

Andries van Aarde – A sideways glance: His theological and hermeneutical contribution to the South African scene

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This article pays tribute to Andries van Aarde's theological and hermeneutical contribution. His research unfolds in three phases: a narrative reading of the text, a social scientific investigation of the context and an 'ideal construct' of the historical Jesus. Despite the theoretical nature of these inquiries, Van Aarde indicates convincingly their practical value for the church and society on the whole.

A step to the side: Into the text

The way in which the Bible has been transmitted, received and interpreted has been and still is heavily debated. Into this scenario steps Andries van Aarde.

At the beginning of the 1980s, biblical interpretation was stuck in a blind alley of traditional approaches: historicism and positivism on the one hand and structural analysis on the other, both of which aimed to provide the exegete with an 'objective' grip on the text. Van Aarde has always valued the role of genre in biblical exegesis and hermeneutics, which means distinguishing between gospel, acts, epistle and apocalypse. However, he became increasingly frustrated with the inadequacy of this distinction and began hearing the voice of the *narrator* of the text. Who is telling the story? For whom is it intended?

Especially: what does it aim to achieve? Van Aarde reads the gospels as narratives in accordance with the principles of modern literary theory. According to the classical hermeneutical communication model, there is always a sender, a message and a recipient involved in the communication process. Van Aarde (1983:58–82) focuses especially on the *narrative point of view*, that is, the way in which the narrator presents the story and what outcome the narrator has in mind. No narrative is free from the ideology of the narrator. From this ideological framework, the narrator creates characters who assume the roles of protagonists or antagonists and who act in a constructed world of space and time.

According to Andries van Aarde (1983:76–80), the gospels are not historical reports about the life and death of Jesus, but are narratives, permeated with the intrinsic ideology (theology) of the narrator, who aims to draw readers into the story so that they can participate in the events.

The question is, however, whether these insights have practical relevance, for example for preaching, or whether they are just theories from ivory tower academia? According to Van Aarde (1984:123–146), engaging with the intention of a text certainly has practical value. After all, a sermon is a communicative event.

The first step in this process is when the preacher engages with the text and seeks to discover its intention. Van Aarde proposes a different set of questions to that of genre. The two main questions are whether the text is argumentative by nature, inviting the reader to follow the rhetorical line of thought, or whether it is a narrative text that lures the reader into the plot. Understanding the way in which a text communicates has implications for exegesis and communication. The process of communication is twofold: firstly between text and preacher and secondly between preacher and audience. Ideally, the whole process should entail a *Horizontverschmelzung*, a fusion of horizons of text, preacher and audience.

Van Aarde moves away from the traditional model of *explicatio* or *applicatio*: firstly explaining the text and then making it relevant for the contemporary context, in other words, illuminating how to move from text to sermon. The pitfalls in this regard include spiritualisation, allegorising or drawing direct parallels between the text and today's world, some of which are more successful than others. *What* the text communicates, *why* it does so and its implicit *outcome*, can be integrated into the structure of a sermon.

Van Aarde specifically applies his narrative approach to the Gospel of Matthew. In an article (Van Aarde 1985) he argues that 'God with us' (Immanuel) is a key phrase in the Gospel of Matthew, which occurs strategically at the beginning (1:23), in the middle (18:19) and at the end (28:18). The ideology of the narrator of the Gospel of Matthew is strongly influenced by 'God with us'. This determines the way in which he reads and re-structures the Gospel of Mark and it also influences his understanding of Jesus (Van Aarde 1985:272–289).

In a subsequent book (Van Aarde 1994a) entitled *God-with-us: The dominant perspective in Matthew's story*, it becomes clear that the 'dominant perspective' refers to the narrator's point of view, which also reveals his theology. In other words, the narrator has certain ideas which he chooses to convey in a particular manner by means of literary techniques. 'Ideas' and 'techniques', concepts borrowed from literary criticism, imply much more than the usual distinction between 'form' and 'content'. They become powerful hermeneutical tools to aid textual exegesis and which help the reader to discover the intention of the text and even to become part of the story.

'God-with-us' is the dominant perspective of the narrator of the Gospel of Matthew. The heart of the message is that God is present in a limitless and unmediated way. The narrator uses two narrative lines to expound this idea; he tells a story within a story. The first narrative line is God's unmediated presence in the pre-Easter Jesus, who reaches out to the marginalised and outcasts of the society. Analogous to the Jesus story is the story of the post-Easter disciples, who continue to follow Jesus' example. They become manifestations of 'God-with-us' to outsiders.

