Social Responsibility with Respect to Religion and Migration in South Africa

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Abstract

This article starts with a review of the trends in religion and migration in South Africa, before thematically discussing recent developments in the field of religion and migration studies. The article argues that migration of people has untapped resources for development and social transformation. We also argue that engagements with migration serves as a barometer for social cohesion and social responsibility in South Africa. Through an interdisciplinary review of the developments in the field, we suggest that despite an increase in interests in human mobility, policy makers, researchers and civil society activists have not taken migration flows within the South African context seriously. We conclude that although there has been significant civic and academic interest in understanding xenophobia as a symptom of a fractured civil society, most scholars have ignored the role of religion harnessing socially responsible cultures of reception and hospitality. In this regard, we hold that religion emerges as a necessary ingredient in shaping social responsibility that is characterised by cultures of receptions and hospitality towards migrants in South Africa.

Keywords: Religion, migration, social responsibility, theology, hospitality

Most migration research has taken the situation in northern destination countries as its starting point, neglecting the

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> perspectives of origin and transit countries, and of migrants …. Recent debates on migration and development have led to a broadening of approach and a realisation of the need for the cooperation of scholars from destination, transit and receiving countries (Castles 2010:1571).

Introduction

During recent years, migration has emerged as an increasingly volatile and politicised issue as governments sought to respond to balance the rights of its citizens, with the responsibility to harbour provide shelter to refugees and asylum-seekers. In this regard, the US response to migration from south of its border, to the Mediterranean migrant crisis, persistent xenophobic violence in South Africa and Rhoyinga of Myanmar, all represent examples of regional crisis that challenge the limits of social responsibility in the context of global migration. In addressing the question of whether ethics of migration have been adequately addressed in the Southern African context, we start out by mapping the competing ideas about citizenship and migration in South Africa before we proceed to interrogate current debates around ethics of migration and theologies of migration. We conclude our article about the extent to which current discourses of social and civic responsibility, whether ethical or theological in orientation, are sufficient for responding to the social challenges related to migration.

Mapping Migration in Southern Africa

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM)[1] indicates that there are more than 200 million people migrating around the world, and the World Migration Report (2010) estimated the number of international migrants[2] in

[1] More statistics on global movement can be accessed from the website of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at: http//www.iom.int.

[2] In this article the terms 'migrant' and to a very limited extent 'foreigner' (where cited in quotes) will be used to refer to people from other countries, who reside in South Africa. This is because in South African legislation the distinction between refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants are not

Africa in 2010 to be 19 million[3]. Ten percent of all African migrants were hosted by South Africa (WMR 2010). According to a recent report by the Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat (RMM) of the Danish Refugee Council (2017), most migrants heading for South Africa originate from the Horn of Africa, particularly Ethiopia and Somalia, with significant numbers also leaving from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and, to a lesser degree, from West Africa. While the exact numbers of African migrants living in South Africa remains a contentious issue, statistics from the South African Department of Home Affairs (2015) ranked the top 15 sending countries as follows: Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Nigeria, DRC, Malawi, Somalia, Ghana, Burundi, Mozambique, Uganda, Congo-Brazzaville, Cameroon, Tanzania, Lesotho and Senegal (DHA 2015). Political and economic instability in Zimbabwe, DRC and Swaziland has been cited as the main reason for migration within southern Africa, while religious tensions, wars and economic instability has been a major driving force behind the movement of people from further north (Kok *et al*. 2006).

The *World Migration Report (2015): Migrants and Cities: New Partnerships to Manage Mobility* noted that 'many city and local governments also still do not include migration or migrants in their urban development planning and implementation'. The report aims to address this gap by considering migration as a defining factor alongside climate change, population growth, demographic change and economic crisis in shaping sustainable cities in the future. Equally important, this report examines how migration and migrants are shaping cities and how the life of migrants is shaped by cities, their people, organisations and rule, suggesting that there is a direct correlation between social responsibility and regimes of hospitality experienced by migrants.

Presenting the 2013, 10th Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture, Mary Robinson[4] proposed an expansion of the concept of citizenship and remarked; 'in

yet clearly distinguished in terms of rights and access to public funds, mobility and work.

[3] Retrieved, 7 August 2012 on http://wwwjcp.ge/iom/pdf/WMR_2010_ ENG LISH.pdf.

