mission theology and methods, Giambarba 1988).
- 1.4 Locomotive: Fuel that made train move (triad: myth, funds, structure).
- 1.5 Locomotive engineer: Kip McKean (1954-)
- 1.6 Myth: Line of prosperity theology:
 - "Awesome families" in "God's family"; "We're changing the world";
 - "We are true disciples of Jesus"; "We are followers of Christ".
- 1.7 Parent: (Mother) Church Of Christ (COC).
- 1.8 Propaganda: Church bulletins, books, int'l conferences, KNN videos...
- 1.9 Railroad sabotage: 2003: First, outing of "Locomotive engineer"; then, "insurgent consciousness" (Smith 1991) fueled by "the letter".
- 1.10 Slogan: "Evangelize the world in this generation".
- 1.11 Train: World-wide rapid expansion [1979-2002, 1 congregation in Boston to 435 congregations in 171 nations; 2002 membership 135,046 (Stanback 2005)].
- 1.12 Trainwreck: Finalized in 2003 (after 10 years of internal crisis).
- 1.13 Triad of fuel: Myth (authority over interpretation of biblical text); Funds/Resources; Structure (Legal/Administrative & Propaganda-use of media).

Part 2.

IMAGES AS SYMBOLS

2.1 Country = Colombia

2.2 **Cycle of life** = Humans (and religions) are born, mature, and then die/fail (Smith 2017).

2.3 Door = Membership.

2.4 Glue = Connectiveness (present, past, and future) (Chillisa 2020).

2.5 Hand = *Missio Dei* (Bosch 1991a).

2.6 House = Imported "system" fueled by "Locomotive" ("Triad of fuel") (Rheinbolt-Urbe unpublished original).

2.7 **Imagination** = Social imagination (Anderson 1991) and/or "God-image" (Louw 2015; Roux 2019).

2.8 **Table** = Original space for creating social spaces "Table fellowship" (Bosch 1991a).

2.9 Tree = Local, interconnectiveness, and critical realism (Smith 2010).

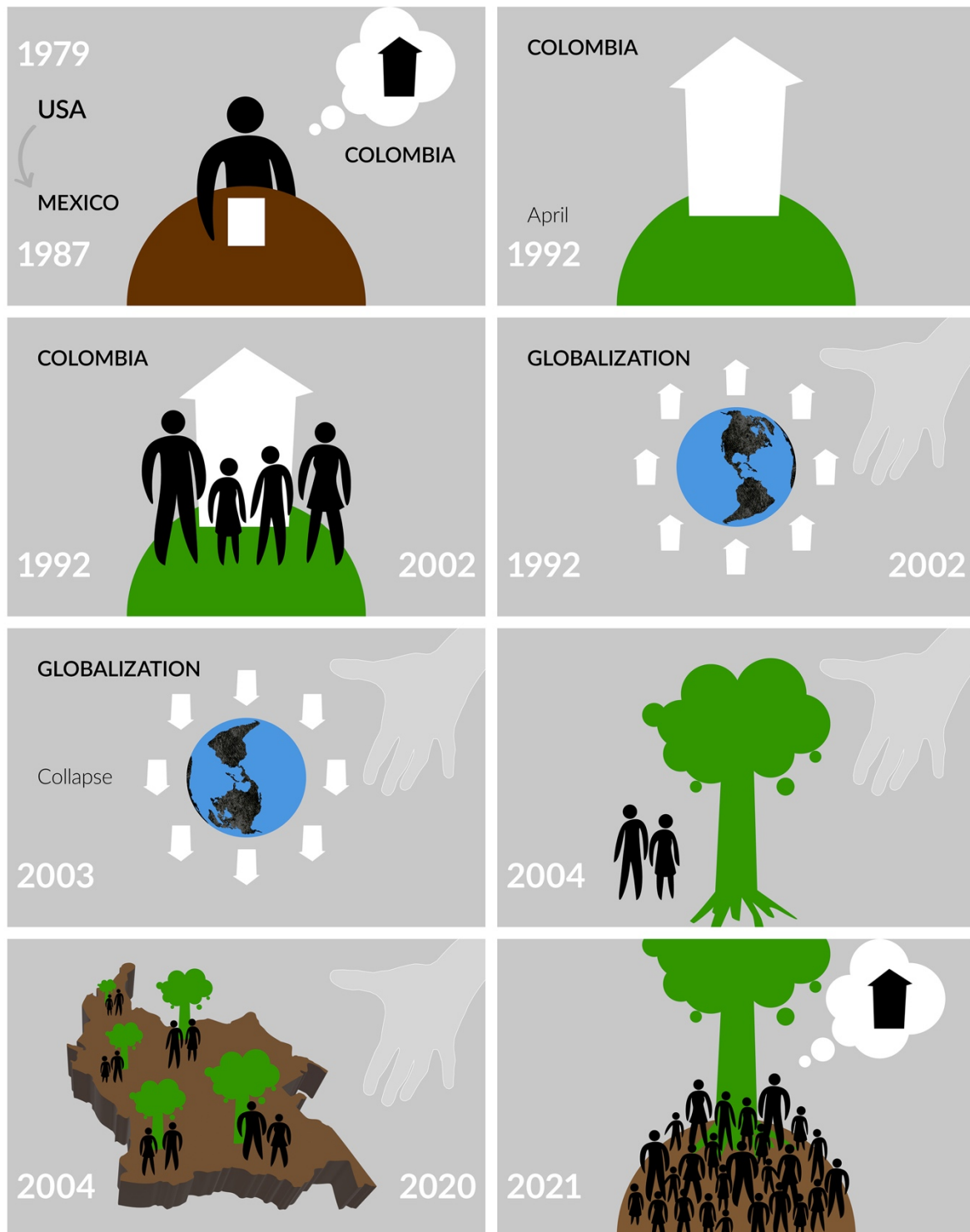
2.10 **Tree + Soil** = Limits of the local (or self-imposed limits) (Allen, Illich 1973).