Van Aarde (1994:xiv) assumes that the Matthean gospel also reveals something of the social context of the intended readers. Most probably, they lived c.a. 70 AD, the time of formative Judaism and tension between the synagogue and the church. In the Matthean community, some people in leadership positions chose to conform to the ideology of the Pharisees in their behaviour and attitude, thereby deviating from the example of Jesus. The narrator employs narrative techniques to express his theological idea of 'God-with-us'. He draws the reader into the primary sequence of the narrative, the commission of Jesus before Easter and exhorts them to become part of the secondary sequence, the commission of the disciples after Easter. The 'God-with-us' theme gives the narrator a basis of authority by which he addresses the readers and succeeds in drawing them into the story. In the new hermeneutics, this communication event is called *Einverständnis* or *Eindringlichkeit*.

During the 1980s to the 1990s, Andries van Aarde produced groundbreaking work with his literary approach to reading the gospels. In the first place, these works could be treated not as historical documents, but as skilful literary creations. Furthermore, he stripped them of dogma, which usually coloured exegetes' approach even before they read the texts themselves. All texts, including biblical texts, are literary inventions, thus, a world on paper. The aim of the narrator is

to make this paper world real to the readers, inviting them to become characters in the story as it were.

Although Van Aarde would soon turn towards other approaches to the text, he did not take leave of literary theory altogether. In 2006, he wrote a series of two articles in which he first expounds genre and plot in the gospel material (2006a:657–677), followed by an analysis of the narrator's point of view in New Testament texts (2006b:1111–1143). In these two articles he combines historical criticism and narrative criticism. He also employs some of the most sophisticated, even abstract, narrative theories (e.g. Gérard Genette and Mieke Bal).

Another sidestep: Into the context

During the mid-1980s, Andries van Aarde became increasingly involved in research done by the Context Group, an international US based research project that focuses on the interpretation of texts within the parameters of social scientific models. Here, Van Aarde's appreciation of the narrative is supplemented with social scientific theories. 'Every text, including a narrative discourse', he writes (Van Aarde 1988a:235), 'reflects the social context from which it originates, although in truncated form, presented from a particular ideological perspective.' The text placed in its historical context. After all, a narrative originates within a particular context, for which its meaning is intended. Biblical exegesis and the consequent hermeneutical exercise therefore have to pay close attention also to the world and circumstances outside the text. Van Aarde (1988a:237) calls these forces, the mechanisms that generate texts, 'culture'. Thus, texts are not only determined by the ideology of the narrator, but also by the culture in which they were written. Consequently Van Aarde (1988a:237) states: 'In this connection, therefore, the term "culture" can be replaced by the term "social context".'

Van Aarde then extends his appropriation of literary theory to incorporate the social context. Instead of a one-way direction from 'sender to message to recipient', a circular movement is indicated: from recipient, to sender, to message to recipient. The recipients and the world in which they function, bring texts into being, that is, the social context co-determine the production as well as the meaning of texts.

Thus, the narrative, as well as the social context, is important to convey the meaning of the text. Put differently, intra-textual as well as extra-textual concerns are involved in the whole process of communication. These have far reaching implications for biblical exegesis and hermeneutics. However, how do modern day readers gain access to the social context, the extra textual world? How do they build a 'construction' of an unfamiliar world? The first and foremost clues to the extra textual world are provided by the text itself. But there may be other sources which serious exegetes will take into account even before they read the biblical text in question.

For example: the Gospel of Luke and consequent Acts of the Apostles were written during the second half of the 1st

century CE. The context is that of the Judaic Hellenic world. The early church had taken its first catholic steps, despite the severe persecutions and brutal executions during the reign of Domitian (81–96 CE) and the Jews had to reorganise themselves under Pharisee leadership. Serious conflicts arose between the Jewish and Hellenistic worlds and within the growing Christian community; adherents to the new faith had to be accommodated from all sectors of the community. What were the contextual issues and how does the gospel address these?

Thus, even before tackling exegesis of a particular biblical text, it is possible for exegetes to construct an imaginary social context which may have produced the text. Imagining themselves into this context may result in a meaningful and coherent hermeneutical exercise.