[4] Mary Robinson is the former President of Ireland and president of the Mary Robinson Foundation-Climate Justice. The lecture, 'Freedom, Truth, Democracy: Citizenship and Common Purpose' (*Sunday Times* 14 July 2013: 10).

the 21st century, we need a new concept of citizenship that embraces all those people who find themselves in the country – nationals and migrants alike … this is particularly relevant to countries like South Africa, a "go to" country with a strong economy that attracts and will continue to attract a large migrant population'. On the opposite end of this spectrum, we find the current Mayor of Johannesburg, the city that was at the heart of the 2008 xenophobia attacks speaking against African migrants in the city with the largest settlement of migrants in South Africa, a city that Mpofu (2016) has reminded us, was actually built by migrants. Herman Mashaba, unlike Mary Robinson, draws a stark distinction between citizens and migrants, and he has risen to prominence for his very critical stance against migrants. After his first 100 days in office he announced 'I will do everything possible to provide accommodation. But the City of Johannesburg will only provide accommodation to South Africans. Foreigners, whether legal or illegal, are not the responsibility of the city'[5]. While many have dismissed Mayor Mashaba as xenophobic nationalist, a close reading of his speeches suggest that he frames his expulsion of migrants as a socially responsible campaign. For example when he declares that he will provide housing to South African citizens only, he is invoking the right to exclude migrants in the interest of the citizenry and national development. Settler (2017) has argued that Mashaba's confidence is the result of an unqualified and unrestrained popular sentiments against African migrants, coupled with increasing government complacency to deal with and prosecute acts of xenophobic violence. Consequently, Mayor Mashaba, through framing his xenophobia as socially responsible action, he not only aligns himself with government's *Fiela* campaign – to expel the illegal migrants – which provided him with legitimacy, but he presents himself as the public servant that is willing to make the hard and unpopular decision about the supposed correlation between migration and criminality (Diaz & Sheik 2017). Mashaba's final move in legitimating his xenophobia is that he presents migrants as an obstacle to social development and economic upliftment of the country's citizens, thus framing his decision to exclude migrants, as socially responsible conduct in the interest of the citizenry.

Between 2008 and 2015 South Africa experienced an increase in hos-

[5] 'Joburg Mayor Mashaba: Foreigners Not the Responsibility Of The City', reported on 24 July 2017 (see http://ewn.co.za/2017/07/24/joburg-mayor-mashaba-foreigners-not-the-responsibility-of-the-city#).

tility towards migrants, most notably, three waves of public violence spread across the nation, accompanied by continuing government programmes focussed on excluding 'illegal' migrants, such aa *Project Fiela*. An exception to the more pervasive culture of hostility towards migrants, the work of Bishop Paul Verryn previously of the Central Methodist Church in Johannesburg stands out as a model of religiously informed social responsibility. A number of scholars have reflected on this church occupation as a good example of tolerance and hospitality for people coming from outside South Africa. For example, Culbertson (2009) reflected on the reception of Zimbabwean migrants, while Sabar (2004) says that it drew attention to 'the paucity of attention to religion and leaves a major gap in our understanding of African migrants'. Settler (2017) argued that the Central Methodist Church emerged as a site of exception, which ultimately disrupted the churches' understanding of self. Mnyaka (2003), Nzayabino (2005), and Orobator (2005) have also noted that religion plays a central role in shaping and maintaining identity among migrant populations and their reception by host nations. According to Lauren Landau (2009:10) from the Africa Centre for Migration and Society there are new forms of exclusion through policies related employment and residence patterns, and he goes on to suggest that religion emerged as one of a number of strategies for negotiating inclusion and belonging, while transcending ethnic, national and transnational paradigms.

Notwithstanding the need to make sense of migration as an increasingly pertinent social phenomenon, Stephen Castles (2010) argued that a theory of migration is 'neither possible nor desirable' suggesting rather, that 'we can make significant progress by re-embedding migration research in a more general understanding of contemporary society'. For Castles, a conceptual framework for migration studies should take social transformation as its central category, in order to facilitate understanding of complex, interconnected, and the contextual nature of migratory processes. This would mean examining links between social transformation, human mobility and regimes of hospitallity. It is for this reason that this article interrogates the ethics of migration as a counterpoint, and companion discourse to theologies of migration, as a way to review social responsibility and migration in South Africa.

