


Spiritualityd ... Spirituality in our time – In conversation with Hartmut Rosa's theory on social acceleration

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Based on a public lecture held at the University of Pretoria in September 2017, the first section of this article highlights experience as a turnkey to the post-secular mind frame, with transforming wholeness as an implicit objective of spirituality. The second illustrates some possibilities of diverse spiritualities through practical, experiential examples. Given that post-secularism is understood to be a new cultural mind frame on religiosity arising in our time and that spirituality is never context-free, the newest of sociological theories on time, and on our time, are indicated in the third and last section of this article. Helmut Rosa's contribution in this regard is summarised, from which certain questions are teased out on spirituality.

This contribution is an altered version of an invited public lecture held at the Musaion, Department of Biblical and Religious Studies, University of Pretoria, on 13 September 2017. Such an originating *Sitz im Leben* of this, the resulting article, explains the at times less densely than usually written composition and also the vignettes from personal experience in academic contexts which serve as instances illustrating points being made. Because the phenomenon of post-secularism is developing internationally, apart from global trends in religiosity indicated, examples touch on the geographies of Germany, Finland, Turkey, South America and Asia and of course, given the location of the author and the two figures to whom this publication is dedicated, Southern Africa. Examples furthermore relate to Christianity, Islam, Judaism and atheism in communication both with and in some respects against one another – again telling of a post-secular atmosphere.

The first section of this article highlights experience as a turnkey to the post-secular mind frame, with transforming wholeness as an implicit objective of spirituality. This is; however, not in any instrumentalist sense because an arrivedness runs contrary to spirituality as continuous existential meaning seeking-and-making. The second section of this article illustrates some possibilities of diverse spiritualities through practical, experiential examples. Important here is the indication that there is no 'holier than thou' position on spirituality, namely from any superior vantage point of being of a certain conviction, be that a religious or a non-religious persuasion. Given that post-secularism is understood to be a new cultural mind frame on religiosity arising in our time and that spirituality is never context-free, the newest of sociological theories on time, and on our time, are indicated in the third and last section of this article. Helmut Rosa's contribution in this regard is summarised, from which certain questions are teased out on spirituality for – precisely – our time.

I feel myself honoured herewith to dedicate this published version to colleagues Pieter de Villiers and Celia Kourie, who established Christian Spirituality as an academic discipline in South Africa (cf. O'Sullivan 2012:43–59) and to whom I owe an irredeemably great debt of gratitude for the professional and intellectual doors they have opened to me, our colleagues and our students.

***Aut delectare aut prodesse* [That which 'pleaseth the soule']**

Aut delectare aut prodesse – 'either to educate or to please' – had been a summary of Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus, a contemporary of Augustus Caesar, whose later life years overlapped with the early life years of Jesus of Nazareth) on the purpose of poetry. Much later, in the 1600s and 1700s, this formulation also became a motto of sorts to the French literary and philosophical salons where – as much as all the other intellectual influences on our context – much of the contents of our minds had been given form.

To educate here at this public lecture is therefore not my only intent; academics' thoughts are already mature, and owned, and integrated with much else in our lives. Besides, in matters of

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spirituality, people's views seem almost always arrived; as if we have the answer. This, even as we remain – perhaps surreptitiously, perhaps subliminally – always en route. Academic life provides deep pleasures too, though. While the delights of a public lecture are more restrained than those of, for instance, a music show, colleagues can share some pleasures of the mind (cf. De Villiers 2006:99–121) and of togetherness (spirituality is never singular), in considering spirituality, even if for a brief time only (given the Qohelet caveat in Ecclesiastes 1:2: הַבְּלִי הַקָּלִים). Yet, time is an important theme – also for tonight, as the recent insights from contemporary sociology by Hartmut Rosa, to be taken into review below, indicates again.