Still deeply aware of the social context in which biblical texts were produced, Andries van Aarde (1988b:829–846) turns to Jesus. What did the world in which Jesus was born and bred, in which he lived, taught and died, look like? Jesus has to be studied in the context of the eastern Mediterranean world during the time when the New Testament came into being, that is, Palestine under Roman rule, but also deeply under the influence of Hellenistic thought and culture. This society was structured by some important ideological powers that determined the different social relationships, namely: economy, politics, family life and religion. In analysing these categories, Van Aarde (1988b:840–842) realises that modern notions of rich-poor in terms of 20th century capitalism of the developed world is vastly different from those of a 1st century citizen in the eastern Mediterranean world.

In the first place, the poor happened to be under those who were for some reason or another 'unclean'. A tax-collector, who performed a disgraceful task, was, despite all his riches, labelled poor. But in the second place, the family was the most important and most central social entity. Everything revolved around the family. Family relationships and to be securely embedded into a family were more important than anything else. If disaster struck, one could always rely on the family for help. In this sense, rich and poor were defined not only in terms of economic or monetary means, but in terms of family support. Thus, poor was not an economic category in the first place, but the poor were those people who did not belong to a family and had no societal resources. Given the strong patriarchal orientation of the time and the dependence of the family on its head, the patriarch, the poor had no-one else to rely on but God. In the 1st century Palestine, Jesus is to be found among the social outcasts who relies on God, his heavenly Father.

This article (1988b:844–845) also aims to make it clear that the gospels cannot serve as liberation manifestos as expressed in political terms like 'the privilege of the oppressed poor'. However, perhaps without realising it directly, Van Aarde's research into the historical Jesus was initiated. For from this point further, just as he applied himself diligently to narrative

theories, Van Aarde would now turn his attention to models of social scientific criticism.

Biblical hermeneutics should always keep in mind the cultural distance between ancient and modern cultures, as well as mutual cultures within a particular period (1993b:516). Taking a look at advanced agrarian societies in 1st century Palestine, Van Aarde (1993b:515–545) illuminates the intricate social relationships of the time. Now, even more than previously, it becomes clear that not economy, but the family was the dominant institution in the society. However, a once predominant agrarian society had developed at the time of 1st century Palestine and became much more differentiated and stratified than before. During this transitory phase kinship and family ties were put under some stress, although, the interests of the family would not vanish completely yet. Instead, family relationships were absorbed into the broader societal structures, where they developed into an ideology. These societal structures were organised hierarchically and consisted of only two classes: the few elite, the powerful and the masses, those without power, usually the workers or the peasants. There was no middleclass. Between the elite and the masses existed a kind of reciprocal relationship, best described as a patron-client agreement. Patrons protected the clients and the clients were dependent of the patrons. Thus, it appears that the tight-knit familial bonds of the agrarian society have now been extended to a new relationship that functioned as an imaginary family or fictive kinship groups that were bound to one another by a shared solidarity (1993b:536). A group that gathered around a particular patron, called themselves his followers, or his disciples. Most probably the disciple circles of Jesus, as well as of John the Baptist, functioned as imaginary families. However, in the case of Jesus it appears that the 'clients' mostly consisted of the marginalised of society, the unclean, the displaced ones.

Once again, the result of the research is a monograph: *Kultuurhistoriese Agtergrond van die Nuwe Testament. Die Eerste-eeuse Mediterreense Sosiale Konteks* (Van Aarde 1994a) [The Cultural Historical Background of the New Testament. The First Century Mediterranean Social Context]. The aim is to provide modern readers with information regarding the social context of the area surrounding the Mediterranean Sea during the beginning of the New Testament. Van Aarde starts with the Maccabean War (2nd century BC) until the Bar-Kochba insurrection (2nd century AD) (1994a:9–62), thereby conveying something of the social dynamics behind the cultural history of the New Testament. He gives an overview of the Hellenistic-Roman presence in Palestine and offers some background to the religious beliefs, philosophies and cultural practices (1994a:63–86). The issues that were raised in the articles, are systemised and elaborated in the book, especially from Chapter 3, part 2 (1994a:86–130). Consequently, he discusses the many movements, groups, streams of thought, traditions and conflict within 1st century Palestine. Interpretation of the New Testament requires of the exegete to take all the larger structures of the Mediterranean

society into account, like the political regime and economic exploitation of the Roman Empire, as well as the smaller units like kinship that came under pressure within Palestine as an advanced agrarian society.