Part 3.

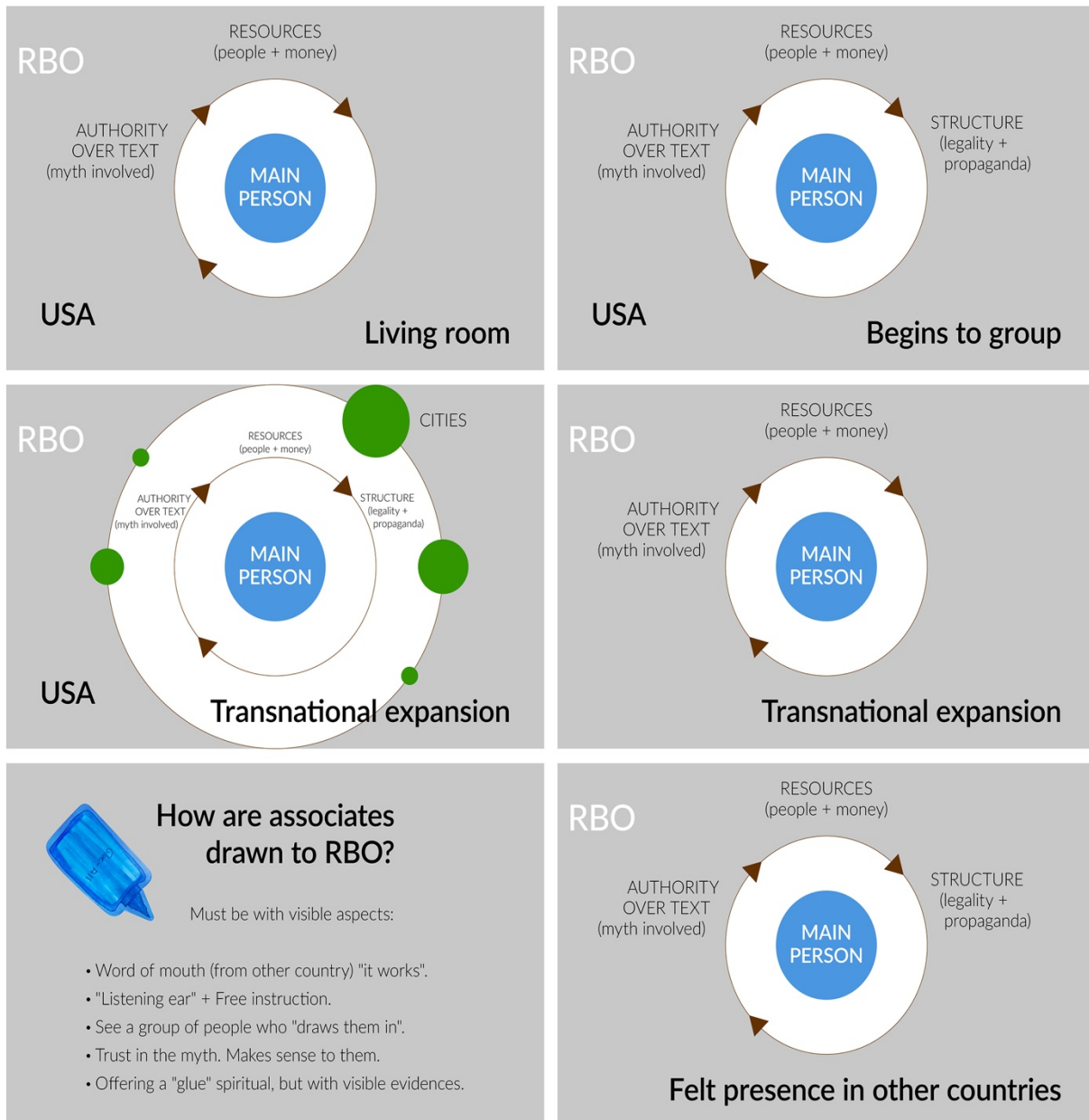
IMAGES AS CONCEPTS OR THEORIES

- 3.1 **Basic template** for expanding RBO
(Rheinbolt-Urbe unpublished original).
- 3.2 **Basic template** for national (and int'l) expansion of RBO
("Managerial missiology" Escobar 1991, 2002, 2003).
- 3.3 **Collapse** of the RBO (Castellanos 2011).
- 3.4 **Embodied** female-maternal-embodied-knowledge
(Rheinbolt-Urbe unpublished original).
- 3.5 **It vs. She** ("Empirical church vs. Mystical church" Bosch 1991;
Illich (Leao 2022; Allen (Allen 1995).
- 3.6 **Roland Allen's Three-selves concept** (Allen, Rheinbolt-Urbe 2013;
Rutt 2018a, 2018b).
- 3.7 **Slogan** "Evangelize the world in this generation"
(Bosch 1991a, Castellanos 2011).
- 3.8 **Teología de la casita** = Theology of "the system"
(Giambarba 1988, Lamb & Lamb 1991).
- 3.9 **Tool** in "Teología de la casita" - "One on one discipling"
(Lamb & Lamb 1991; Giambarba 1988).
- 3.10 **Walking together** ("Conviviality" Illich 1973, Leao 2022).

