

Editorial

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In his ‘J.T. van der Kemp and his Critique of the Settler Farmers on the South African Frontier (1799-1812)’ Johannes A. Smit focuses on the first London Missionary Society (LMS) President of African Missions in South Africa, J.T. van der Kemp, and his conflict with the settler farmers on the South African frontier (1799-1811). This revolves around the fact that the settler farmers saw themselves as settled in South Africa (and not as a temporary phenomenon as perceived by the D.E.I.C.), that they supported the patriot (and revolutionary) movements in the Netherlands/ Europe and America. They were critical of the British and the Dutch governments of their time and in actual fact rebelled against these government. They were slave holders, participated in the slave trade, and manifested ‘cruelty’ towards the Khoi and Xhosa. This article unpacks these issues with specific reference to Van der Kemp’s South African texts as published by the LMS in their *Transactions of the London Missionary Society Volumes I – III*. Theoretically, he draws on some insights from works of Michel Foucault, especially with regard to eighteenth and early nineteenth century ‘representational thought’, where ‘idea’ and ‘object’ are directly related.

Kapya John Kaoma’s article is titled ‘African Religion and Colonial Rebellion: The Contestation of Power in Colonial Zimbabwe’s Chimurenga of 1896-1897’. He examines the unifying role of the *Mwari* cult, the cultural symbol of land, and the authority of spirit mediums in the first anti-colonial socio-political and religious protest of *Chimurenga* of 1896-97 in colonial Zimbabwe. Using their spiritually- and socially-defined authority, spirit

mediums (*n'anga*) served as movement intellectuals to the *Chimurenga* — they crafted strategies and inspiration for social protest. The shared values of the *Mwari* cult, the cultural symbol of land, and the office of mediums were further employed to mobilize masses into a social movement that sought to reverse rapid sociocultural and political changes brought about by colonialism. To make this case, the article problematizes religion within an African lifeworld. Aside from showing that African religions share many aspects with other world religions, the article rejects Emile Durkheim's theory of 'the sacred and profane'. It argues that this separation is hard to establish in African traditional religions and cosmologies. Spirit mediums, for example, employed African sociology, spiritual beliefs and customs in their attempts to reject or transform the colonial order. Besides, the implementation of 'indirect rule' and land grabs led to the contestation of power between colonial authorities, chiefs, and spirit mediums. This contestation is analyzed from a social movement perspective. Amidst contemporary social injustices, human rights abuses and corruption in post-colonial Africa, and without underestimating the role traditional religions play in African politics, the study challenges Christianity to follow the prophetic example of spirit mediums in the *Chimurenga*.

Kamal-deen Olawale Sulaiman's 'Religious Violence in Contemporary Nigeria: Implications and Option for Peace and Stability Order' looks at the rising incidence of religious violence in Nigeria. It also investigates the causes and the implications of religious violence for peace and stability order in contemporary Nigeria. The prospect for combating this religious violence is equally examined. The method of approach is purely from written sources which comprise of documents, monographs, manuscripts, books, journals as well as magazines. The study reveals that the religious violence in Nigeria has claimed many lives and property worth billions of Naira. The violence has not helped in the growth and development of the nation. However, education, tolerance, dialogue and reconciliation among others should serve as tools with which to douse the social violence that emerges from the malpractice of religion in Nigeria. This will ensure peaceful co-existence of Christians, Muslims, Traditionalists and members of other religions. This would also help in the restoration of a peace, security, growth and stability order in Nigeria as a nation.