Here a new, or should one rather say, an old world is opened. Andries van Aarde dares the modern exegete to explore a different way of life, a different mode of thought. Yet the hermeneutical exercise does not require merely cognisance of a strange and different word; it demands putting on a different 'think cap' altogether. Only then, one can imagine how 'the world goes round'.

Jesus from the side

It appears that Andries van Aarde's interests in both narrative and social scientific criticism paved the way for thorough research into the historical Jesus. Also, by now, Van Aarde plays a lively part in the so-called 'third quest' for the historical Jesus. However, up to the 90s, this is a debate mainly among scholars of the United States; Van Aarde is the only South African who openly supports this research and even partakes in discussions on the subject.

In 1993 (Van Aarde 1993a:397–423, 1993c:942–962), two articles are published in *HTS Theologiese Studies/Theological Studies* that give an indication of the Jesus research in South Africa since 1980, from Andrie du Toit, to Willem Vorster, to Andries van Aarde. The latter article was initiated by a research project (1992–1993) at the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research in Collegeville, Minnesota, titled *The epistemic status of New Testament and the emancipatory living of the historical Jesus in engaged hermeneutics*. Engaged hermeneutics proposes engagement between theologians from the developed and the developing worlds. Theologians from the developed world often follow the traditional European academic approach to the canon, which is often irrelevant for the poor and oppressed countries elsewhere, whereas scholars from the developing world choose for the option of liberation-theology to serve their own needs. Where may the common ground for engagement be found? According to Van Aarde, not in the canon, but in the historical Jesus.

Taking cues from the gospels and from the 1st century Mediterranean world, Andries van Aarde proceeds to construct an 'ideal type' of Jesus of Nazareth. In terms of Max Weber's understanding, this 'ideal type' is not a depiction or hypothesis of reality, but a theoretical construct (cf. also 1994c:592, 1995:332, 1996:487, 2002:434), an imaginative sociological 'ideal type'.

Consequently, Van Aarde (1993c:946–947, cf. 1996:477) investigates traditions concerning Jesus' birth and the relationship with his family and draws the following portrayal of the historical Jesus: he lived in 1st century Herodian Palestine, a world where family interests were ideologically conditioned. Strained family relationships, his sharp critique of the patriarchal family and his trust in God as his *Abba* become noticeable (cf. 1995:330, 1996:487). Jesus seems to redefine the kingdom of God in terms of a

brokerless household (Van Aarde 1993c:947, 951), where family members have direct access to God, the Father without the usual intercessions of the patriarchal head of the family. Thus, Jesus does not see the kingdom of God as an apocalyptic event, or comparable to earthly kingdoms. He envisages the kingdom of God as a household where strained relationships are 'healed by means of "politics of compassion" and God's unmediated presence' (Van Aarde 1995:330).

A further question that has to be investigated is the matter of Jesus' baptism. Usually baptism is a ceremonial or ritual event in order to heal 'sinful sickness' (Van Aarde 1993c:952) or to remove certain stigmas attached to people, for example, being a fatherless son. The picture becomes even clearer as Van Aarde realises Jesus' special concern for the 'nobodies' in the society, women, children, prostitutes, tax collectors and so forth. By baptism Jesus is healed from 'sinful sickness', perhaps he was initially a follower of John the Baptist, but then broke away and started his own ministry of 'healed healers' who heal and forgive sinners (Van Aarde 1993c:952, 1995:330). The alternative wisdom of the 'ethos of compassion' was regarded as subversive to the temple ideology and brought him into disfavour with the religious leaders of his time, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Eventually, like a criminal he was crucified by the Roman procurator. 'No family or fictive family took care of his body – and so Jesus of Nazareth died as he was born – a nobody among nobodies' (Van Aarde 1995:330).

These views Van Aarde would publish some years later in a sensational (even notorious) book, *Fatherless in Galilee: Jesus as child of God* (2001). Andries van Aarde is the first Afrikaans speaking South African to write a book that critically examines the life and history of Jesus of Nazareth (Le Roux 2002:77). This compels the reader to think historically, to penetrate to the earliest attestations of Jesus, to appreciate Jesus as someone from the 1st century Mediterranean world and to see a full picture of his life as human being (Le Roux 2002:97).