It seems, in addition, that the time for spirituality has come – the terminology of a 'turn' to the spiritual (e.g. Kourie 2006:19–38) has become distinctive of our dawning post-secular age (cf., foundationally, Habermas 2008:17–29). Whereas, reflexively (and developing here Lombaard 2016:260; cf. Lombaard 2015a:86–89), in the mind frame of modernism all is understood atomistically and historically, and in the mind frame of post-modernism all is understood relationally and metaphorically, in our currently dawning post-secular mind frame, all is understood ever more personally and experientially. In my opinion what I feel makes sense, existentially, and is, therefore, intuitively considered valid. Experience has become a popular (though not an unproblematic; cf. Biernot & Lombaard 2017:1–12) culturally embedded orientation towards religiosity; faith that is internally sensed rings true (cf. locally, extensively, intensively and foundationally, Deist 1994).

With experience as a key now turning further than in earlier eras (cf. the classic sources of James 2002 [1902]; Otto 1917, 1923) in unlocking meaningfulness, the time for feeling faith is here. Spiritual experience is 'feeling faith' – but not as with the charismatic externalised exuberance ('We have [*the Holy*] spirit', as a common Pentecostal confession), nor as with the pietistic internalised monopoly ('How is your soul today?', as a common pietistic inquiry). Rather, spiritual experience can be understood as that which happens between our highest sense and our deepest self (Schneiders 2005:17–18). This is transforming holiness (to adapt the astute title from Bosch 1991), or for the non-religious, transforming wholeness. Transformation is here not understood as South African political parlance has appropriated the term (Lombaard 2015b:2). Rather, transformation means at once finding the self-deepened (the passive formulation here is well considered: this deepening is no achievement but is fully grace; cf. Lombaard 2018a:108–109) and the world purposefully altered (cf. on transformation especially Waaijman 2002:455–483) by the encounter, ongoing, with the

1.This simple definition can easily be misunderstood, as that spirituality would relate to an *only*-personal, pietist-like experience-and-expression of faith. However, in the discipline of Spirituality Studies, it is implicitly understood, and in arguing towards a definition always emphasised, that spirituality relates as fully to context – a horizontal dimension – as it does to the personal, and as it does to the beyond-personal-and-contextual – a 'vertical' dimension. (The inverted commas employed here indicate the intent also to include religions and non-religions that eschew the idea of an above-human.) This can, for example, be clearly seen in the most substantial work in the field of Spirituality Studies (Waaijman 2002).

Holy Other; or for the non-religious: with a wholly other. (The conceptual play here is not unique: see, e.g., Ward 1993:159–180.) Neither anti-communal² nor anti-individualistic,³ either within the church⁴ or without it,⁵ spirituality is the sense of full, fuller or fullest meaning one retains from ... – different conclusions to this sentence present themselves: God?⁶ Non-God?⁷ Gods?⁸ And more ...

Why these question marks and the ellipses ...? Because – *fides quaerens intellectum* [Anselm of Canterbury, 11th century]; faith seeking understanding – any answers offered are:

- Less important than the questions asked (including the content of the questions and the manner of asking).
- Always mere murmurs of meaning (cf. Lombaard 2014a:472–488) en route, rather than assertions and statements.
- Living (as opposed to dead) giveaways that the quest, the journey, the interest, the curiosity is driven by something meaningful enough to be engaged with. Such a sought-after engagement 'pleseth the soule' (as the mystic Julian of Norwich, 14th century; cf. Watson & Jenkins 2006:161, footnote 61, would say). In his own way, Horace would agree.

To have the pleasure to do so here, at the invitation of the Faculty of Theology at this university, is apt too: this Faculty has inscribed in its cornerstone, as if on a stele from the ancient world: *Vita brevis, ars longa* (freely translated: 'While life is short, art lasts' – a slogan that has inspired many theologians; cf., e.g., Scheffler 1996). Or, formulated in a more contemporary manner by a Berlin street artist on a public utilities strongbox on a street corner (photographed in August 2017; see figure 1).

Faith *accompli*?