Migration, Religion and Social Responsibility

The debate between migration and social responsibility is best captured by the

debates advanced in Wellman and Cole's *Debating the Ethics of Migration* and Joseph Carens *The Ethics of Migration.* Wellman and Cole (2011) shape their volume around the question, does the state possess the right to exclude in the interest of the nation? While Christopher Wellman leads the charge that legitimate states have the right to have any immigration regime they desire, Phillip Cole, taking into account recent scholarship around the redundancy of the nation state as a container of identity, advances an open borders position. Carsen (2013) starts with examining current ethical and philosophical debates that the responsibility of the nation state is to protect the wellbeing of its citizens, and to offer limited rights to migrants. Through a review of current policies related to migration, Carsen shows how some practices of reception of migrants are morally defensible, while others are not. He ultimately argues that the only way for any society to uphold its own moral ideals, is to have an open border position.

While Castles (2000) defines citizenship, not unlike Mary Robinson above, as having 'equal access for participation in various areas of society, such as politics, work and social security', Tanya Dreher (2006b) argues that such regimes of inclusion encompasses the idea of responsibility between communities and government towards migrants. In the light of the increasing numbers of migrants within the Johannesburg inner city, scholars like Landau and Seggati (2011), in *Contemporary Migration to South Africa - A Regional Development Issue,* explored the developmental potential of migration for promoting integration/ social cohesion, enhancing tolerance and addressing xenophobia. They focused on how migrant communities articulate, negotiate and construct meanings in a context of hostility to migrants and they also concluded that religion plays a significant role in the lives of migrants before, during and after migration. Similarly, in his interrogation of the role of religion in migration, Stephen Bevans (2008) argues that through acting compassionately towards the stranger, we will gain insights not only as a community that helps and sustains migrants, but also 'as a community with and of migrants'[6]. Finally, Wilson and Mavelli (2008) in their chapter contribution to *Intersection of Religion and Migration* argue that there are deep fractures in

[6] See Stephen B. Bevans (2008), 'Mission among the Migrants, Mission of the Migrants: Mission of the Church'. In *A Promised Land, a Perilous Journey*. See also Wilson and Mavelli (2008), 'Intersection of Religion and Migration' in the same edited volume.

the ways in which responsibility is assigned, conceptualized and assumed, before they go on to argue that in a post-secular world, religion presents as a key organizing principle that transcends nationality and citizenship. In view of these arguments around social responsibility, ethics and hospitality, we wish to argue that religion as social capital, social institution and belief system can provide multi-stranded entry points into the debates about the politics of belonging, which dispenses hospitality and social responsibility.

As we have indicated above, sentiments towards migrants in South Africa, are largely oriented towards regimes of exclusion, as opposed to hospitality. The civic and state approach to migration along this trajectory ranges from integration, tolerance, to outright hostile xenophobia. A 2006 study by the South African Migration Project (SAMP) on citizens' attitudes to migrants concluded that South Africa continued to be a society in which xenophobia remained well entrenched, and the study revealed that most citizens wanted to give 'limited or little rights to migrants, [and] even benefits they were legitimately entitled to' (Crush *et al.* 2013:10). The same study found that despite increased contact and social interaction between migrants, South African hostility towards migrants have not lessened to a great degree. The result of this study was confirmed by the World Values Survey, a global longitudinal study of peoples' beliefs and values, which indicated that South Africans were more hostile and resistant to migrants and refugees than citizens of any other country.

The Africa Centre for Migration and Society, and the Southern Africa Migration Project have conducted several studies exploring how migrant communities articulate, negotiate and leverage religious identity to construct meanings to suffering experienced as a result of living in often hostile contexts. Similarly, the Southern African Missiological Society made a call for proposals on the subject of Migration in Africa in March 2012, after raising a critical question: where is Christian mission located in all of these matters in a continent where migration has become a way of life? Swart and de Beer (2014:7), in a non-theological, non-fictional publication, *Sanctuary* on the work of Paul Verryn and the Central Methodist Mission in Johannesburg, illustrates the vacuum in South African theologies to the massive challenges of migration. The work of Luis Rivera (2012) 'Xenophilia or Xenopbobia: Towards a Theology of Migration', a paper delivered at Princeton Theological Seminary on the 6th of October in 2012 provides an attempt to develop a theology of migration and warns:

> Migration and xenophobia are serious social quandaries. But they also convey urgent challenges to the ethical sensitivity of religious people and persons of good will. The first step we need to take is to perceive this issue from the perspective of the immigrants, to pay cordial (that is, deep from our hearts) attention to their stories of suffering, hope, courage, resistance, ingenuity … (Rivera 2012:4).