In her ‘Displaced Sense: Displacement, Religion and Sense-making’ Maheshvari Naidu states that whether formally categorized as refugees or not, displaced migrants experience varying degrees of vulnerability in relation to where they find themselves displaced. The internally displaced furthermore squat invisibly and outside the boundaries of the legal framework and incentive structures accorded to those classified as ‘refugee’. They are thus arguably, by and large, left to source sustaining solutions for themselves. Her article works through the theoretical prism of sense-making theory and works through the notion of crisis as a ‘cosmology episode’ (see Weick 1993). For Weick, a ‘cosmological episode’ occurs when people are suddenly and profoundly plunged into an awareness that the universe is no longer a rational and orderly system and experience themselves as being in a state of crisis. Crisis sense-making is in turn understood as a social process and a communicative phenomenon present in individuals’ interaction with their (disrupted) and sometimes violent life-world, which in the instance of the internally displaced, is also one of disorder, crisis and discontinuity. She also probes how internally displaced persons (IDPs) in one Zimbabwe settlement cope with the materialities of their disrupted lives through their personal scaffold of religious beliefs and behaviours. Using narrative inquiry with a sample community of five women and five men in Caledonia settlement in Zimbabwe, the article sheds light on how these individuals use their religious beliefs to cohere some semblance of order out of crisis typified by the structural violence of deprivation, poverty and dislocation. Findings suggest that, in the absence of security and a known and ordered future, the internally displaced in Caledonia settlement make sense of their present reality and their precarious future within their settlement through the matrix of their beliefs, and exhibit resilience, trust and faith.

‘The Startling Phenomenon of the Western Tibetan Buddhist Nun: The Challenges Faced by Western Nuns in the Tibetan Buddhist Tradition Living Outside the Traditional Tibetan Buddhist Regions’ is the title of the article by Elizabeth Swanepoel. She investigates the recent manifestation of a number of Western Tibetan Buddhist nuns and the challenges they face living outside traditional Himalayan nunneries. The lives of these nuns have been researched mainly by insiders such as scholarly Western nuns and no reliable statistics are available about the number of Western monastics in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. She uses a phenomenological perspective to determine the

challenges of transplanting a Buddhist monastic community to the West and the difficulties experienced by the Western Tibetan Buddhist nuns in the process. She concludes that despite the difficulty of adopting an ancient Asian religious tradition and transplanting its monastic institution to the West, these nuns have contributed significantly in transforming gender prejudice within the ranks of Tibetan Buddhism, and furthermore render a diversity of services in the lay and monastic communities.

Jaco Beyers titled his article, ‘Insights from Hans Achterhuis Applied to the Violence on LGBT Communities in Uganda’. He states that there are many reasons for violence, and that like an approaching thunderstorm is a clear indication of possible lightning to follow so the current world conditions are conducive for violence. Violence is inevitable and immanent in what Hans Achterhuis refers to as the “violent times we live in”. It is however impossible to predict where lightning will strike. Hans Achterhuis, a Dutch philosopher, utilises philosophy and fictional literature to illustrate the causes and effects of violence. In his book *Met alle Geweld* (2010) (Full Force of Violence), Achterhuis identifies six perspectives on violence: goal oriented violence; struggle for recognition; polarity of us vs them; mimetic desire; tension between morality and politics and the barbaric human nature. In the discourse on violence philosophers have the task to identify the possible localities where lightning might strike next and to warn, prevent and if not that at least suggest precautious measures – “installing lightning rods”. That is the purpose of the book by Achterhuis. Lightning has recently struck in Uganda. The author here looks at the occurrence of religiously inspired violence against the lesbian, gay, bisexuals and transgender communities (LGBT) in Uganda. The perspectives presented by Achterhuis are utilised in order to try and make sense of the violence. He suggests that discussion forums can serve as lightning rods preventing similar violent outbursts in communities in Southern Africa.

The article by Maitumeleng Albertina Ntho-Ntho’s and Jan Frederik Nieuwenhuis is titled ‘Religious Intolerance: The Case of Principals in Multi-faith Schools’. It reports on a qualitative study framed in a phenomenological research design and aimed at investigating how school principals describe their mediating role when implementing religion-in-education policy at schools. Data were collected by means of narrative interviews. Stories of

twelve school principals pursuing postgraduate studies at the University of Pretoria, all of whom had been in education for at least fifteen years at the time of the study, were collected, transcribed, analyzed and interpreted. Research findings indicate that, irrespective of the laws and policies laid down for them in implementing the policy, these school principals were unable to reconcile the requirements of the constitution with their own traditions and school rules.

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