To jump between eras and geographies with spirituality is possible, not because it is timeless – spirituality is as contextually bound as any other human activity (cf. Wildman 2011:1–30)⁹ – but because it is so abundant. Whether religious in nature (and diversely so – cf. the various encyclopaedias of

2.Even extreme individualists, like me, have to acknowledge that certain *social* contexts allow for such an orientation.

3.Even the most *koinonia*-oriented, like me, have to acknowledge that groups comprise individuals.

4.Of which – with apologies to Mark Twain – the rumours of its imminent demise are much exaggerated, though its continued life will be *semper reformanda*, à la Küng, Barth, Von Lodenstein, Augustine.

5.Cyprian's 3rd century extra *ecclesiam nulla salus* has in our time to be mediated by the realisation that the Spirit of God has moved into society – a point now made by quite a diverse range of theologians (which may, surprisingly, conciliate liberation theologians' orientation to social justice and the resilient sense in traditional Christianity of a general revelation).

6.Namely the historically related three religions of the Book, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

7.Namely the historically unrelated non-religions of Buddhism and, quite differently, atheism and agnosticism.

8.Namely the historically unrelated lives-of-faith orientations in, for example, Africa and India.

9.This applies as much to what may be termed spiritual peak encounters, namely mystic events, on which cf. Krüger (2006) and in a more popular format Joubert (2013).



Source: Photo taken by the author

Note: The picture is graffiti on a public utilities box (painted by an anonymous person).

FIGURE 1: Earth without art is just Eh ...

spirituality) or not (e.g. Comte-Sponville 2006, 2007; De Botton 2013), the sense of the above-human, an elevating experience or a transformational encounter, is found across all human contexts: in all ages and places. The latter – surprising for many – includes highly secularised countries, which because of their public a-religiosity may easily be assumed, therefore, to be largely a-spiritual spheres of human life. Such an assumption is, however, not valid. For instance, it remains confounding to social scientists that many people who self-declare in surveys as religiously non-adherent at times pray (most recently, Monnot & Tanner 2017). Furthermore, the concept of implicit religion (cf., e.g., Bailey 1997) has taught us to see spirituality peeking through unexpected cracks, for instance, when atheists swear ‘Jesus!’, or when rationalists such as, locally, the *Nuwe Hervorming* (cf., e.g., Muller et al. 2002) gather on Sundays together to strengthen their commitments. Such a non-church service is not altogether different from the way in which ZCC¹⁰ members gather weekly under a tree in an open field, or when the Afrikaans rock group *Fokopolisiekar* released its 10-year anniversary CD and almost all of their top hits collected on that album refer to God or church or faith, albeit negatively (cf. Lombaard 2018b). All such a- and anti-religious expressions may not reflect piousness in its usual sense of devotionalities, but one can infer from each such

10. The ZCC, the Zion Christian Church, an African Initiated Church, is one of the largest Christian denominations in southern Africa, which because of the members’ insignia and uniforms, is also one of the most visible.

expression a certain kind of piety. Not believing is as much an act of faith as is believing. Aspects of faith, also as non-faith, seep through the porousness of our human existence, and as part of our human evolution, always have (Van Huyssteen 2006). Furthermore, no matter what our orientation in intellect and practice to these matters is, we also feel that orientation. Spirituality is *sensed*. Meaning is experienced.

The latter may be demonstrated by the following personal vignette:

As part of a recent conference on religious demography held in the Finnish city of Turku, which has since then become world famous for an act of terror in which two people were murdered and six injured¹¹ on a square I crossed daily while there, a public lecture was held in the city library (Hackett 2017). The lecture reported, fully dispassionately in demographic mode, on emerging trends in religious commitment and non-commitment. From the Pew survey reported on in this presentation,¹² it seems that over the coming decades, globally speaking, the proportion of religiously non-committed people is set to decline in relation to the proportion of religiously committed people. Both groups are set to increase in absolute numbers, given population growth, but the number of religious adherents will expand faster.