Andries van Aarde's understanding of the historical Jesus has been shaped through the many years that he was involved with the Context Group and Jesus Seminar. He shares many of their ideas and methods and has a special high esteem for John Dominic Crossan (cf. e.g. Van Aarde 2001:30–32, 62–63, 65–71, 168–169, 188–190). However, he takes his own point of departure, namely those traditions that point to Jesus as a fatherless son (2011:72, 77), supported by an 'excursus' into a post-Easter Joseph trajectory (2001:82–118). Uncovering one layer after the other, Van Aarde comes closer to the historical Jesus. Research confirms that Jesus grew up as a fatherless son. He came from a peasant farming community of Herodian Galilee. He displayed a remarkable affinity towards the outcasts and marginalised of the society and was considered as a 'healer' by them. Towards the temple and imperial hierarchy, he was critical and rejected their modes of operating. He communicated his vision of the kingdom of God by means parables, metaphorical and proverbial expressions and the favourites are not the elite of the society, but the poor and rejected members.



Van Aarde's (2001:1–32) investigation is historical by nature, but definitely not in the positivist sense of historicism. He agrees with many of his predecessors that a grip on the historical Jesus is impossible. The closest one can get to the 'historical Jesus' is by means of a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach, therefore, the traditional historical criticism has to be supplemented by insights from especially social scientific criticism. Thus, Van Aarde calls his 'ideal' construct of Jesus, 'Jesus from the side' (Van Aarde 2001:38).

What does this mean?

Up to now, that is, the 1990s, research regarding the historical Jesus, was either 'from above' or 'from below' (Van Aarde 1993c:953, cf. 1994c:362, 1994d:589, 2001:38). Christology 'from above' that took shape after Constantine, reflect traditions of political power and hierarchy and are characterised by many conciliar debates regarding the 'two natures' of Christ. Then came the 'Enlightenment' with its trust in human reason and which, especially during the 18th century, had an almost devastating effect on the Church. Consequently a Christology 'from below' became important for theologians of the 19th and 20th centuries, which focused increasingly on the humanity of Jesus. However, both these Christologies, from above and from below, indicate a vertical direction. This was not the way in which Jesus was seen by his own contemporaries or earliest followers. They regarded him as equal, regarded him from a horizontal perspective, therefore, 'from the side'. Thus, Van Aarde's ideal construct of the historical Jesus 'from the side' takes into account the social processes in terms of which Jesus was either honoured or put to shame by his contemporaries of the community in which he lived – and died.

Jesus 'from the side' has far reaching implications for the South African theological scene, as well globally. The concern of the project that initiated the paper mentioned previously (1993c) was 'engaged hermeneutics' and the engagement implied is between the traditional theology of theologians from the developed world and contextual theology of the developing world (cf. 1994c:345–367, 1994d:575–596). Theologians on both sides regard the Bible, especially the New Testament, as hermeneutical source (1994d:577). However, theology from the developed world is permeated by the vertical structure of Christology 'from above' as well as 'from below' (1994a:362). Furthermore, the imperialism and colonialism of the developed world onto the developing world was not received favourably by theologians from the latter. Consequently, contextual theology from the developing world often became 'designed' to shake off the manipulative power-invested hold from the developed world. Is it possible to find an alternative design for engaged hermeneutics?

Contextual theology of both the developed and developing world is concerned about the 'economically poor and politically oppressed ... the non-person ... the peripheral person' (Van Aarde 1994c:349). Therefore, Jesus from the side provides the ideal ground for engaged hermeneutics and becomes the proverbial 'answer to the question'. Research into the historical Jesus reveals that Jesus of

history continues in Jesus of faith (Van Aarde 1995:329, cf. 2003:549). The Christian religion is not a book religion, but models its belief patterns on the words and deeds of Jesus of Nazareth. Therefore, memory of the Jesus of history as manifestation of God, would make it clear to understand what 'emancipatory living' means. Thus, Jesus the Jew living in 1st century Herodian Palestine whose life started and ended as a 'nobody', is the ideal hermeneutical bridge between the developed and developing world, by providing not a theology from 'above' or 'below', but from the side.