Before, discussing the significance of religion as a source of meaning-making and of belonging that transcends ideas of citizenship and nation, we propose to briefly explore the field of transnationalism to help locate our approach to social responsibility, religion and regimes of hospitality towards migrants. We hold the conviction that the emergence of transnationalism as a field of study, offer new ways to understand the lived experiences of migrant. Zan Addullah defines transnationalism as 'the multiple processes that allow people to live in ways that span two or more societies simultaneously, essentially merging these multiple locations into a single field of activity' (2012:10). Scholars like Levitt (2001; 2003; 2007), Vertovec (2009), Schiller (2003; 2005), and Horevitz (2009) have also done extensive work in advocating the use of a transnational optic as an effort to understand migration. They agree on the definition of transnationalism as multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation states. In his work on *Transnationalism*, Vertovec explored meanings of transnationalism within the context of globalization, critically assessing migrant transnational practices and demonstrated ways in which new and contemporary transnational practices of migrants are fundamentally transforming social, political and economic spheres in both host communities and communities of origin.

Another significant contribution to this debate has been offered by Levitt (2007):

> Understanding migration as a transnational process, and that people will simultaneously belong to this country and their homelands for the long haul, reveals several important things. For one sometimes migration is as much about people who stay behind as it is about people who move. In some cases, the ties between migrants and non-migrants are so strong and wide spread that migration also radically transforms the lives of individuals who stay home. They don't have to move to participate across borders. People, money and what I have

> called social remittances - the ideas, practices, social capital, and identities that migrants send back into their communities of origin - permeate their daily lives, changing how they act as well as changing their ideas about gender, right and wrong, and what states should and should not do. In response, the religious and social and political groups, they belong to also begin to operate across border (Levitt 2007:23).

Levitt goes on to argue that the transnational lives of migrants are inextricably linked. For her, mosques and churches are part of the multi-layered webs of connections where religious goods are produced and exchanged around the globe. In *Between God, Ethnicity and Country: An approach to the Study of Transnational Religion,* Levitt suggests that '[b]y focusing on transnationalism as networks and exchanges of goods we miss the fact that transnational religious practices also involve the transformation of identity, community and ritual practices' (Levitt 2001:6).

Although critics of this theory argue that migrants and immigrants have always maintained ties with their homelands for centuries and therefore nothing is new about the so-called new immigration - migration concept, other than an increased ability to communicate and easy travel to one's homeland (Horevitz 2009), it does take the complex dynamics of cross border relations seriously. One of the significant contributions to emerge out of the theoretical developments regarding the different ways in which scholars have approached transnational migration has been the concept of simultaneous embeddedness. This approach explored how migrants and their descendants participate in familial, social, economic, religious, political, and cultural processes that extend across borders while they became part of the places where they settle (ibid). In his discussion of embeddedness, Vertovec (2007) shows how this idea is further developed into two kinds of embeddedness, the first being *relational* embeddedness, which involves actors' personal relations with one another, including norms, sanctions, expectations and reciprocity. The second is *structural* embeddedness which refers to different scales of social relationship in which many others take part beyond those actually involved in an economic transaction.

In attempting to engage religion and theology as a basis for the more *personal* regimes of hospitality, scholarship in the field of religion/ theology and migration, has developed in at least two distinct directions. The first is

concerned with how migrants use and move with their religion as developed in the work of Levitt (2007) and Adogame (2010). The second shift is in the emergence of theologies of migration that rely on politics of difference and incorporation (hospitality).

In the first set of interests, Spikard and Adogame (2010) are not uncommon insofar as they point to the instrumentalist uses of religion in the context of migration. These range from studies concerned with new migrants' use of churches and mosques as the primary site for building social networks (Robertson 2012), religion as resources for migrants and source of resilience to help them cope with the challenges of migration (Hagan & Ebaugh 2003), to migrants replicating religious traditions at various sites of settlement as assertion of cultural and religious identity (Levitt 2001; 2007; Huwelmeier & Krause 2010).