Next to me at the public lecture was seated a Muslim, devout in faith commitment, dressed in fully Western clothes; a US qualified social researcher and a former businesswoman in the Islamic fashion industry in Turkey. The first to speak after the demographer’s presentation, she expressed the surprising sensation she had just had: how good the numbers – sheer figures – had made her feel, namely that there would in the foreseeable decades be a definite growth in the number of people who, like her, believed. The sense she conveyed was not on adherence to Islam, but more general: *faith* would not decline (by implication: as influential thinkers in the Western intellectual pantheon had predicted: Hegel, Kant, Feuerbach, Marx, Freud, Durkheim and Weber).

There was immediate reaction to this from the back of the seating area. The speaker was Jewish; highly active in the local synagogue, though (importantly for the overall argument here) for cultural reasons only, because he is atheist. His reaction was the opposite to that of the first speaker, he pointed out: the figures had on his part prompted feelings of intense discomfort, namely that this negative phenomenon (in his view), religion, was not about to wane, as many had thought and as he himself had hoped for the sake of a better humankind.

Conspicuous in this interchange – notably, in an academic setting – was the language of feeling: both speakers had expressed their emotive (but not emotional) experience. Cold numbers had elicited warm sensations about a cared-for religious future. Tellingly, both different religions and different orientations to the phenomenon of religion had been given voice to. Moreover, this occurred in nominally Lutheran, though mostly non-practicing, Finland. This was

11. www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/18/finland-police-report-multiple-stabbings-in-city-of-turku.

12. The reports are available on www.pewforum.org/2017/04/05/the-changing-global-religious-landscape and on www.globalreligiousfutures.org; the insights have already been argued sociologically in, for example, Berger (1999).

post-secularism in action: a wide religious diversity, in mature interaction, deeply felt, openly communicated.

The marked contrast of this kind of interaction to the Turkey market attack mere days later could hardly be more stark.¹³

Such a sense of innate experience, of a 'gut reaction' from the simple actualities of religion, is not difficult to recreate in many contexts. Let us experience together, at this public lecture, our emotive responses, each our own sense of discomfort *as much as* those of others who believe differently than we respectively do, if we consider two contemporary instances of religious argumentation:

- Take as first instance the argument that religion is by and large an accident of birth: if you were born in Brazil, you would most probably be Catholic; in Nepal, Hindu; in Indonesia, Muslim; in Thailand, Buddhist; etc. For religious adherents, this is often a difficult assertion to accept. The sense of overwhelming devotion, the special relationship with the divine on which believers base their major life choices (i.e. 'discerning the will of God for my life', or some kindred awareness), as well as the bonds of faith that give comfort on eternal salvation and that cement meaningful relations – all these matters are of deeply felt significance. This view is held so centrally that, for instance, for most Reformed believers the Calvinist notion of predestination (as popularly conceived) is an easier problem to relate to than would be acceptance of the haphazardness of sheer fate as associated with place of birth. Hit-or-miss demographics holds little in spiritual comfort for religious adherents. One can sense the unease, immediately, caused among the religious faithful by statements on geographic religious determination. In contrast, anti-religiously inclined public personalities have been known to exhibit an attitude of something akin to *Schadenfreude* towards the existential angst caused by such statements. Geography as central basis of faith seems to lay bare just how tentative, how conditional religious commitments can seem, once portrayed as such.
- A very similar sense of historical contingency is also found when the tables are turned, and it is pointed out that on a simple head count of civilisations across ages and places, modern Western(ised) society is the only one that allows substantially for a primarily religion-less or even anti-religious existential stance. (The most thoroughgoing socio-philosophical analysis of secularisms remains Taylor 2007.) The economic and technological success of precisely this single societal configuration is a customarily welcomed argument for faithlessness. However, the resultant exponentialised calamities of world wars in the past and possible ecological armageddon in our future stifle such optimisms about rational, economic and technological 'advances'. In addition, the immense cruelty

13. On the other hand, given the most dramatically visible sign of religiosity again forcing itself onto constant public consciousness, the tragic 9/11 events as one of the prime indicators of the dawning post-secular age (cf. Habermas 2008:17–29) and given indications that this most perverse form of religious expression, violence, will be with us for some time yet, and internationally, perhaps it has become necessary to include such appalling events into theorising post-secularism.