Of course, engaged hermeneutics is not relevant to contextual theology of the developed and developing world only, it pertains to existential and ethical issues of society at large: matters concerning gender, race, sexual orientation, age, social and religious orientation:

As the living symbol of God's unmediated presence, the historical Jesus set people free and, as the risen Christ and Kyrios (Lord) he still sets people ... free from distorted relationships with oneself, others and God. Christian ethics is not an abstract ideology but it is based on the humanness and humaneness of the Jesus of history.

(Van Aarde 2003:550)

Concluding remarks

Andries van Aarde has done pioneering research by appropriating theories and methodologies of fields from outside theology to reading biblical texts. Studies like these are interesting, even entertaining, but often run the risk of remaining theoretical endeavours without any practical value, however. Andries van Aarde convincingly demonstrated that this is not the case. On the one hand, he strips the biblical texts from their usual dogma. On the other hand and most importantly, he holds these texts in deep respect by appreciating their narrative art as well as the socio-cultural context in which they originated. His compelling portrayal of the historical Jesus has far reaching implications for further academic studies, as well as for the practical ministry of the church.

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APPENDIX 1

Andries Gideon van Aarde – Curriculum Vitae

Born

25 April 1951, Pretoria, South Africa

Education

- D.Litt. (Ancient Languages: Greek), 2005, Dissertation: 'The Infancy Gospel of Thomas as a heroic myth of the child-god Jesus within the context of Ebionite early Christianity'.
- Ph.D. (History of Ancient Culture), 2000, Dissertation: 'Historicization of myth: The metaphor "Son of God" and its Hellenistic-Semitic and Graeco-Roman Background'.
- D.D. (New Testament studies), 1982, Dissertation: 'God-with-us: The dominant Perspective in Matthew's story'.
- M.A. (Semitic Languages), 1978, Dissertation: 'Macarism-Series in the New Testament, Jesus Sirach, and 2 Slavonic Enoch: A form-critical study'.
- B.A. Honours (Greek and Semitic Languages Combined), 1977.
- B.D. (Theology), 1974.
- B.A. (Major: Greek and Semitic Languages; Minors: Philosophy, German, French, Latin), 1977.

Professional positions

- Senior Research Fellow, Unit of Advanced Studies, University of Pretoria, 2010 –
- Honorary Professor, Department of New Testament Studies, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, 2009 –
- Chairperson of the Executive of the Board of Directors of the To Care Foundation for vulnerable people (a NGO and NPO Article 21 company which focuses on corporate fundraising for poverty alleviation, professional social services and community entrepreneurship skills development),
- 2009 – Research Manager, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, January 2000–2004 Chairperson of the Department of New Testament, Faculty of Theology (Section A), University of Pretoria, 1989–1999
- Full Professor, 1989 –
- Associate Professor of New Testament, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, 1984–1988
- Senior Lecturer, Biblical Studies: specialisation: Old Testament, Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria, 1980–1983
- Lecturer of Hellenistic Greek, Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria, 1979–1980
- Part-time lecturer of New Testament Greek and Biblical Studies at the Africa Institute for Missiology (accredited by the University of Pretoria), 1985–1999
- Ordained pastor, Netherdutch Reformed Church of Africa, 1974 –
- Editor: *HTS Theological Studies/Theologies Studies*, 1985 –

Professional memberships

The South African Society of Patristic and Byzantine Studies

- Society of Biblical Literature (USA)
- New Testament Society of South Africa
- Societas Novi Testamenti Studiorum*, Co-Chair of Matthew Subgroup 2000–2005
- The Jesus Seminar of the Westar Institute (USA)
- The Context Group: A Project on the Bible and its Cultural Environment (USA)
- Catholic Biblical Association of America

Previous professional activities

- Resident Scholar: Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Studies (St John's University, Collegeville, MN, USA), 1992–1993
- Visiting Scholar: Graduate Theological Union (University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA), 1997–1998
- Visiting Scholar: Tantur Institute for Ecumenical and Theological Studies, Jerusalem (Israel), October 1999–January 2000
- Resident Scholar: St Deiniol's Library, Hawarden (Wales), February 2000