Broadly speaking, second set of interests can be referred to as theologies of migration motivated by a moral or social responsibility concerned with hospitality, reception and integration of migrants. This tradition is primarily concerned with the response of the church to increasing visible migrant communities, and the failure of the state to adequately respond to the lived needs of migrants. Theologies of migration seek to invoke a whole range of themes such as hospitality (Groody & Campese 2008), church as host/ welcoming the stranger, (Cruz 2010; Mpofu 2016), church as suffering body (Rivera 2012), and theologies of inclusion and incorporation (Baggie 2008).

These theologies of migration largely rely on metaphors of church or religious communities as characterized by unity, oneness, focusing on shared belief and at times empathy. In *I was a Stranger: A Christian Theology of Hospitality*, Sutherland (2006) writes against the decline in hospitality in the Christian church. He suggests that in the Pauline biblical narrative, church elders are instructed to be beyond reproach and to not just live a normative, orthodox life, but to act as an example of an exemplary life into which the stranger can be assimilated. Unlike Sutherland's focus on the competence of the church to receive the stranger, Groody and Campese (2008) in *A promised Land/ A Perilous Journey*, move beyond the politics of reception, to offer a sustained theological critique of borders' physical and ideological barriers. They highlight three Christian themes - *Imago Dei* (the Image of God), the *Verbum Dei* (the Word of God), and the *Missio Dei* (the Mission of God) - that touch directly on the migration debate and help us understand that crossing borders is at the heart of human life, divine revelation, and Christian identity.

Through drawing our attention to *Imago Dei* they insist that Christians ought to see immigrants not as problems to be solved but people to be healed and empowered. Finally, in his documentary on migration, '*Dying to Live*', Daniel Groody suggests that true aliens are not those who are undocumented but those who have so disconnected themselves from their neighbours, that they fail to recognize the humanity in the Other. Lastly, drawing on his intercultural theological perspective on migration, Rivera-Pagán (2012) suggests that instead of perceiving national identity as 'an already historically fixed essence', it should rather be seen as historically constructed and constituted 'by exchanges with peoples bearing different cultural heritages' and in the case of Christianity, he invokes the idea of Jesus as a wanderer, foreigner.

However, despite its orientations towards inclusion, protection and integration, what these theological analyses have in common is that they rely on an idea of religion that presupposes an idea of the migrant 'other' as apolitical and asexual, vulnerable and ready for incorporation into the host culture. Further issues that emerge from the two sets of interests is that they both submit to, replicate and rely on the idea of the nation state as homogeneous, on the one hand, and the migrant Other as victim, the non-national on the other hand.

Integration, Assimilation and Cohesion

It is a generally held view that models that focus on providing care and support to migrants have to focus on integration, assimilation or cohesion but just what are the implications for this current investigation? Jonathan Sacks in his 2008 book *The Home we Build Together* (2008) offers three parables as a framework for understanding the relationship between newcomers and local citizens, that help us reflect on social responsibility towards the migrant or newcomer.

The first parable tells the fate of hundred strangers who have been wondering around the countryside in search of a dwelling place and eventually find themselves at the gate of a large country house. They are greeted by the owner at the gate who asks for their names and responds to their search for a place to stay with a warm welcome. He has a big house with many empty rooms; so they are welcome to 'stay as long as they like'. They are guests who can stay for as long as they want but the *host* remains the *host* and they are his guests (Sacks 2008:14).

In the second parable, a hundred strangers are searching for a place to

stay and find themselves in the middle of a city. They see a large and comfortable hotel with all amenities. They have enough money to pay for their bills, so they check in and stay. For Sacks, their relationship with the hotel is a contractual one, they pay money in return for services and they will remain in the hotel only for as long as they can afford to pay. By Sacks' understanding, treating migrants as strangers in South Africa is nothing but society as a hotel (Sacks 2008:15).

In the third parable a hundred strangers are met by the mayor, councilors and residents of the city to a warm welcome. The mayor addresses them and explains that there is no town house to accommodate them. However, the city leaders and residents have land to accommodate all of their guests. The city has town planners, engineers, builders and experts who can help them work together to design and build homes for the new citizens. *They do it together*. Unlike in the country house or hotel, the new comers have to invest their energy to build their own long term houses. They play an active role, and get an opportunity to work with their newly found citizens in building their permanent dwelling place (Sacks 2008:15). These three parables serve as an important signpost of the kind of hospitality that migrants and refugees should experience. The challenges presented by migration are very complex and as Sacks explains, building such an ideal society (based on the model of the last parable) as home won't always be easy and requires commitment and concerted efforts because:

> The newcomers still occasionally seem strange. They speak and act and dress differently than the locals. But those long sessions of working together have had their effect. The locals know the new-comers are serious, committed, dedicated. They have their own ways, but they have also learned the ways of the people of the town, and they have worked out ... a rough and ready friendship ..., Making something together breaks down walls of suspicion and misunderstanding .... That is society as the home we build together (Sacks 2009:29).