(internally as much as externally) of the largest political experiment with atheism, 20th century Soviet Communism, leaves little phenomenologically to commend it above alternatives. It remains moreover a strange socio-historic twist of faith (as opposed to fate) that, although the rivulet of non-religiosity runs deep in the roughly three millennia of the Greek-Western philosophical and cultural stream, it does not on its own merits alone run wide. The cultural success of non- and anti-religiosity was namely conditional on the tolerance of Christianity (initially reluctantly so; latterly however deeply committed to a-religiosity in particularly the political but also the economic spheres of society), to allow for the kinds of liberal democracy in which a non-religious life may easily be led. Historically, no other religion had allowed to develop within its fold – in this case drawing on some of its own impulses towards freedom and ethical sensibilities – a cultural marginalisation, including also the possibility of a principled rejection, of its own social centrality. More succinctly formulated: modern atheism is a child of Protestantism. Thus, it remains too, to a substantial extent, in three ways: in the way atheisms articulate their arguments,¹⁴ in what they reject, and – importantly here – in where they are found. To accentuate the latter: non-religiousness is no less a function of its circumstances and milieu than the geographic consideration on religiosity is for faith traditions.

Such contingency, rather than the much-treasured arguments from logic or (fully valid) moral accusations against religions, leaves such adherents with as much a sense of unease at the existential and personal implications as do the alternatives.

Many of us may, in light of arguments such as these, feel surrendered by circumstance to the commitments of or against faith to which we find ourselves so deeply bound. It is as if, simply, we have been cast arbitrarily into existential positions that have been determined on our behalves by spiritual and/or intellectual giants and social institutions and forces that lie beyond our power and which lie very often beyond most humans' understanding. Given this fate, Luther's famous (and mythical) *Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders* could, differently understood than usual, become not a confession of arrived faith commitment, but a yielding to happenstance, and perhaps a cry of lonely despair: I have been washed up here by the tides of the times. Ecclesiastes 3:1–8,¹⁵ famously misused as text for comfort, in such a frame of understanding assumes again its proper fatalistic sense: we cannot escape our seasons of life, that is, our times.

14. For instance, the famous Richard Dawkins is in a strong sense an Anglican atheist, namely in the manner in which he builds his arguments against religion.

15. Eccl. 3: 1 To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: 2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; 3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; 4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; 5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; 6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; 7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; 8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

It is at this almost numinous moment, when one finds oneself in the face of the Big Question/s left with a sense of having been abandoned by the routine securities of religion and non-religion, and often in humility but at least without the at times faintly palpable sense of delicate superiority, that the discipline of spirituality turns intuitively to mysticism (on which, see, e.g. Krüger 2006; McGinn 1995). However, rather than follow that more usual trajectory here, a contemporary sociological theory on modernity would add differently to the tapestry of spirituality (the metaphor of e.g. Boersma 2000; Kourie 2015:1–9); and so we move next, briefly, to the work on social acceleration by Helmut Rosa (2013).

Time after time

Rosa's 2013 book, *Social Acceleration: A New Theory of Modernity*, is not the first to consider 'how time flies' (see, e.g., Vanhoutte 2018:170–194 for an overview and further implications; also Trejo-Mathys in the opening pages to *Social Acceleration*, 2013:1.115–555)¹⁶ – the old adage that things seem to be going ever quicker. However, Rosa's is the most thoroughgoing analysis of how speed has become one of the characteristics of the rise of the modern period and thus of our age, and it constitutes a major sociological advance in understanding the dynamics of our lives at present.