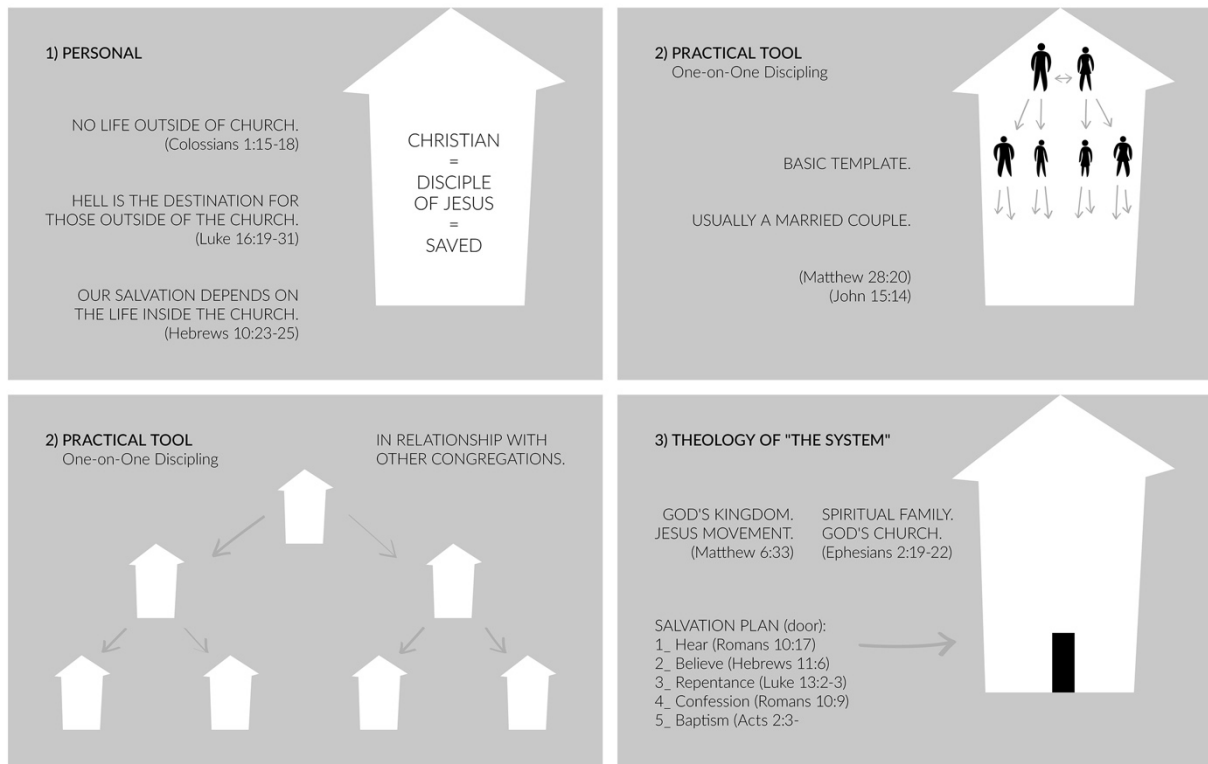
Appendix R1: Vignette: ICI Colombia Narrative