For Speilhaus (2008), one of the most visible symbols of settlement is seen in efforts to build a house of worship where migrants gather to retain their sense of identity and pass on their culture to the next generation. In the light of this symbolic significance of the construction of houses of worship, he argues that

the building of mosques in Europe has become controversial because houses of worship have powerful symbolic value. As Speilhaus rightly puts it; '[n]ew houses of worship are public reminders that new comers intend to stay' (2008:70). Similarly Cruz (2010), writing about migrants in the Asian context, argues that religious Centres provide migrants with much-needed hope, refuge, solace and a link to their homeland. As we have suggested earlier, at the heart of the debates surrounding the reception of migrants are the assumption about what ethical and social responsibility the host nation has towards the migrant stranger. Similarly, in South Africa, migrants rely on their Christian spirituality as means to cope with the challenges of migration, and they also rely on religious communities as sites of incorporation into the society. While many political and even church and community leaders fear that increasing numbers of migrants will lead to 'parallel societies' divided along tribal, ethnical or national lines, the moral imperative within religious communities is to embrace the stranger, as well as religious identity as transnational identity, which emerges as a powerful counter-narrative for building an inclusive society.

According to a study conducted by McDonald (2000:29), cross border migration into South Africa from elsewhere in the continent is an 'eminently manageable process', as opposed to the popular stereotype of an uncontrolled flood of migrants sneaking under fences and charting crocodile-infested rivers to get into country[7]. He notes that while some migrants live in South Africa without residence documents, these migrants often attend church services in the hope of getting support[8]. Unfortunately, there appears to be very little that churches are doing in response to the plight of migrants - with no programs aimed at welcoming and providing support to people from outside South

[7] Similar observations have also been made in a study on perceptions of migration and immigration conducted by Crush and Pendleton (2004) who note that South African citizens' perceptions of migrants are 'a mixture of half-truths and misleading stereotyping'.

[8] Buhle Mpofu (researcher) attended worship services in Mayfair and Kensington and conducted interviews with migrants and congregants between April and August in 2015. On one occasion, I was asked to write a falsified letter stating that one member was employed by the church so that he can process an asylum permit. I explained that it was not possible to do that as it is a criminal offence. However, this experience left me wondering what it is that the church is doing to address these challenges.

Africa. Instead, there is a growing perception among local people in South Africa that migrants are 'criminals who take their women and jobs, resulting in xenophobic attacks (Jean 2008). Elsewhere, Mpofu (2016) has argued that responses to such challenges require the development of missiological strategies which will promote respect and dignity of people from outside South Africa, to foster what Fornet-Betancourt (2008) calls; 'civil courage that welcomes strangers as citizens who must be protected'.

Sol (1982:38) observed that 'when the people move, the church moves', this is an assertion that the church is not just a structure built in and for local communities, but it is a community of people who share a set of beliefs and values, and who remain connected despite the fact that they move from one place to another. As people move, they do not leave behind their religious experiences; they move with them and articulate their migration experiences in the light of personal theological reflections on the journey, and connect with people who share the same views and values. It is because of this that we have sought to argue that in engaging questions of social responsibility, we should also focus on the religious lives of migrants as well as that of the host nation. We argue that faith communities cannot simply be imagined as communities that help and sustain migrants through regimes of patronage, but we must allow the presence of migrants to lead to a re-imagination of self, community and nation - 'as a community with and of migrants' (Bevans 2010).

Unpacking the issue of ethics and social responsibility in the context of migration, is contingent on how we imagine the migrant other. While Mary Robinson and Joseph Carsens imagine the migrant as a global citizen who should be afforded the same rights and privileges as a 'national subject' in a borderless world, Herman Mashaba and Phillip Cole belief that it is morally, socially and politically irresponsible to maintain an open-border policy in the context of increasing migration. Cole and Mashaba argue that it is the rights of the nation, or community to protect its interest through distinguishing between citizen and migrant – each with a distinct set of rights of access, residence and opportunity.