Not the at times maligned fatalism of the biblical Eccl. 1:9: הַיּוֹם כַּמּוֹת הַיּוֹם וְהַיּוֹם כַּמּוֹת הַיּוֹם [What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done], nor the resignation inherent to the French saying, *Que sera, sera*, Rosa's *Social acceleration* offers a broad overview of how time is experienced at the heart of culture, forming people and relationships in foundational ways. This has implications for religion too, on which two matters will below be indicated. Firstly, though, a brief summary of Rosa's contribution.

The past roughly half a millennium, which have formed our humanity foundationally, has, as Rosa points out, been characterised by three forms of acceleration: technological, social and life-pace:

- The former is easy to analyse: big machinery and small have enabled us to cross vast distances in a day, if we drive or fly, or in a moment, when we use a computer or smart phone to communicate. These are the things that add 'noise' (in the communicative sense, already indicated as such in the first modern well-accepted communication theory, that of Shannon & Weaver [1949]) to our daily existence, in what had been memorably referred to as a 'technorgy' (e.g. <http://pbfcomics.com/comics/technorgy/>), that is, the 'incoherent enthusiasms' (Agre 1999:37–41; cf. Lombaard 2009:17–29) sold to us by the missionaries of technology (cf. Kessler 2017:5–6, drawing i.a. on Illg 2010). What would take days, weeks or could easily have been impossible in a lifetime a decade or two or a century or two ago is now for many people a matter of course: we communicate across the globe, and travel much of it too.

Interestingly, and importantly for the topic here: none of these advances are initially presented as that they would make life busier: selling a car, a laptop or a mobile phone to one, sales staff would never say that these new machines would make your life ever fuller. Rather, they point out how much time one would save, through greater productivity or efficiency, in order to have 'more free time' (a mantra of the modern age). The ensuing more engaged time, consisting of both more hours taken up and more activities crammed into those hours, are left for us to discover – quite willingly, usually, and often with great enthrallment.

- Social acceleration involves that less constancy, more dynamism is found in what expectations may well have held to be, relatively speaking, more placid circumstances. Moving one's residence (roughly every seventh year now, for those with property bonds in South Africa), changing political allegiance or falling into and out of religion, as well as moving affiliations within either possibility, and more transient than anticipated romantic and matrimonial relationships characterise this 'quickening' of our social selves.
- Life-pace relates to the duration of day-to-day encounters: meals are seldom taken at one's leisure; social interactions may increase in number but may well be limited to a tweet or a WhatsApp note while parked at a traffic light; rest is intermittent, with holidays brief; extended family liaisons, though perhaps frequent, are at a Facebooked or Instagrammed or Snapchatted distance and instance.

That life thus becomes less settled and more energetic, and ever more so, and that these forms of acceleration feed on one another, is not difficult to see. This pace changes how we relate to the world and to others, and thus alters who we are.

An important insight on how this foundationally affects our spirituality relates to the expectations we have in life. In less-involved, 'slower' times, most people could expect to have more or less all the experiences of life that life has to offer. By the time one dies, the possibilities of life would have been exhausted: a full life means having sampled all or most of what was on life's table, which was entirely feasible within a normal lifetime. Death in such circumstances does not mean missing out on anything more that life could offer. Death was therefore an easier boundary to cross: the current horizons have been exhausted, and new horizons await. The implied world of an ever-accelerating life is; however, that horizons have stretched and continue stretching, quite easily, to beyond almost all physical borders, with more people and more experiences to encounter ever more closely, ever more easily, mediated ever more variedly. Death becomes a barrier: I know much, much more lies ahead in life, after my demise, beyond my personal reach. Death does not mean gain, in the usual religious sense, but loss – not only leaving loved ones 'behind' (whom one might encounter again in an after-life, if those were one's convictions, involving thus a temporary separation), but permanently losing all the advantages of a future life here on earth. One may not lose faith because of

16.The l. abbreviation serves to indicate, instead of page numbers, the location numbers in the Kindle edition.

this, but the sense is strongly that one is about to lose out on much else. (On a more mundane, less existential level, a current slang-abbreviation popular among the youth captures something of this: 'FOMO' – fear of missing out.)