International guest professor

- St Mary's College, University of St Andrews (Scotland), February 2000
- King's College, University of London (UK), February 2000
- United Faculty of Theology (Jesuit Theological College), Trinity College
- Theological School, The Theological Hall of the Uniting Church of Australia, Melbourne (Australia), April 2000
- Catholic University of Australia, Melbourne, April 2000
- Catholic University of Australia, Brisbane, April 2000
- Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen (the Netherlands), July–September 2001
- Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Belgium), March 2003
- Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio (USA), January 2004
- McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago (USA), January 2004
- Evangelical Theological Seminary, Cairo (Egypt), September–December 2004

Papers read at international conferences

- Münster (Germany 1993); Dublin (Ireland) 1996; Leuven (Belgium) 1988 and 1996; Sheffield (UK), 1988; Vienna (Austria) 1990; San Francisco (USA), 1992; Birmingham (UK) 1997; Santa Rosa, CA (USA) 1996, 1997 and 1998; Collegeville, MN (USA) 1992 and 1993; Portland, OR (USA) 1991, 1992 and 1996; Tüzing (Germany) 1999; Pretoria (SNTS International Meeting) 1999; Jerusalem 2000; Pretoria (The Context Group) 2001; Montréal, QC Canada (SNTS International Meeting) 2001; SNTS Durham (UK) 2001; SNTS International Meeting Barcelona 2002, Bonn 2003; SBL Philadelphia 2007, Boston 2008, New Orleans 2009

Awards and grants

Centre for Science Development of the Human Research Council of South Africa

- 1990, 1993, 1996 – Travel Grants to attend international conferences in Sheffield, Münster and Leuven
- 1990 – Research Fellow of Visiting Professor J.H. Elliott (University of San Francisco)
- 1991 – 1992 – Ad Hoc Grant for research on the Separation of Judaism and Christianity
- 1995 – Research Fellow of Visiting Professor M.J. Borg (State University of Oregon, Corvallis)
- 1997 – Research Fellow of Visiting Professor Carolyn Osiek (Catholic Theological Union Chicago)

National Research Foundation

- 1999 – 2000 – Senior Research Grant (for project: The Joseph Trajectory in the Old Testament, Intertestamental Literature, the New Testament, and Patristic Literature
- 2010 – NRF Rating Incentive

University of Pretoria

- 1993 – 1995 – Excellent Academic Achievement



1996 – 1998 – Excellent Academic Achievement
 1999 – 2001 – Excellent Academic Achievement
 2002 – 2004 – Excellent Academic Achievement
 2003 – 2005 – Mellon Foundation Mentor Programme Award
 2003 – International Exchange Programme: Katholieke Universiteit Leuven and the University of Pretoria

Miscellaneous

2001 – 2004 – Mellon Mentorship Award
 2004 – United States of America's Endowment for the Humanities (Otterbein College, Westerville, OH (USA))
 2007 – The Netherdutch Reformed Church of Africa's HCM Fourie Academy Award
 2008 – The South African Academy for Science and Arts: Van Drimmelen Award for Religion

Post-graduate students

Supervisor of 20 completed doctoral dissertations and 7 masters dissertations

Scientific publications

Author of 6 monographs
 Editor of 9 monographs in Supplement Series
 Author of 25 chapters in books
 Author (or co-author) of 182 scientific articles in accredited journals
 Author of 70 popular-scientific articles