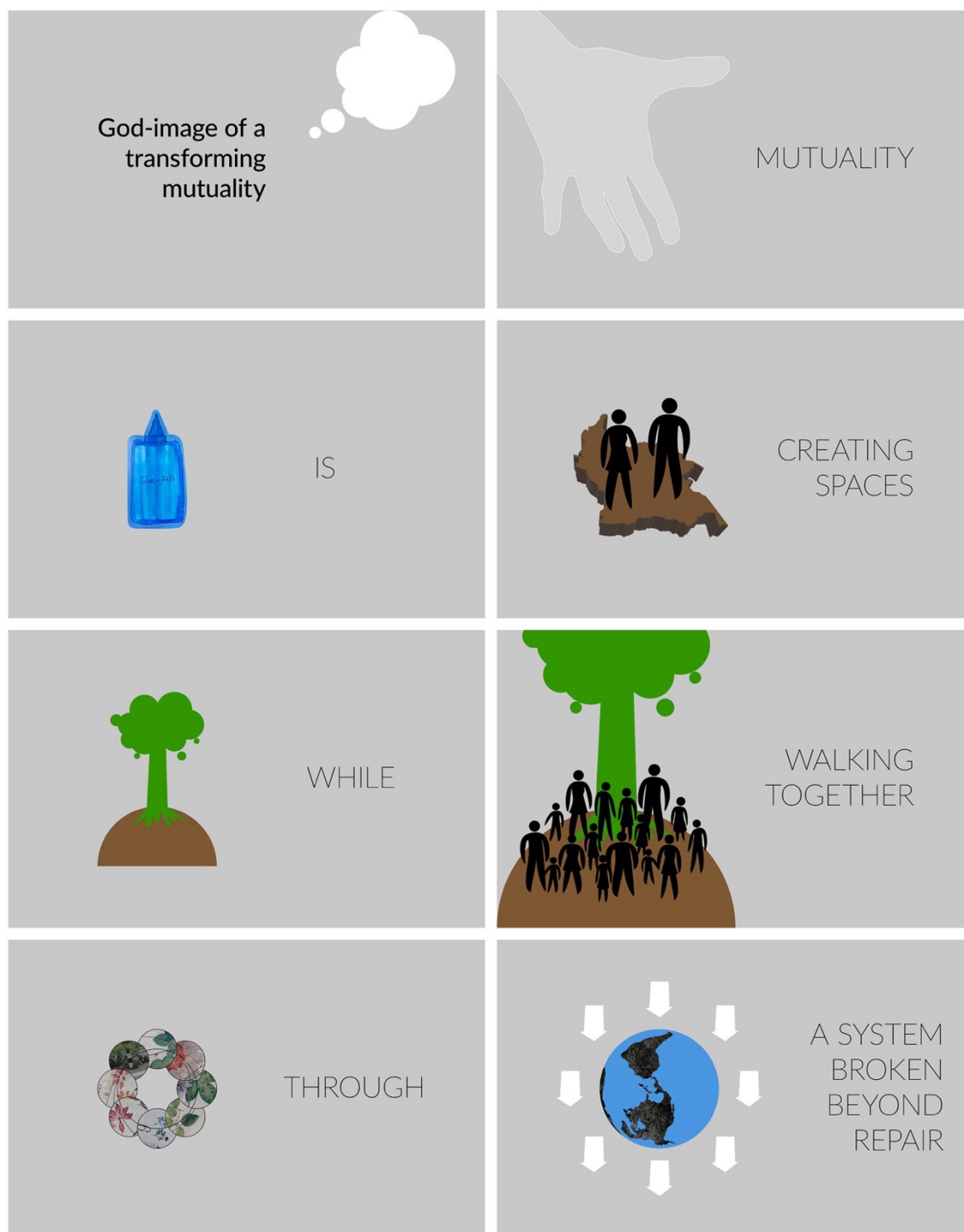
Appendix R2: Vignette: Template for Research of RBOs



Appendix R3: Vignette: *Teologia de la casita*



Appendix R4: Vignette: Mutuality is . . .



Appendix S: Approval Letter (SU Ethical Committee)



NOTICE OF APPROVAL

REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form

26 November 2020

Project number: 15155

Project Title: Self-understandings and Practicing Mutuality in Mission within Roland Allen's Three-Selves Theory: A Missiological Evaluation of a Colombian Case Study

Dear Ms Renee Uribe

Your REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form submitted on 18 November 2020 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (REC: SBE).

Please note below expiration date of this approved submission:

Ethics approval period:

Protocol approval date (Humanities)	Protocol expiration date (Humanities)
26 November 2020	25 November 2021

GENERAL REC COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THIS PROJECT:

There are some minor spelling and grammar errors in the English version of the Consent Form. Please proofread the document for language errors before it is sent to participants.

INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: SBE, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (15155) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

You are required to submit a progress report to the REC: SBE before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

Once you have completed your research, you are required to submit a final report to the REC: SBE for review.

Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Proof of permission	RENEE MARIE URIBE DOCTORADO	23/06/2020	first
Proof of permission	RENEE MARIE DOCTORADO English	02/07/2020	Translation to Eng.
Research Protocol/Proposal	Proposal-Ethical Committee	02/07/2020	1st
Informed Consent Form	Consent template--Renee Uribe	02/07/2020	1st
Data collection tool	Data Collection Questions--Renee Uribe	02/07/2020	1st
Informed Consent Form	Consent template--Renee Uribe (2nd version)	17/11/2020	
Default	Mental Health Support Letter. pdf	17/11/2020	1st
Default	CV Mental Health Practitioner	17/11/2020	1st