Social acceleration, in Rosa's understanding, is not untempered, but is inhibited, mediated or softened by a number of factors. These include physical limitations: the speed of travel is naturally limited by what the body can bear and by what engineering allows machinery to accomplish; to raise a child to the age of six simply takes 6 years; the unrested body collapses (cf. Walker 2017); a deep love relationship of decades cannot be concertinaed into weeks; learnedness does not amount to 'going on a quick learning curve', but is gained through sustained scholarship and critical reflection, the depth and breadth of which requires decades of intellectual work rather than the umpteen-thousand results of a split-second search engine result. In addition, there are social spheres by means of which one can opt out of this 'human race'¹⁷ or that offer compromises¹⁸ or that seek to revitalise.¹⁹ Then there are institutions and operations that, frustratingly, slow matters down, either by breaking down (e.g. electricity, i.a. because of over-use during a cold winter or because of corruption and/or poor management) or by bureaucratic tardiness (institutions of state, for instance, and on a smaller scale, passive-aggressive personalities in institutional gatekeeper roles that find some kind of aberrant satisfaction in keeping others waiting).

Acceleration is thus not unfettered. However, it is ever more powerful and modifies our lives in substantial ways.

Some further questions, in addition to the above notes, for consideration may be posed on aspects of belief and meaning (i.e. spirituality) within such an 'accelerated world':

- Is the placement of religion within a deceleration category faithful to all forms of faith? Historically, for instance, we know from Weber's insights (cf. Otto 2005a; 2005b) that capitalism sprung from early Calvinism and still bears many of its hallmarks. In this case, therefore, religion and the dynamics of economic life are closely related to one another in working better, faster, harder. Spirituality as experienced faith finding expression in concrete action thus, in such an instance, offers no reprieve from social acceleration, but is its harbinger.
- With capitalism hence a prime carrier of social acceleration, is it fair to attempt sidelining religion from an accelerated world? Would such a sidelining, then, not perhaps be yet another instance of trying to relegate matters of faith to the margins of modern democracies? (Cf. Lombaard, Benson & Otto 2018.)

17. Meditation or retreats or the slow food movement remain obvious examples, with medical mental-recuperation institutions as a more unsettling example.

18. High-energy yoga or a game drive and other activities that give expression to the maxim that 'a change is as good as a holiday'.

19. How many churches cast their Sunday services, and beauty parlours their treatments, as 'recharging' for the coming week? One South African motivational speaker famously said during a radio interview that he takes 'short bullets of rest' during airplane flights.

- The latter, while also in the contemporary world many religious people find their faith positively energised by at least some aspects of the highly dynamic hastened life world. Goosen (2007:43) namely argues that *radikale afgrondelikeid* [bewildering limitation] *together with oneindige eksessiwiteit* [unrelenting bounty] characterise life in our times, which may be seen as negative, but could as well be highly positive impulses towards the joys of what life has to offer, including the deeply fulfilling religious dimensions of that life.
- On the other hand, would *such* a positive orientation as just indicated not privilege yet again Protestant expressions of Christianity above other forms of Christianity in particular, and above other forms of religiosity in general? Could such an impulse then perhaps, in its more extravagant theological forms, even feed directly into the baser, more materialistic elements of faith found in so-called prosperity gospel expressions of religion?
- Would the latter, as a corollary, not in turn sideline the more quietist, reflective, meditative, symbolic and traditionalist spiritualities, as found in, for instance, Roman Catholicism, the Orthodox traditions, Buddhism and some primary religions?
- In addition, would the last point not be strengthened by what has been occurring precisely as the pace of acceleration has been increasing over recent decades: a turn to spirituality in life in general (Kourie 2006:19–38), and the return to interest in matters religious across many academic fields (Lombaard 2014b:1–6)?

These are questions left open for the moment, for further, future consideration – should time allow.

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Competing interests

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