Articles in peer-reviewed journals

1978, 'Moderne semantiek en formele homiletiek', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 34(1&2), 41–56.
 1978, 'Die vraag na Bybelse gronde vir die onderskeiding in bearbeidingswyse tussen heidensending en die arbeid onder "buitekerklikes": Enkele Nuwe-Testamentiese riglyne', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 34(1&2), 57–75.
 1980, 'Nuwere benadering tot *Gattungsforschung*', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 36(1&2), 58–73.
 1980, "'Betekenis" en "gebruik" in die makarismereeks (Matt 5:3–10)', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 36(3&4), 1–28.
 1980, 'Bruikbaarheid van aktante-analise vir die eksegeese van Sinoptiese Tekste', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 36(3&4), 29–49.
 1981, 'Kritiek op die fundamentalisme: 'n Vorm van teologiese liberalisme?', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 37(4), 6–21.
 1982, 'Ondersoek na die Nuwe-Testamentiese makarisme en makarismereeks as *Gattung*', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 38(1), 36–52.
 1982, 'Matthew's portrayal of the disciples and the structure of Matthew 13:53–17:27', *Neotestamentica* 16, 21–34.
 1982, 'Discourse analysis of the Greek text of Matthew 13:53–17:27', *Neotestamentica* 16, 1–17. (Addendum to *Neotestamentica* 16)
 1983, 'Vertellersperspektief-analise: 'n Literatuurteoretiese benadering tot die Evangelies', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 38(4), 58–82.
 1984, 'Verlede en hede op die gebied van die Matteusnavorsing: 'n Oorsig van die verskillende interpretasiemodelle', *Scriptura* 11, 1–49.
 1984, 'Die weg van die teks na die preek: Die verkondiging van die Nuwe Testament as kommunikasie-gebeurtenis', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 40(2), 145–147.
 1984, "'Verbondstruktuur" in die Nuwe Testament: 'n Terreinverkenning met die oog op die debat oor die verhouding kinderdoop-verbond', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 40(3), 28–55.
 1985, 'Narrative point of view and the "temporal function" of the Old Testament in Matthew's gospel' (original printed in Afrikaans), *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 41(2), 272–289.
 1985, 'Redaksioneel: Predikantevergadering 1985 en die gesag en funksie van die Bybel en belydenisskrifte', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 41(3), 337–338.
 1985, 'The use of Scripture: Principles in hermeneutics' (original printed in Afrikaans), *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 41(4), 547–578.
 1985, 'Die outeurskapsvraag van die Johannesevangelie met die oog op interpretasie of resepsie', *Skrif & Kerk* 6, 45–62.
 1986, 'Resensensie van Engelbrecht, E., "Sending en geregtigheid in die Matteusevangelie"', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 42(1), 170–176.
 1986, 'The "Wirkungsgeschichte" of Matthew 28:16–20 in "volkschristianiserende" missiology' (original printed in Afrikaans), *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 42(1), 77–93.
 1986, 'The miraculous multiplication of loaves (Mt 14:13–21 en par): Historical criticism in perspective' (original printed in Afrikaans), *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 42(2), 229–256.

1986, 'The parables of Jesus: Classification and preaching' (original printed in Afrikaans), *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 41(3), 441–457.
 1986, 'Demonology in New Testament times' (original printed in Afrikaans), *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 41(3), 547–563.
 1986, 'Rudolf Bultmann en Karl Barth in herinnering', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 42(4), 649–651.
 1986, (co-author, Pelsler, G.M.M.), 'Verslag van die 49ste algemene vergadering van die CBA en die 41ste algemene vergadering van die SNTS', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 42(4), 630–648.
 1987, 'Immanuel as die geïnkarneerde tora: Funksionele Jesusbenaminge in die Matteusevangelie as vertelling', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 43(1&2), 242–277.
 1987, 'Thoughts on the beginnings of the church as a history of reconciling Diversity' (original printed in Afrikaans), *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 43(3), 325–351.
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 1988, (co-author, Pelsler, G.M.M.), 'Verslag van die 42ste jaarlikse kongres van die Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas gehou by die Georg-August Universiteit Göttingen, 24–28 Augustus 1987', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 44(1), 178–202.
 1988, 'Die werklikheidsbetrokkenheid van teologiese uitsprake', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 44(1), 1–5.
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 1989, 'Resensie van Scheffler, E.H., "Suffering in Luke's Gospel"', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 45(1), 183–190.
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 1991, (co-author, Van Staden, P.), 'Social description or social-scientific interpretation? Survey of modern scholarship', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 47(1), 55–87.
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 1992, 'J H J A Geyvenstein – Professor 1917–1945: Paving the way for critical an historical understanding of the New Testament at the University of Pretoria' (original printed in Afrikaans), *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 48(1&2), 139–158.
 1992, 'A S Geyser – lecturer in theology 1946–1961', (original printed in Afrikaans), *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 48(1&2), 159–182.



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- 1994, 'Reeksvoorwoord', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies Supplementum* 6, iii.
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- 1995, (co-author, Vledder, E.J.), 'The social location of the Matthean Community', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 51(2), 388–408.
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- 1996, (co-author, Botma, A.), 'Die formule "en Christo" as basis van die Pauliniese ekklesiologie', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 52(2&3), 285–317.
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