In her reflection on the politics of justice and social responsibility, Althauss-Reid (2000), offers a critique of liberation theology, contextual, and systematic theology. She contends that while these progressive and critical theological traditions address questions of injustice, racism and economic under-development, they require a redeemable subject. She goes on to argue that in most cases this poor, marginalized subject are imagined domesticated,

apolitical and asexual. Aulthauss-Reid's reading of theology's preoccupation with the licit, asexual, deracialized victim as the subject of its patronage, points to a problematic point to the victim-villain dialectic that informs a great deal of theological responses to migration. During the 2015 migrant crises around the Mediterranean and Northern Europe, attitudes towards the reception of migrants were complicated by claims and preoccupation that migrants were politicized, had families and seemed affluent[9]. These concerns ultimately expose the idea that social responsibility in the context of migration must only be dispensed to the most vulnerable and most deserving – where the burden of proof of such chronic and critical need rests with the migrant (victim). Similarly, Sara Ahmed (2000) reminds us that in much of the scholarship, and humanitarian efforts concerned with migration, the migrant is fixed as perpetually vulnerable and a victim. She argues that humanitarian groups and activists, in seeking to depict the lived experience of the migrant, these groups generally, script particular narratives of the migrant as victim – where the person's political and sexual agency is erased. Ahmed (2000) writes that 'universalism of speaking for the other is premised on phantasies of absolute proximity and absolute distance', and she goes on to argue that the figure of the victim is ultimately a product of phantasies of benevolence and particular postures of social responsibility.

Conclusion

The misleading stereotyping and a mixture of half truths about migration and immigration noted by Crush and Pendleton (2004), has fuelled wrong perceptions on African migrants, as this approach does not consider the situation of sending and receiving countries. For more than a century migrants have been attracted to Johannesburg – the City of Gold – because of the promise of new life and relief from hardship. However, we argue that the manner in which local faith communities has responded to the reception of migrants lies also, in how the issues have been framed. Where regimes of

[9] Norwegian authorities debated the introduction a policy to confiscate assets and money of migrants who possessed money or assets of more than 10000krone. See http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/refugee-crisis-norway-is-latest-country-to-propose-seizing-asylum-seekers-cash-and-valuables-a6832966.html (reported 25 January 2016).

hospitality towards migrants are framed as competition over limited local resources, xenophobia is highly likely, but where it is framed in terms of recognition of the 'Other', then accommodation and integration of the migrant is possible.

In closure, we wish to suggest that in assuming the posture of social responsibility towards migrants, local citizen and faith communities must move beyond rhetoric of accommodation and patronage. Robert J. Schreiter's two books provide a useful insight into a re-orientation of social responsibility and pastoral care in the context of migration. In *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local* (1997), he suggested that there is an urgent need to develop intercultural theologies that transform one's understanding of theology from the local (contextual) to the universal (transnational). However, in his 2004 book, *'Constructing Local Theologies'* (2004) he argues that global challenges – such as migration – is more usefully addressed at a local level, where recognition of the Other is possible.

In this regard we conclude that while the regimes and theologies of hospitality is probably best developed at a local level, we are in agreement with Orobator (2005) that the church as ecclesiological community, must assume a position of social, moral and political responsibility to ensure conditions where hospitality towards migrants are possible. For him, the church constitutes the theological and social community, what he refers to as 'a double dimension', with an identity simultaneously related to God and at the same time, to the world.

Finally, this article has discussed some considerations on the ethics of migration and sought to also interrogate the moral imperative to welcome the stranger – that inhabits most theologies of migration. We have argued that while there is a social responsibility to care for the stranger, such motivations must be interrogated insofar as they imagine all migrants, as always necessarily victims, and that the failure to demonstrate victimhood renders the migrant as undeserving of ecclesial, social and political protection. Thus we can conclude that our postures of protection and social responsibility suggest less about our recognition of the migrant other, and more about our self-projection as benevolent providers of liberty and modernity, or guardians of nationalist interest against the 'foreign hordes'. Finally, we have sought to demonstrate that religion offer migrants and citizens the possibility of shared values and meaning-making, as well as transnational networks of belonging that opens the prospect for new postures of social and political responsibility.

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Social Responsibility with Respect to Religion and Migration

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